HISTORY OF CEYLON

Volume I

Part I

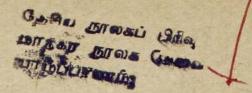
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UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA SRI LANKA

This work, for the first time, deals comprehensively with the history of Ceylon from the earliest times up to the declaration of Independence in 1947. It is divided into two Volumes, the first up to the arrival of the Portuguese in 1505, and the second from that event up to 1947. It collects and digests the material that is now found scattered in numerous publications, some of which are not easily available. It also takes into account data not hitherto examined, and attempts to throw fresh light on the unsolved problems of the history of the Island.

It surveys historical developments outside Ceylon which have affected the course of events in this Island. In the case of Volume I, this survey is mainly Indian history and in the case of Volume II, both Indian and European history. The historical and religious developments in India within the period covered by Volume I have been dealt with by Indian scholars who have made a special study of the subjects concerned. Each Volume is divided into a number of Books in which, in addition to the political history, the civilisation distinctive of the period is dealt with succinctly-political and economic conditions, administrative organisation, agriculture, irrigation, religion, art and architecture receiving due notice. The first Volume will consist of about 800 pages of which Part I, up to the end of the Anuradhapura period, is now published. Part II, which is now going through the Press, will contain the Index. Bibliographies, Genealogical Tables and a Chronological List of Kings for the whole Volume. Both parts contain numerous maps and illustrations.

தோத்து நூலகப் பிரிவு மாரத்து நூலக சேலை மாற்போனம்:



UNIVERSITY OF CEYLON

HISTORY OF CEYLON

Editor-in-Chief:

PROFESSOR H. C. RAY, Ph.D., D.LITT. 1956 to May 1958.



VOLUME I

From the Earliest Times to 1505

PART I

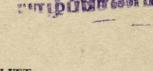
Up to the End of the Anuradhapura Period

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HISTORY OF CEYLON

PREFACE

THE need for a comprehensive History of Ceylon has been felt for a long time. The proposal that the University of Ceylon should supply this need was made by Sir Ivor Jennings in 1953, and a scheme for a co-operative history was planned to work under the editorship of Dr G. C. Mendis. It was intended, in this work, to collect together and digest the material that is now widely dispersed in publications not readily accessible to the average student. No decision, however, was taken on this proposal until 1955 when a sub-committee of the Senate was appointed to inquire into the scheme and report. As a result of the recommendations of this sub-committee, towards the close of 1956, a draft plan for a History of Ceylon from the earliest times up to 1947 was prepared, and various specialists were invited to contribute the chapters dealing with their respective fields of study, by Professor H. C. Ray, the then Head of the Department of History. Editorial panels to deal with the two volumes of the History were also selected. The material for Volume I of this History, bringing the narrative down to the arrival of the Portuguese in 1505, had been received, but for a few contributions, by the end of 1957, and has been edited by Professor S. Paranavitana.

Volume I of this History will consist of about 800 pages, and, for the convenience of the reader, it has been decided to issue it in two parts. Part I, bringing the History to the end of the Anuradhapura period, is now offered to the public and it is hoped that Part II, which is going through the Press, will be issued before the end of the year. This being the first attempt at a History of Ceylon on such a comprehensive basis, there are bound to be shortcomings and defects in it, but it is hoped that the specialist and the student, as well as the average educated person, will find something in this work that will be helpful.

The generous assistance given by the Asia Foundation has relieved the University of much of the financial burden which it would have had to bear in the preparation and publication of this History, and it is my pleasant duty here to express my thanks, on behalf of the University, to Mr R. V. Sedvick and Mr William T. Fleming, Representatives of that Foundation in Ceylon, for the readiness with which they facilitated the grant, and to Dr G. C. Mendis for the initial action he had taken towards this end. I also express my obligation to the members of the editorial board, the contributors and others who co-operated in bringing the work on this Volume to a successful conclusion. Thanks are due to the Archaeological Commissioner

for the photographs and drawings for the illustrations and to Mr P. U. Ratnatunga of the Surveyor-General's Department for his assistance in the production of the maps included in this Volume. The satisfactory get-up of the present publication is due to Mr H. B. Perera, the Supervisor of the University Press, who in carrying out this work with the limited equipment and resources available to him, has shown commendable energy and initiative in overcoming many a difficulty with which he was confronted in the course of the work.

NICHOLAS ATTYGALLE

Peradeniya, 16 September, 1959.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AACP.

Art and Architecture of Ceylon: Polonnaruva Period. By
S. Paranavitana, published by the Arts Council of Ceylon,
First Edition, 1954.

ABIA. Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology, Kern Institute, Leyden.

AIC. Ancient Inscriptions in Ceylon. By Dr E. Müller, London, 1883.

AI. Ancient India (Bulletin of the Archaeological Survey of India).

ALTR. Ancient Land Tenure and Revenue in Ceylon. By H. W. Codrington, Government Press, Colombo, 1938.

Ar. Arabic
ARE. Annual Report of Epigraphy, Southern Circle, Madras

ASCAR. Archaeological Survey of Ceylon, Annual Report.

ASCM. Archaeological Survey of Ceylon, Memoirs.

ASI. Archaeological Survey of Ceylon, Inscriptions.

ASIR. Archaeological Survey of Ceylon, Inscription Register

BSOAS. Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies. University of London.

But.

Butsarana of Vidyācakravarti. Edited by Pandit Välivitiye
Sorata NāyakaThera, Colombo, 1953.

CALR. Ceylon Antiquary and Literary Register.

CCC. Ceylon Coins and Currency. By H. W. Codrington, Government Press, Colombo.

CHI. Cambridge History of India.
CHJ. Ceylon Historical Journal.
CII. Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum.

CIHSS. Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies.

CJSG. Ceylon Journal of Science, Section G, Archaeology, Ethnology, etc.

CLR. Ceylon Literary Register.

Colas. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri. The Colas. Second Edition (Revised), Madras, 1955.

Com. HI. Comprehensive History of India.

Cv. Cūļavanisa, being the more recent part of the Mahāvanisa, Edited by Wilhelm Geiger, Pali Text Society, London, Vol. I, 1925; Vol. II, 1927.

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CORRIGENDA

- p. 17, l. 10 from foot. Read permanently
- p. 17, l. 7 from foot. Read travelled
- p. 24, l. 16. For uniterruptedly read uninterruptedly
- p. 34, l. 1. For tribe. read tribe,
- p. 34, l. 18. For Kurunāgala read Kuruņāgala
- p. 34, l. 6 from foot. For Sigiri read Sigiri
- p. 42, l. 3 from foot. For pp. 17, 22 and 49 read p. 12
- p. 62, l. 16. For vipava read vaipava
- p. 67, l. 24. For requistes read requisites
- p. 69, l. 6 from foot. For Kalinga read Kalinga
- p. 70, l. 18. For Ambagamu read Ambagamu
- p. 71, l. 7. For Kālinga read Kalinga
- p. 73, l. 1 from foot. For VIII read IX
- p. 81, 1. 4 from foot. For drehistoric read prehistoric
- p. 95, l. 14. For pased read based
- p. 149, last l. For themses, thelvey read themselves, they
- p. 151, l. 14. Read it
- p. 160, l. 1. For sa read as
- p. 178. l. 5 from foot. For dyansty read dynasty
- p. 182, l. 7 from foot. For independent read independent
- p. 184, l. 11. For as reprisals read as a reprisal
- p. 184, l. 23. For to read of
- p. 185, l. 15 from foot. For peoples read people
- p. 186, f. n. 19. For ogainst read against
- p. 224, l. 16. For Sanskrit read Sanskrit literature
- p. 237, f. n. 60. For Papñcasūdanī read Papañcasūdanī
- p. 247, l. 8. For This exigetical literature, of which read Of this exegetical literature
- p. 247, l. 12. For exigetical read exegetical
- p. 261, l. 12 from foot. For peterae read paterae
- p. 269, l. 6 from foot. For hundrde read hundred
- p. 271, l. 27. For Junior read junior
- p. 273, l. 13. For 414. read 414
- p. 248, l. 32. For largesse read largesses
- p. 279, l. 8. For Śripurusa read Śripurusa
- p. 294, l. 14. For descendent read descendant
- p. 329, l. 17. For extra ordinary read extraordinary
- p. 397, l. 22. For Polonnarua read Polonnaru
- p. 409, 1. 3 from foot, For instances read instance

INTRODUCTION

This Volume deals with the history of Ceylon from its earliest beginnings up to the arrival of the first European nation to gain political ascendancy over a part of the Island. During this long period of nearly two thousand years, the Island passed through various vicissitudes; but, in the main, its destinies were shaped by the actions of its own people. While it was, by its geographical position, exposed to political, economic and cultural influences from various directions, its people, during the greater part of the period dealt with in this Volume, had enough vitality to absorb, modify and assimilate these to suit their own environment. Not only did they succeed in evolving a political and social system which stood the test of time for many centuries, but they also exerted considerable influence, particularly in the domain of culture and religion, on the life of the peoples in many lands of South-eastern Asia. Among the peoples of the Indian civilisation, the Island of Simhala was held in an esteem much greater than was its due if the extent of its territory and its material resources were the sole determining factor. Though not unaffected by the revolutionary changes in religious doctrines which the neighbouring continent witnessed from time to time, the people of Ceylon, throughout this long period, considered it of paramount importance to preserve the form of Buddhism which they had received from India early in their history, thus making their distinctive contribution to the cultural heritage of mankind.

Like other Asian countries with a civilisation of Indian origin, Ceylon had long since passed the prime of its national manhood at the end of the period dealt with in this Volume, and its people were ill-equipped, materially as well as morally, to face the struggle against people of a more dynamic and assertive civilisation from lands of which they had hardly any knowledge then. The three centuries of this conflict between two civilisations and the formation of a new way of life with the integration of elements from their own ancient culture with those from the West will be the subject of the Second Volume.

The first of the five books into which this Volume has been divided begins by introducing to the reader the stage on which the drama of history was to be played, and the milieu from which the actors in it were drawn. It next gives an account of the sources on which modern historians have to rely in unfolding that drama. Next, in the fifth chapter, has been given the meagre information that is available about the peoples who occupied the stage before it was taken possession of by civilised men. The sixth

chapter is devoted to a discussion of the happening by which light is first thrown on that stage, i.e. the occupation of the Island by the people who gave it the name by which it has been referred to by many nations of antiquity, and by which it is still known in the world. With regard to the region of the Indian sub-continent from which came these first historical people of the Island—the Sinhalese—this History has accepted a conclusion which differs widely from the views held on the subject by most writers. It is, therefore, gratifying to note that the presence of Kambojas in pre-Christian Ceylon-the starting point of the argument for the thesis that the original home of the Sinhalese was on the upper reaches of the Indus has received support from a source which was not available to the writer of this chapter when he formulated his theory. An early Pāli text just published by the Venerable Aggamahāpandita Buddhadatta Mahānāyaka Thera refers to a Kamboja-gama in Rohana. That a community of people called Kambojas flourished in early Ceylon is thus attested by literary, in addition to epigraphical, evidence. The last chapter of the first book discusses the legendary accounts of the early kings of the Island, and attempts to extract the kernal of history embedded in them.

In the second Book has been discussed the happening which, next to the occupation of the Island by the Sinhalese, has had the most profound effect on the subsequent course of its history, namely, the introduction of Buddhism. The account of this event is preceded, in the first chapter, by a survey of religion in India from the earliest times, leading to the rise and spread of Buddhism. Not long after the espousal by the Sinhalese of the doctrines of Śākyamuni, the Tamil people from South India, on three different occasions, wrested the sovereignty over this Island for themselves, and the successful endeavours of the Sinhalese, first under Duṭṭhagāmaṇi, and later under his nephew Vaṭṭagāmaṇi, to recover their dominion temporarily lost, have been transformed in early times to achievements of a Heroic Age.

For four hundred years after Vaṭṭagāmaṇi, the Sinhalese, without any anxiety caused by external enemies, could concentrate their energies on the arts of peace. In the two centuries preceding, and the three after the beginning of the Christian era, they made great advances in the economic development of the Island, in the building of magnificent religious monuments and in the construction of irrigation works. The first dynasty of Sinhalese kings yielded place to a new family in or about 66 A.C.; this, however, did not retard the economic development of the country and progress in art and culture. The elements of civilisation which the original Aryan settlers had brought with them, fertilised and refined by contact with

Mauryan and Āndhra culture introduced in the wake of Buddhism, had evolved, during the first two centuries of the Christian era, into a distinctive civilisation, on which the Sinhalese people had stamped the impress of their own genius.

Commercial contacts had been established in the meantime with the Western world, and religious as well as trade relations existed with the Chinese empire. In the neighbouring Tamil land, there flourished contemporaneously a distinctive culture which was destined to influence profoundly the course of Sinhalese civilisation. A chapter, therefore, has been set apart to deal with that civilisation as reflected in the Sangam literature. Developments within the Buddhist religion in India are taken notice of in another chapter before the general civilisation of the period dealt with in Book II is briefly surveyed in the last two chapters.

It is not due to any break, dynastic or political, in the history of Ceylon, but solely in deference to the earlier chronicles, that Book II ends with the reign of Mahāsena. After him, the even course of events continued for another century and a quarter. But the reign of Mahāsena marked the culmination of architectural development of the early period; the kings who succeeded him did not undertake such colossal enterprises as the leta-The second Sinhalese dynasty ended in 428. vana Dāgāba. dynasty which was established in 455 after an interlude of Tamil rule produced two kings of great vigour, the founder Dhatusena, and his son, Kassapa I. The name of the first of these two sovereigns is associated with the Kalāväva, while the second has to his credit the stupendous engineering feats at Sigiri. But the dynasty did not last long, and the Island went through a period of civil wars, in which the scions of two royal families fought with each other for its overlordship. This period of dynastic instability (Chapter II) which lasted for about a century and a half, had, however, intervals of good government under kings like Aggabodhi I and Aggabodhi II, who brought the irrigation system of the Island to its then highest pitch of development. Ceylon, by this time, had acquired an important place as an entrepôt in international traffic, which no doubt contributed to the wealth of its rulers and people. A period of relative stability and prosperity was inaugurated by Manavamma in 684, and the three centuries which followed marked the maturity of the Sinhalese civilisation. The Sinhalese, however, were drawn into the vortex of power politics in the neighbouring Dravidian land and though, at first, they more than held their own, the rise of the mighty Cola empire and the attempt of the Sinhalese to preserve the Pandya kingdom as a buffer between their country and the Colas led to the downfall of the Anuradhapura kingdom at the beginning of the eleventh

century. For the first time, Ceylon became the province of an empire with its headquarters outside the Island, and was administered in the interests of that empire. Sinhalese art and institutions were under an eclipse.

The heroic attempts of the Sinhalese leaders to throw off the Cola yoke, the establishment of a new kingdom by Vijayabāhu I with Polonnaru as its capital, the disorders that followed the death of that monarch, the career of Parākramabāhu the Great, the struggle for power between two factions after the demise of that king and the fall of the Polonnaru kingdom after it had existed for about a century and a half are dealt with in Book IV. The end of the Polonnaru kingdom is a dividing point in the history of Ceylon. Henceforth, the centres of political gravity shift from the ancient cities in the northern plains of the Island to new capitals in the western and central regions. An important question to be determined for the proper understanding of the history of the Polonnaru period is the identity of the Kalinga people who played such an important part in shaping the events of those days. In this History, the prevailing view that they came from Kalinga in India has been adopted, but the present writer, in a paper contributed to the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon Branch, has demonstrated that the Kalingas of mediaeval Ceylon came from the Malay Peninsula or Sumatra. If this view gains acceptance, the events of the period would assume a new significance, and it would be seen that the position of the Island on the sea-routes had been as much of a determining factor in its history as its proximity to the Indian sub-continent.

Book V deals with a period of decline, in political power as well as in art and economic conditions. For the greater part of this period there were two seats of authority in the Island, the Sinhalese kingdom in the southern half which claimed overlordship of the entire Island, and a Malay or Tamil kingdom which exercised de facto control of the north. This is the period of which our knowledge of the course of events is very sketchy, and it has been necessary, therefore, to enter into a discussion of the available evidence at greater length than in other books. Views differing from those held by previous writers have been arrived at on many a problem relating to the history of this period, but the evidence on which such conclusions have been reached is given in full, so that the reader can judge for himself whether the conclusions are justified or not.

This History was originally planned as a series of monographs. But, in the course of its preparation, at least where a sufficiently long period had been dealt with by the same contributor, a coherent narrative of events has been aimed at; the editor has done his best to eliminate repetitions and overlappings in other sections too. But a certain amount of repetition is inevitable in a co-operative work of this nature.

While the various contributors have done their utmost to assist the editor in seeing that conflicting points of view are reduced to the minimum, the individual contributors have had the fullest freedom in expressing their opinions, whether these agreed with the opinions expressed by others or not. References have been given in footnotes, where necessary, when a statement made in one chapter is at variance with another given elsewhere in the book. In Chapter VII of Book II, for instance, Mr S. Natesan argues for an earlier date for the Sangam literature than that accepted by many South Indian historians of repute, and adopted by other contributors to this History, too.

As originally conceived, this History was not meant to embody the results of any original research, but to collect together and digest the material that is widely dispersed in numerous publications. As the reader will observe, some of the contributors have disregarded this limitation, and endeavoured to seek solutions to problems of Ceylon history by discussing. evidence that has not been previously brought to bear on them. But many problems yet remain to be solved. One such is the parentage of Mahinda IV. The view put forward in Chapter IV of Book III, that he was a son of Kassapa V, would make him a very old man at the time of accession. Kassapa V, who himself was of advanced years when he came to the throne, died in 920 after reigning for ten years, and Mahinda IV, who ascended the throne thirty-three years afterwards, espoused a new queen, begot two children and reigned for sixteen years. It is quite possible that Mahinda IV was the same as Mahinda referred to, in the Kataragama pillar-inscription, as a son of Udaya II. But this question cannot be definitely settled until all the inscriptions bearing on the question have been published and studied. Other problems yet awaiting solution will be referred to in the course of the discussion of events in the various chapters.

A matter to which the editor has given considerable thought is the form in which proper names, of personages as well as of places, should appear in this History. As the best known sources for Ceylon history are in Pāli, some writers favour the Pāli forms of names. While this practice has been followed up to the end of the Anurādhapura period, it was considered unnecessary to adhere consistently to the principle of 'Pāli only' for proper names. For names like 'Parākramabāhu' and 'Vikramabāhu' are well-known in their Sanskrit forms; and they appear as such in contemporary documents. Certain names of kings are well-known to Ceylon scholars in their Sinhalese forms, e.g. 'Duṭugāmuṇu' for the Pāli form 'Duṭṭha-gāmaṇī.' It was, however, considered that it would lead to confusion by adopting such forms in a few cases only. The alternative forms (Sinhalese, Pāli or Sanskrit) will be given in parenthesis after each name in the Chronological List of Kings which will be included in the second Part of

this Volume. With regard to place names, while those which have not yet been identified are given in the Pāli forms as they occur in the chronicles, those which are well-known today, such as Polonnaru, Kuruṇāgala, etc., and others which have been identified, such as Batalagoḍa, have been given in those forms, and not as Pulatthipura, Hatthiselapura and Badalatthalī, in Pāli. It would indeed be taking consistency too far to refer to the well-known Dambadeṇi as Jambuddoṇi for the reason that this is the form in the Cūlavanisa. Moreover, the Sinhalese literary sources are more important than the Cūlavanisa for the period after Polonnaru, and it is in their Sanskrit or Sinhalese forms that names do appear in them. The names of certain places in India, e.g. Pāṭaliputra, which are well-known in their Sanskrit forms, have been so adopted. The identification of the variant forms, when not done in the text itself, will be noticed in the Index.

A departure from the general practice made in this Volume is to give, wherever possible without causing ambiguity, Sinhalese names of places and titles of books in their stem forms, conforming to the practice with regard to names in other inflexional languages, and not in the nominative singular. The reader, for instance, will find 'Polonnaru' instead of 'Polonnaruva' and Rājāvalī for Rājāvaliya. In quoting Sanskrit names, for instance, one does not, in English writings, call the capital of Asoka 'Pāṭaliputram' and the epic of Vālmīki, the Rāmāyaṇam. The system of transliteration adopted in this work is that followed in the Epigraphia Zeylanica.

With regard to chronology, while the date of Devānampiya Tissa has been decided on the basis of that of Asoka as determined by the references in his edicts to a number of Greek potentates, the dates of kings from Dutthagamani to Mahasena are in accord with Wijesinha's chronology. The reasons why the editor does not accept the view that a Buddhist era beginning in 483 B.C. was in use in Ceylon up to a certain period have been given in A New History of the Indian People, pp. 262-264, and in EZ., V, pp. 86ff. All attempts to give exact dates for legendary kings before Devānampiya Tissa are bound to be failures. The dates for the kings from Sirimeghavanna to Mahinda V are as given in EZ., V, pp. 109-11, in accordance with the discussion which precedes the chronological list given there. The dates for Vijayabāhu I and his immediate successors are in accord with the discussion in EZ., V, pp. 10ff., and those for the rulers during the Cola occupation have been arrived at with reference to the date of Vijayabāhu I's accession. The other dates are in accordance with the chronological table in EZ., III, pp. 25ff. The dates of the kings of the Dambadeni and later periods have been discussed in the relevant chapters.

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The contributions for Books I to IV, with the exception of Chapter 2 B and C of Book I, Chapter 7 of Book II, Chapters 2 to 4 of Book III, and Chapters 6 to 8 of Book IV, were read, in his capacity as Editor-in-Chief, by Professor H. C. Ray, who made very useful suggestions. It is very much to be regretted that circumstances deprived the rest of this Volume of the benefit of his mature scholarship. Mr C. W. Nicholas read through all the contributions and the whole of this Volume has improved in quality due to his scrutiny. His assistance has also been very valuable in passing the work through the press.

I am thankful to Mr. S. C. Blok, B.A., F.L.A., the Librarian of the University, and the members of his staff, Mr. K. D. Somadasa, B.A., M.S., and Mr. H. A. I. Goonetilleke, B.A., DIP. LIB., in particular, for the very courteous manner in which they made available to me the books necessary for reference, and assistance in finding the references in some cases. Mr. W. M. K. Wijetunga, B.A., and Mr. S. U. Kodikara, M.A. who functioned as Secretary to the Editor-in-Chief from October, 1956 to May, 1957, have rendered very useful service in the initial stages of planning this History. Mr Wijetunga has also undertaken the laborious task of preparing the Index to this Volume. The progress of the work was facilitated by the efficiency of Mr. J. Siromani who did the typing and clerical work found necessary in the editing of this Volume. Mr L. K. Karunaratna, the Chief Draughtsman of the Archaeological Department, has been very helpful in advising my draughtsman, Mr J. Jayasena, in the preparation of the maps and plans. The drawings reproduced in Plates I and II have been supplied by Dr. N. D. Wijesekera. The Map between pages 16 and 17 has been reproduced, with kind permission, from the University of Ceylon Review, Vol. IX, where it was first published. Finally, I must express my deep gratitude to the Vice-Chancellor, Sir Nicholas Attygalle, for the great personal interest that he always took in this project, without which this Volume would never have been brought to a successful completion within a comparatively short time.

S. PARANAVITANA

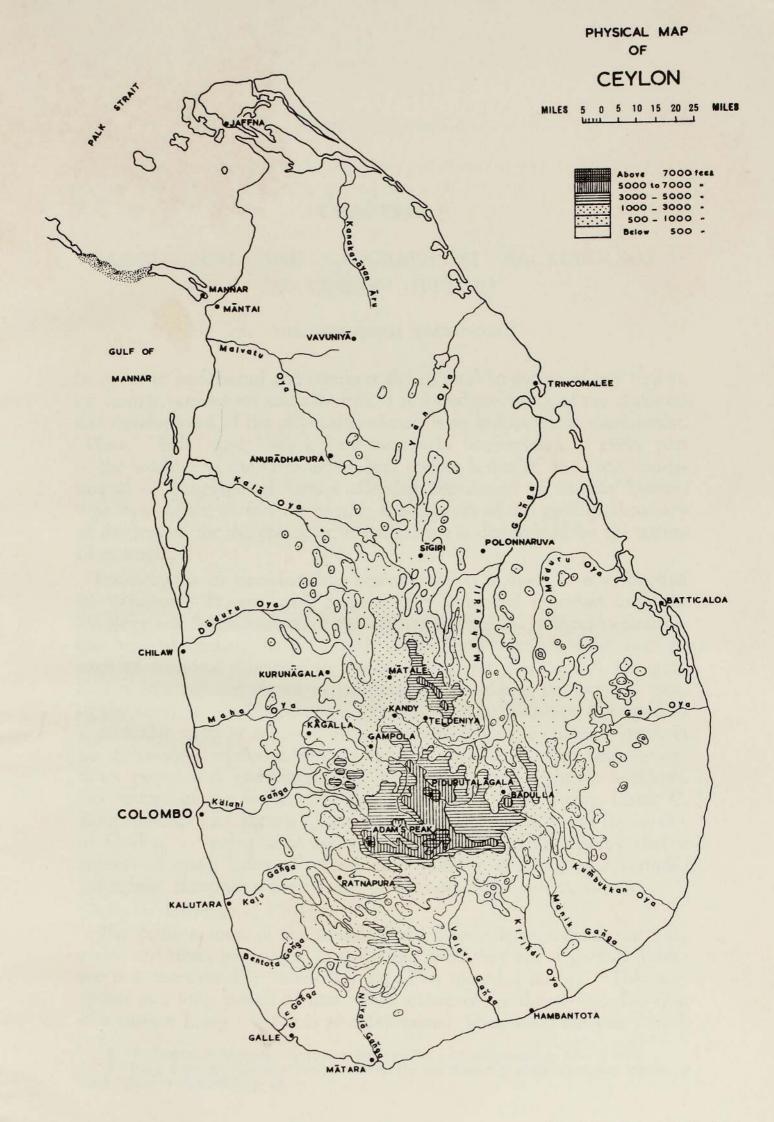
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BOOK I
DAWN OF HISTORY

BOOK 1



CHAPTER I

GEOLOGICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND OF CEYLON HISTORY

A. THE GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

In order to understand and interpret the cultural landscape of any region, i.e. human settlements and activities, a real understanding of the character and development of the physical landscape is an indispensable prerequisite. 'Place,' 'Folk' and 'Work' are intimately inter-related in every part of the world, and the form of the land surface is one of the most fundamental of geographical factors affecting the course of human history. The form of the surface, in turn, is the product of the geological history of the region, for the character of the surface is determined by the nature of its origin.

Landscape is an everchanging evolutionary complex. It is a function of 'Structure' 'Process' and 'Stage'. By 'Structure' is meant both the lithology and the disposition of the rocks of the region. 'Rocks constitute the basis of contemporary scenery, while the internal tectonic and the external erosional processes are the shapers of the landscape'. The geological processes concerned in building and moulding the external parts of the earth are cyclical in their relations. Every landscape is related to a particular stage in the evolutionary procession of sequential forms in the geomorphic cycle—infantile, young, mature, late mature, old—sometimes punctuated and interrupted by climatic and volcanic accidents. No feature of the surface is a finished product. Berrowing Lester C. King's description of South Africa, one might apprepriately call the surface of Ceylon, a 'polygenetic and complex thing, meaning thereby that it consists of many facets of varied derivation.' It is indeed a veritable palimpsest, comprising the records of successive cycles of evolution.

Geological Evolution of Ceylon

The configuration of the coastline of Ceylon, its mountains and hills, plains and rivers have been, in the main, what they are at present during the two thousand five hundred years of its recorded history. This may appear as a long period of time when measured by the average life-span of a human being; but it is an infinitesimal fraction of the vast stretch

^{1.} Woodridge S. Morgan, The Physical Basis of Geography (Longmans), p. 174.

2. King, Lester C., Landscape Study in South Africa in Proceedings of the Geological Society of South Africa. Vol. L (1947), p. 24

of time, computed at over two thousand millions of years, during which the story of the earth has been recevered from the geological record enshrined in the ancient rocks and later stratified formations laid down in successive ages as mud, sand, gravel and shells in the beds of oceans, lakes and rivers. During the greater part of this incalculably long period, that small parcel of the earth's land surface constituting our Island did not form a separate geographical entity.

Towards the close of the Palcozoic Era3, when animal as well as plant life had undergone a long period of evolution, the land now comprising Ceylon formed part of a vast southern continent, to which the name of Gondwanaland has been given, and which included the modern peninsular India, the greater part of Africa and Western Australia, and even Brazil. The area of the earth now comprising the North Indian plain, together with the mighty Himalayan range, formed part of an ocean which bordered Gondwanaland on the north, and almost encircled the Earth. There were various oscillations of climate during these remote ages, long periods of arctic cold temperature followed by warmer periods with luxuriant vegetation, to which is due the coal seams found in many parts of what was once Gondwanaland. Certain forms of flora and fauna being peculiar to Ceylon and Madagascar, and a certain degree of consanguinity which the Island has with parts of Africa, Deccan, and Western Australia in lithology, structure, etc., are to be explained by these regions having been parts of one continent in remote geological times. In the latter part of the existence of Gendwanaland, in the Jurassic Period to be more exact, Ceylon received, in a few narrow basins, the river sediments from Central Gondwanaland, as evidenced by outcrops of shale and sandstone near Tabbova and Andigama.

The dismemberment of the Gondwana continent into several units including peninsular India, southern Africa and western Australia is believed to have taken place towards the close of the Mesozoic era. But Ceylon still continued to be a part of the Deccan, and many more millions of years had to elapse before it became a separate geographical entity in the Miocene Period of the Tertiary Era. During the Miocene Period, a belt of sea much wider than the Palk Strait of today flooded the land between Madras State and the Puttalam-Jaffna coast, thus creating the Island of Ceylon. At the bed of this sea, shells and other remains of marine organisms accumulated. Subsequently, fringes of this sea were brought up above sea-level on both sides, and so we find beds of Miocene limestone

^{3.} Geological Time is generally divided into five Eras, viz: Archaean, Paleozoic (or Primary), Mesozoic (or Secondary), Cainozoic (or Tertiary) and Quaternary. Each of the above is subdivided into periods, e.g. Jurassic Period of the Mesozoic Era and Miocene Period of the Cainozoic Era.

outcropping along the north-west coast of Ceylon and the Jaffna peninsula on the one side and in the Karikal region on the other.

Another fact which points to Ceylon and peninsular India having formed one geographical unit until times which, geologically speaking, are recent, is that they both stand on the same platform or shelf.⁴ This continental shelf has an average width of about twelve miles around the Island, where the mean depth of water is only about 36 fathoms, and beyond which there is a drop abruptly to 500 fathoms in two miles and 1000 fathoms in about ten miles, plunging eventually to a steep descent of 3000 fathoms and over. In the Palk Strait, the sea is barely fifteen fathoms deep.

An event of great importance in the geological history of Ceylon, which has had immense bearing on the scenery as well as the climate of the Island, is the final upwarp of the central massif. This took place in pest-Jurassic

times.

The primitive ground-complex of the Island has been subject to a continuous process of sub-aerial decay and crosion through atmospheric agencies. It has been estimated that, by this means, ever 10,000 feet depth of the original surface of the country has been removed. This disintegration, as D. N. Wadia says, 'has liberated in a concentrated form economically valuable minerals, and compounds which were before locked up in an extremely disseminated state in a vast bulk of barren rock.'5

The Lithology of Ceylon

Nearly nine-tenths of the Island is composed of crystalline (igneous and metamorphic) rocks of Archaen or pre-Cambrian Age. The igneous rocks were formed at great depth through the solidification of molten rock material (magma) beneath the outer shell or crust of the earth. The metamorphic rocks were formed as a result of changes which igneous and sedimentary rocks underwent through the action of heat, pressure, megmatic intrusions, etc. They consist of a complicated series of gneisses and schists, leptynites and granulites, type khondalites, quartzites and quartz-schists, belts of crystalline limestone, dolomite and calc-granulites, contact metamorphics, etc. These strata are penetrated by bodies of plutonic intrusions which denudation has exposed on the surface in wide tracts, as hills and ridges—the products of differential crosion. The chief among these are:—

1. Charnockite (a hypersthene granite) named after Bob Charnock.

5. Spolia Zeylanica, Vol. XXIII, pt. 1, p. 7.

^{4.} About two thirds of the earth's surface consists of deep ocean basins. Above these depths rise, more or less abruptly, by means of the steep continental slopes, the continental platforms or shelves. From their edges, these shelves slope gently upwards to the actual coastline, and then ascend into the various elevations of the land.

2. Tōṇigala granite (a hornblende granite) named after the rock on which the famous Tōṇigala inscriptions are found.

3. Balangoda granite (a zircon granite).

In addition, these rock systems are cut through, in several areas, by veins of pegmatite and quartz, the final and acid phases of igneous activity. There are also a few basic dyke occurrences here and there. And, commonly enough, the whole mass has been crumpled, twisted and fractured in response to enormous strains and stresses, and by the shifting weight of detrital material which has depressed portions of the crust into the deeper thermal zones, causing metamorphism by re-crystallisation, replacement and infusion.

At Tabbova and Andigama in the North-Western Province, there outcrop the two small patches of sandstones and shales of Gondwana (Jurassic) age. These occurrences are in the form of restricted faulted zones.

In the Jaffna peninsula, the adjoining islands and the north-west coastal strip from Kalpiti to Mullaitīvu, the Archaeans lie buried under a layer of sedimentary limestone of Miocene and later age, the exact thickness of which remains yet to be investigated. The surface of this limestone region is generally flat and not much above sea-level, though south of Kudiramalai they form a sea-cliff about fifty feet high. In the Jaffna peninsula, the limestone forms an extensive tract of almost horizontal stratarising to about fifty feet above sea-level in the sea-cliffs of Kīrimalai on the north coast. This limestone is fossiliferous and it is highly jointed. In view of this feature and its solubility, it has become an excellent aquifer. At Minihāgalkanda, about forty miles to the east of Hambantota, lies another narrow belt of Miocene sediments exposed on the sea-front as a cliff.

Between the Miocene and the Archaean terrain is a continuous belt of about six to ten miles width of quartz gravel mixed with red earth. Though occurring as a uniform cover, it is best seen as a capping over the less conspicuous minor undulations of the plain. It is believed to have been deposited as a result of a post-Pliocene shallow marine transgression.

There is no marked division of Ceylon lithology into 'solid' and 'drift.' Although the underlying rocks do not outcrop everywhere, most of the surface cover is of 'in situ' residual material of varying thickness, from a few feet to forty or more. It is only in the narrow valleys and deni that one comes across transported material in any quantity. In the low plains, most of the surface cover through which the isolated buried hills peep, is alluvial drift, though here too, extensive areas of residual cover are not wanting, particularly in the wet south-west.

The local residual cover here is mostly composed of laterite material. Igneous and metamorphic rocks, under humid tropical conditions, normally

weather into laterite. Thus the surface geology is characterised by lateritic formations in the humid areas of Ceylon; they are lateritic in texture, though they are not true laterites in composition, which are rich in the hydrated oxides of aluminium.

The most recent formations, geologically speaking, are such deposits as peat, river, lake and marsh alluvium, littoral concrete, coral-sandstone

and beach-sand deposits.

The Structure of Ceylon

Having dealt with the rock composition of the Island, we may now briefly consider its structure. In structure, Ceylon is part of a great synclinorium whose axis runs almost N.N.W.—S.S.E., passing a little to the east of Kandy and Nuvara-eli, veering through N-S to N.N.E.—S.S.W. near Trincomalee, and pitching gently towards the North. This synclinorium is closed on the South, and opens funnelwise to the North.

Both in its layout or ground plan and in its profile, the Island exhibits a remarkable harmony, a clear reflection of the symmetry of its internal structure. The smooth easterly bulge of the coastline south of Batticaloa, in conformity with the outwardly convex sweep of the strike of the country rocks and their relief, the equator-ward protruberance of the south-west coast reflecting the festoon-like curve of the pendant Rakvāṇa massif, the extensive but northward tapering lowlands of the northern half of the Island in sympathy with the gentle northward pitch of the synclinorium, and the broadened south, all conform to a symmetrical and harmonious structure, so clearly manifest and discernible on the map and the terrain.

The Archaean rocks of Ceylon suffered folding and plication on vast scales in pre-Cambrian times, specially when they were folded down into a vast synclinorium. They have since, well nigh, lost their elasticity. Subsequent release of pent-up strains and stresses in the subcrustal depths was to have been achieved only through fracturing and sheering, accom-

panied by faulting or vertical movements of crustal blocks.

That portion of the basement crust of the earth which supports the Island of Ceylon has a varied and complicated history down the ages. It received layers of sediment in Archaean times. These underwent metamorphism, regional and local, and constitute the Khondalite system of rocks of today. Along with the metamorphism, the basement as well as the overlying khondalite sediments were folded into a synclinorium and intruded by granite.

Subsequently, differential block-uplift of the Central Highlands has taken place, making it a veritable 'fault complex.' Late-mature erosion surfaces, escarpments, gorges and river terraces, incised meanders, numerous water-falls, dislocations in river profiles and a large variety of other facts point to this phenomenon. The youthful nature of the features leads one

to the conclusion that the latest movements have been geologically very recent. Thus the latest chapter in the geological history of the Island may be described as one of block dislocations, splintering, tearing and tilting of blocks6.

The Relief of the Island

From the point of view of relief, the Island may be divided into five major regions:—

1. The Central Highlands, including the Rakvana massif and the

Knuckles.

2. The well-watered southwest country, having a characteristic topography of scarplands; cuestas, hogsbacks, strike ridges with gentle dip slopes and steeper scarp edges, alternating with longitudinal valleys and showing a well developed trellis drainage pattern.

3. The drier, east and south east country of residual hills, monadnocks, buttes and monolithic outcrop domes, with a morphology of the

inselberg type.

4. The northern lowland and slope with residual ridges and hills, diminishing gradually in height and width with distance from the Central Highlands, eventually to be buried under the mantle of recent alluvium and gravels.

5. The coastal belt of lowland, including the fringe of lagoons, spits,

and dunes.

The lagoons were formed by portions of the sea being cut off by the formation of sand bars and spits. These in turn were built up, for the most part, from detrital material brought down by the rivers, but later worked and deposited by some long-shore drift. In due course, the lagoons tend

to fill up, become salt-water swamps and eventually dry land.

A salient feature of practical importance because of its bearing on soil conservation, agricultural land use, forestry, siting of settlements and occupance by man, is the existence of a series of FLATS at varying elevations, within especially the higher parts of the Island. If we examine the Central Highlands by way of illustration, we find that it consists of a fairly compact unit of diversified landscape. It may be classified into the following groups of morphological units:—

1. Late mature erosion surfaces or Flats.

2. Recently formed escarpments, and

3. Hardy old residuals, monadnocks, buttes, etc.

Of these the late mature erosion surfaces include the following :-

1. Horton Plains, mean altitude about 7000 ft.

2. Moon, Elk, Kandapola, Ambavela and related plains about 6200 ft.

^{6.} Kularatnam, K. 'Late Mature Erosion Surfaces in Ceylon and their Tectonic Relations' in Proceedings of the International Geographical Congress, Washington, D. C., 1952, pp. 344-349.

3. The Rāgala ledge, about 4900 ft.

4. The Hatton and Madulsima platform, about 4500-4200 ft.

5. The Välimada Basin, about 4200 ft.

6. The Southern Platform, Kandy Plateau, and the Badulla Basin, about 2000-1600 ft.

7. The Mahavalatänna—Tañjantänna step, about 1500—1200 ft., etc. From the nature of the evidence available, these can be considered as due to block-faulting.

It is known that the Tabbova surface of Jurassic age, which was subjected to faulting, has already been planed down. In the Central Highlands, however, the scarps have scarcely been touched by erosion in most cases. Therefore, the movements which created these blocks are post-Jurassic and geologically speaking probably quite recent. The present topography thus appears to be the work of erosion sculpturing on a dominant synclinorial structure which had already undergone planation, through long ages of exposure to weathering and erosion, and then been upwarped into a dome. In the course of this upwarp, the surface was disrupted into a multitude of faulted blocks and splinters accompanied by tilting of the surfaces. All this, naturally, resulted in serious modifications of the drainage pattern, so that in plan, the anomalous Mahaväli Ganga seems to flow the wrong way.

A variety of evidences converges along many lines toward the suggestion

of recent tectonic movements in Ceylon.

Influence of Geology upon History

The influence of geology upon history is both direct and indirect. While the direct effects are manifested mainly through the availability of mineral and other resources for man's use, the indirect influences work essentially through the topographical and other environmental conditions to which geology gives rise.

The close geological link with India both from the point of view of proximity and access as well as landscape, has meant that the Island's early human history has been closely bound up with that of the sub-continent. The early settlers came from there, bringing with them their arts, crafts

and culture into their new home.

The natural division of the Island into a number of environmental regions, each offering different sets of conditions for human and economic development, is itself a function of topography and climate. According to the levels of culture and technical knowledge attained by man, these areas began to be progressively occupied. The tectonic factor assumes economic importance in this context. Each of the major features in the build of the Island has thus had its influence on human history.

The ancient settlements and civilisation which evolved in the Dry Zone of Ceylon were based upon the development of tank irrigation. Man took every advantage of the peculiar disposition of rock outcrops here and turned them to use in the essential parts of the tanks, such as bunds, anicuts, sluices, spills, weirs, channels and the like. Several examples could be cited in this connection; suffice it to mention a few: Minnēri, Giant's Tank, Kalāväva, Parākrama-samudra, etc.

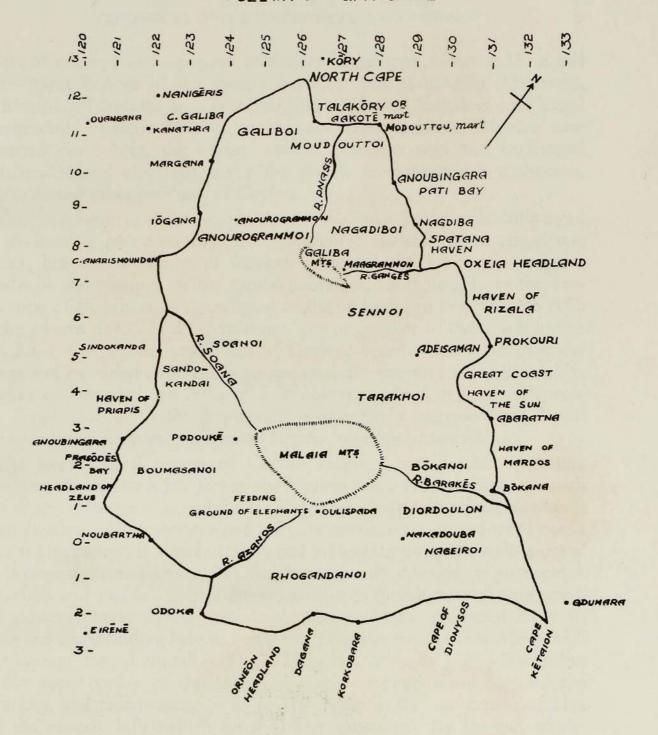
Sīgiri, Yāpavu, Kurunāgala and other rock fortresses of the past bear testimony to how geology served man, even through these residuals of circum-denudation. Defence strategy is an essential factor in the location of capitals during certain periods of history.

Turning now to the direct influences of geology, the Island's history does not present much serious evidence of the service of geology to Man in this regard. Apart from building-stone, clay for bricks, tiles and pottery, and some iron ore which have been widely used in the past, the principal economic resources of the Island such as graphite, glass-sand, limestone for cement, mica, ilmenite and monazite sands seem to have remained ineffective until the impact of the outer ripples of the industrial revolution in Europe began to be felt. Some of these minerals are only now beginning to prove their value to the economy of Ceylon. Gemstones, of which a great variety occur in the rocks, have, however, stood out prominently from very early days, although, unfortunately, the most valuable of them, viz. diamond and emerald, are not found. In the past, gemstones did constitute an important item of external trade.

B. THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

LANKA (Ceylon) is an island in the Indian Ocean, 25,481 square miles in area, lying between 5° 55' and 9° 51' north latitude, and separated from the southern extremity of the peninsula of India by the Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Strait, the width of the intervening sea at the narrowest point (Adam's Bridge) being about 20 miles. The Island is pear-shaped, 270 miles from north to south and 140 miles from east to west, and its coast-line is indented by numerous lagoons, while off its north-west coast, where the most recent land-bridge with India existed in geological times, are several islets. It possesses in the port of Trincomalee (ancient Gokanna) one of the largest and safest natural harbours in the modern world : and numerous smaller bays, anchorages and roadsteads afforded adequate shelter for the sailing ships of ancient and medieval times. The position of Ceylon in the Indian Ocean places it astride the great sea-routes, past and present, between Europe, India and the Far East (and, in more recent times, the route to Australia as well) : and from about the second century, when the Island first became familiar to Greek and Arab sailors, it has been

PTOLEMY'S TAPROBANE



a port of call and an emporium of the sca-borne trade between West and East. Most famous of the ancient harbours was Mahātittha (Mahavoṭi, Mahavuṭu, Mahapuṭu and Mātōṭṭam in medieval Sinhalese and Tamil inscriptions), modern Māntai, on the mainland opposite Mannār, now a buried city: here, ships from various countries sold and exchanged merchandise and also took away the pearls, precious stones, cinnamon,

elephants and other products of Ceylon.

The proximity to, and the contacts with, India profoundly influenced the civilisation and economy of the ancient Sinhalese whose origin was Indian, but the insularity of Ceylon mitigated the force of disruptive upheavals and changes on the Indian continent, most notably in the preservation of Buddhism as the religion of the Sinhalese from about 246 B.C. to the present day. At different times, one or another of the South Indian kingdoms, the nearest neighbours of Ceylon, became dominant over the others and extended its territory to imperial dimensions: then, inevitably, Ceylon was invaded and ravaged or conquered. And, as time advanced, the Tamil element in the population progressively increased and Tamil influence upon Sinhalese civilisation became more pronounced.

The south-central region of Ceylon forms a considerable mountain mass (terminating at 8,292 feet in the highest peak, Pidurutalāgala), which rises in two successive peneplains above the lower ground which surrounds it on all sides. This extensive and lofty mountain zone, commonly known now as Upcountry, is a cool, healthy and invigorating region, well-watered by perennial streams and rivers which frequently descend in picturesque waterfalls and rapids: it is endowed with a luxuriant natural vegetation and possesses great scenic attractions, the panoramas presented from its passes and commanding heights being exceptionally expansive and beautiful. The average annual rainfall is 80 to 125 inches, rising to 140 to 200 inches in the upper valley of the Mahaväli Ganga, around Ramboda and the Knuckles, and falling away to 65 to 100 inches in the mountains of Uva and the easterly hills, which form a drier sub-zone. By the end of the first century B.C. the lower montane zone in the Mahaväli Ganga valley around Teldeni, Kandy and Gampola, the lesser hills to north-west of Badulla, and the northern and western slopes of the Mātalē hills were populated.7 These early settlers in the mountain valleys at elevations of 1,000 to 2,000 feet have left their inscriptions on rock at the Buddhist monasteries which they founded near their settlements, and the sites of their epigraphs mark their routes from the lowlands into the mountains. Above about 2500 feet the montane zone was largely unpopulated till the

^{7.} The routes into the lower montane valley of the Mahaväli Ganga were (i) from the Kurunägala lowlands up the Ridīgama—Molagoda—Aladeņi pass, and (ii) from the Kāgalla district up the Māvanālla—Aranāyaka—Gampola pass. The region north-west of Badulla was reached along the valley of the Ūma Oya.

tenth century: the later large-scale movement into the hills did not begin till the fall of the Polonnaru kingdom and the virtual abandonment of the northern plain in the thirteenth century. The Kandyan kingdom, the last stronghold of the Sinhalese monarchy, was essentially a mountain kingdom, a refuge of independence from the European enemies below. All around the montane or Upcountry zone is the Lowcountry which is divided into two sharply separated zones, the Lowcountry wet zone and the Lowcountry dry zone, the one very different from the other in climate and vegetation.

The Lowcountry wet zone extends over the western, south-western and southern lowlands (mainly the Chilaw, Colombo, Kalutara, Galle, Mātara, Kāgalla and Ratnapura districts) and receives the rains of both the south-west and the north-east monsoons, the average annual precipitation being 85 to 125 inches, rising to 130 to 200 inches in the Ratnapura and Kalutara districts, parts of the Kagalla and Galle districts, and the lower valley of the Kälani Ganga. Floods are a recurrent problem. The vegetation is dense and very luxuriant, and there is a constant struggle to control the invasion of wild growths into cleared or cultivated lands. The rivers are perennial, broad and deep. There is no need to store water for irrigation because there is no lack of it at any season : occasional droughts occur but they create no great economic problems. The land is flat only near the coast : inland, it rises gradually, though often interrupted by high outcrops, to the foothills of the central mountains. The Chilaw, Colombo and Kāgalla districts were populated in pre-Christian times, as numerous inscriptions in these areas attest.8 But there is no historical or monumental evidence of the presence of a settled population in early times in the southwestern region (from the Kalu Ganga to the Nilvala Ganga) and in the Ratnapura district which lies immediately inland of it: the earliest inscription in this region belongs to the tenth century. It is recorded that in the twelfth century the Pañcayojana district (present Pasdun Kōralē in Kalutara district) was a great, swampy wilderness: Parākramabāhu I drained the swamps and marshes into the rivers and made the land habitable.

The Lowcountry dry zone is historically the most important region in Ceylon because it was the cradle of the Sinhalese civilisation. It embraces the north-western, northern, north-eastern, north-central, eastern and south-eastern parts of Ceylon, and forms about 70 per cent of the total land area. It is called the dry zone because it receives the rains only of the north-east monsoon (October to April), while during the south-west monsoon (May to September) it undergoes a period of drought. The

^{8.} Although some parts of the wet zone were occupied in early times, the dry zone, with its facilities for irrigation and greater extents of flat lands, was a far more suitable region for an agricultural economy in which rice was the principal crop.

annual rainfall averages 50 to 75 inches, decreasing to 35 to 45 inches in two arid sub-zones, the Mannar district in the north-west and the Hambantota district in the south-east. During the annual drought the temperature rises, a strong, drying south-west wind blows throughout the day, the grass turns to stubble and is easily fired, the vegetation droops and the under-growth dies down, the smaller reservoirs (or tanks, as they are generally called) shrink to muddy pools, the streams and watercourses run dry, and the larger rivers (except the Mahaväli Ganga and the Valave Ganga) are reduced to mere trickles of flowing water, or break up into disconnected pools. The main problem in the dry zone, it is apparent, is to provide an adequate supply of water for agricultural and domestic use during the annual drought. The land is by no means uniformly flat : numerous rock outcrops and many ranges of hills, several exceeding 1000 feet in height and a few rising to over 2000 feet (the highest being the Monarāgala massif of 3,646 feet), stand out from it. Full advantage was taken by the ancient Sinhalese of the differences in contour to close gaps between ridges and create large and small reservoirs, and to dam rivers at higher levels and divert their waters along artificial canals : this was one of the greatest skills possessed by the ancient people and they built up a stupendous and intricate irrigation system of inter-related dams, canals and tanks, often mingling the waters of rivers flowing in different directions, to which modern engineers have accorded very high praise. If the northeast monsoon rains fail, as they sometimes do, the dry zone undergoes a prolonged period of severe travail because its economy, which is agriculture, is dependent upon a normal rainfall in the rainy season. beginning of the second century B.C., if not earlier, the entire dry zone was populated, most thickly in the north-central region, and the construction of tanks and other irrigation works had begun. It is not known when malaria, the scourge of the dry zone till so recently as 1940, first afflicted the people. It has been conjectured that malaria came with the neglect and final ruin of the irrigation system following upon the fall of the Polonnaru kingdom early in the thirteenth century: it is true that large extents of the dry zone were abandoned thereafter, and that the re-occupation and re-development of these areas on any extensive scale was impracticable until malaria was eradicated by means of the insecticide D.D.T. during the Second World War. Simultaneously (that is, in the thirteenth century or soon afterwards), the large Tamil element which then formed part of the permanent population of Ceylon became predominant in the Northern and Eastern provinces: and by dint of toil and thrift they have maintained that position to this day in the less malarial coastal belts of these two provinces and particularly in the Jaffna peninsula. In the interior dry zone, the successors of the original Sinhalese population, wracked by

^{4.} S. P. C. 93556

fever and an ulcerating disease called *parangi*, survived in abject poverty and continual ill-health in jungle villages and hamlets. Throughout the north-central region the great majority of the ancient place-names has been lost, and the conclusion has been drawn that the present population is not descended from the original Sinhalese inhabitants. In the Tamil areas of the north and east, many place-names have assumed Tamil forms in which the original Sinhalese element is recognisable.

Rohaṇa-desa or Rohaṇa-maṇḍala (S. Ruhuṇu-danaviya) and Malayadesa or Malaya-maṇḍala (S. Malamaṇḍulu) were two territorial divisions which are mentioned from the earliest times. Rohaṇa comprised all the area to the east of the Mahaväli Ganga, together with lower Uva and the Hambantoṭa, Mātara and Galle districts, and its capital was at Mahāgāma (present Tissamahārāma), while Malaya extended over the entire mountain region and its foothills. Rājaraṭṭha, although not specifically mentioned in the chronicles till the ninth century, was the first of the three principalities, the original but circumscribed realm of the early kings who reigned at Anurādhapura until Duṭṭhagāmaṇī Abhaya in B.C. 161 united the whole Island into one kingdom.

Rājaraṭṭha was divided into four divisions named after the cardinal directions, and the most important of these divisions became Dakkhiṇadesa or Dakkhiṇapassa (Dakuṇpasa in inscriptions): from the end of the sixth century it was assigned to the *uparāja* and this continued to be the established practice till the twelfth century. Towards the end of the twelfth century a change in nomenclature took place. Rājaraṭṭha was changed to Patiṭṭhāraṭṭha (S. Pihiṭiraṭa, in inscriptions Pihiṭirajaya or Piṭirajaya), and Dakkhiṇadesa and Malaya were amalgamated to form Māyā-raṭṭha (Māyā-rajaya), so called because it was the appanage of the *māyā* (equivalent to *mahayā* or *mahapā*): together with Rohaṇa, whose name remained unchanged throughout the whole period of history, they formed Tisīhala (Trisimhala-rajaya or Tunrajaya).

Separating Rājaraṭṭha and Rohaṇa was the defensible river barrier of the Mahaväli Gaṅga (Gaṅgā, Mahāgaṅgā or Mahāvāluka Gaṅgā in the Pāli chronicles), the scene of much fighting in the war of liberation waged by Duṭṭhagāmaṇī Abhaya in the second century B.C., and again during the civil war between the forces of Parākramabāhu and Mānābharaṇa in the twelfth century. Supporting the many forts which commanded the fords along the river-line was the key fortress of Vijitanagara, afterwards Pulatthinagara (Polonnaru), the twelfth century capital. Polonnaru had strategic importance: it protected Rājaraṭṭha against rebel forces advancing from Rohaṇa, and it also facilitated both rapid organisation of the defences along the river against a successful invader in possession of the northern plain as well as escape into Rohaṇa. At different times Rohaṇa was ruled

by princes who were independent or semi-independent of the Anuradhapura king. Revolts and uprisings usually originated there: so did the organisation of resistance and of the forces of liberation to fight or expel a South Indian invader. For armies based on Rajarattha, Rohana was a territory difficult to conquer and to hold because of the vulnerability of the long lines of communication which ran through difficult terrain: even during the Cola conquest in the eleventh century no serious attempt was made to occupy and administer Rohana, although punitive expeditions and raids were carried out. Economically, Rohana was a much less prosperous territory than Rajarattha. It has no irrigation works approaching the magnitude of those in Rajarattha, and the remains of its capital, Mahagāma, bear no comparison with those of Anurādhapura or Polennaru. When malaria came, it afflicted Rohana as it did Rajarattha, and depopulation resulted either by exodus into the Lowcountry wet zone and the hills (which were and have continued to be unaffected by the scourge) or by mortality. Tamils and Moors settled on the east coast, and are still there. Where the Sinhalese clung on, inland and in the south, many of the ancient place-names have been preserved.

Malaya, the mountain principality, was ruled from the sixth century to the eleventh century by a junior prince styled the Malayarāja. Later, it lost importance, and in the reigns of Jayabāhu I and Parākramabāhu I in the twelfth century, the administrator was not a member of the royal family. The mountain fastnesses afforded sanctuary to defeated rebels and absconders from justice. In early times the hills of the Dambulu area and of the southern part of Hiriyāla Hatpattu were included in Malaya.

Up to about the seventh century, the terms used for the largest territorial divisions were desa, passa, (S. pasa) and janapada (S. danaviya). The term raṭṭha (S. raṭa) is absent in the Mahāvamsa. The inscriptions of the early centuries A.C. refer to district chieftains styled raṭiya or raṭika (Pliny's rachias): one of them administered a sub-division called a kaṇṇika (kaṇiya in inscriptions). Other sub-divisions were known as rājī (rajiya in inscriptions), bīja (bija or bijaka in inscriptions) and atana. The administrators of the largest territorial divisions were princes or ministers. A prince who governed Rohaṇa bore the title Rohiṇika, while a minister who performed the same functions was called Rohaṇa-bojika. The administrators of Nakadiva (P. Nāgadīpa, the Jaffna peninsula) and Pajinakara (the eastern coast) were ministers (ameti). The village headman was the gamika. Although the title parumaka (P. pamukha), so common in the early inscriptions and usually rendered as 'chieftain,' conferred no terri-

^{9.} He was styled Malaimaṇḍala Nāyakkan (a Vēļaikkāra) or Malayarāyara (CJSG., II, p. 122.)

torial jurisdiction, some of the parumakas were bojikas of certain localities and others, no doubt, held territorial office.

Although the information relating to territorial divisions and administration in the early period is scanty, a larger and more precise volume of evidence is available for the medieval period (eighth to twelfth centuries). 'Provinces' were clearly distinguished from the 'districts': in contemporary inscriptions the provincial administrators are styled pas-ladu and the district chiefs rat-ladu. But there was no uniformity (this is the case even at present) in the designations of the major territorial divisions. The provinces were called passa or desa or padesa or janapada or mandala (S. madulu). Rattha was a district within a province, except in the case of the historic principality of Rajarattha (S. Rajarata, the ancient Anurādhapura kingdom). There were other anomalies: Rohana, Malaya and Rajarattha had within them divisions also known as desa, passa, mandala, janapada and rattha. Mandala, which designated a province in the medieval period, was used occasionally in the early period in a much more restricted sense. An alternative for the district designation rattha was vagga (S. vaga or vaka). The other names of the sub-divisions (kaniya, rajiya etc.) went out of use and were replaced by S. kuliya and bim.

Roads were necessary at all times for the passage of bullock-drawn waggons and carts which were the vehicles in common use in Ceylon from the beginnings of history. Horse-drawn chariots were employed to a limited extent in war, though they probably always formed part of the king's equipage. Elephants were doubtless used to draw open carts carrying specially heavy loads. Defined roads, with suitable gradients and bridges of adequate strength at river crossings, were required by all these types of vehicles for the purposes of traffic and trade, and were in existence in Ceylon always. Remains of ancient roads, some paved, and of ancient stone bridges still exist. Wooden bridges were more common than those of stone, but, as is to be expected, all have perished. The construction of one particular bridge across the Kala Oya at a point northward of Giribā by Parākramabāhu's general, Senāpati Deva, is described as follows: - 'he (the senāpati) at the instruction of the king, threw a long, very fine and very solid bridge across the river of the Kalavapi, passable by files of elephants, horses and chariots, held together with iron bands and nails, made of beams of timber, and 20 cubits (30 feet) broad.' Causeways of stone were also constructed. The Pali chronicles differentiate between main highways or trunk roads (mahāmagga), roads (magga or maggānumagga), streets in towns (vīthi) and footpaths (ekapadikamagga or anjasa). The Sinhalese inscriptions, likewise, distinguish between roads (manga or manga) and streets (veya). Rest-houses (ambalam of modern times) were provided at intervals on the roads so that travellers could

shelter or rest. Nissamkamalla (1187—1196) states in an inscription:— 'in the course of inspecting the three kingdoms (Pihiṭi, Māyā and Ruhuṇa) in various ways, he (the king) fixed the distance of a gavuva and calling it a Niśśańka-gavuva, he caused inscribed milestones to be set up.' Several of these gāvuta or Niśśańka-gavu pillars have been discovered along ancient roads, and Codrington has stated his opinion that the earlier Sinhalese

gavu was about 21 miles.

The chronicles and commentaries refer specifically to a few of the main highways: - (i) from Jambukola (near Kańkesanturai) to Anuradhapura; (ii) from Mahātittha (Māntai) to Anurādhapura: this was an important commercial route as well as the path of the invader advancing from the seaport upon the capital; (iii) from Anuradhapura via the Kacchakatittha ford (Mahagamtota), Mahiyangana, and Buttala, Mahāgāma (Tissamahārāma), joining the capitals of Rājarattha and Rohana10: (iv) from Mahāgāma to Dīghavāpi (near Irakkāmam in the Gal Oya Valley); (v) from Anuradhapura to Uruvela (near the mouth of the Kala Oya); (vi) the East coast highroad, which passed through Chagama (Sākāmam) and (vii) the pilgrim road from Rajarattha to Adam's Peak which was greatly improved in the reign of Vijayabāhu I. There were many other highroads joining centres of population and trade, especially the ports, nakaras (forts or trading-stations) and niyamatanas (market-towns). In the towns, street-lines were laid down: Fa-Hsien (411-413) says that in Anurādhapura 'main streets and side streets were level and well-kept.' The main highway in the capital city was the Mangulmaha-veya, which ran through the north and south gates of the Citadel. The bunds of the larger tanks and of the major canals would have made excellent highways, as they do at this day (e.g. Kalāväva, Nuvaraväva, Kantalāy, Parākramasamudra, Tisāväva at Tissamahārāma, Tisāväva at Anurādhapura, Aļahāra canal, Yodaväva, Ridī-bāňdi-āļa, Angamādilla-āļa, and several others). The bunds of the smaller tanks would have formed the main footpaths, as they still do in the dry zone. The ancient Sinhalese, whose skill in irrigation engineering attained a degree of the highest proficiency, would readily have understood how to make the best use of the contours in road construction and how to safeguard their roads against erosion by the action of water.

It might be added here that the Kalu-gal-bämma which runs across country for many miles in Bintänna Pattu and Vellassa Division and was thought to be a built-up highway, is not the work of man but a natural dyke.

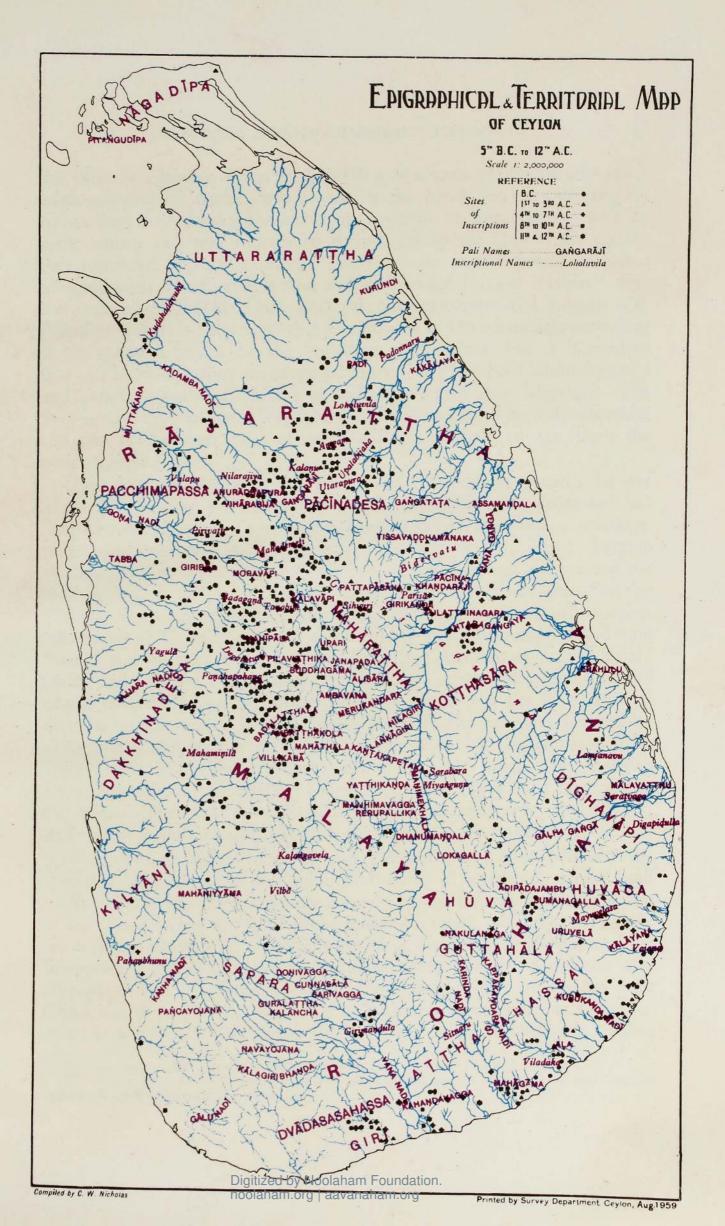
^{10.} From Mihintalē to Mahagamtoţa on this route was 9 yojanas. Other distances specified are (i) 5 yojanas from Anurādhapura to Uruvelā (near the mouth of the Kalā Oya), and (ii) 9 yojanas from Mahāgāma to Dīghavāpi. A yojana is equal to about nine English miles.

The Ceylon chronicles state that, in the time of Gotama Buddha, Ceylon was known as Lankādīpa (its names under the three previous Buddhas being given as Ojadīpa, Varadīpa and Maṇḍadīpa). Then it acquired the additional name Tambapaṇṇi, which originated from the fact that the hands of Vijaya's wearied men were reddened by the copper-coloured sand when they threw themselves down at their landing-place. Because of Vijaya's supposed lion ancestry, he and his followers were called Sīhaļa, and the Island acquired yet another name, Sīhaļadīpa.

In Indian literature,11 the earliest reference to Ceylon is in Kauṭalya's Arthaśāstra in which the Island is mentioned under the name Pārasamudra ('Beyond the Ocean,') the forerunner of Palaesimoundu and Simondou of some of the Greek writers. About this same period, Onesicritus, admiral of Alexander the Great, Megasthenes, Greek ambassador to the court of the Mauryan king, Candragupta, and Eratosthenes, the first of the geographers, gave accounts in their works12 of what they had heard about Ceylon which they call the Island of Taprobane (from Tambapanni). These earliest geographical accounts by Western writers, based upon second-hand information, are, as is to be expected, largely fabulous. The size of Ceylon was greatly exaggerated, and the belief prevailed among the Greeks and Romans till as late as the first century that Ceylon extended westward nearly to the African coast. But there were some accurate observations interspersed in these fabulous accounts, notably, the duration of the sea voyage from the mouth of the Ganges to Ceylon, the shallow seas between South India and Ceylon, and the stormy weather experienced during the south-west monsoon. The inscriptions of the Mauryan Emperor, Asoka, (circa B.C. 268-232), whose contemporary was Devānampiya Tissa of Ceylon, mention Tambapamni, along with the South Indian kingdoms of Cola, Pandya and Kerala, as outside the limits of his dominions.

The great discovery of the use of the monsoon winds to sail from the mouth of the Red Sea direct across the Indian Ocean to India was made by a Greek named Hippalos in the first century B.C., and this knowledge began to be fully utilised by Greco-Roman shipping in the following century: but there was no regular, direct intercourse with Ceylon till the end of the first century, although the products of Ceylon were known and were available to Western merchants in the ports of South India. Pliny (24—79) and the author of the *Periplus* (circa 60) had access to more reliable information about Ceylon than the earlier writers. Pliny relates that in

^{11.} Although a few local sites are associated with incidents in the lives of the characters of the Rāmāyana, the Indian epic occupies an unimportant place in the folk-lore and legends of Ceylon, and an assumption that Lankā of the Rāmāyana is Ceylon is not warranted.



the time of Claudius Caesar (41—54)¹³ a freedman of Annius Plocamus, while coasting off Arabia, was carried by the winds and after drifting for fifteen days made land at the haven of Hippuros in Taprobane, where he went ashore and was hospitably entertained by the king at the capital, Palaesimundus, for six months. The freedman then returned to Rome bringing with him four Sinhalese ambassadors led by one Rachias¹⁴ who were sent by the Sinhalese king to establish direct commercial contacts with Claudius. Pliny purports to describe Taprobane and its inhabitants according to the accounts given by the Sinhalese ambassadors, but it is evident that much of what they are supposed to have said has been misunderstood and misinterpreted through lack of understanding of their language. The *Periplus* says that the name Taprobane had been replaced by Palaesimundu, and that the northern port of the Island was a day's voyage from the coast of India.

The direct trade between the West and Ceylon began towards the end of the first century and developed rapidly thereafter: the far-famed but little-known Island of Taprobane became a reality to Western mariners. Numerous first-hand narratives of the ccuntry and its people became available to Greek and Roman geographers, and this material formed the basis of the altogether exceptional account of the Island compiled by Ptolemy about the middle of the second century. Ptolemy calls Ceylon 'the Island of Taprobane which was formerly called Simoundou and now Salike' and he adds that 'the inhabitants are commonly called Salai.' (Salike and Salai are from Sīhaļa). By the fourth century the Axumites had begun to monopolise the Indian sea-borne trade and the Romans used them as middle-men. Roman commerce with the east was revived by Constantine, and it is recorded that in the year 361 an embassy from Serendivi (Ccylon) was received by the Emperor Julian: the Arabian form, Serendib, of the name of Ceylon had already gained currency in the West. The revival of Roman power was, however, short-lived: trade soon passed permanently into the hands of intermediaries.

From Asoka's time, religious and cultural intercourse between the Buddhist establishments of Ceylon and those of northern, central and southern India had been maintained uninterruptedly, and monks travelled to and fro between Ceylon and the Indian continent. Inscriptions of the second/third century at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa in the Krishṇā valley record the foundation of a monastery named Sīhaļa-vihāra and the dedication of a cetiyaghara to the fraternities of Tambapaṇṇi-dīpa. Contacts with China too were of early origin. The Sinhalese ambassadors to Claudius' court in the first century stated that there was commerce between Ceylon

^{13.} See infra, p. 225 The Roman emperor at the time was more probably Augustus.

14. Raţiya or Raţika, occurring frequently in Sinhalese inscriptions of the first to third centuries and signifying the administrator of a district.

and China. Embassies carrying gifts from the Sinhalese king visited China in the first and second centuries, but these became more frequent after the fourth century. A notable Chinese visitor to Ceylon was the great traveller-monk, Fa-Hsien, who came here in 411 and stayed two years. He wrote an account of his travels and his description of Ceylon, which he calls 'the Land of the Lion,' is of great interest. He reached Ceylon after a voyage of 14 days from Tāmluk, at the mouth of the Ganges. says that the Island was 50 yojanas from east to west and 30 yojanas from north to south, that round it were nearly 100 small islands, all subject to the main Island, that there were no differences of summer and winter, that the vegetation was luxuriant and that cultivation was not confined to seasons. Fa-Hsien sailed for China from Ceylon, travelling in a large merchantvessel on which there were over 200 souls. Four embassies from Ceylon reached the Chinese court in the first half of the fifth century. Sinhalese bhikkhunis arrived at Nankin in 426 and three more in 429, and, for the first time in China, an ordination of wemen was held in 434. In 456, five Sinhalese monks, one of whom was a celebrated and peerless sculptor, visited the Chinese Emperor. Palladius, a Roman, writing in the fifth century, refers to the people of Taprobane as the Makrobioi ('the long-lived') and to their king as a very powerful monarch: he relates also some fabulcus travellers' tales, one of which is that an island in the Maniolai group, in the neighbourhood of Taprobane, possessed the magnet stone which attracted to it vessels bolted with iron nails.

By the second quarter of the sixth century, Ceylon had become the entrepot of sea trade between the West and the Far East. Chinese and other Fareastern ships sailed into its harbours carrying their cargoes of silks, while from the West came the vessels and the merchandise of the Persians and the Axumites. In the ports of Ceylon these mariners from distant lands as well as the merchants of India exchanged their goods and also purchased the products of Ceylon. The 'Christian Topography' of Cosmas Indicopleustes is a work of this period and contains a somewhat lengthy account of the Island of Taprobane. Cosmas says that the Pagans called it Taprobane and the Indians Sielediba (Sīhaļadīpa), and that because of its central position it had become a great emporium, receiving wares from all the trading marts and again distributing them all over the world: it was a great resort of ships from all parts of India, from Persia and Ethiopia, and from China. About the middle of the seventh century the Arabians had secured domination over the ocean routes to the west and all that trade was in their hands. The Chinese retained control of the seaborne traffic to the Far East. The Sinhalese and Chinese exchanged embassies in the seventh and eigth centuries. A Chinese text recounts the visit to Ceylon of a princely and learned Indian monk named Vajrabodhi in the years 718

and 719: from Anurādhapura he travelled into Rohaņa and thence to Adam's Peak, then a wild region. In the ninth century piracy on the seas was widespread in the Indian ocean, including the coasts of Ceylon. The Cola Empire of South India, which rose to power towards the end of the tenth century, possessed a powerful navy which facilitated its conquests of Ceylon and the Maldives, and the extension of its influence to Malaya and Java. In succession to the Colas, the Pandyas established a realm of imperial extent, and then the Arab power became predominant. Arab shipping and merchants were established in Ceylon at the port of Colombo as early as 949, and long before the arrival of the Portuguese in 1505 they were in full control of the Ceylon coasts. The Sinhalese kingdom based on Polonnaru collapsed in the thirteenth century, and Marco Polo (circa 1293) and Ibn Battūta (1344) were two well known travellers who visited Ceylon subsequent to that event. To the Arabs, Ceylon was Serendib, to the later Europeans Seylon, Zeilan and other variants, and finally Ceylon. The Arabian geographer, Idrīsī, compiled a map of Ceylon which was more inaccurate than Ptolemy's: Fra Mauro (1459) scarcely improved upon it. Even after the Portuguese established themselves in Ceylon, their cartography, though ornate, continued to be inaccurate. Their successors, the Dutch, produced the first reliable maps of the general configuration of the country. For this, the most recent period in Ceylon history, many books and reports, Portuguese, Dutch and British, are available, the most outstanding, reliable and readable account of the seventeenth century Kandyan kingdom, its people and their customs being Robert Knox's work, 'An Historical Relation of Ceylon.'

Reference has already been made to the great port of Mahātittha (modern Māntai). The other important ports, except Gokaṇṇa (Trincomalee), were also on the northern and north-western coasts, namely, Sūkaratittha or Hūrātoṭa (Kayts), Tambapaṇṇi (at the mouth of the Aruvi Āru), Magaṇa (Ptolemy's Margana, at the mouth of the Mōdaragam Āru), and Uruvelā (at the mouth of the Kalā Oya). All were intimately associated with the pearl and chank fisheries. This coast was also the most vulnerable part of the Sinhalese kingdom, because it faced the Coromandel coast of South India from which the Colas and Pāṇḍyas launched their invasions of Ceylon. There were many small harbours and havens on the east and south coasts which were probably used from early times. But it was not until about the tenth century that the ports of Galle on the south-west coast and Colombo on the west coast achieved prominence.

CHAPTER II

FLORA AND FAUNA

A. THE FLORA

While the vegetation of a country is determined by geographical factors such as climate and soil, the vegetation in turn plays a not inconsequential role in the shaping of history. Human settlements have sprung up in areas where plants required for man's sustenance could easily be cultivated. The earliest interest in plants has been for food, clothing and shelter. Later, by a process of trial and error, medicinal properties of several species were discovered. The ancient physicians of the Island attempted to give detailed descriptions of all medicinal herbs found in the island. They appear in writings called *Nighantus*.

Development of aesthetic sense in man has been greatly facilitated by the beauty and fragrance of flowering trees and shrubs around him!. The mystery of plant life has been one of the factors responsible for the awakening of religious consciousness in the human mind. The philosopher has found ideal conditions for deep meditation in the serenity and solitude of the forest, while the poet has revelled in the beauty of the park. It behoves the student of the Island's past, therefore, to consider how the stage has been set by Nature in this respect for those who played their parts throughout the centuries in the history that would be unfolded in the subsequent chapters.

Very little is known about plants' that grew here in early geological times. The geological and geographical factors which have given rise to the flora of the island, as found today, have been discussed in Chapter I. Ceylon has a rich flora comprising about 2850 indigenous species distributed in 171 families. Besides these there are over 200 naturalised aliens. The principal types of the Island's vegetation are briefly enumerated below:—

1. The evergreen rain forest of the low country is a dense multi-storeyed community. Some of the dominants pierce the top canopy reaching to a height of well over 100 feet. The bases of the trees are characteristically buttressed. Dipterocarpus zeylanicus and species of Doona and Mesua are some of the dominants here.

The competition for light is so severe that some species reach the light by growing on the branches of big trees, e.g. the epiphytic ferns, orchids

^{1.} See CHJ. IV., pp. 28-29 for trees that were planted in gardens in ancient Ceylon.

and bryophytes. The rain forest is the natural home of epiphytes and it is thought that they originated in this region. Species of Loranthus (S. pilila), Viscum (S. pilila), and Ficus (S. $b\bar{o}$, banyan) are also seen on trees but they are semi-parasites.

Still others grow to great heights as climbers and twiners. The *lianas* or woody climbers are especially interesting life forms in the rain forest. Salacia reticulata (S. kotala-himbuṭu), Entada pursaetha (S. pus-väl) and Anodendron paniculatum (S. dūl) are very good examples. All the *lianas* exhibit anomalous anatomical features.

- 2. The montane or mossy forest is, in some respects, similar to the dry evergreen forest. The trees are not tall and are flat topped. Among the dominants here are species of Syzygium and Michelia (S. sapu). The trunks of the trees are densely covered by liverworts and mosses. Usnea barbata ('old man's beard') is a very characteristic lichen seen hanging from the branches of the trees. In the undergrowth is a very interesting genus, Strobilanthes (S. nelu). There are nearly 30 species of this, and all but a couple are endemic to Ceylon. Growth of the Strobilanthes is gregarious, and one species may cover extensive areas. They flower all at once about every seven or eight years, and they all die down. Another species which exhibits gregarious growth and periodic burst of flowering is Stenosiphonium cordifolium. This too is called nelu in Sinhalese, and replaces Strobilanthes in the drier regions.
- 3. The dry evergreen forest is less complex than the wet evergreen type. The trees are shorter, much branched and with a wider canopy. There are no 'emergent dominants,' and fewer epiphytes and climbers. The principal evergreens are Diospyros ebenum (ebony), Manilkara hexandra (S. palu), and Alseodaphne semecarpifolia (S. vāvarana). The most important deciduous species are Chloroxylon swietenia (satin), Vitex pinnata (S. milla) and Berrya cordifolia (S. hal-milla). The last exhibits a gregarious growth under moist conditions. Hemicyclia sepiaria (S. vīra) is another very common evergreen. It forms a 'filler' species in the dry zone forests, but it does not yield any economically important timber. Till recently, these forests were treated as a climax type, but now it is generally recognised as a secondary seral type due to human interference.

The forests yield important timber, and much felling has been going on. Only a small fraction of the existing forests represent undisturbed primary climax communities. The only probable exception is Simharāja forest and part of the Adam's Peak wilderness.

4. On wet soil along the banks of rivers are some very interesting trees like Terminalia arjuna (S. kumbuk), Mesua thwaitesii (S. diya-nā), Vateria copallifera (S. hal), Dillenia indica (S. hondapora) and Pongamia pinnata (S. magul-karanda). Terminalia arjuna absorbs much calcium from the soil.

Because of this property, it is capable of seftening hard waters, and it was at one time a common practice to plant kumbuk trees near bathing wells. There is so much calcium in the bark of trees in the dry zone that it is sometimes burnt down as a source of lime.

- 5. The Arid Zone. The vegetation here is sparse and thorny scrub. The Baobab tree, Adansonia digitata, found near Mannar, has been introduced to Ceylon by the Arabs.
- 6. Grasslands. There are extensive areas of grassland in Ceylon and of these the most interesting are the patanas. The dry patanas are found between 1500 and 5000 feet, and of these the best known are in Uva. Other examples are found in the Knuckles region and in the Deniyāya—Rakvāṇa area. The sky is for most of the time clear, and there is intense insolation. The soil is poor in humus, and always hard baked. Often next to the patana is evergreen forest, but the latter is restricted to either the tops of the hills or the moist ravines. The grass is periodically burnt so that the new flush will be more palatable to grazing animals. Where there is a heavy growth of Cymbopogon confertiflorus (S. māna), containing essential oil, the fires could be very destructive. It is thought that these grass fires may be responsible for the maintenance or even the extension of the patanas.

The wet patanas are found above 5000 feet. They are found in the Horton Plains, Elk Plains, Moon Plains and towards Bogavantalāva. The soil is black and moist due to the high content of organic matter. A characteristic tree here is Rhododendron arboreum (S. maharatmal), with a gnarled habit and beautiful large red flowers.

The nature and origin of the patana is a long debated question. According to some it is a climax type; according to others it is a subsere brought about by human interference. There is no doubt that evergreen forest is possible on these, and reforestation has been successfully carried out with the Australian Eucalyptus.

The damanas are a savannah type of grassland below 2000 ft. level, as seen stretching eastwards from the Uva patanas towards Bibile. Among the tall grass in this region is seen the only gymnosperm indigenous to Ceylon—Cycas circinalis (S. madu).

Talāva is a type of grassland in the wet zone. The fernlands with Gleichenia linearis (S. käkilla) appear on similar lateritic soil. In the latter is found a deep layer of humus and unchanged litter.

- 7. The salt marsh communities of Suaeda, Salicornia and Atriplex are found in low lying coastal areas periodically flooded with sea water. The characteristic succulence of the plants is due to the high concentration of salt in the soil.
- 8. The mangrove communities of Rhizophora, Bruguiera (S. kadol), Sonneratia acida (S. kirala) and Acanthus ilicifolius (S. ikili) are found near

the river estuaries. They exhibit stilt-roots, pneumatophores and viviparous seedlings. Some distance behind the mangrove, especially in the Galle district, are the palm Nipa fruticans (S. gin-pol) and the fern Acrostichum aureum (S. kärän-koku).

9. Along the coast is an open community of *Ipomoea pes - caprae* (S. mūdu-bin-tamburu) and *Spinifex squarrosus* (S. rāvaṇa - rävul). The latter helps to collect blown sand and build up small hillocks (embryo dunes). It is, therefore, responsible for the building up of dunes (e.g. at Hambantoṭa). A little distance behind the strand are the familiar species of the littoral woodland, *Pandanus odoratissimus* (screw pine) with stilt roots, *Thespesia populnea* (S. sūriya) and *Scaevola koenigii* (S. takkaḍa).

10. The bulk of the coastal plain is covered by the palms, coconut especially to the west and south, and palmyrah to the north of the island.

11. The aquatics are plants growing in free water. Probably the best known are Nelumbium nuciferum (S. nelum) and Nymphaea nouchali (S. ōlu). They are rooted in the mud, but their leaves come above water. Hydrilla ovalifolia and Aponogeton crispum (S. kekaṭiya) are rooted and submerged. Pistia, Eichhornia and Salvinia are floating forms which multiply very

rapidly vegetatively and are pernicious weeds.

Extensive areas of natural forest land have been cleared for cultivation. In the absence of forest cover, the heavy rains bring about rapid erosion and impoverishment of the soil. Some protection is afforded the soil by the planting of cover crops like tropical Kudzu (Pueraria thunbergiana). Even greater harm has been done by shifting cultivation (chenas). In the abandoned areas, secondary successions are represented by Osbeckia aspera and Hedyotis fruticosa (S. bōviṭiya - väraniya) communities. Sometimes Ochlandra stridula (S. baṭa) and Gleichenia linearis (S. käkilla) may be associated with them.

The national income of Ceylon is derived from plant products, mainly tea, rubber and coconuts. Tea is grown in the wetter parts of the Island both in the hills and the lowlands, rubber in the low country wet zone and coconuts in the coastal plains.

Paddy is cultivated over large areas throughout the Island. In addition to these, several minor crops are under cultivation, namely, cocoa, arecanut, cinnamon, citronella, cardamoms, nutmeg, cloves, tobacco, kapok, pine-

apple and sugar cane.

The first serious study of the local plants was carried out by Dr. Paul Hermann, who was in the Island from 1672—1679 as physician to the Dutch East India Company and who is generally regarded as the Father of Ceylon Botany. An event of utmost importance to us was the publication of Flora Zeylanica, by Linnaeus in 1747. This was based on Hermann's collection, and the plants were arranged according to the new

system proposed by Linnaeus. This work probably contributed in no small measure to the opening of the Royal Botanic Gardens in Ceylon by the British Government. This institution has had the good fortune to have as Directors several outstanding scientists at various times. Gardner (1844) was followed by Thwaites (1849). Thwaites made extensive collections of local plants. He studied not only the flowering plants but also the lower forms. He was followed by Trimen, who is well known for 'The Handbook to the Flora of Ceylon' which still remains the only complete compendium of local flowering plants. Willis assumed duties in 1896. He made a study of the Podostemaceae and also the endemic flora of Ceylon. As a result of his studies he propounded the theory of 'Age and Area.' He is also responsible for the founding of the scientific journal 'The Annals of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Peradeniya'.

B. THE FAUNA

For its comparatively small size, Ceylon possesses a rich and varied fauna in keeping with the richness and variety of its flora. For many ages, though probably not uniterruptedly, Ceylon was part of the land-mass of the sub-continent of India, and the last land-bridge (now represented by Mannar Island, the Pearl Banks and the sandbanks and shoals known as Adam's Bridge) between the Island and the mainland probably ceased to exist in comparatively recent times.2 The tiger, moving southward down peninsular India, supplanted the Indian lion in the Vedic age, for the Rgveda mentions the lion but not the tiger: but, though the tiger reached South India it could not enter Ceylon as the land connection no longer existed. Generally, the fauna of Ceylon is closely akin to that of South India; but in the montane zone and, to a lesser extent, in the lowcountry wet zone, there are several distinctive forms, probably a relic fauna, which are peculiar to those regions. This endemic characteristic, confined mainly to the hills, includes all the members of the faunal realm, mammals, reptiles, birds and the invertebrates.

Among the mammals, the elephant of Ceylon takes pride of place. Its capture and domestication in the service of man are mentioned from the fifth century B.C. It is smaller in size than the Indian elephant, although the early Greek writers thought otherwise, but from early times it was highly esteemed in other lands for its greater tractability, reliability and intelligence, and it was always an important export product, particularly in the Portuguese and Dutch periods. In Ceylon, tame elephants were employed as war elephants and as working animals, principally in the haulage of timber and stone, and it was with their aid that the buildings

^{2.} See supra, p. 8

of the ancient civilisation, now in ruins, were constructed. All tame elephants took part in ceremonial processions. The present status of the wild elephant is precarious: in annually dwindling numbers, it inhabits the wilder parts of the dry zone, but formerly (up to 100 years ago) it was as common in the hills and the wet zone as in the dry zone. Large herds are now rare and its migratory habits are becoming increasingly restricted by the felling of forests for land development. In the Ceylon race of the Asiatic elephant, tuskers are comparatively few, certainly less than one in ten of male elephants. Elephants are wholly vegetarian in their food: adequate and clean water-supplies are very necessary for their well-being. Their vision is poor and their sense of hearing is not highly acute, but their power of scent is strongly developed. They are good swimmers. Occasionally, lone bull elephants turn dangerous and have to be destroyed. Elephants are persistent and formidable crop-raiders and they suffer many casualties while engaged in, or attempting, these depredations.

Next in size to the elephant is the wild buffalo, a formidable animal which goes about in herds of 10 to 50 in the park country of the dry zone. An essential requirement in the buffalo's habitat is water: it must at all seasons have water or watery mud to lie or wallow in, and in severe droughts, many animals perish. Like elephants, wild buffaloes are captured and domesticated: they are used mainly for agricultural purposes. The buffalo's eyesight, hearing and sense of smell are all well-developed. Its food is vegetarian. Lone, bull buffaloes, each bull keeping to its own territor, are often met with and some of them are liable to be dangerous. Allied to the buffalo is the bison or gaur (S. gavara), the only indigenous

animal of Ceylon which is now extinct.

Of the members of the deer family, the sambhur is the largest. It is a noble animal, ferest-leving, shy and retiring, and not inclined to be gregarious except in favoured localities. Like the buffale, but to a lesser degree, it needs water or damp places to lie in. Its habitat extends from sea-level to the highest elevations. The commonest deer is the spotted deer, an elegant species, confined to the dry zone, highly gregarious, and, where it is protected, occurring in companies, consisting of several herds mingling on common grazing grounds, of 100 to 500 individuals. It is a timid animal, easily stampeded, and is the favourite prey of the leepard. The barking deer or 'red' deer is a small animal found at all elevations, alone or in pairs, and is extremely timid and shy. The hog or marsh deer, an introduced species, is now nearly if not altogether extinct.

The wild pig is fairly abundant in the jungles at all elevations and normally occurs in sounders of 10 to 30 animals, but large, lone boars are not uncommon. In addition to roots and yams, it eats carrion and is destructive

to crops.

The leopard is the largest of the carnivorous animals. It is not uncommon, but it is not often seen because it is largely nocturnal and its mode of life is to make itself inconspicuous to facilitate the hunting of its prey. It is a handsome animal, over seven feet from bead to tail, possessing extremely keen sight and hearing, great strength and agility. The leopard is found in the mountains as well as in the lowlands. It often kills cattle, but man-eating leopards have been very rare in Ceylon. The sloth bear, an animal of the remoter rocky hills and forests of the dry zone, with powerful teeth, long, naked claws and an uncertain temperament, is rightly regarded by the jungle villagers as the most dangerous denizen of the forest. It is more liable than any other animal to turn aggressive, particularly when accompained by cubs. It avoids the proximity of human settlements. Bears are agile in climbing trees and are fond of bees' honey, termites and certain kinds of fruit, but they also eat carrion.

The smaller mammals include the chevrotain or mouse deer, jackal, monkeys, hare, porcupine, mongoose, otter, giant squirrels, squirrels, pangolin, wild cats, loris, shrews and rats, too numerous to be specified individually.

Reptiles, from crocodiles to snakes and lizards, occur in large numbers and great variety. The largest and most dangerous crocodiles are those of the wet zone rivers (from the Bentota Ganga to the Valave Ganga). Tank crocodiles, though found in far greater number, are smaller and very rarely dangerous to man. The largest snake is the python which sometimes measures over fifteen feet: its prey is the spotted deer and the smaller animals. The cobra, Russell's viper and the krait are poisonous land snakes whose bite can be fatal to man. The largest of the many lizards is the water-lizard or kabaragoyā, a larger and more aquatic reptile than the ubiquitous monitor-lizard or talagoyā.

The largest of the numerous indigenous birds are the handsome peafowl and the pelican and storks. Birds of brilliant plumage or striking appearance include orioles, woodpeckers, rollers, flycatchers, hoopoe, jungle fowl, kingfishers, minivets, trogon, malkohas, pigeons, grackles, hornbills, parakeets, drongoes, jacana, ibis, shama, sunbirds, bee-eaters, stilts, barbets, chloropsis, iora and nuthatch. Ceylon is the southern terminus of the migratory bird routes down the Indian continent and great numbers of migrant birds, notably flamingoes, wild ducks, snipe, plover, curlew, whimbrel, pitta and a host of waders visit the Island during the north-east monsoon, adding greatly to and enriching the indigenous bird populations of the lagoons, lakes and tanks.

Of the invertebrate animals, of which there are an enormous number and variety, the butterflies, moths, beetles, and dragon-flies are of special interest and attraction. Only the fringe of scientific faunal studies has yet been touched: a great field of research remains open to the zoologist, biologist and ecologist.

Ceylon pessesses an unique historical background of Wild Life protection extending into the past for over 2000 years. It was a duty of the Sinhalese kings, who, from the third century B.C. to the eighteenth century, were Buddhist rulers, to give protection to wild beasts, birds and fishes, and the fulfilment of this religious and kingly duty is recorded in the chronicles and inscriptions. In the twelfth century the 'great tanks' and a wide region surrounding Anurādhapura were added to the areas of sanctuary. Elsewhere, hunting was permitted and practised, but the protection given to Wild Life was real and effective, and enabled the fauna to survive in great abundance until the advent of the Europeans.

CHAPTER III

PEOPLES AND LANGUAGES

A. PEOPLES.1

THE known elements of the population of Ceylon² that obtain now should provide essential information in determining the constitutents of the admixture which existed in ancient days. In such an analysis, one has to be guided to a large extent by the study of physical features and measurable data according to a systematic examination of ethnic values. Such Islandwide surveys have not yet been undertaken, nor have we been so fortunate as to have the results published of the only systematic survey launched in 1937,³ according to which the following classification had been practically established:—

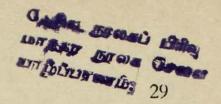
- 1. Väddā (a) open-eyed; (b) Gond.
- 2. Pre-Dravidian.
- 3. Sinhalese dolico-cephalic (long headed), so called 'Vanni type.'
- 4. Sinhalese brachy-cephalic (round-headed).
- 5. Armenoid.
- 6. Melanid (dark-skinned).
- 7. Mediterranean.
- 8. Negroid.
- 9. Mongoloid.
- 10. European.

How these racial elements entered into Ceylon's population is a question that needs an answer at the hands of the pre-historian and proto-historian. The living primitive races of South-East Asia supply corroborative evidence in establishing certain trends, both physical, cultural and material.⁴ The story of man in prehistoric times will be related in the chapter dealing with the prehistoric age.⁵ Human remains belonging to that age have

Census of Ceylon, 1946, Chap. VII.
 Ethnological Survey of Ceylon—Marret and Wijesekera. Complete materials are at the Colombo Museum and at Harvard University.

^{1.} The help generously given by Professor J. H. Hutton in writing this chapter is most gratefully acknowledged.

Census of India, 1931.
 See infra, pp. 74-81.



PEOPLES AND LANGUAGES

not turned up so far during any scientific excavation6. But the discoveries made in India7 help considerably in gaining some knowledge of Ceylon.

The early Sinhalese, of a later period, may have intermingled with the aboriginals. Periodic infiltrations of South Indian and North Indian racial elements cannot altogether be eliminated from such a composition. These immigrants who came at different times from North India and settled down here and merged with the aborigines introduced Indo-Aryan dialects to this country. The aboriginal inhabitants had their ewn linguistic traits different from the Aryans, some of which might have belonged to the Munda or Austric groups.

The reference to tribes in the Mahāvamsa indicates the prevalence of a society organized under totemistic clans. Some of these clan names mean lion, hyena, hare or goat, crow, peacock and fork-tailed shrike. Could they be the names of totems or emblems of beasts and birds which were worshipped? But the Rgveda mentions no such clans, although the Mahābhārata relates incidents about groups of peoples bearing such names. It is possible that these tribes of Ceylon are representatives of

racial stocks living prior to the Dravidians in India.8

The Väddas also have preserved a class organization of an exogamous nature with female descent and totems which include the wild boar and peacock. The Väddā clans (varuge) are Morāne, Unapāni, Nānadēva or Nabudan, Ämbala, Urutala and a number of other varuges of minor

strength.9

The conservative elements of the aboriginal population may have resisted admixture with the immigrants as a natural and inevitable reaction. But, with the newcomers from across the continent, the local population10 would have had very little chance of competition and survival. Such local groups may have been forced to evacuate the fertile habitations in the face of advancing bands of newcomers. The thick jungles and the inhospitable areas became their final resting place. Further internal migrations resulted from climatic fluctuations and desiccation of the lands. Out of many such bands, there still survive one tribe, namely, the modern Väddās11 who, though less than 1,000 in number, occupy the eastern lowlands, having reached the furthest outpost of their migratory move-

The Väddas can still provide evidence of the highest value about the prehistoric people of Ceylon. A close physical observation, when con-

^{6.} The finds at Balangoda may be examined in this connection. P.E.P. Deraniyagala in JCB-RAS, New Series, Vol. V, p. 1 et seq.
V. D. Krishnaswamy in Ancient India, No. 9, 1953, pp. 53 et. seq.
G. C. Mendis, The Early History of Ceylon, 4th Edition, page 7.
C. G. Seligman, The Veddas, 1911, p. 30.
For the local groups, see G. C. Mendis, Early History of Ceylon, 4th Ed., p. 7.
The Mahāvamsa refers to them as Pulindas, chap. vii, v. 68.

sidered in conjunction with the bodily measurements of the present day Väddās, supports the theory of their composite character. The racial constituents of the admixture are attributed to Negrito, Australoid and Mediterranean ethnic elements, so that the Väddās cannot claim to be strictly aboriginal, nor are they the original inhabitants of their present habitat. Compare the modern Väddās with the jungle tribes of the southern part of India, viz., Malavedans, Irulas and Sholagas.¹² A remarkable similarity still prevails. What can be the answer? Migrations of such primitive tribes from India must be the most likely answer. They may have come here in waves, each succeeding band driving the preceding one into the inhospitable interior until later the early ancestors of the modern Väddās met in the Highlands.

The Yakkhas and Nāgas of the Sinhalese tradition, if they were the inhabitants of the Island at the time of Vijaya's arrival, as is supposed by many, can be tentatively equated with the Australoid and the Mediterranean elements, respectively. If there was also a Negrito element, which is uncertain, it was possibly to be found in the lost tribe of legendary people called the Niṭṭāvo.¹³ These elements may have been mixed even at the time of Vijaya's arrival, and the components of the admixture, even at this time, may have become legendary owing to antiquity.

Another suspected source of racial infiltration into the Island may be mentioned here. The most likely origin of this element is the group of Indonesian Islands. Little physical, but more cultural, evidence is available.

The physical elements are :-

- (a) A faint trace of Mongoloid features in the modern Sinhalese population.
- (b) An alveolar prognathism.14

The cultural elements are :-

(a) The presence of the outrigger-canoe and coconut.15

(b) Masks.

(c) Mode of wearing the lower garment in the South.

(d) Crocodile cult.

There is a definite element in the population of the Malabar coast of India, particularly strong in the Tiyya caste, which traces its crigin to Ceylon and which probably reached that Island from further east. It came no

^{12.} Census of India, 1931, Vol. I, pt. 1, p. 444.

13. Taprobanian by Hugh Neville, Vol. I, page 67, mentions such a tribe. The description is that of an ape-like, coarse-featured, short-statured tribe of pygmy man. The legend is still current in the Pānama Pattu of the Batticaloa District in the Eastern Province.

^{14.} An alveolar prognathism marked by a dental protruberance characterises the Sinhalese.

15. These are believed to have been introduced from the Melanesian area. Compare the Polynesian word oru-u with the Sinhalese word oruva, meaning a boat or outrigger. Neville, Taprobanian, Vol. I, p. 69; Ferguson, JCBRAS, XIX, 1906, pp. 42-43; A. A. Perera, in his Sinhalese Folk Lore, p. 18, mentions the Soul Boat, which idea may have been diffused from Indonesia.

doubt from the Indian Archipelago, and it seems most unlikely that such a migration would have left no traces in Ceylon, except such items of material culture as the coconut and the outrigger canoe. It may therefore be taken as highly probable, if not certain, that there are elements in the population of Ceylon of the Pareocan and Nesiot racial strains, though it might be difficult to isolate them at the present time.

The fact that a certain stratum of the population shows definite signs of a Vädda element must not lead to confusion between such a stratum and the Sinhalese peasant type found in the Vanni District, which is diffe-

rently constituted.

The Väddā¹¹³ as a type can be quite easily recognized, although the Väddā himself is a mixed type of more than one racial element. It is a regularly persisting type prevailing chiefly in the Badulla district. One is often impressed by the reticent shy manner of a Väddā. He is a thin small made man of a dark complexion with wide open eyes. He has a small head, narrow and long, thin lips, dark wavy hair, scanty body hair except in the Australoid type that has profuse body hair and beard. The eyes are small, open, dark brown and dark in colour. The nose is broad with wide alae except where the Mediterranean element is traceable in a fine straight nose. The skin colour is dark and tends to be oily.

The pre-Dravidian type, though not so common, does actually appear generally in the Tamil-speaking areas of the Island. It may be the continuation of a very early element in the Island's population, or may very well have been already present in the Tamils when they migrated from southern India. The type itself is vigorous, and is bound to persist, in as much as it is well conditioned to the physical environment. It is a thick-set, rugged type with apparent virility. This type of man has a long and narrow head with defined features. There is no prognathism. He has thick lips and a wide mouth. The hair is very dark and wavy, body hair being scanty. The eye colour is dark brown or dark. He has a large wide nose. The skin colour is invariably dark or black. The stature varies from medium to tall, the body showing a big-boned structure.

The Simhala dolico-cephalic type may be graphically described as the Vanni type. It is the common type of the so-called Vanni and up-country districts. This forms the backbone of the Sinhalese peasantry in the dry zone. This type is weak and emaciated, largely as the result of malnutrition and environment, and is liable to be confused with the Väddā type, although these are distinctly different. This type of man has a long narrow head with a slight alveolar prognathism. He has thin lips with fine teeth, slightly wavy dark hair, moderate body hair, small eyes, dark or dark

^{16.} W. C. O. Hill, CISC., III, pt. 2, Tables XIII and XIV (detail measurements) and Plate.

brown in colour, small narrow nose, skin colour dark brown or black, with short or medium stature.

The following observations may be made regarding the Sinhalese roundheaded type. In general appearance, a man of this type shows a close resemblance to a modern Bengali. His head is long and broad. A natural tendency for alveolar prognathism and dental protrusion is noticeable. He has somewhat thick lips, dark and slightly wavy hair, and profuse body hair. The eyes are medium and dark in colour. The nose is narrow and straight. The skin colour varies from brown to fair. Such a type, although found scattered amongst the Sinhalese speaking parts of the Island, seems restricted on the Indian continent to the West littoral, East Bengal and Mysore. Could this in any way explain the origin of the Sinhalese to any of those areas ? 'The Sinhalese and the Tamils are similar in their measurements to a great extent, but in the following characteristics the two differ significantly, viz., maximum cephalic length, while the Tamils had longer heads and maximum cephalic breadth where the Sinhalese have broader heads.'17 The present evidence is insufficient to assert such an origin purely on physical measurements. But the social kinship, when studied with physical attributes, seems to favour such a view.

The Armenoid type is not uncommon in the Island. It is found mostly among the Tamils. This type of man has a heavily built body with a tendency to corpulency. He has a high broad head that is brachycephalic. Prognathism is absent, thick lips with the lower lip tending to be pendent. He has darkish wavy hair with profusion of body hair. The eyes are somewhat long. The nose is prominent and somewhat beaked. Skin colour varies from fair to dark. He is medium to tall in stature.

The Melanid type is not uncommon amongst the Sinhalese. This is an ancient type and may be easily distinguished from the pre-Dravidian and Vanni as it lacks both the rugged coarseness of the former and weak appearance of the latter. The head length is medium, so is the breadth, with no prognathism. The lips are thin, the hair very dark, moderate body hair, dark eyes and fine straight nose. The skin colour is very dark, almost black. The stature varies from short to tall.

The Mediterranean is a fine-featured handsome type, quite common in the Island. He is of delicate build and average proportions. His head is long and narrow. He has no prognathism, his lips are thin, hair is dark and wavy. He has sparse body hair. His eye colour is brown, nose is straight, skin colour is brown or fair. He is average in stature.

The Negroid type is sometimes met with amongst the Sinhalese and Tamil population. It is very difficult to miss this as the colour, lips, hair,

^{17.} P. K. Chanmugam, CJSG., IV, pp. 12ff, where the probable origin of the Sinhalese is discussed.

and facial prognathism betray the ethnic elements. The individual shows great energy which has accounted for his success. His head is long and narrow, face is prognathous, lips are thick, his hair is dark, wavy or curly. The body has very little hair. Eyes are brown and small. Nose is broad and short with wide alae. Skin colour is dark brown or quite black. He is medium to tall in stature and dolico-cephalic. He has generally a

thick set body.

The Mongoloid element is either of very recent introduction or attributable to an early strain from the Indian Archipelago, and preserves the ethnic traits fairly markedly. This type is seldom observed among the Sinhalese and Tamils, except for its development as a pathological condition. The head is short and wide. There is no prognathism. The lips are thin. Hair is straight and dark in colour. Body hair is almost absent. The eye is almond shaped with an epicanthic fold. The nose is not prominent but broad and flat. Skin colour is light brown or pale yellow. Medium to short in stature and effeminate in general appearance.

The West European type is of recent introduction and can be usually detected by observation, though in certain cases the European admixture can scarcely be noticed. The general appearance and build are European. The head form varies from round to narrow with no prognathism. Lips are thin; the hair is straight but of a light colour; eye colour varies from brown to grey or even blue; the nose is straight and fine; the skin colour

is fair; the stature is medium to tall.

The peoples of Ceylon are composed of an interesting assortment of several racial elements of a basic character, but varied with new elements. One fact stands out clearly, and that is the population of Ceylon is very much mixed, particularly in the cities and urban areas. The rural areas still preserve a certain purity of ancient racial elements which, in spite of different admixtures, are transmitted in physical groups.

B. THE LANGUAGES OF CEYLON

(a) Sinhalese

Sinitalese is the language spoken by the vast majority of the people of Ceylon throughout the country except in the greater part of the Northern Province and the coastal belt of the Eastern Province. Next in importance to Sinhalese comes Tamil, which is confined chiefly to the Northern and the Eastern Provinces. Tamil will be dealt with separately in the last section of this chapter.

Among the few dialects of Sinhalese, the dialect of the Väddās is of a peculiar character. It is confined to the area lying between the central highlands and the sea, in the eastern part of the Island. Wilhelm Geiger, in summing up his views on the origin and evolution of the Väddā language,

states: 18 'The Väddās were an aboriginal tribe. perhaps related to the most ancient tribes of Southern India. They were inhabitants of Ceylon before the first Aryan immigration, and spoke a non-Aryan language. The last remnant of this language is a small number of words which survive up to the present day. When the Väddās came in contact with the Sinhalese, they first adopted from them a number of Aryan words which they used in their secret language (while wandering or hunting in the wilderness). By the lasting intercourse with the Sinhalese people, the loanwords became more and more numerous and the aboriginal language was gradually displaced by colloquial Sinhalese. Now the Väddās had need of new words for their secret language, and this may have been the period when they invented the numerous periphrastic expressions.' The Väddā dialect is fast disappearing on account of the spread of education and encroachment of civilisation on the territory occupied by the Väddās.

The Rodiyā dialect¹⁹ is spoken by the class of people known as Rodiyās, living mostly in villages or hamlets of theirs, in the Kandyan highlands, in the North-Central Province, and in certain areas in the neighbourhood of Ratnapura and Kurunāgala. In their dialect there are certain elements not traceable to Sinhalese. C. M. Austin de Silva²⁰ makes an attempt to explain some features of the Rodiyā dialect as survivals of early Austro-Asiatic elements.

Maldivian²¹ is also a dialect of Sinhalese confined to the Maldive Islands. It is now agreed that Sinhalese belongs to the Indo-Aryan family of languages. Unlike in the case of any other Modern Indo-Aryan language, we can trace the development of Sinhalese from stage to stage from the pre-Christian centuries. The earlier records extant are in the form of cave inscriptions, and they date back to the third century B.C. From about the same period, or perhaps a little later, we come across rock-inscriptions which provide abundant material, interesting from the stand-point of language as well as of contents. From about the ninth century numerous pillar-inscriptions appear. The graffiti on the gallery wall at Sigiri, of which a large collection has been published by S. Paranavitana, date from about the seventh century to about the thirteenth, if not later. They supplement largely the data provided by the lithic records, and are of particular importance for certain centuries such as the seventh and the eighth, as only a few inscriptions belonging to those centuries have so far been found.

^{18.} IHQ., XI. pp. 515f.

The Language of the Rodiyās of Ceylon by W. Geiger in CALR, V, pp. 103—118.
 Handsome Beggars (The Rodiyās of Ceylon) by M.D.Raghavan, Colombo. 1957, Chapter XV,

⁽The Rodiyā Dialect) pp. 106—107.

21. Maldivian Linguistic Studies by W. Geiger, translated into English—Extra number of JCBRAS, Vol. XXVII, 1919.

Although there is evidence of literary activity in Ceylon from the time of King Devānampiya Tissa (third century B.C.), the works produced by those early writers have perished. The works extant date from about the tenth century A.C. But from that period, there is ample material in the form of literary works as well as lithic records, which enables us to trace the development of the language continuously.

The ethnic grouping of the original inhabitants of Ceylon is largely a matter of conjecture. In the absence of any definite evidence, the character of the language spoken by them cannot be determined.

The language of the earliest extant records, viz. the cave and the early rock inscriptions, resembles closely Middle Indo-Aryan, and possesses the characteristics of Prakrit. Geiger discusses in his Introduction to A Dictionary of the Sinhalese Language (pp. xviii-xx), the similarities and points of difference betwen the earliest phase of Sinhalese which he calls Sinhalese Prakrit and the Middle Indian Prakrits. He points out the difficulty in establishing a direct relationship between any Indian Prakrit and the Sinhalese Prakrit, on account of the mixed character of the latter. Even during the earliest phase, Sinhalese possesses certain features which are peculiar to it, and in the course of centuries it went on developing along its own lines. The entire range of the Sinhalese language is divided by Geiger into three different periods, viz. (1) Sinhalese Prakrit, (2) Proto-Sinhalese, and (3) Sinhalese proper. The Sinhalese Prakrit period is taken to have lasted from about the third century B.C. to about the third or the fourth century A.C. The Proto-Sinhalese period, lasting from about the fourth or fifth century A.C. to about the eighth century, was the stage of transition when Sinhalese emerged from being a Prakrit, underwent certain radical changes and developed some distinctive features which marked it out as a New-Indian speech during the next period.

During the course of its development, the Sinhalese language has been exposed to various foreign influences on account of the political vicissitudes Ceylon has had to go through. Traces of Dravidian influence are noticeable from early times, and this influence seems to have been felt more intensively in course of time. There is also a certain element in the language, particularly in its vocabulary, which is not traceable to any known Aryan or Dravidian language. In all probability, that element dates back to pre-Aryan times, e.g. words such as: äpaya 'surety,' oluva 'head,' kakula 'leg,' kaṭa 'mouth,' kalava 'thigh,' kulla 'winnowing basket,' tola 'lip,' pädura 'mat,' potta 'bark,' baḍa 'stomach,' linda 'well,' lipa 'fireplace,' and vilumba 'heel.'

Besides, the researches of Sylvain Levi, Jean Przyluski, P. C. Bagchi and S. K. Chatterji have revealed the existence of a considerable number of Austric words in the Indo-Aryan forms of speech. The observation

made by Professor S. K. Chatterji with reference to such borrowings,22 viz. that they were made quite early when Austric dialects were spoken by the masses of Northern India, and that they were absorbed in and transformed into the present Aryan-speaking people of the country, is of great significance even with reference to Ceylon. The word pol23 'coconut' may be an Austric borrowing made at some early age. Words like lingu 'gender, sex,' nangula 'plough,' kehel 'plantain,' anguru 'charcoal,' gaja 'elephant,' kāka 'crow,' deļum 'pomegranate,' and labu 'gourd' may be Austric forms that have infiltrated into Sinhalese through Indo-Aryan. The degree to which the Aryan speech of Vijaya and other immigrants who colonised Ceylon, was modified by the pre-Vijaya form of speech cannot be determined in the present state of our knowledge.

A little over a century ago, scholars held divergent views regarding the character of the Sinhalese language. While Rask²⁴ assigned it a place in the Dravidian family, F. Müller25 indicated the basis of Sinhalese as Dravidian. While Haas²⁶ maintained that Tamil had at least an influence on the development of the Sinhalese language, any direct relation between Tamil and Sinhalese was set aside by Caldwell.27

The view that Sinhalese was an Aryan language was propounded ably by James de Alwis,28 and this view was strengthened further by Childers29 and supported by Rhys Davids, 30 P. Golschmidt 31 and Ed. Müller 82. Geiger states in his Introduction to A Dictionary of the Sinhalese Language (p. xvii), 'It is an indisputable fact that the Sinhalese language is one of the Modern Indo-Aryan vernaculars and stands in a line with Gujarātī, Marāthī, Bengali, Hindustānī, etc. The fact is sufficiently proved by Sinhalese phonology and morphology, and it is acknowledged without reservation in the Linguistic Survey of India I, page 145.'

He adds further that 'owing to the geographical isolation and peculiar development of the Sinhalese language, it is extremely difficult and perhaps impossible to assign it a definite place among the Modern Indo-Aryan dialects. It has a decidedly composite character. The base seems to be a Western dialect brought to the Island by the first Aryan colonists. But this base is overgrown with new elements imported into Ceylon at various

^{22.} Pre-Āryan and Pre-Dravidian in India, by P. C. Bagchi, p. xix.

Pre-Āryan and Pre-Dravidian in India, by P. C. Bagchi, p. xix.
 Op. Cit., p. xxviii.
 Singalesisk Skriftlaere, Preface p. 1.
 Novara, p. 203; Allgemeine Ethnographie, p. 466.
 ZDMG., p. 658.
 Comparative Grammar, 2nd Edition, p. 111 of the Preface.
 JCBRAS., 1865—1866, pp. 143—156; 1867—1870, pp. 1—86.
 JRAS., NS. VII., pp 35—48; Vol. VIII., pp. 131—155. 'The proof of the Sanskritic Origin of Sinhalese' JRAS, 1875.
 JRAS., NS. VII, p. 35.
 His first report printed int. al. in Trübner's Record, X, pp. 21—22.
 Report on the Inscriptions in the Hambantota District 1878, p. 5; IA., VIII., p. 224.

times, probably already soon after the colonisation and from different parts of continental India, chiefly from the East (Kalinga)'33

Whether Sinhalese was, in its origin, based on a Western dialect of India or on an Eastern dialect, led to a long controversy. While scholars like Geiger,34 Codrington35 and S. K. Chatterji36 favoured the western theory, others like Rev. R. Siddhartha,37 Md. Shahidullah38 and P. B. F. Wijeratne39 tried to maintain that Vijaya and other early colonists came from the area of Bengal in the East. P. B. F. Wijeratne in his Introduction to The Phonology of the Sinhalese Inscriptions, summarising the different views of scholars regarding the original home of Vijaya, says that the main point of the controversy is the identification and location of Lala, the homeland of Vijaya, whether with Lata in Gujerat or with Radha in West Bengal. He adds: 'It is very unlikely that a marriage alliance between Vijaya's successor and a princess from eastern India was possible so soon after the settlement in the Island of Vijaya and his people, if they hailed from Western India. Again Geiger's presumption that immediately after the immigration from Western India there began to take place a lively intercourse between the Island and Eastern India is fanciful'. He agrees with the view that the first Aryan settlers in Cevlon were from Eastern India, and he finds further support for that view in some philological data provided by Shahidullah to that effect.

D. J. Wijeratna also says in his History of the Sinhalese Noun (page 2): 'The earliest Sinhalese as recorded in the inscriptions of the 3rd century B.C. shows unmistakable evidence that it was a Middle-Indian dialect descended from Sanskrit, having affinities with the Eastern group of Middle-Indian. It has affinities in phonology and morphology with Eastern Asokan, Ardha-Māgadhī and Māgadhī.

Sukumar Sen, too, in discussing the dialects and dialect-groups of inscriptional and literary Middle Indo-Aryan,40 makes the observation that the language of Ceylon inscriptions dating between the first century B.C. and the third century A.C., agrees to a large extent with the Middle-Eastern dialect groups.

A close study of the early Brāhmī script, as preserved in Ceylon, has revealed 11 certain marked similarities between the Brāhmī characters of

37. JCBRAS, XXXIII (No. 88) p. 123 ff.
38. IHQ., IX, p. 742 ff.
39. BSOAS, XI, p. 586, ff.
40. Comparative Grammar of Middle Indo-Aryan by S. Sen, Chap. II.

^{33.} Introduction to A Dictionary of the Sinhalese Language, p. xxiii. Cf. 'On the oldest Āryan element of the Sinhalese Vocabulary' by E. Kuhn (p. 7) translated from the Munich Sitzungsberichte der philos.—philol. hist. Classe der K. Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1879, Vol. II, pt. iii. pp. 399—434

34. A Dictionary of the Sinhalese Language, Vol. I., pt. i, pp. xvii-xviii.

^{36.} The Origin and Development of the Bengali Language, p. 15 and p. 72.

^{41.} Palaeographical Development of the Brāhmi Script in Ceylon from 3rd century B.C. to 7th Century A. D., by P. E. E. Fernando in UCR., 1949, p. 285.

Ceylon and those of the inscriptions of Asoka in the Western and Southern portions of India, such as Girnār, Siddhapur and Brahmagiri. Instances have also been shown where the early Brāhmī characters of Ceylon bore resemblance to those in inscriptions of Asoka found in the Central and the Eastern parts of India, such as Delhi, Jaugaḍa and Rummindei. Thus, on palaeographic grounds, the Western influences seem to be more pronounced, although influences from the Central and Eastern parts of India

are also present.

A. L. Basham⁴² makes an examination of the historical data connected with the landing of Vijaya, and comes to the conclusion that the weight of the Vijayan legend is on the side of the west coast. He anticipated the linguistic objections that may be raised, such as the nominative singular termination -e and the use of the palatal s for dental s, which are said to be due to Māgadhī influence on the early Sinhalese, and states: 'These facts may perhaps be accounted for by the influence of Māgadhī, the Mauryan official language, on the Sinhalese court language at the time of Asoka.' He adds also that the frequent substitution of ha for Indo-Aryan sa, which exists in the Sinhalese language to this day, suggests a western source, and even reminds us of the Iranian dialects where the mutation is regular.

He says that the use of the term gamini in the early inscriptions of Ceylon strengthens the 'conclusion that the original settlers came from the west, for it was in Western India that the term was widely used in the pre-Buddhist period.'

Basham finds striking points of contact between early Ceylon and North-Western India, in the use of the epithet maharaja as applied to kings, and in the importance of the king's brother in the affairs of the kingdom.

One other argument in favour of the Western theory that needs examination is the behaviour of the echo-compounds in Sinhalese. Although the echo-compounds, in use today, are themselves later formations, the mould in which they are cast is said to preserve an ancient speech habit. The nature of the opening syllable of the echoed half of the compound varies from language to language. In this respect, Sinhalese forms like data-pata 'teeth,' atu-patu-gānavā 'sweeps,' avul-pavul 'confused,' danga-panga 'naughty,' mischievous,' daksa-paksa 'clever,' sudda-buddha 'clean,' āni-bāni 'yawning,' āralu-būralu 'frivolous talk,' seem to resemble closely the echo-forms of the Western region of the North.

Whatever be the origin of the Sinhalese language, with successive waves of immigration from different parts of India, various elements crept into it. The introduction of Buddhism to Ceylon was also a significant event in the development of the Sinhalese language. The Buddhist scriptures

^{42.} Prince Vijaya and Aryanisation of Ceylon, by A. L. Basham in CHJ, I, pp. 163-171.

and the language in which they were couched continued to exercise such an overwhelming influence on Sinhalese that works of the Anurādhapura period, judging from the ones extant, have a marked Pāli bias. The popularity that Sanskrit studies gained during the Polonnaru time also introduced new features which were largely responsible for the shapings of the language in subsequent times.

The South Indian invasions of Ceylon that had taken place from early times, and also the contacts we have had from time to time with the Dravidians of South India, in particular with the Tamils, have exposed our language to Dravidian influence.⁴³ Even in the inscriptions belonging to the early centuries of the Christian era, there are traces of Dravidian influence.

There are numerous Dravidian loan-words in the inscriptions of the tenth century, like: mēkāppar, ulpāḍu-kaṇakkar, kol-pāṭṭi, perenāṭṭiyam and perenāṭṭuvam, melāṭsi, perelāki and mandraṇḍi, particularly words connected with revenue, military and administrative branches of the state machinery. In a literary work like the Dhampiyā-aṭuvā-gāṭapada belonging to the tenth century, however, the Dravidian element is meagre and much less marked. In subsequent times, the percentage of Dravidian borrowings in Sinhalese goes on increasing, and becomes much more pronounced.

On account of the influence of South Indian customs and manners, arts and crafts, forms of worship, food and clothing, systems of administration and medicine, and above all through court influence, numerous Dravidian words have been borrowed into the Sinhalese language. Besides such direct borrowings, Sanskrit or Prakrit words have been borrowed through Tamil, and words so borrowed bear the impress of the medium through which they have found their way into Sinhalese, e.g., asamōdagam 'a species of parsley' = Skt. ajamoda(-ka); gendagam 'sulphur' = Skt. gandhaka; pattiyam 'agreeable (food)' = Skt. pathya; pākkudam 'present, tribute' = Pkt. pāhuda (Skt. prābhyta); pāḍama 'lesson' = Skt. pāṭha; māndama 'rickets' (literally 'deficiency') = Skt. māndya.

Besides the Dravidian words borrowed into Sinhalese, there are numerous Dravidian idioms that have gained acceptance in Sinhalese, and have even ousted older Aryan idioms, e.g. vahan layi 'puts on shoes' = Tamil midiadi pōdukirāu, cf. old Sinhalese vahan nängi = Pāli pādukāyo āruyha,

^{43.} For the view that the Sinhalese is Dravidian in its syntax, see Taprobanian, II, pp. 24 ff and Mudaliyar W. F. Gunawardhana in JCDRAS, XXVIII (No. 74), pp. 12—60, and CALR, VIII, pp. 193—207; ibid, IX, pp. 158—165, 212—223 and ibid, X, pp. 15—24. The opposite view has been advocated by M. H. Kantawala in CALR, VII, pp. 105—107, 137—140 and 226—229; ibid, VIII, pp. 193—207, 208—209. See also A. M. Gunasekera, A Comprehensive Grammar of the Sinhalese Language, 1891, pp. 356—368; and On the Oldest Āryan Element of the Sinhalese Vocabulary, by Prof. E, Kuhn, translated by D. W. Ferguson in CLR, 3rd series, I, p. 145 ff and Rev. Father S. Gnanaprakasar. The Dravidian Element in Sinhalese in JCBRAS, XXXIII (No. 89), 233—251.

meaning literally 'having mounted the shoes'; hulam gahayi 'wind blows' (literally, 'wind strikes', = Tamil kāṭṭu aḍikkiradu; saturā piṭu dakī 'gets rid of the enemy (literally 'sees the back or the departure of the enemy') = Tamil satturuvin puran kākirān; piţa-raţa balā mikmeyi 'starts for a foreign land' = Tamil villāttai nokki purappadukirān; balā-gena hindī 'keeps on looking' (literally, 'having looked and taken he remains') = Tamil pārttukkondu irikkirān.

Of all the Dravidian languages, although it is Tamil that has exerted the greatest influence on Sinhalese, others like Telugu and Malayalam too have exerted some influence. According to the Oruvala Sannasa44 Telugu Brāhmaņas are said to have remained in the service of King Parākramabāhu VI and of his successor, and certain lands are said to have been granted to them in recognition of their meritorious services.

People from Malabar had been in Ceylon from at least the mediaeval times, and they figure quite prominently in the political history of the country during the Gampola and Kotte periods. Their country is referred to by the names Malala and Kerala, which are sometimes identified. Soldiers from both Malala and Kannada countries seem to have been employed in the fighting forces of many kings of Ceylon. Thus our association with Telugu, Malayalam and Kanarese speakers must have also contributed, in some measure, to the development of the Sinhalese vocabulary.

The languages of the Portuguese and the Dutch who occupied Ceylon did not affect the structure of the Sinhalese language to any extent. However, many words have been borrowed from those languages into Sinhalese. As has been pointed out by Father S. G. Perera, 45 Portuguese words 46 found their way into Sinhalese, generally through the corrupt spoken form of Portuguese. In being adapted to Sinhalese, the Portuguese vocables have undergone certain modifications to be in keeping with the genius of the Sinhalese language, e.g. Portuguese achâr 'pickle' = accāru in Sinhalese; Port. dedâl 'thimble' = S. didāle; Ceylon Port. puir 'toilet-powder' = S. puyara; Port. lazaro 'leprosy' = S. lāduru; Port. alcoviteiro 'pimp' = S. alukuttēruvā; Ceylon Port. birlo 'bobbin' = S. biralu; Port. alfinete 'pin' =

^{44.} See EZ., III, pp. 51—70.
45. CALR, VIII, p. 45 ff.
46. 'A compendium of the Ceylon Portuguese Language' by W. B. Fox in CLR., Third Series, IV,

^{&#}x27;On some Portuguese words commonly used by the Sinhalese' by A. E. Buultjens in The Ceylon

Orientalist, Vol. II (1885—1886) pp. 214—218.

'An explanatory list of Portuguese words adopted by the Sinhalese' by Louis Nell, in The Orientalist, Vol. III, (1888—1889), pp. 41—56.

'Influence of the Portuguese and Dutch languages on the Sinhalese and the Tamil' by E. Woodhouse, in The Orientalist, Vol. II, pp. 155—158.

'A Comprehensive Grammar of the Sinhalese Language' by A. M. Gunasekera, pp. 368—375.

'Portuguese Influence on Sinhalese Speech,' by Rev. Fr. S. G. Perera in CALR, VIII, p. 45 ff.

alpentia, alpenettiya; Port. avano, abano 'fan' = S. avāna; Ceylon Port. burro 'ass, donkey' = S. būruvā; Port. novena, 'novena' = S. nuvāne.

The Dutch introduced many words⁴⁷ relating chiefly to law, food and clothing, household furniture and other articles of domestic use, games of cards, names of months, and a variety of other things, e.g., Dutch fiskaal 'fiscal' = S. piskal; D. volmacht 'executor' = S. polmah-kārayā; D. koekji 'a kind of cake' = S. kokis; D. kalkoen 'turkey' = S. kalukun; D. baadje 'jacket' = S. bācciya; D. zak 'pocket' = S. sākkuva; D. knaap 'tea-poy' = S. kanappuva; D. scherm 'screen' = S. iskirīma; D. horologi 'clock' = S. oralōsuva; D. ruiten 'diamonds' = S. ruyita; D. Januari 'January' = S. Janavāri; D. blik 'tin' = S. belek.

The English, who were the last foreign power to occupy Ceylon, brought the people into closer association with their language and literature, and also with the thought of the West. This impact led to the production of new literary forms, and to the growth of a modern Sinhalese literature. Apart from enriching the Sinhalese vocabulary, the English language has also begun to affect the idiom to some extent. The Sinhalese language had, till recently, been denied a chance of developing as a virile means of expression of modern and scientific thought. However, with the grant of independence and he awakening of the masses, that situation has changed, and it is expected that Sinhalese will gradually develop into a powerful medium, capable of expressing the complexities of modern thought.

(b) Tamil

TAMIL is spoken by a considerable section of the population of Ceylon. It is the language of the Tamils and the Muslims inhabiting the Northern and the Eastern portions of the Island. Muslims living in other parts of the Island also speak the Tamil language. It is spoken in the Up-country districts by the Indian population living there.

Tamil belongs to the Dravidian family of languages which are mainly concentrated in South India, and which include Telugu, Canarese, Mala-yālam and Tulu. There are islands of languages belonging to this family in portions of Central India and of North-East India, extending up to the

'Dutch words in the Sinhalese language' by E. H. Vanderwall, ibid, Vol. XXII, No. 4, April

^{47. &#}x27;On Some Dutch words commonly used by the Sinhalese' by A. E. Buultjens, in The Orientalist, Vol. III (1888—1889) pp. 104—107.

A Comprehensive Grammar of the Sinhalese Language, by A. M. Gunasekera, 1891, pp. 375—380.

'The Contribution of the Dutch to the Making of Ceylon' by E. H. Vanderwall in The Journal of the Dutch-Burgher Union of Ceylon, Vol. XXII, No. 2, October, 1932, pp. 45—61.

^{&#}x27;Disuse of the Dutch Language in Ceylon' by J. R. Toussaint, ibid. Vol. XXXV, No. 2, October, 1942, pp. 39-47.

Ganges.48 In distant Baluchistan Brāhuī, a language which is Dravidian in its essential features, is spoken, though it is mixed up with Persian and some other languages of the neighbourhood. The fact that this language is found in the region of Mohenjo-daro and Harappā, where the remains of an ancient civilisation have been traced, lends support to the theory that this civilisation was connected with the ancient Dravidians who are believed to have lived there in remote times.49 The proximity of Ceylon to South India has also led to the belief held by some that Tamil, or some variant of it, must have been the language of the prehistoric inhabitants of Ceylon.

Tamil is, in the words of Sir George Grierson, the well-known authority on Indian linguistics, 'the oldest, richest and most highly organised of the Dravidian languages, plentiful in vocabulary, and cultivated from a remote period.' Its alphabet is derived from the old Vatteluttu, which is traced by some scholars to the Brāhmī script used by Asoka in his inscriptions. According to Professor Langdon, the Brāhmi script itself is traceable to the pictographs found in the seals of the Indus Valley civilisation. 50 Dr. G. R. Hunter who has made a deep study of these seals, is inclined to think that these pictographs had a Dravidian origin.⁵¹ Though no finality has been reached with regard to the decipherment of these seals, this view of D.. Hunter acquires some significance in the light of the references made in the Silappadikāram, a Tamil work of the second century A.C., to pictographs used by merchants in scaling their merchandise.52 It is also worth mentioning in this connection that the Tamil word for writing, elududal, means also the drawing of pictures.

The earliest Tamil writing which has survived is found in some of the caves of South India, which must have been occupied by Buddhist monks about the third century B.C. It is interesting to note that an inscription found in one of these caves mentions a kuţumbika (householder) from Ilam (Ceylon).

Tamil has had a long history in Ceylon. The Mahāvanisa relates that Vijaya married a Pāṇḍya princess from Madhurā, and that she was accompanied by a hundred maidens and a thousand families of eighteen guilds who settled down in Ceylon. Coming to historical times, we find that two Tamils, Sena and Guttaka, ruled at Anurādhapura in the latter half of the

49. Sir John Marshall, Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilisation, Vol. I, p. 42. 50. Ibid. Vol. II, p. 423.

^{48.} These are Gondi, Kolami, Kui, Kurukh and Malto, spoken in Madhya Pradesh and Orissa. Malto is spoken in Rājmāhāl near the Ganges region.

^{51.} G. R. Hunter. The Script of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro and its connection with other Scripts, pp. 17, 22 and 49. 52. Silappadikāram, Canto V, 1. 112. The Tamil word for pictograph is kanneluttu. See also Canto XXVI, Il. 136 and 170.

third century B.C. for a period of about twenty years. The famous Tamil king, Elāra, reigned in Ceylon during the next century for a long period covering over forty years. By this time Tamil must have been well-established in Ceylon. Large numbers of Tamil soldiers had already found their way to Ceylon, and Tamil merchants also had begun to engage in trade of different kinds. An inscription of the second century B.C., found in Anurādhapura, mentions a corporation of Tamil merchants, of which the captain of a ship (navika) was the head.⁵³ A Tamil poet from Ceylon is said to have adorned the Tamil Śaṅgam at Madhurā⁵⁴; he may perhaps have lived in the first century B.C., as he appears to be one of the earlier poets of the Śaṅgam Age. It is well-known that Jaffna has been a centre of Tamil learning for several centuries. The Ārya-cakravartis of Jaffna, who rese to power in the fourteenth century, were great patrons of Tamil literature.

During the nineteenth century, Jaffna produced some distinguished scholars who took a leading part in the revival of Tamil learning in South

India.

The antiquity of Tamil in Ceylon is borne out by the fact that some words of the Sangam period are still in common use among the peasantry of Jaffna, though they have fallen into disuse in South India, the original home of the Tamil language; such words as aitu and atar are cases in point. Moreover, some usages found in cld Tamil which have completely disappeared from popular speech in South India are still current in Jaffna. The medial demonstrative u, which is exemplified in words like utu and uvan, and the interrogative termination -e, occurring in words such as vantārē, are now unknown in South India, except among scholars wellversed in Tamil literature. An endearing expression used in addressing a female child as mahanē (son), which is mentioned in the Tolkāppiyam, the grammar of the Sangam age, is met with in ordinary usage among the people of Jaffna.

The Tamils of Jaffna have retained some of the characteristics of old Tamil. The Tamil spoken by them is, to a great extent, free from the admixture of Sanskrit words. In Sangam literature, we find only a small percentage of Sanskrit words, and even in regard to these words, they are used in conformity with some rules of Tamil phonology laid down in the Tulkāppiyam, according to which, for instance, the consonant r should not be used at the beginning of a word, unless it is preceded by an appropriate vowel. This rule is scrupulously observed even today by the illiterate villagers of Jaffna. Sanskrit words like ruci and raktam, for instance, are pronounced by them as urusi and irattam. In the Law of Tēśavaļamai, which

^{53.} Inscription No. 12 from Periya-Puliyankulam; JCBRAS, No. 93, pp. 54—5. 54. Ilattu Pūtan Tēvaṇār. Seven of his poems are included in the Śaṅgam anthologies Akanāṇūṛu, Kuṛuntokai and Naṛṛiṇai.

obtains in Jaffna, pure Tamil words like mutusam and tēdiya tēţţam are used, instead of the Sanskrit terms used for these legal concepts by the Tamils of South India. It must be said that, as a result of the isolation of the Ceylon Tamils from South India for a long period, the Tamil spoken by them presents some distinctive features of which they are proud, especially as the Tamils of South India use, in their colloquial speech, more words of Sanskrit origin and also Hindustani words, disregarding Tamil phonology in their pronunciation of such words.

The influence which Tamil has had on the Sinhalese language in certain directions is note-worthy. Apart from the fact that Tamil has flourished in the Island for several centuries, we have to remember that its influence must have been considerable during the Cola occupation of the Island in the eleventh century. The author of the old commentary of the Sidatsangarā, the only extant ancient grammar of the Sinhalese language, says that the interpretation of one of its rules has to be made by the application of a method recognised in the Vīraśōliyam, a treatise on Tamil grammar which is ascribed to the eleventh century. We find that the study of Tamil formed a feature of Pirivena education from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries. Śrī Rāhula of Toṭagamuwa (fifteenth century) was an acknowledged master of the Tamil language. It is mentioned in a late Sinhalese work referring to the Dambadeni period that a Sinhalese king included Tamil in the course of studies followed by him55. Tamil influence was strong in the court of Parākramabāhu VI (1412-1468), and later in the court of the last four kings of Kandy. There have been instances of Tamil authors who were patronised by Sinhalese kings. Śarajōtimālai, a Tamil work on astrology, was composed under the patronage of Parākramabāhu IV.56 In Sinhalese works on astrology and medicine, Tamil influence is most clearly discernible.

The influence of Tamil on the vocabulary of Sinhalese has been dealt with above.57 Titles such as 'Ilangakkon', 'Tennakon' and 'Perumal', as well as official designations such as 'Mudaliyar' and 'Aracci', are pure Tamil words. An interesting list of Tamil words found in the Sinhalese language is given by Mudaliyar A. M. Gunasekara.58 Further research in this direction will be useful from a linguistic point of view.

Tamil inscriptions have been found in different parts of Ceylon, though only a few of them have been published. Some Tamil inscriptions of the period ranging from the eighth to the eleventh centuries have been discovered at Anuradhapura and other places in the North-Central Province.

^{55.} Dda., p. 1.
56. See Book V, Chapter I, Note 71.
57. See supra, p. 39.
58. A Comprehensive Grammar of the Sinhalese Language, pp. 356—368.

The majority of the records left by Sinhalese rulers between the death of Vijayabāhu I (1110) and the accession of Parākramabāhu I (1153) are in Tamil. A Tamil inscription of Parākramabāhu I is found at Nainatīvu. An instance of a Tamil inscription of the fourteenth century found side by side with Sinhalese inscriptions of the same date is at Lamkātilakavihāra in the Kandy District. This shows that the later Sinhalese kings made use of Tamil also, in addition to Sinhalese, in respect of their inscriptions in some places. It is hoped that all the Tamil inscriptions collected by the Department of Archaeology will be published. A careful study of these inscriptions is bound to be fruitful from the historical point of view.

CHAPTER IV

THE SOURCES OF CEYLON HISTORY

Sources are the raw material of history, without which the record of the past would be irrevocably lost. They are windows through which we of the present look into the past. The history produced by each generation of historians is the product of their attempts to look into the past through these sources. They are the continuing datum which historians interpret for the writing of their history. They not only form the material but they also determine the scope and extent of that history, set the framework of its writing and even influence the attitudes which historians adopt. It is therefore necessary to have a knowledge of the sources that cover the history of the partial of the partial of the sources that cover the history of the partial of the partial of the sources that cover the history of the partial of the partial of the sources that cover the history of the partial of the partial of the past at the

sources that cover the history of the period that one is studying.

The Ancient Period covers nearly two thousand years of the history of this Island. For most of it there is a continuous stream of sources of various kinds. But by far the most important of all these is the chronicle which goes by the name of the Mahāvamsa. This chronicle, both on account of the details it supplies, and the extent of the history it deals with, far surpasses all the other sources which consequently tend sometimes to get overlooked. Since the chronicle was written as a history, there is the further tendency to depend exclusively upon it, and to be guided by its attitudes and perspectives. However, without this chronicle, our history would be very uncertain and meagre over most of the ancient period. Literary works of a semi-historical character based upon the Mahāvamsa or its sources have been compiled from very early times. Some of them have come down to our own day. The value of these documents is to be judged by their proximity to the events they deal with. most fruitful source are the epigraphic records. Not only do they provide material that is different from the usual data given in the literary records, but they also have the virtue of being contemporary documents untouched by the hands of editors and copyists. Although there has been no systematic survey of prehistoric archaeological sites, much attention has been devoted to the study of structural monuments, both religious and secular. Sculpture, painting and coins, and above all the tanks and other irrigation works, comprise the rest of the sources in this category. Some of the numerous foreign visitors to this Island have left behind records of their impressions, either in their own works or in those of others. Some of these are very valuable. They come from countries as far away as China and Italv.

1. Literary Sources

The Mahāvanisa is not the earliest record of our history, nor can it be understood apart from the traditions that lie behind it and the other works based upon it. All these together form an inter-connected historical tradition which has to be considered in its entirety. It is a tradition of history-writing that has its origin with the beginnings of Buddhism in India, and comes down to our own times, for the Mahāvanisa and the Dīpavanisa have both been continued down to our own day. It has been entirely the work of monks, and these traditions have come down to us because they were kept safe in the libraries attached to the vihāras.

The earliest missionaries who introduced Buddhism to the Island brought with them not only the scriptures but also traditions connected with the Buddha and the Sāsana. These included the succession of teachers from the time of the Buddha and the names of the contemporary Magadhan kings, the history of the three Councils and the sects, and the traditions connected with the expansion of Buddhism after the Third Council with special emphasis on the events which led to the missions of Mahinda and Sanighamittā to the Island in the reign of Devānampiya Tissa. These traditions were added to and elaborated in course of time. After the mission of Mahinda, the successful establishment of the Sāsana in Ceylon and the foundation of the Mahāvihāra came to be regarded as the most important event in the history of the Island. Other events such as the enshrining of the Relics in the Thuparama Dagaba, the planting of the Bodhi Tree, the building of the Lehapāsāda and the Ruvanvälisāya became treasured memories, and accounts of these were recited and handed down for the edification of the faithful. When the earliest commentaries in Sinhalese on the Pāli Canon came to be made, an historical introduction was added to this which brought together all these traditions. It was mainly a history of Buddhism, and this was called the Mahāvanisa of the Mahāṭṭhakathā or the Aṭṭhakathā Mahāvanisa.

Although, to begin with, this section ended with the nibbāna of Mahinda, in time it was extended to cover the subsequent history of the Sāsana. But a new emphasis was brought to bear upon it. The history of the Island came to be closely linked up with the history of the Sāsana. To complete the picture, therefore, the history of the Island from its earliest remembered beginnings till the time of Devānampiya Tissa was added. Material was gathered from whatever traditions, legends or myths that were current. There were no menks at that time to remember and hand down the traditions, and so the account of this period is largely legendary, embellished with stories taken from the Jātakas and other sources. Further, the history of the kings from the time of Devānampiya Tissa onwards came to be included. This consisted of the relationship of the king to his

predecessor and the mode of succession, the benefactions to the Sanigha and other deeds of merit, important events falling within the reign such as famines and rebellions and other significant details. Legends and anecdotes too sometimes came to be included. The whole took the form of a chronicle. There was finally a group of stories and legends which probably had their origin in the south, centering round the life and work of Dutthagāmaṇī. It was popular and secular in character at first. But to this was added a religious touch and the Ruvanvälisāya, the Lohapāsāda, and the Maricavaṭṭi-vihāra erected by this king, became an important theme within the story.

Thus from the original nucleus arose a corpus of historical tradition which was faithfully preserved in the important vihāras of the time. Since it was a growing body of material, the traditions differed from vihāra to vihāra. These were for a long time handed down by word of month. To facilitate this process, and to fix the main traditions, part of this was versified and part preserved in what have come to be called 'memory verses,' which are a string of nouns connecting the main trend of a story. What lies in between was added by the narrator. It was in the style of the old ākhyāna poetry of ancient India, part verse, part prose. According to accepted tradition, these records as well as the canon and the commentaries were first written down in the time of Vaṭṭagāmaṇī Abhaya, in the first century B.C. Though after this time the nucleus of the tradition was fixed, new stories, legends, traditions and anecdotes were being constantly added on, some from the hand of the narrator, and some after they had gained currency by repetition.

Besides the main historical tradition represented by the Atthakathā Mahāvanisa, the commentators too made use of illustrations drawn from contemporary life and history. The material from these old commentaries such as the Kurundī, the Mahāpaccarī, the Andha and Sankhepa have been incorporated in the later Pāli commentaries, together with further stories and anecdotes. Another feature of this tradition is the emergence of special groupings of traditions such as the Cetiyavanisa-atṭhakathā, the Sīmākathā, the Mahābodhivanisa-atṭhakathā, the Vinaya-atṭhakathā and the Sahassavatthu-atṭhakathā. All these seem to have stemmed out of the original Mūlaṭṭhakathā or the Mahāṭṭhakathā, or at least have drawn inspiration from it.

The earliest extant record of this historical tradition is the *Dipavainsa* which, compiled by unknown authors, was completed about the middle of the fourth century A.C. Being unused to the language, they wrote in inelegant, halting Pāli verse. It could scarcely be called a work of art, but its historical value is great. The memory verses, the double versions and the numerous repetitions show that it stands very close to the original. Conse-

quently, it gives us a fair indication of the nature of the early historical tradition, and has preserved it from the hands of enthusiastic redactors. The many references to bhikkhuṇīs have led scholars to suppose that this may be the work of the bhikkhuṇīs of the Mahāvihāra residing in the Hatthālhaka nunnery.

Another work based upon this historical tradition is the introduction to the Samantapāsādikā, the commentary to the Vinaya, written by the famous commentator, Buddhaghosa. It was finished in the twenty-first year of a king called Sirinivāsa. He has been identified from inscriptional and other evidence as king Mahānāma of the Mahāvanisa, (406—428 A.C.). This introduction deals only with the history of the Sāsana, and brings it down to the nibbāna of the Thera Mahinda. Its main purpose was to establish the authority of the Vinaya and so it does not deal with the history of the Island as such. The material for this history came probably from both the Aṭṭhakathā Mahāvanisa and the Vinayaṭṭhakathā.

The best known chronicle is the Mahāvanisa. It was not composed all at once, for it exists in four recognisable sections. The first part which consists of the first thirty-seven chapters is commonly known as the Mahāvanisa. The rest of the chronicle is usually referred to as the Cūlavanisa. According to the colophon of the Vainsatthappakāsinī, which is a commentary to the Mahāvanisa, the author of this first part is a monk named Mahānāma, who lived in the Dighasandasenāpati-parivena. The Cūļavanisa refers to an uncle of Dhātusena, who lived in this same vihāra, and with whom he underwent the ceremony of renunciation, and also to a monk named Mahānāma, who resided in the Dīghāsana-vihāra when Moggallāna 1 was king. It was customary to take all these to refer to the same person, though the second reference would place Mahānāma in his extreme old age. Dighāsana, further, is taken to be the same as Dighasanda. Mahānāma, a monk from Ceylon, appears in an inscription at Buddhagaya. It has been suggested that this may be the same as the Mahānāma who wrote the Saddhammappakāsinī, the commentary to the Paţisambhidāmagga, which was completed in the third year after the death of Moggallana I (491-508 A.C.)1. This Mahānāma has also been identified with the author of the Mahāvanisa.2

Mahānāma composed the work in elegant Pāli verse. He was a poet who consciously set about to produce a work of art. In the poem he says that the original he had to work on was 'here too long drawn out and there too closely knit; and contained many repetitions.' His Mahāvanisa, he

^{1.} See Book III, Chapter VII.
2. The references in order are, Mvt., p. 637; Cv., xxxviii, v. 16; Cv., xxxx, v. 42; CII., III, p. 274f. Professor Paranavitana has given an interpretation to the first and seventh ślokas of the inscription which unmistakably connects the Mahānāman of the inscription with the authorship of the Mahāvamsa and the commentary to the Paţisambhidāmagga. See infra, pp. 391 f.

says, will be free from such faults. He makes use of various literary devices such as puns and alliteration, and presents his material as a well-balanced whole. The work has been called, in turn, 'a kāvya according to the standard of Indian poetry,' 'an epic', and 'the purāṇa of the Mahāvihāra.' There is some truth in each of these, though they do not quite describe the Mahāvamsa. There are many epic features in the work, especially the account of king Duṭṭhagāmaṇā. It is a purāṇa in that it gives the traditions connected with the Mahāvihāra. It is religious in its outlook even when dealing with secular matters. The strong didactic purpose running through it is summarised in the phrase that ends each chapter, 'compiled for the serene joy and emotion of the pious.' Parts of it were no doubt read for the edification of the faithful.

Although there is a great deal of similarity between the Dipavanisa, the Samantapāsādikā and the Mahāvamsa, scholars are generally of opinion that Mahānāma based his work mainly on the original Atthakathā Mahāvainsa which he followed very faithfully. The similarities in these works are to be explained by the fact that they all stand very close to the original. Where in the original the tradition had been set in verse, the later histories copied these faithfully, so that there is sometimes a very exact verbal agreement. For the rest, there is much similarity in the order in which the subjects are dealt with, and in the substance. These remarks mainly apply to the period up to the nibbana of the thera Mahinda. The Mahavainsa adds considerable new material to the chronicle after the reign of Devānampiya Tissa. The Dīpavamsa dismisses this part very briefly. Further, the epic of Dutthagamani is dealt with in eleven chapters, though it takes up only as many verses in the Dipavamsa. Like the Dipavamsa, the Mahāvamsa, too, ends with the reign of Mahāsena. His attempt to destroy the Mahāvihāra must have so disorganised the life within it, that the records on which these traditions were based were no longer maintained. Though the chronicles themselves were written sometime after these events, yet the history up to the point of writing is not included in them. It is only the last five chapters of the Mahāvamsa that take the form of a chronicle proper, and historically, is its most valuable section. It serves as the model for those who set their hands to continue the Mahāvanisa.

The Mahāvamsa assumed so much importance and popularity that a glossary of words was complied for it called the Ganthipadatthavannanā. This work is now lost. But there is a commentary to the Mahāvamsa called the Mahāvamsa-tīkā or the Vamsatthappakāsinī. We do not know the name of its author. The date too is uncertain. But it has been placed between the seventh and the tenth century. Apart from explaining the meanings of words, it introduces much new material which either the author of the Mahāvamsa did not make use of, or which had been added

to the Aṭṭhakathā Mahāvanisa since that time. In explaining the text, it refers to several works which the author of the Mahāvanisa consulted, or which existed during his time. Among others, it mentions a commentary to the Dīpavanisa called the Dīpavanisaṭṭhakathā which is no longer extant. This work too ends with the reign of Mahāsena.

Another work of considerable interest is the Extended Mahāvanisa or the Cambodian Mahāvanisa. It is called the Cambodian Mahāvanisa because the first manuscript discovered was in the Cambodian script. It has since been given the name 'the Extended Mahāvanisa' for it is in fact the same chronicle, and deals with the history of the Island to the end of the reign of Mahāsena. But it is almost twice the length of the Mahāvamsa, for many new legends, episodes, descriptive passages and romances have been inserted and set in Pāli verse. The author gives his name as Moggallāna, but we do not know anything more about him. The work is definitely later than the Mahāvaiisa-Tīkā. This is an interesting example of the way in which the Mahāvanisa itself came to be expanded. Much of the material comes from the original source, the Atthakathā Mahāvanisa. This shows that the author of the Mahāvanisa did not exhaust his material. It is also possible that the original source utilised by Mahānāma did not remain static, but was itself constantly expanding. Here again the bulk of the new material is added to the period before the time of Saddhā Tissa, the successor of Dutthagamani. Not sufficient use has been made of the Extended Mahāvainsa.

The chronicle which stopped at the end of the reign of Mahāsena was continued up to the reign of Parākramabāhu I. According to Geiger, who accepts the Sinhalese tradition about the authorship of this work, it was written by a monk named Dhammakitti.³ It has also been attributed to Moggallāna who wrote the Abhidhānappadīpikā.⁴ Whoever he was, he consciously continues the Mahāvanisa because he starts from the last verse of the last chapter of the Mahāvanisa without any sort of break. He finishes this in forty-two chapters, sixteen of which he devotes to the career of Parākramabāhu I. The great authority achieved by the first part of the chronicle was probably the reason which led to the practice of referring to the later section as the Cūļavanisa. This therefore will be referred to as Cūļavanisa I.

The history of eight centuries comprised in this work was derived from material that existed in the time of the author. But almost all of this is now lost. The Cūļavaiisa itself refers to the Dāṭhāvaiisa and the Kesadhātu-

^{3.} Cv., (Pt. 1) Introduction, p. iii. Geiger attributes the work to Dhammakitti 'according to the Sinhalese tradition.' But he gives no reasons for this.
4. This monk lived during the time of Parākramabāhu I, and was beholden to him for patronage.

^{4.} This monk lived during the time of Parākramabāhu I, and was beholden to him for patronage. Thus Yagirala Paññānanda Thera thinks that he must have written the part up to the end of the reign of Parākramabāhu (Mahāvamsa; the third part, by Yagirala Paññānanda Thera. Colombo, 1935) Introduction. pp. v-vi.

vainsa, and Geiger sees in some parts of the chronicle material taken from a lost Rohana chronicle. Apart from these, the author depended on records, that had been kept in the vihāras, of the benefactions made to the Sangha by successive kings, records kept in the courts of kings, such as mentioned definitely in the time of Vijayabāhu I, the records of works of merit which were maintained by kings, called puññapotthakāni, and no doubt eyewitness accounts of the reign of the last of these kings, namely Parākramabāhu I. It is possible that the earlier portions of the chronicle had been in part written already by earlier writers, so that Dhammakitti had only the task of putting all this together to mould it into a consistent whole, and in a style that was his own.

In its form and material the chronicle up to the reign of Mahinda V continues the pattern of the last five chapters of the Mahāvamsa. More details, however, are given as we approach the end of the period. But, in dealing with Vijayabāhu I, we are given a full account of his struggle for the independence of his country. With the sixty-second chapter, the author introduces a new method, and deals with Parākramabāhu I in the manner in which Indian writers dealt with epic heroes, and reminiscent of the style in which Mahānāma dealt with Duṭṭhagāmaṇī. The purpose was to glorify the hero, to make him an ideal king and the paragon of every virtue. The author throughout adopts the stilted style of the classical kāvya writers, with its literary and mythological allusions, metaphors and similes, and its conventional and stereotyped descriptions. The influence of Sanskrit is very marked in this section.

The second part of the Cūlavainsa, which may be called Cūlavainsa II, deals with the period from Vijayabāhu II, the successor of Parākramabāhu I, to the end of the reign of Parākramabāhu IV of Kuruṇāgala (circa 1325 A.C.). The author of this part of the Cūlavainsa is not known. He wrote in the same ornate Pāli verse as Dhammakitti, using the same classical Sanskrit kāvya style. But he surpasses his model in the praise and glory which he showers on the hero of this section, who is Parākramabāhu II. Much of this part deals with his works of merit, and is of little historical value. The history of a century and a half dealt with in this section comprises eleven chapters from chapters 80 to 90 of the Cūlavainsa. But of these, nine deal with the reigns of Vijayabāhu III, Parākramabāhu II and Vijayabāhu IV, a period of forty years. The hero himself is given six chapters. The value of the chronicle is less in this period, as other historical sources are also available from this time on.

The third part of the Cūṭavamsa, which is Cūṭavamsa III, was composed on the invitation of the king Kīrtiśrī Rājasimha by a monk named Tibboṭuvāve Siddhārtha Buddharakṣita in the eighteenth century. He continues the chronicle at chapter 90 verse 103, and completes the work in ten chapters.

But the last two chapters which deal with the reign of Kirtiśri Rājasimha comprise more than half of it. Only chapter 91 and the first five verses of chapter 92 are relevant for the ancient period. The style and language exceed in extravagance those of the previous section, and the author seems to have lost the significance of many of the events of his time, and history seems to have passed him by. Other historical works have pushed this part of the Cūlavanisa into the background.⁵

Although the *Mahāvanisa* and the *Cūlavanisa* were not translated into Sinhalese till very recent times, yet there appeared chronicles in Sinhalese which were based upon them and which made them their models. They also had before them two other works which, though they were not chronicles, were yet based upon the *Mahāvanisa* and the *Cūlavanisa*. These were the last two chapters of the *Pūjāvalī*, which dealt with the works of merit of the kings of the Island, and the *Nikāya-sanigraha* which was a history of the *Sāsana* in Ceylon. These will be dealt with at length later.

The Rājaratnākara, the work of the mahāthera of Valgampāya, was probably written in the reign of Vikramabāhu (or Vīravikrama) of Kandy in the fifteenth or sixteenth century. The work is interspersed with Pāli verses, and the purpose of the author was mainly to justify the claims of this king to rule the Island. He, therefore, traces the lineage of this king. The first part of the work gives the history of the kings of the Island from the time of Vijaya. For its material and general arrangement, it leans much on the Mahāvainsa and the Dīpavanisa, from which the Pāli verses too, are borrowed. But it also shows borrowing from the Pūjāvalī and quotes from the Mahābodhivanisa, the Nikāya-sanigraha, the Dāthāvanisa and the Rasavāhinī. It thus contains some material that is not to be found in the Mahāvanisa.

The Rājāvalī exists in many recensions; the published recensions end with the reign of Vimaladharmasūrya II (1687—1707 A.C.). It is possible that there were many Rājāvalīs continued in various places. We do not know who the author of this chronicle was, but it seems probable that it was continued by various hands. The Rājāvalī is not so dependent on the Mahāvanisa as the Rājaratnākara. It has its own method of arranging the material and follows the Pūjāvalī much more, even to the point of verbal agreement. There are many points at which these two works give material not contained in the Mahāvanisa. Both the Rājaratnākara and the Rājāvalī give only a bare list of the names of the kings in dealing with the period covered by the Cūļavanisa. The Rājāvalī is most useful for the period after Parākramabāhu V, especially the Kōṭṭe period of history, for which the

^{5.} The Mv. and the Dv. have been continued from the point where they have been terminated, to include the period up to our own time. These works are Mahāvamsa, the third part, by Yagirala Paññananda (Colombo, 1935) and Dīpavamsa, the second part, by Ähungalle Vimalakīrti (Colombo, 1939).

Cūļavamsa is of very little use. The Kurunāgala period is entirely omitted; the Gampola period is dealt with only after the rise of Alakeśvara. The Rājāvalī, in its treatment of history, deals mainly with the political events and tends to leave out the history of the Sāsana. It seems to have made use of a historical tradition of a popular character not included in the Mahāvamsa.

There are two minor chronicles: the Suļurājāvalī, written in the time of Kīrtiśri Rājasimha, which is modelled on the Rājāvalī and deals at length with the reign of this particular king, and the other, called the Narendra-caritāvalokanapradīpikā (the lamp that lightens the lives of the kings) written in the nineteenth century by Yaṭanavala Mahāthera of the Asgiri-vihāra.

Apart from the Mahāvamsa and the historical tradition it gave rise to, there were other works too which incorporated the historical material enshrined in the Aṭṭhakathā. We learn from the Mahāvamsa-ṭīkā that there were two works called the Mahācetiyavamsaṭṭhakathā and the Mahābodhivamsakathā. Neither of these is now available. They were written in Sinhalese, and were collections of the traditions from the Mahāṭṭhakathā which dealt with the Ruvanvälisāya and the Sacred Bodhi Tree. When Pāli became the language of the learned, these works came to be translated into Pāli. Though they deal with these special subjects, they also give the history of the Island up to the events they purport to describe.

The earliest of these works now extant is the Pāli Mahābodhivamsa which is probably an expanded version of the original Sinhalese Mahābodhivamsa. The author, however, made use of other extant works as well, for we can trace a distinct indebtedness to the Mahāvamsa and the Samantapāsādikā, as well as to the Jātaka Nidānakathā, for the details about the previous Buddhas. The author of this work was a monk named Upatissa who lived in the time of Mahinda IV in the last quarter of the tenth century. The Dharmapradīpikā of Guruļugōmi is a commentary upon it, and a Sinhalese version of it was made by Śrī Parākramabāhu Mahāsāmi of Vilgammuļa, in the reign of Parākramabāhu IV. This goes by the name of Simhala Bodhivamsa. A later work, the Cūļabodhivamsa, gives the history of the shoots of the Sacred Tree.

The earliest extant Thūpavamsa is the Pāli work of that name, written by a monk named Vācissara, in the time of Parākramabāhu II in the thirteenth century. He is supposed to have based it on two previous works written on the same subject, one in Sinhalese and the other in Pāli. But a comparison with existing works shows that he borrowed from other works as well, such as the Mahāvamsa, the Samantapāsādikā, the Jātaka-Nidānakathā and the Mahāvamsa-ṭīkā. The present Sinhalese Thūpavamsa was written shortly after this by Parākrama-paṇḍita. It contains new material that is not found in the Pāli work of Vācissara. This may have been taken from the earlier

works which are now lost. Both works give the history of the Sāsana beginning with the history of the Buddhas and coming down to the time of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī. The material is much the same as that found in the Mahā-vanisa, but lays special emphasis on their respective subjects. The latter work, though originally intended to deal with only the history of the Ruvan-välisāya, now incorporates the history of other thūpas as well. Material from these two works was used in the writing of the historical sections of other works such as the thirteenth chapter of the Saddharmaratnākara.

The fashion set by the Thūpavamsa and the Mahābodhivamsa was followed by other works, the object of which was to set forth the history of a particular Relic or sacred object. These works provided a model for the purpose. One such work deals with the Frontal Bone Relic of the Buddha. It is called the Lalāṭadhātuvamsa. The original Pāli work is difficult to come by. But it was translated by a monk named Kakusandha about the fourteenth century. This Sinhalese version fellows the early history of Buddhism up to the division of the Relics, and includes the visits of the Buddha to Ceylon. In this it follows the Mahāvamsa. But the rest of the work follows an independent tradition which probably comes from Rohaṇa. This section is very valuable, for it gives much data from the history of Rohaṇa which is not obtainable elsewhere. The main centre of interest in the book is the building of the thūpa at Sēruvila, which enshrined this Relic.

A Relic of much greater significance in the history of the Island was the subject of a few works in this same tradition. This is the Sacred Tooth Relic. An early work referred to as the Daļadā-vanisa written probably in the time of Kitti-sirimeghavanna is now lost. It probably dealt with the history of the Relic up to the time when it was brought to Ceylon in the reign of that king. The Daṭhāvanisa, the Pāli version of this history, was written by a monk named Dhammakitti in the form of a verse kāvya. It was composed at the suggestion of Parākrama, the senāpati who placed Līlāvatī on the throne. The date of the work must therefore be the early part of the thirteenth century. Here, too, the early history of Buddhism is given before the history of the Relic. The history of the Relic is then traced from the distribution of the Relics after the parinibbāna of the Buddha. In this, it follows the pattern of the Mahābodhivanisa and the Thūpavanisa. But it differs from these in that it includes a larger number of legends and traditions from Ceylon.

The Daļadā-sirita, written by a person who had the title 'Devradadampa-sangināvan,' in the time of Parākramabāhu IV in the early part of the fourteenth century, contains the rites and rules that were to be observed in the worship of the Relic. But it is prefaced by a long account of its history up to the time of Sirimeghavanna, based on the Daṭhāvannsa, and also the

later history up to the time of Parākramabāhu IV, setting forth what the various kings did to honour the Relic. The Daladā-pūjāvalī is another work composed at this time and added to later, which deals with the offerings made to the Relic. This different intention results in differences in the method of treatment. But, on the whole, it is based on the Daṭhāvamsa and the Mahāvamsa which it quotes frequently. Three minor works of a late date in the same tradition are the Daļadā-vamsa of the time of Kīrtiśrī Rāja-simha, the Daļadā-haṭana, composed in 1793 A.C. and the poem Dāṭhā-vamsa-kavi. The latter are two Sinhalese poems.

The Kesadhātuvamsa, which relates the history of the Hair Relic of the Buddha, is referred to in the Cūlavamsa I as the source from which the author got his material about the Relic, and the honours paid to it. There are no extant copies of this important work. The Relic was brought to

Ceylon in the reign of Moggallana I (491-508 A.C.).

The Pūjāvaļī stands in a special category, as it is not in the main a historical work. It belongs to that class of literature the purpose of which is to extol the virtues of the Buddha. Material is usually drawn from the Suttas and the commentaries. The Pūjāvalī deals with the offerings that were made to the Buddha before and after his parinibbana. This includes the offerings made by the kings of India and Ceylon. Therefore, the last chapter deals with the many benefactions made to the Samgha and the Sasana by the kings from Devānampiya Tissa to Parākrambāhu II, in the thirtieth year of whose reign this work saw completion, that is in 1266. It was written by a monk who is generally known as Mayūrapāda-mahāthera. The chapter that precedes this, which is the thirty-third of the book, gives a history of the Island from the time of Vijaya to the introduction of Buddhism to Ceylon. It includes the history of the previous Buddhas and the history of Buddhism in India up to the end of the Third Council. The material for these sections is largely taken from the Mahāvamsa and Cūlavamsa. But there is also a tradition that seems to have come from outside this, for there is in this work some material that does not find a place in the Mahāvamsa, but is included in the later Sinhalese chronicles already dealt with.

This urge to write history was probably inspired by the gradual growth of the historical traditions connected with the spread of Buddhism. This early history of Buddhism which later was connected with the history of the Island may be seen in the historical introduction to the Samantapāsādikā. This, however, brought the history only up to the nibbāna of the Thera Mahinda. The later history of the Samgha and the Sasāna was included in the other historical works, but was not collected separately. The commentaries, too, came to include many stories and anecdotes about the history of the Samgha and the monks who composed it.

The first attempt to put together this material as a history of the Sāsana is the two chapters at the end of the Pūjāvali. The Katikāvatas of Parākrama-bāhu I and Niśśamkamalla (which are inscriptions) and that of Parākrama-bāhu II contain brief allusions to the history of the Sāsana.

The next work of importance which deals with the history of the Sāsana is the Pāli work, the Saddhammasangaha. It was written by a monk named Dhammakitti, who has been identified as a monk who came to the Island from Thailand, and was a pupil under another monk of that name in the fourteenth century.⁶ This was probably the first of the two great elders who had this name. This work gathers together the traditions dealing with the Sangha, from the early councils to his own time. He gives further the names of well-known writers and the works they are supposed to have written. It also contains many stories of Ceylon origin. Some of his facts, however, are wrong, probably because he was a foreign monk.

The best known and the most important of the histories of the Sāsana is the Sinhalese work, the Nikāya-samgraha, also called the Sāsanāvatāra, which was written by Jayabāhu Devarakkhita of the Gadalādeņi-vihāra. He wrote the history of the Sāsana from the parinibbāna of the Buddha to the fifteenth year of king Bhuvanekabāhu V of Gampola. He drew his material from a variety of sources. For the early part he depended on the Mahāvamsa, the Samantapāsādikā, the Mahābodhivamsa and the Thūpavanisa. It is likely that he used other sources as well, such as the commentaries. For the later sections he made use of the Cūlavamsa, the Katikāvatas and the Pūjāvalī. It is clear that he used other sources too besides these, which are now lost. The work was continued by the same author after he became Samgharāja, with the name Dhammakitti, to cover the reign of Vīrabāhu II too. The purpose of the author seems to have been mainly to emphasise the part played by the Sanigha in the history of Ceylon, and to recount the history of the heretical movements and the attempts made to eradicate them. He does not concern himself very much with the history of the Relics. The names of important monks and their compilations also find a place in the book.

Vimalakitti-thera of Gaḍalādeṇi in writing his Saddharmaratnākara, incorporates in the twelfth chapter a history of the Sāsana from earliest times, taking his material mainly from the Nikāya-samgraha. The history is brought down to the time of writing, which is 1415 A.C., and includes the reign of Parākramabāhu VI.

Mention should be made at this point of the Katikāvatas. Though some of them are inscriptions, yet they should be considered here because

^{6.} Louis de Zousa, D. M. de Z. Wickremesinghe and G. P. Malalasekera mistakenly attribute this work to one of the Dhammakittis of Ceylon or South India.

they are important for the history of the Sāsana and they are made use of by subsequent writers. A Katikāvata is a religious edict intended to regulate the affairs of the Sanigha. There are six which are well-known. The first of these is dated in the time of Mahinda IV, and is known as the Mihintalē Tablets. The second was promulgated by Parākramabāhu I and is an inscription at Polonnaru. The third too is in this capital city and was inscribed by Niśśamkamalla. It is in a fragmentary state. The fourth belongs to the reign of Parākramabāhu II, and is known as the Dambadeni-katikāvata. The fifth is by Parākramabāhu VI during the Kōṭṭe period. The last is dated in the time of Kīrtiśrī Rājasinha and the Sanigharāja Väliviṭa Saranamkara. Some of these were utilised by the author of the Nikāya-sanigraha.

There are other works which continue in the tradition of the Nikāya-sanigraha. The Suļupūjāvalī was written as an extension of the Pūjā-valī, but in style and language it resembles the Nikāya-sanigraha. It deals with the kings from Parākramabāhu II to Kīrtiśrī Rājasimha. These earlier works are made use of for the history of the Sāsana as it appears in the later works such as the Syāmopasampadāvata by Siddhārtha Buddharakṣita-thera who brings the history down to the time of Rājādhi-Rājasimha, and gives an account of the ordination introduced from Siam; and the Pāli work Sāsanavamsadīpa, written in 1880 by a monk named Ariyavamsālamkāra Vimalasāratissa-thera to commemorate the establishment of the Amarapura Nikāya in Ceylon.

The intimate relations that existed between Ceylon, Burma, Thailand and Cambodia from the fourteenth century onwards resulted in a constant exchange of scholars between these countries. It also gave an opportunity to these scholars to get acquainted with the books available in each other's countries. Thus we come across several books in Burma and Thailand which contain material based on historical traditions from Ceylon. Since Pāli was the language of the canon accepted by all these countries, it became the language of intellectual intercourse between their scholars.

One of the earliest evidences of this intercourse is the Mānāvuļu-sandēsa or the Mahānāgakula-sandēsa or the Rāmañña-sandēsa. It was sent from Mahānāgakula in Rohaṇa to Arimaddana-pura in Burma shortly after the reign of Parākramabāhu I. It enjoins the Burmese Sangha to initiate a purification on the lines of the purification of the Sangha effected by Parākramabāhu I. The Buddhaghosuppatti is a Pāli work discovered in Burma. It is a late and unreliable work, but it goes back to the same source material as that to which the authors of the Cūļavanisa and the Saddhamma-sanighaha went for their accounts of the great commentator. Another work emanating from Burma of limited historical significance is the Gandhavanisa. It was written by a monk named Nandapañña on the invitation of a monk

named Changhadasa. We cannot be certain of the date, but it gives the names of monks who were the authors of well-known books. But the information given is not always reliable.

A work of much greater importance is the Jinakālamālinī, written in Thailand by a monk named Ratanapañña. He deals briefly with the history of the Sāsana from the lives of the Bodhisattas and that of the Buddha to the reign of Mahāsena, and then gives the history of the Tooth Relic and the Frontal Bone Relic. From here, he goes on to the history of the Sāsana in his own country, and what is of importance to us, gives an account of an image that was taken from Ceylon, and also the introduction of the upasampadā ordination from Ceylon to those countries in the time of Parākramabāhu VI. This work is specially valuable for the data contained in the later sections of the book. Two other works from Thailand which mention this image and also other details about the history of Buddhism in Ceylon are the Sihinga-Buddha-rūpa-nidāna, sometimes called Sihinga-nidāna, and the Cāmādēvīvamsa.

Connections with Burma were strong from the fifteenth century. Not only were books from Ceylon taken there, but there arose a body of stories and anecdotes which came to be called the Sihalavatthu. It is partly from this that the traditional history of the Sāsana given in the Lokappadīpakasāra of Samgharāja Medhamkara of the Sīhaļavamsa of Burma was written.7 This history deals with the period up to the reign of Saddhātissa. monk seems to have come to Ceylon for his ordination. inscriptions, though not quite in this category, should be mentioned here for it depends on this same cycle of tradition. They were inscribed by king Dhammaceti on a number of stone slabs in Pegu in 1478 A.C. They deal briefly with the establishment of Buddhism in Ceylon, and the subsequent periodic reforms. But the main purpose is to record the establishment of the proper ordination from Ceylon in the reign of this king and his contemporary, king Bhuvanekabāhu VI. In 1863 a monk named Paññasami Kavidhaja wrote a history of the Sasana in Burma called the Sāsanavamsa-dīpikā. The first part of this Pāli work gives the traditional history of the Sāsana in Ceylon before proceeding to deal with the Sāsana in Burma itself. It also refers to many connections which Ceylon had with Burma. Another work of Burmese origin with references to Ceylon is the Sotabbamālinī.

The history of the Island is to be written not only from the chronicles and other histories but also from many incidental references and data that are to be found scattered in numerous other works as well. These fall into two categories. There are first the commentaries, sub-commentaries, Tīkās and glossaries to the works of the canon, and also a few other religious

^{7.} For this Medhamkara Samharāja, see Vidyodaya, 1940, pp. 33 ff.

works. There is, secondly, a class of literature which has sought to bring together stories and anecdotes weaving them round some theme, illustrative of some aspect of the Buddha or his doctrine.

In the first category are to be placed the Visuddhimagga of Buddhaghosa as well as the many commentaries he wrote to the books of the Tipitaka, such as the Samantapāsādikā, the Sammohavinodanī, the Sumangalavilāsinī and the commentaries of Mahānāma, Dhammapāla and Upasena, which centain many incidental references of value for the history of Buddhism in the Island. Much of this material has been put together by Adikaram and Buddhadatta-mahāthera. Later works based on these, such as the sub-commentaries, glossaries and translations are too numerous to be mentioned individually. The works on the Vinaya, for instance such as the Vinayavinicchaya, Mūlasikkhā, Khuddasikhā and the Sinhalese works based on these, the Sikhavalanda and the Sikhavalanda-vinisa, give some indication of the practices that prevailed among the monks, and the emphasis they gave to them. The works on the Abhidhamma, too, though they deal mainly with the philosophy and psychology of Buddhism, yet from a historical view indicate the state of intellectual life of the people of the time and the influences that prevailed. It would take too long to mention all the relevant works here. The Vanavinisa-sanne, for instance, which is a translation with comments of the Vinayavinicchaya, is interesting as not only revealing the intellectual climate of the time, but also as having been written by a king, namely Parākramabāhu II.

The other works stem mainly from the Suttas, and from the commentaries They come in three streams which sometimes run into each other. The life of the Buddha and stories about him were collected and grouped together. They are of interest to the historian as they formed part of the historical tradition which we have considered. The second stream consisted of stories that were brought to Ceylon from India. These were largely folk-tales. They are to be found especially in the Jātakaṭṭhakathā. It is the third that is of special concern to us as they were stories of Ceylon origin which were placed alongside the other stories. Some of them are to be found in another collection of such stories, the Dhammapadetthakathā. These stories have found their way into later collections such as the Tunsarana, the Amāvatura, the Paricchedapota and the Pūjāvalī. Pāli works of a similar kind are the Upāsakajanālanikāra, the Sādhucaritodaya, the Sārasamgaha and the Pāramī-mahāsataka. The last is a work belonging to the Gampola period, and is also important for the historical allusions pertaining to that period.

The best known of these collections of stories is, however, the Saddharma-ratnāvalī which belongs to the thirteenth century. The main source for

these stories is the Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā. But it also borrows from works such as the commentaries on the Dīghanikāya, the Suttanipāta, the Petavatthu and the Buddhavanisa. The name of the author is Dhammasena-thera, but we do not know anything about him. The Samantakūṭavaṇṇanā by Vedehathera gives, in an eulogy of the Buddha, an account of his visits to the Island. Some of these stories are of Ceylon origin, while others, though of Indian origin, are sometimes set in a local milieu. Two other Sinhalese works to be placed in this same category are the Saddharmālamkāra and the Saddharmaratnākara. They both belong to this period. The former goes back to the Sahassavatthuppakarana mentioned in the Mahāvamsa-tīkā. Some of these stories have come through the Rasavāhinī. There are Dutthagāmanī legends here which are not found in the Mahāvamsa. The latter work goes back mainly to the Sārasamgaha. But it has made use of the Saddharmālamkāra, the Jinacarita, the Samantakūṭavannanā, and the Jinabodhāvalī. This work contains, in the twelfth and thirteenth chapters, a history of the Sanigha based on the Nikāya-sanigraha, the Mahābodhivamsa and the Thūpavamsa. The history is brought down to the time of Parākramabāhu VI.8

During the Dambadeni period, a class of pseudo-historical literature came into vogue which has come to be called vittipot. They are collections of legends, myths and local history. These works are the Bambauppätti, a work on cosmology, the Janavanisa, a description of the caste system, the Buddharājāvalī, an account of the early history of Ceylon and the history of the Malalas, the Kurunāgala-vistara, a collection of information about that city, the Yāpahu-vistara, an account of the building of Panduvasnuvara and the story of Panduvāsudeva. In this same category of local history may be placed a few other works which are less composite. The Dambadeni-asna is a short work on the reign of Parākramabāhu II, the Kandavuru-sirita describes the day to day life of the kings of the Dambadeni period. The Hatthavanagalla-vihāra-vainsa, written in the time of Parākramabāhu II, gives the history of the saintly king Sirisangabo and the history of the Attanagalu-vihāra. Two Sinhalese translations of this work, called the Elu-Attanagalu-vanisa, contain references to historical personages of the time in which the translations were made. During the Kötte period, historical themes, such as those of Vijaya, Kuvēnī and Gajabāhu, formed the basis of popular ballads and religious cults. These works such as the Sīhabā-asna, the Kuvēṇi-asna, the Gajabā-kathā and the Kohombā-yakkama are really more of sociological and religious interest than purely historical. Most of these are ballads centering round the worship of the goddess Pattini, and are interesting for that reason.

^{8.} For the literary works mentioned in this and the preceding paragraphs, see the appropriate sections of Book III, Chapter VII, Book IV, Chapter VIII and Book V, Chapter VIII.

The Pärakumbā-sirita, a poem culogising the person of Parākramabāhu VI, was probably intended to be accompanied by dance before the king. This is the first of a series of eulogistic, panegyrical poems. But all of them except this one fall outside the period of this volume. But eulogies of patrons are to be found in poems which otherwise have little or no historical value, such as the Kāvyaśekhara, the Guttila-kāvya and the Sandēsa poems.

These Sandēsa poems, modelled on the Meghadūta of Kālidāsa, though they are full of stylised descriptions which bear no relation to actual experience, yet in a limited way provide material of topographical and historical interest. Those that fall within this period are the Tisara-sandēsa of the time of Parākramabāhu V, the Mayūra-sandēsa of the time of Bhuvanekabāhu V, and the Hanisa, Paravi, Girā, Kokila and Sälalihinī Sandēsas, all of the time of Parākramabāhu VI. These are sometimes of sociological and religious interest as well.

The best known work in Tamil which covers a part of this period is the Yālpāṇa-vipava-mālai. It was written by one Mayilvākanam at the request of the Dutch Governor Maccara in 1736. It deals very briefly with the earliest phase of Ceylon history up to the time of 'the Paṇḍu Mahārāja' presumably Paṇḍuvāsudeva. Mest of the book deals with the more recent history after Māgha's invasion. It was no doubt based on earlier works. A few other Tamil works are also cited, such as the Vaya-pāḍal, the Kalveṭṭu and some poems connected with shrines such as those at Nallūr and Trincomalee, the former known as the Kailāsamālai. Another work on history is the Yālpāṇac-carittiram, but it is late and unreliable.

As Ceylon was on one of the main cross-roads of the ancient world, it was inevitable that she should come within the notice of merchants and seafarers. From very early times, therefore, Ceylon is mentioned in literature, and is the subject of travellers' tales. Though some of these are just passing references, some are remarkable for their accuracy, and seem to come from the observations of eye-witnesses. In this section are included both the accounts of travellers who came here as well as the references to Ceylon in foreign books.

(a) Greek and Roman

After Alexander opened up the middle-east, there was active trade between the ancient Mediterranean world and the East. Traders and mariners carried news of these parts to the west, and these stories came to be incorporated in books written in the west. There is a reference to Ceylon in the treatise *De Mundo* which is ascribed to Aristotle. Onesicritus, a pilot attached to Alexander's navy, mentions Ceylon. Megasthenes, an ambassador attached to the Maurya court, made various observations on India and Ceylon. These accounts are to be found in the writings of Strabo and Pliny. Others

to notice Ceylon in their works are Hipparchus, Artemidorus and Marcian of Heraclea. But there are three accounts that stand out as being fuller than the others. These are the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* by an unknown author, the *Geographia* of Ptolemy which is based on earlier works and the reports of observers, and the *Topographia Christiana* of Cosmas Indicopleustes. The map of the Island that accompanies the work of Ptolemy is, however, a later addition based on details supplied by the book. Yet it is probably the earliest map of the Island.

(b) Arab

Ceylon was known to Arab travellers long before the rise of Islam. The Greeks and the Romans depended on the knowledge of these intrepid sailors. But it is only after Islam that this knowledge found its way into books written by Arabs, and later, Muslims generally. One of the earliest of these travellers' accounts is by a person named Sulayman whose writings are incorporated in the Silsilat-al-tawārīkh of Abu Zayd a century later (950 A.C.) Another early writer is Ibn Khurdadhbeh. Mas'udi in the mid-tenth century travelled in these parts and in his work includes both the knowledge of earlier writers and his own experiences. Shortly after him Istakhri, Ibn Hawgal and Magdisi briefly mention Ceylon. Birūni in his work on India occasionally refers to Ceylon. In the middle of the twelfth century Idrisi, the famous Arab geographer, brought together all the existing knowledge of the eastern lands and has a place for Ceylon. Other geographers follow him, such as Yākūt, Qazwīnī and Abul Fida who make mention of Ceylon. But the most important of all the Muslim writers on Ceylon is Ibn Battūta who came to the Island about the middle of the fourteenth century.

(c) Mediaeval European

Travellers from the Mediterranean world in search of the east, and Christian friars, in the accounts of their travels, give brief glimpses of the country. Marco Polo in the thirteenth century is one of the best known. Next most important is John de Marignolli. Others are Friar Odoric of Pordenane, Friar Jordanus, Nicolo di Conti of Venice, Ludovici Varthema of Bologna and Duarte Barbosa from Portugal in the sixteenth century. After that we come to the travellers of the modern period.

(d) Modern European

After the Portuguese and the Dutch came to Ceylon, a number of them turned historian and interpreted the doings of their countrymen. In doing so, most of them gave some account of the history of the Island before their arrival. They made use of existing records such as the Rājāvalī and the Nikāya-saingraha. They also made their observations on the conditions existing in the Island about the time they arrived here. These accounts,

therefore, give some valuable information on the social, economic and political conditions in the Island in the latter part of the Kōṭṭe kingdom. Do Couto, De Barros, Ribeiro, Queyroz, Valentyn and Baldaeus are all valuable from this point of view. Other source material of conditions in Portuguese and Dutch times such as Tombos are also indirectly useful.

(e) Chinese

From very early times there was intercouse between India and China, both over the land route and the sea route. This intercourse soon extended to Ceylon as well. The gradual spread of Buddhism into those areas was a further incentive for the development of this relationship. Thus traders, travellers and religieux came to these countries in pursuit of their several interests. Monks and nuns from these areas went to China braving the dangers of the ocean. The record of this intercourse is to be found in a large number of Chinese works from very early times till the close of our period. Some of these contain only incidental references, while others provide important and valuable data. These works can be grouped into four different types. The best known are the records left by, or about, religieux. There are the well-known travel accounts of Fa Hsien, in the fifth century and Hsüan Tsang and I Tsing in the seventh century. The last two did not come to Ceylon and the third does not say anything very much about it. Three Indian monks, Gunavarman, Vajrabodhi and his pupil Amoghavajra went to China and passed through Ceylon on the way there. Chinese accounts of their lives mention these visits. The works are Sung-kao-sêng-chuan and Chêng-yüan-hsing-ting-shih-chiao-mu-lu by Yüan Chao. These took place in the seventh century. The work Pichiu-ni-chuan or 'The biography of Bhikkhuṇis', written in the sixth century by Pao Chang, refers to the nuns who went from Ceylon to inaugurate an order of nuns there. There are next the accounts written by travellers, geographers, merchants and soldiers which contain references to the Island. The main works are Ke-nee-si-yih-hing-ching, 'the Itinerary of Ke Nee's travels in the Western Regions' of the tenth century, Tao-Ichih-lio, 'General account of the Island Foreigners' by Wang Ta-Yuan in the fifteenth century, Se-yih-ke-foo-choo, 'Description of the Western Countries' cf the fourteenth century, Hai-kuo-tu-che, 'Foreign Geography,' and Pien-i-tien, 'A History of Foreign Nations.' There are two works which cover the campaigns of Cheng Ho, the cunuch sent by a Ming Emperor. These are the Hsing chia-sheng Lan, 'Description of the Star Raft' by Fei Hsin who accompanied the expedition, and the Ying yai sheng lan, 'Description of the Coasts of the Ocean' by Ma Huan, a Chinese Muslim attached to the expeditions as an interpreter. An important work in this category is the Chu-fan-chih, compiled by Chau Ju-Kua, a Chinese inspector of foreign trade, giving an account of the trade in these regions.

There are next the official records maintained by the Chinese emperors. These often contain references to embassies sent and received as well as other political connections. These records exist from the fifth century onwards, and are helpful in the synchronisms they provide. Some of these records are the Sung Shu, Wei Shu, Liang Shu, Sui Shu, Nan Shih, Hsin T'ang Shu, Sung Shih, Yuan Shih and the Ming Shih. Besides these annals of dynasties, there were works of history which are to be placed in a last category. Some of these are merely compilations, and references to Ceylon appear here too, occasionally. Works in this manner are, the Tung T'en, 'The Cyclopaedia of History', Tai-ping-yu-lan, 'The Taiping Digest of History', Tse-fu-yuan-kuei, 'The Great Depository of National Archives', Wen-hsientung-kao, 'Antiquarian Researches', by Ma Tuan Lin in the fourteenth century, Yu-hai, 'The Ocean of Gems', Tsa-chi, 'Miscellaneous Record,' a supplement to the 'Antiquarian Researches' called Hsu-wen-hsien-tung-kao, Hung-k'en-lu, 'A History of the Middle Ages', and a supplement to this, and Ta-ching-i-tung, 'A Topographical account of the Manchu Dynasty'.9

(f) Indian

Hardly any Indian traveller has left an account of his travels in Ceylon; hardly any court maintained annals or, if such were kept, few have survived. They were more interested in philosophy and religion than in the writing of history. It is probably for this reason that Indian references to Ceylon are few and scattered. The best known literary work that touches on Ceylon is the Rāmāyaṇa. But most of it is legend and has little relation to the Island. The Lamkāvatāra-sūtra, a Mahāyāna work, is set in Rāvaņa's Lamka, but this too has no historical significance. Incidental references are to be found in many works such as the Mahābhārata, the Divyāvadāna, the Purāņas, especially the Skanda-purāņa, the Rājataramgiņī, the Jātakas, and in Tamil works from the south, such as the Silappdikāram, the Maņimekalai, the Padirrupattu and the Pattinappālai. Beginning with Asoka's inscriptions, Ceylon is mentioned in a number of Indian epigraphic records of the Gupta, Calukya and Pallava periods. With the rise of the first Pāṇḍya Empire and the gradual entanglement of Ceylon in the politics of South India, many epigraphic records of the Pandyas and the Colas contain references to the political fortunes of the Island. These are to be found mainly in the prasastis of the inscriptions where the kings lay claim to victories won or refer to defeats sustained earlier. A few inscriptions such as at Buddhagayā and Nāgārjunakonda are religious in character.

(g) South-East Asia

Ceylon had many connections with the countries in this region, but not all the many references to Ceylon are known. Burma, Thailand and Cambo-

^{9.} I wish to express my thanks to Dr. W. Pachow for the help he gave me in transliterating the names of these Chinese works drawn from many sources into standardised Roman characters.

dia shared a common faith with Ceylon, Theravāda Buddhism. Not only was there a regular exchange of scholars and scriptures, but the histories of these countries, since they were so much bound up with religion, became common knowledge. The language of this intercourse was Pāli, and the works in Pāli were a common heritage in these countries. In addition to this, there exist in the countries mentioned local histories in their respective languages which sometimes refer to Ceylon. The Burmese chronicle called Yazawingyaw, for instance, deals with the history of the Sāsana in India and Ceylon. The Hmannan Yazawin or 'The Glass Palace Chronicle' of the nineteenth century refers to Ceylon. Though this is late, there are other less known works which stand behind it. The Kalyāṇī Inscriptions of king Dhammaceti have already been touched on. The value of these works is mainly for the religious history of the later period. Other epigraphic evidence too is available from Thailand and Cambodia.

3. Epigraphic Sources

From the third century B.C. right down to the end of this period, there is a stream of inscriptions which shed light on the history of the Island. In themselves, they do not contain much political history, but taken along with the chronicles they provide valuable confirmation of the record of the chronicles and sometimes even shed new light on them and correct the chronicles on some minor points as well. Besides, on some aspects of history, they fill gaps left by the chroniclers who were mainly interested in religion and in the main political changes. Thus, on aspects such as the administration of the religious institutions, the day-to-day economic life of the people and the land-tenure system, the evidence of the inscriptions is invaluable. They have the further advantage that they are contemporary records, and except where time and weather and the destructive hand of man have caused damage, we have them in the form in which they were originally set down by the scribe. These inscriptions are not evenly distributed over the period, for in the early centuries and again in the ninth and tenth centuries they are to be found in large numbers, while in the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries they are scarce. The language of the earliest records is classified as Proto-Sinhalese and in time it develops into the modern Sinhalese. There are, however, a few Sanskrit inscriptions when Mahāyāna influence became strong, and a few Tamil inscriptions after the Cola conquest. The script of the early records is Brāhmī, the same as that used in Asoka's inscriptions. But this, too, in time develops into the modern Sinhalese script. These changes in the language and the script are of value in determining the age of a record where no other means are available to do this.

From the introduction of Buddhism into the Island in the third century B.C., till about the second century A.C., when they disappear, there are a large number of one-line inscriptions. They are usually found on the brow of caves below the drip-ledge. These have come to be known as the Brāhmī Cave Inscriptions. The main purpose in all of them is the same, to record the grant of the cave to 'the Sanigha of the four quarters, present and future.' The names of the donors and the details about them such as their titles, genealogy, profession and status are given. Kings, too, joined with the ordinary laymen of their realm in this task. Numbers make up for the brevity of these records, and they give some valuable glimpses of the religious and social life of the time. These records are mostly to be found in the ancient Anurādhapura and Rohaṇa kingdoms. But there are some in Malaya and the south-west of the Island too.

The other main group of inscriptions of this early period are those recording the grants of land and tanks. Canals, fields and villages too are sometimes the subject of grants. In time, more precise terms were used such as bojakapati and dakapati. The extent of the land too was sometimes given. The donor was very often the king and he gave his titles and genealogy. Sometimes private individuals, too, made grants such as these, but the name of the reigning king is mentioned in many private documents for purposes of dating. The donees in almost all these grants were the monks resident in particular vihāras specified by name. The purpose of the grant was sometimes defined, such as to make provision for the four requistes of the monks, or the maintenance of some building in repair, or the provision of oil for lamps, or food and other requirements for the performance of the Ariyavassa festival. Money was given sometimes instead of land and the fact recorded. Inscriptions of this type are to be found at Tonigala, Molahitiyavelegala, Pahala Kayinattama, Veheragala, Perumiyankulam, Pāļu Mäkiccāva, Ruvanväli Dāgāba, Habāssa, Timbirivava, Velangolla, Nagirikanda and Rassahela. The Vallipuram Gold Plate, recording the establishment of a vihāra, is unique for the period. It was intended for burial in the foundation of a building. Two inscriptions at Situlpavu and Godavaya are interesting for the first makes over to the Sanigha the fines from a local court of law, and the second the customs dues from a neighbouring port. A few private grants such as the Tonigala inscription, dated in the reign of Sirimeghavanna, and the Labuätabändigala inscription, donate to the Sanigha specified items of food; this was to be made available from the interest derived from capital in the form of seed-paddy or money which was invested with a merchant guild. An inscription of some importance is located at Hinguregala. This records the purchase of several blocks of land by a vihāra from a company of soldiers. The names of the individuals and the details of the transaction

are given. The construction of steps or pillars for the purpose of acquiring merit is recorded and the merit is sometimes transferred to others.

With the growth of Mahāyānism in the Island a new kind of inscription comes to view. An inscription at Kuccavēli refers to the merit acquired by the sculpturing in bas-relief of a number of caityas. The Indikaṭusāya copper-plaques contain the texts of Mahāyāna scriptures; they were enshrined in dāgābas. The Trikāyastava in an inscription at Mihintalē is a well-known Mahāyāna Sanskrit text. The Tiriyāy inscription is another unique record, for it is in praise of the Girikaṇḍa-caitya, which is described as the abode of Avalokiteśvara. Towards the end of the sixth century, a number of inscriptions record the manumission of slaves or their maintenance. It was presumably recorded for the merit it brought. Some of these records are to be found at Nilagama, 'Burrow's Pavilion' at Anurādhapura, Kuḍā Ratmalē and Murutava.

The two centuries before the Cola conquest are again prolific in epigraphic records. From the time of Sena I there is a stream of inscriptions, most of which are commonly known as 'Pillar Inscriptions.' They record the proclamation of 'immunities' to lands or villages, or to vihāras that were mentioned in the record. The purpose was to prevent royal officials from entering these lands in order to harass the people, or to make illegal exactions from them. Some even granted immunity from taxes and dues that were customarily due from them. These records are interesting because, for the first time, we see the administration at work. Various types and grades of officials appear in these records, some from the central government and some from the provinces and other administrative units. There is a uniformity in these inscriptions in style and content which makes it unnecessary to single them out.

In the course of the tenth century, and especially towards the end of it, there are a few very long inscriptions which record the promuglation of regulations by the king for various purposes. They were inscribed on slabs of rock so that all could read them. The best known of these are the Mihintalē Tablets which lay down detailed instructions and rules for the monks as well as for the administration of the vihāra lands. Other inscriptions of this kind are the Anurādhapura Slab inscription of Kassapa V, the Kaludiyapokuṇa inscription of Sena III, and the Puliyankuḷam inscription of Dappula V. The Vēvälkäṭi inscription contains rules for the administration of justice in certain groups of villages. The Koṇḍavaṭṭavan inscription of Dappula V lays down rules for the administration of the village at the site. The Badulla Pillar inscription is the record of rules for the management of a market-town. Rules for the distribution of water from a royal tank are the subject of the 'Vessagiri' Slab inscription of Mahinda IV. A long Sanskrit inscription at the Abhayagiri-vihāra records rules for the monks

residing there. A long fragmentary Sinhalese inscription at the same site gives a list of the pious and valorous deeds of a king, who presumably was Mahinda IV.

There are no records of the grant of land during this period, but there are a few incidental references to grants of pamunu land in the pillar inscriptions. A few odd inscriptions such as one at Vessagiri and another at Kaludiyapokuna, record the gift of money for purposes specified in the grant.

A special feature of the inscriptions of this period is the emergence of the *praśasti* at the beginning of the record. It becomes almost an invariable practice to include them in important records of kings. These serve the historian well, as they give much data about their titles, genealogy and any special achievement they took pride in. These *praśastis* in time became formal and stereotyped. This practice continues into the other periods as well.

It is again in this period that most of the unique group of graffiti at Sigiri were written down on the Mirror Wall. There are hundreds of them, and though they mainly deal with the beauty of the maidens painted on the rock, yet incidental information they give, such as names, titles and place-names and brief hints about the conditions of the time, build up a picture which cannot be obtained from the other records of the period. A few of the authors of these graffiti are royal personages, and some or them can be identified. But most of the authors are those who do not figure in history. Although most of these graffiti belong to the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries, there are a few which are earlier than this date and a few which are later.

The period following the Cola conquest introduces us into a new pattern of inscriptions. There are no more pillar inscriptions and only an echo of the old 'immunity-clauses' appears now and again. Nor arc there records of the promulgation of regulations except the two katikāvatas, the Galvihāra inscription of Parākramabāhu I and the fragmentary katikāvata of Niśśańkamalla. The inscriptions of this period are hardly different from literary compositions, for much care has been devoted to the language and style in which the substance of the record is composed. Partly for this reason, the inscriptions are longer than the average record of the preceding period. The main interest of most of the records of this time is political. They were largely the work of the members of the Kālinga dynasty who made a serious bid to win the favour of the Sinhalese.

The Ambagamu inscription of Vijayabāhu I is one of the earliest of this period, and is the record of his benefactions to the Shrine of the Sacred Footprint. His Panākaḍu copper-plate is the earliest known record of this kind, and registers the grant of privileges to the family of

Budal-nāvan who had helped him in his adversity. It gives a brief account of the life he spent before he succeeded to the throne. Records by which grants are made to generals and ministers for loyal service rendered to the kings are fairly common from this time on. The Devanagala rock-inscription of Parākrambāhu I, the Polonnaru slab-inscription of Viajayabāhu II, the Kevulgama and more particularly the Polonnaru slab-inscription of Sāhassamalla and the very short record at Koṭṭangē of Lokeśvara II are some in this category. The introductions to the longer inscriptions are occasions to dilate upon the claims to the throne, the meritorious works and the policy of the monarchs who set them up. There are a few short records of land-grants such as the Kaṭagamu inscription of Mānābharaṇa and another private grant of land at Koṭṭangē.

The Samgamu-vihāra inscription is the only one of its kind in this period. It is the record of a treaty entered into by Parākramabāhu I and Gajabāhu to settle their disputes and to determine the succession to the throne. The monks of this vihāra had probably taken the initiative in bringing about

Similar in purpose to the Ambagumu record is the Ruvanvälisäya. slab-inscription of Kalyanavati. It records all the honours done and donations made to the shrine, in her name. Lilavati in her Anuradhapura slab-inscription records the building of an alms-hall and the provision made for the continuance of the alms. Sundara-mahādevī, the queen of Vikramabāhu, and Rūpavatī, the queen of Parākramabāhu I, record briefly their erection of edifices at Māravīdiya and Potgul-vehera respectively. There are a few Tamil inscriptions. Four of these deal with religion and the Vēļaikkāras figure in two of them, as protectors to a charity and to the shrine of the Sacred Tooth Relic. The other two are at Budumuttava. The Galapāta-vihāra inscription is a unique private record of a grant, by a high dignitary and his relatives, of lands and slaves who are mentioned by name. It is one of the longest private inscriptions. Two inscriptions dated in the regnal years of Kalyanavati deal with the restoration of irrigation works. The Batalagoda-väva inscription records the restoration of an abandoned tank, and also of the rehabilitation of the vihāra and the village dependent upon it. The Minipe inscription contains only the introductory portion which is a prasasti in the traditional style of a political manifesto. A short Sanskrit inscription at Trincomalee records an invasion by a prince named Codaganga which does not seem to have reached the ears of the chroniclers.

There is no king in Ceylon who has so many inscriptions in his name as Niśśamkamalla. During his brief reign of nine years, he must have kept his scribes very busy. There is more information about him in his inscriptions than in the Cūļavanisa. But he had a tendency to boast about

his achievements, and so his claims have to be looked into with some caution. Some records such as the Gal-āsana (Stone-seat) inscriptions are brief, but others are long and include the famous Galpota or 'Stone Book.' There is much word for word repetition in these records, for they were probably copied from a set formula. For most of the records, there is no definite purpose except that they were intended to pacify and conciliate his subjects and to reconcile them to the Kālinga dynasty. Sometimes, as in the Dambulla and the Vān-āļa inscriptions, some specific intention is discernible through the usual formula.

There are only a few inscriptions of the Dambadeni period. A short pillar-inscription records a grant of land at Anuradhapura to a pirivena there in the reign of Parakramabahu II. His inscription at Devundara is longer, and is similar to the records of regulations of the Anuradhapura period. It contains rules for the administration of the scaport nearby. The inscription on a guardstone at the Lamkātilaka in Polonnaru records briefly the restoration of that shrine by Vijayabahu IV, and the Nāranbadda inscription records the construction of the vihāra at the site and the grant of land to it by Parākramabahu II.

An inscription dated in the third year of Bhuvanekabāhu IV belongs to the famous prelate Dharmakīrti. It records the construction of the Gaḍalādeṇi-vihāra and the many grants that were made to it by various individuals. Another inscription of the same date at Laṃkātilaka gives an account of the foundation of the shrine by Senā Laṃkādhikāra and enumerates the donations made to it. The Ampiṭi rock-inscription of the reign of Vikramabāhu IV is the record of a grant of land made to the shrine of the god of Senkaḍagala. Two other inscriptions dated in his reign are at Vīguļavatta and Petigammana, recording respectively, the construction of an irrigation canal and a grant of land. The brothers Alakeśvara and Devamantrīśvara appear as donors of land to the shrine of the god of Senkaḍagala in an inscription at Sagama dated in the time of Bhuvanekabāhu V.

Towards the end of this period, the type of record known as the sannasa comes into vogue. The main purpose of these records is to provide legal authority for the grant of land to persons or institutions. Some inscriptions too may fall into this category, though they are distinguished by the fact that they are inscribed on stone. The sannas were usually on copperplates, or where the originals are lost, copies are available on ola leaves or on paper. In later times ola leaves too came to be used for sannas. Two important stone inscriptions of Parākramabāhu VI, one at Pāpiļiyāna and the other at the Saman-dēvāle at Ratnapura have been destroyed by the Portuguese, but their texts are available in ola manuscripts. Land-

^{10.} For this inscription, see Book V, Chapter I, note 73.

grants by individuals are also recorded with the name of the reigning king, such as the inscriptions at Madavala, Devundara and Vaharakgoda. The Dädigama Slab of Bhuvanekabāhu VI is out of the ordinary, in that it is the proclamation of an amnesty to his enemies after he had subjugated the Four Korales and the Uḍaraṭa. There is a similar political agreement somewhat later in the Alutnuvara inscription of Senāsammata Vikramabāhu.

The trilingual inscription discovered in Galle is unique in that it is a foreign inscription in Ceylon recording gifts to local shrines. It is in Tamil, Chinese and Persian, and records gifts made to a Hindu, a Buddhist and an Islamic shrine by Cheng Ho at the beginning of the fifteenth century. He was the leader of an expedition sent into these areas by a Ming emperor.

These are the more important among the epigraphical records of the Island, and all those cited here have been edited and published. But there are many more not noticed directly which are yet to be published and there are some important records among them. But these will serve as an indication of the range and types of epigraphic evidence available for the writing of history.

4. Numismatic

Coins are another important source for the history of the Island. They throw light not only on the economic life of the country, but also on foreign influences that held sway from time to time, the artistic and technical skill of the people at various times and also sometimes on the political events of the time. This information is gleaned from the provenance and numbers of the coins, the legends and symbols on them and their metal content and fabric. Foreign coins found in Ceylon are evidence of trade connections that existed with those countries. Ceylon coins similarly found in other countries such as South India and their influence on the currency there, is evidence of influences from Ceylon on those countries¹¹.

5. Archaeological Souroes

In this category are placed all those sources which reveal the life of past ages, not through the written or the inscribed word, but through the creations of those ancient peoples, be they the crude implements of the prehistoric age or the beautiful paintings and sculptures and the magnificient structures of the Anurādhapura and Polonnaru periods. Much of this, of course, is in ruins, and what remains is that which has survived the ravages of time because they had been made of more durable material. Although the data conveyed by this type of source is limited, yet it is evidence that lights up what is conveyed through the written sources. Buildings mentioned in the chronicles, if identified with some ruin that we know,

^{11.} For brief accounts of the coinage of Ceylon in various periods, see the appropriate sections of Book II, Chapter VII, Book IV, Chapter VII and Book V Chapter VII,

CEYLON MILES 5 0 5 10 15 20 25 MILES ALTITUDE Above7 000 Feet 5000-7 000 --3000-5 000 --1000-3000 --500-1000 MEGALITHS PREHISTORIC SITES IN HILL-COUNTRY O PREHISTORIC SITES IN LOW-COUNTRY VAVUNIYÃ. O W URN BURIALS Molaash TRINCOMALEE 0 ANURĀDHAPUR 0 0 0 00 ATTICALOA CHILAW 0 KURUNAGALA, 0 COLOMBO RATHAPURA KALUTARA HAMBANTOTA GALLE

MATARA

PREHISTORIC SITES

give us a better idea of the scope of the activity involved than the bare fact as mentioned in the record. The same is true of the tanks. Apart from the mere identification of places, the study of archaeology reveals the techniques and skills that had been developed in course of time, and gives some indication of this development too. The harmony and balance of the buildings, and the sculptures and the paintings, reveal their artistic sensibilities. Influences from foreign countries that from time to time held sway can also be determined by the comparison of forms, motifs and techniques with those of neighbouring countries. Together, this group of evidence is an index to the level of culture and material prosperity of each age. New developments in religious doctrines and cults are reflected in the monuments of the various ages¹².

^{12.} For pre-historic remains, see Chapter V of this Book. For brief accounts of the architecture sculpture, painting, town-planning and irrigation during the various periods, see the relevant sections of Book II, Chapter IX, Book III, Chapter VII, Book IV, Chapter VIII and Book V, Chapter VIII.

CHAPTER V

PREHISTORIC AGE

THE story of man begins during the Pleistocene age. That is the reason why the Pleistocene period is of the highest interest to all pre-historians. Therefore, it would be pertinent to commence this chapter by quoting Adams¹ who has thus summarised Wayland's findings about that period

as regards Ceylon.

'Certain deposits lying on the surface of the gneisses of the coastal plain he designated 'Plateau Deposits.' These consist of gravelly beds overlain by red earth... They are not of marine origin. The upper red earth he believes to be wind-borne deposit. These plateau deposits are widely distributed over the lower levels of the Island and they contain abundant chipped flints and worked fragments of quartz etc., the remains of Palaeolithic man, and also the tools and

weapons of the later Neolithic inhabitants of Ceylon.'

It is agreed, generally, that man evolved into a tool-using animal during the latest phase of the Pleistocene period. In the West and in the colder areas, generally, this period is marked by glaciations, and four such glacial periods have been determined by climatologists. In the warmer tropical areas like Africa,² India and Ceylon, two periods of heavy rainfall have been postulated. These are known as pluvial periods,³ as contrasted with the glacial periods. The stone age⁴ falls within the Pleistocene, which itself lasted about five hundred thousand years altogether. It was during these pluvial periods that the laterite formations which are such a marked feature in the Ceylon geological strata can be observed. But the earliest stone implements used by man discovered so far fall into the late Pleistocene and the residual and alluvial deposits, and this period can be approximately dated to one hundred thousand B.C.

The existence of the stone age artifacts in Ceylon has been revealed by the efforts of pioneers in the field of prehistory. A few names like those of Green, Pole, Drs. Sarasins, Seligmann, Wayland, Hartley and Noone deserve mention. In India, the results of scientific surveys in the Soan Valley and the Narmadā region yielded definite evidence in establishing

India during early Pleistocene Times.' Geological Magazine, LXIX (1932).
4. V. D. Krishnaswami 'Stone Age in India,' Ancient India, No. 3, (1947), pp. 11ff.

F. D. Adams, The Geology of Ceylon, in Canadian Journal of Research, Vol. I, p. 443.
 H. de Terra and T.T.Patterson, Studies on the Ice Age in India and associated Human Cultures, Washington 1939; H. de Terra, P. Teilhard de Chardin and H. L. Movius (Jnr.)
 Geological and Archaeological aspects of S. E. Asia, Nature, No. 142, 13th August, 1938.
 M. C. Burkitt, L. A. Camiade and F. J. Richards 'Climatic changes in South East

a sequence of datable strata containing stone implements made by early man. On the basis of such discoveries, a sequence has been worked out in the Punjab and the Narmadā valley. Ceylon has not been so fortunate as yet. Much serious and scientific study has yet to be made, as such scientific knowledge alone will help to determine the age of finds discovered with other associated datable objects, and to co-relate the sequence of human activities in India and Ceylon.

The finds so far available to the research worker are limited, and some of those that have been discovered remain in the Colombo Museum and others in private collections. Two series of artefacts, one that of the upland areas and the other that of the lowland areas, could be observed. As regards the artefacts so far discovered, the true significance relating to the finds is lost as their provenance is not known, and the implementiferous strata have not been scientifically recorded and observed. Such few remains as are available have been examined with care, and it is on the basis of such knowledge that the following story is reconstructed. Fresh knowledge and, that too, scientific knowledge, will help to establish the sequence and such knowledge is being looked forward to by the research worker with the greater interest.

It is proposed therefore, to follow the three well-known periods into which the Old Stone Age has been divided in other countries. In India, too, such a classification has been possible, and an attempt should be made to correlate the local industries of the Stone Age with those of India, Burma and Malaya. There is also mention of an Eolithic Age in these parts, although the material evidence does not appear to be convincing enough for establishing such a period. Nevertheless, faint traces of most primitive stone artefacts may be accepted as being surviving stone implements of one hundred thousand years ago. The eoliths even in Europe are not well defined. They are believed to be the earliest implements made by man and fashioned by him when he knew very little of the art of tool-making. In Ceylon, too, the same position may have prevailed during very ancient times.

But the proper Stone Age in Ceylon begins with the Lower Palaeolithic period. This is reckoned to be about fifty thousand years old. The laterite surfaces exposed to sun and rain yield abundant crops of chert material. Often chert and quartz are found separate without any implements. Sometimes the exposed laterite or sandy surface yields a combination of chert and quartz. Generally speaking, the stone implements are fashioned out of chert or quartz, and rarely flint and jaspar. There is a belief in certain quarters that the Old Stone Age did not develop sufficiently in Ceylon as in South India, because of the isolation of early Stone Age men in the Island as a result of geological disturbances. On

the other hand, sufficient material has been forthcoming, even from the random inquiries and collections made so far in the Island, to warrant the postulation of a full sequence of Old Stone Age cultures. The local cultural pattern changed according to the climatic fluctuations and environmental differences that ensued in the areas periodically. It has been stated earlier that similar climatic conditions prevailed on the Indian continent and as far as Australia, the entire area then being one connected land surface.⁵ The peoples living in these lands developed similar cultures, and although the land masses later separated due to submergence in places by the sea, the peoples living in them might have been in contact with each other. It follows, therefore, that the cultural development would have been founded on similar bases, and the social patterns, too, could not have been dissimilar.

Special mention has to be made of a class of artefacts, viz., the so-called pebble implements, (vide Plate Ia). A similar series has been discovered in Africa, India and Ceylon. These are found in the river gravels, open stations and caves. These may have served as chisels, but their presence is interesting because they appear to be an intrusion into the chronological sequence of ancient artifacts.

The middle Palaeolithic, which is approximately 25,000 years old, has not yet been definitely distinguished in Ceylon on the basis of scientific data. It is true that certain beautifully worked stone implements similar to those found in India and Europe have been picked up in gravel beds and open stations. But as these have never been obtained in proper stratigraphical sequence with datable associated finds, very little reliance can be placed on their proper age. Some of the hand axes and scrapers (Plate Ib) may very well belong to this period. Nevertheless, there is a gradual evolutionary appearance which seems to indicate a progressive development in the technique of stone manufacture.

The upper Palaeolithic period is datable to about 15,000 years, and it can hardly be separated from the middle Palaeolithic as far as Ceylon implements are concerned. A gradual weakening, both in technique and vigour of production, seems to have been present during this period. It is very unlikely that the natural development of this culture could have been arrested, but only very little information has been presented to the student by those who have dealt with the subject in the field. More material is being eagerly awaited and perhaps a better appreciation of stone implements of the entire Palaeolithic period can then be made.

Between the upper Palaeolithic and the Neolithic there is, in most countries, a period known as the Mesolithic which is datable to approxi-

^{5.} See supra, p. 2.
6. A. Aiyappan 'Mesolithic Artifacts from Sawyerpuram in Tinnevelly District (South India)', Spolia Zeylanica, XXIV, pt. 2, (1950), pp. 145ff.

mately 10,000 years. Even in Europe, the Mesolithic is not as clearly defined as any other period of human prehistory. It indicates a general deterioration of humanity, as a result of climatic changes, towards a lower standard of life than prevailing previously. Nothing new either in tool manufacture, in material or technique, has been ascribed to this phase of human existence. The climate in the Island may have been wet, and man may have been struggling to overcome the adverse effects of his natural environment all the time. The leisure available for artistic or other cultural activities would therefore have been limited. In fact, it may be that at this stage food gatherers were being gradually transformed into food producers, and some form of settled life, even on a semi-nomadic basis, was being enjoyed. It is difficult to believe that Neolithic man suddenly developed, although isolated for ages, from his previous ancestors. It is also strange that the development in the Island was sporadic through cultural contact with migrations from India alone.

The next characteristic phase of human activity is the Neolithic, datable to about 8,000 B.C. The Neolithic period is one of gradual transition from the Mesolithic. It was during this stage that agriculture associated with animal husbandry came to be regarded and practised as a means of livelihood. The chief features of the implements belonging to this age are the grinding and polishing of stone tools by various techniques. In order to obtain a smooth implement, Neolithic man may have resorted to pecking, grinding, rubbing and polishing of stone tools. There are indications of hafting and the axe and adze seem to have been known and used. These indications seem to suggest the use of wood, horn, bone and other material, both as implements and as means of hafting to produce a handle. The mortar is also a common utensil. It may have been essential for pounding and crushing of grain.

The final phase of the Stone Age is generally known as the Microlithic period. The name is derived from the very tiny stone implements employed by man. The microliths or 'pygmies,' popularly so called because of the size of the tools, are found practically throughout the Island. They have been carefully studied by a number of persons who were technically competent to do so. The implements appear last in the stratigraphical series, and are discovered generally on the surface itself. The patanas in the upland areas and the arid sandy tracts in the scuth-east and the northwest of the Island yield abundant material representing these remains. The period of their use varies geographically from country to country. In fact, these were used by primitive people up to almost modern times in Australia and Malaya. In Ceylon, too, these might have been used by

^{7.} M. A. Noone and H. V. V., Noone (1940) 'Stone implements of Bandarawela,' CJSG, III, pp. 1-24.

the Väddās until a few thousand years ago. These tools may have been composite. In fact, this character becomes obvious by an examination of the actual size and shape. The implements could have been used as knives, cutters, arrow heads, points, needles, chisel blades or axes. According to their shapes, the tools have been described as lunates, crescents or trapezoids (Plate IIa). It may be possible to discover in the stone artifacts from the south-east of Ceylon, for example at Minihāgalkanda, some characteristics resembling those generally found in the stone tools belonging to Malaya and Indonesia. This new technique, probably introduced from the south-east, may have been used in making the Ceylon tools, and a careful analysis may reveal their true origin to be South-East Asia.

Two other periods of the early history of man are generally recognized. One is the Chalcolithic or the Bronze Age, and the other the Iron Age. The Chalcolithic is a definitely established period of history which lies on the border-line between prehistory and history, and is therefore called proto-history. In the West as well as in India, information regarding these periods is available. 'It is noteworthy that such a Chalcolithic complex has not so far been revealed in the Microlithic industries of Eastern India.'8 In Ceylon there is hardly any information worthy of mention. The Neolithic overlaps the Chalcolithic in India. Similarly, it is possible that in some areas the two phases run simultaneously. Whilst information on the Neolithic of Ceylon is available, the Chalcolithic is practically unknown. As no traces have been discovered nothing can be said about that phase. The bronze objects so far discovered belong to the historical period, and this story will be narrated in the relevant chapter.

A similar position prevails with regard to the Iron Age. Excavations have revealed certain traces of iron manufacture in the Island.9 Slag heaps marking the sites of ancient furnaces are also met with. There are also legends which mention the hilly districts as iron smelting areas. As regards the utensils used by early man of the Iron Age, we have no information. There are traces of iron in the burials belonging to the Neolithic age in South India. The same information is not available with regard to the burials in Ceylon.

This story would be incomplete without knowing something about the way of life of the men who lived in Ceylon during the Stone Ages. Early man produced stone implements by the primitive technique of percussion and perhaps by thermal action. Having obtained the raw material—flakes or cores—portions were chipped by striking with another stone generally known as a hammer or hand axe. Little secondary flaking

9. N. D. Wijesekera, Peoples of Ceylon, p. 2. 10. ASCAR, 1956, p. 8.

^{8.} V. D. Krishnaswami in Ancient India, No. 9, 1953, p. 71.

or trimming became necessary during very early times, as only the rough 'business' or working edge needed shaping. The rest was sufficiently shaped to obtain a good hand grip. In this category can be included the hammer stones, choppers, hand axes, scrapers and points. Two main series of industries are also recognized, viz., the core industry and the flake or blade industry. The more shapely and beautifully worked implements are to be found mostly in the second group. This may be the result of accumulated experience and the development of the technique of manufacture in course of time. Bone, horn or shell is not found during this period, and even if these had been in use, all these materials could not have survived. The shell objects may have been used more as ornaments than as implements (Plate IIb).

In spite of the important discoveries so far made, very little information is available about the Palaeolithic times. The material collected so far helps to confirm the general notion that Palaeolithic man of Ceylon lived under very much the same conditions and circumstances as his contemporaries in other parts of the world, particularly India. His way of life, his mental outlook and general pattern of behaviour must have been based on the same pre-determinants as those of humanity elsewhere but, perhaps, with one exception. Whereas in the West early man's constant struggle was to keep himself warm, in Ceylon he had more time to devote to hunting and food gathering. He led the life of a primitive hunter. His larder was supplemented with sparse collections made by the women folk who obtained such things as fruits, leaves and edible roots from the forest nearby, as did our Vädda women until very recent times. jungle then was teeming with animals, and trapping and hunting animals were his full time occupations. In this, certainly, the dog may have played As regards the cannibal practices of early man, either an important part. of Ceylon or elsewhere, very little or nothing can be said without specific data in support of such a belief. The facts, if any, so far discovered certainly do not warrant such an inference.

If man originally migrated from India to Ceylon, then it is natural to expect contemporaneous Indian and Ceylonese prehistoric people to possess striking points of similarity. This is manifest in stone implements and material remains so far discovered in Ceylon and India. The two peoples could have followed the same technique of stone flaking. The customs, beliefs, arts and crafts could not have been different. The men of primitive times lived in caves and open stations according to the season. They preferred the mouths of caves or rock shelters situated on the sunny side of hills overlooking streams, even as the Väddās did until recent times. Being a hunter, primitive man's constant thought was about food and protection from animals. But, unfortunately, the caves or rock shelters

scientifically excavated so far have not yielded Palaeolithic implements. Only Neolithic implements and a few shells and bones have been discovered. The distribution map¹¹ (facing p 81) showing the location of implements so far discovered suggests the occupation practically of the entire Island by early man, except areas over 5,000 feet above sea level.

Primitive men did not live by hunting only. Fishing, food collecting and gathering relieved them of the monotony of a meat diet. Fire-making would have been known and the technique employed may have been the drill-bow method. It survived until recent times, and some Väddas use it still. This is evident by the presence of charcoal at various levels of occupation. Fires may have been used for protection as well as for warmth. It was, of course, during much later times that cooking came to be practised. Tropical men required very little clothing, and this too was obtained from his environment. Barks of trees and leaves of plants and skins of animals sufficed to cover nudity. Few ornaments were used, and some of the pierced shells may have been used for ornamentation. Ochre has also been found. Different hues may have been in use. It is likely that they painted their bodies and drew pictures on the walls of caves. The excavations of Drs. Sarasins12 reveal a large variety of bone tools and implements. These could have been used as arrow points and awls, but not as needles, since none of them shows an eye. It is quite likely that other bone artifacts, such as harpoons, fish hooks and needles may have been found together with carved material. Snail shells regularly pierced at a certain point may have been worn in a string round the waist and the neck.

Red and yellow ochre has been picked up in open stations. Some pieces show definite signs of wear. In Ceylon, a few caves do contain paintings and engravings¹³. In the caves at Āṇḍiyagala, Gal-Oya and Bintänna are rock paintings which have no connection with later art. But they are distinct and their ethnological value as such seems to be very limited and these pictures and unintelligible signs help to show that ancient men at some period were engaged in engraving and painting. Various crude representations of animals and conventionalised signs are all that have been preserved. Naturalistic expression has been attempted without success. The paintings are certainly not modern, and are widely distributed in the North-Central, Uva and Eastern Provinces. The caves in the Kāgalla and Ratnapura Districts may also reveal such primitive art. The paintings are not done by a brush. Probably the finger may have been used in drawing them. No religious or magical significance can be attributed to these ancient paintings until more data have been obtained.

^{11.} This also indicates Megalithic sites.

Steinzeit auf Zeylan, 1908.
 John Still in JCBRAS, Vol. XXII, p. 74; C. G. Seligman, The Veddas, 1911, pp. 320-21

There is no true evidence as to the manner of disposal of the dead during the Palaeolithic times. It is likely that cremation and burial were both practised and, in order to commemorate the site, stone monuments have been put up. Whether these are commemorative of the dead or indicative of the burial sites, it is difficult to say. But the following classes of megalithic monuments have been discovered: the dolmen at Rambukkana,14 the cists¹⁵ at Katiraveli in the Eastern Province and the stone mounds at Konvava in the North-Central Province. Both forms of burial appear to have been common in certain areas. Large pots16 with wide rims containing human skeletal remains have been found. This is indicative of a form of burial probably belonging to the late Neolithic times. A funerary urn with smaller pets found in association has been discovered at Pomparippu. Smaller pots were also found within the urn. A skull was found in the large urn.17 A black and red variety of pottery was found. It is now felt that pottery was known from about the Mesolithic times in Ceylon. Sites in the Pomparippu¹⁸ and Ratnapura areas have yielded pottery in association with human remains. There seem to be two other series of pottery; one a large series with thick body and massive rim and the other a small series with a thinner body and a smaller rim. The thickness of the large variety was about 20 mm. and that of the rim 25 mm., whilst that of the smaller series was 6 mm. and the rim 15 mm. The composition seemed to contain a large quantity of sand. Thumb impressions and engraved lines arranged in herring-bone shape by way of decoration can be observed both inside and out.

The material at our disposal will not justify any further comments regarding prehistoric men of Ceylon. Attempts have been made to do so but these will remain mere suggestions without a scientific basis. The types of men, their food and clothing, customs and beliefs and in fact their general physical make-up and mental outlock and way of life must for the present remain in doubt and uncertainty until drehistoric excavations and studies are founded on a more scientific basis. The story about prehistoric man will therefore have to be retold from time to time by different scholars, approaching the problems from different scientific angles.

^{14.} CJSG, II, pp. 96-97.

^{15.} Ibid., p. 94.
16. N. D. Wijesekera, Peoples of Ceylon, p. 26.
17. ASCAR, 1956, p. 8, plates 5 and 6.
18. The cemetery at Pomparippu may not belong to a date earlier than the Sinhalese occupation. Similar pot burials continued to be in vogue in the Tamil country up to the Sangam age, i.e. second century A.C.

ARYAN SETTLEMENTS: THE SINHALESE

'CEYLON,' the name by which this Island is known to the world today, has been derived, through Arabic and Portuguese corruptions, from the Sanskrit 'Sinihala.' It is by the name 'Sinihala,' or its dialectical forms, that this Island and its people are generally referred to in classical Sanskrit literature, and most often in later Pāli as well as Sinhalese writings. The people who comprise about seventy per cent of the population of Ceylon even today, after the Island had been subject to various historical vicissitudes during a period of over two millenia, call themselves and their language by that name, which has been Anglicised as 'Sinhalese.'

The language spoken by the Sinhalese is akin to Hindi, Bengāli, Marāthi, Gujarātī and other Indo-Aryan tongues of Northern India, of which the oldest known form is the Vedic Sanskrit1. In its basic characteristics, Sinhalese differs from Tamil, the language of the South Indian people who are the nearest neighbours of Ceylon, and who during the last thousand years, have displaced the earlier Sinhalese population of some areas in the northern and eastern parts of the Island. That Sinhalese has been the speech of the people of this Island for over two thousand years is established by hundreds of inscriptions on stone, the earliest of which belong to the third century before Christ. How the form of speech represented by the earliest epigraphs gradually changed to give rise to modern Sinhalese can be studied in considerable detail by a continuous series of documents belonging to the intervening centuries, quite up to modern times, and by numerous literary works, of which the earliest extant dates from the tenth century.2 Until the colonisation of regions in the southern hemisphere by various European nations during the last four centuries, Ceylon continued to be, for about two thousand years, the southernmost region of the globe where an Aryan language was spoken by the mass of the people. This circumstance invests the Sinhalese language, and the people who spoke and still speak it, with a particular importance in the study of the world's history and civilisations. The fact that a large territory inhabited by peoples speaking non-Aryan languages intervenes between the Sinhalese and the speakers of Aryan tongues in India clearly indicates that the ancestors of the present day Sinhalese migrated to this Island from Āryāvarta—as the abode of Aryanised Indians was known in

For the linguistic affinities of Sinhalese, see supra, Chapter III.
 For the evolution of the Sinhalese language, see Stgiri Graffiti, Vol. I, pp. lxxviii ff.

ancient days-sometime before the third century B.C., when documents in old Sinhalese were first engraved on stone. The distance which separates the Sinhalese from their nearest linguistic kinsmen also suggests that this migration was not an overland one, but along a sea route. The inference that we have drawn from the above premises is generally confirmed by the traditions handed down among the ancient Sinhalese, and recorded in the chronicles. According to these traditions, the eponymous hero of the Sinhalese race arrived in this Island, with his followers, by sea at the beginning of the Buddhist era, i.e. in the sixth or fifth century B.C., some three hundred years before the date to which the earliest epigraphical monument in Ceylon can be ascribed. The evidence of the distribution of the early Brāhmī inscriptions indicates that, by the third or second century B.C., the ancient Sinhalese had occupied practically the whole of the Island.3 It is, therefore, not unreasonable to infer that there was an interval of some two or three centuries between the date of the earliest settlement in the Island of an Aryan-speaking group of people, and that of the earliest Brāhmī inscriptions in old Sinhalese.

These traditions had been handed down orally for nearly a millenium before they were recorded in the chronicles. Hence, one need not be surprised to find that the account given in the chronicles with regard to the origin of the Sinhalese and their arrival in this Island can by no means be called history as the term is understood today. Moreover, it was not unusual among ancient peoples to attribute superhuman qualities and miraculous deeds to the heroes of old, and the stories that were current among the ancient Sinhalese relating to their eponymous hero were true to pattern. A brief re-statement of these stories and an attempt to distinguish the different strata embedded in them will be found in the next chapter.

The settlement of Aryan-speaking peoples in Ceylon was considered an important happening by their racial kindred in North India, too, and they had their own accounts of the manner in which this was brought about. These stories seem to have been current more particularly among mercantile people who had embraced the Buddhist faith. The event was ascribed to so remote an epoch that the hero of the legends, the eponymous Sinhala, was believed to have been Buddha Himself in a previous existence. The traditions that were current among the Buddhists of ancient India with regard to this topic have been given literary form in a work which was translated into Chinese in the third century of the present era, being thus earlier than the Ceylon chronicles by at least two centuries. The Pāli Jātaka collection, too, contains a story somewhat similar to the Simhala legend, but not so detailed. Hsüan Tsang, the Chinese pilgrim,

^{3.} See map facing page 17.

has given yet another account of the origin of the Sinhalese. These stories, also, will be recounted in the next chapter.

A feature common to all these stories is the belief that was current among the people in North India in the most ancient times that this Island, considered to have been a sort of an El Dorado, was inhabited by man-eating Yakṣas or Rākṣasas. Such stories might have originated from the presence in the Island of a race of men in prehistoric times who practised cannibalism. It is also not improbable that these stories were made to gain currency by the earliest pioneers who discovered this Island and, having become aware of the existence of precious stones therein, wished to keep

them as a monopoly by discouraging others from visiting it.

With the exception of the story recorded in the Ceylon chronicles, all other accounts of the peopling of this Island make the merchants take the leading part therein. These accounts are more worthy of credence, for in all ages and climes it was the merchants of adventurous disposition who, lured by the expectation of immense profit, went to new lands in search of commodities that were prized by civilised people. After the Aryanised people of North India took to seafaring and trade with foreign lands, it would not have been long before they discovered the Island which lay close to the southern extremity of the Indian peninsula, with pearl banks on its north-western littoral and precious stones in its south-eastern districts. These early merchants must have established trading posts at convenient places on the sea-board, and gradually extended their purview into the interior. The fertility of the soil must have induced some of them to make permanent agricultural settlements there, which must have attracted more and more colonists, until the whole Island was occupied by civilised men.

It is quite understandable that, in the stories relating to their origin current among the Sinhalese themselves, their epenymous hero has become the scion of a royal family. But the earliest Brāhmī inscriptions contain indirect evidence that the founders of the Sinhalese royal family of ancient days had mercantile associations. For the title gāmaṇī, borne by members of the royal family in the earliest inscriptions as well as in literary references, was one appropriate to the head of a mercantile corporation, and occurs with that connotation in the Pāli Jātakas.⁴ The title parumaka (Skt. pramukha), borne by the ancient nebility, also points in the same direction.⁵

The Indian legend of Simhala does not help one in ascertaining the precise area in Āryāvarta from which the original Sinhalese migrated to

Vāṇijā samitim katvā nānāraṭṭhāto āgatā
 Dhanahārāya pakkamsu ckam katvāna gāmaṇim
 Merchants from many a kingdom came, and all together met
 Chose them a chief, and straight set out a treasure to get.

Chose them a chief, and straight set out a treasure to get.'

See Jātaka IV, p. 351 and Rouse's translation, p. 222.

5. See Mookerji, Local Government in Ancient India, Second Edition, p. 47.

Ceylon. Simhakalpā, the home town of Simhala, is not mentioned in any other source. The geographical evidence in the stories of the Ceylon chronicles is indecisive when the names are taken to indicate the regions to which they were applied in historic times. Vanga, the region over which the father of the princess who consorted with the lion is said to have reigned, is well-known as modern Bengal, and the mention of Kalinga and Magadha in the elaboration of the details is in accord with this. region in which was the hunting ground of the lion where Vijaya's father founded Simhapura, and whence Vijaya himself started on his voyage that brought him to Ceylon, is called Lala, phonetically equivalent to Lata, the modern Gujarat. It is very unlikely that, in those early days, there could have been direct communication between Bengal and Gujarāt. This difficulty can be overcome by taking that Lala of the Mahavamsa is Rādha adjoining Vanga, for this territory is referred to as Iladam in eleventh century Tamil inscriptions,6 and Lada is mentioned together with Gauda and Vanga in a fifteenth century Sinhalese poem.. 7 The identification of a place in Western Bengal, named Singur, with the Simhapura of Vijaya, has been suggested.8 In the twelfth century, a Ceylon king of Kalinga lineage proclaimed that the Simhapura from which he hailed was identical with the city of that name from which Vijaya came to Ceylon.9 But, if the original Sinhalese started from a port in Bengal on their voyage which brought them to Ceylon, it is very improbable that they first went to Suppāraka and Bharukaccha before they finally arrived in this Island. If, on the other hand, Lala is taken to be the well-known Latadesa, i.e. modern Gujarāt, a band of sea-farers taking to their vessels from a port in that country would naturally call at the havens of Bharukaccha and Suppāraka before they landed on the western sea-board of Ceylon. A consideration of the geographical names occurring in the traditional account of the colonisation of Ceylon by people of Aryan speech is thus inconclusive with regard to the point of departure, though the evidence is more favourable to the view that this was on the western, rather than on the eastern, sea-board of Northern India.

The evidence of language has been appealed to for settling this question. But philologists who have compared the modern Sinhalese language with the Indo-Aryan vernaculars of North India have not been unanimous in their verdicts. Geiger, who is the ultimate court of appeal among European philologists with regard to matters concerning the language of Ceylon, is decidedly of the view that Sinhalese, with regard to its phonology, is

^{6.} SII, III, Introduction, p. 19.

Pärakumbāsirita, v. 71.
 JBAS., New Series, VI, p. 604.
 EZ., II. p. 115.

akin to those of the Western group like Marathi.10 On the other hand, evidence that cannot be easily ruled out of court has been adduced by others, notably by Mohamed Sahidullah,11 in support of the contention that Sinhalese has its next-of-kin in the Eastern Indo-Aryan languages. In view of the fact that the Sinhalese language has had an isolated existence for two and a half millenia, separated from its sister languages by a wide belt of Dravidian, and developed on its own lines, while the regions of North India, peopled by speakers of Aryan languages, had seen much shifting of populations, the conclusions arrived at by a comparison of modern Sinhalese with the present day vernaculars of North India become somewhat open to suspicion. It is also not possible to speak of immutable characteristics of the Eastern in contrast to the Western groups of Indo-Aryan. Nevertheless, there have been certain phonological and other features in which the Eastern dialects differ from those in the West. The change of an original y to j and ν to b, characteristics of the Eastern languages, is not found in the Western as well as in Sinhalese, which also preserves a western characteristic in the common change of s to h.¹²

The comparison of the language of the earliest Sinhalese inscriptions with Indian dialects of approximate date is likely to yield more reliable results. Certain characteristics of old Sinhalese, such as the change of t to t when preceded by an r, the nominative singular in e, the locative singular in hi (śi) and the palatal in place of the dental s, can be characterised as eastern, for they are neticed in the Ascka edicts at Dhauli, and differ from corresponding phonetic features in the language of the Girnar edicts in Western India. But most of these phonological and morphological peculiarities can also be met with in the Asoka edicts at Maneshra and Shāhbāzgarhī in the extreme north-west of what was India (in territory now included in Pakistan)13.

When we consider the semantic aspect of the language, too, the results are contradictory. The circumstance that the word ganga, derived from Skt. Gangā, the name of a particular river, has become a generic term for rivers in Sinhalese, has been cited as an indication that the ancestors of the people who speak that language came from the Gangetic valley. But the rivers which fall to the sea on the north-western sea-board, on which the earliest settlers landed, according to tradition, are not known as ganga but as oya (from Skt. srotas.) The river which was known as Gaigā par excellence in ancient Ceylon was the Mahaväli Ganga, and Gonagamakapattana (Trincomalce) at which immigrants from Eastern India landed on a subsequent occasion, was not far from the mouth of this river. The

W. Geiger, A Grammar of the Sinhalese Language, pp. VII—XII.
 Indian Historical Quarterly, IX, pp. 742—750.
 For the linguistic evidence discussed at greater length, see supra, pp. 33-41. 13. See Hultzsch, CII, I, pp. lviff, lxxxivff and xcixff.

introduction of the term Ganga to indicate one particular river at first, and later as a generic term for a stream, cannot thus be taken as due to the original Aryan settlers. On the other hand, the Sinhalese word for the rice plant, goyam, is obviously derived from Skt. godhāma, meaning 'wheat,' indicating that the cultivation of grains was introduced to Ceylon by a people whose staple food grain had originally been wheat, 14 and who extended the use of that word to another grain which was cultivated for their staple diet in a new land.

This contradictory nature of the evidence furnished by an examination of the literary tradition as well as the language has led historians to conclude that there had been two streams of immigration of Aryan-speaking peoples into this Island, one from the west and the other from the east of Āryāvarta. ¹⁵ This is what the tradition categorically states, and does not require any profound critical analysis for its enunciation. But such a conclusion leaves us exactly where we started. The two streams of immigration did not possibly reach the Island simultaneously, and the name 'Sinhala' was not bestowed on the Island jointly by those who came from the east and the west.

As has already been stated, there are no inscriptions contemporaneous with the first settlements, and in the earliest epigraphical records available, there is no direct evidence bearing on the question for which we are seeking an answer. The limitations of archaeological research, where the evidence of material remains is not illumined by the written word, make it very unlikely that a question like this would be settled by that means. We therefore fall back on the earliest inscriptions to see whether there is any indirect evidence in them bearing on our present quest.

An inquiry that is likely to yield results is the examination of proper names in the earliest Brāhmī inscriptions, particularly with a view to ascertaining if an epithet of ethnic significance attached to any of them suggests the region from which the ancestors of those who bore such names originally came. The name 'Simhala' itself does not occur in these records, for the very good reason that there was no need to distinguish any person by referring to him as such, when the people as a whole were entitled to that name. But the few people who were not Sinhalese figuring in these records have words of ethnic significance prefixed to their names; for instance, we find a merchant and galiapatis who were Damedas (Tamils) mentioned in three inscriptions, and persons described as Milaka (Skt.

^{14.} Cf. infra, p. 219. The statements in the CHI, I. pp. 135, 203 and 413 that rice was the staple food of the people of North India, based on evidence from the post-Rgvedic literature, Megasthenes and the Jātakas, refer, in the main, to the inhabitants of the Gangetic valley, and do not exclude the possibility of the existence of communities, whose staple diet was wheat, in some areas of the Indus valley, as such do exist today. Two varieties of wheat, still grown in the Punjab, have been identified among the finds at Mohenjo-daro. See Wheeler, The Indus Civilisation, p. 62.

15. CHI, I, p. 606.

Mleccha) in two records. 16 These de not come to our aid in determining the original home of the Sinhalese. It is, however, legitimate to surmise that when the ancient Sinhalese left their original homeland, some persons of contiguous territories also came in their company. As a later analogy, we may mention soldiers of fortune from Germany who came to Ceylon with the Dutch.

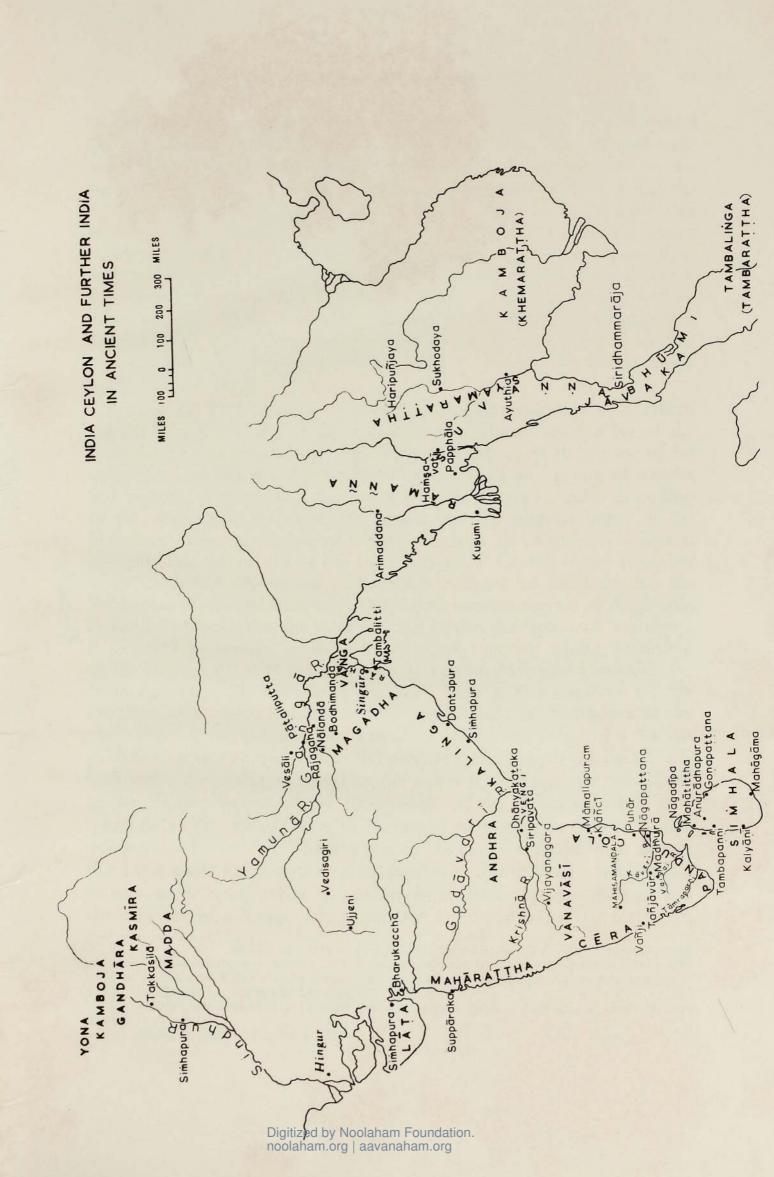
We are not mistaken in this surmise, for in no less than four Brāhmī records there occurs a name which is that of a tribe known from Sanskrit and Pāli literature as well as the earliest Indian epigraphical records. The name is 'Kabojha' with its derivative form 'Kabojhiya'. Two short Brāhmī records from Koravakgala¹⁷ mention a village chief (gamika) named Kabojha. Being a mere personal name, this may be dismissed as of no significance. Deserving of greater consideration is the mention of a chieftain (parumaka) named Gopala who was the head of a corporation (goța=Skt. goștha) of Kabojhiyas (Kabojhiyana=Skt. Kambojīyanam) in an inscription at Kaduruväva in the Kurunāgala District.18 A cave at Bovattegala is stated in the inscription engraved therein to have been the gift to the Sanigha of the members of the great mercantile guild (mahapugiyana = Skt. mahā-pūgyānām) named Kabojhiya.19

The name is easily recognised as Kamboja in Pāli and Sanskrit. This cannot refer to the country of that name in Further India, for the latter emerges into history a thousand years or so after the date of these inscriptions. The Kambojas, in association with the Yavanas, are mentioned by the great Sanskrit grammarian Pāṇini.20 Yāska, in the Nirukta, states that the speech of the Kambojas differed in some respects from that of the average Indo-Aryan of his day.21 In the Assalāyana Sutta of the Majjhima Nikāya, the Buddha has referred to the Kambojas, along with the Yonas (Yavanas), as people among whom there were only two classes, the free men and slaves.22 Asoka, too, refers to Kambojas along with Yonas and Gandhāras as western borderers of his.23 Kamboja was included in the list of sixteen great janapadas mentioned in the Pāli canon;24 here, too, it is coupled with Gandhara. This people occupied the extreme northwestern area of the Indo-Aryan world, in what is today the borderland

See infra, p. 238.
 Nos. 1049 and 1050 of the Inscriptions Register in the Archaeological Department (ASIR).
 The text of this inscription (No. 1316 of ASIR) reads: Goța Kahoji(ya)na parumaka Gopalaha bariya upaśika Citaya lene śagaśa.

^{19.} ASIR. No. 1118. The reading is Kabojihiya mahapugiyana manapadasane agata anagata catudisa sagasa.

^{20.} Gaṇapāṭha, 178 on Rule II, 1, 72.
21. CHI, I, p. 117.
22. Majjhima Nikāya, P.T.S. Edition, Vol. II, p. 149.
23. Hultzsch, CII, I, p. 25.
24. See, for example, Angustara Nikāya, P.T.S. Edition, Vol. I, p. 213; Vol. IV, pp. 252, 256 and 260.



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of Afghanistan and Pakistan. It has thus to be accepted as a historical fact that some Kamboja people had found their way to Ceylon, and were living as a distinct social group, constituted into a corporation, in the second century B.C. Such a conclusion is supported by the fact that the Yonas, who are mentioned together with the Kambojas in the early Pāli texts as well as in the Asoka inscriptions, and must, therefore, have been occupying contiguous territory in north-western Āryāvarta, had found their way to Ceylon in the pre-Christian centuries, for Paṇḍukābhaya (fourth century B.C.) established at Anurādhapura²⁵ 'the common dwelling ground of the Yonas.' But the reference in the Brāhmī inscriptions to the Kambojas does not necessarily establish that they migrated to Ceylon together with the original Sinhalese. Indirect evidence for that is found in the Mahābhārata.²⁶

That great Sanskrit epic, in its account of the conquests of northern regions by Arjuna, one of the five Pandava brothers, gives a list of the countries and peoples which submitted to the hero in the course of his campaign. In this list, the Kambojas are included in a group of peoples and regions coming after the mention of Simhapura. And, according to the Mahāvainsa tradition, Sinihapura was the original home of the Sinhalese. This association of Simhapura with the Kambojas makes it probable that the people of this stock arrived in Ceylon in the company of the Sinhalese. Moreover, it furnishes evidence to conclude that the Simhapura of the Sinhalese was in the north-western regions of Ārvāvarta. A significant fact is that the verse which describes the capture of Simhapura is followed by another giving a list of peoples among whom, according to the manuscripts of the epic written in Telugu, Malayalam and Grantha characters, were the Vankas or Vangas. There is thus evidence for the existence of a Vanga country in the close vicinity of Simhapura in the north-west of Āryāvarta. The Vessantara Jātaka also refers to a Vankapabbata to which a prince of the Sivi country in the Punjab was banished.27 This settles the problem created by the mention of Vanga and Sinhapura in the Vijayan legend of the Mahāvamsa. If the Sinhalese, when they migrated to this Island, brought memories of a territory named Vanga which played a part in the totemistic stories connected with their origin, that name could easily have been confused with that of Vanga, well-known in subsequent times, when the geographical details became blurred, and the existence of a Vanga other than that in Eastern India was forgotten.

India. See Bhandarkar, Carmichael Lectures (1921), pp. 25ff.

26. Mahābhārata, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute Edition, Sabhāparva, chap. 24, vv. 19—22.

^{25.} Mv. x, v. 90; See also Mv., text edited by Geiger, Introduction p. liv. The Yonas mentioned together with the Kambojas in Asoka's edicts are considered to be the colony of Greeks that had settled at Nysa, between the Kabul and the Indus rivers, a considerable time before Alexander's invasion of India. See Bhandarkar, Carmichael Lectures (1921), pp. 25ff.

^{27.} Jātaka, translation, Vol. VI, p. 225.

Kalinga and Magadha were thus introduced in the elaboration of details. Such shifting of names from one region to another is not a rare phenomenon in Indian history. For example, a people called the Malavas (Malloi) were living in the Punjab when Alexander invaded India; later they are found occupying the Vindhyan plateau.28

The exact location of this Simhapura is furnished by Hsüan-Tsang who visited it in the seventh century. According to the Chinese pilgrim,29 the western border of the kingdom of Simhapura was on the river Indus, and the city itself was situated about 700 li (117 miles) to the south-east of Takṣaśilā (Taxila).

The location of the original Sinhalese in this region is supported by the fact that the only known occurrences in Indian epigraphy of the personal name 'Simhala' (in a slightly modified form) is furnished by two Kharosthi inscriptions of the first or second century of the Christian era, one engraved on a vase found in a stūpa at Taxila, and the other on a bas-relief from Loriyan Tangai. The first inscription records the establishment of a stūpa in honour of all Buddhas by two brothers, one named Sihila (Simhala) and the other Simharaksita. The second records a gift of Simhamitra, the companion (or rather the pupil) of Sihilaka (Simhalaka)30. Sihila is interesting as the intermediate form through which the Tamil Ilam originated from Simhala. The name was at first a personal one, and was later extended in use to denote a people. The word should have continued in use as a personal name in the region where the Sinhalese first lived, even after they, or a section of them, had migrated to other regions.

The ancient Sinhalese, however, do not appear to have migrated to Ceylon direct from their original home in the upper Indus valley. They had, most probably, settled down in an intermediate area, and remained there for some time, before seeking a new home further afield. This is the conclusion that one arrives at by an examination of the account given in the Mahāvamsa which states that the father of Vijaya, the leader of the colonists who arrived in Ceylon, left the city of his maternal grandfather to found a new kingdom in Lāļa-raṭṭha.31 The Mahābhārata appears to have preserved a memory of the Sinhalese who had left their original home in the Punjab and settled down in a region closer to this Island. In the account of Nakula's conquest of the peoples and countries to the west of Indraprastha, the poet mentions the very powerful Grāmaņeyas on the banks of the Sindhu (Indus).32 Grāmaņeya is the equivalent in

^{28.} CHI, I, p. 375 and Com.HI, II, p. 257.
29. Samuel Beal, Buddhist Records of the Western World, Vol. I, pp. 143—146. A Sihapura in western India is also mentioned in the Cetiya Jātaka. Jātaka, translation, Vol. III, p. 275

^{30.} Sten Konow, Kharosthi Inscriptions, pp. 87 and 110.

^{31.} Mv., VI, v. 34. 32. Mahābhārata, op. cit., Sabhāparva, Chap. 29, vv. 7—8.

Sanskrit of the old Sinhalese gamani, which, as has already been stated, was a title of early rulers in Ceylon, both at Anurādhapura and other places. The title grāmani and its equivalents or derivatives are not applied in the Vedic or other ancient literature in Sanskrit to supreme rulers.33 It generally had the connotation of 'troop-leader.' Grāmaneyas are mentioned in this passage of the Mahābhārata in the company of people who are known to have had an oligarchical form of government, and lived in the region close to the mouth of the Indus. It seems likely, therefore, that they were identical with, or closely related to, the Indo-Aryan speaking people who immigrated to Ceylon and established a settlement under the rule of chiefs called gamani.

Simhapura, from which the original Sinhalese came to Ceylon, is said in the Mahāvamsa to have been in the country of Lāļa, i.e. Lāṭa. If Lāṭa be taken to correspond to Gujarāt, the Simhapura in that region may be represented by the modern Sihor in Kāthiāwār.34 Ptolemy calls the Lāta country Larike, and describes it as adjoining Indo-Scythia which was at the mouth of the river Indus. In ancient days, the course of the lower Indus ran much further to the east than it does today, and one of its branches emptied itself into what is now called the Rann of Cutch, then open sea. grants coming down the Indus would, therefore, naturally arrive in the country anciently known as Lata, and now called Gujarat. It is also possible that the ancient Lata comprised the region of the Indus delta, for it is still called Lar, and that the Simhapura of Sinhalese tradition was located in that area. The map of Sindh facing page 248 of Cunninghams's Ancient Geography of India shows a place containing ancient ruins named Hingur, some forty miles to the east of the apex of the Indus delta; the name 'Hingur' can very well be taken as a corruption of an original 'Simhapura.' There is evidence that the Kambojas who, as we have seen above, inhabited a region bordering the upper Indus, had at one time established themselves in a country near Sind.35 If this is due to the Kambojas, or a considerable section of them, migrating southwards down the Indus, the fact supports the inference that the ancestors of the Sinhalese, who were neighbours of the Kambojas, had done likewise.

The tradition recorded by Hsüan Tsang that the boat in which Sin hala's sister was sent adrift, reached Persia,36 points to the belief held by the people among whom this version of the Simhala legend originated, that the home of the principal characters in the story was in the west of India. The country of Western Women, peopled by the descendants of Sinhala's

^{33.} Macdonell and Keith, Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 247.
34. Simhapura mentioned in a grant of Dhruvasena I of Valabhō (EI, XVII, p. 110) has been identified with this place.

^{35.} HCIP., I, p. 260.

^{36.} Samuel Beal, Buddhist Records of the Western World, Vol. II, p. 240.

sister, has its parallel in the Sinhalese traditions about Vijaya, for the ship in which the wives of Vijaya and his followers were sent away is said to have arrived at Mahiladvipa, the Island of Women. An Island of Females as well as one of Males was known to Marco Polo.37 It was said to have been situated somewhere between the coast of Baluchistan and the Island of Socotra. These descendants of Simhala's sister are called Western Women by Hsüan Tsang, and a knowledge of them as well as a cult of their ancestress appears to have prevailed in ancient Ceylon; the Queen of the West (Pacchima-rājinī) for whom, according to the Mahāvamsa,38 Pandukābhaya established a chapel in Anurādhapura, was obviously the Queen of these 'Western Women.'

The Mahāvamsa states that when Vijaya and his followers were banished frem Simhapura, they were made half-shaven (addha-mundaka) as a punishment. Sanskrit writings refer to Yavanas, Sakas and Kambojas as shaven-headed, and state that this was a punishment inflicted on these people by the mythical king Sagara.39 The Sakas are said to have had their heads half-shaven, just as Vijaya and his followers had. The expression 'half-shaven' does not mean 'shaven over half of the head,' but that their hair was cropped short. This was the normal custom of these peoples, just as it is among many people in the West today and, copying the westerners, among 'civilised' people of Asia as well. The Indians, who normally wore their hair long, must have invented the story of Sagara degrading them by having their heads shaven or half shaven, to show their disapproval of the custom. If the shaven-headed Kambojas, as we have shown above, were associates of the early Sinhalese, the latter themselves might have affected this fashion of wearing their hair short, and the people in the new lands to which they came could have invented the story of their heads being shaven as a punishment, just as it was invented with regard to Yavanas and Sakas.

According to the Mahāvamsa, Vijaya's brother, Sumitta, who remained behind at Simhapura, espoused a daughter of the Madda (Madra) king. The territory of the Madras was not far distant to the east of Simhapura in the Punjab and, if the original Sinhalese hailed from that region, it is natural for their leader to find a consort from among the people who had once been their neighbours. If the original Simhapura was in Vanga or Kalinga, it is unlikely that a tradition of a marriage of the leader of the Simhalas with a princess of the Madra people would have originated 40

^{37.} The Book of Ser Marco Polo, translated and edited by Colonel Yule, 3rd edition, Vol. II, pp. 404-6.

^{38.} Mv., x, v. 89.
39. Mv., vi, v. 42; Harivamsa, xiv, 16.
40. Mv., viii, v. 7; The capital of the Maddas (Madras) was Sagala, which is Sialkot in the Punjab (Com.HI, II, p. 138).

Sinhalese traditions regarding early times refer more than once to ten brothers in the ruling family. Panduvāsudeva is said to have had ten sens, and Devānampiya Tissa was the second of ten brothers. An inscription at Bovattegala refers to ten brothers who were the sons of Gamani, and ten brother-kings ruling at Kataragama in pre-Christian times are mentioned in literary sources.41 The recurrence of ten brothers in the ruling family at Anurādhapura, as well as in Rohana, appears to be too regular to have been brought about by natural means, and seems to point to an institution modelled on the ten brothers headed by Vāsudeva, who in a Jātaka story are said to have ruled at the city of Dvāravatī in western India.42 An inscription at Tonigala gives the ancient name of the place as Tavarakiya, which is derived from the Sanskrit Dvārakā, a form of Dvāravatī. A city named Dvārakā is mentioned in connection with the Kambojas. 43 One of the early settlements of the ancient Sinhalese, attributed to a follower of Vijaya, was Ujjeni (Skt. Ujjayanī),44 which must have been named after the famous city of that name in the Avanti country in Western India.

Onesicritus, who was the pilot of the royal vessel when Alexander sailed down the Indus, heard of Taprobane, as Tambapanni was called in Greek, from the people of that region, and the account that he has left is the earliest reference to this Island in any historical or other work.45 For Onesicritus to have been informed of this Island by the people of the Indus valley, they must have had intercourse with it. This is quite natural if the original Aryan settlers to Ceylon came from that region.

Thus the evidence is overwhelming for the view that the original Sinhalese came to Ceylon from the western regions of Aryavarta. But the traditions of the Sinhalese, which are recorded in the chronicles, also inform us that settlers came from the Gangetic valley in north-east India not long after the arrival of those from the north-west. In fact, according to these traditions, the family which was ruling at Anuradhapura in the time of Asoka was descended in the male line from a leader of a party of immigrants from the Gangetic valley, and could claim connection with the eponymous hero of the Sinhalese only through his grandmother. Buddnist Jātakas and Avadānas have many references to merchants of olden times who sailed down the Ganges to the open sea, and proceeded to Suvannabhūmi (Burma or Sumatra);46 some of these mariners no doubt came to Ceylon and settled down therein. In mediaeval Sanskrit literature,

Mv., ix, v. 1; xi, v. 5; CJSG, II, pp. 99f; 175f.
 Jātaka, translation, Vol. VI, p. 217.
 Müller, AIC, p. 73; B.C. Law, Historical Geography of Ancient India, p. 53.
 Mv., vii, v. 45.
 CHI, I, p. 424.
 Com. HI., II, p. 447.

there are references to envoys of the Simhala rulers arriving at the court of the Nandas in Magadha.47 Whether these stories have a substratum of fact or not, it is certain that, by the time of Asoka, a regular trade route had come into being between a seaport on the north coast of Ceylon and Tāmralipti (Tāmluk) in Bengal. Historical writings are unanimous in stating that many noble families and artisans arrived from Magadha along with the Buddhist missionaries, and made Ceylon their home. Intercourse with the regions in the Gangetic valley steadily increased after the introduction of Buddhism, and settlers from that part of North India, in addition to the supreme influence that they exerted on the development of the culture of the ancient Sinhalese, must also have made an important contribution to the formation of the racial stock.

Vijaya and his followers, as referred to above, are said to have espoused maidens from the Pandya country. Aryan influence seems to have penetrated to the extreme south of the Indian peninsula before it arrived in Ceylon. The ancient Pandya kings traced their origin to the Pandavas, the heroes of the Mahābhārata, and their family priest was believed to have been Agastya who, it appears, was a pioneer in extending Aryan culture to the south.48 According to the critically edited text of the Mahāvamsa, it was from the city of southern Madhurā that Vijaya and his followers. obtained their brides. In some of the manuscripts of the Mahāvamsa, however, there is a reading of this particular passage in which the word meaning 'southern' does not occur; 49 but the reading with that word is vouched for by the Saddharmālainkāra of the fourteenth century which, quoting the chronicle, definitely mentions southern Madhurā in this connection.50 The qualifying word meaning 'southern,' attached to the name of the capital of the Pandya country, was no doubt meant to distinguish it from the present Madhurā which had been the seat of Pāndya royalty from about the beginning of the Christian era. This city, however, acquired that position after the earlier Kapāṭa (Kapāṭa-puram in Tamil), which is referred to, in the Rāmāyaṇa as well as in the Mahābhārata, as the chief city of the southern kingdom, was submerged in the sea. Kapāṭapura itself supplanted an earlier Madhurā at which, according to Tamil tradition, the first College of Tamil poets called the Sangam was held, and which too was swallowed by the sea. The earlier Madhurā is referred to in Tamil literature as southern Madhura, and it was that city to which the author of the Mahāvamsa referred as the capital of the Pāndya kingdom at the time of the first Aryan settlement of the Island.51

^{47.} Mudrārākṣasa, commentary of Dhuṇḍirāja, edited by Telang, Sixth Edition, Bombay, 1918, p. 43.

^{48.} Kātyāna's vārtika on Pāṇini, iv, i, 168; Raghuvamsa, vi, 61. See also Com. HI, II, p. 498.
49. Mv., text edited by Geiger, vii, v. 49 and footnotes.
50. Saddharmālankāra, Karuṇādhāra Press, Colombo, B.E. 2494, p. 395.
51. V. R. Ramacandra Dikshitar, Studies in Tamil Literature, p. 15.

Nothing has been recorded in the chronicles, or in other writings, of any men whom the Aryan settlers in the Island met when they first came here. The Yakkhas with whom Vijaya and his successors are said to have had dealings, and the Nāgas referred to in the traditional accounts of Buddha's visits to Ceylon, are clearly stated in the chronicles to have been non-human beings. Some of these Yakkhas and Nāgas are mentioned in Jātaka stories and others in the Mahābhārata.⁵² They figure in the Mahāvanisa as a result of folk-tale motives becoming attached to the stories of national heroes. To consider them as races of men with a high culture is not justified by archaeological evidence, nor by any recognised standards of historical criticism. Ancient Sanskrit literature clearly proves that this Island was not the Lankā of the Rāmāyaṇa, and the story of that epic is a nature myth.⁵³ The views held by some people today about a highly developed Rākṣasa civilisation in Ceylon are pased on nothing but imagination.

If we do not accept the cuhemerization of the yakkhas as an autochthonous race, there is nothing in the traditions of the Sinhalese to suggest that, when they originally arrived in this Island, they had to contend with those who previously owned the land. There is also no evidence to establish that a people of Dravidian stock who, in historic times, occupied the neighbouring mainland, and on many occasions feught with the Sinhalese for the sovereignty over the Island, were present there at the time of the first Aryan settlements. Early Tamil literature contains nothing to indicate that Ceylon was a region in which that language was spoken by a considerable proportion of the people. In fact, the boundaries of the Tamil land are given in authoritative Tamil works as the Venkata mountain (Tirupați) on the north, Kumari (Cape Comorin) on the south and the sea on the east and west, thus excluding Ceylon.54 assumption that the Pandyas, with whom the first Aryan settlers in Ceylon allied themselves, were Dravidians is not a necessary one, for the names of their capital and dynasty are of Aryan crigin. The ethnic term Dravidian or its equivalent has not been found in any document that can be attributed to a date earlier than the time of Asoka. In fact, the earliest known occurrence of the term (Dameda = Skt. Dramida, S. Demala) is in a Brāhmī inscription attributable to about the second century B.C., found at Anurādhapura.55

The widely held belief that the Dravidians occupied the whole of India from time immemorial and were pushed south by an incoming Aryan

55. JCBRAS, XXXV, p. 34.

^{52.} JCBRAS, XXXI (No. 82), pp. 303ff; Mahābhārata, op. cit, Adiparva, chap. 31, v. 15.

^{53.} Jacobi; Das Ramayana, pp. 126ff. See also IHQ, II, pp. 345-350 and IV, pp. 339-346. 54. Tolkāppiyam, Pāyiram, 11, 1—2; Šilappadikāram, Canto VIII, 11. 1—2; and Aḍiyārkkunallār's comments thereon.

people is not based on any demonstrable evidence. The earliest traditions of the Tamils, those referring to the first Sangam, as well as the oldest extant Tamil literature, are replete with evidence of the Aryan influence. It is most likely that the Dravidians came from Western Asia, and in their progress towards South India left a pocket of people, the Brāhuīs, speaking a language of that family, in Baluchistan. 56 The ancient people of the Deccan who buried their dead in megalithic tombs and used iron implements have been identified with the Dravidians. Recent archaeological investigations at sites containing these megalithic monuments, with superimposed deposits of later datable cultures, have indicated that these people, who made their first appearance in the Deccan about the middle of the first millenium B.C., spread to certain areas in that region after the withdrawal of the Maurya power⁵⁷. This agrees remarkably well with the evidence of the Ceylon chronicles, according to which the first Dravidians against whom the Sinhalese had to fight came to this Island, after the introduction of Buddhism, as mariners engaged in the horse-trade.58 South India is not a land known for horse-breeding. On the other hand, the regions to the west of the lower Indus where. Dravidians had left traces of their presence in the form of megalithic monuments, has from ancient times been known for its horses. The date referring to which the chronicles mention the Dravidians for the first time appears therefore to be not far removed from the time they were infiltrating into the regions which subsequently became known after them. The persons of Dravidian race figuring in the Brahmi inscriptions of Ceylon are, characteristically, described as merchants or mariners. But they bear Aryan names, and therefore appear to have come under Aryan influence before they moved to the Deccan and to Ceylon. Possibly, they remained for several generations in the areas to the west of the lower Indus, or in some intermediate region such as Gujarāt, or Kāthiāwār, from which region, according to a tradition still current, the Tamil people are said to have come to their present habitat.59 It thus seems not unlikely that the Tamils were not strangers to the Sinhalese even before they both encountered each other as friends or fees in this Island. The higher culture, including the languages, brought to these regions by the Sinhalese as well as the Tamils, was adopted in varying degrees by the people of a Stone Age culture who were there before their arrival. Thus, the vast majority of the people who today speak Sinhalese or Tamil must ultimately be descended from those autochthonous people of whom we know next to nothing.

^{56.} For the Dravidians, see CHI, I, p. 593ff.
57. C. von, Fuerer-Haimendorf in Indo-Asian Culture, II, 1954, pp. 238 ff; see also Tamil Culture, II, p. 133.

^{58.} Mv., xxi, v. 10. 59. HCIP, II, p. 229.

The ancient Sinhalese migrated to this Island after having sojourned in regions where the Harappan civilisation flourished many centuries before the dawn of history in Ceylon. It is therefore likely that they absorbed, and brought here with them, some survivals of that civilisation. Some among the symbols of unknown significance in certain old Sinhalese Brāhmī inscriptions have parallels among the symbols of the Indus script. The very tradition of a lion-killer (Simhala) as the originator of their race could be due to some Harappan survival which the original Sinhalese appropriated for themselves. A lion-killer (Simhala), resembling Gilgamesh of the Sumerians, the prototype of the Greek Heracles, is represented on a seal found at Mohenjo-daro.

^{60.} E. Mackay, Further Excavations at Mohenjo-daro, plate LXXXIV, Nos. 75 and 86.

CHAPTER VII

THE EARLY KINGS OF CEYLON UP TO MUTASIVA

The traditional story of the early kings of Ceylon, as found in the Mahā-vainsa and the later chronicles, is so much intermingled with myth and legend that it is almost a hopeless task to separate them from any history that is to be found embedded in them. A common procedure is to reject the miraculous and the improbable, and to accept the rest as the authentic history of the Island. But this alone is not sufficient because that which is plausible may not necessarily have taken place. The only method that does not violate the principles of scientific history is to put ourselves in the place of the authors, and to trace as far as is possible the ways in which the material they incorporate in the chronicles came into their hands.

To a large extent, Mahānāma, the author of the Mahāvamsa, may have been following the Aṭṭhakathā Mahāvamsa, and his task may have been to bring order and symmetry to the mass of material that was at his disposal. The Dīpavamsa briefly alludes to some of these legends and leaves out others. At the time the Dīpavamsa was composed, it is possible that some of this material was not there in the Aṭṭhakathā. The original nucleus of the Aṭṭhakathā Mahāvamsa was the history of the Sāsana up to the time of its introduction to Ceylon, and then it was gradually extended further. The historical introduction to the Samantapāsādikā bears this out. The attempt to make this a history of the Island as well, was made only after Buddhism had taken firm root in Ceylon. It is closely connected with the idea that the destiny of the Island was linked with that of the Sāsana. We do not know when this transformation took place, but it was several centuries after the introduction of Buddhism.

With regard, therefore, to the history of the Island before the introduction of Buddhism, the compilers of the Atthakathā had to depend on a large number of floating traditions that had been handed down by word of mouth as myth, legend and folk-lore. It was their task to set this down in some form of order. They had specially in mind the significance of all this for the history of the Sāsana. These traditions, as they grew, sometimes incorporated motifs and legends that go back to the same corpus of sources as were utilised by the authors of the Jātakas, the Divyāvadāna, the Mahābhārata and the Harivanisa.

The last link in the chain is the fertile imagination of the common man whose insatiable curiosity about his past was matched only by his love for a good story with some romantic interest. Consistency or truth was

not his aim, and he had no conception of history as we know it now. He never attempted to report what he saw and, even if such was his intention, its passage over several centuries through many different hands would have changed it beyond recognition. However, elements of truth about the past have percolated through these traditions, and it is our task to unravel them. We have not only to search for the truth that may lie concealed behind these myths and legends, but also to see how the stories came to be put together in the form in which we have them today.

The Vijaya Traditions

The traditional history of the Island begins with Vijaya. He is regarded as its first king. From this point on, there is a continuous history although, at this early period, history merges so much with legend that we do not know for certain whether Vijaya himself was a historical figure or not. These legends are undoubtedly of popular origin and, even in their present form, do not savour of the vihāra. The story of Vijaya first appears in the Dīpavanisa, but it is a short account and omits entirely both the episode of Kuveṇī and that of the princess who came from Madhurā.¹ The Mahāvanisa, on the other hand, elaborates this into two chapters.² The Rājāvalī furnishes a few additional details.³

There was once, in the Vanga country, a king of the Vangas, who had as his consort a daughter of the king of the Kalingas. Her name, according to the Dipavanisa, was Susima, but according to the Mahavanisa-tika, was Suppadevi. It was prophesied of her that she would have union with a lion. When she was travelling with a caravan to the Magadha country, a lion attacked them and carried her away to its lair. The lion was roused to a passion by her caresses and had union with her. happened in the Lala country. In time she bore twin children, a son and a daughter, whom she named Sīhabāhu and Sīhasīvalī. When the son grew up, he escaped with his mother and sister from the cave where they were imprisoned, and sought refuge in a border-village of the country of the Vangas. There he killed the lion, his father, who was ravaging the country-side, for a reward that was offered. He declined the invitation to be the king of the Vangas on the death of his grandfather, and set out to found a kingdom of his own. In the country of Lala he built the city of Sihapura and established a kingdom and took his sister, Sihasivali, for his consort. She bore him thirty-two sons, the two eldest of whom were named Vijaya and Sumitta. Vijaya grew up to be a wayward son and his mode of conduct angered the people. Finally they asked the king that he be put to death. But the father, after warning him thrice, banished him and his seven hundred followers from the kingdom. With them

^{1.} Dv., ix.

^{2.} Mv., vi and vii.

^{3.} Rv. Tr., pp. 14 ff.

went their wives and children, but in separate ships They landed at different places. The women reached Mahilādīpaka⁴ and the children Naggadīpa.⁵ Vijaya and his followers put in at Suppāraka,⁶ but had to set sail again because the people of the place objected to their violence. They finally reached the Island of Lankā and landed in the region called Tambapaṇṇi, on the very day on which the Buddha passed into Nibbāna.

Here in Lanka, they were met by the god Uppalavanna, in the form of a wandering ascetic. He had been entrusted with the guardianship of Lanka by Sakka, the king of the gods, who had been instructed by the Buddha, shortly before his parinibbana, to protect Vijaya and his followers. Uppalavanna ensured this protection by the binding of the sacred thread and the sprinkling of holy water on Vijaya and his band. Immediately after that, Kuveņī or Kuvaņņā (the Black One) appeared on the scene. She was a Yakkhini. By guile and the magic power that she possessed, she lured Vijaya's followers one by one into a pond and imprisoned them there. Finally it came to Vijaya's turn to be lured into the pond. He was more wary than the rest. Noticing that there were footsteps leading into the pond and none coming out, and also that she straightway addressed him as a prince, thus revealing her knowledge of his rank, he knew her to be a Yakkhini. She had assumed the form of a woman-hermit. He seized her and prepared to slay her, but spared her when she promised to restore his followers. She also promised to obtain for him a kingdom and to do him a woman's service. Thereafter she regaled them with food and drink, and offered them goods taken from the ships of traders whom she had devoured. That night, by a strategem, she helped Vijaya to kill all the Yakkhas from that region, who were assembled at Sirīsavatthu, the Yakkha capital, for a wedding feast.

Vijaya's ministers founded settlements giving them their own names. He himself ruled from his settlement, Tambapaṇṇi. He did not wish, however, to be consecrated king, although his ministers desired it, unless he had a maiden of a noble house to be consecrated queen along with him. They, however, overcame the king's reluctance and obtained for him a Paṇḍu princess from Madhurā. She came here with a whole retinue of people. Kuvaṇṇā was persuaded to go back to her people despite her entreaties, and she went taking her two children with her. She was killed

^{4.} Hsüan Tsang refers to this Island as being near Persia (Po-la-se), S. Beal, Buddhist Records of the Western World (London., 1884), p. 240. For further developments of this tradition of an Island of Women, see S. Paranavitana; 'Pre-Buddhist Religious Beliefs in Ceylon'. JCBRAS, XXXI (1929) pp. 309—314.

^{5.} It can also mean, 'the island of unclothed men.' There are some who identify this with the Nicobar Islands.

^{6.} Situated on the west coast of India, identified with the modern Sopārā, north of Bombay. According to the $D\nu$, they put in at Bharukaccha, too, and were similarly ejected. This has been identified as modern Broach, near Surat.

by her own people in Lankapura, but her two children escaped. From their union arose the hill-people called the Pulindas.7 They were allowed by the king's leave to live in Malaya.

This well-known account of the origin of the Sinhalese kingdom has certain features in common with a few Jataka stories. It is likely that the authors of the Mahāvamsa tradition borrowed these from the Jātakas or from a common source. The resemblances are too close to be explained as coincidences. Therefore, in the search for the kernel of truth in this account, these features have to be taken note of.

The story of the encounter of the Vanga princess with the lion is similar to the first part of the Padakusalamānava Jātaka.8 In this Jātaka a Yakkhiņī with the face of a mare attacks a caravan, and carries away a handsome young Brahmana to her cave in the forest, where he is kept a prisoner. By their union there is conceived in her womb the Bodhisatta, and in time he is born as a son. When he grows up, he escapes with his father into the haunts of men. The Yakkhini mother tried her best to persuade them to return. But when she failed in this, she fell dead through sorrow.

The Kuveni episede in the Mahāvamsa account is similar to the Valāhassa Jātaka.9 Further, it has particular application to Ceylon. The story deals with a race of Yakkhinis who lived in Sirisavatthu in the Island of Lanka. It was their practice to lure into their city, with promises of marriage, merchants ship-wrecked on the coast between Kalyani and Nāgadīpa. On one occasion they captured five hundred merchants and the chief Yakkhini took the chief of the merchants for her husband. Once when she returned from a meal of human flesh, the merchant found that her bedy was cold and knew her to be a Yakkhini. He informed his friends about this, but was able to persuade only half of them to escape with him. They were fortunate that a Cloud Horse, who was the Bodhisatta, conveyed them through the air to their own country, and set them down each in his own place. The imprisonment of the followers of Vijaya in a pond, and the discovery of this by Vijaya, are reminiscent of another Jataka story, the Devadhamma Jataka,10 where a water-sprite imprisoned, one by one, the brothers of the Bodhisatta who came there till at last the Bodhisatta himself came, and noticing from the footsteps that the brothers had gone in, was able to release them. Besides, the story seems to have affinities with the encounter of Ulysses and Circe, the imprisoning of his fellowers by Cyclops and his discovery of

8. Jātaka, Engl. Trans., Ed. E. B. Cowell and W. H. D. Rouse (Camb. 1895—1913), III., (No. 432) pp. 298—306.

9. Ibid., II, (No. 196), pp. 89—91.
10. Ibid., I, (No. 6), pp. 23—27.

^{7.} They are mentioned in ancient Indian literature as a people who were opposed to the Aryans. It is possible that this same name came to be applied to the jungle peoples of Ceylon before the term Väddā became common.

it by the footsteps that led into the cave where they were hidden and the Sirens who lured sailors to their deom by their music.

The Mahāvamsa account is not the only version of the foundation of the kingdom of the Simhalas, though it is the best known. It is, however, fuller than all the others, and contains all the elements of the tradition. The version that is closest to this is that found in the Dipavamsa. This is earlier than the Mahāvamsa by over a century. Both these accounts go back to the same source, for they are so similar. The main differences are these. The Dipavanisa account is a short summary when compared with the Mahāvamsa account. It leaves out two aspects of the Mahāvamsa story, the killing of the father, the lion, by Sīhabāhu and his refusal of his grandfather's kingdom, and the entire Kuveni episode. It gives a longer version of the founding of the settlements. We also learn from the Dīpavamsa that Sīhabāhu's mother was called Susīmā.

The Mahāvamsa-tīkā, in commenting on the Mahāvamsa account, gives additional details not found in the Mahāvamsa, taken probably from the original Atthakathā.11 We do not know whether this material was available to the authors of the Dipavanisa and the Mahāvanisa, or was added later to the Atthakathā. In the commentary, Sīhabāhu's mother is called Suppādevī. In the Kuveņī story, the name of the Yakkhiņī who came in the shape of a bitch is Sīsapātī. The Yakkha king of Lankāpura is Mahākālasena, his wife is Gondā, and the daughter who was given in marriage to the Yakkha at Sirisavatthu is Polamitta. Kuveni's children are called Jivahattha and Dipella.

Hsüan Tsang, in his 'Buddnist Records of the Western World,'12 gives two accounts of the origin of the Sihala kingdom. The first of these accounts repeats the Vijaya story as found in the Mahāvamsa, but with important omissions and changes. The story takes place in Southern India, and no places or persons are mentioned by name, except that Ceylon is called Ratnadvīpa. As in the Dīpavamsa, the entire Kuvenī episode is emitted. The hero of the story is the son of the lion, the person who corresponds to Sihabāhu of the Mahāvamsa story. He and the sister are set adrift in two boats; she reaching Persia and he landing in Ratnadvipa. The reason for his banishment is that he had slain his father, the lion. In Ratnadvipa, he killed the merchants who came there, and detained the children. In time they became numerous, and elected a king and ministers and established a kingdom. Since their feunder got his name by catching a lion, the country came to be called Simhala.

The second account given by Hsüan Tsang is substantially the same as that found in the Divyāvadāna.13 Inspiration for this story is drawn

Mvt..p. lxxxviii.
 Buddhist Records of the Western World, S. Beal (London 1884), II, pp. 235—244.
 Divyāvadāna, ed. E. B. Cowell and R. A. Neill (Camb. 1886), p. 523.

mainly from the Valāhassa Jātaka. To this is added the tradition that the Simhala kingdom was founded by a person named Simhala from India. In this story Ratnadvipa was peopled by a race of Rākṣasī women who lived in an iron city. Appearing in human form, they lured merchants who came there in search of gems. After enjoying their company, they were imprisoned so that they could be devoured at leisure. Simhala, the son of a merchant called Simha, from Jambudvipa, was also so enticed with five hundred of his frends. But Simhala discovered that they were Rākṣasī women. He informed his friends of the danger, and they were escaping with the help of the Cloud Horse when the women came again and persuaded all but Simhala to go back with them. The story goes on to relate how the Rākṣasī queen, taunted by her people, came in search of Simhala. But he remained adamant. The king of the country, however, was taken in by her, and he took her into his court. In the night, she called her people from Ratnadvipa, and set upon the palace, devouring whom they could and carrying away the others. When the people discovered their loss, they offered the kingship to Simhala for his wisdom in resisting the Rākṣasī. He remembered his friends still in the clutches of the Rākṣasī women in Ratnadvīpa. Therefore he embarked with troops to rescue them. The Rākṣasī women were all killed or driven out of the Island, their city was destroyed and their treasures were seized. His friends were released and then, summoning his people from Jambudvīpa, he established a kingdom here in Ratnadvīpa. Because of the king's name, the country was called Simhala.

Perhaps, of all these early versions, the least fanciful is that of Fa Hsien. 14 He says, Ceylon 'had originally no inhabitants, but only demons and dragons dwelt in it. Merchants of different countries came here to trade. At the time of traffic, the demons did not appear in person, but only exposed their valuable commodities with the value affixed. Then the merchantmen, according to the prices marked, purchased the goods and took them away. But, in consequence of these visits, men of other countries, hearing of the delightful character of the place, flocked there in great numbers, and so a great kingdom was formed.'

An analysis of these various versions along with the Jātakas with which some of them have common features reveals that there were three main elements in the traditions that deal with the establishment of the Sīhala kingdom. These have been combined in various ways, and sometimes some of them are omitted. Each of these elements contains a germ of truth which, in course of time, has been overlaid with legend and romance. A comparison of the versions will enable us to eliminate what may seem extraneous to the core of truth, and what probably had been added later.

^{14.} A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms, ed. J. Legge (Oxford 1886), pp. 101-102.

The first of these is the story of Susīmā (Suppādevī), Sīhabāhu and Sīhasīvalī. Part of this story owes its inspiration to the Padakusalamānava Jātaka. But it is possible that the nucleus of the tradition goes back to the totemistic origins of the Sīhalas. There were totemistic clans in India, and it is not uncommon to find primitive peoples tracing the origin of the clan to the union between the totem animal and a human mother, and to brother and sister marriages. The location of the story in Lāļa (Lāṭa), in the region of the modern Gujarāt, is also significant, for even today lions are known to roam in this area. The introduction of Vaṅga into the account is due to the confusion of Lāṭa with Lāḍha, which is in West Bengal. Sīhapura is a city mentioned both in the Mahālhārata and in the Jātakas. It may have been introduced into the story because of its similarity to the names of the main figures in the tradition.

The second element in the tradition is the colonisation of Lanka from Jambudipa. This is common to all the versions (except that of Fa Hsien). They are all agreed that the clan or group that was mainly responsible for this was that of the Sihalas. Some traced their origin to Simhala, their eponymous ancestor and founder of the race. He is also made the leader of the group that colonised Lanka. The Mahavamsa and Dipavamsa traditions, however, give this privilege to Vijaya, who corresponds to Simhala of the other accounts. The ancestry is pushed back to Sīhabāhu and his father, the lion. 'Vijaya' itself means 'Victory.' In view of these conflicting versions, and the legendary character of the traditions, it is difficult to establish the historicity of these episodes. If the main essence of the former tradition is that a group called the Sihalas colonised Lanka, that of the Vijaya story, which basically is separate from the former, is that one of these migrations was that of a band of ne'er-do-wells who gravitated into this Island. It is a story which, if invented to explain the origin of the race, would hardly bring credit to it. Thus peaceful migrations as well as others less peaceful took place, and those who made the most lasting impression among them were the Sihalas.

The third main element in the tradition is that which deals with the Yakkhinis in the Island. It should be noted that this episode does not appear in the Dipavamsa and the first (which probably is the earlier) account of Hsüan Tsang. This episode as given in the Divyāvadāna and the second account of Hsüan Tsang is modelled very closely on the Valāhassa Jātaka. But they do not mention the Yakkha city, Sirīsavatthu, and call Lankā, Ratnadvīpa. The Mahāvamsa version of this episode, however, though it mentions Sirīsavatthu and Lankā with Kalyānī and Nāgadīpa, yet omits most of the features of the Jātaka. The basic idea alone is common, that Yakkhinī women preyed upon unsuspecting mariners first beguiling them with their wiles. Fa Hsien too, refers to

'dragons and demons' who inhabited the Island, but they were rather shy individuals who indulged in peaceful barter. These stories were no doubt modelled on the actual experiences of merchants who, from very early times, came in search of pearls and precious stones. They sometimes met with a hostile reception from the primitive inhabitants of the Island, but sometimes peaceful trade may have been possible. It is not unnatural that the merchants should regard these shy, elusive and rather impulsive inhabitants as supernatural beings.

The more developed Mahāvamsa version has included all these basic elements, and woven them into a consistent whole. It has further brought in other traditions about the beginnings of the history of the Island, almost all of which are to be found only in the Dipavamsa and the Mahāvamsa. The colonising of Mahiladipa and Naggadipa is attributed to the women and children who set out along with Vijaya in different ships. Hsüan Tsang's first account gives a different version of this, where the daughter of the lion (Sīhabāhu's sister) sets out in another ship and reaches Persia, the abode of the western demons, and by intercourse with them gave rise to a clan of women-children. The founding of the settlements is given more fully in the Dipavamsa than in the Mahāvamsa. There were two traditions dealing with the founding of these early settlements, one which connected it with the ministers of Vijaya, and the other with the brothers of Bhaddakaccana. Another interesting tradition is that which explains the existence of the Pulindas by making them the descendants of the children of Kuvenī by Vijaya. The only religious feature in an otherwise popular and secular tradition is provided by the synchronisation of the landing of Vijaya with the parinibbana of the Buddha, and the entrusting of the Island by the Buddha to Sakka who in turn hands over the task to Uppalavanna. Thus he is at hand to meet Vijaya and his companions, and to ensure them his protection. The last of these additional features connects the story of Vijaya with that of Pandukābhaya. with the marriage of Vijaya with the Pandu princess from Madhura, and the ancestry of Pandukābhaya which connects his grandfather Panduvāsudeva with the family of Vijaya.

The Pandukābhaya Traditions

The earliest extant account of Paṇḍukābhaya is to be found in the Dīpavamsa, but it is confined to a few verses giving his ancestry, the legend of Ummādacittā and a brief notice of his reign. The Samantapāsādikā, too, refers to him in the list of rulers, but says nothing more about him. In both these works he is called Pakuṇḍa. The Mahāvamsa, however, gives a long account devoting two chapters to the period from Paṇḍuvāsudeva,

^{15.} Dv., xi, 5.

^{16.} Smp., ed. Takakusu and Nagai (P.T.S., London, 1924), p. 72.

his grandfather, to Muțasiva, his son,¹⁷ But the central figure in these traditions is, without doubt, Paṇḍukābhaya himself. He is the hero of this part of the *Mahāvainsa*, much in the same way as Duṭṭhagāmaṇī is the hero of a later section. The story, as given in the *Mahāvainsa*, is as follows.

Vijaya, shortly before his death, sent word to his brother Sumitta to come to Ceylon to rule in his place. But at this time Sumitta was king in Simhapura. He therefore sent Panduvāsudeva, his youngest son by the daughter of the Madda king. He came here with thirty-two sons of ministers, in the guise of mendicant monks, and was received at Upatissagāma by Vijaya's ministers. Vijaya was dead by this time. Bhaddakaccānā, the daughter of Paṇdusakka, of the clan of the Sākyas, similarly came to Ceylon, with thirty-two of her retinue, in the guise of nuns, sent here by her father on the advice of the soothsayers who predicted an auspicious journey which would end in a royal consecration. She, too, was received at Upatissagāma. She and Paņduvāsudeva were consecrated king and queen of the Island. There were ten sons and one daughter from this union. It was foretold that the son of the daughter, the beautiful Ummādacittā, would one day destroy his uncles. She was, therefore, placed in a chamber built upon a single pillar. In the meantime, Bhaddakaccānā's brothers, too, had come to this Island, and had founded settlements in various parts, each giving his name to the village he founded. Dighagāmani, the son of Dighāyu, one of these brothers, went to Upatissagama and was appointed to serve in the court of the king. He, driven to madness with love for the beautiful Ummādacittā, visited her chamber by a stratagem, and she conceived a child. His accomplices in this, Citta, a herdsman, and Kāļavela, a slave, were put to death when this was discovered. They were reborn as Yakkhas, and kept guard over the child. The uncles planned to kill the child if it should be a son. When, therefore, she gave birth to a son, she with the help of an attendant exchanged babies with another woman who had given birth to a daughter about the same time. They named the son Pandukābhaya after the grandfather and the eldest uncle. Panduvāsudeva reigned thirty years and on his death Abhaya, the eldest son, was consecrated king.

Paṇḍukābhaya was taken to Dvāramaṇḍalaka in secret. While on the way there, the uncles who were on a hunt nearly discovered him. But Kāļavela diverted their attention by causing a boar to appear. From that time, the uncles who discovered the existence of the nephew, do their best to compass his death. When he was seven years old, while playing in a pond with some friends, he had a narrow escape, for all his friends were killed by those who were sent to kill him. He lay hid in the hollow

^{17.} Mv., viii-x.

of a tree. On another occasion, when twelve years old, while working with some herdsmen, those sent to kill him missed him because he happened to send his foster-father's son with the fire for the herdsmen that he should have taken. When the uncles again discover his hiding place, he leaves his foster-father and goes to Paṇḍulagāma, to a Brāhmaṇa named Paṇḍula who is well versed in the Vedas. He sees that Paṇḍukābhaya will one day become king, and instructs him in the knowledge he would require. His mother, in the meantime, kept him in funds.

Finally, Paṇḍula gave him money with which to recruit soldiers, and sent him forth with the army thus raised. He then proclaimed who he was, and in the city of Paṇa, near the Kāsa mountain, gathered some more followers. He then set out with his men to Girikaṇḍa, and on the way there met the princess Pālī, the daughter of Girikaṇḍasiva, his uncle, who drew his revenues from this region. She was taking food for her father and his men who were reaping a field. He went forward to meet her and she, getting down from the waggon, offered food in a golden bowl. She took banyan leaves to serve food to the others, and even as she touched them they turned into golden vessels. This was a sign given him by Paṇḍula tnat she would be his queen. Thus she came to be called Suvaṇṇapālī. So he took her with him. He defeated the army sent by the angered father at a place which later was called Kalahanagara. The five brothers who came to make war on him were defeated at a place called Lohitavāhakhanḍa.

Paṇḍukābhaya now sojourned for four years on the east side of the Gaṇgā, near the Dola mountain. When his uncles sought to make war on him, he attacked their fortified camp near the Dhūmarakkha mountain, occupied it and drove them across the Gaṇgā. After this defeat Abhaya, the king who was then ruling, wished to make a bargain with him that he (Paṇḍukābhaya) confine himself to the east side of the Gaṇgā. But his brothers threatened him with death for this, and he was forced to give up his throne. Tissa, another brother, became regent. Abhaya had ruled for twenty years from Upatissagāma.

A Yakkhini named Cetiyā used to wander around the Dhūmarakkha mcuntain in the form of a beautiful mare. When the prince was told about this, he set out to catch her. After hot pursuit, he caught her near the Kacchaka ford. He was about to slay her when she promised to win the kingdom for him in return for her life. And so he got his mare, Cetiyā. Thereafter, he dwelt on the Dhūmarakkha mountain for four years, and then came to the Arittha mountain where he sojourned for another seven years biding his time. His uncles again came to make war on him, and surrounded the mountain. He first lulled them by peaceful overtures, following the cunning counsel of Cetiyā, and then taking them by surprise, surrounded them and destroyed them. The place came to be called

Lābukagāmaka because the skulls collected after the battle appeared like a heap of gourds.

He was left victor in the conflict. He then went to the place where his great-uncle Anurādha lived and, on the recommendation of the sooth-sayers, decided to build his capital city there. When all was ready, he and Suvaṇṇapālī were consecrated king and queen of the Island, and he took as his chaplain the faithful Canda, the son of his tutor, Paṇḍula. Offices were granted to his other followers according to merit. To develop his capital, he laid out four suburbs and constructed the Abhayavāpi, named after himself.

He established shrines for the Yakkhas who had helped him, Kāļavela, Cittarāja and the slave-woman. He housed Cetiyā, the Yakkhinī in the form of a mare, within the royal precincts. Sacrificial offerings were made to them year by year. He also established the cemetery and the place of execution, the chapel of the Pacchima-rājinī (the Queen of the West), the Vessavana Banyan Tree, the Palm of the Vyadhadeva, the Yona Quarter, and the House of the Great Sacrifice. The work of the candālas was organised, and a village was set apart for them. He built dwellings and places of worship for the niganthas, Jotiya, Giri and Kumbhanda, for those of heretical beliefs, for wandering ascetics and for ājīvakas and Brāhmanas.18 He constructed refuges for those recovering from illness. Ten years after his consecration, he established the villageboundaries all over the Island. He made the previous king, Abhaya, the first nagaraguttika of the city, and made him ruler for the night only. When Pandukābhaya ascended the throne, the kingdom had been without a ruler for seventeen years. He himself reigned for seventy years, having become king at the age of thirty-seven years.

The only other substantial version of this tradition, as mentioned earlier, is that given in the Dīpavamsa. It consists of fifteen verses and almost all the aspects of this version of the story are given in greater detail in the Mahāvamsa. They both go back to the same original source. The Dīpavamsa version contains the following aspects: the arrival of Bhaddakaccānā, the daughter of Paṇḍusakka, and her becoming the chief queen of Paṇḍuvāsudeva; the birth of the ten sons, namely, Abhaya, Tissa, Uttiya, Tissa, Ascla (the fifth), Vibhāta, Rāma, Siva, Mattakala and Matta, and a daughter named Ummādacittā, so-called because she maddened all those who set their eyes on her; the arrival of Dīghagāmaṇī, son of Dīghāyu, at the court at Upatissagāma, the wooing of Ummādacittā and the birth of Pakuṇḍa; Paṇḍuvāsudeva's reign of thirty years, the succession of his son, Abhaya, who reigns for twenty years after which

^{18.} S. Paranavitana., 'Pre-Buddhist Religious Beliefs in Ceylon', JCBRAS, XXXI. (1929), pp. 309-314.

the kingdom is without a ruler for seventeen years; the struggle of Pakuṇḍa who is called a rebel, against his uncles, seven of whom are killed; his succession as king in his thirty-seventh year and his reign of seventy years from Anruādhapura which became his capital, and the establishment of village-boundaries in his tenth year. This account has two facts not given in the *Mahāvamsa*, the names of the uncles and the fact that he was regarded as a rebel (coro) during the period he was fighting his uncles.

There are certain features in these versions which are common both to the Ghata Jātaka and to the Kṛṣṇa legends in the Mahābhārata and the Harivamsa. These similarities suggest that they go back to a common tradition of legendary stories which were utilised to elaborate the history of Paṇḍukābhaya. These stories are to be found mainly in connection with the early part of his career. They can be regarded as of little historical value, and as accretions to the main core of historical tradition.

In the Ghata Jātaka, 19 it was foretold that the sons of Devagabbhā would one day destroy her two brothers, Karinsa and Upakarinsa. So she was placed in a room built on a single pillar, and two attendants were set to guard her. But Upasāgara, a prince from Uttara Madhurā, through the help of one of the attendants, won her hand. By their clandestine union they had a son. Later, a daughter and nine other sons were born to her. But all the sons were secretly exchanged for girls because of the threat that hung over their lives. The eldest of the sons was named Vāsudeva, and two others were called Baladeva and Candadeva. When they grew up their identity was discovered. Though the uncles attempted to destroy them, it was the uncles who came to a sudden end at the hands of these brothers.

Vāsudeva in the Ghata Jātaka is without doubt the same as Kṛṣṇa of the Hindu tradition, for there, too, he is called Vāsudeva, for his father, in that tradition, is called Vasudeva. The Mahābhārata gives briefly the history of Kṛṣṇa's lineage, and the circumstances of his birth. He belonged to the Yādava race and, on his father's side, was connected with the Pāṇḍavas, for his father's sister Kuntī was the mother of three of the Pāṇḍava princes. His mother was Devakī, the daughter of Devaka. Devaka's brother, Ugrasena, was the ruler of Madhurā, and he was deposed by his son Kanisa. Kanisa was the cousin of Devakī. Many are the exploits of Kṛṣṇa given in the Mahābhārata, but those which are of special interest to us are the destruction of Kanisa and the slaying of the king of the Hayas (horses) who dwelt in the woods of Yamunā.

The Harivamsa,²⁰ a later supplement to the Mahābhārata, contains many more stories of Kṛṣṇa, some of which go back to an early period. Among these are included stories of his birth, childhood and youth. These stories

^{19.} Jātaka, op. cit., III, (No. 454), pp. 50-57.

are repeated in Puranas such as the Vișnu and the Bhagavata. Some of these stories are similar to the legends connected with the early life of Pandukābhaya. It was foretold by Nārada that Kamsa would be killed by the eighth son of Devaki, his brother's daughter. Kṛṣṇa, the eighth son, is an incarnation of Vișnu, (which accounts for the name Devagabbha in the Ghata Jātaka). Kamsa kept Devakī under guard, and killed all her children in order to prevent the fulfilment of the prophecy. The seventh child, who too was an incarnation of Visnu, was miraculously transferred to the womb of Rohini, the second wife of Vasudeva, Kṛṣṇa's father. He was born and was named Rāma. The eighth child, Kṛṣṇa, was saved by Vasudeva by the ruse of exchanging the child for the babygirl of a cow-herd couple named Nanda and Yasoda. Kamsa discovered the deception later, and did his best to have the child destroyed. But on every occasion the child escaped. He grew up among the cow-herds, and his pranks with the gopis are well-known. In the end, he kills Kanisa and rules for a while in his capital, Madhurā. But later he built his own capital and named it Dvāraka.

An examination of these versions and stories will show that there are many similarities between the Pandukābhaya traditions and the Jātaka and the Epic and Puranic stories of Kṛṣṇa. These can, therefore, be rejected as borrowings from external sources. The whole story of Ummādacittā, with its prophecy, the incarceration, the illicit love affair and the exchange of babies, the miraculous escapades of Pandukābhaya and his sojourn among the herdsmen, and the relationship he had with his uncles who were ten in number, all fall into this category. There is reason, further, to doubt the historicity of the name Panduvāsudeva as well as the numerous incidental connections with the Pandava traditions. The episode in which Pandukābhaya obtained his famous mare, Cetiyā, is reminiscent of other legends and stories such as Kṛṣṇa's conquest of the king of the Hayas, the Padakusalamānava Jātaka in which appears a Yakkhini with the face of a mare, and the story of Vijaya and Kuveni, in which he makes a bargain with her to spare her life in return for the help she was to give to obtain a kingdom.

It is natural, especially in the historical traditions of the remote past, that the ancestry, birth and early life of a hero should be clouded in legend and carry little historical value. But the reason why such stories gathered round him is because he may indeed have been a person who appeared to his contemporaries as a hero. Thus there is usually some historical basis for such traditions. In the story of Paṇḍukābhaya, there is little doubt that the war he waged to win the kingdom and the foundation of Anurādhapura constitute the core of the historical tradition. He was for a leng time

^{20.} Harivamsa, (Engl. Trans. M. N. Dutt), lv-lxi, lxxxiv-lxxxvii and cxv.

a rebel who lived probably by pillage. He gathered round him a band of followers and lived in the eastern parts of the Island. After a series of battles, he defeated his rivals and established himself as king with Anuradhapura as his capital. The course of the war can be followed by the topographical details that are given. But the possibility that later hands added these details to the story cannot be discounted. The tradition that it was Pandukābhaya who first made Anurādhapura a capital city is very strong. It is plausible to accept that the construction of the Abhayaväva served this end. He is represented as the author or originator of many of the features of the capital which were known at the time these traditions took shape, such as the administrative and sanitary arrangements of the city, and the shrines within it. Both the Dipavainsa and the Mahāvamsa attribute the establishment of the village boundaries throughout the Island to him. While it is possible that some of these things go back to the reign of Pandukābhaya, we cannot discount the possibility that there was a natural tendency to put back to his time many things the origins of which were uncertain because he was the first king to rule from Anuradhapura. It is probably in this manner that early shrines such as those of the Yakkhas, Cittaraja, Kalavela and Cetiya, came to be associated with the early life of Pandukābhaya.

Muṭasiva, the son and successor of Paṇḍukābhaya, is given a reign of sixty years, and the chief event recorded of his reign is that he laid out the Mahāmeghavana garden.²¹ Tradition has it that he had ten sons, the second of whom succeeded to the throne as Devānampiya Tissa. The Dīpavamsa gives the names of the other sons as Abhaya, Nāga, Uttiya, Muttaka, Mitta, Sīva, Asela, Kira and Tissa. He had two daughters as well, Anulā and Sīvalī.²² Some of the sons figure in later history as kings.²³ Paṇḍukābhaya is given a life-span of one hundred and six years and Muṭasiva succeeds him to reign another sixty years. These figures seem to have been artificially fixed in order to synchronise the arrival of Vijaya in Ceylon with the parinibbāna of the Buddha. They assumed the contemporaneity of Devānampiya Tissa with Asoka, for Buddhism was introduced into the Island according to tradition during their reigns.

Mv., xi. 6-8.
 G. C. Mendis: 'The Chronology of the Early Pāli Chronicles', UCR. V., pp. 39-54.

BOOK II EARLY ANURADHAPURA PERIOD

CHAPTER I

RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENTS IN INDIA

Pre-Aryan Religion of India 3000—1500 B.C.

Religion is a spontaneous expression of the heart; it is based on feeling and faith, and every person, primitive or modern, is religious. The religious experience, however, varies from people to people, from age to age and gives rise to widely different myths, superstitions, dogmas and creeds.

In India, the archaeological explorations in 1922 laid bare the culture of an ancient people, who lived 5,000 years ago in the Punjab and Sind: their culture was similar, and in some aspects superior, to that of Egypt and Mesopotamia. They used arms and utensils of stone, lived on agricultural products and utilised domesticated animals. They were more advanced than the Egyptians and the West Asians in the use of cotton textiles, well-planned magnificent baths, well-aligned wide streets and commodious houses. Their religion had certain features which appear in later Hinduism. Their culture differed from that of the Egyptians or Sumerians in the absence of large temples and massive tombs.

The discovery of the ruins at Mohenjo-daro in Sind came in the wake of the excavations of a Buddhist stūpa and monastery which, according to the first discoverer, R. D. Banerjee, were built with bricks taken from the ruins of a massive structure, which might have been a rendezvous of the priests of prehistoric days. Adjoining the massive structure was the great bath supposed by some scholars to be the place for ceremonial ablutions of the priests as well as of their devotees—a feature noticeable in many ancient and modern sacred sites of India.

An idea of the religious beliefs of the people of Mohenjo-daro and Harappā can be formed from the numerous stone images, figurines and engraved seals discovered at the two sites. These may be classified thus: worship of (1) Mother-goddess; (2) Three faced Siva and Phallus; (3) Trees; (4) Animals or Zoolatry, and (5) Svastika or Wheel.

(1) Mother-goddess

There are a number of standing female figures almost nude, and just having a band or girdle around their loins, and an elaborate headdress and a collar. There is one figurine with up side down, and a twig issuing out of her womb. It suggests that the earth which produces food crops

was represented by this Mother-goddess—a conception which finds currency in Indian religions of all periods.

(2) Siva and Phallus

The next important find is that of an image of a three-faced deity with eyes concentrated on the tip of the nose in a meditative pose, and having animal figures surrounding it. The deity has a head-dress adorned with a pair of horns, the arms are covered with bangles, the neck with a necklace and the waist with a waistband. The lower limbs are bare with the phallus exposed. There are four animals, an elephant, a tiger, a rhinoceros and a buffalo, with a deer below the seat of the god. More numerous than the Siva image are the stones shaped like a phallus. The Dāsas or Dasyus of the Rgveda are said to be Phallus-worshippers. It seems that Phallus-worship was very popular among the ancient people who built the cities of Mohenjo-daro and Harappā.

(3) Tree-Worship

From some sealings, it appears that tree-worship was in vogue in two forms: worship of natural trees and worship of the tree-spirit or goddess. The tree appears to be Pipal (Ficus religiosa), or it may be the tree of life as in Babylonia. It reminds us of the sculptures of Bhārhut and Sāñchī, and of the famous Bodhi Tree of Bodh Gayā. It is also prevalent nowadays among the peoples of India.

(4) Animal-Worship

The number of seals and sealings show that animal-worship was perhaps more popular than tree-worship. The animals are represented in three forms: (a) human-faced goat, ram or bull, similar to those found in Sumer, or to the Nāgas of ancient India; (b) composite animals, i.e., partly goat, partly bull or elephant, but mostly unicorns (ekaśṛniga), the sealings of which are abundant, signifying their great popularity as an object of worship, and (c) animals in natural forms, viz. rhinoceros, bison, tiger, elephant, buffalo and humped bull, most of them being represented with a trough before them. All of them were not objects of worship.

There may be similarities between the Sumerians and the pre-Aryan peoples of India regarding objects of worship, but the fact that most of the forms of worship are still found in India, though not in the Vedic period, proves that the pre-Aryans were basically Indians, and were not an offshoot of the West Asians. Professor Keith suggests that the people of Mohenjodaro and Harappā were pre-Dravidians, a remnant of which are the Brāhuis in Baluchistan. It is also likely that they had some relations with 'the Väddas of Ceylon and the Sakai and Semang of the Malay Peninsula'. Some of the religious beliefs of the pre-Aryan or pre-Dravidians can be traced in those of the Indians of the post-Vedic period, e.g., worship of

^{1.} Keith, Religion and Philosophy of the Veda, I, p. 11.

Siva, worship of trees and the spirits dwelling in them, and worship of cows and serpents (Nāgas).

VEDIC RELIGION

A long time, say about a thousand and five hundred years, must have elapsed between the effacement of the pre-Aryans and their culture and the advent of the Vedic Aryans,2 who must have lived long with the Iranians, developing certain common religious traits. The Vedic literature is vast, and developed in about a thousand years which witnessed also vital changes in the religious beliefs of the Aryans. The earliest text of this literature, the Rgveda of 1028 hymns, composed at different times and compiled about 1500 B.C., gives an idea of the earliest form of religion of the Vedic Indians. The hymns were composed mainly by seers in praise of certain gods, a also for the material benefit of their tribal chiefs. The Vedic as also post-Vedic Indians were optimistic in their outlook, and wanted to make the most of their lives in the present, and were not concerned about their future existence. There are a few hymns which seem to hint at monotheism, viz., that there is One God beyond all the gods and natural forces; excepting this, there is very little of philosophical expositions in the hymns. In the post-Vedic literature, the attention of the Brahmanas was so much occupied with ritualism of a sacrifice that they honestly believed that not only the highest earthly happiness but also liberation (moksa) could be attained through sacrifice.

The deities of the hymns were personifications of Nature, or of the natural beneficent forces or calamities that occurred to the people of those days. The former, e.g. were Dyaus (sky or heaven), Agni (fire), Sūrya (sun), Uṣās (dawn), Vāta (wind), Pṛthivī (earth) while the latter, e.g. were Vṛtra (the with-holder of rain, also a dragon, a serpent), Rākṣasas (earth-demons), Vala (caves holding the clouds). Sometimes, more than one deity represented the same natural force and vice versa, or were attributed the identical qualities and functions. This was very likely due to the fact that the favourite god of a composer received all the encomiums that came to his mind. Some of the deities were conceived as lords or warriors sallying forth to discharge their functions and thereby conferring benefits on mankind, while a few others were regarded as complementary to each other and were addressed in pairs, e.g., Dyāvā-

pṛthivi, Indragni, Sūryamāsa.

There are several gods, major and minor. The major ones may be classified as Celestial, Aerial and Terrestrial.3

^{2.} Some scholars are of the opinion that the destruction of the Harappā culture was due to the invading Aryans. See Wheeler, The Indus Civilisation, pp. 90ff.

3. Griswold, Religion of the Veda, Oxford, 1923, Keith, Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upaniṣads (Harvard Oriental Series), 1925, The Vedic Age of the Bhāratīya Vidyā Bhavan, 1951.

The Celestial gods :-

(1) Dyaus (Dawn-Zeus of the Greeks) appears in two aspects; one as the parent of gods and the other as one coupled with earth (Prthivi), (2) the Adityas (= Amesa spenta of the Avesta) represent a number of gods, said to be all sons of the mother Aditi, the 'boundless sky' (dyaur aditi).4 They are pure and hely and are upholders of moral laws. (3) Mitra (Iranian Mithra) and Varuna⁵ appear mostly as a pair. Varuna is the ruler (kṣatra) of gods and men, and the administrator of physical and moral laws. The pair is invoked to bestow rain. (4) Uṣās (Dawn) is the daughter of Dyaus, and is followed by her lover the Sun. She is ever young. (5) Sūrya, Savitr and Pūṣan; Sūrya drives away darkness, sickness and disease. He is the priest of the gods. Savitro is one aspect of Sūrya. He is the stimulator of life and activity of Sūrya as well as of men. He drives away the evil spirits and immortalises gods and men. Pūsan (= Hermes) is the producer and protector of cattle, and is the guardian of paths making them safe for men and cattle. (6) Viṣṇu is not a very important god in the Rgveda. (7) Vivasvant (= Vivanhvant of the Avesta) had Saranyū as his wife, and the two Asvins as his sons. He is the ancestor of the human race, the first sacrificer Manu, who is known as Vaivasvata or the son of Vivasvant. (8) The Asvins are divine physicians. (9) The Moon appears mostly with Soma, and casts influence on vegetation and tides.

The Aerial gods:—(1) Indra has been hailed in the Roveda as the highest of the gods. He is born by the side of his mother (i.e. lightning bursting through clouds). He is a great warrior, armed with bows and arrows and thunderbolt. (2) Trita Aptya is a water deity. (3) Vāyu and Vāta are the two wind gods. Vāyu is born out of the breath of Puruṣa, the Prajāpati. He accepts animal victims. Vāta roars and raises clouds of dust. (4) Parjanya (rain or thunder cloud) is the rain-giver who fertilises the earth and also the ruler of the three worlds. His son is Soma. (5) Apsarases (the waters) are the river channels flowing to the sea. They wash out sins of lieing, cursing and violence of their votaries. (6) Rudra is a form of Agni. He is an archer, the wielder of the thunderbolt and the lightning. He is a god of healing, is beneficent and bountiful, but he is also wrathful and needs appeasing.

The Terrestrial gods: -(1) Agni is the son of Dyaus and Prthivi or Tvastr and the waters. He is born for ever, but is always the youngest. He bears oblations to the gods, and as such he is an intermediary between gods and men. The worship of fire is very old and belongs to the Indo-Iranian period. (2) Brhaspati is also a form of Agni. He is the divine purohita. He dispels darkness with thunder. (3) Soma is the juice exuded

^{4.} Rgveda, X. 632.
5. Mitra and Varuna are mentioned in the Boghaz-köi tablets (1400 B.C.).

The Savity verse (Rgveda. iii, 62, 10) is chanted daily by an orthodox Brahmana.

by pounding with stone from the plant of the same name. (4) The Rivers: There are five rivers, viz., Sarasvatī, Vipās, Sutudrī, Sarayū and Sindhu, of which the Sarasvatī is the main. (5) Pṛthivī bears the burden of mountains. She is great, shining and steadfast. Besides these gods, there are several others who have not been dealt with here.

Sacrifice and those who condemned it

In the Rgvedic period, worship of deities was performed ceremonially in a sacrifice, which consisted mainly in inviting gods to the place of offering to take food and drink offered by the worshippers. There were no costly gifts of jewels, garments, or chariots as has been the case at a a later period. The deities were not visible, and so Agni or the sacrificial fire was invoked to convey the gifts to the gods, but were actually utilised by priests, the vicegerents of gods on earth. This simple and honest belief was gradually elaborated into a short, medium or long sacrifice in the Yajurveda, the Brāhmana literature and the Śrauta-sūtras. The only sacrifice (yajña) that the Rgvedic Indian knew was that of Soma, in which the ceremonial pressing of Soma juice by stones formed the essential feature. The gifts made were all pastoral, e.g. milk, curds, melted butter, grain, barley, rice and cakes, with animal victims on very rare occasions. sacrificial system was gradually elaborated and made complicated in the Yajurveda, the Sāmaveda supplementing it with sāmans (hymns) to be chanted on particular occasions. Many of these sāmans, however, were taken from the Rgveda. In course of time developed the Brāhmanas and the Śrauta-sūtras, which elaborated the rituals to an enormous extent.

The philosophical and cogitational aspects of the sacrifices received greater stress in another literature of a little later date than that of the Brāhmaṇas, known as the Āraṇyakas, which were also primarily a ritualistic literature compiled specially for those who took to forest life. In this literature, the sacrificial rituals were given allegorical interpretations, and many of the rituals were replaced by cogitation of the gods and muttering of mantras. It was enjoined that the Āraṇyaka literature should be studied only by the recluses, who have gone to the forests and renounced the worldly ties altogether. Most of the Brāhmaṇas have a corresponding Āraṇyaka. It will be apparent from the nature of contents of the Āraṇyakas that emphasis was being shifted from external ritualism to internal cogitation, as also to esotericism paving the way for the advent of the secret teachings of the Upaniṣads, which laid down that the teachings should be imparted secretly by the teacher to his deserving pupils.

The last sections of the Āranyakas are the Upaniṣads, the well known philosophical literature of the Indians. Though there are as many as 108 Upaniṣads, only six or seven of them are regarded as the oldest and the most important. The Upaniṣads do not deny the efficacy and importance

of sacrifices, though occasionally there are disparaging remarks about the sacrifical rituals; but the emphasis was on the quest of the Truth, the Ultimate. Several ascetic thinkers offered solutions of the origin of the worldly beings and things, and tried to explain the highest truth, according to their own lights. The principal *Upaniṣads*, *Bṛhadaraṇyaka* and *Chāndogya*, entered into elaborate discussions about the nature of the soul in an individual and in its ultimate state, and it is evident that the soul-theory loomed large in the eyes of the authors of these *Upaniṣads*. There is very little of religious beliefs in these texts, and it seems that the performance of sacrifices continued to be the core of the religion of the Upaniṣadic period. Though the philosophers were mainly Brāhmaṇas, the Kṣatriyas also were credited with philosophical knowledge. It is apparent that the Kṣatriyas gradually shook off their subservience to Brāhmaṇas and claimed a status, at least intellectually, equal, if not superior, to the Brāhmaṇas.

This Kṣatriya upsurge is found mostly in lands outside the orthodox Brahmanical centre. The Kṣatriya movement finds full expression in two religions: Jainism and Buddhism, which appeared in India soon after the earlier *Upaniṣads*. The propounders of these two religions, Māhāvīra and Gautama, were scions of royal Kṣatriya families, viz. the Nāya and the Sākya clan. Both of these thinkers applied their minds to the chief problem of the *Upaniṣads*, viz. the nature of the soul in its bonded and emancipated state, and arrived at conclusions diametrically opposed to each other. Mahāvīra admitted the eternal existence of multiple souls, while Gautama Buddha denied the existence of soul altegether. The former applied the logic of syādvāda (relative existence) to everything worldly, as well as to the conception of soul, while the latter propounded his law of causation (paṭiccasamuppāda) combined with momentariness (khanikavāda), and established the non-existence of an eternal soul, and the dynamic state of worldly beings and objects.

Both of these teachers eschewed ritualism and strongly deprecated the killing of living beings, which was so much in vogue in the sacrificial rituals, described above. Their religion consisted of ethical principles, meditation and a recluse-life with the difference that Mahāvīra advocated rigorous asceticism, while Gautama Buddha preferred a moderate one.

Besides these two distinguished religious teachers, there were a few others whose doctrines are found mentioned in the Pāli texts, more or less, in cryptic form. (1) Pūraṇa Kassapa taught passivity of soul (akiriyavāda), i.e. a soul earned neither merit by gifts, sacrifices or austerities, nor demerit by killing, stealing, lying and so forth. (2) Makkhali Gosāla upheld the doctrine of fatalism (niyati-sangatibhāva), i.e., a being had a fixed chart of existences associated with happiness or sufferings, and, by any exertion, it could not be altered. The followers of this teacher came to be known as the

Ājīvikas, who were rivals of the Jainas. They received special attention from both Asoka and his grandson. They existed in India, particularly in the south, up to the fourteenth century, A.C. (3) Ajita Kesakambalī was a materialist and held the view that a being was composed of earth, water, air, fire and ākāsa (space), and after death, it reverted to these elements. (4) Pakudha Kaccāyana held a view similar to that of Ajita Kesakambalī, and said that a being was composed of the four great elements, and pleasure (sukha), pain (dukkha) and soul (jīva). These elements existed eternally and no action, good or bad, had any effect on them. It is also described as akiriyavāda in the Pāli texts. (5) Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta was an agnostic, and declined to give a definite answer to any of the ultimate problems. He was the teacher of Sāriputta and Moggallāna before their conversion to Buddhism.

Besides these teachers, there were perhaps many others, whose views are analysed and summed up in the Brahmajālasutta and elsewhere. These five or six teachers were known as gaṇins (leaders of sects). There was another class of religious men who were known as Paribbājakas, who were wandering students without any definite creed. They moved about singly or in groups making one of them as their leader. Many of these Paribbājakas became ultimately Jainas or Buddhists, and many reverted to Brahmanism. They moved about in the towns and villages and lived a moderate recluse-life. There were also religious men who were hermits and lived in forests, occasionally coming to the town or villages for food, medicine or other requisites.

JAINISM OR TEACHINGS OF NIGANTHA NATAPUTTA

The two cardinal tenets of Jainism are syādvāda and navatattva. By syādvāda, as already stated above, is meant that all worldly objects should be viewed from different standpoints, e.g. a boy grows from the date of his birth, but he decays from the date of his death, so it cannot be stated merely that a boy either grows or decays. There are such seven points of view. By navatattva is meant that there are in the world 'nine substances:' (a) jīva (the conscious soul), (b) ajīva (the non-soul, which is unconscious); jīva functions with the help of ajīva as mind functions through body; such functions are physical, vocal or mental, producing (c) merit (puṇya) or (d) demerit (pāpa) which are also substances; these two substances (e) flow (āsrava) into jīva, and their flow may be (f) restrained (sanīvara); of these two substances, āsrava causes (g) bondage (handha) by karman (deeds), bringing sufferings in one's repeated existences, while the other substance samīvara (h) destroys (nirjarā) the effects of deeds and leads one to (i) liberation (mokṣa).

In the Sāmaññaphalasutta, the Jaina doctrine is given as cātuyāma-sanīvara or the four restraints, viz. (1) to be free from passion and desire, (2) to keep away from all kinds of traffic, (3) to eschew all possessions and (4) to remain absorbed in knowledge.

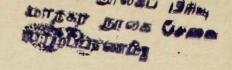
Of the Jainas, the stricter sect, Digambaras, prefer to live and move about singly or at the most in groups of twos or threes. The other sect, Svetāmbaras, prefer living or moving in large groups. Neither of the sects has a fixed abode or a monastery; the Svetāmbaras dwell for limited periods at any house found vacant by them in course of their peregrinations. Such temporary lodgings are called *apasāra*. Their nums take a separate lodging near about.

In these temporary lodgings, they carry on their observance of precepts, studies and meditations, which ensure them liberation. They have also a gradation of monks and nuns. The lowest is called sādhu or sādhuī. The next stage is upādhyāya or teacher of scriptures, and then an ācārya, who must be advanced spiritually. The next stage is arihanta or tīrthankara, who is perfect in spiritual practices and knowledge. By arihanta is meant one who has removed all obstructions to liberation, while by tīrthankara is meant one who has crossed (tīrtha) the sea of existence. The final stage is called siddha when one gains absolute knewledge, insight, righteousness and prowess. He is then a pure soul without a body.

Jainism as a Religion

In its early stage, Jainism adhered strictly to ethical principles and austere observances, of which fasting from one to several days formed the special feature. The Jaina sādhus (monks) and sādhus (nuns) still maintain their early principles. The Jaina laity, however, have introduced worship of tīrthankaras (the Perfects) in temples, and borrowed a few ritualistic forms of worship from the Hindus; but they attach great importance to observances of moral precepts and other vows, including fasting.

The only ceremony in which the sādhus and sādhus can take part is the first initiation ceremony of a novice. It is performed with great pomp and grandeur in a public assembly. On the dīkṣā day, the novice comes to the assembly in luxurious costumes to give them up for the rest of his life, and puts on just five pieces of cloth (three upper and two lower) and takes a begging bowl, signifying his total renouncement of all earthly possessions. From that day onwards, he leads a very hard life, without even a bath and cleansing of teeth and living on just what is collected by begging by one of the monks of the group to which he belongs. Every morning and evening he confesses any breach, if committed on the preceding night or day, respectively, of any of the rules prescribed for the monks. His main duties are study, meditation and punctilious observance of the



five precepts, supplemented by some vows for perfecting himself in the

precepts.

The five precepts are:—(1) non-injury (ahimsā), (2) not speaking an untruth (asatya-tyāga), (3) non-stealing (asteya), (4) perfect chastity (brahma-caryā), and (5) complete renunciation of worldly possessions (aparigraha). The aim of his life is acquisition of perfection in (a) right knowledge (samyakjñāna) of the precept and vows; (b) right faith (samyak-darśana) in Jaina doctrines and scriptures, and (c) right conduct (samyak-cāritrya) or the true observance of the five precepts and the supplementary vows. He is debarred from all ceremonies, including worship of the Perfect in temples, and is permitted only to chant hymns in their prasie. All that is prescribed for the monks are also applicable to the nuns.

Jaina Laymen

The first and foremost duty of a Jaina householder is the observance of the five precepts, which are slightly lighter than those prescribed for the recluses. The precepts are:— (1) non-killing of living beings (prāṇāti-pāta-viramaṇa); (2) non-lieing (mṛṣāvāda-viramaṇa); (3) non-stealing (adattādāna-viramaṇa); (4) chastity (maithuna-viramaṇa): and (5) limitation of worldly desires and possessions (parigraha-viramaṇa). These precepts are administered ceremonially by the spiritual preceptor (guru) to a house-holder after ascertaining that the latter had discarded his (a) regard for non-Jaina teachers and associates, and (b) doubts about the excellence of the Jaina faith and teachers and about the efficacy of deeds (karma) in this life and the next. The observance of precepts is to be supplemented by seven vows (vrata) and eleven restrictions (pratimā) which a householder voluntarily imposes upon himself for a fixed period.

In addition to the above, a Jaina householder can perform worship of the *tīrthankaras* in temples. The worship consists of bathing the images with a wet cloth, putting auspicious marks on them with sandalwood powder, and offering of rice and dried fruits. He is to perform also the evening worship $(\bar{a}rati-p\bar{u}j\bar{a})$ by waving of lamps in the ritualistic style. The worship is concluded by salutation and prayer $(vandan\bar{a})$ to the Perfects.

The Jainas regard the eighth, fourteenth or fifteenth days of a fortnight and the pajjusana (the closing season of the year) as very auspicious. On these days, and during pajjusana, they take up some extra vows out of those prescribed for the recluses. Such extra observances are called posadha of a householder—fasting forming the main part of such observances. Rigorism and ahimsā (avoiding all injuries and even discomforts to living beings) in every day affairs is the keynote of Jaina religion, and fasting is given the highest importance as a purificatory means.

Rituals and ceremonies have only a minor place in the religion. In later days, however, these are resorted to by some Jaina householders,

who have also borrowed from the Hindus in a modified form the rituals relating to birth, marriage and death.

BUDDHISM

Buddhism, which was a younger contemporary of Jainism, struck a new keynote in Indian religious life—a via media between the rigorism of the Jainas and the secularism of the sacrificial Brāhmaṇas. It advocated a moderate life for its recluses, and permitted them just enough food and clothing and a shelter to maintain their physical strength in order to be able to practise concentration of thoughts and to acquire knowledge. It chalked out a well-thought out path known as the atthaigikamagga, or the Eightfold Path, which trained an adept morally, psychologically and intellectually.

The monks and nuns were prescribed ten precepts, of which four were in agreement with those of the Jainas. The Buddhist householders were required to observe only five of them with option to increase them to eight temporarily. For the monks, the ten precepts were enlarged into 226 rules codified in the *Pātimokkhasutta*, and likewise for the nuns, and elaborated further in the *Vinaya-piṭaka*. Apart from the observance of disciplinary rules, the monks and nuns were asked to practise meditations, divided into lower and higher categories, known as *jhānas* and *samāpattis*. These are dealt with analytically in the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka* and systematised

by Buddhaghosa in the Visuddhimagga.

Along with these practices, the monks and nuns, with a few exceptions, were required to pursue a programme of studies for intellectual development (paññā). The main object of such studies was to comprehend the three cardinal tenets of Buddhism, viz., momentary impermanence (khaṇika-anicca), non-substantiality (anattā) and painfulness or suffering (dukha) of all worldly objects and beings. This comprehension could take place by means of constantly observing the dynamic nature of worldly objects governed by the law of causation (paṭiccasumuppāda). The intellectual acquisition led to Nibbāna, usually known paṭisankhā-nirodha. The Buddhist monks are graded according to their spiritual acquisitions. Buddhism as a Religion

Being not so austere as Jainism, Buddhism offered a better scope for the development of its religious aspect. In its early stage, the monks and nuns were advised to refrain from worship of Buddha-images or stūpas, and were asked to concentrate on their self-exertion and progressing along the spiritual path, outlined above. They were prescribed monasticism, which was a complete departure from the traditional forms of Indian recluse-life. It necessitated a few ceremonial formalities, which might be

regarded as the religious aspect of early Buddhism. These may be summed up briefly as follows:—

(1) Tisarana or the taking of refuge in the three ratanas. Every monk or nun or a householder must express his faith thrice in Buddha, Dhamma

and Sanigha with set formulae.

(2) Pañca- or dasa-sīla or the administration and avowal of five or ten moral precepts. The administration is done formally by a senior monk to a junior monk or novice, or by a monk to a householder; for the former, the number of precepts is ten while for the latter it is five.

(3) Pabbajjā and upasampadā or the lower and higher forms of ordination. The former is meant for an entrant into the noviciate (sāmaṇera), while the latter is for a trained novice seeking admission into the Samgha as a full member, a bhikkhu. These two ordinations are done ceremonially, for

which is laid down a systematic procedure.

(4) Uposatha or the auspicious day of meeting of the monks. On every full-moon or new-moon day, the monks dwelling in a parish must assemble at a central monastery, declare their innocence of breach of all pātimokkha rules, or confess their breaches of rules, if any, and take absolution. If the breach be of a serious nature, the offending monk is excluded from the assembly and is placed under suspension or probation. In the assembly after the formal election of the President, the rules of the pātimokkha are recited by him and every monk present, or the absentees by their proxies, have to say that they were all pure according to the rules. This ceremony is usually followed by a discourse or religious discussion, which could be listened to by the householders.

(5) Vassāvāsa or the Rainy Season Retreat. During the three months of rains, the monks are enjoined to stay at a fixed abode, and not to move beyond the boundaries of a certain limited area without very special and urgent reasons, for which again prior sanction of the Sanigha was necessary.

The Retreat is ended by a ceremony called pavāraṇā, which is similar to uposatha described above. In this ceremony, the monks or nuns are required to confess if there be any breach of the pātimokkha rules during the whole period of the Retreat. This ceremonial occasion is considered by the lay-devotees as very sacred for offering gifts of cloths, for making robes for the inmates of the Saingha. There is a special function called kathina performed after pavāraṇā. In this ceremony, some monks are given special privileges for cutting and sewing the cloths into robes quickly, so that they may be distributed to the inmates of the Saingha before their dispersal.

Religion of the Lay-devotees.

More latitude was given to the lay-devotees than the monks and nuns for expressing their devotion to their faith. These are as follows:—

(1) to supply the monks and nuns with robes, food, bed and medical requisites, which are said to ensure them long life and happiness in the next world; (2) to construct monasteries for the residence of monks and nuns; (3) to erect stūpas enshrining the relics of Buddha and of his saintly disciples and to worship them; (4) to visit the four places: Kapilavastu, Bodh Gayā, Sārnāth and Kusinārā sanctified by Buddha's birth, enlightenment, first preaching and Mahāparinibbāna, respectively; (5) to make and install Buddha images for worship; (6) to take tisaraṇa and five precepts, and occasionally eight precepts for a short period; (7) to attend uposatha assemblies; (8) to offer cloths for robes at the pavāraṇā ceremony.

The History of Buddhism (5th-4th century B.C.)

In the second century after the Buddha's demise, during the period of the Śiśunāga dynasty (414-396 B.C.), the Sanigha became divided into a number of sects, some affiliated to the orthodox section called Theravada, while others to the unorthodox called Mahāsāmghika.7 The latter had their main centrein the Andhra province, for which they were also called the Andhakas. They introduced substantial changes not only in the disciplinary rules, but also in the conception of the Buddha and in the summum bonum. They made some of the Vinaya rules lax, conceived of the Buddha as the highest conceivable being (lokottara), whose apparitional form appeared in the world as Gautama Buddha, and that the summum bonum was not Nibbana but Buddhahood. This new movement brought in its train the worship of Buddha images on a large scale. It laid more stress on Jātaka stories, and popularised the pāramitā cult, making the lay-devotees feel that they could, without embracing the recluse-life, derive the benefits of the religion. It is regarded as a forerunner of Mahāyāna Buddhism, which later swept over Northern India and North-eastern Asia. The orthodox sect, Theravada, had also many sub-sects, one of which, the Sabbatthivada, became very popular in Northern India, particularly at Mathurā, in Gandhāra and Kashmir, and also in Central Asia. Another sub-sect, the Sammitīya, became popular in Sind, as also in the western part of India. The Theravada, which retained its stronghold in Central India and moved southwards to the borders of India, adhered to the orthodox principles and doctrines as found in the Pāli Piṭakas. The establishment of this sect in Ceylon and the historical developments in India which led to this momentous event will be dealt with in the next chapter.

^{7.} For these sects, see infra, pp. 196 ff.

CHAPTER II

THE INTRODUCTION OF BUDDHISM

THE conversion of the people of Ceylon to Buddhism, with which the authentic history of the Island begins, profoundly influenced the subsequent course of events therein, and has imparted to its culture its distinctive character. Historical records of the Island are unanimous in stating that the acceptance of the doctrines of Sakyamuni by the people of Ceylon was the outcome of the enthusiasm displayed by the great Indian emperor Asoka for the propagation of Buddhism within and without the confines of his vast empire. The history of Cevlon has thus been brought into relation with that of India, during one of the latter's most glorious periods, when almost the whole of that sub-continent, and some of its adjacent lands, were united politically into an imperial organisation, the like of which had never before been witnessed in that part of the world. Moreover, this contact took place when that mighty empire was under the beneficent rule of a monarch who, for the single-mindedness with which he strove to realise lofty humanistic ideals, has had no peer anywhere in the world, either before or after him. The mention of Asoka's name in the historical writings of Ceylon has contributed not a little to the resuscitation of his name and fame, after they had been forgotten in his own land during many

Contemporary records do not throw such a blaze of light on the personality of Tissa, Asoka's Ceylonese contemporary. But the epithet, Devānanipiya, by which the Indian emperor refers to himself in his own records, and which went out of vogue among Indian kings not long after his time, has become an integral part of the personal name of the Sinhalese ruler and, though he himself may not be recognised with certainty in the inscriptions of the time, his younger brother and successor, Uttiya, finds mention in them¹. Monuments which the chronicles attribute to Devānampiya Tissa still receive the fervent devotion of the Buddhists of Ceylon and other Theravāda lands, though they have not come down to us exactly in their original form.

Buddhist traditions of Ceylon, as well as of India, agree in stating that Mahinda (Mahendra) was the missionary who, for the first time, preached the doctrines of the Buddha in this Island. The two traditions, however,

^{1.} In three inscriptions at Mihintalē, ASI, Nos. 940, 952 and 653 (ASCAR., 1933, p. 16). The text of the best preserved of these epigraphs runs: (1) Mata-pitaśa aṭaya (2) Gamaṇi Uti-maharajha śaya lene daśa diśaśa śagaye dine.

disagree with regard to the relationship that Mahinda bore to the Maurya emperor. Mihintalē, the sacred hill to the east of Anurādhapura, perpetuates in its name the memory of this teacher who left his native land to work for the spiritual, moral and material well-being of the people of Ceylon. We are thus dealing with an historical tradition, the authenticity of which can be established by exacting standards of criticism, even though that tradition, as may be expected from its connection with religion, is overlaid to a great extent with legends in which the miraculous element is very conspicuous.

It was in Magadha that Buddhism, as well as Jainism and other doctrines which challenged the supremacy of orthodox Brahmanism, found the largest number of adherents when it was first preached. From Magadha, these religious movements spread to other parts of Northern India, and even penetrated the regions to the south of the Vindhya barrier. Whether as a consequence of the spread of these new doctrines or not, the territorial expansion of Magadha took place simultaneously. Even in the time of the Buddha, Magadha had absorbed the kingdom of Anga which adjoined it to the east. The aristocratic republic of the Licchavis and the ancient kingdom of Kosala came under the hegemony of Magadha not long after the time of the Buddha. The kingdom of Avanti appeared as a rival of Magadha, but the issue was ultimately decided in favour of the latter. In the meantime, the dynasty which occupied the throne of Magadha at the dawn of history, the Siśunāgas, gave place to rulers of low origin, the Nandas, who put an end to most of the local Kṣatriya dynasties of Northern India, famous in epics and legends. The Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina traditions are unanimous in painting the Nandas in the blackest colours, but there is no doubt that, for the first time in history, they welded together the peoples of the Gangetic valley and the neighbouring regions into a powerful military state, so that when the legions of Alexander the Macedonian overran the north-west of India, there was an insurmountable obstacle which checked their further progress.

The Nanda ruler who was on the throne of Magadha when Alexander came on the Indian scene brought about the downfall of his dynasty, according to Indian tradition, by offending a Brāhmaṇa named Viṣṇugupta, better known by the sobriquet of Kauṭalya², who is famous not only as a political theorist, but also as one who applied those theories in the weaving of complicated plots for the undoing of his opponents. He joined hands with Candragupta, a scion of the Maurya clan, and the combination of the daring and valour of the warrior with the astuteness and calculation of the priest set up a new dynasty on the throne of Magadha. Candragupta,

^{2.} The name is often spelt Kautilya and interpreted 'the crooked one.' See Geiger's translation of the Cūlavamsa, I, p. 243, n. 1.

who thus became the master of the military forces of the Nandas, and their material resources, proved himself more than a match to Seleucus Nikator, Alexander's successor in Western Asia, and added to his dominions a number of provinces which had formerly been under Persian suzerainty.

This vast Indian empire of Candragupta Maurya was organised on the model of the defunct Persian empire, with a strong central bureaucracy. Candragupta also entered into diplomatic relations with the Hellenistic rulers of Western Asia, and with him India emerges from the tribal to a national, nay international, outlook. The expansion of the relatively small state of Magadha into an empire embracing almost the whole region of Indo-Aryan culture was not effected by an adherence to the humanitarian principles and ethical conduct so much extolled in the religions which originated in that region. On the other hand, brute force and unscrupulous state-craft of a Machiavellian order were the means adopted for the achievement of that end; once achieved, it was maintained by an elaborate system of espionage and all the paraphernalia that go to make up a police state. But the resulting peace and order, and the maintenance of communications, no doubt assisted the missionaries of Buddhism and other non-conformist faiths in spreading their doctrines.

Candragupta, according to Ceylon chronicles, reigned for twenty-four years, and was succeeded by his son Bindusara, whose reign lasted for twenty-eight years.3 Bindusāra, who is generally credited with the extension of the southern frontiers of his empire as far as the Tamil lands, is reported to have had a hundred sons, among whom Asoka was pre-eminent for valour, though he was not the eldest. Towards the close of Bindusāra's reign, Asoka was viceroy at Ujjayini. Hearing of his father's last illness, he hastened to the capital, Pāṭaliputra (modern Patna) and, after Bindusāra's death, he is said to have slain ninety-nine of his brothers, including the eldest, and made himself master of the empire, though he was not formally consecrated for four years. According to the Sinhalese tradition, Asoka's coronation took place 218 years after the parinirvana (passing away) of the Buddha which, on the basis of the Buddhist era now current in Ceylon, should be placed in 543 B.C. But synchronisms furnished by the mention of certain Greek kings in the inscriptions of Asoka would point to the fact that this monarch's coronation took place in or about 270 B.C.4

The ruthless methods adopted by Asoka in securing the throne earned for him the epithet of Canda, 'the Wicked', as we are told in Sinhalese chronicles. Modern historians, however, are not disposed to accept that

I, p. 495 and HCIP., II, p. 70.
4. HCIP., II, pp. 92—94. P. H. L. Eggermont (The Chronology of the Reign of Asoka Moriya, Leiden, 1956, p. 180) gives the date of Asoka's coronation as 268 B. C.

^{3.} For the divergent traditions with regard to the lengths of these reigns in the Purāṇas, See CHI., p. 495 and HCIP., II, p. 70.

Asoka made a clean sweep of all his brothers, save one who became a monk later in his reign. For they believe that there is a reference in one of Asoka's inscriptions to brothers of his who were alive after the eighth year of his reign.⁵ But Asoka's own words indicate that, in his unregenerate days, he could be ruthless in the extreme when his acquisitive instinct was aroused. For he has told us that, in the conquest of Kalinga, one hundred and fifty thousand were taken captive, one hundred thousand were slain and many times that number died.

The conversion of Asoka to Buddhism, so fraught with consequences to the whole of humanity, was brought about, according to the tradition of Northern Buddhists, by a venerable monk named Upagupta. The historical writings of Ceylon, however, state that this took place in the fourth year after his coronation when Asoka, after being disgusted with the unbecoming attitudes of the thousands of the Brāhmaṇas and ascetics who were daily fed in his palace, casually observed, one day, the serenity and subdued demeanour of a novice of tender years who happened to be no other than the son of his own brother, whom Asoka had deprived of life and the throne. The conquest of Kalinga, which resulted in so much loss of human life, and misery to the living, was undertaken by Asoka in the eighth year of his reign; and it is quite improbable that he had at that time been converted to Buddhism. The Ceylon tradition about that event, at least with regard to the date on which it took place, seems thus to be inaccurate.

The generally accepted view among historians is that Asoka was attracted towards Buddhism due to the revulsion caused by witnessing the horrors of the Kalinga war. However it was brought about, Asoka's conversion to Buddhism resulted in a complete reversal of the policy that he had hitherto followed. We thus have the unique spectacle of a great emperor publicly proclaiming his contrition at the sorrows caused to humanity by his war of conquest. He renounced war altogether and, instead of conquest by arms, strove to realise the Buddhist ideal of a cakravartin monarch by conquering the earth without the use of force-dhammavijaya as he calls it in his inscriptions. By his own personal example, and by exhortations through his officials, he endeavoured to inculcate in his subjects such conduct as would conduce to their happiness both here and hereafter. He had rescripts on morality drawn up, and had them engraved on rocks and stone pillars. He went as far as possible in introducing humane methods of administration without weakening the foundations of society. He distributed medical aid, had trees planted along roads, not only within his own dominions but also in countries with which he

^{5.} Rock Edict V. Asoka, however, refers in this Edict to 'the harems of my brothers,' an expression which does not necessarily imply that these brothers were alive when the edict was published.

had diplomatic relations. His solicitude for the welfare of beings was not confined to men; it extended to the brute creation as well.

He prohibited the slaughter of animals in certain types of religious observances. Apart from this, Asoka's enthusiasm for his new faith did not result in the imposition of disabilities on other faiths. The morality that he preached was of a general nature, proper behaviour towards religious teachers, Buddhist as well as non-Buddhist, proper behaviour towards parents, humane treatment of slaves, truthfulness, charity and such like virtues to which no one can take exception. Following the injunctions of the Buddha,6 he definitely enjoins toleration-not to extol one's own faith at the expense of another's. There is so little of the doctrines peculiar to Buddhism in these exhortations that many have doubted whether Asoka had actually embraced Buddhism. But, in some of the minor rock edicts, he states unequivocally that he had become an upāsaka, i.e. a lay believer. As an upāsaka, and a monarch concerned with the welfare of humanity, his concern was to select such aspects of the Buddhist way of life as were of concern to the man of the world, and not to those who had renounced the world. The latter stood in no need of royal exhortation if their renunciation of the world was genuine. Nevertheless, in one document, Asoka recommends to the members of the Sanigha some discourses which, in his opinion, they could profitably study. Asoka personally visited, and paid homage to, places associated with the career of the Buddha, such as the garden of Lumbini, where He was born, and set up monumental pillars with inscriptions engraved on them. Buddhist vihāras and stūpas were built at cities and towns all over his vast dominions.

In spite of Asoka's tolerant attitude towards all faiths, the result of his espousal of Buddhism was that the greatest share of the royal bounty went to the members of the Buddhist Sanigha. This had the undesirable consequence of many a person donning the yellow robe, not with the purpose of spiritual advancement, but with the expectation of sharing in the benefits showered on the Sanigha by the king and other devotees. Those who had entered the Sanigha with such base motives were lax in their conduct, and were not well versed in the doctrines. They actually propagated doctrines which went counter to the teachings of the Buddha. The genuine members of the Sanigha refused to associate themselves with these impostors, and the result was that, for seven years, neither the uposatha nor the pavāraṇā could be held in the monasteries.

When Asoka was appraised of this state of affairs, he sent a minister to the royal monastery at Pāṭaliputra, the Asokārāma, with instructions to have the disputes among the Sanigha settled, and to have the uposatha festival

^{6.} T. W. and C. A. F. Rhys Davids, Dialogues of the Buddha, I, p. 30 and Lord Chalmers, Further Dialogues of the Buddha, I. p. 272.

carried out. The minister commanded the bhikkhus to conduct the uposatha festival; but they refused to do so in the company of those whom they considered to be heretics. The minister thereupon started to cut off the heads of the monks who disobeyed his order, until the emperor's brother, who was a monk, confronted him. The minister's instinctive reverence for royalty checked his misguided enthusiasm. When Asoka heard of what had happened, he was troubled with the thought whether he, too, would have a share of the guilt of slaughtering the bhikkhus. None but a very venerable thera, Moggaliputta, was capable of setting the king's doubts at rest. He was brought to the capital with great solemnity from his mountain retreat, and the emperor was assured that no guilt was attached to him as he had no intention of having any of the bhikkhus slaughtered. Moggaliputta Tissa, with the aid of Asoka, had the adherents of false doctrines expelled from the Order, and the uposatha festival was duly celebrated. A thousand theras out of those who had assembled at Pātaliputra on this occasion held a council to settle what were the true doctrines of Buddhism, and the Pāli canon as it exists today is considered to have been finally redacted at this Council, the third to be held, according to Ceylon traditions, after the death of the Buddha. Moggaliputta Tissa himself is believed to have expounded at this Council the work known as Kathāvatthu, in which heretical views have been refuted.

The events narrated above are recorded only in the chronicles of Ceylon. The Northern Buddhists have no traditions of a Council held in the reign of Asoka; hence certain scholars have doubted whether it really took place. The Council having been held expressly for the purpose of settling the Theravada doctrines, it is not strange that other schools of Buddhism have not preserved any tradition about it, and the consensus of opinion among scholars today is in favour of accepting as historical the Ceylonese account of the Third Council. Moggaliputta Tissa Thera is also not mentioned in the writings of Buddhists other than the Theravada. His historicity is proved beyond doubt by the discovery of an inscribed casket containing his relics in Stupa No. 2 at Sanci, and it appears probable that he is the same as Upagupta of the Northern Buddhist tradition.7 According to the Nikāya-sanigraha, those who were expelled from the Sanigha on the occasion of the Third Council assembled at Nalanda and, gaining admission to the Mahāsāringhika and other non-Theravāda sects, became the founders of a number of schools which played a considerable part in later religious developments.

An important decision taken by Moggaliputta Tissa Thera at the close of the Third Council was to send missionaries to preach Buddhism in the

^{7.} Col. L. Waddell identifies Upagupta of the Northern Buddhist tradition with Moggaliputta Tissa, JRAS., 1897, pp. 76-84.

outlying provinces of the Mauryan empire, and in lands beyond its confines, for the saint is said to have perceived that, in the future, the religion will prosper more in those regions than in the land of its birth. The mission to Kāśmīra and Gandhāra (Kashmir and the regions in Western Pakistan close to the Afghan border) was led by a thera named Majjhantika. Mahisamandala (modern Mysore) went the thera Mahādeva, and to Vanavāsa (North Kanara, called Banavase in mediaeval times) the thera Rakkhita. A Yavana (Greek) thera, named Dhammarakkhita, led the mission to Aparanta (the country round the port of Sopara on the west coast of India). The regions peopled by the Maharattas of the present day, the ancient Mahārāstra, were entrusted to the thera Mahā Dhammarakkhita and, in the country of the Yavanas (Greeks or Hellenised people to the west of India), Buddhist doctrines were preached by Mahārakkhita. The thera Majihima went to the Himalayan regions and in Suvannabhūmi (perhaps modern Burma) missionary work was undertaken by the two theras, Sona and Uttara. The principal missionary to each country was attended by four others, for the purpose of the missionaries was to recruit members to the Sanigha, and valid admission to the Order can only be effected by a chapter of at least five. Special importance appears to have been attached to the mission intended for the Island of Ceylon, for at its head was Mahinda Thera who, in addition to his spiritual attainments, second to those of no other colleague of his, enjoyed the prestige of being a son of Asoka himself.

According to the tradition of the Northern Buddhists, Mahinda (Mahendra) was a uterine brother and not a son of Asoka, and some scholars are inclined to give more credence to this tradition than to that of the Ceylon Buddhists. But details of Mahinda's parentage would have been of greater concern to the Buddhists of Ceylon than to their co-religionists in other lands and, therefore, better remembered. According to the Ceylon tradition, Mahinda was the son of Asoka by the daughter of a merchant of Vidiśā (modern Bhīlsa). Asoka fell in love with her when he, as a young prince, was on his way to Ujjayini, to assume duties as viceroy there. From his union with Vedisa-devi, as she was called, Asoka had a son, Mahinda, and a daughter, Sanighamitta, who were brought up at Pațaliputra after he became emperor. Asoka permitted Mahinda as well as Samghamitta, to adopt the religious life so that he, as the story goes, may become a kinsman of the Buddha's religion. It would thus appear that Mahinda was of royal blood only on the father's side, and the Ceylon Buddhists would not have acquiesced in an account which lowered the wordly position of Mahinda if he was in fact a brother of Asoka, in which case he would have been of royal blood on the mother's as well as on the father's side.

Certain scholars and historians have been somewhat sceptical with regard to the account of these missions as narrated in the chronicles of Ceylon, on the ground that the inscriptions of Asoka do not mention some of the countries to which they were despatched, for example Suvannabhumi and the Himalayan regions, among the recipients of that monarch's own beneficial attentions. Asoka's inscriptions, it must be noted, are not an exhaustive account of his activities, and his missions were of a nature different from those sponsored by the Church with Moggaliputta Tissa at its head. The purpose of Asoka's missions was limited to the promotion of a moral life among the people, and the furtherance of humanitarian activities, precisely the function of a cakravartin according to Buddhist ideas. The missions despatched by the head of the Buddhist Order had a more far-reaching aim. Their purpose was to induce the people of the lands, wherein they preached, to formally take refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sanigha, and to encourage the more earnest converts to adopt the religious life, by being ordained as bhikkhus. The establishment of the Buddhist religion, according to the view of the Church, was the establishment of a local Saingha, which lay outside the emperor's functions.

Moreover, the historicity of the Ceylon chronicles with regard to this matter has been proved in a remarkable way by Cunningham's discovery, in Stūpa No. 2 at Sānchī, of relic caskets on which the names of some of the missionaries referred to in the Mahāvanisa and the Dīpavanisa are inscribed.8 On the inner lid of one of the relic-caskets there is an inscription which reads '(relics) of the pious man Majjhima'. On the outer lid is a record stating that the relics were of Kassapagotta, teacher of the Himalayas; Majjhima, as we have seen, was the leader of the mission to the Himalayan regions, and the Dipavamsa states that Kassapagotta was one of his companions. An inscription of about the first century A.C. at Mihintale refers to the images of Mahinda-thera and three of his companions. The damaged part of the record no doubt contained the names of the other two companions also.9 Thus the tradition that Ceylon was converted to Buddhism by a thera named Mahinda and his companions is vouched for by documents only two hundred years later than the date generally ascribed to that event.

The missionaries to other countries left immediately after the Third Council was over, but Mahinda is said to have tarried for some time in the city of Vidisā, where his mother lived, in a monastery called Vedisagiri (probably modern Sāñchī)10 until the time was propitious. For, at that time, Muțasiva, who was ruling at Anuradhapura, was in extreme old age, and

Cunningham, The Bhilsa Topes, p. 287.
 Müller, AIC., No. 20, Müller has wrongly ascribed the record to Śirimeghavanna.
 Sir John Marshall, Guide to Sāñchī, p. 8.

was not likely to grasp intelligently the doctrines of Buddhism, or to take an active interest in their propagation. Mahinda, therefore, waited until the demise of Muțasiva and the inauguration of the rule of his son, Tissa. Buddhist missionaries, evidently, did not believe in broadcasting seed on a ground where they were not likely to germinate. This brings us to the Ceylon ruler who gave a welcome to the missionaries from India, and accepted with alacrity the gift of the Dhamma which they brought.

Tissa was the second son of Muțasiva. We are not told why he succeeded to the sovereignty instead of the eldest, whether the latter pre-deceased his father, or was set aside due to some disqualification. The chronicles speak of the usual consecration (abhiseka) of Tissa on his accession, and this event is said to have been accompanied by the miraculous appearance of costly things in his dominions. He, it is said, had been a friend of the Indian emperor even before his elevation to the sovereignty, though the two had never seen each other. There is little doubt that merchants coming from North India brought vivid stories of the greatness of the Maurya empire and the might of its ruler; there might even have been the exchange of civilities between the Ceylon prince and the Indian monarch. However that may be, Tissa, not long after the inauguration of his rule, decided to send envoys, bearing costly presents, to Asoka. At the head of the diplomatic mission was Tissa's own nephew, Mahā Arittha, and its members included the Brahmana chaplain, a minister and the treasurer. The envoys embarked at Jambukola (not far from modern Point Pedro in the Jaffna Peninsula)11 and, after a voyage of seven days, reached Tāmalitti (Tāmralipti, the modern Tāmluk in Bengal). In seven more days they arrived at Asoka's capital, Pāṭaliputra, where they delivered Tissa's presents to the Maurya emperor.

Asoka received the envoys with graciousness, and was much pleased with the presents sent by the Ceylon ruler. He conferred on the chief envoy the rank of a commander of the army (senāpati), on the Brāhmaṇa the rank of chaplain (purohita), on the minister the rank of general (daṇḍa-nāyaka) and on the treasurer the rank of guild-lord (seṭṭhi). The envoys and their entourage were entertained befittingly, and after having consulted his ministers, Asoka sent to Tissa as return presents everything that was required for the consecration of a king. These were a fan, a diadem, a sword, a parasol, shoes, a turban, ear ornaments, chains, a pitcher, yellow sandalwood, a set of garments that had no need of cleansing, a costly napkin, unguent brought by the Nāgas, red-coloured earth, water from the lake Anotatta and also from the Ganges, a spiral-shell winding in auspicious wise (i.e. towards the right), a maiden in the flower of her youth, utensils such as golden platters, a costly litter, yellow and emblic myrobalans and

^{11.} For the identification of Jambukola, see Rasanayagam, Ancient Jaffina, p. 62.

precious ambrosial healing herbs. In addition, the envoys were asked to convey to Tissa the following exhortation from Asoka: 'I have taken refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and His order, I have declared myself a lay disciple in the religion of the Sākya son; seek then even thou, O best of men, converting thy mind with believing heart, refuge in these best of gems.' To the envoys returning home he said: 'Consecrate my friend yet again as king.'

After a stay of five months at the Magadhan capital, the Sinhalese envoys returned home by the same route that they had taken. They delivered the presents of Asoka as well as his parting message to Tissa and, as instructed by the Indian emperor, consecrated the Sinhalese ruler with the requisites for that ceremony sent by Asoka. Here the question arises why Asoka sent, as return presents to Tissa, the objects necessary for the consecration of a king, and why Tissa agreed to have himself consecrated with them, even though, according to the Mahāvamsa story, he had already been consecrated. Receiving consecration at the hands of one monarch by another usually implies the latter's acknowledgement of the suzerainty of the former.

The commentary to the *Mahāvamsa*, quoting a source much older than any of the extant chronicles, informs us that when the envoys of Tissa presented themselves before Asoka, the latter inquired from them about the consecration ceremonies that were current in Ceylon, and was informed that, in reality, there was no *abhiṣeka* of rulers in this Island. They exercised power by the assumption of a new staff (yaṣṭi), miraculous types of which are said to have appeared on Tissa's inauguration. In ancient times, there was no kingship without abhiṣeka, and the inevitable conclusion that one can draw from the statement in this early source is that, at the time when Tissa's envoys went to Pāṭaliputra, the ruler of Ceylon did not, in fact, enjoy the status of a king.

This conclusion is supported by one of the titles borne by the early kings of Ceylon, i.e. gāmaṇī (Skt. grāmaṇī) which means 'leader of the community', and was in ancient India the designation of the chief of the Vaiśyas. The title gāmaṇī was borne by the chiefs of mercantile and other corporations also. In addition to the kings of Anurādhapura, there were other provincial rulers in ancient Ceylon who had the title of gāmaṇī. Another title of Sinhalese kings was ma-parumaka (Skt. mahā-pramukha), and there were numerous parumakas (pramukhas) all over the Island in the centuries preceding and immediately following the beginning of the Christian era. It is therefore clear that when Tissa began his rule, he only had the title of gāmaṇī, and that the real purpose of the mission that he sent to Asoka was to obtain the support of the great Indian empercr for his assumption of royal honours, so that he may be acknowledged as such by the

other gāmaṇīs and parumakas in Ceylon. The adoption by Tissa of the title of Devānanpiya, which is not known to have been used by members of dynastics other than Asoka's, would also indicate that kingship was an institution introduced to Ceylon under the influence of the Mauryan emperor. Asoka would have readily agreed to lend his support to Tissa in the latter's desire to be proclaimed as king, for by that he would have brought the Island of Ceylon, the southernmost limit of the Indian world, within the Mauryan sphere of influence. The Island also would have served as a base for the extension of Mauryan influence to the Tamil kingdoms, which lay outside the borders of Asoka's empire. In short, such a request from Tissa of Ceylon would have afforded Asoka an excellent opportunity to put into practice the policy that he had adopted of conquering, not by force of arms, but by means of the Dhamma¹². These developments were no doubt reported to Mahinda Thera who, realising that the time was now opportune for the fulfilment of the mission that he

had undertaken, arrived in Ceylon with his companions.

Before we follow the progress of Mahinda's mission in Ceylon, it may be appropriate at this point to consider briefly the type of religious beliefs and practices which were current among the people to whom he had to preach the doctrines of Buddhism, and whether that religion was known in this Island before his arrival. The Sinhalese people came from North India and settled down in Ceylon about five hundred years before the beginning of the Christian era; therefore, the religious beliefs which they brought with them could not have differed, in their essentials, from those which prevailed in their original home at that time. The religion of the higher classes of society in North India in those days was that reflected in the earlier strata of the two great Indian epics—the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata. The supreme deity then was the Creator, Brahmā, and the orderly governance of the world was believed to be ensured in different spheres by the four world-protectors, Indra, Yama, Varuna and Kuvera. Siva and Visnu were yet to attain the pre-eminent positions that they hold in the Hinduism of today. Popular religious beliefs which persisted even after the adoption of Buddhism by the Sinhalese, and which are not obsolete even today, indicate that this scheme of divine rule of the Universe was believed in by the ancient Sinhalese. For, of the four gods who are believed to be protectors of Ceylon—the world to the Sinhalese—two are Yama and Varuna, more or less metamorphosed, Skanda is the commander-in-chief of Indra and Vibhīsaņa is a brother of Kuvera. Lesser gods worshipped by the ancient Sinhalese, as indicated by the personal names appearing in the earliest Brāhmī records, and by other evidence, included Baladeva, the god of Wine, Rāma13, Karņa, Vāsudeva and Siva.

13. ASC. Memoirs, VI, p. 44.

^{12.} For the nature of Tissa's relation with Asoka, see S. Paranavitana in JRAS., 1936, pp. 443ff.

These deities belong to the Brahmanical pantheon; it is, therefore, not surprising to have evidence for the presence of Brāhmaṇas, not only in the

literary records, but also in inscriptions.

Divine beings of less reputable origin called Yaksas commanded respect from the high as well as the low. Cittaraja, a Yaksa to whom special honour was paid by Pandukābhaya, figures in one of the Jātaka stories. The mare-faced Yaksini installed in his palace by this ruler differed very little from Assa-mukhī (Horse-faced), figuring in another Jātaka story. The water-spirits called Nagas received their share of adoration, and Culodara and Mahodara of Ceylon legends are apparently the same as Kundodara and Mahodara of the Mahābhārata. A goddess named the 'Western Queen' and the deity guarding the city had their shrines in ancient Anuradhapura. The worship of stars was also widespread, for the custom of naming children after the constellation under which they were born was common in early Ceylon. Certain trees were held in awe, for example the banyan; other trees appear to have been regarded as the abodes of oracles; a pañhamba (the oracle mango) figures in the account of Mahinda's activities. The hunters worshipped the palmyrah palm, and the other castes probably had their own shrines. The religion of the common people appears to have been similar to that of which we obtain glimpses from the Jātaka stories. Near Anurādhapura, there was an area set apart for the use of various sects of ascetics. Jainism seems to have counted many adherents, for a hermitage of one of the leaders of this religion is said to have been established by Pandukābhaya14.

The colonisation of Ceylon by the original Sinhalese took place just when the doctrines of Buddhism were being preached for the first time in North India, and it is not impossible that some among those who settled down in this Island had heard of these teachings. Either among the original settlers, or among those who subsequently arrived in the Island, there could even have been some who had been converted to these new doctrines. The merchants and mariners who frequented these shores between the date of the original settlement of the Sinhalese and the middle of the third century B.C. might conceivably have brought tidings of the revolutionary changes in religious thought that were then gaining ground on the continent. According to the chronicles, some of the subsequent arrivals in Ceylon after the original colonisation belonged to the clan (Śākyas) of which the Buddha Himself was a scion. If these accounts are reliable, they presumably were acquainted with the name and the doctrines of their great kinsman, but it does not necessarily follow that they had espoused these doctrines.

Legends associated with the Mahiyangana and Girihandu Dāgābas¹⁵ assert that these two shrines were founded in the lifetime of the Buddha,

S. Paranavitana, Pre-Buddhist Religious Beliefs in Ceylon, JCBRAS., XXXI, pp. 302ff.
 For Girihañdu Dāgāba, see EZ., IV, pp. 155ff.

but these legends are so full of the miraculous and the supernatural, that it is not safe to deduce from them any conclusion that worshippers of Buddhist stūpas were to be found in Ceylon before the time of Devānampiya Tissa. No monument that can be ascribed to a date before the official introduction of Buddhism into this Island has yet been recognised. From the evidence now available, therefore, it cannot be stated that any considerable group of people were adherents of Buddhism in Ceylon before the middle of the third century B.C., though there might have been, here and there, individuals who had some knowledge of its tenets, and had inclinations towards them. At any rate, there do not appear to have been Buddhist bhikkhus, leading a corporate existence, in those early days, and the establishment of the Sāsana from the Buddhist point of view is synonymous with the establishment of the Sanigha. And this took place, for the first time, in the reign of Devānampiya Tissa.

Mahinda Thera started to Ceylon from the Vedisagiri-vihāra in the Avanti country, to which part of India his mother belonged. He must have had connections with that part of India even before. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the form of Buddhism established in Ceylon by Mahinda Thera was that which had developed in the Avanti country. In support of this conclusion is the fact that Mahā Kaccāyana Thera, one of the Buddha's immediate disciples, is credited with the authorship of the first Pāli grammar, the sacred language of the Ceylon Buddhists. Mahā Kaccāyana was the disciple who preached the message of the Buddha in the Avanti country, and the traditions of the Northern Buddhists credit him with an important role in the development of the Theravāda doctrines. Some scholars are of opinion that the Pāli language is akin to the dialect of Avanti.

According to the unanimous tradition of Sinhalese Buddhists, the first meeting between Mahinda Thera and Devānampiya Tissa, king of Ceylon, took place at Mihintalē on the full-moon day of the month of Jeṭṭha (May—June; Sinhalese Poson) in the eighteenth year of Asoka's reign, i.e. two hundred and thirty six years after the parinirvāṇa of the Buddha. The day was a national festival at that time, celebrated with water sports, most probably as a thanksgiving to Parjanya for the south-west monsoon rains. While the people were enjoying water sports, the king, attended by a large retinue, went a-hunting to Mihintalē, and there encountered the mission-aries, being led to the spot by a deer which he chased. The deer is said in reality to have been a Deva who adopted this ruse to introduce the king to the missionaries in a dramatic manner. The king is said to have been frightened at the first sight of the saffron-coloured bhikkhus, but was reassured with the words: 'Samaṇas are we, O great king, disciples of the king

^{16.} HCIR., II, p. 379.

of Truth. From compassion toward thee are we come hither from Jambudīpa.' These words brought to the king's mind the message of Asoka, and in the conversation which ensued, Mahinda Thera, it is said, put certain questions to Tissa so as to test the latter's intelligence. The king having passed the test creditably, the thera delivered a discourse to him and to his retinue who had now joined him.

Mahinda Thera and his companions are believed by the faithful to have transported themselves through the air from Vedisagiri in Avanti to Cetiyagiri in Ceylon. Those who are not prepared to believe that there was air transport in those days may give some thought to the question of the manner of Mahinda Thera's progress from Avanti to Ceylon. The normal course would have been to arrive overland to a seaport on the western coast of India, most probably to Bharukaccha, and thence to take ship to the Island. Perhaps Mahinda Thera and his followers adopted this course. Another possibility is that the missionaries travelled overland right up to the crossing between South India and Ceylon. The fact that the propagation of Buddhism in the Tamil country has also been credited to Mahinda Thera, according to traditions prevalent when Hsüan Tsang, the Chinese pilgrim, visited India¹⁷, would give some support to the second possibility. It is of course quite possible that Mahinda Thera and his companions undertook missionary work in South India after the successful completion of their work in Ceylon, though this is not recorded in the Sinhalese chronicles.

The story given in the chronicles of the progress of Mahinda's mission is embellished with miracles and the supernatural element. The denizens of heaven are always ready at hand in making things smooth for the theras. Earthquakes which do harm to none frequently occur to impress the king and the courtiers with the prophecies ascribed to the Saint. At sermons preached on important occasions, the devas in the congregation far outnumber the men. Elephants, without anybody's bidding, indicate to the king the exact spot on which sacred shrines are to be sited. Malevolent beings are tamed and made to be of service to the religion. A tradition that had not found its way to the chronicles, but has been recorded in a tenth century inscription, was that a Rākṣasa who had his abode in the Tisāväva was tamed by Mahinda Thera, and was made to be of service to the religion as well as to society. This feat of Mahinda Thera, which reminds us of the achievement recorded of his fellow-missioner to Gandhara, has also been referred to in the Mahākarmavibhanga, a Sanskrit Buddhist text that was in vogue among the Mahāyānists18. Divested of these mira-

^{17.} S. Beal, Buddhist Records of the Western World, Vol. II, p. 230 18. EZ., I, p. 35; Mahākarmavibhanga, edited by Sylvain Levi, p. 63.

culous elements, the course of events with regard to the establishment of Buddhism after the arrival of the missionaries may be related as follows:

Soon after their meeting with the king, Mahinda Thera and his companions, forming a chapter according to Vinaya rules, performed at Mihintale the first sanighakamma (Act of the Order) in Ceylon by conferring the ordination on a lay disciple named Bhanduka who had accompanied them. They remained at Mihintale that night, and preached a sermon. king and his retinue returned to the city, having invited the missionaries to come there on the morrow. The first sermon in the city was preached within a pavilion specially put up for the occasion in the precincts of the palace, wherein meals were served to the honoured visitors. The congregation consisted mainly of the ladies of the royal household, foremost among whom was Anula, the consort of the king's younger brother, Mahanaga. The common people, who of course had no admission to the palace, were not content to allow the gift of the Dhamma to be appropriated solely by royalty, and clamoured to hear the missionaries preach. As the palace grounds had no room to hold the large assemblage, it was arranged for the thera to deliver a sermon at the elephant stables. Large numbers were converted as a result. The crowds who came to hear the preachings of the missionaries grew so large that there was no room for them even in the stables. The next congregation was therefore held in the spacious grounds of the Nandana park outside the city. On this occasion, too, women, not of royal rank, were among the most enthusiastic converts. At the close of the day, the thera wished to return to Mihintalē; but the king offered the Mahamegha garden, to the south of the city, as the abode of the missionaries. The first night of the missionaries at Anuradhapura was spent in the royal pavilion, within that delightful garden, to the west of the site of the later Bodhi Tree.

Early morning on the next day, the king visited the thera and, having learnt that it is permissible for the Samgha to accept the gift of a park, donated the Mahāmegha garden to the community of the four quarters. The princess Anulā expressed a desire on this occasion to adopt the life of a nun; but Mahinda Thera pointed out that it was not permissible for him to admit women to the Order, and that this could be effected if his sister, the therī Samghamittā, were invited to Ceylon. The king was requested to send a message to Asoka for this purpose, as well as for obtaining a branch of the sacred Bodhi Tree to be planted in Anurādhapura. The rest of the morning was spent in visiting various spots in the Mahāmegha garden and its precincts, where important shrines were to come up in the future. During the next three days, sermons were preached to numerous congregations that had assembled in the Nandana park. When the king enquired whether the religion of the Buddha has been established, the thera replied

in the negative, and explained that, for this end to be achieved, it was necessary to establish the consecrated boundaries so as to include the whole city within them. On the fourth day after the thera's arrival in Anurādhapura, Devānampiya Tissa himself ploughed a furrow marking the boundaries of the consecrated area. Work was commenced, in the days that followed, for building various edifices in the Mahāmegha garden that were necessary for the Samgha. Thus originated the celebrated Mahāvihāra which was to develop in the future into one of the greatest monastic establishments of the Buddhist religion anywhere in the world.

Nearly a month was spent in preaching to the people who had come to Anurādhapura from various parts of the Island, and when the time for the vassa (rainy season) retreat drew nigh, Mahinda Thera went to Mihintalē to spend that season there. The king followed him to that hill, and initiated the work necessary to prepare caves as abodes for Mahinda and his companions. A second monastery was thus established at Mihintalē.

After the end of the *vassa* season, with the ceremony of the *pavāraṇā*, ¹⁹ Mahinda Thera expressed the desire to see the Buddha in the form of a *stūpa* in which relics were enshrined. The king readily agreed to build such a monument if a suitable relic could be obtained. Thereupon the *thera* despatched Sumana, a novice who had accompanied him, to Asoka, with the request for the right collar-bone of the Buddha. When this and other relics were brought to Ceylon, Devānampiya Tissa and the people received them with great rejoicing and ceremonial, and enshrined the collar-bone in the Thūpārāma Dāgäba, built just outside the walls of Anurādhapura. Thus was established the first Buddhist place of worship in the Island, at which the *bhikkhus* as well as the laymen could give expression to their devotion to the Master.

Meanwhile, Tissa had not forgotten his undertaking to get down the therī Samghamittā and the branch of the sacred Bodhi Tree. Ariṭṭha, who had previously been sent as his envoy to the court of Pāṭaliputra, was once more placed at the head of a mission to Asoka, but this time for a very different purpose. Ariṭṭha agreed to undertake this task on condition that he was permitted to enter the Order after its successful accomplishment.

Arittha and his companions embarked at Jambukola as before, arrived in due time at Pāṭaliputra, and delivered the message of Tissa to Asoka. The Indian monarch, though loth to send his daughter to so distant a place, agreed to the request for the sake of the propagation of the Dhamma that was so dear to his heart. He also made preparations to obtain the branch of the Bodhi Tree. Asoka's visit to Bodh Gayā for this purpose, the severance

^{19.} The formal request, by each member of the Samgha assembled at the end of the retreat, made to the assembly to declare any transgression of his that had come to the notice of the others.

of the branch from the sacred stem, the transportation of the sacred object, befittingly placed in a vase, to the capital, and thence to the seaport, were all accompanied by brilliant pageantry and manifestations of unbounded religious fervour. Different classes of artisans to perform the various services necessary for the Bodhi Tree also accompanied the sacred object. The therī Samghamittā, entrusted with the care of the sacred object, and other nuns embarked at Tāmralipti, and with Ariṭṭha and his companions in attendance, performed the voyage back to Ceylon.

They were received with manifestations of great honour and rejoicings by Mahinda Thera and the king of Ceylon, who had come to Jambukola from Anuradhapura. The branch of the sacred Tree was placed in a pavilion at the sea-shore, and worshipped for three days therein, the king himself acting as door-keeper. From the pavilion the Bodhi-branch, placed in a beautiful chariot, was taken to a spot where the Pācīnārāma, 'Eastern monastery', in Nāgadīpa was later established. In four days, the sacred object reached Anuradhapura, having been paid homage at various halts, one of which was the village of the Brahmana Tavakka. Entering the city through the north gate, the Bodhi-branch was taken through the south gate to the spot selected for its installation. In the presence of Mahinda Thera, Sanighamitta Theri, nobles of the realm, the Ksatriyas of Candanagāma and Kājaragāma²⁰ and the Brāhmaṇa Tavakka, the Bodhibranch was finally planted on the terrace prepared for it. The presence, on this occasion, of the ruling princes of outlying districts, and the Brāhmaņa Tavakka, at the invitation no doubt of Devānampiya Tissa, was a form of their acknowledging the paramountcy of the latter. Eight saplings which arose from the seeds of the branch, and thirty other saplings which arose later in the same manner, were planted at various places in the Island.

Samghamittā took up her abode in a nunnery named Upāsikā-vihāra within the city, and established the Order of Nuns by ordaining Anuļā and her women. The mast of the ship in which the Bodhi-branch was brought, was kept in one of the buildings of Samghamittā's nunnery, in another the rudder, and in yet another the helm. A second nunnery called Hatthālhaka-vihāra (the Convent of the Elephant Post) was later established for the residence of Samghamittā.

According to the *Mahābodhivamsa*, eight brothers of Vedisadevī, the mother of Mahinda Thera, accompanied the Bodhi Tree to Ceylon, and were given various offices and ranks by Devānampiya Tissa. These are referred to as Kṣatriyas of the Śākya or Maurya clan, but it is not clear how such a claim could have been substantiated, for Vedisadevī herself was the daughter of a banker of Vidisā. Some of the mediaeval royal families

^{20.} Candanagāma has not been identified. Kājaragāma is modern Kataragama.

of Ceylon claimed descent from Sumitra, the eldest of these brothers of Vedisadevī.²¹ The *Dīpavainsa* names some of these princes entrusted with the care of the Bodhi Tree, but says nothing of their relationship to Asoka. The *Mahāvainsa* has not recorded their names.

In addition to the religious buildings already named, Devānampiya Tissa has been credited with the foundation of a number of other vihāras, among which mention may be made of Issarasamana to the south of Anurādhapura, Vessagiri, of which the location is not known, Paṭhamathūpa, also not identified, the refectory called Mahāpālī and the Jambukolavihāra at the landing place of the Bodhi Tree. He also constructed the reservoir at Anurādhapura which still bears his name, the Tisāväva.

After his return from his second mission to the Maurya court, Arittha, the nephew of Devānampiya Tissa, adopted the religious life and, in due course, acquired high spiritual attainments.

When Devānampiya Tissa had carried out various undertakings on behalf of the religion that he had espoused, he is reported to have questioned Mahinda Thera whether the Law of the Buddha had been well established in the Island. The Saint replied that it had indeed been planted, but had not yet taken root. Further questioned, as to how this development could be brought about, the king was told that the religion will take root only when a person born of Ceylonese parents in Ceylon, studies the Vinaya (disciplinary rules) in Ceylon, and expounds the Vinaya in Ceylon. The king wished to know whether there was such a person, and was told that Arittha, who was now a mahāthera, had the required qualifications. The king then made elaborate preparations for an assembly of bhikkhus at the Thuparama, and Arittha Thera, who occupied a seat equal to that of Mahinda Thera, expounded the Vinaya22. This story illustrates that the great missionary did not wish the new religion to be considered as something exotic, which had to be maintained by teachers from abroad, but had arranged to make the Buddhist Church in Ceylon a truly national institution. The wisdom of this policy has been amply demonstrated by the later course of events in the history of Buddhism in Ceylon, for the kings and people considered the Buddhist Church as an institution that they had to maintain and defend at all costs.

There was one person, and that very close to Devānampiya Tissa, on whom the religion which the king so strenuously endeavoured to propagate had no beneficial results. The queen of Devānampiya Tissa plotted to kill his younger brother, the *uparāja* Mahānāga, so that the succession would be assured to her own son, then a boy of tender years. The strategem she adopted was to send Mahānāga a present of mangoes, of which

^{21.} EZ., III, p. 67. 22. Smp., pp. 102—3.

the topmost fruit was poisoned. The death-dealing present was delivered to the intended victim when he was supervising the work of constructing a tank and, as fate would have it, the boy prince, for whose benefit the plot was hatched, happened to be by the side of his uncle. The latter, quite unaware that it was poisoned, gave the topmost mango to the boy, who ate it and died on the spot. Mahānāga, apprehensive that he would be charged of the offence, fled from Anurādhapura to Mahāgāma in Rohaṇa, and set himself up as the ruler of that district. This story goes to prove that the southern part of the Island was not under the effective control of the king of Anurādhapura at that time.

Devānampiya Tissa reigned for forty years and, during the whole of this period, Mahinda Thera and Samghamittā Therī lived in Ceylon, engaged in propagating the faith and setting an inspiring example, by their own lives, to the devotees of the new faith. Devānampiya Tissa was succeeded in or about 207 B.C., by his younger brother Uttiya whose historicity is proved by three inscriptions in caves at Mihintalē. Mahinda Thera expired in the eighth year of Uttiya. The obsequies were carried out with great solemnity. The relics which remained after the cremation of the body were enshrined in a number of stūpas, including one built at Mihintalē. In the next year passed away Samghamittā and her body was cremated with honours equal to those accorded to the obsequies of her brother, at a spot close to the Bodhi Tree which will always be associated with her memory. A monument was raised in her honour there²³.

The seeds sown by the personages figuring in the foregoing account had fallen on good soil, and the harvests of spirituality, charity and loving kindness to fellow-beings, resulting therefrom, have been garnered during more than twenty centuries, to the benefit of humanity not only in this small Island, but also in regions far beyond. Their names have been held in veneration by a grateful people up to the present day, and will continue to be so held for many generations yet unborn.

^{23.} The small ruined stūpa to the east of the Thūpārāma cannot be the monument built over the ashes of Samghamittā, as is believed by some today.

CHAPTER III

THE TRIUMPH OF DUTTHAGAMANI

According to the chronicles, three of Devānampiya Tissa's younger brothers, Uttiya, Mahāsiva and Sūratissa, each reigned for ten years, one after the other. Sūratissa was ousted by two Tamil horse-dealers, Sena and Guttaka, who jointly ruled for twenty-two years. It has been recorded of Sena and Guttaka that they believed in the doctrine that sins are washed away by water, and in order to carry out their sacred ablutions without having to go far, they diverted the course of the Kadamba-nadī (Malvatu Oya) to run by the side of the city of Anurādhapura. Asela, another younger brother of Devānampiya Tissa, is said to have wrested the throne from the two Tamil usurpers, and ruled for ten years until Eļāra, a Tamil from the Coļa country, seized the kingdom and reigned for forty-four years.

The traditional chronology for this period is manifestly incredible; for, according to it, the reigns of five brothers are spread over a period of 102 years, and that after their father is said to have himself ruled for sixty years. The round figure of ten years assigned to four of the rulers also makes the chronology open to suspicion. The historicity of one of these successors of Devānampiya Tissa, however, is proved by epigraphical records, and we have to conclude either that these rulers were contemporary, exercising authority in different regions of the Island, or that the relationship they bore to each other, as given in the chronicles, is wrong.

However this may be, princes of Devānampiya Tissa's house lost control of the northern half of the Island not many decades after his death; and Buddhism, for the time being, ceased to enjoy the privileged position which that monarch had accorded it in his dominions. The incursion of Tamils at this period was perhaps not unconnected with the decline of the Maurya empire after the death of Asoka. If, as we have surmised in the last chapter, Devānampiya Tissa leaned on the support of Asoka to establish the regal authority of his house, the withdrawal of the Maurya power from South India would have given to political adventurers from that region the opportunity to try their fortunes in this Island, with no fear of a great power in the background to check them. It is also possible that the people of Ceylon, in the enthusiasm for the faith that they had recently adopted, spent too much of the resources of the state in establishing shrines for Buddhism, and neglected the upkeep of military defences, thus giving

^{1.} See supra, p. 125, f. n. l.

the impression to their neighbours that this Island was an easy prey to a soldier of fortune.

The Tamil rulers of this early period are not described as having been actively hostile to Buddhism. In fact, the chronicle states that Sena and Guttaka reigned justly, and Eļāra's love of justice is said to have been stronger than the natural affection he had for his own son. The stories related of his love of justice, which was so great as to compel even the gods to rain in due season, are also narrated in Tamil literature in connection with a mythical Cola king, Manu Cola². But Buddhism under these rulers was deprived of the active support which Devānampiya Tissa and his successors extended to it, and some of Elāra's warriors, without the knowledge of their master, are said to have treated the Buddhist shrines and the bhikkhus with scant respect, and even with hostility.

But, fortunately for the future course of Buddhism in this Island, that religion had been propagated, in the reign of Devānampiya Tissa and the subsequent decades, throughout its length and breadth, and the princes who exercised power in the southern half of the Island, where the writ of the Tamil rulers did not run, gave theirsupport to the bhikkhus, and encouraged their subjects to follow the teachings of Mahinda's successors. And, in course of time, a scion of the princely house that had found refuge in Rohana, as the southern part of the Island was anciently named, summoned the people to the clarion call of religion and led them to victory, so that the first Sinhalese dynasty recovered its sovereignty over the whole Island, and raised Buddhism once again to the pre-eminent position which it had temporarily lost. We now proceed to trace the descent and pursue the career of this prince Duṭṭhagāmaṇī (Duṭugāmunu), who vanquished Elāra and has come to be regarded by the Sinhalese as their national hero.

Mahānāga, the younger brother of Devānampiya Tissa, who fled from Anurādhapura, consequent to the episode that we have related in the previous chapter, established himself at Mahāgāma (now known as Tissamahārāma), and was succeeded by his son, Yaṭṭhālaya Tissa. Goṭhābhaya, the next ruler of Mahāgāma, is said to have been Yaṭṭhālaya Tissa's son. Goṭhābhaya's son, Kākavaṇṇa Tissa, married Vihāradevī, daughter of Tissa of Kalyāṇī, and begot two sons, Duṭṭhagāmaṇī and Saddhātissa. The authority of these princes of Mahāgāma does not seem to have extended very far at first, for at Kataragama, only eight miles to the east of Mahāgāma, there was a family of Kṣatriyas whose representatives, as we have seen in the preceding chapter, were present at the ceremony of planting the Bodhi Tree at Anurādhapura by Devānampiya Tissa. We are not told of the reaction of the Kataragama Kṣatriyas to Mahānāga's arrival, but two ruling houses cannot exist so close to each other for long without

^{2.} Colas, p. 8.

coming into conflict. And this conflict came to a head in the time of Gothābhaya who, according to the Dhātuvainsa, slew the ten brother kings of Kataragama and, in order to expiate the sin of this action, built a number of vihāras in Rohaņa3. An inscription in early Brāhmī script at Bovattegala, about 30 miles east of Kataragama, refers to ten brother kings who were the sons of a ruler called Gamani4. The historicity of the ten brother kings mentioned in the Dhātuvanisa is thus established.

The fact that tradition considered it necessary for Gothābhaya to expiate the sin of slaying these ten brother kings by building as many as five hundred vihāras, proves that he was judged by his contemporaries to have committed a very reprehensible act in annihilating them. Popular judgment, which tradition as a rule perpetuates, is not so severe on princes who dispose of their rivals in the course of their own aggrandisement. It is, therefore, clear that, in slaying these princes, Gothābhaya was held by public opinion of his day to have committed an offence against persons who should not have been so treated by him. If the Kataragama Ksatriyas befriended uparājā Mahānāga and his family when they fled from Anurādhapura, and allowed him and his descendants to live at Mahagama under their protection, the act of Gothābhaya in slaying the representatives of the Kataragama royal family of his day, would have been judged as one of ingratitude which, according to the canons of conduct in ancient times, would have been considered a heinous offence necessitating expiation.

The Kataragama Kṣatriyas are nowhere stated to have been descended from the legendary ancestors of the royal family of Anuradhapura. The probability is that they represented the leaders of a stream of immigration to this Island different from that which had established itself in and around Anuradhapura. In the names and titles borne by members of this family, in the language of their inscriptions, and in the culture which these denote, they do not, however, seem to have differed from the royal family of Anurādhapura. The slaying of the ten brother kings by Gothābhaya did not put an end to the Kataragama Kṣatriyas. A prince named Mahatisa, son of Damaraja (Dharmaraja), the son of the eldest of the ten brother kings, figures in a number of epigraphs at ancient sites in the south-eastern part of the Island. A princess named Abi Anuradi, daughter of Prince Abhaya

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^{3.} E-raja put Gothābhaya nam raja piyarajahu gē ävāmen rājjaya läba piyarajahu kī parıdden ma dhātūn-vahansēta pūjā karavā vāsaya karannē Kadaragama dasabā-rajadaruvan maravā danduvam pinisa . . . Mahavāli-ganga egoda vihāra pansiyayak hā megoda vihāra pansiyayak da karavā . . . āyuṣayāgē keļavara dev-lova upannēya. 'King Goṭhābhaya, son of that king (Yaṭṭhālaya Tissa) succeeded to the sovereignity after the death of the king his father and reigned, paying worship to the Relic as instructed by his father the king. He slew the ten brother kings of Kadaragama and, as a punishment (for that offence) wonstructed five hundred wihāras on the thither side of the Mahavalla and the same and the sam (for that offence), constructed five hundred vihāras on the thither side of the Mahaväliganga and another five hundred on the hither side, and . . . at the end of his life, was born in heaven'. Dhv., p. 23—4.
4. CJSG., II, pp. 99—100 and 175—176. See also C. W. Nicholas in UCR., VI.

who was the son of Uti (Uttiya), one of the ten brother kings, was the donor of a cave at Bōvattegala⁵.

It also appears that, after the clash between the two Kṣatriya families of Rohaṇa in the time of Goṭhābhaya, there was a reconciliation, sealed by a matrimonial alliance, in the time of Goṭhābhaya's son and successor, Kākavaṇṇa Tissa. Kākavaṇṇa, according to the Mahāvaṁsa, married Vihāradevī, the daughter of Tissa of Kalyāṇī (Kälaṇi). The origin of the family that ruled at Kälaṇi has not been stated in the chronicles, but a phrase in the Mahāvaṁsa, which can be interpreted to mean that Uttiya, the younger brother of Tissa of Kälaṇi, was so named after his grandfather, has suggested to later writers that the rulers of Kälaṇi were descended from Uttiya, the younger brother of Devānaṃpiya Tissa. We have seen, however, that there was a prince named Uttiya who belonged to the Kataragama dynasty, and the probability that the rulers of Kälaṇi belonged to that same dynasty comes up for consideration.

In this connection, the evidence of fourteen inscriptions, containing more or less the same text, engraved in caves at the site of an ancient monastery now called Kotādāmūhela, in the Yāla sanctuary, seems to have an important bearing. These records state that the caves in which they are indited were granted to the Saingha by a princess named Abi Savera, daughter of Mahatisa (Mahātissa), who was the son of Damaraja (Dharmarāja), and that this princess was the wife of Aya Tisa (Prince Tissa) son of Aya Abhaya (Prince Abhaya)6. The epithets like 'Gotha' (Short) and 'Kākavanna' (Crow-coloured) attached to royal names in literary works are unlikely to have been used in public documents when the personages to whom they were bestowed were still alive. Prince Tissa, son of Prince Abhaya, can therefore very well have been Kākavanna Tissa, son of Gothābhaya. In the name of the princess, 'Abi' is a courtesy title, prefixed to the names of several princesses in inscriptions of the pre-Christian period. 'Savera', by normal phonological processes, could have assumed the form 'Vahera' in course of time in popular parlance, and the name turned into Pāli as 'Vihāra' by the chroniclers. 'Vahera' being the form which the Pāli word vihāra had assumed in Old Sinhalese, the story given in the chronicle that the name of Kākavanna's consort was due to the fact that a vihāra was built at the spot where the boat in which she was sent adrift by her father touched land, can easily be taken as an instance of folk-etymology. In the name of the father of Princess Abi Savera, the element maha can be left out, as it is often found indiscriminately used, both in literary works as well as in inscriptions. The name 'Kalanika Tisa,' itself has been found in a fragmentary Brāhmī inscription at an ancient site in the south-eastern

6. ASCAR., 1934, p. 21; UCR., VI, p. 239.

^{5.} UCR., VI, p. 239 and CJSG., II, p. 115, Inscription No. 465.

area of the Island7, suggesting that the ruler of Kälani, the father of Kākavanna Tissa's wife, was connected with the rulers of that part of the country. If the course of events was such as has been inferred from the above interpretation of the epigraphical records, Dutthagamani, the son of Kākavanna Tissa and Vihāradevī, united in his person the two rival Kṣatriya families of Rohaṇa, the one that had borne authority in that region probably from the time it was colonised by the Sinhalese settlers, and the other that came from Anuradhapura, bringing with it the cultural influences adopted later through contact with Maurya India. Duțțhagāmaṇi could thus count upon the loyalty of the people of Rohana as a whole.

The Dhātuvanisa has recorded other details with regard to the relations between the rulers of Mahāgāma and those of Kälaņi. A princess named Somadevi, sister of Kākavanna Tissa, was given in marriage to Prince Abhaya, the brother of Siva, ruling at Kälani8. This Siva must have been the successor, and probably the son, of Tissa of Kälani, who, according to tradition, lost his life by the wrath of the gods for having unjustly executed, in a barbarous manner, a saint whom he groundlessly suspected of intimacy with his queen. Prince Abhaya, the brother-in-law of Kākavanna, is said to have taken up his abode at a place named Girinuvara (-nagara). Prince Dutthagāmaņī, while yet of tender years, is said to have been sent to reside there with a minister named Dava as guardian. Later, there was a dispute between the two princes as to which of their two families was the superior. Prince Abhaya did not wish this dispute to be decided by the only manner in which such differences can be settled, i.e. by an appeal to arms. He, therefore, left Giri-nuvara with his wife, Somadevi, and retinue, and went to his friend Siva, who was the ruler at the city of Sēru, where the Sēruvila Dāgāba now stands. Siva of Sēru received Abhaya with hospitality and, having learnt the reason of his unexpected visit, gave the latter a site for a new abode within his territories. A city, named Soma after his wife, was built there by Abhaya, and he continued to reside therein9. This story indicates that, in spite of matrimonial alliances, the relations between the descendants of Mahānāga and

No. 1095 of the Inscriptions Register of the Archaeological Department.
 Māta-bhāgayehi Kälaṇiyē Siva nam maharaja tamāgē bāṇa vū Abhaya rāja-kumārayāhaṭa Kāvantissa rajjuruvan gē buhunāṇi vū Somadevī nam rāja-kumārikāvak maha peraharin genavut pāvā dī bäṇanuvan Abhaya rāja kumārayan Giri-nuvara vāsaya karavūyē ya. 'Later, the great king Siva of Kälani had the princess, Somadevi, younger sister of

Kākavaṇṇa Tissa, brought with great ceremony and espoused to his brother, the prince Abhaya. He made his brother, Prince Abhaya, reside at Girinuvara'. Dhv., p. 30.

9. Rajjuruvō taman gē put vū Duṭugämuṇu-kumārayan laṅgaṭa käňdavā 'Puta tepi gos Girinuvara vāsaya karav' ya yi kiyā Dāvā nam amātyayaku ōhaṭa piyatanaturehi tabā Girinuvaraṭa yävūvō ya. E Girinuvara un Abhaya nam raja Duṭugämuṇu laṃgāta ababā arabāta ababā arabāta sammāna kumārayan dāka ohu hā samaga ā senāvaṭa vastrābharaṇādiya dī bohō satkāra sammāna keļēya. Dutugāmuņu kumārayā da Girinuvara vāsaya keļēya. Māta bhāgayehi jātiya nisā raja-daruvan gē vivādayak vūyē ya. E-kalhi Abhaya rajjuruvō maṭa vivādayen kam

the representatives of the Kataragama Kṣatriyas were not always friendly, and neither party wished to concede to the other pre-eminence in lineage. It also becomes clear that the whole of Rohaṇa was not at that time united under one central government, and that local rulers, like those of Kälaṇi and Sēru, at times did not acknowledge the paramountcy of the princes of Mahāgāma.

The policy of Kākavanna Tissa seems to have been to weld together the various elements of political power in Rohana into one unit under his own person, so that, in the event of an attempt by the rulers of Anuradhapura to extend Tamil dominion into Rohana, the Sinhalese who were yet free could effectively defend themselves. But he wished, it appears, to achieve this unification of Rohana by peaceful means. The minister who had been sent to Girinuvara with the young prince Dutthagamani had so contrived matters as to put an end to the possibility of that princedom emerging as a rival to Mahāgāma. We hear no more of Kalyāņī and its rulers. They were perhaps impressed with Kākavanna's superior resources, and became content, in course of time, to acknowledge the ruler of Mahāgāma as their overlord. There yet remained Siva of Sēru, reinforced by the followers of Abhaya, Kākavanna's own brother-in-law. The area under the rule of these two princes was in the north of Rohana, adjoining the territories of the Tamil ruler of Anuradhapura. Their going over to the side of Eļāra, or being vanquished by the latter, would make Kākavanna Tissa's territories vulnerable. A show of force would precipitate the very consequence that was feared, for in order to defend themses, thelvey might invoke

nätä yi taman gē Somadevī nam vū bisava hā samaga sivuranga senaga gena kramayen yannāhu Sēru nam nuvara raja karana tamā gē mitra vū Siva rajahu nisā ohugē samīpayaṭa giyō ya. E Sivaraja Girī Abhaya raju hā ek va ā senagaṭa vastrābharana dī kirī tel ādiyen hā goda-mas diya-mas ādīn yukta koṭa bat da dunnē ya. Kīpa davasak giya kala 'rajjuruveni, me-tānhi pāmini kāriya kavarē dā' yi vicālēya. E viṭa ē Girī Abhaya raja ā kārana siyalla ma kīyēya. 'Rajjuruveni, topa keļē yahapata ya, ā yutu tānaṭa ma ava, mama topaṭa kaļamanā dā danimi ; tepi nahamak sitava ' yi kiyā ē rajahu vāsaya karanu pinisa nuvara-bim soyannē vil-samīpayehi itā sitkalu vū bhūmi-bhāgayak dāka e-tāna nuvarak koṭa e-nuvaraṭa dēvīn gē namin Somanuvara ya yi nam tubūyē ya. 'King (Kāvantissa)... called his son prince Duṭugāmuṇu to his side and, saying, ''Son, go thou to Girinuvara and reside there'', appointed a minister named Dāyā to be in the position of father to that (prince), and sent him to Girinuvara. King Abhaya who resided in that Girinuvara saw Prince Duṭugāmuṇu and showed great hospitality and honour by presenting robes, ornaments, etc., to the retinue who came with that prince. And Prince Duṭugāmuṇu resided at Girinuvara. Later, there was a dispute among the royal personages with regard to birth. Then king Abhaya, (reflecting) ''I have no use for disputes'', took his queen Somadevī, and the four-fold army with him and going forth in due course thought of his friend king Siva, reigning at the city named Sēru, and went to him. That king Siva entertained the host who came with king Giri Abhaya by giving them robes, ornaments, and eatables such as curd, milk, ghee, meat and fish. After the expiry of a few days, king Siva asked: "Your Majesty, what is the cause of your coming to this place'' ? Then king Giri Abhaya told him in detail the reason for his coming (there). Siva replied: 'Your Majesty, what is the cause of your coming to this place''? Then king Giri Abhaya told him in detail the reason for his coming (there). Siva replied: 'Your

the aid of the foreign ruler on the opposite bank of the Mahaväli Ganga. In this predicament, Kākavaṇṇa Tissa appears to have acted in a very politic manner, by making use of the attachment to Buddhism of the Sinhalese nobles as well as the people, in order to bring about the unification of the whole of Rohaṇa.

The story was made to gain currency by religious teachers that a sacred relic in the possession of Kākavaṇṇa was destined to be enshrined by him in a stūpa at Sēru, the Buddha Himself having prophesied it in that wise¹⁰. Significantly, the prophecy of the Buddha is said to have been brought to the notice of Kākavaṇṇa by a great thera who was the nephew of Vihāradevī, and also of Giri Abhaya, the ally of the ruler at Sēru. No doubt, the story must have been propagated by the preachers in the dominions of these two kinglets. Kākavaṇṇa having stationed his elder son, Duṭṭhagāmaṇi, at Mahāgāma, and his younger son, Saddhātissa, at Dīghavāpī, proceeded with his army towards Sēru, proclaimed the purpose of his visit and demanded all land-owners in and around Sēru to come to his assistance. The thera who propagated the story about the relic also accompanied the king.

The kinglets of Sēru and Soma must have found themselves on the horns of a dilemma. If they received Kākavaṇṇa in a friendly manner, it would have amounted to acknowledging him as their suzerain. If they did not do so, they would have alienated the sympathies of their own subjects, for the declared purpose of Kākavaṇṇa's visit was one which the people as a whole would have approved. Besides, Kākavaṇṇa was accompanied by a powerful force, and the spiritual mentor who accompanied him on this expedition was one who commanded the respect of the local rulers as well as the prince of Mahāgāma. The outcome was that the kinglets of Sēru and Soma and their retainers received Kākavaṇṇa Tissa with the honour due to an overlord, and assisted him in the building of the shrine. Thus Kākavaṇṇa Tissa achieved what might well be described as a dhamma-vijaya which ultimately was of benefit to all parties concerned.

Kākavaṇṇa Tissa, like many another father with a famous son, hassuffered in comparison. But, if not for Kākavaṇṇa's having resolved the rivalries of the various factions with a claim to the overlordship of the Sinhalese who had not to bear the yoke of the foreign invaders, Duṭṭhagāmaṇī might not have been able to accomplish what he did. According to literary sources, it was Kākavaṇṇa who raised an army from among the able-bodied men of Rohaṇa, and had it trained. He established workshops for the manufacture of weapons with which he equipped his soldiers. He had garrisons posted at strategic points along the course of the Mahaväli Ganga, and one of his sons from a consort other than Vihāradevī,

^{10.} The account which follows is based on the Dhv., pp. 34ff,

named Dighābhaya, was entrusted with this work of guarding the frontier against possible inroads by Tamil forces. He realised that, with the constant threat of a hostile power in the north, the greatest necessity was unity among his own people, and he contrived to impress this need on the minds of his two sons by making them take an oath that they would never fight against each other. He well understood the part that the members of the Sanigha could play in the affairs of the people and, so that his house may rely on their powerful support, he admonished his sons to pay due respect to them. He did not underestimate the might of the forces of his potential opponents, and did not encourage any rash and premature adventures, the failure of which would have spelt doom to all future prospects of regaining the lost patrimony of his house.

This cautiousness of his policy is interpreted as cowardice by modern romancers, as it was indeed taken by his own son Gamani Abhaya. The chronicle depicts the prince as chafing under the restraint imposed by his father, even in his tender years. When the child was requested to give a promise that he would not fight the Tamils, he is said to have crouched upon his bed and, when questioned by the mother, Vihāradevī, why he did not stretch himself on the bed in comfort, the precocious boy is said to have asked how he could do so when the Tamils blocked him on the north, and the great ocean on the south. When the prince had grown into manhood, and an army had been raised and trained, he is said to have requested the permission of Kākavanna Tissa to march against the Tamil foe. The old king felt that the time was not yet opportune and withheld his approval; the impetuous young prince, so the story goes, expressed his indignation in a most eloquent, but offensive, symbolic act. He sent his father a woman's ornament to wear. The father was naturally enraged, and gave orders for the prince to be put in chains, but the latter escaped from the palace before this order could be put into effect. He is said to have found refuge in the mountains and remained incognito until the time came for him to take charge of affairs himself.

This estrangement between Kākavaṇṇa Tissa and his elder son took place shortly before the death of the former. It must have happened not long after Kākavaṇṇa extended his authority to the Sēru district, for, according to the *Dhātuvaṇisa*, it was towards the end of that ruler's career that the sacred relic was enshrined in the stūpa at Sēruvila¹¹. Duṭṭha-gāmaṇī was still in hiding at Kotmalē when Kākavaṇṇa died, and the younger prince, Saddhātissa, who came to Mahāgāma from Dīghavāpī when he received the tidings, returned there with the queen-mother and the state elephant. Duṭṭhagāmaṇī was informed of the death of his father by the ministers. He came to Mahāgāma and was duly installed as ruler.

^{11.} Dhv., p. 34.

Saddhātissa, however, remained at Dīghavāpī and did not surrender the state elepehant to his elder brother when requested to do so by Duṭṭha-gāmaṇī. The queen-mother, too, was not allowed to come to Mahāgāma. A state of open hostility thus developed between the two brothers. Fortunately, the old king, before he died, had anticipated such a development, and taken a pledge from the commanders of the army that they would remain neutral in a future conflict between the two brothers, who had thus to settle their differences by putting into the field only minor forces under their control.

The first encounter between the partisans of the two brothers took place at Cullanganiya-piṭṭhi (Sulunguṇā-piṭiya)¹², where the day was decided in favour of Tissa. Duṭṭhagāmaṇi had to flee, accompanied by only one faithful follower. He, however, succeeded in eluding his pursuers and, coming to the safety of Mahāgāma, raised fresh forces and went forth to meet his younger brother again. In the second encounter, Duṭṭhagāmaṇi's horsemanship secured for him the victory and the possession of the state-elephant. Saddhātissa, in his turn, was reduced to ignominious flight, and would have fallen into the hands of Duṭṭhagāmaṇi, had not the Samgha intervened and brought about a reconciliation between the two brothers. Saddhātissa made his submission to Duṭṭhagāmaṇi, who was now free for the undertaking which had been the one and only purpose of his being from childhood, namely the expedition against the Tamils to wrest his ancestral patrimony from them.

The Tamil rulers, on their part, do not seem to have been idle while the forces meant to check their advance had become impotent due to dissensions among their leaders. We have already referred to the garrisons maintained by Kākavaṇṇa Tissa on the right bank of the Mahaväli Ganga to hold the Tamils in check on the opposite bank. But, when Dutthagāmaṇi actually began his campaign, the initial fighting was to reduce Tamil strongholds on the right bank. It, therefore, follows that the forces of Eṭāra had succeeded in vanquishing the Sinhalese garrisons on the Rohaṇa side of the river, and had established their own strongholds within territory that had been Kākavaṇṇa Tissa's. Most probably, they secured this advantage while the Rohaṇa forces were engaged in deciding the dispute between Duṭṭhagāmaṇī and Saddhātissa. What Kākavaṇṇa had achieved by bringing Siva of Sēruvila under his influence had been thus nullified.

Perhaps the events in Rohana detailed above did not take place without the machinations of the power at Anuradhapura. Elara and his counsellors

^{12.} This place is believed to be the same as Yudanganava near Buttala; but the popular identification seems to be resting on no valid foundation. See ASCAR., 1955, pp. 27—28.

would not have been slow to realise the significance of Kākavaṇṇa Tissa's move to Sēruvila, and a counter-move on the political chess-board on their part must be expected. If the estrangement between Kākavaṇṇa Tissa and his elder son, and the rivalries between the two brothers after the death of their father, had been the work of Elāra's agents, they have acted with a sure grasp of the methods of political intrigue that were the norm in those days in relations between neighbouring states, and thus brought about the very condition to prevent which Kākavaṇṇa had striven so hard. It is difficult to imagine that, without any external prompting, the mild-tempered Tissa would have challenged his impetuous elder brother. However this may be, the conflict between the two brothers made Duṭṭhagāmaṇi's ultimate task more difficult of achievement; but, happily, the differences between the brothers were settled before irreparable damage was caused either to the internal harmony, or to the military potential of the principality of Rohana.

A descendant of the uparāja Mahānāga, who had to flee from Anurādhapura under the tragic circumstances narrated in the preceding chapter, which deprived him of the chances of occupying the throne of his elder brother, was thus in a position to undertake an expedition to wrest that throne which the incompetent successors of Devānampiya Tissa had not been able to retain in their family and, while he is making the final preparations for that fateful march, which decided the future course of the history of this Island, we may pause for a while to consider the length of the interval between the reigns of Devanampiya Tissa and Dutthagamani. We have seen above that the lengths of reigns attributed to the successors of Devānampiya Tissa at Anurādhapura are artificial, or that the relationship which they bore to each other as given in the chronicles is open to Similarly, there is a certain amount of incredibility with regard to the succession after Mahānāga in Rohana, as the sources have been interpreted. In the narrative of the chronicles with regard to the events at Anuradhapura, the interval between the generations of Devanampiya Tissa and Dutthagamani was covered by a single generation, whereas in the account of the succession of rulers in Rohana, three generations followed one after the other between Mahānāga, the brother of Devānampiya Tissa, and Dutthagamani. As we have suggested above, two generations appear to have been telescoped into one another in the account of the history of Anurādhapura.

On the other hand, the opposite process of making two generations out of one appears to have taken place with regard to the history of Rohana. This is suggested by an inscription in a cave at a place named Kusalāna-kanda in the Batticaloa District¹³. This record, which is in the earliest

^{13.} For the text of this epigraph, see UCR., VI, p. 240.

form of the Brāhmī script, gives us the following genealogy: Uparāja Nāga, his son Rāja Abhaya, his son Gāmaṇī Tissa. If we identify Uparāja Nāga with Uparāja Mahānāga, as the element mahā in proper names is optional, and Gamani Tissa with Kakavanna Tissa, the latter's father Abhaya, to be identified with Gothābhaya, has to be taken as the son of Mahānāga himself, and not of Yatthalaya Tissa, son of Mahanaga. Gothabhaya, thus, has to be taken as a brother, and not a son of Yatthalaya Tissa, as stated in the historical writings, or at least as the most important of them has been interpreted. In the old Sinhalese language, in which the historical writings were first preserved before they were rendered into Pāli, the word for 'brother', bata, could easily have been misread as puta, 'son'. Moreover, the wording in the verse of the Mahāvamsa which gives the relationship of Gothābhaya to his predecessor is sufficiently ambiguous to leave one in doubt as to whether he was the son of his predecessor14, Yatthalaya Tissa, or of Mahānāga, so much so that the commentator had to intervene and assure us that he was in fact the son of Yatthalaya Tissa. But the commentator could have been misinformed, or the sources from which he derived his assurance liable to the suspicion arising from the close resemblance of the old Sinhalese words for 'son' and 'brother'. In view of what has been stated above, the difference of sixty years between the traditional date for the commencement of the Ceylon Buddhist era, and that as computed from the probable date of Asoka's accession, has to be deducted in whole or in part from the 106 years which, according to traditional chronology, elapsed between the death of Devanampiya Tissa and the accession of Dutthagamani15.

In the Kusalānakanda inscription mentioned above, Nāga or Mahānāga is given the title uparāja as he is in the Mahāvamsa. In an inscription at Kolladeniya in the Uva Province, i.e. in the ancient principality of Rohana, the cave in which the record is inscribed is said to have been granted to the Sanigha in the reign of Aya Naga¹⁶. Aya is the title appropriate to princes in the early period; but, though Naga of this record is referred to by this less magniloquent title, his reign period is mentioned without any reference to a paramount sovereign. Nāga, thus, was ruling Rohana without acknowledging the authority of the Anurādhapura king, a circumstance supporting his identity with Mahānāga. In the Kusalānakanda inscription, the title raja is applied to Abhaya, i.e. Gothābhaya, but in the Kotādamūhela inscriptions, this ruler is referred to as an aya. In the Kusalānakanda record, again, Kākavanna appears to be designated Gamani Tisa. As we

^{14.} Mvt., p. 430.
15. EZ., V, p. 86ff.
16. Inscription No. 1007 in the Register of the Archaeological Department. See ASCAR., 1934, p. 18. This epigraph reads: Parumaka Puśadevaśa jhaya Parumakalu Śonaya lene Nagayaha rajhayahi kate śagaśa. [The cave of Lady Śona, wife of Lord Puśadeva, founded in the reign of Prince Naga (is given) to the Samgha.]

are expressly told in the Mahāvanisa, that the title 'Gāmani' was given to Kākavanna's son because of the overlordship of Mahāgāma, the same reason would apply to Kākavanna being called Gāmanī Tissa. Further, in a cave inscription at Kallūdupotāna in the Batticaloa District17, the reign of the son of Aya Abhaya is referred to. Aya Abhaya of this record has to be taken as Gothābhaya, and his unnamed son as Kākavanna who, in the Koṭādamūhela inscriptions, receives the title of aya. Thus the Rohana princes who can be recognised in the inscriptions as Mahanaga or his descendants are at times called 'Aya', at times 'Raja' and sometimes 'Gamani'. They are never called 'Maharaja' by which Uttiva the younger brother of Devanampiya Tissa, is referred to in inscriptions at Mihintalē. But the periods of their reigns find mention, thus indicating that they ruled without acknowledging the supremacy of another. Perhaps they did not use the title maharaja because they had not undergone the ceremony of consecration. This is the position in records which are contemporary, but in inscriptions of about the third or fourth century18, and in literary works, Yatthalaya Tissa, Gothabhaya and Kakayanna arc called maharaja.

The army which was led by Dutthagamani had ten commanders to whom superhuman exploits were ascribed by later generations. The stories with regard to their birth and their extraordinary physical strength, narrated in the chronicles and current in folk-lore, read like fairy tales. Their opponents on the Tamil side are credited with even greater feats of physical strength. These details, with which the narrative of the historical records has been enlivened, are of such a nature as to cast doubts on the historicity of the paladins of Dutthagamani. But contemporary inscriptions refer to some of them in a much more prosaic, and therefore credible, manner. In a cave inscription at Situlpavu in the Magam Pattu, the senāpati Mita (Mitta) of King Devanapiya Abaya is mentioned. This is Nandimitta, the chief commander of Dutthagamani whose personal name was Abhaya19. Again, a Brāhmī inscription at a place called Välaellugoda near Dombagahavela in the Badulla District has recorded the name of Phussadeva, another of Dutthagāmani's commanders, in a manner enabling him to be recognised without a possibility of doubt20. The achievement of Dutthagamani and his paladins in delivering the Sinhalese from foreign domination, and in establishing the national faith on a secure basis, had so captured the imagination of their contemporaries and the succeeding generations, that all those who took a prominent part in this

^{17.} Inscription No. 899 in the Register of the Archaeological Department. This inscription reads: Ayabaya-putaśa rajhiyaśi kate parumaka śada. [Founded by Lord Šada.... in the reign of the son of Prince Abhaya.]

18. For instance in the Rūgam inscription, UCR., VI, p. 238.

JCBRAS., (New Series), II, p. 130, Inscription No. 21.
 ASCAR., 1940—45, p. 40, Plate XIV.

campaign of liberation have been considered as heroes, and the accounts of their lives and their deeds have been related generation after generation in the manner considered appropriate to the recounting of the deeds of heroes in ancient days, before these stories found a place in the historical writings. Fortunately for them, the common human frailty of advertising and perpetuating the memory of one's good deeds has provided them with a defence, against the attacks of modern sceptics, in the inscriptions that they have engraved in caves which they caused to be fashioned and granted to the Sanigha. When we subtract from the stories given in the chronicle those embellishments that had crept in for the reasons stated above, we get a coherent and very rational account of the campaign of Duṭṭhagāmaṇi against Eḷāra.

Dutthagamani anticipated the greatest military genius of modern Europe by acting on the principle that an army marches on its belly, for his first act after gaining control of affairs in his own principality was to entrust to his brother an intensive campaign of food-production, and to store provisions at Dighavāpi, a base from which his advancing forces could be supplied with ease. The ideological factor was duly taken into account; it was instilled into the minds of the soldiers that they were risking their lives and fortunes, not in their self-interest, not for the aggrandisement of their king, not even for their wives and children, but solely for the glorification of the faith which was so dear to them, for Dutthagamani and his advisers knew that men would give up their lives for a noble cause more readily than for personal gain. The campaign thus assumed the character of a holy war and, so as to give emphasis to this, a band of bhikkhus accompanied the army. Vihāradevī, who had brought up her son in the best traditions of Aryan chivalry, accompanied her son and shared the perils and difficulties of the campaign with the common soldiers.

Starting from Mahāgāma, Duṭṭhagāmaṇī's army marched ..long the high road leading to the north, halting successively at Kaluvala, Ēhaļa, Gīkitta, Guthala, Girigama, Niyamulla, Mädagam Uyantoṭa and Tungam Kasaṭapiṭi, until he reached Mahiyaṅgaṇa²¹. The names of these halting places are as given in the writings of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; they were no doubt the stages along the high road from Mahāgāma to Mahiyaṅgaṇa as they existed then. Of these places, only Guthala has preserved its old name with slight modification up to now. Girigama is probably the place now called Yudaṅganāva²². The enemy was first encountered at Mahiyaṅgaṇa, which in addition to being one of the most sacred places of Ceylon Buddhists, is also of great strategic importance,

Sinhalese Thūpavamsa, 2nd part, edited by Professor D. E. Hettiaratchi, Colombo, 1947, p. 40. 'Gut-hala' is the modern 'Buttala'
 ASCAR., 1955, pp. 27, 28.

for it is not far from where the Mahaväli Ganga, which forms the boundary between Rohana and the king's country, emerges from the mountains and starts its course northwards through the plains. The Tamils had a fort here, under a commander named Chatta, and after subduing the stronghold, Dutthagamani spent some time here, and arranged for the enlargement of the venerated stupa. Proceeding northwards, the next obstacle was encountered at Ambatittha (Ambatu)23 which was a fortress of extraordinary strength, being protected by the river on one side, and by a channel diverted from the river on the other. Attempts made during four months failed to reduce the fort, and finally Dutthagamani achieved his purpose by exploiting its commander's weakness for women. Dutthagamani's mother, Viharadevi herself, is said to have agreed to play the part of a decoy in the trap laid to ensnare the Tamil commander. After Ambatittha, a stronghold under the command of seven brothers, and therefore called Satbākotte in Sinhalese, was captured. Much booty fell into the hands of the conqueror at this place, which the king distributed among his troops.

Dutthagamani's further progress was northwards along the right bank of the Mahaväli Ganga, and the places at which fighting took place are given as Antarasobbha (Aturoba), Doņa (Deņagama), Hālakola, Nālisobbha (Polvatta), Dīghābhayagalla, Kacchatittha (Kasātoṭa), Koṭanagara, Vahittha, Gāmaņī, Kumbhagāma, Nandigāma, Khānugāma, Tamba (Tambunnāgama), Unnama and Jambu (Damunnaru). In most of these places, the fortress was named after its commander. Of these places, only Kacchatittha (Kasātoţa) is capable of being identified today. It is the ford known as Mahagamtota on the Mahaväli Ganga, close to Polonnaru. Polvatta is probably the place now called Polattavila between Mahiyangana and Polonnaru. This part of the route of Dutthagamani's march being very dense forest now, the ancient place names have gone out of vogue with the disappearance of the population many centuries ago, but it is beyond doubt that the king's strategy was to reduce all the enemy garrisons within Rohana itself, along the river up to its mouth, before he crossed it

to the enemy's territory.

It is significant that one of these commanders was named Dighābhaya. The prince who was a half-brother of Dutthagamani, stationed by Kakavanna on the frontier to ward off Tamils attempting to cross the river, was Dighābhaya²⁴. It appears that he had gone over to the enemy, which explains the presence of Tamil strongholds on the Rohana side of the river. This defection must have taken place after the estrangement of Dutthagamani with his father, and it also adds strength to the surmise that Tamil

^{23.} The names as they appear in Sinhalese sources are given in parenthesis following the Pāli form in the Mv.

diplomacy had something to do with Saddhātissa's hostility to his elder brother.

The place at which Duṭṭhagāmaṇi crossed the river was known as Bhatta-bhutta-vaṭāhaka (Bat-bun-vaṭa) in later times²⁵. No place with such a name is found today along the course of the river; but as the ancient high road from Mahāgāma to Anurādhapura passed through Kasātoṭa (Mahagaintoṭa), it must have been somewhere in the vicinity, for armies usually march along lines of communication which are well established.

After the crossing of the river, the further progress of Dutthagamani's army was by Vijitapura, a fortress of extraordinary strength, the garrison of which had been augmented by the Tamils who had escaped from the strongholds on the right bank of the river. Vijitapura was defended by a strong masonry wall with battlements and towers. Its gate is said to have been of iron, and surrounding the wall was a triple line of moats. Dutthagamani advanced towards it and encamped in open country at a place which, in later times, was known as Khandhavara-pitthi26. This stronghold could not have been the place now called Vijitapura near Kalāväva, for the Tamils would not have retired so far into the interior of their own territory after they had abandoned the positions on the right bank of the river. Moreover, the modern Vijitapura was not on the high road to Anurādhapura from Mahāgāma, and Eļāra's fort of Vijitapura appears to have been meant for the purpose of controlling his positions across the river, and to guard the frontiers of his kingdom against possible attacks by the forces of Rohana. The strategic purpose of Vijitapura corresponded to that of Polonnaru, which was known in mediaeval times as Kandavura. In the time of Parākramabāhu I, there was a suburb of Polonnaru called Vijitapura. These considerations would indicate that the fortress which played such a great part in Dutthagamani's campaign was Polonnaru itself, or some place in its vicinity27.

The Tamil garrison defended Vijitapura with great determination; repeated attempts made by Dutthagāmaṇi's forces to breach its defences proved abortive. Dutthagāmaṇi's elephant Kaṇḍula, which battered the gate with the weight of his body, came to grief from balls of red-hot iron and molten pitch hurled down by the defenders. But the Sinhalese forces repeated their assaults until the fortress finally succumbed and, having entered it, through breaches made by the elephant and the troops led by Nandimitta, caused great carnage among the defenders.

Girilaka, the next fortress along the route, was easily captured, but the Sinhalese forces encountered another great obstacle at the fortress of Ma-

^{25.} Mvt., p. 476.

^{26.} The name would be Kandavuru-piți in Sinhalese.

^{27.} Parker, Ancient Ceylon, pp. 237-9.

helanagara, which was defended by a triple trench and a hedge of thorny creepers. Attacks on it for four months failed to make much impression, and Duṭṭhagāmaṇī had to adopt methods other than military in bringing the place under his control. The measures which proved successful are referred to in the chronicle as 'diplomatic warfare' (manta-yuddha) by which phrase are perhaps meant what in modern terminology are called 'silver bullets'.

No more strongholds blocked Dutthagamani's way to Anuradhapura, but he did not undertake this final phase of the campaign for some time. Instead, he encamped himself at Kasapabbata (Kahagalagama), some eighteen miles to the south-east of Anuradhapura, and stayed there long enough to construct a tank and to celebrate the water-festival of Poson. The reasons which prompted Dutthagamani not to pursue the advantages he had so far gained, and bring the campaign to a speedy conclusion, giving the enemy time to add to their strength, have not been stated, but are not difficult to conjecture when we consider the significance of the fact that, in subduing the last named fortress, he had to adopt measures other than military. Dutthagamani's encounters up to now had been with the commanders of Elara's outposts; the main Tamil army had not yet been put into the field. He had been on the offensive from Mahiyangana up to Mahelanagara and, in attacking fortified positions, his forces must have sustained more casualties than did the enemy's. His soldiers must have also been tired by the long march, and to engage them in a pitched battle against the fresh forces of Elara, at a point far away from his base, would have amounted to giving hostages to Fortune.

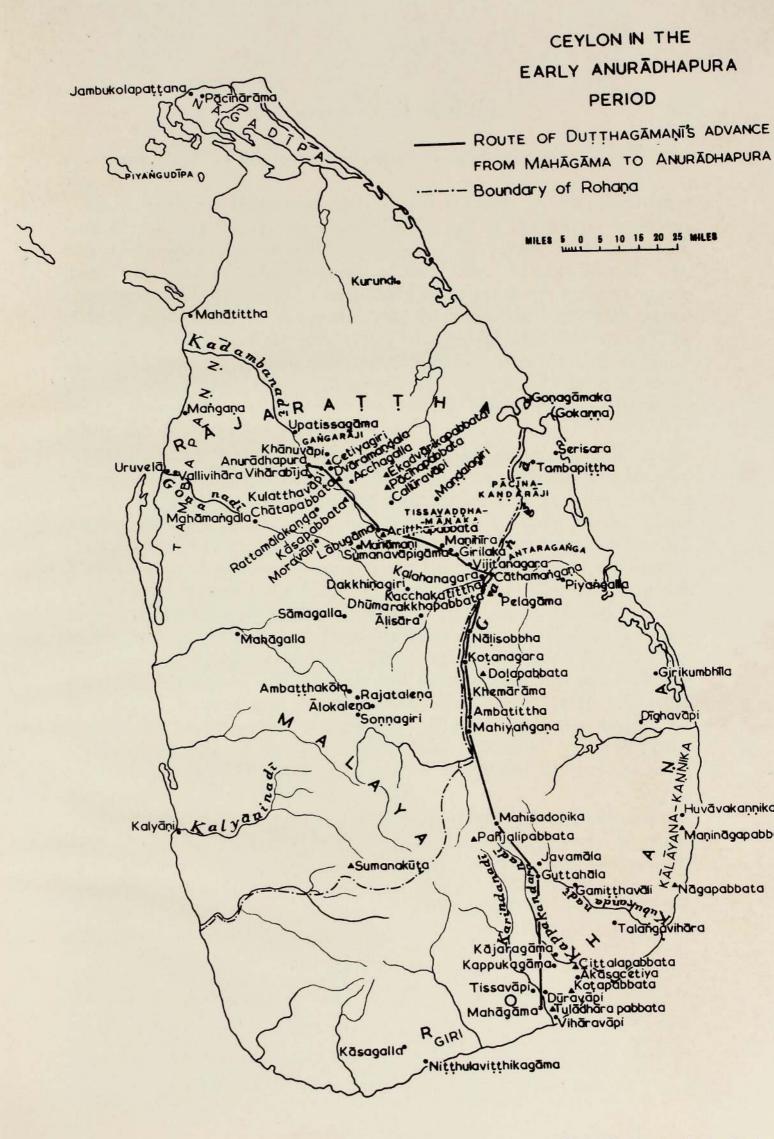
Perhaps that was what Elāra himself wanted Duṭṭhagāmaṇi to do, and was waiting to crush him in a decisive engagement after making him sustain severe losses in reducing the frontier defences. Duṭṭhagāmaṇi had now brought under his control considerable areas of territory, from which he could recruit fresh levies to his army and requisition provisions, for the Sinhalese population of the districts which he overran must have hailed him as a deliverer. Reinforcements and provisions could also be had from Rohaṇa. These considerations probably prompted Duṭṭhagāmaṇi to change over from the offensive to a defensive strategy; and, for this purpose, he chose a suitable terrain guarded by the hilly nature of the site. Elāra himself appears to have been loth to take the offensive, for Duṭṭhagāmaṇi was not molested at Kāsapabbata for several months; but, at last, the Tamil leader advanced forward with his army to meet Duṭṭhagāmaṇi, who was thus able to fight the decisive battle on ground of his own choice, which he had adequate time to prepare to suit his plans.

According to the methods of warfare which prevailed in ancient India and Ceylon, the purpose of the attackers, when two armies confronted

each other, was to seek out the commander of the opposing side, so sa to capture him alive or to slay him. The defenders had to prevent this. Dutthagāmaṇī, therefore, followirg his mother's counsel, it is said, adopted a ruse to wear out the champion on the enemy's side, before he was finally confronted with his opponent. The Sinhalese set up figures of their king with umbrellas over the head, in no less than thirty-two different places, in order to mislead the attackers. This ruse worked, and Dīghajantu, the Tamil champion, cut his way through the Sinhalese to what he believed was Dutthagāmaṇī's encampment, and struck the effigy of the king, no doubt to cause merriment in the ranks of the Sinhalese army.

After several experiences of this, he finally came to where Dutthagāmaṇī really was. There, the Sinhalese champion Sūranimila was ready to defend his king; he drew Dīghajantu from the king towards himself by fulsome abuse of the Tamil cahmpion. Sūranimila parried the sword thrust of Dīghajantu with his shield, which he let go when the Tamil champion's sword pierced it, and himself stepped aside. The sword with the shield fell to the ground and, as Dīghajantu bent down to pick it up, a mighty blow from Sūranimila's spear put an end to his career. Phussadeva blew the conch as he alone could blow it. The Tamil soldiers, seeing their champion fall and hearing the thunderous peals of Phussadeva's conch, broke ranks and took to flight. The Sinhalese pursued them and caused great havoc among the fleeing enemy. A tank in the neighbourhood of the battle field is said to have had its water turned into red from the blood of the slain Tamil soldiers, and received its name of Kulatthavāpi (S. Maha-Kälättāva) on this account.

Elāra, who had taken the field, mounted on his elephant, himself took to flight when his army broke its ranks. What the Sinhalese warriors had now to do was to overtake him and slay him without giving him the opportunity to get to Anuradhapura and shut himself up within its walls with the remnants of his army, and thus force on Dutthagamani the necessity of a prolonged siege. But Dutthagamani proclaimed that none but he himself must fight Elara, for according to the code of Indo-Aryan chivalry, equal must fight equal. Elara had almost entered his capital when Dutthagamani overtook him and challenged him to single combat. The Tamil king accepted the challenge, for according to the Kṣatriya code, there was nothing so dishonourable as not to fight when challenged in battle by an opponent of equal rank. The two warrior kings thus faced each other outside the southern gate of Anuradhapura, both mounted on elephants. The decisive encounter was short and swift. 'Elara hurled his dart, Gamani evaded it ; Gāmaṇī made his own elephant pierce Eļāra's elephant with his tusks and he hurled his dart at Elara; and this (Elara) fell there, with his elephant.' With these dramatic words, the ancient chronicler has given



us a vivid picture of this memorable single combat between two valourous foes.

The struggle had been conducted, in its final phases, in strict accordance with the rules of the ancient Kṣatriya code, and in conformity with that code Duṭṭhagāmaṇī treated his fallen foe. 'All enmity must cease with death' was one of the injunctions of that code. In pursuance of this, Duṭṭhagāmaṇī ordered Eḷāra's dead body to be given the honours appropriate to a cakravartin monarch and, after cremating the body with appropriate funeral rites, on the spot where the redoubtable warrior fell, he caused a monument (caitya) to be erected there. Moreover, he ordained that all music must cease whenever any one passed the monument, which injunction was honoured even seven hundred years afterwards when the Mahāvanisa was written²⁸.

Dutthagāmaṇi entered the city of his forefathers in triumph, amidst the rejoicings of his followers, but he had to settle accounts with another enemy before he could devote his time to peaceful pursuits. When Vijitanagara fell, Eṭāra had sent a message to a South Indian Tamil chief named Bhalluka, a nephew of Dīghajantu, to come to his aid. Bhalluka arrived with an army, just too late to take part in the decisive battle, for he landed in Ceylon seven days after Eṭāra had been cremated. In spite of the bad news which greeted him on his arrival, Bhalluka decided to advance on Anurādhapura from Mahātittha (Mātoṭa, modern Tirukke-tiśvaram) and set up his camp at a place named Kolambahālaka. Duṭṭha-gāmaṇī met him there with his army and, fighting a battle in which Phussadeva took a leading part, he routed the South Indian army. Bhalluka himself lost his life in this engagement. Duṭṭhagāmaṇī thus became the undisputed master of the whole Island, and realised his youthful dream of stretching forth his limbs unhampered by the foe who occupied the Island to the north of the Mahaväli Gañga.

Like Asoka after the conquest of Kalinga, Duṭṭhagāmaṇi was attacked with remorse on account of the myriads of human beings whom he caused to be killed in order to achieve his purpose. That purpose was publicly proclaimed to be the glorification of the religion of the Buddha who proclaimed all manner of killing to be a sin. And this killing of human beings was carried out not only with the knowledge of the sons of the Buddha, but

^{28.} The mound known as Elāra's Tomb until recently is in reality the Dakkhiṇa-thūpa. The southern gate of Anurādhapura, near which Elāra fell and where the monument in his memory was erected, must have been a few yards to the north of the present Medical Officer's bungalow at Anurādhapura. No remains of any monument are to be seen on the spot. If the ruins of this monument had been preserved until modern times, they must, most probably, have been scattered to the four winds by the contractors of the Public Works Department who put up the buildings of the modern hospital. The commentary of the Mahāvamsa adds the information that the spot was to the west of the potters' village and to the east of the image-house of Elāra (Mvt., p. 483). This would indicate that, up to the time of the commentator, Elāra's image received worship.

also to a great extent with their approval, for a contingent of bhikkhus marched with the army. The Church was thus faced with a dilemma. Could it officially acknowledge that no sin was committed by Duṭṭha-gāmaṇī in killing human beings, and thus abjure the teachings of the Buddha, or uphold the teachings of the Buddha and allow the king who had done so much for the religion, and was expected to do much more, to suffer the torments of Hell?

In this predicament, some bold spirits are said to have categorically asserted that all the killing of human beings caused by Dutthagamani in no way hindered his path to heaven. Their argument was that, among the enemies of Dutthagamani who lost their lives in his campaigns against Elara, there was only one person who had taken the Three Refuges and one who had observed the Five Precepts in addition. The rest were unbelievers and sinners, no better than beasts. This view, i.e. that unbelievers and sinners are no better than beasts, and that one may slaughter them with no fear of consequences in a future birth has been made to appear authoritative by being attributed to arhats from abroad who arrived by air; but, happily for the good name of Buddhism, the view has not been taken scriously by later generations. Others, with greater casuistry, argued that Dutthagamani indeed committed sin in having so many human beings killed, but that this sin was not of such a nature as to immediately fructify after death. The effect of his many good deeds took precedence over that of his sins and, before the force of his good actions could exhaust itself to give room to the results of his sins to take effect, he would put an end to the cycle of births and deaths in the dispensation of the next Buddha, Maitreya.

Whether the story that Duṭṭhagāmaṇī himself felt remorse and was reassured by these and such other arguments is true or not, these accounts in the chronicle and the Pāli commentaries indicate that, in the early period, when the alliance between the Buddhist Church and the Sinhalese State was being forged, thinking men pondered on the inconsistencies brought about by that alliance. But the people, as a whole, do not appear to have been prepared to carry logical consistency to a point that would endanger the life of the community, and only accepted so much of Buddhism as was consistent with self-preservation. In later ages, people were wise enough not to give thought to such inconvenient questions.

Duṭṭhagāmaṇī (circa 161-137 B.C.) was able to devote his whole energies, during his reign of twenty-four years, to advance the cause of Buddhism by building monasteries and shrines, for no enemy either at home or from abroad challenged him after he defeated Bhalluka. As it had happened so often in the history of peoples, the averting of a danger that threatened the national existence was followed by a period of great creative activity in

architecture and the arts. The first monument of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī was Maricavaṭṭi-thūpa (Mirisaväṭi Dāgäba) which greatly surpassed in magnitude the stūpa built by Devānampiya Tissa. He also built a costly edifice, said to have been of nine storeys, for the Sanigha; but the monument which is particularly associated with his name is the Mahāthūpa (Ruvanväli Dāgäba), which the monarch did not live long enough to see completed. The Mahāthūpa was an undertaking which speaks cloquently of the boldness and daring which were the outstanding features of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī's character, for in his day, a monument equalling, or even approaching it in size existed nowhere in the whole of the Indian world, and the king was determined to have it built without exacting from his subjects the free labour to which he was entitled.

Apart from these works of a religious nature, Duṭṭhagāmaṇī concerned himself with what are today known as social services. He, for instance, bestowed on the sick 'the foods of the sick and remedies as ordered by the physicians.' The scene at the death-bed of the hero-king is described with great pathos by the author of the *Mahāvaṇisa*. Addressing one of his comrades-in-arms, who had become a Saint, the king is reported to have said: 'Formerly, I fought with you, the ten great warriors, by my side; now have I entered alone upon the battle with death, and the foe death I cannot conquer.' Listening to a recital of the hundreds of good deeds that he had done for the religion and the people, the hero passed away, mourned by the whole country. The body was cremated on the terrace outside the boundaries of the Mahāvihāra where the *Sanigha* used to assemble for public functions, most probably at the spot where the Dakkhiṇa-thūpa was later built²⁹.

^{29.} ASCAR., 1948, pp. 8ff.

CHAPTER IV

SADDHĀTISSA TO SABHA

Dutthagāmaṇi had a son named Sāli, but this prince renounced his claims to the throne for the sake of his love for Asokamālā, a maiden of incomparable beauty, but of low birth. After Duṭṭhagāmaṇi's death, his younger brother, Saddhātissa, came to the throne (circa 137 B.C.) and continued the policy of Duṭṭhagāmaṇi, completing the Mahāthūpa. Saddhātissa was all that the Buddhist Church could desire of a ruler, and the epithet of saddhā (Pious or of great faith) which is prefixed to his name, Tissa, indicates his personal character. The peace established by Duṭṭhagāmaṇi continued in his reign, and he could therefore found numerous religious establishments and construct irrigation works.

For over four decades during the reigns of Dutthagamani and Saddhatissa, the government of the country was in accordance with the behest of the Sampha, and this seemed to have created in the minds of its members the impression that such a state of affairs was only natural. After the death of Saddhātissa, however, the Samgha seems to have overplayed its hand, and met with its first reverse since the restoration of the Sinhalese sovereignty at Anuradhapura. Saddhātissa's eldest son, Lañjatissa, remained behind in Rohana, when the former came to Anuradhapura to occupy the throne rendered vacant by the death of his elder brother. The second son, known to history only by a nickname, Thūlatthana (Fat-breast), was at Anuradhapura with the father, and seems to have gained the favour not only of the ministers but also of the dignitaries of the Church. After Saddhātissa's death, the ministers and the Samgha in an assembly held at the Thūpārāma decided to give the throne to Thūlatthana. We are not told why the eldest son of the deceased king was passed over. But Lanjatissa was not a prince whose piety was so great as to subordinate his own interests to it. And he was strong enough to defend his rights. He came swiftly from Rohana to Anuradhapura, ousted his younger brother after he had occupied the throne for the brief span of one month and ten days, and captured the sovereignty in spite of the opposition of the ministers and the dignitaries of the Church. Naturally, he could not have had much love towards those who tried to deprive him of his patrimony; and, for three years after his accession, he is said to have treated the Brotherhood slightingly and neglected it, for the very good reason that these upholders of morality violated seniority. But, in the end, the Sanigha proved to be

the more powerful party in the dispute, for Lanjatissa is said to have undertaken a series of religious works to atone for his earlier neglect.

Lañjatissa reigned for nine and a half years, and was succeeded by his younger brother Khallāṭa Nāga, who occupied the throne for six years. In his reign, three brave and valourous princes named Tissa, Abhaya and Uttara, sons of Sumanā-devī, a half-sister of Khallāṭa Nāga, plotted to capture the power for themselves by murdering the king within the palace. Somehow or other the plot leaked out, and the princes, who well knew what the consequences would be, escaped to the sanctuary of the Jain ascetic Giri, which then existed at the place where the Abhayagiri-vihāra was later established, and put an end to their lives by entering into the flames of a funeral pyre. This act of self-immolation by three brilliant young princes seems to have captured the imagination of the people, for at the place where the tragedy occurred, was built a stupa named Aggipavisaka (Entering the Fire)1. The manner of their death suggests that these princes had leanings towards the Jaina faith, and we may even suspect that their plot was encouraged by the partisans of Jainism in Ceylon2. These dissensions in the royal family gave the opportunity to disaffected elements to come to the fore. A military leader named Mahā Rattaka3 overpowered Khallāṭa Nāga in the capital, but was prevented from reaping the fruits of his treachery by Vattagamani Abhaya, younger brother of Khallāṭa Nāga, known to the Sinhalese villagers as Valagam Bāhu.

Vattagamani came to the throne at a time when the enemies of his house were numerous and emboldened by the weakness of his predecessor. Five months after his accession, danger threatened him from two directions. A young Brāhmaņa, named Tīya of Nakulanagara4 in Rohana, raised the standard of revolt, and many were his followers, deluded by the prophesy of another Brāhmana that Tiya was destined to become king. At the same time, seven Tamil chiefs landed at Mahātittha with a powerful force. Vattagamani realised that he had inadequate forces to fight against both these enemies, and tried to make them fight with each other so as to weaken them before he attacked them. The plan was sound in theory, but did not work as Vattagāmaņī intended. Vattagāmaņī sent a message to Tiya that he could have the kingdom, provided he went to meet the foreign

^{1.} For this episode, see Mvt., p. 612.

For similar intrigues by the Jains in India, see H. C. Ray, DHNI, II, p. 976.
 This name appears in Geiger's translation of the Mahāvamsa as Kammahārattaka. Some manuscripts of the Dipavamsa have the name as Mahāratthaka which is perhaps preferable to the form in the later chronicle.

^{4.} This name has been read as kula-nagara and rendered into English as 'the city (that was the seat) of his clan' by Geiger, Mv., translation, p. 231. For the identification of Nakulanagara, see C. W. Nicholas, Historical Topography of Ancient and Mediaeval Ceylon (JCBRAS, Special Number, 1959), p. 52.

invaders and vanquished them. Tiya5 agreed, advanced with his forces to meet the Tamils, and was vanquished by them.

The Tamils, elated with success, advanced towards Anuradhapura. Vaṭṭagāmaṇi fought a battle with them at Kolambahālaka where, half a century before, an earlier Tamil invader was destroyed with his army. The outcome of the conflict was quite otherwise with Vattagamani. He lost the day, and barely escaped with his life. His purpose now was to preserve himself so as to resume the struggle with better chances of success on a future occasion. He was hastening into the city to take his loved ones with him when, at the northern gate, the ascetic of the Jaina hermitage, the same Giri who had given shelter to the princes who plotted against Vattagamani's elder brother, exultantly shouted words of derisive mockery at him. In his flight he took with him Anuladevi, the wife of his elder brother, who was with child, and her two sons. His own queen, Somadevi, he left behind with her own consent, so as to lighten the burden of the carriage, and give the others a chance of escaping. Of the Tamil leaders, one is said to have returned home with Somadevi. Another found the Bowl-relic, which came to his hands, a sufficient reward for his part in the campaign. Of the remaining five Tamil chiefs, Pulahattha ruled for three years, and was slain by his commander-in-chief, Bāhiya, who reigned for two years. Panayamāra succeeded to the throne by murdering Bāhiya, and reigned for seven years. Pilayamāra6 slew Panayamāra, but could remain on the throne for only seven months, when he was murdered by his commander-in-chief, Dāthika. Thus the Tamils are said to have exercised power at Anuradhapura for fourteen years and seven months, after which period, Vattagamani Abhaya vanquished what remained of the Tamil forces and gained back his throne.

The above is the account of the Mahāvainsa relating to this period. But the Pāli commentaries7, which were written some time before the Mahāvanisa, have a different story to tell. According to them, the accession of Vaṭṭagāmaṇi was preceded by the fourteen years' rule of Tiya, which they characterize as one of great misery to the land, caused by a prolonged famine, and most disastrous to the religion, on account of the famine as well as the hostility shown towards its adherents and shrines by Tiya. Large number of bhikkhus, unable to get even the meagre sustenance with which

6. The element māra in the names of these Tamil chiefs points to their Pāṇḍya extraction. With the name 'Piḷayamāra,' compare 'Paḷaiyan Māran,' the title of the princes of Mōgūr, not far from Cape Comōrin (CHI, I, p. 596).

7. See, for example, Sammohavinodanī (PTS, Edition) pp. 445—6.

^{5.} In the printed editions and translations of the Mv., (Geiger) as well as in the P.T.S. editions of the Pāli Commentaries, this name is found as Tissa, but the Sinhalese form of the name $B\ddot{a}minitiy\ddot{a}$ (=Brāhmaṇa Tīya), conclusively proves that the form given above, found in several manuscripts, is the correct one. It has been rejected for the same reasons as gave rise to the form Tissa at the hands of copyists.

they were content, are said to have left the shores of this Island to the more hospitable land of India. Sacred shrines of Buddhism, like Thūpārāma and Mahāthūpa, were deserted without worshippers, and their courtyards, on which thousands used to assemble on festive occasions a few years before, were overgrown with weeds, and their precincts were given over for cultivation. Harrowing details are given of the misery which the people underwent for want of food. These sources make no mention whatever of the five Tamil leaders, who, one after the other, ruled the Island according to the Mahāvamsa.

As the commentaries were written before the time of the author of the Mahāvamsa, he, a prominent dignitary of the Church, must have been aware of these accounts of Tiya. Why he made no reference to them, and why the commentaries on their part have no reference to the Tamil rulers, are questions to which no satisfactory reply can be given. Perhaps there is no irreconcilable divergence between these two accounts. Mahāvamsa itself does not state that Tīya lost his life in his encounter with the Tamil invaders. It is quite conceivable that, after being worsted in military conflict with them, he realised the advantage of acting in concert with them, and came to some sort of mutual understanding. The invaders themselves perhaps thought that it was more advisable to maintain a local leader with a considerable following as nominal head of the government, while they themselves exercised effective authority. If such was the situation, some writers of olden days who gave an account of these disastrous years might have designated the era after the person who was the titular ruler, while others gave importance to those who actually wielded authority. The commentators, in that case, were of the former view, while the chroniclers were of the latter.

However one may explain this discrepancy, the period of over fourteen years before Vaṭṭagāmaṇī finally established his position appears to have been a time when reaction against the spectacular successes of Buddhism worked to the political disadvantage of those who had identified themselves with that cause, and placed in positions of power those who were indifferent or actively hostile to it.

The accounts in the chronicles of the reigns of Devānampiya Tissa, Duṭṭhagāmaṇī and Saddhātissa give one the impression that the entire population was behind these kings in their policy of supporting Buddhism. Even Brāhmaṇas who were living in Ceylon at that time are depicted as giving the new religion an enthusiastic welcome; this is supported to some extent by the contemporary inscriptions which record the gifts of caves to the Samgha by Brāhmaṇas⁸. But the complete identification of the interests of the state with those of the Samgha could hardly have been

^{8.} See infra, p. 232.

to the liking of these Brāhmaṇas and other non-Buddhist elements, among whom the Jainas were of considerable importance. The Jaina establishments, dating from the time of Paṇḍukābhaya, continued to exist at Anurādhapura throughout the most successful period of Buddhism. In fact, it was the policy of Buddhism not to persecute adherents of faiths other than their own. The Jaina teachers and Brāhmaṇas must have had their own followers, though numerically inferior and not occupying positions of influence in the body politic. Inscriptions at Māgama and Kirinda⁹, attributable to about the beginning of the Christian era, speak of the eradication of false doctrines, indicating the presence of non-Buddhists in the South up to that time. The position, we may guess, was the same at Anurādhapura.

The complete harmony which prevailed between the royal family and the leaders of the Sanigha in the reigns of Dutthagamani and Saddhatissa, coupled with the appeal to the populace of the heroic and chivalrous qualities of the former monarch, gave no opportunity to those who might have been dissatisfied with their religious policy, to give expression to their The open rupture between the king and the Saiigha which took place after the accession of Lanjatissa must have given courage to such elements; but before their discontent could be expressed in action, the differences were settled. But these discontented parties appear to have gained allies among the junior members of the royal family, who, in the normal course, would not have succeeded to the throne. The plot of the three princes in the reign of Khallata Naga appears to have been encouraged by these elements, for it was to a Jaina sanctuary that they resorted to escape from justice when their plans were discovered. But the opposition to the royal family was not abated, and a Brāhmana ultimately appeared on the scene in open revolt against the king. The incursion of the Tamils from the opposite coast was probably not unconnected with these happenings in the Island. If they were not actually invited by the factions opposed to the pro-Buddhist royal family, they must have so timed their arrival as to take advantage of the situation. The head of the Jaina establichment at Anuradhapura was exultant at the discomfiture of Vattagāmaṇi, and must have rejoiced when the Tamil invaders entered Anurādhapara. He no doubt anticipated an improvement in the position of his flock due to this change of rulers.

Vaṭṭagāmaṇī himself seems to have adopted certain political views which made him disliked by the orthodox Buddhist Church. The Pāli commentaries very often refer to him as Piti-rāja. The contemporary and later inscriptions call him Pita-maha-raja. The Mahāvainsa explains this title, which means 'Father-king', as due to his having adopted the

^{9.} JCBRAS, XXXVI, pp. 58-66.

son of his elder brother as his own, and thus stood in the position of father This explanation hardly carries conviction, and the epithet 'Pitirāja' (Skt. 'Pitr-rāja'), being a well-known name of Yama, one of the four Lokapālas, indicates that Vattagāmanī considered himself to be an embodiment of that deity. The term 'Mahākāla', used in derision by the Jaina ascetic, when Vaṭṭagāmaṇī was flying before his enemies, can also have the same significance, for 'Kāla' is a synonymn of 'Yama'. Even in adversity, Vattagamani took drastic action against those who did not treat him like a god10. Such pretensions would have been considered with disfavour by the Samgha and, just at the time when non-Buddhist elements were asserting themselves, the Buddhists were not inclined to extend enthusiastic support to the prince who succeeded to their leadership.

Having managed to escape from the enemy with some members of his family, Vattagamani, for some time, remained in hiding in the forest at a place named Vessagiri, which cannot be the site of an ancient monastery near Anuradhapura now known by that name. The present 'Vessagiri', as proved by inscriptions engraved on rocks at that site, is the ancient Issarasamana-vihāra.11 Moreover, it is less than two miles from the southern gate of Anuradhapura, and could not have been a safe place for Vattagamani, with no followers capable of protecting him in danger, to remain in hiding, while his enemies were in occupation of the city. At Vessagiri, Vattagamani as well as the women and children of his household depended for their sustenance on what a thera named Mahātissa of Kupikkala obtained by begging. The grateful king granted lands to the monastery of the thera by having the donation recorded on a ketaka¹² leaf. From Vessagiri, Vattagāmanī went to a place named Silā-sobbha-kandaka (Galheba-kada) and, after tarrying there for some time, went to Mātuvelanga near Samagalla. None of these places is capable of being identified today; but from the trend of the narrative, it has to be assumed that they were located between Anuradhapura and the Malaya country.

At Mātuvelanga, Vattagāmanī again met his former benefactor, Mahātissa Thera. The latter introduced the fugitive king to a local chief named Tanasiva with whom Vattagamani and his dependants remained for about fourteen years. Fate, however, deprived Tanasiva of the possible benefits of having stood as host to the legitimate sovereign, though unwittingly. This was due to an incident between his wife and Queen Anula—the sort of incident that commonly arises among women due to petty jealousies. When the two ladies went into the jungle to collect herbs, Tanasīva's wife, it is said, struck the basket of the royal Anula with her foot. Though in adversity,

^{10.} For a detailed discussion of the view briefly set down here, see S. Paranavitana, The God of Adam's Peak, pp. 61—67.
11. CJSG, II, p. 182.
12. Pandanus Odoratissimus.

Anuļā could not brook this insult from an inferior, and came crying to Vaṭṭagāmaṇī with the complaint. The king thought it best to leave the place before matters came to a head, but Tanasiva's wife, on her part, felt herself to be the aggrieved party, and apparently complained about the matter to her husband. From Tanasīva's point of view, it was a case of strangers repaying him with base ingratitude for all he had done to them in their need. Bursting with indignation, he went forth with his bow to teach the ungrateful stranger a lesson. Vaṭṭagāmaṇī was thus forced to defend himself, and shot Tanasīva to death.

The king was no longer in a position to keep his identity a secret, for the people of the place would not have allowed an unknown person who killed their chief to go away unscathed. He, therefore, proclaimed his identity, and found the people loyal to their legitimate sovereign. He gathered around him a number of followers, among whom were eight noted for their military exploits. With this slight improvement in his fortunes, Vaṭṭagāmaṇī sought out the thera who had helped him in his adversity, and conducted a festival at a monastery named Acchagalla, presumably the residence of the thera. The place must be on the way from the highlands to Mahāgāma, for we next meet Vaṭṭagāmaṇī at Ākāsacetiya, to the east of Mahāgāma. Vaṭṭagāmaṇī's plan appears to have been to follow the example of his great predecessor, Duṭṭhagāmaṇī, and lead the people of Rohaṇa, who had so far never borne the yoke of foreign domination, and could be relied upon for their loyalty to his house, against the Tamils ruling at Anurādhapura.

But an incident which occurred while he was at Ākāsacetiya almost proved disastrous to the Sinhalese cause, and presents Vaṭṭagāmaṇī as having learned nothing from adversity. One day, the king was climbing the steep ascent to the summit of Ākāsacetiya with the queen, and met one of his generals, named Kapisīsa (Monkey-Head) climbing down. Ākāsacetiya has perpendicular sides, and is altogether unscalable today; in ancient days there must have been wooden ladders giving access to the summit. Kapisīsa sat down to give way to the king, but the latter was enraged that he did not prostrate himself as one should before royalty, and struck the warrior down on the spot with his sword. When news of this high-handed action came to the ears of the other captains of the army, they deserted Vaṭṭagāmaṇī in a body, as they felt that no good will result by serving such a prince.

On their way from the king's camp to their destination, these captains encountered a troop of bandits, and were robbed of all their possessions. Being reduced to destitution, they went to a monastery in the vicinity named Hambugallaka. The *thera* who was in charge of the place supplied the warriors with food and raiment and, in due course, heard their story.

He realised the supreme importance of reconciling them with Vattagamani, if Sinhalese sovereignty was once more to be established in this Island, and appealed to their sense of loyalty to the race, and above all to their devotion to the national faith. The thera, Tissa, versed in the four Nikāyas, pointedly put to them the question: 'With whom will it be possible to further the doctrine of the Buddha; with the Tamils or with the king. '? They had to admit that it was only by serving Vattagamani that this could be brought about. When the indignation they felt against Vattagamani had gradually subsided, the thera of Hambugallaka, together with the thera Mahātissa, who seems to have been untiringly following Vattagamani from place to place so as to make himself available in case of need, took the captains to the king, and reconciled them to one another. The king who, on calm reflection, must have seen the folly of his action, fully realised the great importance of this reconciliation brought about by the theras; and as he was not at that time in a position to repay them, requested them to come in the future when a message was sent to them. In this request, the captains of the army joined the king. This story illustrates to what extent the Sinhalese royal house of the day was indebted to the Sanigha for the maintenance of the people's loyalty towards it. Scores of bhikkhus whose names have passed into oblivion must have used the same arguments with the common people, with the result that many of them rallied to the call of Vattagāmaņī.

While Vaṭṭagāmaṇī Abhaya was thus gathering forces in Rohaṇa, the power of the Tamils at Anurādhapura must have been weakened due to rivalries among their leaders. At last, after being in eclipse for fourteen years, Vaṭṭagāmaṇī found the time opportune to march to Anurādhapura and, having overcome the Tamils by slaying the last of their leaders, Dāṭhiya, recovered the throne that he had lost. We are not given any details of his campaign, but the seven commanders of his army appear to have enjoyed, in ancient times, a measure of renown second to that of the paladins of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī. The extant historical records, being written by the monks of Mahāvihāra, are not very eloquent about Vaṭṭagāmaṇī and his generals, who founded rival monasteries and were not distinguished for their support of the earlier religious establishments. Had the writings of the Abhayagiri-vihāra been preserved, we might have known more about the personalities of Vaṭṭagāmaṇī and his comrades in arms.

One of the first acts of Vaṭṭagāmaṇī after regaining his throne was to mete out retribution to the Jaina ascetic, Giri, who so gleefully expressed his delight at the king's earlier misfortune. Giri's establishment was destroyed, and the Buddhist monastery which supplanted it was given to Mahātissa Thera, who had helped him in adversity. Thus he simultaneously settled off old scores and proved his gratitude towards one to

whom he stood in debt. The generals of Vaṭṭagāmaṇi, too, founded various monasteries, and gave them to Tissa Thera of Hambugalla who, as we have seen, interceded between them and the king at a critical juncture. The new monasteries founded by Vaṭṭagāmaṇi were well provided with all requisites, and the number of inmates in them waxed great. The older monasteries were in comparison neglected and, at this juncture, the partisans of a thera named Mahātissa of Mahāvihāra, against whom disciplinary action had been taken for a certain offence, seceded from the older monastery, and went to the new. Thus, from Vaṭṭagāmaṇi's reign dates the first schism in the history of the Buddhist Church in Ceylon¹³.

Another event of importance in the history of Buddhism in Ceylon took place in the reign of Vaṭṭagāmaṇi Abhaya. Up to then, the Buddhist scriptures were handed down orally. The uncertainty of life during periods of famine, such as that from which the country suffered before Vaṭṭagāmaṇi's victory, brought home to the heads of the Church the risks attendant on oral transmission; and they decided to have the sacred texts committed to writing. Later tradition asserts that this was done at Aluvihāra in the Mātalē District¹⁴, but the earlier historical writings do not connect Aluvihāra with this event.

Somadevi, who so self-sacrificingly allowed herself to fall into the hands of the enemy, so that others may escape, returned home after the restoration of Vaṭṭagāmaṇi, and the king founded a religious establishment to perpetuate her name. A veil has been drawn by ancient writers over her experiences in foreign lands.

Vaṭṭagāmaṇī reigned for twelve years after he regained the throne, and was succeeded by Mahācūlī Mahātissa, the son of Khallāṭa Nāga. Though not cast in the same heroic mould, or so likeable a personality, as Duṭṭhagāmaṇī, Vaṭṭagāmaṇī, too, has captured the imagination of the common man, and he is one of the few kings of ancient Ceylon whose name and fame are not dependent on the written record. The patient abiding of his time in adversity has gained for him the sympathy of the popular mind. To him are credited by the peasants of Ceylon the numerous caves with drip-ledges which were the abodes of Buddhist anchorites in ancient days. One or two of these caves do, in fact, bear inscriptions with a royal name which may be his; but others are either earlier or somewhat later than his date.

The authority of Mahācūlī Mahātissa seems to have been acknowledged throughout the Island, for inscriptions of his reign are found in places in the North as well as in the South. His reign of fourteen years (circa 77-63 B.C.) was mostly spent on religious activities, but at least during the latter

^{13.} For fuller details of this schism, see infra, pp. 245 ff.

^{14.} Ns. C. M. Fernando's translation, pp. 10-11.

part, the peace of the land was disturbed by Coranaga, the son of Vattagāmaṇi, who rebelled against Mahācūlī Mahātissa, and ascended the throne after the latter's death. Coranaga, i.e. Naga the Bandit, was of a revengeful disposition, and destroyed eighteen monasteries which had refused to give him accommodation when he was a rebel. He was poisoned by his own queen Anula. The throne was then occupied for a period of three years by a prince named Tissa, son of Mahācūļī Mahātissa. He, too, was poisoned by Anula, who, in order to satisfy her lust for a palace guard, took the control of affairs into her own hands. Anuļā, the first sovereign queen in Ceylon history, disgraced her sex, for she is said to have poisoned one paramour after the other, and in the end is said to have had thirty-two palace guards to satisfy her carnal desires. The affairs in the palace had come to such a pass that Kuṭakaṇṇa Tissa, the second son of Mahācūļī Mahātissa, could only preserve his life by donning the yellow robe. He eventually came back to the lay life, raised an army, put the infamous Anula to death by setting fire to the house in which she lived, and ascended the throne himself.

Kuṭakaṇṇa had the personal name of Abhaya as well as Tissa, and the epithet prefixed to his name, of which the significance is not clear, is also given as 'Puṭakaṇa' or 'Puḍakaṇa' in the inscriptions 15. The accession of Kutakanna Tissa (circa 44 B.C.) inaugurated an era of peace and prosperity, which continued during the reigns of his two sons, Bhātika Abhaya and Mahādāthika Mahānāga who, one after the other, succeeded to the throne, as well as during the reign of Amanda-gamani Abhaya, son of Mahadathika Mahānāga. During the period of seventy-one years covered by the reigns of these four sovereigns, no external enemy threatened the kingdom, nor did internal disharmony trouble the people. The kings, nobles and the people, of one accord, celebrated the religious festivals, sometimes on a gorgeous and a lavish scale, as they fell due16. Various religious establishments were founded throughout the length and the breadth of the Island, and those founded by earlier generations were duly maintained. Irrigation works were constructed so as to increase the supply of food, and the people, as a whole, seem to have led a contented life. Numerous are the inscriptions which these rulers have left behind; these records indicate that their authority was acknowledged in Rohana as well as in the districts directly under the control of the capital. No ruler during this period demanded sacrifices from the people to satisfy his desire for military glory, or made undue demands on their labour, so as to raise huge memorials to perpetuate his name. All throughout the Island's history of two thousand years, there does not appear to have been any other period during which the

^{15.} EZ., III, p. 155—6.
16. For example, the Giribhanda festival in the reign of Mahādāṭhika Mahānāga;
see Adikaram, Early History of Buddhism in Ceylon, pp. 88—89.

people were happier; this happiness and freedom from fear was extended to the animal kingdom by Āmaṇḍa-gāmaṇi, who issued an edict prohibiting the taking away of life. Sometimes the kings carried their religious enthusiasm to extreme and even to absurd lengths, as, for instance, when Mahādāṭhika gave himself, his queen, his two sons, his state-elephant and his state-horse to the Sanigha; but the latter had the good sense to take advantage of the king's liberality with due consideration of propriety, particularly with regard to the embarrassing gift of the queen.

It is an irony of fate that Amanda-gamani Abhaya, who ordained that there should be no killing of any sort within his kingdom, was himself killed by his younger brother, Kanirajānu Tissa (circa 29-32 A.C.), who held the sceptre for three years at Anuradhapura. Some members of the Sanigha, possibly as a result of the favourable treatment accorded to them by the previous rulers, had by this time become a law unto themselves, and this was brought home to Kanirajanu Tissa in a very unpleasant manner. A dispute arose among the community of bhikkhus at Mihintalē, and the matter being referred to the king for decision, he went there, heard both sides to the dispute, and delivered his judgment in accordance with law and equity. But there was a faction among the bhikkhus whose concern was that their point of view, and not justice and equity, should prevail. They were, therefore, enraged against the king who had dared to give a decision that went against them. Sixty of these militant monks charged forward in a body, and captured the person of the king, with intent to murder him, before he could get out of the building in which the case was heard. But the plans of these monks miscarried. The king, we are not told how, managed to escape from their clutches, and meted out summary justice to the miscreants who had disgraced the robe that they were wearing. They were hurled down from a precipice known as Kanira, the name of which, it appears, later generations prefixed to that of the king.

Possibly as a result of the prolonged period of prosperity, without the necessity of overcoming difficulties, which it enjoyed for the best part of a century, the dynasty which had ruled Ceylon from the dawn of history, and which produced such great monarchs like Devānampiya Tissa, Duṭṭha-gāmaṇī and Vaṭṭagāmaṇī, had now become effete, and its final extinction was very near. Cūṭābhaya, the son of Āmaṇḍa-gāmaṇī, who succeeded Kaṇirajānu, reigned for one year only. After his death, the throne was occupied for four months by his sister, Sīvalī, also known as Revatī¹7. The elevation of a princess to the throne was probably due to the reason that the male line was extinct, but the people, who perhaps still remembered the career of Anuṭā, do not seem to have been enamoured with the idea of

^{17.} Dv., XXXI, p. 30.

a woman reigning over them. Ilanāga, the son of a sister of Āmaṇḍa-gāmaṇī, thus found no difficulty in dethroning Sīvalī, and having himself

consecrated as sovereign.

Ilanaga, however, had to settle accounts with a very powerful faction in the country, before he could establish himself on the throne securely. The Lambakannas, who proved a thorn in the side of Ilanaga, are mentioned in his reign for the first time in Ceylon history. As we shall later see, a scion of this clan founded the second dynasty of Sinhalese kings which ruled the Island for several centuries, and kings of subsequent times, as late as the fifteenth century, claimed to belong to this stock. Later tradition traced the descent of the Lambakannas to the princes who are said to have come from North India with the Bodhi Tree. The Sinhalese form of the name, 'Lämäni,' has been used as the equivalent of Pāli lekhaka, 'scribe '18. Therefore, whatever the origin of the clan might have been, we may conclude that, at the time the Lambakannas first appear in history, they held the position of scribes in the administration. Their influence in the society of those days must have been very great, and the sight of weaklings and women on the throne must have put into the heads of the more ambitious among them the idea of capturing the supreme power in the land for themselves.

The trial of strength between Ilanaga and the Lambakannas began not long after that prince's accession to the throne. After the consecration, it was customary for the king to have a ceremonial bath in the Tisāväva; all high dignitaries and members of the various services had, it appears, to accompany the king on this occasion as a matter of fealty. When Ilanaga was about to return after the bath in the Tisavava, the Lambakannas were conspicuous by their absence. They had returned to the capital before the king—an action which was tantamount to disloyalty. Ilanaga was wroth, and he punished the Lambakannas by making them perform manual labour on a road that was being constructed to the Mahāthūpa. Not only were the populace entertained by the sight of the haughty Lambakannas engaged in manual labour at a public place, but their pride was further hurt by men of a low social standing, the Candalas, being appointed as overseers to supervise their work. The Lambakannas did not take this humiliation lying down. They turned the tables on Ilanaga by taking him captive and keeping him confined in the palace, while they themselves administered the government.

A remarkable story is told in the chronicle about the manner in which Ilanaga obtained his freedom. His queen feared the worst, not only for her lord, but also for her infant son. Rather than have her son put to death by the rebels, she put festive garments on the infant and placed him

^{18.} Compare Lämäni (=Lambakanna)-duvak (Ns. text, p. 14), which stands for Lekhaka-dhītikā of the Mv., xxxvii, v. 26.

in front of the state-elephant, expecting the beast to trample the infant to death. The elephant, however, realised the peril in which his master and the infant were in; and, with the infant on his back, rushed to the prison where Ilanāga was held captive, secured the king's escape by breaking down its walls, and carried him safely to the seaport of Mahātittha. Having thus secured the release of his master, the elephant is said to have gone to the jungles of the Hill Country.

Whether we believe this story or not, the fact that Ilanaga escaped from prison may be accepted as a fact. From Mahātittha, Iļanāga took ship to Îndia, and remained in exile for three years, before he could persuade some power there to give him military assistance. Ilanaga thus has the distinction of being the first Sinhalese ruler to have invited foreign troops to take sides in a dispute for the throne in Ceylon. He landed at Sakkharasobbha, probably on the east coast of Ceylon, with his Indian forces which were strengthened by recruits from Rohana. He remained for some time in Rohana before he marched against his adversaries. A battle took place at a place named Kapallakhanda on the field of Hankarapitthi (both places not capable of identification today) in which Ilanaga's forces showed signs of giving ground, but his personal valour secured the day for him, and the Lambakannas were utterly routed. After regaining the throne, Ilanaga wreaked terrible vengeance on the Lambakannas who had forced him to exile. Instead of having them beheaded, as he first intended to do, he is said to have shown them mercy, at the intercession of his mother, by cutting off their noses and toes, after having had them yoked to his chariot in his triumphal march through the city.

While in Rohana before he returned to Anurādhapura, Iļanāga enlarged the great dāgāba at Mahāgāma, and made many benefactions to religious institutions there. An inscription of his is reported to have been found on a stone pillar embedded in the masonry of the dāgāba¹9. The Pāli commentaries, the Samantapāsādikā and the Atthasālinī, refer to a king Mahānāga, who went abroad with his brother, and was established on the throne after his return²0. This Mahānāga of the commentaries can be no other than Iḷanāga of the chṛonicles.

Ilanāga died after a reign of six years, reckoned perhaps from the date of his regaining the throne, and was succeeded by Candamukha Siva, who reigned eight years and seven months (circa 43-52 A.C.). The consort of Candamukha Siva was a Tamil princess, and was known as Damila-devī. This alliance of his son with a Tamil princess was, perhaps, a part of the price which Ilanāga had to pay when he obtained military aid from South India against his adversaries.

^{19.} Müller, AIC, p. 26.

^{20.} Smp., p. 473, Atthasālinī, P.T.S. Edition, p. 399.

According to the Papañcasūdanī²¹, the epithet 'Candamukha' was attached to the name of a king Tissa and not Siva. The following episode is narrated in that commentary of King Candamukha Tissa. The senior thera of the Mahavihara at that time was almost blind. The king, in order to test the spiritual attainments of the thera, visited the monastery at a time when all the inmates had gone out on their begging rounds, apprached stealthily and grasped the feet of the thera as if a serpent were attacking him. The there remained unperturbed, and questioned who it was; the king replied, 'I am Tissa, your reverence'. The thera paid a compliment to the king by saying, 'It seems to me that a fragrant breeze is blowing'. The manner in which the king is represented in this episode to have acted-with no consideration either of royal dignity or of the deference due to the head of a great religious establishment-indicates the monarch to whom the spithet 'Yasalālaka' is given in the chronicle, whom we shall presently notice. Unless we take it that the reading 'Tissa' in the Papañcasūdanī is due to a scribal error, it appears that the historical tradition of ancient Ceylon was not decided with regard to the identity of the 'Moon-faced' (Candamukha) monarch.

The last king of the first dynasty of Ceylon, Yasalalaka Tissa, secured the throne by slaying his elder brother, Candamukha Siva, on the occasion of a water festival at the Tisavava, and reigned for seven years and eight months. Yasalālaka Tissa is said to have come by his end, and caused the extinction of his dynasty, by his proneness to practical jokes. The doorkeeper of his palace²² is said to have borne a remarkable likeness to him in appearance, and the king used often to change places and apparel with this functionary, purely to have a laugh at the sight of his ministers bowing down to the door-keeper in the belief that the latter was the king. dcor-keeper realised the possibilities of the situation in which he often found himself without his own seeking. One day, when the real king, disguised as the door-keeper, was laughing at the sight of the ministers prostrating themselves before the throne with the mock king seated on it, he was put to death for seemingly improper behaviour, as door-keeper, in front of the throne. The real door-keeper, we are told, continued to occupy, in earnest, for six years the throne to which he was elevated in jest.

The practice of a king acting as door-keeper, which Yasalālaka is said to have undertaken as a jest, is known to have been a part of a solemn festival. When the branch of the sacred Bodhi Tree arrived in Ceylon, Devānampiya Tissa, after having received it, is said to have temporarily invested with the sovereignty the heads of the eighteen families who were sent to protect it, and himself acted as door-keeper while the festivities were

P.T.S. Edition, p. IV, p. 97.
 Dovārika, see infra, p. 233 f. and H. C. Ray, DHNI, p. 1003, f.n. 1.

continuing. If the door-keeper in the reign of Yasalālaka Tissa was a descendant of one of the personages who came to Ceylon with the Bodhi Tree, the king's exchanging of places with him would have been the enacting of an ancient ritual. We know that, in some parts of the ancient world, the king, on the occasion of certain festivals, abdicated authority to a person temporarily invested with the privileges and paraphernalia of royalty²³, and it is possible that Yasalālaka Tissa lost his life on some occasion like that, when the person selected to play the part of the mock king happened to be one who had supporters to back him as the permanent occupant of the throne.

It is not known whether the door-keeper belonged to the Lambakanna clan, some members of which had made a bid to capture the government in Ilanāga's reign. He is introduced to us by the chronicle as Subha, son of Datta, who was also door-keeper in his time. Inscriptions of the king who put an end to the first dynasty of Ceylon are known.²⁴ They do not help us in settling the question of his identity, but they inform us that his name was really Saba (Sabha), and not Subha as given in the chronicles. Sabha, to give this king his real name, did not, however, succeed in founding a dyansty to replace that which was brought to an end by his capture of the throne, whether as stated in the chronicle, or in some other manner. That honour goes to a scion of the Lambakanna clan who, as we have seen, did not acquiesce in the continuation of the old dynasty by princes who could claim to belong to it only through the female line of descent.

^{23.} Sir James G. Frazer, The Golden Bough, Abridged Edition, London, 1924, pp. 262-289.

^{24.} EZ., III, p. 166.

CHAPTER V

LAMBAKANNA DYNASTY: VASABHA TO MAHĀSENA

Vasabha, who belonged to the Lambakanna clan, conquered Sabha (Subha), after the latter had reigned for six years. The circumstances which enabled Vasabha, who by birth was not entitled to the allegiance of the people, to secure the throne of Ceylon for himself and, moreover, to establish the right of his family to the sovereignty of the Island, have not been reliably recorded in the chronicles. On the other hand, as has very often happened in the case of personages who had risen to greatness from comparatively humble beginnings, folk-tales seem to have grown about him, in which we find familiar motives such as predictions by soothsayers of the future greatness of the hero, vain attempts by those in power to prevent what had been ordained by Fate, and the hero accomplishing his destiny in spite of various obstacles, in the removal of which his future partner in life gives

him a helping hand.

According to these stories, King Sabha was disconcerted by a prophecy that a person named Vasabha would kill him. Sabha, therefore, ordered the execution of everybody bearing that name. A young man named Vasabha of the Lambakanna clan served under his uncle, the commanderin-chief of the army, whose love for his nephew was not so great as to make him disobey the king's order. Accordingly, he arranged to take the youth to be delivered to the king. The commander-in-chief's wife, however, was determined to save the youth, and thought of a plan by which she could effect her purpose. On the morning that the commander-in-chief was to go to the palace with Vasabha, she prepared his betel bag without one of the necessary ingredients, and the military officer, discovering this at the palace, sent Vasabha home to fetch what he lacked for a chew of betel. When he came home, his aunt appraised him of the situation, of which he had been unaware up to this time, gave him a thousand pieces of money, and aided Vasabha to take to flight. Vasabha went to the Mahāvihāra, and the theras there provided him with the necessities of life. leper assured Vasabha that he would become king, and this finally made him decide to raise the standard of revolt against Sabha. He went to Rohana, where he secured many followers and, having in two years brought these outlying regions under his control, marched with the men of the southern principality to give battle to Sabha. He was victorious in the final encounter, and was crowned king.

In this story, we find that the monks of the Mahavihara were the first to come to Vasabha's assistance, and that he was able to secure a following when he went to Rohana. Though not of royal birth, Vasabha must have commanded some influence in the country, for he belonged to the Lambakanna stock, and was related to the commander-in-chief. There being no descendant of the ancient royal dynasty, who could claim the allegiance of the people as a matter of right, those of adventurous spirit could command a following in such parts of the Island as were not adequately garrisoned by the forces of the Anuradhapura ruler. And, in his challenge to the established authority, Vasabha is said to have followed the policy adopted by a much greater upstart than he, namely Candragupta Maurya, who learned of its efficacy through the admonition of an old woman to a child eating a cake1. Just as the child eating the hot cake, following the old woman's advice, did not attack it at the centre, but nibbled at the edges, so did Vasabha, following Candragupta's example, start by attacking, not the established power at the centre of authority, but the outposts hardly known to the military leaders at the capital. Having, as a bandit, gained control over one village, he extended his power from village to village, until he could raise, in Rohana, an army which he felt was a match for that of the Anuradhapura king. The fact that the Samgha of the Mahavihara was on his side must have greatly helped him in rallying the people to his standard. His personal valour must have contributed to retain the loyalty of his followers throughout the period of two years in which many engagements must have ensued between the forces of Sabha, commanded by his uncle, and his own followers.

In the course of the protracted campaigns which he had to wage against the insurgents led by his own nephew, the commander-in-chief of Sabha lost his life, and Vasabha, after ascending the throne, married his widow, named Potthā, who had been instrumental in saving the life of Vasabha when the latter was in danger. This marriage with the maternal uncle's widow would be considered a union coming within the prohibited degree according to customs now prevailing among the Sinhalese. But, in certain societies in which cross-cousin marriage is customary, 'an heir, on succeeding, may marry the wife of his maternal uncle, but not if he has previously married one of the daughters'2. This is the only recorded instance of such a marriage in ancient Ceylon; but, if such unions were not customary, Vasabha would not have wedded Potthā, out of gratitude. As cross-cousin marriages were normal in ancient Ceylon, just as they are still common among the Sinhalese, the custom of marrying one's maternal

^{1.} Mvt., pp. lxxxii f.
2. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, Vol. LIV, p. 240. Professor H. C. Ray has drawn my attention to Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa's mistress, being his maternal uncle's wife,

uncle's widow also may be taken as prevalent in ancient Ceylon, at least among the Lambakannas, the clan to which Vasabha belonged.

Inscriptions dated in the reign of Vasabha have been found at places so far apart as Vallipuram on the north coast of the Jaffna Peninsula, and Tissamahārāma in the Southern Province, besides ancient sites in the King's Country³. It is thus clear that, though he came to occupy the throne with no hereditary right thereto, Vasabha's authority was acknowledged throughout the length and breadth of the Island.

In those days when the predictions of soothsayers influenced the actions of rulers as well as the ruled, Vasabha, who is said to have come to the throne as the result of prophecies favourable to him, was disturbed in mind by another prophecy which declared, after he came to the throne, that he would not be long-lived. This might have been considered a safe prophecy to make concerning an upstart who came after the downfall of another upstart. But Vasabha went to the correct quarter for consultations with regard to remedial measures. He was told that he need not have fears about an early death if only he, in addition to making gifts of certain requisites to the Sanigha, undertook the restoration of ruined buildings, observed the five precepts and fasted on sabbath days. Vasabha acted accordingly and lived to a ripe old age, for his reign extended to forty-four years (circa 67-111 A.C.). A king who carried out a programme of this nature in ancient Ceylon would have had the enthusiastic support of the Sanigha, and his reputation as a righteous king would have made it difficult for any rival to gain a following against him. Vasabha had his son Tissa, on whom historians have conferred the epithet of 'Vankanāsika', (Curved, i.e Aquiline Nose), married to Mahāmattā, a daughter of his predecessor, Sabha.

In addition to numerous religious buildings and irrigation reservoirs, Vasabha's public works included the raising of the city wall to a height greater than it was before his time, and fortress-towers at the four gates. Perhaps this strengthening of the defences of his capital was only part of a comprehensive scheme of military preparedness against a threat that was feared. It was about this time that the Colas in South India were becoming strong and aggressive under Karikāla⁴, the greatest of the early kings of that dynasty; and Vasabha and his ministers perhaps felt that a trial of strength with the Colas was inevitable one day, and took measures accordingly. There is, however, no mention in history of any conflict, whether at home or abroad, in the reign of Vasabha. But, in the reign of his son and suc-

^{3.} EZ., IV, pp. 229-237; CJSG., II, p. 17f; EZ., I, pp. 66-74.

^{4.} Colas, pp. 31 ff.

cessor, Vankanāsika Tissa, there was, according to the Pūjāvalī⁵ and the Rājāvalī, an inroad into Ceylon by the forces of an unnamed Cola king, in the course of which twelve thousand Sinhalese were taken captive to South India; according to the Pūjāvalī, these prisoners were employed as labourers in some work on the Kaveri. The next king Gajabahu, son of Tissa, according to the same sources, retrieved the national honour in ample measure. Before we discuss these events, to which there is no reference whatever in the earlier chronicles, it is necessary to say something about the succession after the death of Vasabha.

The genealogical table of the Mahāvamsa with regard to Vasabha, Tissa and Gajabāhu, is confirmed by numerous inscriptions of the last named ruler, which record that he was the son of the great king Tissa and grandson of the great king Vasabha.6 But there are other inscriptions which prove beyond doubt that this chronicler has recorded only a part of the events bearing on the succession during this period—that which concerned the capital. For, at a place named Tammannava in the Kurunagala District, there is a rock inscription in Brāhmī letters of the second century, containing the name of a ruler Dutaga-maharaja, son of the great king Vahaba (Vasabha).7 Against a possible explanation that 'Dutaga' is an alternative for 'Vankanāsika' is the fact that, in another inscription, also found in the Kurunāgala District, Tissa the son of Vasabha is referred to.8 It seems likely, therefore, that a son of Vasabha, named Duṭaga, not referred to in the Mahāvamsa, ruled over what is now the Kurunāgala District, while Vankanāsika Tissa held the sceptre at Anurādhapura.

At the site of an ancient monastery now called Häbässa in the Buttala Kōralē of the Uva Province, there is an inscription which refers to an uparāja named Nāga who was the grandson of Vasabha and son of thegreat king Uttara.9 According to this record, Uttara was another son of Vasabha, ignored by the Mahāvamsa, who called himself a maharaja, i.e. considered himself to be an independant ruler. Three of Vasabha's sons, therefore, appear to have assumed the title of maharaja, probably at the same time. The area in which the inscription of Dutaga-maharaja has been found is what, in later times, was known as Māyā-raṭa; the record referring to Uttara-mahārāja is in Rohaņa. Vankanāsika Tissa was of course at Anurādhapura, the centre of the districts which came under the appellation of Rajarața or Pihițirața in later times. Thus, the three Simhalas of later

^{5.} Some printed editions of the Pv., e.g. Pv. (2) and Pv. (3), would make us believe that it was in the reign of Gajabāhu I that men were taken from Ceylon to work on the Kāvērī. But the Rv.(Tr.p. 40f.), which is based on the $P\bar{u}j\bar{a}val\bar{\imath}$ for the early history, definitely states that this event took place in the reign of Vankanāsika Tissa.

6. See, for example, EZ., I, p. 211 and EZ., III. pp. 116 and 166.

7. ASCAR., 1934, p. 18.

8. From Kādigala in the Vanni Hatpattu, see CJSG., II, p. 123, inscription

No. 510.

^{9.} EZ., IV, pp. 213—217.

times were under the rule, separately, of three of Vasabha's sons, indicating that there was, in effect, a division of the Island among three separate rulers after Vasabha's death, though Vankanāsika Tissa might have claimed suzerainty over the other two. The existence of a king named Uttara is vouched tor by the Samantapāsādikā which states that he made a model of a cetiya in gold and presented it to Mahāpaduma-thera who declined to accept it.¹⁰

Gajabāhu's successor, Mahallaka Nāga, is said in the Pāli sources to have been related to him as sasuro, which word has been rendered into English as 'father-in-law'. But this Pāli word also means 'brother-in-law', and it is in that sense that it has been understood by Sinhalese historical writers who state that Mahallaka Nāga was a suhuru-badu of Gajabāhu.11 If we take it that he was the same as uparāja Nāga of the Häbässa inscription, for the epithet 'Mahallaka' became attached to him as he ascended the throne when he was advanced in years, it would follow that Gajabāhu espoused a daughter of Uttara-mahārāja who ruled in Rohaņa. A condition of this matrimonial alliance was, judging from the succession, that his wife's brother was to be made uparāja, an office generally given to the heir-apparent. If such was the course of events, Gajabāhu's marriage was a political union, designed to put an end to the rivalries in the ruling family, and divided authority in the Island¹². If the two branches of the royal family ruling at Anuradhapura and in Rohana settled their differences, with identical interests, the independent existence of the branch in the Māyāraṭa could not have been maintained for long, and Gajabāhu would have been acclaimed as the ruler of the whole Island. That such was the course of events is proved by the existence of his inscriptions in all parts of the Island, in the north as well as in the south.

If the account in the Rājāvalī of an invasion of Ceylon by South Indian forces in the reign of Vankanāsika Tissa be taken as historical, it can be considered as a direct result of the weakness of the Sinhalese brought about by the division of the kingdom, for the vigorous Cola power of those days must have certainly taken advantage of such a situation in Ceylon. Gajabāhu's marriage must, in that event, be considered as a plan designed to put an end to the situation which threatened the subjugation of the

11. See S. Paranavitana in JCBRAS., XXX, pp. 452-454.

^{10.} Smp., p. 544. The phrase Uttara-rāja-putto occurring in this text may be interpreted as 'son of King Uttara' or 'prince (i.e. king's son) Uttara'.

^{12.} Dv. xxii, 26, which has obviously been shifted from the position it held in the original sequence of verses in this chapter, when restored to its proper position and the text emended by the correction of an obvious clerical error, can be taken as recording the historical fact that two kings exercised joint authority after Vasabha's death. The reference in an inscription at Ledorugala (ASCAR, 1934, p. 18) to a joint reign of two kings who were brothers is probably to this period. It is also likely that Dutaga of the Tammannava inscription is an alternate name of Vankanasika Tissa. If Dutaga was a distinct personage, he probably was not allowed to reign for long.

Island by a foreign power and, if Gajabāhu in fact retrieved the national honour as tradition asserts, it was made possible by the unity brought about in the Island by means of his marriage to a daughter of Uttaramahārāja, sister of uparāja Nāga, later known as Mahallaka Nāga12.

Gajabāhu is the hero of a considerable cycle of Sinhalese ballads and folktales connected with the cult of the goddess Pattini, still an important element in the religion of the Sinhalese. These stories state that Gajabāhu invaded South India, overawed the Cola king and brought back to the Island, not only the Sinhalese who were taken captive there in the reign of his predecessor, but also twelve thousand men from the Cola kingdom as reprisals¹³. These stories contain incredible details with regard to the manner of Gajabāhu's crossing over to the opposite coast, and his exploits there, and familiar folk-tale motives in other respects. If we consider these ballads on their own merits, therefore, they can easily be dismissed as of no historical value, particularly as their statements do not receive any support from the earlier chronicles.

The Tamil epic poem, Śilappadikāram, which, according to some authorities, was composed in the second century and according to others, in the sixth or seventh century, and of which the subject matter is the story of Kannagi, deified as Pattini, refers to Gajabāhu of Ceylon¹⁴. He is said to have been present on the occasion when Senguttuvan, the Cera king, consecrated a shrine in honour of Pattini, and established a place of worship to that goddess in his own dominions. In the Sinhalese ballads, as well as in the late Sinhalese historical work, the Rājāvalī, Gajabāhu is said to have brought to Ceylon, on his return from the Cola country, the anklet of the goddess Pattini. In view of the reference in the Śilappadikāram, the stories which state that Gajabāhu undertook a military campaign in South India cannot be regarded as altogether baseless. The statement in the Pūjāvalī that captives were taken from Ceylon by the Cola king for labour on the Kaveri receives some measure of support from South Indian tradition which states that Karikāla had dykes on the Kāvērī built by enemies captured by him, though there is no particular reference therein to Ceylon¹⁵. The Colas and the Ceras were rivals at this time and if, in fact, Gajabāhu went to South India as an enemy of the Cola ruler, he must have considered the Cera as his ally; his presence at the consecration of a shrine in that country, and his introduction into this Island of the worship of a goddess favoured by the Cera, thus appear plausible 16.

A representative ballad of this class is the Amkota-hatana, a brief account of which is given in JCBRAS, XXIV, p. 55. Another is the Gajabā-katāva.
 Edited by V. Saminathaiyar, Madras, 1920, pp. 30 and 589.

^{15.} Colas, p. 36.

^{16.} For a different appraisal of these legends, see Nilakanta Sastri, Colas, pp. 53ff.

The epithet 'Gajabāhu' ('He whose arm has the strength of an elephant') which in literary sources has almost ousted his personal name of Gamani Abhaya, and which occurs also in one of his inscriptions¹⁷, indicates that this king had military exploits to his credit. The fact that the early chronicles contain no reference to any such achievement of his can be easily explained. Gajabāhu's name is associated with a cult which the orthodox members of the Buddhist Church in Ceylon do not appear to have received with favour. He was also one of the greatest patrons of the Abhayagirivihāra, the stūpa of which monastery he is said to have enlarged18. The chroniclers, who were concerned mainly with the fortunes of the Mahāvihāra, have therefore dealt with the career of Gajabāhu, the supporter of their rivals, in a perfunctory manner, and were not disposed to be eloquent about his achievements, even though these may have brought honour to the nation.

Mahallaka Nāga, who ascended the throne (circa 136 A.C.) after the death of Gajabāhu I, reigned for six years. He was succeeded, one after the other, by two of his sons; the elder Bhātika Tissa reigned for twenty-four years and the younger, Kanittha Tissa, for eighteen years. The period of almost half a century covered by the reigns of these three monarchs was uneventful; only the foundations of religious buildings and the construction of tanks are recorded about them. The succession to the throne during this time was regular. No domestic disorders or raids by foreign enemies disturbed the even course of the life of the people, and the numerous inscriptions left by these rulers, particularly by Kanittha Tissa (called Malu Tisa in epigraphs), recording donations to religious institutions, give us a picture of a land enjoying peace and prosperity, and of a contented proples

Dissensions in the royal family after the death of Kanittha Tissa disturbed the harmony which prevailed during the preceding half a century. Khujjanaga, the eldest son and successor of Kanittha Tissa, could remain on the throne for one year only. He was slain by his younger brother, Kuñcanāga, who could not himself maintain his position for more than two years, during which the people suffered from a severe famine called ekanālika ('single näli measure'). Sirinaga, the commander of the army in Kuñcanaga's reign, raised the standard of revolt against his sovereign, marched to the capital with a well-equipped army and, having forced Kuñcanāga to flee, ascended the throne himself. The relationship that Sirinaga, the first of that name to occupy the throne, bore to his predecessor is variously stated in different sources. According to the Mahāvamsa, he was the brother of Kuñcanāga's consort, while the Pūjāvalī has been understood to give this relationship as sister's son. The word used in the Pūjāvalī to express the

^{17.} Müller, AIC., No. 5.18. See infra, p. 259.

relationship can also be interpreted to mean 'elder brother.' 19 If we rely on the *Mahāvamsa*, there is nothing to show that Sirināga was a descendant in the male line of Vasabha, and it would appear that the Lambakanna dynasty founded by him ceased to rule, at least for the time being, after Kuncanāga.

An inscription engraved on a rock at the ancient site now called Vessagiri (really the Issarasamana) near Anuradhapura, 20 comes to our aid in establishing the origin of Sirinaga I, and in reconciling the apparent discrepancy, with regard to the relationship that he bore to his predecessor, between the Mahāvamsa and Pūjāvalī. This record is concerned with a grant made to the monastery by a king named Tissa, son of Sirinaga, son of Tissa. proclamation of the grant was made by a second Sirinaga, son of Tissa. For some reason or other, perhaps due to death intervening before his intentions could be put into effect, the donor himself could not have the grant proclaimed. The ruler who proclaimed the grant could not have been one of his predecessors; it must have been a successor. This inscription introduces us to two monarchs by the name of Sirinaga, each of whom was the son of a king named Tissa. According to the chronicles, there were only two rulers who bore the name of Sirinaga, the second coming to the throne forty-four years after the death of the first. Sirinaga II, according to the chronicles, was a son of Vohārika Tissa. In the latter name, 'Vohārika' is an epithet bestowed on the monarch for his justness, his personal name being Tissa. This Vohārika Tissa himself, according to the chronicles, was the son of Sirinaga who ascended the throne after putting Kuñcanāga to flight. Thus the genealogical information with regard to three of the kings figuring in the inscription, namely Sirinaga I, Tissa (Vohārika) and Sirināga II, tallies with that given in the Mahāvanisa. With regard to the first king mentioned in it, however, the epigraph supplies us with information not given in the chronicle, i.e. that Sirinaga I was the son of a king named Tissa.

We have now to decide the identity of the monarch who was the father of Sirināga I as well of the unnamed queen of Kuñcanāga. In the generation which preceded that of Sirināga I as well as of Kuñcanāga, there were two kings who bore the name Tissa, i.e. Bhātika Tissa and Kaniṭṭha Tissa. Of these two monarchs, the second could not have been the father of Sirināga I, for Kaniṭṭha Tissa was the father of Kuñcanāga whose queen was a sister of Sirināga. If we take Kaniṭṭha Tissa to be the father of Sirināga I, it would lead us to the further inference that Kuñcanāga

20. EZ., IV, pp. 218-222.

^{19.} Pv. (1), p. 21. Ohu bāna Kuḍā Sirinā raja ekun visi havuruddak rājjaya kelē ya. If bāna with a cerebral n is adopted, the word means 'brother'; the reading with the dental n, bāna, would indicate 'nephew'. Pv. (2) has the reading bā, oganist all Mss., in which the reading is bāna.

married his own sister. The only alternative is that Sirinaga was a son of Bhātika Tissa, and was thus an ortho-cousin of Kuñcanāga, who seems to have married a daughter of his father's elder brother. That marriages between ortho-cousins were prevalent in the Sinhalese royal family is established by numerous instances recorded for the ninth and tenth centuries. The marriage of Gajabāhu that we have referred to earlier was one of that type. If Sirinaga I was a son of Bhatika Tissa, the statement in the Pūjāvalī that he was a bāna of Kuncanaga is found to be based on an accurate tradition, for the word can mean 'brother' when the n is taken as a cerebral. According to the Sinhalese kinship system, the son of one's father's brother is one's 'brother.'

Thus, at the death of Kanittha Tissa, the throne, instead of passing to the son of Bhātika Tissa, the elder of the two brothers of the previous generation, was occupied by a son of the younger brother. Kuñcanāga, having illegally captured the throne, gave such an influential position as commander-in-chief to the prince who could claim a better right to the throne than he had. Why the son of Bhātika Tissa was passed over at the death of Kanittha Tissa is also not clear. It could have been that, even though he was the son of the elder of two brothers, in point of age he was younger than either of the sons of the younger brother, Kanitha Tissa. Whatever the reasons that enabled the sons of Kanittha Tissa to ascend the throne while a son of Bhātika Tissa still lived, Sirināga was not content with the rank of commander-in-chief, and utilised the resources which that post placed in his hands to wrest the power from one who, in his opinion, had seized it illegitimately. Kuñcanāga, who fled after the victory of Sirinaga I, is not heard of any more. Sirinaga, in addition to the usual religious activities, remitted an impost on fields which appear to have weighed heavily on the peasants, clearly a measure calculated to make him popular²¹.

In dealing with the relationship of Sirinaga I to his predecessor, we have anticipated the succession after his death. His son, Tissa, succeeded him (circa 209 A.C.) and reigned for twenty-two years. He is said to have received the appellation of 'Vohārika' because he, for the first time in the history of the Island, made a law that set aside bodily injury as penalty. He was liberal towards religion, and spent much wealth in embellishing monasteries and shrines, and in gifts to the learned theras who expounded the religion. In his reign we hear for the first time of a sect called the Vaitulya-vādins or the Vitaņda-vādins, who, as will be shown in chapter

IX, were those professing Mahāyāna doctrines22.

Though Vohārika Tissa earned the love and esteem of his subjects by his humanity and justice, he failed to inculcate those qualities in persons

^{21.} See *infra*, p. 239.22. See *infra*, pp. 248ff.

belonging to his own domestic circle²³. His younger brother, Abhayanaga, was implicated in an affair with the queen and, when this became known to the king, the prince fled in fear of the consequences. Having arrived at the seaport named Bhallatittha, Abhayanaga conceived a subtle plan to alienate the people from Vohārika Tissa, with the ultimate aim of capturing the throne for himself. In this, he had the co-operation of his maternal uncle, Subhadeva, who went to the length of submitting himself willingly to mutilation, so as to further their nefarious plans. At Bhallatittha, Abhayanāga feigned anger towards Subhadeva and, in order to remove any suspicion of collusion between the two, ordered the hands and feet of the latter to be cut off. In his mutilated condition, Subhadeva came to Vohārika Tissa and, as one who had suffered at the hands of Abhayanāga, and therefore inimical towards the rebel, gained the confidence of the king. Before embarking to India, Abhayanaga is said to have given his adherents a vivid demonstration of the manner in which he expected them to be loyal towards him. He fatally shot a pet dog of his, and while the animal was in its death throes, called it by its name. The dog came wagging its tail with the last ounce of strength left in it, and lay faithfully at the feet of its master.

In spite of the mutilation that he had suffered, Subhadeva, in the meantime, was entrusted with affairs of responsibility. Making it known that he was acting on behalf of the king, and in his interests, Subhadeva oppressed the people, and introduced corrupt methods of administration, with the result that the love and respect which his subjects hitherto had towards Vohārika Tissa gradually disappeared, and their loyalty was undermined. Abhayanāga sent a spy to survey the field. When the spy met Subhadeva, the latter loosened the roots of an areca palm with an iron stake, and attempted to throw it down on the stranger with his shoulders, suggesting to the onlookers that he was threatening the stranger. What Subhadeva meant to be understood by the spy was that the roots of the affection of his subjects being torn asunder, the king now could be easily overthrown.

Abhayanāga being informed by the spy that the time was opportune, returned to Ceylon with an army from South India, and advanced towards the capital. The discontented people were not eager to sacrifice their lives on behalf of Vohārika Tissa who, realising that the dice was loaded against him, attempted to escape to the mountains on horseback, taking with him his queen, who was the cause of all his misfortunes. Abhayanāga pursued him, and having put him to death at the place in the mountains where he had found refuge, came back to Anurādhapura and ascended the

^{23.} In the narrative in this and the three paragraphs which follow, the account in the Mv., xxxvi, vv. 42—51, has been supplemented with the explanations given in the Commentary (Mvt., p. 663).

throne. The woman on account of whom a good man came to grief continued to enjoy her position as the queen of the land.

Having gained his ambition, Abhayanāga²⁴ proved himself to be a good king, and enjoyed a reign of eighteen years. After his death, Sirināga II, the son of Vohārika Tissa, reigned for two years. The events that we have narrated above would explain why a grant made to the Issarasamaṇa nionastery by Vohārika Tissa had to await until the reign of Sirināga II to be publicly proclaimed. The next king, Vijaya-kumāra, also had a brief reign of one year, and the sovereignty passed over, one after the other, to three Lambakaṇṇa princes who came to Anurādhapura from Mahiyaṅgaṇa.

The narrative of the chronicles gives one the impression that there was a dynastic break after Vijaya-kumāra, for it is nowhere stated, in literary sources, that any of the three Lambakannas mentioned above was related to a king who occupied the throne of Anurādhapura. We are left to guess how it was that three youths who came to Anurādhapura from a distant place managed to get themselves elevated to the throne, except that a blind man, from the sound of their footsteps, did predict that each of them in turn would occupy the throne. Arrived at Anurādhapura, they became close and trusted counsellors of the king, and this position was utilised by one of them to slay Vijaya-kumāra. Sanighatissa, the first of the three Lambakanna princes, who had held the position of commander-in-chief, was installed on the throne.

Samghatissa is said to have lost his life, after he had reigned four years, due to his fondness for jambu fruits²⁵. He used to visit frequently a certain place which produced the most luseious of these fruits, proving himself to be a great burden to the people of the area, for every time the king honoured them with a visit, they had to incur heavy expenditure in receiving the monarch suitably, and in entertaining his followers. Driven to desperation, the people poisoned the jambu fruits which the king was likely to taste.

After Samghatissa's death, Sirisamghabodhi, the second of the three Lambakanna princes who came from Mahiyangana, was raised to the throne, with Gothābhaya, the third, as his treasurer. Sirisamghabodhi, in the estimation of the Sinhalese, was one of the most outstanding of the monarchs who ruled Ceylon, but this estimation has not been made on

^{24.} According to the Dv. (xxii, vv. 37—39), Abhaya, i.e. Abhayanāga, was the elder of the two sons of Sirināga I, and came to the throne before his younger brother, Tissa (Vohārika Tissa). The detailed account of Abhayanāga's machinations to oust Vohārika Tissa in Mv. indicates that the reversal of the order of succession, and of seniority of the two brothers, in that chronicle was based on reliable sources no longer extant.

^{25.} Jambu is at present the name of a fruit-tree, a recent introduction from the Malay Peninsula, which is common in the western and southern parts of the Island. The tree referred to as jambu in ancient literary works, after which Jambudvipa, i.e. the subcontinent of India, has been named, is known as mādam in Sinhalese, and nāval in Tamil. Its botanical name is Syzygium Cumini, formerly Eugenia Jambolana.

criteria which modern historians resort to in judging the achievements of rulers. He earned no military glory, he had no statesmanship which brought prestige to his country, nor did he undertake any public works which improved the material well-being of his people. His claim to greatness consists in that he was a hero of righteousness (dharma-vīra), the last of the three classes to which heroes are divided according to Indian theory, the other two being yuddha-vīra (hero in battle) and dāna-vīra (hero in liberality).

While being a king, he took upon himself the observance of the five moral precepts (pañca-sīla) of Buddhism, one of which is abstinence from killing. He thus practised the ideal of the Buddhist cakravartin who conquers without resorting to force (daṇḍa) or to weapons (sattha). He released criminals condemned to death, but did not consider it prudent to abolish capital punishment; he had the bodies of dead men burnt in place of the criminals, to impress on the minds of the people that justice had taken its course. When a severe drought was causing distress to his people, he is said to have forced the gods who control the weather to rain in torrents by resorting to what may be called satyagrāha in these days. He is said to have removed a pestilence, from which his people suffered, by offering his own flesh to the demon who caused it.

But, unlike in the case of the cakravartin, Sirisamghabodhi did not have the unanimous approval and support of his entourage for the policy that he followed in governing the country. Gothābhaya was anxious to ascend the throne himself; and, seeing that Sirisamghabodhi's righteousness did not result in a breakdown of the administration, openly came out as a rebel. Sirisamghabodhi did not wish to cause the loss of human lives by defending his rights; so, he left the kingdom to anyone who desired it, and himself disappeared from the scene, adopting the habit and life of a hermit. Gothabhaya seized the vacant throne, but feared that the people might have Sirisamghabodhi recalled; therefore he set a price on the head of the king who had renounced the throne. When Sirisamghabodhi heard of this, he is said to have himself severed his head from the neck and given it to the peasant who brought him the tidings, so that everybody may have his desire fulfilled, his being the practice of supreme liberality, the gift of one's own life and limbs, so that he may attain Buddhahood in the future. This supreme act of self-sacrifice is said to have been carried out at Attanagalla, where a shrine, built to commemorate it, has been, and still is, a great centre of pilgrimage26.

^{26.} The Hatthavanagalla-vihāra-vamsa of the thirteenth century has further embellished the account given in the Mv. xxxvi, vv. 73—97, where there is no mention of Attanagalla. According to the Mvt., p. 671, the vihāra built on the site of Sirisamghabodhi's cremation was to the south of Issarasamaṇa-vihāra in Anurādhapura.

Whatever we moderns may think of these stories, the very fact that they became attached to the name of Sirisamghabodhi, and not to that of any other king of ancient Ceylon, indicates that he was different from the ordinary run of human beings. The appearance in Ceylon at this time of the Mahāyāna, which emphasised the ideal of the Bodhisatva and self-sacrifice for the benefit of others, may have had something to do in the formation of Sirisamghabodhi's character. Later generations considered him to be the model of what a Buddhist king ought to be, and Sinhalese rulers, from about the seventh century up to the twelfth, alternately assumed his name as a throne name. From the thirteenth century up to the sixteenth, every king had his name as the throne name.

Gothābhaya, who succeeded Sirisamghabodhi and reigned for thirteen years (circa 249-262 A.C.), was also known as Meghavanna Abhaya. Literary sources give us the impression that Gothabhaya, whose progeny ruled Ceylon for more than a century and a half, was an upstart with no claims by birth to the throne that he seized. But there are epigraphical records of the period which tend to correct this impression. A number of inscriptions written in the Brahmi script of about the third century, particularly a record engraved on a rock at a place named Timbirivava in the Anuradhapura District²⁷, refer to a king named Mekavana Aba (Meghavanna Abhaya) who was a son of a king named Sirinaka (Sirinaga). This Mekavana Aba cannot be Sirimeghavanna as has been taken by some scholars, for Sirimeghavanna was a son of Mahāsena, not of Sirināga, and inscriptions of his give his parentage accordingly, in agreement with the chronicles. Meghavanna of the Timbiriväva and other inscriptions must therefore be Gothābhaya, the only ruler of the period of the inscriptions who was known by that name. Sirinaga, Gothabhaya's father, is probably not the first of that name, for that monarch died thirty-nine years before the accession of Gothābhaya, According to all accounts, Gothābhaya was not a person well advanced in years when he ascended the throne. Gothabhaya therefore must have been a son of Sirinaga II, and thus a brother or half-brother of Vijaya-kumāra, under whom he served when he came with his two companions from Mahiyangana, and whose death he engineered in order to pave the way for his own aggrandisement.

Having seized the throne, Gothābhaya spent wealth lavishly to gain the goodwill of the Buddhist Church, and in certain activities designed for the welfare of the people. His reign witnessed dissensions in the Buddhist Church, and the Mahāyānists made a bid to establish their tenets in this Island. As will be related in detail in Chapter IX, Gothābhaya took the side of the established Church, and the innovators were banished in disgrace.²⁸ But an adherent of the Vaitulya or Mahāyāna school, named

EZ., IV, pp. 223—228.
 See infra, pp. 250f.

Samghamitta, subsequently succeeded in winning the favour of the king to such an extent that he was entrusted with the education of the two sons of Goṭhābhaya. The elder prince, Jeṭṭhatissa, disliked the tutor, for the reason that the latter treated the younger prince, Mahāsena, with favour, perhaps as that prince was ready to accept Samghamitta's point of view in religious matters.

A gruesome spectacle witnessed at the funeral of Gothābhaya clearly shows that, towards the end of his reign, there was disaffection in the court towards the king, and there appears to have been a faction which would have preferred Mahāsena as his successor. It appears that certain ministers refused to go with Jetthatissa at the funeral of Gothabhaya. Jetthatissa so arranged the procession that the body of the dead king followed the younger prince who was at its head. The ministers followed next, and Jetthatissa was at the end of the procession. As soon as Mahāsena and the body of the king had passed out of the city gate, Jetthatissa had the door closed behind them all of a sudden, and the ministers opposed to him all slain. Their bodies were impaled round about the funeral pyre. This swift and drastic action nipped in the bud any plot to keep Jetthatissa out of the succession, and his younger brother, Mahāsena, must have been overawed for the time being. If this episode indicates rivalry between the two brothers, it is to Jetthatissa's credit that he did no harm to Mahāsena. But the manner in which he dealt with his father's ministers earned for him the epithet of 'Kakkhala' (Cruel). Samghamitta considered it prudent to go over to the opposite coast for the time being. Jetthatissa was as great a patron of the Mahāvihāra as his father was; but, when Mahāsena ascended the throne on the death of his elder brother who died after a reign of ten years (circa 263-273 A.C.), the tide turned swiftly to the disadvantage of the older and orthodox sect.

In concert with Sanighamitta, who returned to Ceylon immediately after he assumed the sovereignty, that king caused a great religious upheaval in the Island, the detailed course of which will be dealt with in Chapter IX²⁹. Mahāsena's assault on the citadels of orthodoxy nearly caused a civil war, and disastrous fighting was prevented by the feelings of personal friendship which the leader of the insurgent forces entertained towards the king. While the two armies, that of the king and of the minister named Meghavanna Abhaya, who had risen against his sovereign to avenge the wrongs suffered by the Mahāvihāra, were encamped facing each other, some good meat and drink from the Malaya country were brought to the rebel leader. He remembered the convivial parties of the old days, and did not consider it worth while to partake of these delicious viands without the company of his former friend, the king. Throwing

^{29.} See infra, pp. 252ff.

all caution to the winds, he went in the night to Mahāsena's camp, and invited the latter to partake of the feast before they came to mortal grips on the morrow. This act touched a sympathetic chord in Mahāsena's being, and the two had a heart-to-heart talk, the outcome of which was that Mahāsena promised to re-consider his religious policy.

Mahāsena founded a new monastery encroaching on the boundaries of the Mahāvihāra. The stūpa of this monastery, the Jetavana-vihāra, was the largest monument of its type in Ceylon. Further complications followed in the religious sphere, which had their repercussions on the politics of the day. The thera to whom Mahāsena donated the newly founded monastery, Tissa by name, was charged with a grave offence, and

the judge who investigated the matter found the accused guilty, even though the king wished to have his favourite acquitted. The king thus came into conflict not only with the established Church, but with the

judiciary as well.

In addition to the building of the stupendous Jetavana-dāgāba, Mahāsena also constructed a number of irrigation reservoirs including Minnēri, one of the largest works of its type. In spite of his falling foul of the Mahā-vihāra, his great achievements in architecture and irrigation engineering had so impressed the people of his time that he was deified, and is still

worshipped at Minnēri as Hat-rajjuru-bandāra.

Mahāsena seems to have been on friendly terms with the king of Kalinga, and it was in the belief that he was still alive that the Tooth Relic was sent to Ceylon by the ruler of that country when he could no longer provide for its safety. But, when the Relic arrived in Ceylon, Mahāsena had already departed this life, after a rule of twenty-seven years (circa 275-301 A.C.).

The ancient chronicles, Dīpavamsa as well as Mahāvamsa, end with the reign of Mahāsena. The kings who came after Mahāsena are therefore referred to in Sinhalese literary usage as those of the Cūļavamsa, the name by which the continuation of the chronicle is known, while those dealt with in the earlier part of the chronicle are called those of the Mahāvamsa. The two terms are sometimes rendered by modern writers as the 'Greater Dynasty' and the 'Lesser Dynasty,' disregarding the fact that the first king of the so-called 'Lesser Dynasty' was the son of the last of the 'Greater Dynasty.' However, if matrilineal descent was acknowledged in the Sinhalese royal family of those days, as it was in the twelfth century³⁰, and if the son of Mahāsena who succeeded him was born of a consort of lesser rank, that son could have been considered the scion of a different and inferior stock.

^{30.} CJSG., II, pp. 141 ff.

CHAPTER VI

DEVELOPMENTS IN INDIAN BUDDHISM

As has been briefly alluded to in the first chapter of this Book 1, different schools of thought had already arisen among the followers of the Buddha within a hundred years of His mahāparinirvāna, and these were being gradually systematized into various well-defined orders of the Buddhists. When Asoka accepted the creed as his own personal religion after the Kalinga war, several such orders were in existence and the king espoused the cause of that school regarded at the time as the most orthodox among

As has been narrated in Chapter II of this Book², it was mainly through Asoka's efforts that the Buddhist religion made its phenomenal spread in and outside India at the beginning of our period. Asoka's zeal for the propagation of Buddhism eventually led to the adoption of that creed by many alien races of the north and north-west of India. This has been proved by many authentic literary and archaeological records belonging to our period. The spread of Buddhism far and wide and the introduction into it of various adventitious elements led to its great re-orientation, and it was near about the beginning of the first century that two wellmarked categories of the Buddhist Order were gradually evolved. These are the Śrāvakayāna3 and the Mahāyāna, sometimes also conveniently described as the respective orders of the Southern and Northern Buddhism. Many of the older schools, though maintaining in a manner their separate existence, were classed in the Śrāvakayāna, while the Mahāyāna began to develop in its own way. The medium of expression of their tenets, and of writing commentaries on them was at first different in the case of the Sravakas and Mahayanists, the former normally using Pali or some other Prākrit dialect and the latter Sanskrit. Kaniska, one of the most famous foreign rulers during our period, was associated, in northern tradition, with the systematic development of Mahāyāna, while in Ceylon

See supra, p. 124.
 See supra, pp. 125 ff.
 Buddhist sects which are non-Mahāyānistic in character are often referred to by the deprecatory epithet of Hīnayāna. The reasons for the avoidance of this term in this History may best be given in the words of E. J. Thomas. 'There is a further complication in the case of hīnayāna. It is used as if it were the usual Buddhist appelation for all Buddhism other than Mahāyāna. Yet the term does not come from the Buddhist texts at all. It comes from the French and English translations of the travels of Fa Hsien and Hsüan Tsang, and there it is given as the supposed Sanskrit form of the Chinese terms. This is possible, but it is not the term used in the Mahāyāna scriptures. There we find (e.g. terms. This is possible, but it is not the term used in the Mahayana scriptures. There we find (e.g. in the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtras) the three yānas, érāvaka-yāna, pratyekabuddha-yāna and mahāyāna.' (JCBRAS, Centenary Volume, p. 35).

were systematized the tenets upheld by the Theravadins, and commentaries written on them by her own doctors or those from India settled down there. It will be wrong to suppose, however, that Mahāyānism did not make any headway in Ceylon; it will be shown later how waves of this particular branch of Buddhism spread into the country from eastern and southern India under the patronage of some of her rulers during the period4. But it failed to make any great headway and to establish itself there, due to the strong and energetic action of many of the monks and dialecticians of the Mahāvihāra, supported by some of her most powerful indigenous

The early formative period of Buddhism had hardly passed away when our period begins, and the words of the Master were being interpreted in diverse ways by eminent teachers who flourished in the centuries after the mahāparinirvāņa. The differences in opinion among the prominent members of the Sanigha at first started in the matter about the rules of discipline (vinaya), and then they were gradually spread over the interpretation of some of the tenets (dhamma) preached by the Buddha. This led to the growth and development of schisms among the Buddhist fraternity, and different teachers and preachers of the Law expounded Buddha's teachings both in the matter of dhamma and vinaya according to their own viewpoint, or according to that of the members of the Samgha of their own way of thinking. These differences came to a head about a century after the mahāparinirvāṇa, when the second Buddhist synod (mahāsamgīti) was held at Vaiśāli. A large body of the Buddhist monks, mostly hailing from the eastern parts of India, dissociated themselves from those monks usually belonging to the western parts of the country in the matter of the interpretation of certain rules of discipline. The texts lay down that the latter group of monks, the Westerners, held more orthodox views in this respect, and came to be known, in course of time, as the Sthaviravadins or Theravadins, known also as Vibhajjavadins in Ceylon. The former group, the dissentient ones, formed a school of their own described in later texts, both southern and northern, as the Mahāsāringhika. Thus, Buddhism as current in India in the beginning of the period under review was characterised by these two great primary divisions of the Sanighas.

It will be, however, wrong to suppose that the schismatic tendencies among the general body of the brotherhood resulted in the emergence of only these two well-marked schools. The texts, both of the southern and northern orders of Buddhism, of a later date, refer to a number of schools, most of which, according to them, came into existence before Asoka's The Mahāvanisa, one of the earliest southern texts to give us a

See infra, pp. 248 ff.
 Mv., iv, vv. 9ff. and v, vv. 1—4.

systematic account of the evolution of these sects, mentions first the names of as many as seventeen different schools other than the original Theravada and the first schismatic school Mahāsāmghika, which had branched off either from the one or the other of these two great primary schools. The twelve that had branched off from the Theravada are named as the Mahimsasaka, the Vajjiputtaka, the Dhammuttariya, the Bhadrayanika, the Chandagārika, the Sammiti, the Vajjiputtaka, the Sabbatthavādi, the Dhammaguttika and Kassapiya, the Samkantika and the Suttavada. The five which originated from the Mahāsamghika are described as the Gokulika, the Ekavyohārika, the Pannattivāda, the Bāhulika and the Cetiyavāda.6 According to this Ceylonese tradition, all these seventeen schools had come into existence in the second century after the mahāparinirvāna. Well may Asoka get disturbed for the future of the religion of his choice, and threaten measures against those monks and nuns who would break up the unity of the Sampha, if such was its condition in his time. His Pillar Edicts found at Sānchi, Kosambi and Sārnāth contain stern warnings to the schismatically inclined members of the fraternity7. Asoka's efforts to maintain the unity of the Samgha and the convening of the Third Council towards this end have already been referred to8.

In spite of all these measures undertaken by Asoka who followed the Buddha in denouncing sanighabheda as one of the five principal sins (pañcānantariyāni) that could be committed by a Buddhist, the schisms continued to multiply, and the Mahāvamsa says that the other schools which arose after Asoka were the Hemavata, the Rajagiriya, the Siddhatthaka, the Pubbaseliya, the Aparaseliya and the Vājiriya. These six separated from the rest in Jambudipa (the mainland of India), while the Dhammaruci and the Sagaliya sects separated from the rest in the island of Lanka (Ceylon)9. It would be of interest to compare this account of the fissiparous tendencies in Buddhism with the northern tradition about the grouping of schools which is preserved in a much later compilation as the nineteenth volume of Bstanhgyur complied from the works of Vasumitra, Bhavya, Vinitadeva and others. Bhavya first distinguished the two major schools, the Sthavira and Mahāsāmghika. The following twelve factions gradually evolved out of the former. The Sthavira proper, also called the Haimavata, the Sarvāstivādins, the Vaibādyavādins, the Hetuvidyā (also called Muduntaka or Muruntaka by some), the Vātsīputrīya, the Dharmottariya, the Bhadrayaniya, the Sammatiya (also called Avantaka by some and Kurukullaka by others), the Mahīśāsaka, the Dharmaguptaka, the Saddharmavarska (or properly Sauvarsaka known also as Kāśyapīya) and

 ^{6.} Mv., v, vv. 5—10.
 7. Hultzsch, CII., I, pp. 159—164.
 8. See supra, pp. 130 f.
 9. Mv., v, vv. 11—13.

lastly the Uttarīya (also named by some as the Samkrāntivādin). The factions into which the Mahāsāmghika gradually divided itself were the Mahāsāmghika, the Ekavyāvahārika, the Lokottaravādin, the Bahuśrutīya, the Prajñaptivadin, the Caityaka, the Purvasaila and the Avarasaila 10. A comparison of these two accounts about the various groups that sprang up among the Buddhists in course of time will prove that there is much in common between the two, though the southern tradition appears to be earlier. It is possible that every one of these individual groups had not been formulated before the time of Asoka or immediately after him, but that many of them had taken shape in these times can be proved with the help of archaeological data. Asoka's edicts do not, it is true, refer to any of the groups mentioned above, but many Brāhmi and Kharosthi inscriptions of the post-Asokan period clearly show that a good many of

these Buddhist sects were existing at the time.

The Mathura Lion Capital inscriptions mention both the Sarvastivadin and the Mahāsāmghika schools, though there is no doubt that more prominence is given in them to the former11. The Peshawar, Zeda and Kurram relic casket inscriptions of the time of Kaniska and the inscribed Ter Dheri potsherds also refer to the Sarvāstivādin school. The Taxila copper-ladle inscription and the inscribed jars from Palatū Dheri mention the Kāśyapīyas, and the Mahāsāriighikas are mentioned in the Wardak vase inscription of the time of Huviska. Konow's text of the fragmentary inscription on a jar, unearthed at Pālātū Dherī, indicates that the donor of the record was giving equal patronage to the monks belonging to schools arising out of two rival orders, the Mahāṣāmghika and the Theravāda12. But this by itself is not at all unlikely, for one of the inscriptions on the Mathurā Lion Capital contains the names of the Sarvāstivādins and the Mahāsāringhikas side by side. It may also be observed that in many of these Kharosthi inscriptions noted above, the donors show their particular care to note that the stupas and the sampharamas that were being built by them meant for 'the acceptance and use of the monks of all quarters.' But we shall see afterwards that this tolerant attitude was not always present, especially when the donors themselves were clerics attached to a particular school. It should, however, be noted here that from the evidence of the extant Kharosthi inscriptions, some of which have been mentioned above, it is clear that the Sarvāstivādin school was one of the most important ones in northern and north-western India between the second-first century B.C. and the second century A.C. The evidence of the Wardak vase inscription already mentioned seems to show that the monks of the Mahāsāmghika order for whose use was built a vihāra at Khavada (present

^{10.} E. J. Thomas History of Buddhist Thought, p. 38ff. and Appendix II.

^{11.} Sten Konow, CII, II, pt. 1, pp. 48—49. 12. Ibid. pp. 88—122, 137, 143, 155 and 170.

Khawat, about 30 miles to the west of Kabul) by one Vagramarega, a new-comer in that region from eastern Iran, were not old settlers of the

locality.

The Brāhmī inscriptions of approximately the same period (second century B.C. to second century A.C.) found in different parts of central, western and eastern India also contain references to several well-known Buddhist schools grouped under one or other of the main heads. Thus, the Sanchi and Sonārī inscriptions13 from central India refer to the Haimavata school which according to Bhavya was another name of the Sthavira school (Theravada). Relics of several Haimavata teachers, Kaśyapagotra, Madhyama, Dundubhisvara and others were enshrined in or near Sāñchī. The ācāryas named above were the first three of the five, viz., Kassapagotta, Majjhima, Dundubhissara, Sahadeva and Mūlakadeva, who, according to the Dipavamsa, were the inspirers and teachers of the school especially associated with the Himālayan region¹⁴. As a few other inscribed relic caskets found there show that they contained the relics of Haimavata teachers, it has been justifiably suggested by N. G. Majumdar that 'about the end of the second century B.C., the Haimavatas must have set about collecting from various sources the corporeal relics of their former āchāryas from Kāśyapagotra to Vātsi Suvijayata (about three or four generations) and proceeded to enshrine them in a stūpa at Sānchi.'15 It would be of interest to note here an imprecatory inscription of the first century B.C. found at Sāñchī, which records that 'he who removes any of the components of the stūpa to aññācariyakūla should have the fate of the perpetrator of the five sins'.16 In the Mahāvamsa account of the Buddhist sects, schools of doctrine other than Theravada are described as aññācariyavāda; thus 'the injunction here is evidently against the removal of any property from Kākanāva (an earlier name of Sāñchī) to a non-Theravada community like the Mahasamghikas'.17 This inscription also shows that though the Theravadins were prominent in the region in the early period, other rival schools had also their own establishments there in the first century B.C.

Early Brāhmī inscriptions from western India also mention some wellknown Buddhist schools. A Karle cave inscription refers to the gift of a pillar with relics by the preacher (bhāṇaka) Satimita of the Dhamutariyas (Dharmottarīyas) from Sopāraka (Sopārā). Another inscription from the same place records the gift of a village to the mendicant (pavajita)

H. Lüders, op. cit., No. 340.
 EI., II, p. 396.

H. Lüders, A List of Brāhmī Inscriptions, (EI, X, Appendix), Nos. 156, 158 and 655.
 H. Lüders, op. cit., Nos. 156—158; 654—6; Dv., viii, v. 10.
 Sir John Marshall and Alfred Foucher, Monuments of Sāñchī, Vol. I, p. 294 (N. G. Majumdar on the Sanchi Inscriptions).

friars dwelling in the Valuraka caves for the support of the school (nikāya) of the Mahāsāghiyas (Mahāsāmghikas). In the twenty-fourth year of the Śātavāhana ruler Vasithīputra Puļumāyi, a Parthian named Harapharna built a nine-celled hall at Karle for the Samgha of the four quarters as the special property of the Mahāsāmghikas; the donor is described as the son of Setapharna the Sovasaka, living at Abulāmā.18 The term Sovasaka was equated long ago by Bühler with the Savuarṣaka or Kāśyapīya sect, a branch of the Sthavira school specially associated with the Sarvastivadins. It is true that the name does not occur in the Mahāvamsa list, but the Kāśyapiyas are mentioned there as the direct offshoot of the Sabbattha (Sarvāstivada) school. What is to be noted here is this, that the son of a Theravada sectarian is solicitous for the comforts of the monks of a rival sect; it might mean that he had his personal leaning to the Mahāsāmghika school. Nāsik cave inscription of the nineteenth year of Vāsithīputra Puļumāyi refers to the gift of a cave dwelling (lena) on mount Trirasmi to the monks of the Bhadayaniya (Bhadrayaniya) school.19 The Junnar Buddhist cave inscription records the endowments of some establishments to the nunnery of the Dhammutariyas (Dharmottariyas) in the town.²⁰ The first part of the Nāsik cave inscription No. 22 records the gift of a cave dwelling to the lay worshippers of the Chaitika school, a sub-division of the Mahāsāmghika school, by one Mugudāsa who was instructed by a monk of the same school.21

Such was the background of Buddhism in India in the first century B.C. and afterwards, which favoured the growth and development of Mahāyanism. Most of the schools of Buddhism noted above which came into existence within a few centuries of the mahāparinirvāna of Buddha can be collectively described as Śrāvakayāna, a term which was attributed to them afterwards by the Mahāyānists. Whatever the doctrinal and other differences that existed between the different schools comprising this earlier form of Buddhism, the principal goals of aspiration put forward before the individual members of the Sanigha by it were the status of an arhat (worthy) after conscientiously following the path of a śrāvaka, and the status of a pratyeka-Buddha. The arhat is one who has broken the fetters of the senses and passions, for whom there will be no new birth or death, and who lives in this world like the Buddha, detached but happy and beneficient. This status could be attained by following the path of the śrāvaka (śrāvaka-yāna), i.e. by attentively listening to the precepts preached by the Buddha imparted to him by his teacher and strictly following the rules of discipline as laid down by the Master. The goal

^{18.} H. Lüders, op. cit., Nos. 1095, 1105 and 1106. EZ, VII, pp. 55, 65, 72.

^{19.} H. Lüders, op. cit., No. 1123; EI., VIII, p. 61f. 20. Ibid., No. 1152.

^{21.} Ibid., No. 1130; El., VIII, p. 77.

of a pratyeka-Buddha is to be attained only by those rare beings who succeed in becoming Buddhas through their individual efforts, but who do not preach the Law to others, as was done by Śākyamuni Buddha and his predecessors. The path followed by these rare persons has been described in later texts as Pratyeka-Buddhayāna. In contrast to these two yānas stand Mahāyāna or the Great Vehicle, the way of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. The Pāli canon refers to these orders of the arhats, pacceka-Buddhas and perfect Buddhas, each one succeeding being greater in importance and esteem from the cult point of view than its predecessor.

The Chinese traveller I-Tsing who visited eastern India in the second half of the seventh century A.C. defines the Mahāyānists as those who worship the Bodhisattvas and study the Mahāyāna Sūtras.22 This is a summary definition which emphasises that the Mahāyānists followed scriptures of their own, and worshipped superhuman beings in the stage of existence immediately below Buddhahood. The definition of Mahāyāna can be further elaborated by attributing to it seven lines of thought or practice. These are: '1. A belief in Bodhisattvas and in the power of human beings to become Bodhisattvas. 2. A code of altruistic ethics which teaches that every one must do good in the interest of the whole world and make over to others any merit he may acquire by his virtues. The aim of the religious life is to become a Bodhisattva, not to become an arhat. 3. A doctrine that Buddhas are supernatural beings distributed through infinite space and time, and innumerable. In the language of later theology, a Buddha has three bodies (kāyas) and, still later, there is a group of five (afterwards six) Buddhas (dhyāni). 4. Various systems of idealist metaphysics, which tend to regard the Buddha essence or Nirvāna much as Brahman is regarded in the Vedanta. 5. A canon composed in Sanskrit and apparently later than the Pāli canon. 6. Habitual worship of images and elaboration of ritual 7. A special doctrine of salvation by faith in a Buddha, usually Amitābha, and invocation of his name.....

This extract from Eliot's Hinduism and Buddhism (Vol. II, p. 6) fairly outlines the special features of Mahāyānism both in its growth and development. But it should be noted that these can neither be described as the only characteristics of the system in the stages of its development, nor can each and every one of them be taken to have been absent in any of the schools of the earlier Śrāvakayāna. It must also be observed here that some of these traits were in the process of development from a fairly early period. The divinity of Śākyamuni Buddha had already been established by the time of Asoka, and belief in the existence of his predecessors is traceable in his Nigalī Sāgar Pillar Edict where reference to

^{22.} I-Tsing, A Record of the Buddhist Religion, translated by J. Takakusu, Oxford, 1896, pp. 39ff.

Kanakamuni is made.²³ The existence of the faith in previous Buddhas like Vipasi (Vipaścit), Vesabhu (Viśvabhū), Kakusadha (Krakucchanda), Konā gamana (Kanakamuni) and Kāsapa (Kāśyapa) is vouchsafed by the inscribed reliefs in the railing pillars of the Bharhut stupa (c. middle of the second century B.C.)24 It can be presumed that belief in all the seven Buddhas, the six previous ones and the seventh one the Sākyamuni Buddha, had already been well-established by the Sunga period, as is evident from some reliefs on the architraves of the Sanchi gateways. There the seven Buddhas are represented by means of the Bodhi-trees of the individual Buddhas with vajrāsana beneath them, sometimes interspersed with stūpas.25 The prominent way in which they are depicted leaves little doubt about the development in the cult, and this feature was much emphasised in Mahāyanism. The Buddhas were thus aniconically represented at this stage, but they were shortly to be anthropomorphically depicted in Gandhara and Mathura in the early centuries of the Christian era. The introduction of image worship was thus a further impetus given towards the development of the cult. The Mathura Lion capital inscriptions of the second half of the first century B.C. and a few other Kharosthi epigraphs of the first and second century A.C. refer also to the worship of all Buddhas (savabudhana puya). It is probable, if not certain, that the Buddhalogical speculations to be referred to shortly were of gradual growth, starting from the belief in these previous Buddhas.

Archaeological evidence about the introduction of Bodhisattva worship in the cult is also of great interest. The conception about the nature of the Bodhisattvas as delineated in the Mahāvastu²⁶ has very little in common with the original etymological meaning of the word which can be applied to the representations of Buddha Śākyamuni in his previous births when he was perfecting himself for the attainment of Buddha-hood and Nirvana. The inscriptions of Asoka do not refer to the previous births of Buddha, and the Bharhut representations of many of these stories are labelled by the sculptors as so many Jātakas²⁷ (jāti in this context meaning the Buddha's earlier births), but the word 'Bodhisattva' is never used there in this context. It is only in the inscriptions of the Kuṣāṇa period that we probably find one of its earliest uses. The Taxila Silver Scroll inscription of the year 136 of an unspecified era and of the time of an unnamed Kuṣāṇa mahārāja with the additional titles of rājātirāja and devaputra (probably

27. Cunningham, The Stupa of Bharhut, pp. 48ff.

^{23.} Hultzsch, CII, I, p. 165.
24. Barua and Sinha, Bhārhut Inscriptions (Calcutta, 1926), pp. 39 ff. Cunningham, The Stūpa of Bhārut, pp. 45ff., Plates XXX and XXXI.
25. Sir John Marshall and Alfred Foucher, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 199f.
26. Mahāvastu, translated into English by J. J. Jones, SBB, Vol. XIX, Vol. III, pp. 130, 352;

Vol. I. p. 107f. 85, 83, 81, 234.

the great Kaniska) refers to a Bodhisattva shrine (Bodhisattvagaha) where some relics of the Buddha were enshrined.28 The colossal headless figure of the Buddha originally found by Cunningham at Saheth Maheth (ancient Śrāvasti) and now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, with a pedestal inscription assigning it to the third year of the great Kuṣāṇa emperor Kaniṣka I, is described in the inscription as 'Bodhisattva'29. A few other seated Buddha images of the Kuṣāṇa period hailing from the Mathurā region are also labelled thus, indicating thereby that in the popular form of Buddhism prevailing there (the Śrāvasti Buddha also was a product of the Mathurā atelier), no nice distinction was made between the concepts of the Buddha and the Bodhisattva. But the Hellenistic sculptures of the Gandhāra region generally belonging to the Kuṣāṇa period clearly prove that such a distinction was made there. The Buddha images are almost invariably unornamented, wearing only the monkish garments (tricīvara), and shown in different attitudes illustrative of the various incidents in the life of the Master. The Bodhisattva figures are, however, shown invariably dressed as princes with various ornaments and certain distinctive traits which helped scholars to differentiate one type of Bodhisattva from the other. Grünwedel, thus, could definitely recognise among them two of the prominent Bodhisattvas of the Mahāyānic pantheon, viz. Avalokiteśvara-Padmapāṇi and Maitreya, the Buddha of the future, but now in the Bodhisattva stage³⁰.

Literary data also lead us to arrive at the same conclusion. The traditional schools to the number of the eighteen or more already enumerated are all to be included in the earlier variety of Buddhism denominated Śrāvakayāna. Even the Mahāsāmghika which was different from the Theravada in matters of doctrine and rules of discipline was essentially Srāvakayāna in character. But this school was the earliest to show a tendency for conceiving Buddha docetically, which concept was fully developed by the Lokottaravadin school, one of its branches. Sarvāstivādins themselves as well as the Theravādins, though believing in Buddha as an actual human being, so much magnified his qualities and powers as to transform him nearly into a supramundane entity. The life of a Bodhisattva was also an object of faith by the time when the Divyāvadāna was composed. The Mahāsāmghikas, however, greatly developed their conception about the supra-mundane character of the Buddha and the Bodhisattva, which was further developed in the Mahāyāna. The growth of the Abhidhamma literature, the appearance of the Jātakas and Avadanas and the concept of pāramīs already existent in the Theravada

28. CII, II, pt. 1, p. 77.

^{29.} Cunningham, Archaeological Survey Report, Vol. I, p. 399f; El., VIII, p. 180f; Plate facing

^{30.} Alfred Grünwedel, Buddhist Art in India, English edition by J. Burgers, London, 1901, pp. 181ff.

school, were features of Buddhism in the process of modification and transformation, a full and logical development of which led to the growth of the Mahayana. The concept of bodhicitta by which the Mahayanists meant 'the forming of a resolution to attain Bodhi, and save every being of the world from misery by leading him to Nirvana or Bodhi' and that of the ten stages (bhūmi) of spiritual development were also present in the later phases of the Śrāvakayāna. The two rūpakāya and dharmakāya conceptions of the Sarvāstivādins, though different from the Trikāya conception of the Mahāyānists, may yet have slightly influenced the latter, and the Dharmakāya, Sambhogakāya and Nirmānakāya concepts of the developed Mahāyānism might have taken its clue from the Kāya concept of the Śrāvakas. The conception of Dharmaśūnyatā (Dharmasamatā or Tathatā), i.e. 'the essencelessness of the Dharmas or non-existence of everything worldly' is one of the essential features of Mahāyāna Buddhism. But this may also be regarded as a further development of the idea of Pudgalaśūnyatā as conceived by the Śrāvakas.

The Mahāsāmghika school spread towards the south in a fairly early period, and some of its branches were flourishing in the region of Amaravati, Dhānyakataka and Nāgārjunikonda in the early centuries of the Christian Some inscriptions found at Amaravati mention the Cetiva school, and refer to the Mahācaitya at Dhānyakaṭaka as its chief place of worship.31 A large number of Prākrit inscriptions unearthed at Nāgārjunikonda (in the Guntur district of the Andhra Pradesh) refer explicitly as well as implicitly to the following schools, most of which were branches of the Mahāsāmghika. These are Cetiyavādaka (Caityikas), Rājagirinivāsika (same as Rājagiriya of the Pāli records), Puvvasela (Pūrvaśaila), Aparamahāvanaselia (Aparaśaila) Siddhatthika, Bahusutiya and Mahisāsaka³². With the exception of the last in this list, a sub-sect of the Theravada school, which also appears to have had some hold in the Andhra country, all the rest had Mahāsāmghika association. The Mahāsamgha seems also to have been mentioned in some of these inscriptions as Airiya Hagha (Arya Samgha). The existence in the region of Dhanyakataka of most, if not all, of the sub-sects of the Mahāsāmghika orders proves that it had become the most important centre of this school. These branches continued to flourish there till the third or fourth century A.C., and if tradition is to be believed, Mahāyāna doctrines were probably first systematised in this region.

Mahāyāna appears to have been formulated in the south, and Nāgārjuna, the traditional founder of this school of Buddhism, was most likely an inhabitant of this region. He was the great exponent of the Mādhyamaka,

^{31.} H. Lüders, op. cit., Nos. 1248 and 1250.32. J. Ph. Vogel in El. Vol. XX, pp. 1—37.

one of the two philosophical schools intimately associated with Mahāyāna (the other being Yogācāra of a little later date). Nāgārjuna's elaborate commentary on the *Prajñāpāramitā* and his independent work, *Mādhyama-kakārikā*, especially contain the essential traits of the Mahāyāna doctrine, and thus he has been justifiably described as its founder. Ceylon, the land of Theravāda Buddhism, had also some hand in the development of the Mahāyāna, for one of her monks, Āryadeva by name, who was a disciple of Nāgārjuna, wrote a commentary on the *Mādhyamakakārikā* and further expatiated on the new philosophy in his *Catuḥśataka*, *Śataśāstra*, and a number of other works. Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, the two brothers who lived at Puruṣapura in the fourth century A.C., were able exponents of the Yogācāra school, the Yogācāra doctrine already existing in some form in the Kuṣāṇa period.

Nāgārjuna was a younger contemporary of Kaniska. The name of this great Kuṣāna emperor is also traditionally associated with developments in Buddhism, and many of the great Buddhist theologians responsible for shaping Buddhism of later times came in direct contact with him. Later tradition avers that Aśvaghoṣa, Vasumitra, Pārśva, Dharmatrāta, Ghoṣaka and Buddhadeva were all associated with him. Kaniska built a great stūpa and vihāra (Mahāvihāra) at his capital Puruṣapura (modern Peshawar) where Pārśva, the venerable teacher of the Sarvāstivāda school lived. Aśvaghosa was a native of Magadha, who was taken away by Kaniska, to his court when the latter came to conquer this region. He was a great writer and his celebrated work Buddhacarita, a kāvya of the highest order, expatiated in most beautiful poetry on the transcendental life and activities of the Buddha. Vasumitra, a learned theologian, presided over the deliberations of the monks of various quarters, who congregated at Kundalavana in Kāshmīr to deliberate over the various problems in the matter of interpretation of the texts. The discussions of this Council formed the nucleus of the numerous Vibhāṣāśāstras, i.e. commentaries on ancient scriptures. It would be wrong to uphold, however, that this Council was essentially Mahāyāna in character, for it was held in the stronghold of the Sarvāstivādins, and its high personalities were mostly members of this sect. Kaniska might not have had very direct association with the Council, though it appears to have enjoyed his patronage. It is also true that the session of this Council is ignored in the Pali traditions, signifying that it was mostly confined to the Sarvāstivādins, as the Third Council held in Asoka's time was mainly an affair of the Theravadins, and thus was ignored by the non-Thervadins.

It is worthy of note, however, that the session of the Fourth Council synchronised to a great extent with the final emergence of Mahāyānism in a recognisable form. It has already been indicated how some of the

traits of this developed form of Buddhism had been making their appearance from a much earlier period, and it is in the writings of Nāgārjuna and other Buddhist theologians that the tenets of this branch of Buddhism were systematised. Some of the early works expounding them are the Prajñāpāramitās, Saddharmapundarīka, Lankāvatāra, Dasabhūmikasūtra and Gandavyūha, all of which may belong to the early centuries of the Christian era. The first in this list is the earliest such text to expatiate on the theory of Dharmaśūnyatā (non-reality of phenomenal objects) besides Pudgalaśūnyatā (absence of any substance such as soul); it also incorporates the belief about the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas, enjoins the worship of various deities and inculcates the efficacy of mantras for the attainment of final release. These are some of the essential traits of the Mahāyāna faith. The Pariñaparamitā was translated into Chinese for the first time in 148 A.C. by Lokaraksa, and one can justifiably assume that the original work must have been composed at least a century earlier. Of the several versions of this text, the Astasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā is the oldest, and it contains an interesting statement that the Mahāyāna teaching originating in the south passed to the eastern countries and prospered in the north. The tradition about the southern origin of this form of Buddhism and its spread in eastern India is probably due to the fact that the birthplace of Nāgārjuna, the earliest expounder of Mahāyāna philosophy, was either in Vidarbha (Berar) or in south Kosala, and the main centre of his religious activity was at Nālandā in Bihār. Another tradition that Nāgārjuna was a personal friend of the great Śātavāhana emperor Gautamīputra Śātakarni might have also had something to do with it. He is said to have written a letter to the Śātavāhana ruler, which has been preserved in the Buddhist collections of Scriptures as Suhrllekha (an epistle to a friend). There is a further Buddhist tradition to the effect that the Śātavāhanas were great propagators of the Mahāyāna doctrine. It exists in the form of a prediciton of Buddha that 'there will be a king named Satavahana in South India. When the Law is on the point of extinction.... he will appear and propagate the Vaipulya-sūtra of the Mahāyāna and will save the Law from extinction.' But it should be noted that Gautamiputra Sātakarni has been described by his mother in her Nāsik cave inscription as ekabamhana, ' the Brāhmana par excellence,' and he might have been eclectic in spirit. He and some other Śātavāhana rulers might have been patrons of the Mahāyāna cult; a great spread of it among their subjects is also indicated by the large number of Buddhist cave shrines in western and eastern parts of the Deccan peninsula. Mahāyāna developed into a great religious force, and spread beyond the confines of India on all sides in the early centuries of the Christian era.

CHAPTER VII

THE SANGAM AGE IN TAMILNAD

THE earliest Tamil works which are now extant belong to a period known as the Sangam Age in Tamil literature. According to a traditional account of the beginnings of Tamil literature1, there had been three Sangams or Academies established by the early kings of the Pandya dynasty for the development of Tamil literature. The works of the first Sangam have been lost beyond recovery. Tolkāppiyam, a treatise on Tamil grammar which embodies the literary conventions on which the Sangam works are based, is ascribed to the second Sangam. Pattuppāttu (the Ten Idylls) and Ettuttogai (the Eight Anthologies) which comprise about 2500 poems, including love-lyrics of exquisite charm, and odes addressed to kings and chieftains, belong to the third Sangam; they form the core of Sangam poetry. Tirukkural, the famous ethical treatise of Tiruvalluvar, is said to have been the last work submitted to the third Sangam for its acceptance. The twin-epics, Silappadikāram and Manimēkalai, are called Sangam classics, though some distance of time seems to separate them from the works of the Sangam. They represent, in any case, the milieu of the Sangam Age. Silappadikāram, a work of consummate artistic merit, gives a vivid picture of the life of the people in the ancient Tamil kingdoms. Manimēkalai expounds, in a romantic setting, the tenets of Buddhist philosophy. There are some minor works, mostly of a didactic nature, which are also known as Sangam classics, but with the exception of a few, they belong to a later period.

The chronology of the Śaṅgam works has been a subject of controversy. Only a brief discussion of this subject can be attempted here. The view that has recently emerged from this controversy is that these works should be ascribed to the first few centuries of the Christian era². The twinepics, Śilappadikāram and Maṇimēkalai, which are the works of contemporary authors, undoubtedly belong to the second century A.C. Ilaṅgō Aḍigal, the author of Śilappadikāram, was the brother of the Cera king Śeṅguṭṭuvan who invited Gajabāhu I of Ceylon to be present at the consecration of the temple built for Pattini-devī at Vañji, the capital of the Cera Kingdom. The reference to this fact in Śilappadikāram enables us to fix the period of the Epic as the second century A.C. The synchronism of Śeṅguṭṭuvan with Gajabāhu I of Ceylon is the sheet anchor of the

2. Cōļas, p. 30.

^{1.} Iraiyanar Akapporul Urai gives the earliest account of the Sangams.

chronology of early Tamil literature.3 . But it should not blind us to the fact that the twin-epics represent, in their style, a later development of the Sangam Age. The stiffer, if not the more archaic, style of a good number of poems in the Anthologies bespeaks an earlier phase of the Sangam Age.

The poems of Māmūlanār, for instance, give us an idea of their antiquity. He has referred in one of his poems to an expedition led by the Mauryas to South India4. The Mauryas have been described in this poem by the epithet 'Vamba' which means 'new.' Māmūlanār mentions also the Nandas in another poem of his. It is a characteristic of this poet, as well as of some other early poets of the Sangam Age, to allude to some contemporary events of striking importance in their poems. Bearing these facts in mind, one finds it difficult to assign Māmūlanār to the second century A.C., and to imagine that he could have alluded to the Mauryas of the third century B.C., in the manner in which he has done. It is obvious that he should be assigned to a period much more proximate to that of the Maurya emperors than the second century A.C. Two other poets, Parangorranar and Atreyar, have also referred to the Mauryas in their poems which are included in the Anthologies.5

A close study of the Anthologies reveals that about ten generations of poets can be traced among those who are represented in them⁶. a considerable number of these poets, especially those of the earlier generations, belonged to the Pre-Christian era can hardly be doubted. Nor can it be doubted that Tirukkura! is a much earlier work than Silappadikāram and Manimēkalai7. Quotations from Tirukkura! are found in both the Epics. Positive evidence for fixing the date of Tirukkural is, however, lacking. There is a tradition which connects Tiruvalluvar, the author of Tirukkural, with a sea-faring chieftain Elela who is said to have been his disciple and who was very wealthy, owning a fleet of ships. Some scholars are inclined to identify this chieftain with Elara who became the ruler of Ceylon. If this identification proves correct, Tirukkural will have to be assigned to the second century, B.C.

The view that Tolkappiyam is the earliest of the extant Sangam works is based on the pāyiram (Introductory poem) which is prefixed to the work, and which is attributed to a contemporary poet. The pāyiram refers to Tolkappiyar, the author of the work, as one well-versed in Aindiram, a

^{3.} P. Coomaraswamy pointed out this synchronism in his paper on Silappadikaram. CBRAS, XIII.

Ahanānūru, poem 251.
 Ibid., poem 69; Puranānūru, poem 175.

^{6.} See K. N. Siva Raja Pillai's Chronology of the early Tamils, (University of Madras, 1932). 7. The untenability of S. Vyapuri Pillai's theory ascribing the *Tirukkural* to the seventh century A.C. and the *Śilappadikāram* to the ninth century A.C. has been discussed by me in my *Lectures on the Age of Tirukkural* (University of Madras, 1959).

system of Sanskrit grammar which was anterior to the work of Pāṇini, and which was eventually superseded by it. This reference to Aindiram is significant, and leads to the inference that Tolkāppiyar could not have lived later than Pāṇini, who is now assigned to the fourth century B.C. by Western scholars. The Pāyiram also states that Tolkāppiyam received the imprimatur of a learned assembly during the reign of Nilan-tarutiruvir Pāṇḍiyan who is the earliest of the Pāṇḍya rulers mentioned in Śaṅgam literature.

Tolkappiyam is a work of special interest to the student of Tamil history. It is not merely a treatise on Tamil grammar. In the section of poetics, where it deals with the subject matter of Tamil poetry, it throws much light on ancient Tamil society, as it had developed before Aryan influence made itself felt increasingly in the Tamil country. Tolkappiyam marks, in fact, the stage when Aryan ideas were beginning to make their impact on Tamil society. The ancient Tamils had evolved a pattern of society based on the natural regions of the country. This is reflected in the literary conventions which are embodied in Tolkappiyam, and which had been developed by Tamil poets before the period of Tolkappiyam. The five regions mentioned in Tolkappiyam are the hilly region, the pastoral region, the littoral region, the agricultural region, and the arid, dry region. They were known respectively as kuriñji, mullai, neydal, marudam and pālai, symbolised by the flowers specially associated with the regions. It may be of interest to mention in this connection that the kuriñji (Strobilanthes) blossoms once in twelve years on the mountain ranges of South India, which present at that time a beautiful sight of stretches of lovely purple flowers covering the hillside above the height of 4,000 feet or so. The people who lived in the five regions pursued occupations naturally suited to their environments. Those who lived in the pastoral region, for example, were shepherds, who were called Ayar, and those who lived in the littoral region were fisher-folk, who were called Paratar. The idea of caturvarna or four castes was a later introduction due to Aryan influence. It never had any relation to the structure of Tamil society which was based on the various occupations pursued by the people. Tolkappiyam also speaks of the time when the Tamils had no wedding ceremonies based on Vedic ritual8. In ancient Tamil society, lovers met in secret and marriage came later, following the course of true love, which 'never ran smooth' even in those days of Arcadian simplicity. Elopement of lovers was not an unusual occurrence. Love-sick maidens languished till the return of their lovers who had gone to serve in war, or who had gone to far-off places, sometimes beyond the seas, in pursuit of wealth. Tolkappiyam

^{8.} Poruļ-adikārām, Sūtram 143.

mentions situations of this kind which formed the themes of ancient Tamil love poetry.

War and heroism were also the favourite themes of the ancient Tamil poets. Tolkāppiyam gives some interesting details about warfare in ancient times in the Tamil country. Soldiers used to wear different kinds of flowers as badges to mark the different stages of a war. When carrying out cattle-raids in the enemy's territory, which were the first signal for an invasion, they had the vetci as their badge. For invasions and sieges, they used the vañji and the uliñai respectively. In the battle field where the contending armies met, their badge was the tumbai. The flower that represented victory was the vāgai, which corresponded to the laurels of the ancient Greeks. Vāgais were presented not only to heroes who distinguished themselves in war, but also to persons who attained eminence in other spheres of life. Epitaphs were inscribed on stones raised in honour of heroes who were slain in battle.

From Śangam literature we get glimpses of the political history of this age. The odes addressed to kings and chieftains which are found in Pattuppāṭṭu and Puṛanāṇūṛu contain some valuable historical material. But it is difficult to construct a continuous history of this period from these poems, as most of them, except the longer ones, refer to isolated events pertaining to rulers who belonged to several generations. These poems, however, reflect the varying fortunes of the ruling dynasties of this period. Śilappadikāram gives a more sustained view of the history of the particular period to which it belongs. Maṇimēkalai mentions only a few events of historical importance.

The Cera, Cola and Pāṇḍya kingdoms had held sway in the Tamil country from very ancient times. It is mentioned in the Mahābhārata that the rulers of these kingdoms had taken part in the Great War of the Epic. A poem in Purananūru says that a Cera king fed the contending armies during that war. In historic times, the inscriptions of Asoka refer to these three kingdoms as well as to the Satyaputras who are now identified with 'the truthful Kosars' of Sangam literature. It is clear from the inscriptions that these kingdoms were not subject to the Maurya empire, though Asoka had extended the activities of his Buddhist missions to them. The references in the Sangam Anthologies to the Mauryas indicate that they had made an attempt to extend their territory to South India. Some historians are of the view that this happened during the reign of Bindusara, who was Asoka's father. But it is clear that this attempt could not have led to any lasting results; for, during Asoka's time, the Tamil kingdoms lay outside his empire. Khāravela of Kalinga mentions in his Hāthīgumphā inscription of 165 B.C. the gifts of pearls and elephants received by him from the Pāṇḍya kingdom. He refers also to a confederacy of Tamil states which had been in existence for over a century, and which had been a source of danger to the Kalinga kingdom. There are references in Sangam literature to victories won by ancient Tamil rulers in the Aryan territory, and to their inscribing their crests on the Himālaya mountain to mark their achievements. Possibly their successes in the encounters they had with the rulers of Kalinga and their allies were commemorated in this signal manner. There can be no doubt that there is some basis of truth in the asseverations made in Sangam literature about the success of the Tamil arms in the Aryan territory. This might well have happened during the period when the Mauryan empire had disintegrated after the death of Asoka.

Though there might have been a combination of the Tamil kingdoms against their external enemies, the picture that we get from Sangam literature is that they were not infrequently at war with one another. This was due to the rulers of each kingdom trying to establish their supremacy over the others. In these wars, the chieftains who were the rulers of small principalities played an important role. But their loyalties were uncertain, and they were sometimes powerful enough to assert their independence, defying their sovereigns. Pandya kings had to contend from time to time with some chieftains in their kingdoms. Cera kings fought with the chieftains of Tagadur who were related to them. The invasion of Tagadur by a Cera king formed the subject of a well-known poem, Tagaduryāttirai, of which only a portion is extant. In the Cola kingdom, disputes of succession were frequent. Puranānuru refers to several instances of Cola princes fighting with one another. It contains some touching poems about a Cola king, Kopperunjolan, who was so much disgusted with his rebellious sons that he starved himself to death, along with some poets who were deeply attached to him, and who courted the same fate.

This picture of war and strife should not, however, obscure the fact that the Sangam age had its periods of peace, especially when some powerful monarchs had brought the whole of the Tamil country under their sway. This happened during the reigns of three strong kings,—Karikālan the Great (Tirumā-Vaļavan), Neḍunjēliyan, the hero of Talaiyālangānam battle, ānd Senguṭtuvan of Silappadikāram fame. The first of these kings belonged to the Cola dynasty, the second to the Pāṇḍya dynasty and the third to the Cera dynasty. They were not only men of great martial prowess, but they were also great patrons of literature. Their memory has been enshrined in some of the finest poems of the Sangam age. Karikālan was the hero of two poems, Paṭṭiṇappālai and Porunar Āṛruppaḍai, which are included in Pattuppāṭṭu. In the same collection there are two poems, Maduraikkānji and Nedunalvāḍai relating to Neḍunjēliyan. Śenguṭṭuvan has been immortalized in Silappadikāram. The Sangam Age reached the height of its glory during the reigns of these three kings.

Karikālan had an adventurous carrer. He was imprisoned by his rivals while he was young, but he escaped and fought his way to the throne. He had to face later a combination of the Cera and Pandya kings who were aided by eleven chieftains. He defeated them at the battle of Venni near Tanjore. He put down the rebellion of Aruvāļār in the northern portion of his kingdom, and made Kānchi the chief city of this region. He is said to have led an expedition to North India up to the Himālayas, where he carved the tiger-crest of his dynasty. There is a graphic account of this expedition in Silappadikāram, which recounts the alliances he had made with the rulers of Vajradesa, Magadha and Avanti in North India, and the precious gifts he had received from them. After these achievements, he turned his attention to constructive work for the prosperity of the Tamil country. He got the forests in the northern portion of his kingdom cleared and made the land fit for colonization on a vast scale. He constructed several big tanks for irrigation. He is said to have built the embankment of the river Kaveri. Though no mention of it is made in the Sangam poems relating to him, a tradition attributing this great achievement to him has survived for centuries. This tradition is preserved in South Indian inscriptions of later centuries. There is a reference in Rājāvalī, a chronicle of Ceylon, to an invasion of the Island by a Cola king who carried away 12,000 people for the construction of this embankment. Karikālan made Pugār (Kāvirippūm-paṭṭinam) a second capital of the Cola kingdom, in addition to Uraiyūr, the ancient capital, which he fortified. Pugar, which was a sea-port, became the emporium of foreign trade, both from the East and the West during the Sangam Age. It continued to be the most prosperous city of the Tamil country till the end of this period.

Neḍuñjēḷiyan inherited the Pāṇḍya kingdom when he was quite young. The Cera and Cola kings of that time, together with five chieftains, invaded his capital city, taking advantage of his youth and inexperience. But he met their challenge with dauntless courage, to which he gave expression in a poem which is included in Puranāṇūru. He not only repulsed the attack, but pursued the invaders to Talaiyālaṅgānam, a place in the Cola territory, where he routed them. The Cera king was taken a prisoner in this battle. This victory gave Neḍuñjēḷiyan a pre-eminent position in the Tamil country. Māṅguḍi Marudaṇār, who was the chief of the poets whom he patronized, has in the poem, Maduraikkāñyi, portrayed the prosperous condition of the people of his kingdom. Madurai, the capital of the kingdom, was a flourishing city. Koṛkai, famous for its pearls, was the principal sea port; it commanded a wide sphere of foreign trade.

Senguttuvan, the Cera king, had a long reign extending over fifty years. He intervened in a war of succession in the Cola kingdom, and placed on the throne his brother-in-law, the rightful claimant, who was opposed by nine Cola princes. He put down piracy and made his ports on the western coast safe for trade. He defeated some powerful chieftains and made them submit to his suzerainty. He is chiefly remembered as the founder of the Pattini cult, which spread from his kingdom to the other kingdoms in South India and to Ceylon. It is mentioned in Silappadikāram that Gajabāhu celebrated in Ceylon a festival in honour of Pattini-devi. The introduction of the Pattini cult to Ceylon by Gajabāhu I is confirmed by Rājāvalī, the Ceylon chronicle.9 Śilappadikāram narrates, in epic style, the expedition of Senguttuvan to the Himalayas from where he brought a stone for carving an image of Pattini-devi. The poem describes the campaign waged by him against two North Indian rulers who had spoken slightly of the Tamil kings. In this campaign he received the help of the Śātavāhanas, who are referred to as Nūrruvar Kannar in Silappadikāram.

Some of the Sangam works—especially Silappadikāram and Tirukkural give us an idea of the form of government found in the ancient Tamil kingdoms. The king was the supreme authority. He was personally responsible for the welfare of his subjects. Tirukkural stresses this conception of kingship. A poem in Puranānūru says: 'It is not rice that sustains the life of the people, nor water. It is the king who is their life.' Administration of justice was one of the primary functions of the king, and he personally attended to complaints which were brought to him. Śilappadikāram relates the tragic end of a Pāṇdya king who collapsed on his throne when he realized the injustice he had done by ordering the execution of Kovalan, the husband of Kannaki, the heroine of the epic. The ancient Tamil kings had some assemblies which assisted them, besides their ministers. Spies were employed by the kings. Envoys were sent on political missions. Much attention was paid to the construction of fortifications, and to the maintenance of the efficiency of the army. Cities were well guarded, and their streets were patrolled at night. The villages had their manrams, assemblies which administered justice. The king had a right to tax the land, and to levy customs duties. The tax on land was usually one-sixth of the produce. Questionable ways of augmenting revenue from the subjects were to be avoided. The emphasis of Tirukkura! on this point is in marked contrast to the Arthaśāstra of Cāṇakya which countenances such practices¹⁰.

See supra, p. 184.
 Compare Tirukkural, Couplets 656, 659 and 660 with Arthaśāstra, Chapter 92.

Poets played an important role as the advisers of kings and chieftains. Kapilar, a great poet, was the friend and adviser of Pāri, a chieftain who was famous for his liberality. Avvai, a poetess, was sent by her patron, Adiyamān Anji, on a political mission to Tondaimān Iļantiraiyan, the ruler of a neighbouring state. It is worth mentioning, in this connection, that out of the four hundred and fifty poets who are represented in the Sangam Anthologies, about twenty were women. One poetess, Kākkai Pādiniyār, was not only richly rewarded by a Cera king for her poems, but was given the status of a counsellor in his court. The poets of this age, though they depended for their patronage on kings and chieftains, were no sycophants. They gave fearless advice, and were not slow in admonishing their patrons, when the necessity arose.

The prosperity of the Tamil country during the Sangam age is reflected in the Sangam works. Agriculture was in a flourishing condition, especially in the Cola kingdom which abounded in paddy fields. Salt was brought from the sea coast, and there were sugar factories. Cloth of the finest texture, compared to the slough of a snake, was woven, and Uraiyūr, the Cola capital, was famous for it. The external trade which the Tamil country had with countries in the West, particularly with Egypt, Greece and Rome and with countries in the East including China and Java, made the Tamil kingdoms extremely prosperous. The exports were chiefly pepper from the Cera kingdom pearls and precious stones from the Pāṇdya kingdom and muslin from the Cola kingdom. Horses were imported in ships. It is interesting to note that food stuffs from Ceylon are mentioned among the imports in a Sangam poem11.

That the Tamil country had trade with Babylon, Egypt and Palestine in ancient times, as early as the sixth century B.C., is now well established.12 The discovery of South Indian teak in the ruins of the ancient city of Ur, and the reference to the Tamil words tokai and akil in the Hebrew Bible, point to this conclusion. But in the comparatively later period of the Sangam Age, particularly in the early centuries of the Christian Era, it was the Greek and the Roman trade that brought wealth from the West. The Greeks and the Romans are referred to as the Yavanas in Sangam literature. The Sangam poems speak of ships bringing gold from the Yavana countries, and returning laden with pepper. A Greek writer of this period deplored the drain of wealth from Rome on account of imports of cloth of light texture, pearls and such luxuries which were obviously obtained from the Tamil country.13 It is said that this trade increased

Patṭinappālai, line 191
 See Kennedy, JRAS 1896, pp. 248-257.
 Pliny, VI. 20.

after the discovery of the monsoons by Hippalus in the first century A.C. at the latest. The Greek writers, Strabo, Pliny the elder, Ptolemy, and the author of Periplus of the Erythraen sea bear testimony to this trade.14 They refer to the Tamil country as Damirice which corresponds to the Tamil word Tamilakam. The chief ports mentioned by the author of Periplus and Ptolemy are Korkai (Kolchoi), Cape Comorin (Komar), Nāgapatam (Nikama), Kāvirippūm-pattiņam (Kaberos) and Pondicheri (Ponduce). Musiri, which is referred to in the Sangam poems, was an important port on the west coast. There appears to have been a Yavana colony on the west coast, and also a temple of Augustus. The ruins of a Roman factory near Pondichery have been recently discovered. In Sangam literature there are many references to wine brought from the western countries, and also to Yavana girls and men employed by the Tamil kings as bodyguards. The discovery of hoards of Roman coins in certain parts of the Tamil country confirms the extensive trade that was carried on by the Yavanas in the Tamil country. A Pandya king is said to have sent an embassy to Emperor Augustus. 15

The Tamils had developed Music and Dancing to a high degree of perfection in the Sangam Age. There is hardly any other ancient literature which is so full of references to these arts as the Sangam literature. Bands of musicians and dancers were to be found everywhere in the country. They went from one kingdom to another, seeking the patonage of kings and chieftains who fed them sumptuously and rewarded them with lavish presents. The male musicians were called pānars and the females pādinis; the actresses were called viralis. Sangam literature mentions a large number of musical instruments; the most distinctive of them was the yāl, a stringed instrument, which originated from the Tamil country and was later transformed into the harp in ancient Egypt and Greece. In the pyramids of Egypt were discovered the precursors of the harp, which resemble closely the ya! in structure.16 Silappadikaram is the repository of the musical and dancing lore of the ancient Tamils. The technique of Bharata Nāṭyam is briefly described in Silappadikāram; and it also mentions a large number of folk-dances.

During the Sangam Age, Hinduism was the prevalent religion in the Tamil country, though Buddhism and Jainism were beginning to spread their influence. The gods who were worshipped were Siva, Muruga and Visnu; Korravai, the consort of Siva, was worshipped as the goddess who ensured victory in war. Siva is known in the Sangam works, including the Buddhist classic, Maņimēkalai, as Iraivan or the Supreme

^{14.} The approximate dates of these writers are: Strabo, 20 A. C., Pliny, 77 A. C., Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, 80 A. C., Ptolemy, 130 A. C.
15. Strabo (Geog. India XV C.1.).
16. See my Inaugural Address, Tamil Isai Conference, 1951

God. The worship of Muruga, in its early form, appears to have originated in the Tamil country. Ecstatic dances formed a feature of the worship of this god in the hilly region. Though Tolkappiyam associates Muruga specially with the hilly region, Tirumurugārrup-padai, a later poem of the Sangam age, makes it clear that the worship of this deity was not confined to the hilly region, but was widespread. Vișnu was worshipped as Kṛṣṇa, the god of the pastoral region. There were separate temples for these gods. Frescoes on the walls of a temple are described in *Parippāḍal*, one of the Śangam anthologies.¹⁷ The beginning of the *bhakti* cult which in later centuries developed into a powerful movement among the Tamil people, are tracaeable in some of the Sangam works. Silappadikāram and Maņimēkalai describe a festival for Indra, a Vedic god, held annually in Pugar, the Cola capital. Vedic ritual received the support of the Tamil kings. Karikālan, Nedunjēļiyan and Senguttuvan performed yāgas during their reigns. Brahmins had settled down in colonies in the Tamil kingdom at the beginning of the Sangam Age, if not earlier. Buddhist and Jain monasteries in Madurā are mentioned in Maduraikkānji. During the period of Silappadikāram and Manimēkalai, both Buddhism and Jainism were gaining adherents in the capital cities of the Tamil kingdoms. Kānchi became a centre of Buddhism towards the end of the Sangam Age. Silappadikāram reflects the spirit of religious harmony that prevailed during this period.

The Sangam Age was the formative period when the Tamil way of life took a definite shape. In this process, Aryan influence was, no doubt, an important factor. But it would be a mistake to overstate the extent of this influence. One has to remember that the Tamils had developed a distinctive culture of their own independently. This is exemplified, for instance, in the genre of Sangam poetry which owes nothing to the influence of Sanskrit literature. The music developed by the ancient Tamils had a distinctive technique. It was, however, in the sphere of religion that the Tamils owed much to Aryan influence. But even here, it will be noticed that the typical Tamil approach, as shown by Tirukkural, was somewhat different from that of the Dharmaśāstras of Sanskrit, which mixed up religion and ethics with caste and ritual. Tirukkural transcends caste and creed in its exposition of ethical ideals. Though it recognizes the authority of the Vedas and the fundamental principles of theism, it is non-sectarian in its appeal. It sums up the Tamil view of life.

^{17.} Paripādal, poem 19.

CHAPTER VIII

CIVILISATION OF THE EARLY PERIOD: ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

A. AGRICULTURE

ACCORDING to the evidence available at present, settled agricultural life, coupled with the use of iron weapons and implements, including the plough for tilling the soil, appears to have been introduced into Ceylon by the original Sinhalese. In South India and the Deccan, the use of iron and the practice of agriculture by means of irrigation are generally held to have been introduced by the people who buried their dead in megalithic monuments, or in large pottery urns. The concensus of opinion is that these megalithic folk were Dravidians, but there is no unanimity with regard to the date at which the megalith-builders imposed their superior culture on the people with a rude microlithic culture, who were in prior possession of the land. Several groups of megaliths and some examples of urn-burials have been brought to light in Ceylon2; in connection with the latter, there have been found examples of the red-and-black pottery characteristic of the megalithic culture. But this red-and-black pottery continued to historic times, both in India and in Ceylon; sherds of such vessels with Brāhmī letters incised on them have been found at Anurādhapura. The megaliths and the urn-burials found in Ceylon may well belong to a time after the arrival of the Sinhalese, which must have taken place approximately at the date ascribed to the event by tradition; for, by the third century B.C., when Buddhism was introduced to Ceylon, the Sinhalese had spread over almost the whole area of the Island.

In ancient days, when transport of heavy commodities for long distances on land could not be easily effected, the existence of village communities depended on their ability to produce locally the basic necessities of life, particularly with regard to food. As the staple diet of the people of Ceylon was rice, the production of this commodity was the basis of the economic as well as the social structure. There were two methods of rice cultivation, the first on patches of cleared jungle, depending on the seasonal rainfall, and the second on regularly worked fields depending mainly on irrigation. The early settlers must have necessarily resorted to the first method to raise

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^{1.} For the date of the megaliths and urn-burials in South India, see AI., IV, p. 300 and II, pp.9—16. 2. CJSG., II, pp. 94ff; ASCAR., 1958, p. 8.

the stocks of grain that they needed for their sustenance; but, as the same patch of land cannot be utilised year after year according to this method (which is referred to as slash-and-burn cultivation, and is practised in the backward areas of Ceylon up to this day), they must have realised the necessity of a system of rice culture which did not depend too heavily on the uncertainties of the seasonal rainfall. Reservoirs in which the heavy rainfall of the monsoons was stored in order to irrigate the rice fields, as and when the need arose, in addition to supplying drinking water during the prolonged dry season, were thus constructed at every important village settlement. The contour of the ground in the northern and southeastern plains of the Island was admirably suited for the construction of such reservoirs. An earthen dam was thrown across the upper part of a valley through which a stream ran in the rainy season, and the water impounded in it was stored for irrigating the land below the dam. of such reservoirs depended on the quantity of water which the stream carried from its catchment area; the height and length of the dam depended on the human labour that was available for its construction.

Even after the development of an elaborate system of reservoirs and canals, which will be dealt with in the next section, agriculture was not confined to irrigated lands. There were, of course, those areas of the Island where the mountainous nature of the terrain made irrigation works impossible, and the heavier and more evenly distributed rainfall made them superfluous. Even in that part of the Island where numerous reservoirs were constructed, there were large areas in which the contour of the ground did not permit irrigation. Agriculture in such districts was restricted to the raising of crops during the seasonal rainfalls. Rice grown on such lands was referred to by a name (P. sāli, S. äl-vī) different from that appropriate to the grain raised on irrigated fields. A variety of this rice which, when husked, was of red colour and exuded a fragrant smell when cooked, was very much prized and considered suitable viand for kings and other important personages.

(b) Agricultural products

Rice was not the only grain that was cultivated. There were other varieties of grains such as tana, amu, menēri etc. which were sown on unirrigated land at the beginning of the rainy season, and harvested after its close. In addition, many varieties of pulses and beans were also cultivated on such lands. Dishes made out of such dry grains, beans and pulses, called kummāsa in Pāli, seem to have been the regular diet of everybody at night, and gruel made out of them was taken in the morning. Edible oil was extracted out of sesamum which was extensively cultivated all over the Island in ancient times. As to rice itself, it was grown in such quantities

that, after the local demand had been satisfied, the surplus was exported. Early Tamil literature, in listing the merchandise brought by ships to Kāvērīpaṭṭanam, includes rice from Ceylon3. The cultivation of the sugar-cane was extensively practised, and molasses formed an important item of the diet of the richer people. There is reference in the Mahāvamsa to sugar-cane mills, in which hired labour was used. Cotton, too, was grown on lands which were not irrigated, and no doubt supplied the local demands, which in those days were not very great, for the average man's needs with regard to clothing were much less than they are today. Fruit trees were grown in gardens, the mango being the most prized. The Mahāvamsa refers to coconut groves which existed in the time of Dutthagāmaṇi, and an inscription of about the beginning of the Christian era refers to groves of this palm which were dedicated to the monastery at Mihintale4. But the nut was not utilised for extracting oil from the kernel. The coconut was considered as a fruit to be eaten when it was tender: the water inside was of course enjoyed as it is today. Cattle-breeding was practised side by side which agriculture; stories relating to the early period refer to large herds in certain parts of the Island. The milk was used for extracting ghee without which rice was not taken, save by the poor who could not afford it. Curd and other items of the five milk products were in regular use.

The hilly regions had their own particular products like turmeric, ginger, pepper and spices, not to mention edible bulbs. There were fishing villages on the sea-coast, and the fish in the numerous tanks as well as in the channels and irrigated fields constituted an important item of diet. In fact, there were detailed regulations with regard to the proprietary rights over the fish in these inland waters. Honey collected from the forests which separated one village settlement from the other was an article of diet as well as a medicine, and there were hunters who supplied meat to the folk in the villages and towns from such forests.

(c) Areas of Early Settlements

The areas which were favoured by the early settlers were those where the rainfall is not very heavy—what now constitute the so-called Dry Zone.⁵ The preference for these areas must have been partly due to the fact that they lie close to the anchorages at which the first colenists landed,

^{3.} Pattuppāṭṭu, edited with Commentary by V. Sāminathaiyar, Madras, 1956, p. 525. (Paṭṭinappālai, I. 191).

^{4.} EZ., V, p. 40, n. 5.
5. It is unlikely that the rainfall in these regions was heavier in ancient times than what it is today. See Rhoads Murphey in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. XVI, pp. 181—200.

but it must have been primarily due to the reason that these districts lent themselves admirably to the construction of irrigation reservoirs. Moreover, the primaeval forests in these regions could be cleared with far less labour than those with the dense and tangled vegetation and the trees of very large girth in the wet zone. Nevertheless, there is evidence of the fact that agricultural settlement had proceeded along the valleys of certain rivers like the Kälani Ganga in the wet zone, at the mouth of which was Kalyānī, one of the havens to which mariners were attracted in the earliest times.

Whether the Indo-Aryan colonists themselves provided the labour, which must have been very heavy, necessary to clear the forests and make the land suitable for rice cultivation, cannot be definitely answered. If there were peoples of a lower level of culture in this Island at the time of their settlement, as is very likely, the original Sinhalese probably made use of their labour in clearing forests, constructing irrigation works and tilling fields, themselves supplying the knowledge of the methods of agriculture, and the implements. Perhaps the persons called parumakas in the earliest Brāhmī inscriptions were the descendants of those under whose leadership the pioneers formed the various settlements. If the new-comers provided the leadership to a population that was already here at the time of their arrival, the fusion of the two elements into one community had been almost complete when light is thrown by the earliest inscriptions and literary records.

B. IRRIGATION

The early Indo-Aryan settlers in Ceylon, who came from north-western as well as from north-eastern India, possessed a knowledge both of rice cultivation and of irrigation. Rice was the staple food in the lands from which they migrated directly to Ceylon. It was the food, also, of the South Indian peoples with whom Indo-Aryan mariners, coasting down both sides of the Indian peninsula from the deltas of the Indus and the Ganges, must have made earlier contacts before they ventured further southward to Ceylon. The Vedic texts contain references to irrigation, practised at first by the method of raising water from wells by water-wheels, and later by means of artificially excavated canals which conveyed water to the fields from natural sources of supply. The construction of reservoirs (or tanks, as they are called in Ceylon) probably originated at this same time. From this basic, elementary knowledge there developed later the greatest engineering skill exhibited in the ancient Sinhalese kingdom, namely, the progressive building up of a colossal and complex system of interrelated dams, canals and tanks, mingling the waters of rivers flowing in

different directions: no parallel system of the same magnitude or intricacy existed in contemporary India.6

In the legendary account of the landing of Vijaya and his followers, as narrated in the chronicles, it is stated that these earliest arrivals founded villages in places where water was readily available. This is borne out by the location of the earliest identifiable settlements:— Tambapaṇṇi, on the south bank of the Aruvi Āru; Anurādhagāma, by the Malvatu Oya; Upatissagāma, on the Kaṇadarā Oya; Uruvelā, near the mouth of the Kalā Oya; Vijitanagara, close to the Mahaväli Ganga; Dīghāyu or Dīghavāpi, on the Gal Oya; and Mahāgāma, by the Kirindi Oya. According to these same legends, the first tanks were constructed at Anurādhagāma (afterwards Anurādhapura) in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.

For the historical period, which begins in the second half of the third century B.C., the chronicles and the inscriptions supply a considerable volume of evidence about the irrigation works undertaken from time to time. In the third century B.C., the uparāja supervised the construction of a small tank, while in the following century a prince holding the same office resided at Dighavapi to superintend the cultivation and the harvesting in the eastern districts. Irrigation and food production were, therefore, activities over which important members of the royal family exercised direct supervision. The construction of Tissavāpi (present Tisāvāva) at Anurādhapura is ascribed, doubtless correctly, to Devānampiya Tissa in the third century B.C., but the original reservoir was a small one which had subsequently to be enlarged to enable it to contain and discharge the greatly augmented supply which it received in the fifth century (or later) from the new tank Kālavāpi (Kalāväva) through the long canal, Jaya Gangā. The chronicles give the names of a few tanks of the second century B.C., but only one of them is mentioned again in later times. Two inscriptions which may be assigned to the second century B.C. are records, in one case, of the donation of a small tank, and, in the other, of the grant of an irrigation channel (adi) to the Samgha.

The chronicles mention by name only three tanks and one irrigation canal constructed in the first century B.C., but the inscriptions of the period name a number of tanks and canals. One of these canals was taken off the Mahaväli Ganga in its broad, lower course and irrigated the present swamp called Minvila; since no trace exists of a stone dam ever having

^{6.} The most notable irrigation work of ancient times in North India was the Sudar-sana lake in Junagarh, originally constructed in the reign of Candragupta, and restored successively in the reigns of Asoka, Rudradāman and Skandagupta (EI., VIII, pp. 116—7 and CII., III, pp. 56—65). Though so many famous names of Indian history are associated with this reservoir, no reliable accounts of its remains existing today are available; it is not possible, therefore, to compare it with the ancient irrigation works of Ceylon.

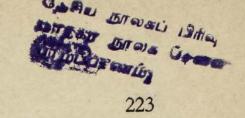
been built at this point, the method employed two thousand years ago to divert the water of the river into the canal is a matter for speculation. Another inscription refers to an avarana (mod. S., amuna, anicut), presumably of stone, since it dammed a small stream. The village tank was a well established feature of the dry zone by the first century B.C. There is reliable historical evidence that at this time two methods of irrigation were practised, (1) small, permanent stone dams across streams, and temporary dams, probably of timber and clay, at suitable sites across rivers, to divert their waters into channels (adi or ali) which conveyed water to the irrigable area, and (2) village tanks directly irrigating the fields below their embankments. There can be no doubt that in irrigation, as in other branches of engineering, the beginnings were small. The assumptions of some writers that the aboriginal inhabitants had built tanks before the arrival of the Indo-Aryans, and that the Indo-Aryans had begun to construct major irrigation works in pre-Christian times, are not supported by the known facts. Nothing larger than the village tank had been attempted by the first century B.C. Many of these village tanks were privately built and owned, and the term vapi-hamika or vavi-hamika, 'the owner of the tank,' occurs in several donative inscriptions; some of these owners were women.

By the first century B.C. the descendants of the pioneer Indo-Aryan colonists had spread, as their numerous inscriptions in the Brāhmī script testify, beyond the dry zone into the Kägalla and Colombo districts of the low country wet zone (the ancient kingdom of Kalyāni or Kälani) as well as into the lower montane zone around Kandy, Teldeni, Gampola, Bōgoḍa (north-west of Badulla) and Mātalē. The dry zone occupies the greater part of the land area of Ceylon, and has far greater extents of flat land, suitable for the cultivation of rice, than the wet zone, but since it receives the rains only of the north-east monsoon (October to April), water storage and cultivation by irrigation are essential. It is not improbable that the stimulus for venturing into and establishing settlements in pre-Christian times in the Kagalla and Colombo districts and the lower montane valley of the Mahaväli Ganga was the fact that in these regions water is no problem and irrigation is superfluous. But there were the disadvantages of limited flat areas and valleys suitable for cultivation, more frequent and devastating floods, greater erosion, lower yields and the continuous inroads of rank, wild vegetation; and these disadvantages, probably combined with other impelling factors, appear to have induced a return to the dry zone, commencing about the beginning of the Christian era, of a large proportion of the descendants of the early wet zone and lower montane zone settlers. The evidence for this hypothesis lies in the hiatus of a millenium in the epigraphical records of these areas; inscriptions are

quite numerous up to the first century B.C. and then there is silence for a thousand years till they begin to recur in the tenth century. This extraordinary feature contrasts markedly with the dry zone where the epigraphical continuity from pre-Christian to medieval times is unbroken. It suggests an exodus of a large section of the population from the wet and montane zone settlements, and this exodus coincides with the beginning, in the first century A.C., of organised development of the dry zone under irrigation projects of progressively increasing magnitude. It may be that some coercion was exercised in this transfer of population, actuated by the need for more labour in the dry zone for construction and cultivation.

The first century marks the first step in the advance from the village tank to the major tank. King Vasabha (67-111) was the first of the great tank-building Sinhalese kings. The number of tanks attributed to him in the Pali chronicles is eleven, and all are named. Six of these are identifiable; they were not major works by later standards, but they were considerably larger than the average village tank of the time, and the largest had perimeters of two or three miles. Vasabha also constructed twelve canals of which only the Alisara canal (Alahara Yoda-ala) is mentioned by name. This canal, which took off from a dam on the Amban Ganga at Alahara, became the feeder canal for the great Minneri tank two centuries later. Shares of the revenue from the canal were donated by the king to a monastery in the Tissavaddhamānaka district, the area around the present breached Kavudulu tank, 6 miles north of Minnēri. Vasabha's canal did not carry the volume of water which it later did when it fed Minnēri tank, but it had a length of about 30 miles, irrigated a large area and probably emptied into the Kiri Oya. The successful construction of a canal of this considerable length meant that in the first century the Sinhalese had developed a high degree of instrumental accuracy in contouring and levelling, and had achieved success in building permanent, stone dams across large rivers. Vasabha's engineers are credited with a third notable achievement; they conducted water to the bathing tanks at Anuradhapura through a system of underground pipes, doing away with the surface channels which existed before.

The inscriptions of the first to third centuries name nearly 150 tanks and canals which are not mentioned in the chronicles. Village tank construction proceeded apace as population increased and spread into new regions, but much more ambitious projects had begun to be assayed; and in the third century a remarkable advance was made in the science and practice of irrigation engineering. In the reign of king Mahāsena (275-301), a king renowned for his prodigious tank-building activities, came the first colossal reservoirs. His irrigation works are enumerated at sixteen tanks and one great canal. The most famous of these works is Maṇihīravāpi



(Minnēri tank) which submerged 4670 acres and at present irrigates 4000 acres. The existing Alisara (Alahara) canal was used as the basis of the Minneri scheme, but the dam at the headworks and the canal had to be enlarged to divert and carry a much greater volume of water than hitherto in order to fill the great, new reservoir. The length of the enlarged and extended canal from the dam to the tank was 251 miles. Tissavaddhamānakavāpi, called Rantisāväva in inscriptions, and correctly identified by Codrington with the present breached Kavudulu tank, was also a work of Mahāsena and nearly as large as Minnēri tank. It held up the Kavudulu Oya, but it also received a supplementary supply from a canal about 6 miles long which issued from Minneri tank. Other colossal reservoirs built by Mahāsena were :- Challūravāpi or Surallāväva, present Huruļuväva on the Yan Oya; Khanuvapi, synonymous with Kanavapi, Kanavava and Kaṇādiyadora, now the large, breached reservoir across the Kaṇadarā Oya near Mihintalē known as Mahakaņadarāväva; and Mahādāragallavāpi, probably to be identified with the breached tank now called Mahagalkadavala to the north of Anuradhapura. Eight of the sixteen tanks ascribed to Mahāsena can be identified with certainty, four with some degree of doubt. Whether all these great undertakings were commenced as well as completed during Mahāsena's reign of 27 years is open to question, but it cannot be doubted that at whatever earlier period some of the works were designed and construction was commenced, completion was achieved in Mahāsena's reign. The 'great Pabbatanta canal on the Ganga' (Mahaväli Ganga) probably flowed eastward past Dhūmarakkhapabbata (Dimbulāgala or Gunner's Quoin), a distance of over 20 miles. The Älahära-Minnēri -Kavudulu scheme completed in Mahāsena's reign was an epoch-making event in the history of irrigation in Ceylon and its subsequent, successful operation to the great benefit of his subjects inspired them to deify him as Hat-rajjuruvo, the god of Minnēri.

C. TRADE

(a) General

Before the Indo-Aryans who made Ceylon their home thought of penetrating to its interior to form permanent settlements, they must have been attracted to the Island at first for other reasons. If we discount the romantic stories in the chronicles relating to the circumstances in which the earliest Indo-Aryan settlement took place, we must conclude, as the Simhalāvadāna and other accounts in Buddhist Sanskrit writings do indeed

state categorically, that they were drawn here for purposes of commercial gain. Sea-faring merchants of North India continued to frequent the havens of the Island even after some of their predecessors had founded

a permanent home thereon7. The ancient trade routes between Ceylon and other parts of the world, and the principal havens on the coasts of this Island at which trading vessels touched, have been referred to in Chapter I of Book 18.

The pearls which were fished on the north-western coast, and the chanks found in the sea further north, must have formed some of the principal items in the merchandise which vessels coming to Ceylon carried to India and countries further afield. Kautalya, in the fourth century B.C., refers to a variety of pearls from a place which is explained in the commentary as a river near the village Mayura, in the island of Simhala9. The precious stones found in the mountainous districts of the south must have been the lode-star which guided merchant vessels to the havens on the western and southern coasts, and provided the rulers of Rohana with the principal source of their income. These played such an important part in the commerce of the Island in ancient days that one of its names in Buddhist Sanskrit is Ratna-dvipa, the Island of Gems. The southern principality of Rohana appears to have received its name after the gem-producing regions, referred to in Sanskrit writings as the Rohana Mountain, i.e. Adam's Peak¹⁰. Ivory and perhaps elephants, too, were sent abroad from Ceylon. Muslins and tortoise shells are mentioned by Roman writers among its exports11. Cinnamon, for which the Island became famous in later ages, finds no mention among its products in foreign notices, or in the literature of Ceylon, with reference to this period. To pay for the commodities exported from Ceylon, the foreign merchants brought gold and silver, copper, glass, coral, semi-precious stones of various types, earthenware of superior quality, wines and horses12. The first mention of people of Dravidian stock occurring in the chronicles is in connection with the horse trade. The king's officers were stationed at the principal sea-ports to collect the customs due to the king; there is a specific reference to customs duties in a first century inscription at Godavāya near Ambalantota13.

The discovery of the monsoons by Hippalus in the middle of the first century, or possibly earlier14, resulted in the regular visits of Roman mariners to the ports of South India, where they obtained commodities from Ceylon. There is no evidence that, in this early period of intercourse

^{7.} CHI., I, p. 424

^{8.} The Smp., p. 808, refers to voyages between Mahātittha and Suvannabhūmi, (Malay Peninsula or Sumātra).

^{9.} KA, translation, p. 83.
10. For example, in the Rājataranginī of Kalhana, Sir Aurel Stein's translation, I, p. 78 and Murāri's Anargharāghava, Nirnayasāgar Press, Bombay, 1937, p. 362.

^{11.} Periplus, p. 47.

^{12.} For imports to South India from the Graeco-Roman world, see *Periplus*, pp. 44—5. The imports to Ceylon must have been of a similar nature.

^{13.} CJSG., II, p. 197; Inscription No. 586.

^{14.} Periplus, pp. 227-230.

between the Roman and the Indian worlds, ships from the west frequented the ports of this Island. Pliny has recorded that four envoys were sent by the Sinhalese king of the day to Emperor Claudius, in the company of a freedman of Annius Plocamus, who, being caught by the north winds while sailing round Arabia, drifted to a seaport in Ceylon, and was treated with consideration when brought before the king15. Recent discoveries of Latin and Greek inscriptions containing the name of Annius Plocamus, in the Eastern Desert of Egypt, indicate that the embassy of the king of Ceylon to Rome must be assigned to a date considerably earlier than the reign of Claudius¹⁶, and make it likely that it is the same as the trade mission which, according to the Mahāvamsa Commentary, was sent to Rome by Bhātika Abhaya. This source informs us that Bhātika Abhaya sent envoys to the country named Romanukkha, and obtained large quantities of coral with which he had a net made to adorn the Mahāthūpa at Anurādhapura¹⁷. Coral was, and is, a well-known product of the Mediterranean, and the name 'Romanukkha' can easily be explained as formed by the addition of the pleonastic suffix -ka to the Latin 'Romanus'. According to traditional chronology, Bhātika Abhaya reigned from B.C 22 to A.C. 7, which period falls within the principate of Augustus, and the inscription mentioning Annius Plocamus referred to above is dated in the thirty-fifth year of a Caesar who can be no other than Augustus.

Whether the ancient Sinhalese, after they had settled down in this Island, engaged themselves in sea-faring which brought them to their new home, and took an active part in the trade with the outside world needs investigation. Some of the stories related in the Rasavāhinī refer to merchants of old Ceylon, who went abroad for purposes of trade, for example Nandi of Mahātittha, who was a devout Buddhist and bore a name common among the Sinhalese in ancient times¹⁸. Merchants (vanija or vanica) figure among the donors in early Brāhmī inscriptions, and the personal name 'Samuda' or 'Hamuda', (meaning 'Ocean') found in these documents suggests that sea-faring was held in esteem by the Sinhalese of this period¹⁹. There are early Brāhmī inscriptions mentioning corporations of merchants (puga or pugiya, derived from Sanskrit pūga)²⁰. We may presume that these mercantile corporations at the principal ports and at the capital had dealings with merchants who came from abroad.

^{15.} Pliny, VI, 84—91. See also Warmington, p. 43.
16. Sir Mortimer Wheeler, Rome Beyond the Imperial Frontiers, London, 1954, p. 128 and Journal of Roman Studies XLIII (1953), p. 38.

^{17.} Mvt., p. 630
18. Ras., II, p. 139f. and 190ff, Rasavāhinī is a work of the twelfth century, but its

material is taken from sources much older.

19. JCBRAS, (New Series) V, p. 71. For the name Samuda, see ASCAR., 1911—12,

^{20.} For the term pugiya, see JCBRAS. (New Series), II, p. 137 and for $puka (= p\bar{u}ga)$ see ASCAR., 1932, p. 9.

The chief of the mercantile corporation, the setthi, as he was called, was an important functionary of state, and took a conspicuous part in the ceremony of the king's consecration. The envoys sent to Asoka by Tissa included among them the head of a mercantile corporation (ganaka)21, on whom the title of setthi, appropriate to his position, was conferred by the Maurya emperor²². In addition to political and religious matters, there were most probably affairs relating to trade between the Maurya empire and Ceylon which the envoys were empowered to negotiate; these, however, were of no interest to the monkish chroniclers whose record alone has come down to us. In one or two Brahmi inscriptions, there is mention of Tamil merchants, and the chief of the corporation of Tamil house-

holders just outside Anurādhapura, was a ship-captain (navika)23.

With regard to internal trade, there is mention in the chronicles and literature²⁴ of merchants travelling in ox-wagons to fetch the produce of the Highlands, among which ginger and turmeric are specially mentioned, to be sold at Anuradhapura and other places where they were in demand. The market-place in the capital and other towns is referred to in literary works; when Sūranimila came to Anurādhapura from Mahāgāma, he bought perfumes in the market, and a Brāhmana who lived in a village near Mihintale gave him merchandise from overseas to be taken to the ruler at Mahagāma.25 The Dīpavamsa refers to the central market (antarāpaṇa) of Upatissagāma, and a similar feature must have existed at Anurādhapura also26. Trading centres (niyamas) also existed at the four gates of the city; the nagaras, to which there is reference in literary works as well as inscriptions²⁷, were local trading centres. Of walled cities, there were only two, Anuradhapura and Mahatittha. The villages being to a great extent selfsufficient, trade probably played little part in the lives of the peasant-cultivator, an occasional pedlar probably bringing to each village commodities like salt and articles of personal adornment such as beads and glass bangles. Barter, no doubt, played a great part in the internal trade, but the evidence from the Pali commentaries and the Rasavahini indicates that the use of coined money was fairly wide-spread28.

(b) Ancient coinage As in ancient India, the earliest known indigenous coins were the eldlings (purāṇas), rectangular pieces of silver, of the average weight of 56 grains,

28. Ras., II, pp. 18ff., pp. 143ff and p. 9.

^{21.} Mv. xi, v. 20 and Mvt., p. 306.

^{22.} Mv., xi, v. 26.
23. In Inscription No. 12 from Periya Puliyankulama, ASCAR., 1905, p. 46, of which the correct reading is Dameda vanijha Višakaha lene, and JCBRAS., XXXV, pp. 54 f.
24. Mv., xxviii, v. 21 and Thv., p. 69.

^{25.} Mv., xxvii, vv. 26-30.

^{26.} Dv., ix, v. 36. 27. For nigamas (niyama) see EZ., III, p. 181; for nagaras, see for example, Mv., xxxiii, v. 37, where the correct reading is Rohane Nakulanagare; EZ., III, p. 122; and Ras., II, p. 166.

on which were impressed various punch marks on both sides. They were probably issued by mercantile guilds with the permission of the king. These are the coins referred as karṣāpaṇas in Sanskrit, kahāpaṇas in Pāli and kahavana in the old Brāhmī inscriptions29. Some of the later coins of this category were circular in shape. They were in circulation at least as late as the second century A.C. Some of these found in Ceylon may have come from North India, but the arrangement of the symbols would indicate that some originated in this Island. The punch-marked coins were succeeded by die-struck coins, the various symbols, punched into the coin from time to time, being united. 'At first the die was confined to one side, the reverse being either blank, or punch-marked.'30

An early coin of Ceylon origin is the large 'Elephant and Svastika' with an average weight of 260 grains The railed svastika, which is one of the symbols prominent in these coins, is also found in oblong copperplaques bearing on one side the figure of Laksmi. Rectangular copper pieces with the figure of a maneless lion on one side were current during the early centuries of the Christian era. They have been found in three weights31. Roman coins have been found in fair numbers in many parts of the Island, the types belonging to this period being base metal Alexandrine tetradrachms of Nero, Vespasian, Hadrian and Lucius Verus. The Romans had a trading settlement near modern Pondicherry³², and coins minted there also found their way to Ceylon in the course of trade. Buddhaghosa mentions kahāpaṇas issued by the Saka king Rudradāman, but no examples of these are recorded to have been found in Ceylon. Cowrie shells and possibly disks of a kind of lac were used as small change³³.

D. POLITICAL CONDITIONS

(a) Royalty: The King

The prosperity of both agriculturists and traders depended on good government, and we may turn our attention to the manner in which this was ensured in ancient Ceylon. From the earliest times to which our available records, literary as well as monumental, go back, the government of the Island has been of the monarchial type, though the titles gamani and maparumaka which were borne by early kings, and certain references in the Mahāvamsa commentary to which we have already alluded, seem to hark back to a time when the government was of a more popular nature34. The king was the focus of the entire administrative machinery, and good

Codrington, CCC., pp. 16ff. Bhandarkar, Carmichael Lectures, 1921, pp. 76ff.
 Codrington, op. cit p. 17
 Ibid., pp. 25ff.
 AI., III, pp. 17ff.
 These have been found in the relic-caskets from the vāhalkadas of the Ruvanvälisāya, and in the debris of the Dakkhina-thūpa at Anurādhapura. 34. JRAS., 1936. pp. 443ff.

government very often depended on the character of the person who occupied the throne. Kingship was hereditary in a family which, by common consent, was considered to be of kṣatriya lineage, and the term khattiya is often synonymous with rāja in the chronicles.

At the dawn of history, the family which claimed descent from the leader of the Aryan colonisation of this Island had established a paramount position at Anuradhapura, and his claim to paramountcy appears to have been acknowledged in theory by chiefs who exercised authority in various localities, though in practice rulers in different places may have often acted without reference to the king at the capital. The kings of Anuradhapura bore the title of maharaja, but the lesser title of raja is used occasionally in their inscriptions and in literary sources. Gāmaṇī, which is given in literary works as a personal name of certain princes, is shown by the inscriptions to have been a title to which members of the royal house, whether reigning or not, had a right. 'Devānampiya', which in the chronicles is no more than a part of the personal name of the ruler contemporary with Asoka, is known from epigraphical records to have been a title borne by kings of Ceylon for nearly three hundred years afterwards35. 'Devānampiya' is well known to have been the title of Asoka and other Maurya emperors; there is, therefore, little doubt that it was adopted by Sinhalese rulers due to the political influence exerted by the great Indian empire on this Island. The title suggests that a certain degree of divinity was attached to the rulers who bore it. The succession in the royal family, though patrilineal, was not regularly from father to son, there being numerous instances of a king being succeeded by his younger brother.

The early kings had more than one consort, two of them appearing to have had official position. The queens were referred to as devīs, i.e. 'goddesses', and the lesser consorts by the term orodika (Skt. avarodhikā), 'inmate of the harem'. Princes of the royal family, too, had each a number of wives. Next to the king in importance was the uparāja, 'viceroy', a title which, in early epigraphical records, is rarely met with outside the principality of Rohaṇa. It seems likely, therefore, that the government of Rohaṇa was the special responsibility of the uparāja. There were times, such as when the throne at Anurādhapura was occupied by a Tamil ruler, during which the uparāja in Rohaṇa functioned as an independent ruler. The princes of the blood royal are given the title of aya (Skt. ārya) in the contemporary epigraphs, and princesses are called abi, perhaps the same as Skt. ambikā.

There were rulers of inferior status, who had the title of raja, in various parts of the Island. The Mahāvamsa mentions the rāja of Kalyāṇī (Kälaṇi) and

^{35.} EZ., III, pp. 155-6.

the Dhātuvamsa has reference to such kinglets at two places within Rohaṇa³6. Inscriptions of the early period found at Ämbulambē in the Mātalē District, Periyapuliyankuļam in the Vavuniyā District, Yaṭahaleṇa and Leṇagala in the Kāgalla District, Bambaragala in the Kandy District, and an ancient site in the forest beyond Mahiyangaṇa in the Uva Province, contain the names of local rulers, bearing the title raja, who do not seem to have been connected with the royal family at Anurādhapura. The sons of these rajas, like the princes of the Anurādhapura royal family, had the title of aya. Members of a local ruling family, with titles of gamaṇi, raja and aya borne by the males, and abi by females, are known from a number of inscriptions in the south-eastern part of Ceylon; it has been suggested that they were the kṣatriyas of Kataragama.

An inscription in a cave at Mihintalē mentions a personage styled Diparaja as the father of the princess Mahabi (Mahāmbikā), who donated the cave to the Sanigha. At first sight, it would appear as if this title diparaja (Skt. dvīparāja, Pāli. dīparāja) means 'the king of the Island', i.e. of Ceylon. But a story narrated in the Sammohavinodani³⁷ informs us that the title was borne by the prince who ruled Nagadipa, the present Jaffina Peninsula. According to this story, an unnamed king of ancient Ceylon gave an undertaking to one of his consorts that her infant son, when grown up, should become king after him. But, as ill-luck would have it, this prince, before he grew into manhood, lost one of his eyes as the result of an accident at a cock-fight which he was witnessing. When the prince's mother reminded the king of his promise, he explained that custom forbade him to nominate to the throne a prince who had a physical defect and, in order to redeem his promise, he would make the prince the ruler of Nagadipa. This story establishes that Nagadipa was then under the suzerainty of Anuradhapura and that, as in India, no person who had a bodily defect could aspire to the throne.

Certain regions which at times were governed by the members of the royal family, were at other times placed in charge of persons who had the title of amātya. Nāgadīpa which, in pre-Christian times, was governed by a royal prince, was administered in the reign of Vasabha by an amātya³⁸. Similarly, we find Rohaṇa under an uparāja, or a prince called Rohaṇika, or administered by an amātya with the designation of Rohaṇa-bojaka (Rohaṇa-bhojaka)³⁹.

The inauguration of a new king was effected by the ceremony of anointment which, according to details furnished by the commentary to the

^{36.} Dhv., p. 32.
37. P.T.S. Edition, p. 443. This is a commentary on the Vibhanga, attributed to Buddhaghosa of the fifth century.

^{38.} EZ., IV, p. 237. 39. CJSG., II, pp. 17—18.

Mahāvamsa, on the authority of writings going back to a very early date, differed considerably from the abhiseka of Indian kings as prescribed in the Brahmanical texts. It was essential that the king should be consecrated together with the queen, who must be of Kṣatriya lineage like himself. The actual ceremony of anointing was performed at first by a Kṣatriya virgin with holy water from the Ganges in a right-spiralled chank, then by the Brāhmaṇa chaplain, to be followed by the seṭṭhi as the leader of the Vaiśyas. After each of the three anointings, the king was reminded that he has been chosen by the Kṣatriyas, Brāhmaṇas and Vaiśyas, respectively, to rule over and protect them according to law and custom, and was admonished that, should he fail in his duty, his head would split into seven pieces. These details are reminiscent of a time when the king was elected by the three main divisions of the Aryan social order, a conclusion which is also supported by the titles like gamani and maparumaka, borne by the early kings⁴⁰.

The king thus was expected to uphold the ancient laws and institutions and to protect the weak. In fact, in common with many another people of antiquity, the ancient Sinhalesė believed that the prosperity of the country depended on just government by the king, not in the same way that we today believe that good government is conducive to the happiness of the people, but in the sense that, as a sort of magical consequence of the king's maintenance of the moral order, rain would fall in due season, crops would be abundant and the earth would yield fruits to the husbandman. This prosperity, the king had to ensure by the performance of certain rituals as they fell due at the proper time of the year; of these, however, we have very little details in the writings of the Buddhist monks, who naturally treated them as superstitious practices beneath their notice. The water-festival which was celebrated in the month of Poson (May or June) was one of such public rituals in which the king had to take part.

The king, in theory, was the fountain-head of justice, and often heard cases that were referred to him for a decision. He was expected to listen to the complaints of the meanest of his subjects, as the stories related of Elāra indicate. In the period with which this book is concerned, the king led the armed hosts to battle when it was necessary to do so to defend the throne against insurgents or foreign enemies. Stūpas, which ultimately became places of worship, were built over the mortal remains of at least the more outstanding kings after they were cremated.⁴¹

(b) Military and Administrative Officers

The king was assisted in his onerous task by a number of high dignitaries in addition to the *uparāja* whom we have already referred to. A position

^{40.} Mvt., pp. 305—7 and JRAS., 1936, pp. 443ff.41. ASCAR., 1948, pp. 8ff.

of great power and responsibility was that of the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, the senāpati. The references to this dignitary in the pre-Christian Brāhmī inscriptions indicate that he was often drawn from the class of nobility known in those days as the parumakas (Skt. pramukha)⁴². Towards the close of this period, the office of senāpati was held by a near relative of the king, as for instance in the reign of Kuñcanāga, when the commander-in-chief was a brother of the queen. The senāpati, at times, instead of using the armed forces under his command to maintain the king on the throne, utilised them to dethrone the ruler, as was done by Kuñcanāga's brother-in-law, and earlier by Mahārattaka in the reign of Khallāta Nāga.

The army commanded by the senāpati is referred to in literary works as having consisted of the traditional four constituents, namely the elephant corps, the cavalry, chariots and infantry. The king, and possibly the commander-in-chief, marched to battle mounted on an elephant. As the account in the Mahāvamsa of the capture of Vijitapura illustrates, the great bulk of this pachyderm was made to serve as a battering ram in breaching the walls of fortifications. Apart from these references, there is no mention of an elephant corps charging the enemy in actual warfare. Warriors are mentioned as having ridden horses when speed was considered important in particular assignments, and Dutthagamani, when he fought his brother, did so on horseback; but this was due to his elephant being not available to him at the time. Horses were also found useful at times to put oneself at a safe distance from the enemy, as for instance when Vohārika Tissa was vanquished by his brother. Apart from these cases, there is no indication that cavalry was used in actual warfare in Ceylon. The war chariot, which was so conspicuous among the fighting men in the heroic age of Aryan India, was only a memory even in the most ancient period of Ceylon history. The bulk of the army consisted of foot-soldiers, who were armed with bows and arrows and spears. Military men of higher ranks carried swords which were used in hand-to-hand combats. Armour was known, for a Brāhmī inscription has recorded the name of an armourer (vamakaraka = Skt. varmma-kāraka)43.

In an early Brāhmī inscription, there is reference to the leader of a guild of elephant trainers. A military officer of the rank of anikaṭa is mentioned in more than one inscription. The Sanskrit equivalent of the term ordinarily means a body-guard, but the Pāli form is found in literature with the meaning of horseman. Danuga (Skt. dhanurgrāha), 'archer', also occurs in certain records, while aśiya, prefixed to personal names in some records, may mean either 'swordsman' or 'horseman'. The general term balattha

^{42.} ASCAR., 1934, p. 18 and JCBRAS (New Series), II, p. 130, Inscription No. 21. 43. JCBRAS (New Series), V, p. 79.

in the chronicles signifies a member of the armed forces; its Sinhalese equivalent balataka is found in inscriptions of about the second or third century. No precise details are available of the manner in which the kings enlisted recruits to their armies, but in case of need, the king, it appears, had the right to ask each free family within his dominions to furnish one of its sons for the defence of the realm, as is indicated by the story of Sūranimila, one of Dutthagamani's warriors.

Another great dignitary of state was the badakarika (Skt. & P. bhāndāgārika, 'treasurer'), often referred to in contemporary records. A number of bhāndāgārikas mentioned in early records belonged to the order of nobility known as parumaka, while others were gamikas. In addition to the king's treasurer, reference is made in early documents to treasurers, or keepers of the store-houses, of local bodies, inferior in status to the gamika. wards the close of this period, the position of the treasurer had become one of great influence. Gothābhaya, who could have had himself elevated to the throne, when Sirisamghabodhi was made the sovereign, was satisfied with the position of treasurer and, while holding that office, gained enough of a following to challenge the authority of the king, and succeeded in capturing the supreme power⁴⁴.

Even after their conversion to Buddhism, the kings of Ceylon are known from references in the chronicles to have maintained Brāhmaņas as domestic chaplains (purohitas) to carry out such public functions as the abhiseka, and domestic rituals which tradition demanded to be performed. The contemporary inscriptions contain no reference to the office of purohita, but Brāhmaņas figure as donors in many of them45. From Indian evidence, we learn that the purchita very often functioned in a judicial capacity. In the case of disputes which arose in the Sanigha, a Brāhmana has been appointed to adjudicate at least in one instance, and it is very likely that the reputation which the Brāhmaṇas had in ancient days to be repositaries of social and legal tradition resulted in their being entrusted with judicial functions46.

A very early inscription refers to a high dignitary who held the office of mahāmātra (mahamata). From Asoka's edicts, we know that in the Mauryan administration, there were various types of mahāmātras, and in the Buddhist canonical literature, the corresponding Pāli term mahāmatta is used in the sense of 'minister'; A mahāmatta who was entrusted with the administration of justice, for instance, is mentioned in the Vinayapiţaka47.

See C. W. Nicholas in *UCR.*, VIII, pp. 116—127.
 See C. W. Nicholas in *UCR.*, VIII, pp. 259—263.
 Smp., pp. 582—3.
 Hultzsch, CII., I, pp. xi. f; Oldenberg, Vinaya-piṭaka, III, p. 45.

The envoys sent to Asoka included a personage who held the office of ganaka, on whom the title of setthi was conferred by the Maurya emperor48. Among the donors of caves in the early Brāhmī inscriptions are a number of personages who held the office of ganaka, and an inscription of the reign of Gajabāhu I mentions a nakara-gaņaka49. Etymologically, the word gaṇaka may be interpreted as 'an accountant', 'astrologer', or 'member of a guild or corporation'. The title setthi conferred on Devanampiya-Tissa's ganaka by Asoka was one distinctive of the head of a banking or mercantile corporation and, from the evidence of the Jātakas, we know that, in ancient India, the setthi was a very important personage in the king's entourage. We may conclude that the ganaka in ancient Ceylon, as well as in India, advised the king on financial matters, and that the officer called nakara-ganaka was entrusted with the finances of the city administration.

Several early Brāhmī inscriptions refer to personages who held various offices of adaka or adeka, a word equivalent to Sanskrit adhyaksa, 'superintendent'. We have a śivika-adeka (Skt. śivikādhyakṣa), rupadaka (Skt. rūpyādhyakṣa) and asa-adeka (Skt. aśvādhyakṣa)50. These three terms may, respectively, be interpreted as 'superintendent of the palanquin department', 'superintendent of the mint (lit. coinage)', and 'superintendent of the horses.' There is another term pakara-adeka, which may be interpreted as 'superintendent of communications' the old Sinhalese pakara (Skt. prakāra, 'way') being taken as the prototype of the modern word pāra. In Kautalya's Arthaśāstra51, the chiefs of the various departments of the administration receive the title of adhyaksa, and the term aśvādhyaksa is the designation of one of the heads of departments whose functions are detailed by that authority.

Another official title occurring in Kautalya's Arthaśāstra, which is found in a Brāhmī inscription with the addition of the -ka suffix is gopa. In the Arthaśāstra52, gopa comes under nāgaraka, the officer in charge of the capital, and was expected to keep the accounts of ten, twenty or forty households. He was, in other words, a municipal officer. The gopaka in the Ceylon Brāhmī inscription has the official designation of veti prefixed to his title. Veti is equivalent to Skt. vetrin, meaning 'staff-bearer' or 'door-keeper'. Possibly the person called veti-gopaka in the inscription referred to held two different offices, or the office of veti-gopaka was not the same as the gopa of the Arthaśāstra.

We are introduced to an ancient dovārika (Skt. dauvārika) by the chronicler in that tragic-comic incident which brought the first dynasty of

^{48.} Mv., xi, v. 26.

^{49.} EZ., III, pp. 116 and 119.

^{50.} Inscription from Periya Puliyankulama, ASCAR., 1909, p. 46. No. 11.

^{51.} KA., text, p. 132. 52. KA., p. 175.

Ceylon kings to an end with the demise of Yasalālaka Tissa. The term is usually rendered into English as 'gate-keeper', but this does not convey the importance attached to the post in ancient times⁵³. A more appropriate rendering would be 'chamberlain' or 'master of ceremonies'.

An old Brāhmī inscription also refers to a personage who held the office of nagaragutika (P. nagaragutika). The Mahāvaṁsa informs us that this office was first created by Paṇḍukābhaya, and was considered by him to be important enough to be conferred on his father-in-law. The office had the alternative title of ratti-rāja, 'night-king' and we have, in the Pāli Jātaka collection, a story which explains the origin of that designation and adds the interesting information that this functionary wore a garland of red flowers⁵⁴. The nagaraguttika was entrusted with all affairs concerning the administration of the capital, and thus corresponds to the nāgaraka of the Arthaśāstra.

The older inscriptions of this period rarely, and the later inscriptions very frequently, refer to personages with the old Sinhalese equivalent of Skt. amātya, P. amacca. The chronicles and literary sources frequently refer to persons who were amaccas. The word amatya is usually rendered as 'minister', but it is more correct to translate it as 'courtier'. An amātya as such had no specific functions, but may be ordered by the king to perform such duties as were considered within his competence. Amātyas were very often sent to the provinces to administer them, and to collect the revenues due to the king. Stories in the Rasavāhinī tell us that, in such positions, an amātya had ample opportunities to add to his personal gains by oppressing the people. Instances are recorded of amatyas fleeing from justice when such conduct was brought to the notice of the king. office, or rather the rank, of amātya was very often hereditary in certain important families. Sometimes an amatya is referred to with the designation of the particular office he held prefixed to his general title. The amacca who held the office of gaṇaka was a gaṇakāmacca, and he who held the office of bhāndāgārika, a bhāndāgārikāmacca. In certain records towards the close of this period, the term paheja is added after the equivalent of amātya. Paheja is etymologically equivalent to Skt. pārṣadya, and may be rendered as 'member of the council'.

Inscriptions from about the beginning of the Christian era up to the end of the period sometimes refer to personages who held the office of rațiya which term is equivalent to rațihika in the inscriptions of Asoka, and the prototype of räți in later Sinhalese literature. The officer who held this

^{53.} See Geiger's translation of the Mv., p. 250, where 'gate-watchman' stands for $dov\bar{a}rika$.

^{54.} Chavaka Jātaka, Jātaka, translation, Vol. III, pp. 19—20. See also Kaṇavera Jātaka, *ibid.*, pp. 27ff. In these Jātaka stories, the *nagaraguttika* is a *caṇḍāla*. For the inscription mentioning this officer, see *UCR*.. VIII. p. 118.

title was evidently in charge of a territorial division called rattha, and thus was the precursor of rat-lad in the ninth and tenth centuries, and the raterāla or raṭē-mahatmaya of the Kandy period.

The village, the smallest unit in the territorial administration, was under the control of an officer called gamika, to whom a number of early inscriptions make reference. He appears to have been of the same status as the gāma-bhojaka mentioned in Pāli literature, and the office very often seems to have been hereditary. Persons holding this office seem to have had, in the early days, a status far superior to what one would assume in the case of a village-headman. Some of them were of such consequence, and were possessed of such material resources, as to employ a treasurer (badakarika) under them⁵⁵. Their social status seems also to have been considerably high, for there was a gamika who was the maternal grandfather of a prince. A daughter of a gamika married a parumaka whose position in society, as would be shown later, was very high 56. A gamika was a minister of Vattagamani Abhaya, and another of this class held the position of treasurer. In general, the gamikas of Ceylon during the two or three centuries preceding the Christian era appear to have had the same position as the gamanis in India at a slightly earlier date.

E. SOCIAL CONDITIONS, TRADES AND PROFFESSIONS

As has always been the case in Ceylon, and in many another country, office under the king, or in the administrative set-up, conferred social distinction on its holder. However, in ancient Ceylon, there was another source of social distinction, namely the holding of land, and the holders of high offices were generally recruited from this class. To such a category of nobility must have belonged the numerous personages with the title of parumaka who figure as donors in the early Brāhmī inscriptions. The word is equivalent to Skt. pramukha and P. pāmokkha, the latter of which is synonymous with $r\bar{a}ja$, and was applied in the India of Buddha's time to the members of oligarchies like the Cetas and the Licchavis. In fact, the king himself seems to have been originally primus inter pares in relation to this order of parumakas, for one of the titles of Ceylon kings which persisted up to the tenth century was the Sinhalese equivalent of the Skt. mahāpramukha. The high social prestige of the parumakas can be gleaned from the fact that one of their order married the daughter of a pre-Christian king, and many high dignitaries, such as senāpatis and badakarikas, are referred to as parumakas. The fact that they derived revenue from villages is apparent from the reference to a parumaka as the overlord (bojaka) of a village⁵⁶. The lower type of parumakas who did not hold any high office

^{55.} UCR., Vol. VIII, p. 125.56. Ibid., p. 123.

under the king would thus have had little distinction from the gamikas referred to earlier. In fact, certain records reveal that there were marriage alliances between families of parumakas and gamikas. The title evidently was hereditary, though there are numerous instances in which it was not attached to the name of the son of a parumaka. The daughter of a parumaka was sometimes given the title, with the addition, of course, of the feminine suffix. A parumaka named Phussadeva, for instance, had a daughter called Parumakalu Soṇa (Śroṇā). By about the beginning of the Christian era, parumakas cease to be mentioned in old documents. Curiously enough, it is sometime after this that the title ma-parumaka (mahā-pramukha) is first attached to the name of a king. Parumakas evidently formed a landholding aristocracy, and most probably were descended from the pioneer Aryans who formed settlements under their leadership in various parts of the Island.

In the social organisation of the day, the king and the members of the royal family as well as the families of the personages who had a right to be called raja, formed a class by themselves, equivalent to the Kṣatriyas of ancient India. We have already referred to the presence of Brāhmaṇas in ancient Ceylon. Some of them possessed great wealth, and wielded much influence. The Brāhmaṇa of Tavakkagāma was invited to the festival of the planting of the Bōdhi Tree at Anurādhapura, along with the Kṣatriyas of Kājaragāma and Candanagāma⁵⁷. There were at times marriages between Kṣatriyas and Brāhmaṇas. A raja named Nāga, mentioned in an inscription at Bambaragala, was married to Dattā, the daughter of a Brāhmaṇa⁵⁸.

There are many early Brāhmī inscriptions which register donations of caves by individuals who bore the epithet of gapati or gahapati, 'house-holder'. The occurrence of the word in Pāli literature indicates that it mainly denoted members of the Vaiśya community who engaged themselves in agriculture, cattle-breeding or trade, though there are instances of Brāhmaṇas who were gahapatis. The later Sinhalese derivative of the word, govi, was restricted in use to those who adopted agriculture as their livelihood, owning their own plots of land, those who pursued trade being considered as belonging to a different social order. In the period of the Brāhmī inscriptions, the term gahapati was applied to agriculturists as well as to traders, for there are inscriptions in which a person who is described as a trader (vanija) is also called gahapati. In the inscriptions labelling the seats of 'the Tamil house-holders' Terrace', the seat of honour was that of a ship-captain, i.e. a trader. At this period, gahapatis were also engaged in occupations other than agriculture, cattle-breeding and commerce.

^{57.} Mv., xix, v. 54.

^{58.} ASCAR., 1935. p. 10.

A lapidary is called a gahapati; so was also a dancer or an actor (naṭa). According to Kauṭalya's Arthaśāstra⁵⁹, the last two would have been rated as Śūdras. It is, therefore evident that, in ancient Ceylon, the artisans (kāru) and actors (kuśīlivas), being considered the peers of agriculturists and traders, enjoyed a social position that was denied to them in contemporary India. As a class, the gahapatis constituted the third estate of the realm, represented by the seṭṭhi at the coronation of the king. The term kuḍibika, equivalent to Skt. and P. kuṭumbika, 'house-holder', found in an inscription of about the first century, must have denoted a person of the same standing

as a gahapati.

In addition to these already referred to, the trades and professions followed by some of the donors in the earliest inscriptions of Ceylon include those of the physician (veja, Skt. vaidya), carpenter or architect (vadaka=P. vaddhaka), goldsmith (taladara = P. tulādhara), painter (cita-kara = Skt. citra-kāra), store-keepers (koṭagarika = P. koṭṭhāgārika), astrologer (nakatika = P. nakkhattika), weaver (pehekara = P. pesakāra), potter (kubala = P. kumbhakāra) and smith (kabara = P. kammāra). A Pāli work of the fifth century refers to weavers of a village in ancient Ceylon, all working together in one factory (sālā)60. The inscriptions naturally would refer only to those trades and professions which gave to their practitioners a surplus of wealth above the subsistence level, which they could spend in providing places of residence for the monks. There were of course various other occupations followed by the people which did not afford them such competence, for example washermen, barbers, woodcutters etc., referred to in literary works. The trades followed by the various guilds said to have been sent to Ceylon by Asoka along with the Bodhi Tree are enumerated in detail by the later authorities, but how far they have application to the period we are considering cannot be decided. Inscriptions of the second century testify to the existence of slaves (dasa), and there are stories in the Rasavāhinī and the commentaries of destitute persons selling themselves into slavery. They could of course purchase their freedom. Slaves on the whole were humanely treated by their masters. Literary sources also refer to a class of outcastes called candalas who lived in ancient times.

The early Brāhmī inscriptions being in an Indo-Aryan dialect, which can easily be shown to have been the origin of the modern Sinhalese language, indicate that the donors mentioned in them were of that race. Consequently, there was no necessity for the documents to have recorded the fact. When, however, the donors happened to be other than Sinhalese,

^{59.} KA., p. 67. 60. C. W. Nicholas in JCBRAS (New Series), V, pp. 68ff.: Papñcasūdanī, P.T.S. Edition, pt. 3, p. 248.

an epithet indicating their ethnic affiliation is prefixed to the personal name. We have thus references to a merchant and gahapatis of Tamil (Dameda) race61. It is, however, noteworthy that these Tamil merchants and householders, like the Sinhalese, bore names of Sanskrit origin, and their records are in the Sinhalese language.

There is an inscription which refers to an individual named Puśa (Skt. Pusya) who is called a milaka and another mentioning a Milaka Tiśa62. Milaka is the same as Skt. mleccha, P. milakkha which, in literary works, is applied to foreigners and non tribes. It is possible that the persons called milaka were representatives of the autochthonous people whom the Sinhalese found here when they first arrived in the Island. If so, it is noteworthy that, by the time of the Brāhmī inscriptions, these milakas had adopted names which were common among the Sinhalese, and also the language of the new-comers.

A social factor of importance which resulted from the adoption of Buddhism by the Sinhalese is reflected in the Brāhmī inscriptions. The term upaśaka, or its feminine form upaśika, is found prefixed to the personal names of individuals of various social grades63. The Buddhist congregation, as is well-known, is divided into four assemblies, namely the monks, nuns, the male lay-believers and the female lay-believers. A person of the male sex, taking refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma and the Samgha, is an upāsaka whatever his position in the world may be. A woman is similarly an upāsikā. The great emperor Asoka, in one of his edicts, publicly declares that he was an upāsaka64. In the early Brāhmī inscriptions of Ceylon, royal princesses refer to themselves as upāsikās, just as people in ordinary stations in life, who had no distinctive epithet to prefix to their names, are given the epithet of upaśaka if they were males, and upaśika in the case of females. At least where religion was concerned, Buddhism thus had the effect of effacing social distinctions to some extent. We do not know whether the upāsakas and upāsikās of those days were organised into well-knit orders. But this epithet was in vogue only while the enthusiasm due to recent conversion lasted, for in inscriptions after the first century of this era, the word upāsaka or its feminine form is conspicuous by its absence. Inherited prejudices, no doubt, were too much for religious enthusiasm to root out.

F. REVENUE AND LAND TENURE

The main source of the king's revenue must have been, as it was in ancient India, the share that he was entitled to from the produce of the

^{61.} JCBRAS., XXXV, pp. 54—56.
62. JCBRAS. (New Series), II, p. 131 (No. 31) and JCBRAS., XXXVI, p. 60.
63. EZ., I. pp. 18ff. and ASCAR., 1911—12, pp. 94ff.
64. Hultzsch, CII., I, p. 171.

land in return for the protection afforded to the cultivators. In India this share, in theory, was one-sixth; but at times, as much as one fourth was exacted and, as a mark of special favour, the levy was reduced to one eighth⁶⁵. Buddhaghosa says that the share which the mythical king Mahāsammata received from the produce of the fields was one amuna of grain for every amuna sown66. Even in the case of the least productive fields, this would have amounted to much less than the lowest assessment known in India; it is, therefore, unlikely that Buddhaghosa modelled the fiscal system of Mahāsammata on that of Ceylon in his own day. Rather, Buddhaghosa must have painted a golden age in the remote past when taxes fell lightly on the shoulders of the people, an ideal hardly possible of attainment in the realities of the present. In the case of the villages granted to officials or favourites of the king, or to the Sampha, the share of the produce to which the king was entitled was paid to the donee.

In addition to this land-tax, which most probably is referred to as bojaka-, bojika- or bojiya-pati in inscriptions of the first to fourth centuries67, irrigated fields were subject to water-rates, called daka-pati in inscriptions68, which were collected in the case of some fields at one harvest only, while in the case of others at every harvest during the year⁶⁹. The water-rate was very often the property of private individuals. A third impost, named matira-majibaka-pati (with variant forms) in the inscriptions 70, was also levied from fields; it probably denoted the share of the fish caught in the tanks and irrigation channels to which the proprietor was entitled.

The Mahāvamsa has recorded that Sirināga I (189—208 A.C.) remitted a levy named kulambana (as the accepted text has it), which, from the wording of the narrative, appears to have been considered by the people to be burdensome⁷¹. This appears to be the same as kula-amana, an impost on fields, referred to in the Habarana inscription of about the third century 72. Most probably, a levy of one amuna of grain from the yield of every kulya (a measure of capacity equivalent to eight dronas) of seed sown, is meant by this term. A similar impost was the karih-aminiya-baka, mentioned in a second century inscription73, obviously denoting one amuna from the yield of a karīsa of seed sown. The one or the other of these imposts must have been levied over and above the normal land tax (bojaka-pati).

73. EZ., IV, p. 190, n. 4; CA., III, pp. 77-8.

^{65.} Manu, vii, 130; HCIP., II, p. 328; Hultzsch, CII., I, p. 165.
66. Sumangala-vilāsinī (PTS. Edition), p. 870.
67. EZ., III, p. 167; Codrington, ALTR., p. 31.
68. EZ., I, p. 72.
69. See Inscription No. 63 from Maha Situlpavu, JCBRAS (New Series) II, p. 133.
70. EZ., IV, p. 227. For the interpretation of the term, see JCBRAS, New Series, V, pp.130ff.

^{71.} Mv., xxxvi, v. 26. 72. Müller, AIC., No. 61. Müller's reading of this inscription is teeming with errors.

There is reference in a first or second century Brāhmī inscription to customs duties levied at seaports74. Revenue accrued to the king from fines imposed in courts of law, to which there is reference in another inscription of the second century.75 In addition to regular imposts, the king was empowered to make requisitions of grain, cattle, etc., from affluent persons⁷⁶. The collection of the revenue due to the king from outlying districts was entrusted to courtiers who, if we go by some of the stories related in the Rasavāhinī, did not neglect the lining of their own pockets77. When the officers of the king visited outlying districts, it was the duty of the inhabitants of those areas to supply them with provisions⁷⁸. On occasions when the king travelled about, the inhabitants of the districts honoured by his visit had to prepare and decorate the roads, entertain his entourage and receive him with appropriate ceremony. How irksome to the people that such royal attention could be, if bestowed too frequently, is proved by the story of Samghatissa79. The king, too, was entitled to the free labour of his subjects, as it was in the later periods, but the details with regard to this service for the early period are lacking. Dutthagamani, it is said, refrained from exacting free labour from his subjects in the building of the Mahāthūpa⁸⁰.

The king, in theory, was the lord of the soil; this, however, did not preclude any person who could command the necessary labour from constructing reservoirs and bringing new lands under cultivation. It was indeed in the interests of the king to encourage land development by private parties; the more the land that was brought under the plough, the greater was his revenue. Persons who constructed reservoirs had proprietory interests in them, that is to say they were entitled to water-rates from fields irrigated by them. There are numerous epigraphs, from about the second century B.C. up to the end of this period, which refer to private individuals who owned reservoirs, or shares of the fields irrigated by them. These could be donated or sold at the owner's will, and were heritable81. There are references in inscriptions as well as in the chronicle to kings

purchasing tanks and land82.

^{74.} CJSG., II, p. 197. Inscription No. 586.
75. ASCAR., 1934, p. 18, JCBRAS (New Series), II, p. 134, Inscription No. 65.
76. Ras., II, p. 131.
77. Ibid., p. 45.

^{78.} Ibid., p. 181.

^{79.} See supra, p. 189; Mv., xxxvi, vv. 70-72.

^{80.} Mv., xxviii, vv. 4-5.

^{81.} See, for example, EZ., I, p. 228. 82. EZ., III, p. 165, ASC. Seventh Progress Report p. 58; Mv., xxxv, v. 117.

CHAPTER IX

CIVILISATION OF THE EARLY PERIOD (continued): RELIGION AND ART

A. RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENTS

(a) The effect of conversion to Buddhism on the life of the people

To what extent the accustomed ways of life of the king and people were changed by the acceptance of Buddhism as the official creed in the reign of Devānampiya Tissa, it is difficult to gauge today. In the conversionif we may use that term-of a person to Buddhism, there are several degrees of earnestness. One may formally take refuge in the Three Jewels, i.e. the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sanigha. This generally implies that such a person accepts that the Buddha and His teachings would lead him to ultimate salvation, and abjures faith in gods, other prophets or teachers as efficient for that purpose. Such a person may, however, invoke the aid of a divine or human agency for wordly ends. To the three Refuges, a more earnest convert may add the Five Precepts, the vows to abstain from taking life, stealing, wrongful conduct in matters sexual, untruthfulness and addiction to intoxicants. Still more earnest devotees may observe the eight precepts on fast days, or take the ten vows to be observed every day. All this may be done while one remains in the world. the really earnest believer in the Buddha, i.e., he who wishes to realise for himself the Truth realised by the Buddha, has to give up all social obligations and family ties, and take to the life of the almsman by being formally admitted to the Sanigha.

The chronicles have recorded that large numbers were so moved by the message of the missionaries that they adopted the life of the almsman. The purpose of those who gave up the world was to attain spiritual emancipation by a strenuous course of self-culture, without being a burden to society. They therefore resided in spots that were not of use to the community economically, such as rocky hills, maintained themselves on what people could easily give away, and generally led a life of self-abnegation and disciplined morality. It has always been the belief among the people of the Indian civilisation, that men who have renounced the world should be venerated, and that it is a meritorious act to supply their inexpensive needs. It was also an accepted policy of their kings to allow such recluses unhampered use of state lands, such as forests and parks, and freedom of movement, without regard to the doctrines that they held or preached.

The third Refuge, when subscribed to by an individual, virtually meant that he accepted the doctrines of the Buddhist Samgha in preference to those of other teachers of the type of Sramanas and Brahmanas, and that the Sampha had the prior claim on his liberality. Those who had proclaimed themselves as upāsakas by taking the Three Refuges, the king, nobles as well as the commoners, therefore, considered it their duty to provide suitable residences for the more earnest converts who had adopted the monk's life, and to give them alms and other requisites. The king donated to the community of monks the royal park as their residence; royal personages and people of various stations in life fashioned rock caves for the same purpose. Invitations were very often extended to the monks for meals, and adequate gifts from the faithful were forthcoming for their needs with regard to robes and other requisites. The parks and caves were, however, donated to the community of monks as a whole, and not to a particular individual; the personal property that an individual monk possessed was limited to his robes, begging bowl, razor and a few other items of daily necessity. The community of monks as a whole had no regular income such as rent from land, and it was thus essential for them, in order to maintain themselves, to retain, by their purity of life, the respect of the people. This, the majority among the early recruits to the Sanigha are said to have accomplished in abundant measure.

For maintaining the members of the Saingha with gifts of the four requisites, the lay devotees did not consider themselves entitled to any kind of service from the monks, nor did the latter entertain any feeling of obligation to the donors, beyond that of making themselves worthy of such gifts by self-purification. It was, however, agreed by the community as a whole that this striving for self-purification by those who had made that their sole concern in life, somehow or other made an important contribution towards the well-being of humanity. The average man considered the monks as endowed with wisdom and, when difficult situations arose in his daily life, he went to them for advice, which they were expected to give him in a disinterested manner. The practice of mental concentration, which was a part of the monk's striving for spiritual attainment, was considered as giving him powers transcending ordinary human capabilities, even to the extent of controlling supernatural forces which, in the opinion of many in those days, affected the lives of men either for good or for bad. Though the monk was enjoined not to exploit the credulity of the masses in this respect, a certain amount of accommodation had to be made in order to prevent the faithful going to other quarters to have their needs satisfied, and from very early times, members of the Sanigha had evolved certain simple ceremonies, such as the chanting of sacred texts (the paritta), to give the laymen confidence on occasions of distress.

With regard to religion in its public, as distinct from its private, observance, what was considered very important in the ancient world were the ceremonies, periodically conducted by the king and the people, designed to ensure the prosperity of the land, by making rain to fall in due season, and the earth to yield fruit in abundance. The early Buddhist teachers attempted to revolutionise the beliefs of men in this regard by proclaiming that it was morality and virtue among men, and not bloody sacrifices, which made the unseen powers shower their benefits on the world. In this, however, they had an uphill task. Beliefs ingrained in the minds of men from time immemorial cannot be eradicated at one stroke. Something had to be offered in place of what they wanted to be abolished, and some old practices which were comparatively less objectionable had to be given the approval of the new creed. Tree-worship and the veneration of bones of great men, which the people had been used to consider as efficacious in ensuring rain in due season, were adopted with a new interpretation as a means of honouring the memory of the Founder of the Faith. Festivals connected with the worship of stūpas and the Bodhi Tree weaned the people away in great measure from older observances in which were certain features of a morally reprehensible nature.

(b) The organisation of the Sanigha and its relations with the State

The more earnest men who had renounced the world for the life of the religieux had two courses open to them. After being instructed in the fundamental teachings of the faith, they could take to strenuous spiritual exercises leading to arahat-ship, or they could devote their time to an acquisition of religious knowledge by a prolonged study of the scriptures. There were many who had adopted the first course, while others attached themselves to teachers of repute and learnt from them the various scriptures. The word scripture is hardly appropriate, for the teachings of the Buddha were handed down orally in the early period, and the memorising of particular sections of the three collections of the sacred tradition was entrusted to a teacher who imparted his knowledge to his pupil. a certain school of monks specialised in reciting the Discourses of the Long Collection, another the Middle Collection, and so forth. state of affairs, which we learn from the early literature, is also reflected in the oldest Brāhmī inscriptions, for in some of them we come across the old Sinhalese equivalent of the Pāli Majjhima-bhāṇaka, Samyuttabhāṇaka, Ekottara-bhāṇaka, Vinaya-dhara, etc., meaning, respectively, the reciters of the Collections known as the Discourses of Middle Length, the Kindred Sayings, Gradual Sayings and the Rules of Discipline. A novice attached himself to a teacher, and served the latter while he was trained in the rules of conduct. That this system was the ordinary rule is also known from inscriptions in addition to literary sources, for we have

in some documents references to monks as acariya (teachers) and atevasika or sadivihariya (P. ante-vāsika and saddhi-vihārika), meaning respectively 'he who lives by the side 'and 'he who goes together with'. The ancient chronicles give the succession of teachers who handed down the doctrines, and the lists of famous monks and nuns who had acquired spiritual attainments.

It has been shown above that the great apostle Mahinda adopted the policy of making the Samgha of Ceylon a national Church, by investing leadership in a person of Ceylon origin. And this national character of the Church was further accentuated during that period when the sovereignty of the greater part of Ceylon passed into the hands of a ruler of Tamil origin. We are not told of any attempt made by the Samgha to win over Elara or his officers to Buddhism, but the leaders of the Sangha at that time considered it imperative to throw their entire weight on the side of the Sinhalese royal family exercising authority over a portion of the Island. The future of the Buddha-sāsana was identified with that of the Sinhalese royal family, and their attempts contributed not a little to the success of Dutthagamani. Purely from the idealistic point of view, the correctness of the attitude of the Sanigha of those days can be easily called into question. It is, on the other hand, quite possible that Buddhism might not have been preserved in Ceylon today had they taken a different attitude to the political situation of their days. Dutthagamani, as we have seen, showed his gratitude to the Sanigha by building monastic edifices and shrines, and by liberal gifts of the four requisites. Individual members of the Samgha do not appear to have asked for, or received, any personal benefits for the great services that they rendered to the king.

The result was quite different when the members of the Samgha, for the second time, intervened on behalf of a dispossessed Sinhalese prince, and succeeded in winning for him popular support to regain the throne. The thera Mahātissa of Kupikkala received the promise of a land grant to his vihāra when he had aided Vaṭṭagāmaṇī in exile. Similarly, Vaṭṭagāmaṇī's generals promised to reward another thera for his services when they were in adversity. And Vaṭṭagāmaṇī Abhaya, after he gained the throne, built a new vihāra and granted it to the thera who had been his benefactor, not to the Samgha as a whole. The generals of Vaṭṭagāmaṇī also granted the monasteries built by them personally to the thera who had helped them.

Granting of lands to monasteries for the members of the Samgha to derive revenue therefrom was an innovation which went against the ideals of early Buddhism, but this compromising with principles appears to have been forced by necessity due to the hardships which the monks went through during the decade preceding the restoration of Vaṭṭagāmaṇī. It is said that, during the severe famine which prevailed then, the monks found it difficult

to maintain themselves in Ceylon, for there were very few to give them alms, and were forced to go abroad. Perhaps it was thought that, if the Samgha enjoyed a regular income from lands which were vested in the monasteries, provision could be made to tide over difficult times like that, so that they had not to depend on the uncertain liberality of supporters who would be few when the power passed into the hands of those hostile to the religion, like the Brāhmaṇa Tīya¹.

In fact, with regard to another innovation introduced in the religious organisation at this time, it is expressly stated that it was the experience during the famine that brought home, to the elders of the Church, the risks they ran in depending on the uncertain life of an individual when they entrusted the preservation of their canon to a number of persons. This consideration induced them to commit the canon to writing.

The practice of making gifts of revenue derived from lands for the Samgha, once it was adopted, spread very fast. The pre-Christian inscriptions rarely mention gifts of land, but from about the first century onwards, the main purpose of inscriptions was to register donations of land to monasteries. The Samgha, however, in order to satisfy their conscience, was expected to refuse when an offer of a land grant was made, but to be silent when it was said that the grant was made to the stūpa of the establishment.

(c) Schism in the Sanigha

In doctrine, as well as in discipline, all bhikkhus in Ceylon acknowledged the authority of the Mahāvihāra from the time of its establishment up to the reign of Vattagamani Abhaya. In the fifteenth year after the first accession of that king, a faction broke away from the old established Church, and formed themselves into a new sect which came to be known as the Abhayagiri- or Dhammaruci-nikāya. Their own version of the establishment of the new sect has not come down to us; what we have is the Mahāvihāra account of the events, which has naturally to be accepted with some reserve. A thera named Mahātissa who, according to the Nikāya-sanigraha, was no other than Mahātissa of Kupikkala who helped Vaṭṭagāmaṇi recover the lost sovereignty, and was rewarded therefor with the incumbency of the newly founded Abhayagiri-vihāra, was charged with the offence of frequenting the families of laymen, i.e. in modern parlance, meddling in politics, and was expelled from the Order. The disciple of this Mahātissa, who rejoiced in the epithet of Bahala-massu, 'Bushy Beard', considered the judgment to be unjust, and protested against the action. Disciplinary action was taken against him, too, by the Mahāvihāra. Tissa, thereupon, with a following of about five hundred monks, left the Mahāvihāra and

^{1.} The Mv makes a pointed reference to this innovation of endowing monasteries with income from land, in the verse following 38 in Chapter xxxiii, which Geiger has rejected as spurious on insufficient grounds.

took up residence in the Abhayagiri-vihāra. The disciples of a religious teacher named Dhammaruci arrived at the Abhayagiri-vihāra from a monastery called Pallavārāma in India, and the secessionists accepted their doctrines as the true interpretaion of the Buddha's teachings. The new sect which, from its headquarters, was known as the Abhayagiri, and on account of its doctrinal standpoint, was called Dhammaruci, enjoyed the favour of Vattagamani Abhaya, and thus grew in numbers and influence2.

According to the Nikāya-samgraha, Dhammaruci, whose doctrinal views the monks of the Abhayagiri-vihāra accepted, belonged to the Vajjiputtaka This was one of the eighteen sects into which Buddhism was split up in India before the establishment of the faith in this Island; it admitted the pudgala, a sort of soul in disguise, and thus differed from all other sects of early Buddhism in subscribing to a heresy at variance with the anatta doctrine, the corner-stone of Buddhist philosophy3. There is, however, no other reference to the inmates of the Abhayagiri-vihāra being partial towards the Vajjiputtakas. This sect flourished in South India up to a comparatively late period, and it is not impossible that some of the bhikkhus of Ceylon who went abroad during the famine which preceded Vattagāmaṇi's restoration, came in contact with its adherents, and were influenced by some of its tenets, though they may not have accepted in toto the pudgalavāda which was the distinctive philosophy of the school.

The Abhayagiri fraternity, like the Mahāvihāra, is listed among the followers of the Theravada by the Chinese traveller I-tsing. Their scriptures were the same as those of the Mahāvihāra, but we are informed by the commentator of the Mahāvamsa, that in certain sections of the Vinayapiṭaka, for example the Khandhaka and the Parivara, the canon, as studied in the Abhayagiri-vihāra, had readings differing from the corresponding texts of the Mahāvihāra, and in interpretation, too, the two communities had different views. This is little more than the divergent readings which one finds today in two different editions of the same text, and the differing interpretation of the same text given by two scholars, as is made evident by an account of a controversy which arose between the two Nikāyas on a passage in the Vinayapitaka, when Bhātika Abhaya was on the throne, and in which a ruling was given by a learned Brāhmaṇa named Dīgha Kārāyana at the behest of the king4.

The adherents of the Mahāvihāra claimed that their own interpretation of the canonical writings goes back to Mahinda himself, but among the teachers of the Mahāvihāra also there were divergent views on questions

Mv., xxxiii, vv. 95—98, Ns., (Tr.), pp. 11—12.
 E. J. Thomas, History of Buddhist Thought, pp. 38 ff.
 Mvt., p. 175, Smp., p. 582—3.

regarding the interpretation of words, and on points of discipline⁵. The opinions of authoritative persons, together with the interpretations of words in the Pali canon, were collected together in several recensions. This literature included traditionary accounts of the foundation of their monasteries and their dealings with kings. There were also stories illustrating various points of the doctrine, as well as of a generally edifying nature in which references are occasionally found to historical personages. This exigetical literature, of which there were three principal redactions, one in the Mahāvihāra itself, another in the Kurundi-vihāra, and a third called Mahāpaccarī, as it was believed to have been written down on a raft (obviously a popular etymology). The Abhayagiri-vihāra had its own exigetical writings, of which we know from casual references to them in the writings of the Mahāvihāra, and from a Chinese translation of a treatise named Vimuttimagga, which was the work of a member of that fraternity6. On the whole, there was no original thinking or bold speculation, either with regard to doctrines or metaphysics, among the bhikkhus of Ceylon who followed the Theravada during this period. Their aim was to preserve intact, and with as little addition or alteration as possible. the doctrines introduced to the Island from India by Mahinda.

(d) Buddhism and pre-Buddhist Cults

Whether any influence was exerted on the development of religious beliefs and practices among the Buddhists of ancient Ceylon by the cults which prevailed in this Island before they embraced the new faith is a question of great interest, but on which the available evidence is very meagre. Some of the important gods, for instance Brahmā, Indra and Vaiśravaṇa, who claimed the allegiance of the original Sinhalese, had already been adopted by the early Buddhists of India, before the faith was introduced to Ceylon, as adherents of the Buddha's doctrines and protectors of the faithful. These, as well as other deities, no doubt continued to receive worship at the hands of the Brāhmaṇas and the sections of the population who looked up to them for guidance in dealing with supernatural powers.

That there had been a further rapprochement between the ancient cults and the newly introduced faith some time after the beginning of the Christian era is indicated by a significant innovation in the architecture of the stūpa, the characteristic monument of early Buddhism. The early stūpas were severely plain and, apart from floral designs and similar decorative work, did not bear any embellishments containing figure sculptures. But, in the vāhalkaḍas added to stūpas in or about the second century, we find

^{5.} See, for example, divergent views on a point of law expressed by Mahāsumma thera and Mahāpaduma-thera, referred to in Smp., p. 477. Also compare ibid., p. 477, where the decision of Kurundī on a legal matter differs from that of Mahā-aṭṭhakathā.

6. Bapat, Vimuttimagga and Visuddhimagga, Poona, 1937, pp. xxx ff.

representations of popular divinities like Nāgas, and the higher gods of the Brahmanical pantheon. The figures of Brahmā and Vaiśravaṇa can be easily recognised among them, that of Sūrya is quite likely, and the other figures adorning the stelae must, on these analogies, be taken as representations of divinities honoured by the people of Ceylon in those days.

The accommodation of these divinities on an adjunct of the monument intended to represent the Buddha must have had for its purpose the conveyance of the idea that these divinities themselves were followers of His teachings, and therefore likely to wield their power on the side of those human beings who are devotees of the Buddha. Perhaps it was as a result of this syncretisation that one of the ancient national gods of the Sinhalese, Varuna, was made to be the protector of the Island, and another, Yama, was made into a worshipper of the Buddha's footprint on the summit of Sumanakūta. The stories relating to the visit of the Buddha to this Island to subdue the Yaksas and Nāgas of popular religion must have also been due to this movement of absorption of earlier cults within Buddhism. The result of this is that, after the second century, there is no mention in the contemporary documents of the Brahmanas who, in the earlier age, certainly wielded much influence with the kings as well as with the common people. Ritual dancing, and perhaps dramatical performances, as well as music, which formed a prominent feature of the worship of gods, and no doubt made a great appeal to the populace, were incorporated into stūpa worship in the reign of Bhātika Abhaya (Dīpavamsa, xxi, 27). This must have had the effect of drawing to Buddhist places of worship those who had been in the habit of frequenting Deva temples for these attractions.

(e) Advent of the Mahāyāna

For nearly three centuries from the reign of Vaṭṭagāmaṇī Abhaya, the two fraternities of Mahāvihāra and Abhayagiri peacefully existed side by side, though there appears to have been not much love lost between them. Certain kings gave their patronage to the older community, while others supported the younger. Most of the kings, however, distributed largesse among the adherents of both sects without showing decided partiality towards either. But a third religious force, which developed within Buddhism in the land of its origin, and is first heard of in Ceylon during the reign of Vohārika Tissa, brought to the surface rivalries between the two sects that were dormant for several centuries.

The Mahāvamsa briefly refers to these momentous developments as follows: 'Suppressing the Vetulya-doctrine and keeping heretics in check by his minister Kapila, he made the true doctrine to shine forth in glory.' Some idea of the doctrines of these Vetulyas, considered as heretics by the orthodox Mahāvihāra, can be gained from Buddhaghosa's commentary to the Kathāvatthu, in which the non-Theravāda doctrines are refuted.

The doctrines that Śākyamuni was not really born in the world of men, that He remained in the Tusita heaven, and only sent a phantom of Himself to the world, and that the Buddha Himself did not preach the Law, but Ānanda preached it, have been attributed to the Vetulyavādins in this source. Such doctrines find their parallels in the Saddharmapundarika and other scriptures of the Mahāyānists. Another doctrine which must have been particularly disturbing to the Church was that, in absolute reality, the Saingha meant the Path towards the Truth and the Results thereof, neither of which accepts gifts; hence the Sampha cannot accept gifts of the pious. This view, which threatened to obstruct the path to heaven of those who had made a success of this world by questionable means, and deserved to be resisted by the laity as well as by the inmates of the monasteries, was held, it is said, by that section of the Vetulyavadins who were also known as Mahāsuñña (Mahāśūnya)-vādins7. The Śūnyavāda, or the doctrine of Relativity, was one of the two principal philosophical tenets of the Mahāyānists, and was ably expounded and defended by Nāgārjuna at about this period. The word Vetulla (Skt. Vaitulya) is but a variant form of Vaipulya which, with the addition of sūtra, is the name given to the scriptures, believed to have been delivered by the Buddha Himself, such as the Prajñāpāramitā and Saddharmapundarīka, which were held in high esteem among the Mahāyānists. The very form Vaitulya-sūtra has been found in a manuscript of the Saddharmapundarika discovered in Kashgar. The Vetullavadins who disturbed the equanimity of the orthodox Church in Ceylon in the reign of Vohārika Tissa must, on these grounds, be taken as Mahāyānists.

The Dipavamsa refers to these heretics as Vitanda-vādins. The term vitanda is well-known in Indian logic, and denotes a disputant who is only concerned in refuting the views of his opponents, but has no view of his own to establish. This is exactly the position taken up by Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva and other great exponents of the Mādhyamika or Śūnyavāda philosophy. For, in their view, everything in this world being relative, there is nothing which has an absolute reality that can be expressed in words. This attitude which, according to their reasoning, is the true significance of the Buddha's injunction that all judgments or views (diṭṭhi) have to be eschewed, has been defended with subtle arguments and great daring—so subtle and daring that these philosophers made themselves liable to be misunderstood and misrepresented by those of a lesser intellectual calibre, as for instance when Buddhaghosa parodies their arguments

^{7.} Dv., xxii, 41; Mv., xxxvi, 41; C. A. F. Rhys Davids, Points of Controversy, p. 318.

^{8.} For Mahāyāna, see supra, pp. 199ff.. An excellent exposition of the Śūnyavāda is contained in T.R.V. Murti's The Central Philosophy of Buddhism, (George Allen and Unwin, London, 1955), pp. 121ff.

by stating that Vitandavadins declare a crow to be white because its bones are white. The alternative name Vitanda-vada, applied to the Vetulla-

vāda, also establishes that the Mahāyāna is intended by that term.

The principal disciple of Nāgārjuna, the great propagandist and dialectician of the Mādhyamika school of Mahāyāna philosophy, was Āryadeva who, according to the tradition of the Chinese Buddhists, was one of the 'eight suns which illuminated the world'. Āryadeva, who was himself the author of several treatises, held in high esteem among the Mahāyānists, and was a fighter for the cause of religion, is said to have been the son of a king of Ceylon. It has been suggested that Āryadeva was the same as the thera named Deva who dwelt at Kappakagāma in the reign of Vohārika Tissa, and whose preaching was much appreciated by the king. But this identification cannot be taken as decisive.

(f) Orthodoxy in conflict with the Mahāyāna

According to the Nikāya-sanigraha, it was the inmates of the Abhayagiri-vihāra who attempted to propagate the Vaitulya or Mahāyāna doctrines in the reign of Vohārika Tissa. An inquisition was held at the instance of the king by a minister named Kapila, 'who was versed in all the sciences', and on his pronouncement that these doctrines cannot be the word of the Buddha, Vohārika Tissa had the Vaitulya scriptures consigned

to the flames and thus 'illuminated the religon of the Buddha'.

But this attempt to suppress new ideas in religion was attended with success only for the time being. For, a few decades later, in the reign of Gothābhaya (in his fourth regnal year, according to the Nikāya-samgraha)9, the monks of the Abhayagiri-vihāra again came forward as champions of the Vaitulya or Mahāyāna. This time, however, there was, in the Abhayagiri monastery itself, a faction headed by a thera named Ussiliyā Tissa that opposed the champions of the Vetulya. But this was, as the Nikāyasamgraha tells us, not for the reason that they were convinced of the error of these doctrines, but as they became aware that the adherents of such tenets had been persecuted in the reign of Vohārika Tissa, and were afraid of incurring the king's wrath by declaring in favour of such unorthodox views. Ussiliyā Tissa and his followers, three hundred in number, accordingly left the Abhayagiri-vihāra, and took up their abode in the Dakkhina-vihāra. This, however, did not prove an acquisition of strength to the Mahāvihāra, for one among those who seceded from the Abhayagirivihāra, by name Sāgali, propagated his own interpretation of the scriptures and became the founder of a third school, called the Sagaliyas after him, which gave immense trouble to the orthodox sect two decades later.

The fears of Ussiliyā Tissa and his followers were fully justified. For Gothābhaya took the side of orthodoxy, and decided to take strong measures

^{9.} Ns. (Tr.), p. 12.

against those who dared to challenge views that had been traditionally held. He seized sixty of them, had brand marks placed on their bodies, and banished them from the Island¹⁰. Thus, in the significant words of the partisans of the Mahāvihāra, Goṭhābhaya 'glorified the Order of the Buddha'. The king and the monks of the Mahāvihāra were, however, to learn later that severe, nay barbarous, measures cannot be effective in dealing with the thoughts of men.

The Abhayagiri monks who suffered on behalf of what they considered to be the Truth found asylum in a monastery at Kāvīrapaṭṭana in the Cola country, where they were treated with honour by the people. One of them had a disciple, a young man who was a native of the place, named Samghamitta. One day, he saw brand marks on the body of his master when the latter was taking a bath. Having inquired and come to know the circumstances in which his master had been treated in that manner, he vowed to take vengeance from the monks of the Mahāvihāra for having been instrumental to such treatment being meted out to a member of the religious Order. Samghamitta is said to have uttered a mighty oath: 'I shall make the inmates of the Mahāvihāra accept the Vaitulya doctrine, or shall see that their monastery is destroyed.'

In due course, Samghamitta, who is described in the chronicle as 'versed in the teachings concerning the exorcism of spirits and so forth,' arrived in Anuradhapura and soon found an opportunity to win the esteem of Gothābhaya. This he did, not by prolonged wranglings on abstruse metaphysics, nor by eloquent discourses on ethics and doctrine, but through his understanding of human psychology. The king, so the story goes, was present one day at an assembly of the Sanigha at the Thuparama. The senior thera, who was a maternal uncle of the king, addressed the latter by his personal name, calling him 'dear Gothābhaya'. Samghamitta, who was present in the assembly, vehemently protested at this taking of liberty with the king's majesty11. Gothābhaya was quite convinced that a religious teacher who had such appropriate notions of kingship must necessarily be holding correct views on matters doctrinal as well. Not only did he show favour towards the teacher from abroad, but also went to the length of appointing him tutor to his two young sons. The elder prince, Jetthatissa, as we have seen above, was not converted by Samghamitta's arguments, and the champion of Vaitulya doctrines thought it wise to banish himself voluntarily during the reign of that prince. But he returned to Ceylon as soon as Mahāsena succeeded to the sovereignty, and lost no time in putting into execution the plans that he had elaborated during the period of enforced inactivity.

^{10.} Ns. (Tr.), p. 13. 11. Ns. (Tr.), p. 14.

The chronicle states that even the ceremony of Mahāsena's consecration was conducted according to the behests of Sanighamitta. Soon after the consecration ceremony was over, Samghamitta persuaded Mahāsena that the monks of the Mahāvihāra did not teach the true vinaya (disciplinary rules for monks), implying that they were lax in their conduct, and that the followers of his sect, the Abhayagiri monks, were to be accepted as the expounders of the true doctrines and were of blameless conduct. Nikāya-sanigraha also states that the king demanded of the Mahāvihāra monks that they accept the Vaitulya-vada as the true doctrine12, but that they were not prepared to accept the king as the arbiter in doctrinal matters. Mahāsena issued an edict forbidding the giving of alms to the monks of the Mahāvihāra, on pain of a fine of hundred kahāpaṇas. The monks of the Mahāvihāra and those of Mihintalē, being thus deprived of means of sustenance, were forced to abandon their monasteries, and took refuge in the highlands and in Rohana. The Dhammarucikas made use of this opportunity to seize for themselves the historic monastery at Mihintalē, the cradle of Buddhism in Ceylon. For nine years, the Mahāvihāra was desolate, and Samghamitta persuaded the king to pull down its buildings, and utilise the material for the embellishment of the rival monastery, quoting the law that ownerless property belonged to the king. In this destruction of the Mahāvihāra, a minister named Sona proved himself an energetic servant of the king. Sanighamitta thus redeemed his oath, and avenged the cruel treatment suffered by his master, but he forgot the saying of the Master of himself as well as of his opponents that hatred does not cease by hatred.

Eventually, the tide turned against the Abhayagiri, and popular sympathy expressed itself in no uncertain terms in favour of the Mahāvihāra. We have already referred to the minister Meghavanna Abhaya, whom the king's religious policy turned into a rebel, and the manner in which a disastrous civil war was narrowly averted by the personal friendship which he entertained towards the king. One of the king's favourite wives was so concerned with the fate of the Mahāvihāra, that she had Samghamitta assasinated by a carpenter working at the Thūpārāma. This was the signal for the citizens to rise in arms against the minister Sona, who was done to death and the lifeless body treated with ignominy by being dragged and thrown on the city's heap of refuse. Mahāsena realised that popular feeling was too strong for even a masterful personality like himself to resist; he therefore bowed to the inevitable and, reversing his religious policy, gave orders for the restoration of the Mahāvihāra—an undertaking in which the minister Meghavanna Abhaya was as zealous as his ill-fated colleague Sona was in its destruction.

^{12.} Mvt., p. 673.

Thus the first half of the reign of Mahasena witnessed the most violent persecution due to sectarian rivalry that has disgraced the history of Buddhism during the whole of the Anuradhapura period. The history of these events has come down to us in the writings of one of the parties to the dispute, and we cannot naturally take it as impartial. The Mahāvamsa uses the most opprobrious epithets in referring to Samghamitta and those who took his side. No doubt they deserved condemnation for the excesses they committed during the brief spell in which they were undisputed masters of the situation. On the other hand, the Mahāvamsa itself bears testimony to the fact that Samghamitta and his partisans characterised the monks of the Mahavihara as not observing the vinaya rules properly. A fragmentary inscription¹³ found in the grounds of the Jetavana monastery, which appears to be the edict issued by Mahasena against the Mahavihara, apparently accuses the members of that fraternity of having been guilty of various sinful acts, though they had been repeatedly rebuked. Perhaps these accusations were not altogether groundless, for the people at first seemed to have acquiesced in the severe measures which Mahāsena adopted against them. We must also admit that the members of the Mahāvihāra did not try to convert their opponents by the exercise of metta. It was by taking their side that Gothabhaya treated their opponents in an inhuman manner. The author of the Mahāvamsa himself, while not actually approving, does not condemn the acts of violence by which summary justice was meted out to Samghamitta and the minister Sona by the partisans of the Mahāvihāra. Neither party in this dispute, though claiming to be champions of the true doctrine, has acted in a manner that would have had the approval of the Founder of the Faith.

In view of the mutual accusations of not following the rules of discipline, it will be relevant here to consider the specific charges brought against the members of the Abhayagiri fraternity by the Mahāvihāra. The commentary of the Mahāvamsa gives us details with regard to these. In addition to the general charge of variant readings in their text of the Vinaya-piṭaka, and the consequent differences in interpretation, the Abhayagiri sect is said to have maintained that it was unbecoming for monks to use fans with ivory handles. The Mahāvihāra rebutted this by quoting authority from their Vinaya text. The Mahāvihāra maintained that ordination can be conferred through a messenger; their opponents denied the validity of such entry into the Order. The Mahāvihāra again maintained that the age of twenty years, necessary for admission into the Order, may be reckoned from the time of conception, and not from birth; this, their rivals declared to be illegal. There were also points in dispute with regard to the setting up of sacred boundaries. Lastly, there was much breath

^{13.} EZ., IV, pp. 273ff.

wasted on the point whether it was permissible for a monk to spit on the ground after rubbing the teeth with the brush. The Abhayagiri brethren maintained that it was unbecoming for a monk to do so, while the doctors of the Mahāvihāra ruled that the Buddha had nowhere prohibited this, and continued to spit on the ground at their morning ablutions.

These points in dispute appear to be very trivial, and hardly worth quarrelling about. If at all they prove anything, it is that the inmates of the Abhayagiri-vihāra led a less luxurious life than those of the more ancient fraternity, and were disposed to take a more reasonable view of things, for example in the matter of spitting on the ground. If there were disagreements on the more fundamental matters affecting moral and spiritual laxity, the spokesman for the Mahāvihāra, who had mentioned these trivialities, would surely have strengthened his case by referring to them. real reason for the condemnation of the Abhayagiri by the Mahāvihāra, therefore, must have lain elsewhere. This, one can guess when one walks over the ruins of the two monasteries. The grounds of the Abhayagiri monastery are more extensive and contain the remains of edifices equal to, or more magnificent than, those of the Mahāvihāra. The older monastery could not have viewed with equanimity the affluence of the later establishment, and must have come to the usual conclusion that men form about a successful rival, namely that the success had been achieved by questionable means. The hearing which the inmates of the Abhayagiri were prepared to give to new theories, afforded the Mahāvihāra an excellent opportunity to exploit the innate conservative tendencies of an Island people, to the disadvantage of their opponents, but when a ruler with strong individual opinions of his own ascended the throne, this proved disastrous to them.

Mahāsena's relations with the orthodox faction again deteriorated when he wished to build a new monastery by shifting the boundaries of the ancient establishment. The Mahāvihāra successfully resisted this attempt, but Mahāsena built his monastery, the Jetavana, with the largest stūpa in the Island as its centre, within the consecrated boundaries of the Mahāvihāra, and vested its incumbency in a thera named Tissa, who belonged to the This recipient of royal favour Sāgaliya school of the Dakkhina-vihāra14. is described in the Mahāvihāra records as a hypocrite, a plotter and lawless, while he is described by his followers as all that a bhikkhu should be. As if to confirm the opinion that the Mahāvihāra had of this Tissa's character, a grave charge, for which the punishment was expulsion from the Order, was brought against him15. The judge who inquired into this charge found Tissa guilty, though it was known to him that the king was anxious

^{14.} Ns. (Tr.), p. 15 and Mv., xxxvii, vv. 32-35. The Ns. calls this thera Kohontissa, i.e. Tissa the hypocrite.
15. Mv., xxxvii,, vv. 38—39 and Ns. (Tr.) p. 15.

to have the accused exculpated. It is, however, not recorded that Tissa was in fact expelled from the Order. The Jetavana-vihāra continued to be an establishment independent of the Mahāvihāra, and became the headquarters of the latest of the three sects into which the Buddhist Church in Ceylon was divided up to the twelfth century.

(g) Religious Contacts with Other Countries

Intercourse between the Buddhists of Ceylon and their co-religionists in other lands was not infrequent during this period. The chronicles have recorded that, at the inauguration of the building of the Mahāthūpa in the second century B.C., there were present representatives of the Sanigha, not only from such famous Buddhist centres in India as Bodhimanda (Bodh-Gayā), Rājagaha, Sāvatthi, Isipatana, Vesālī, Pāṭaliputta, Kosambī and Ujjayani, but also from less well-known places like Kasmira, Pallavabhogga, Alasanda of the Yonas, a monastery in the Vindhya forests, a monastery named Kelāsa (Kailāsa) and the Vanavāsa country16. Of these, Alasanda was probably Alexandria in the country of the Paropanisadae, near Kabul, and Pallava-bhogga the territory then under the rule of the Pallavas, who were destined to play such a leading rôle in South Indian history in subsequent times. Companies of bhikkhus from Ceylon undertook pilgrimages to places associated with the career of the Master, at times continuing their journey as far as Devaputta-nagara¹⁷. The last named city must be Puruṣapura (Peshawar), the capital of the Devaputra kings, as the Kuṣāṇas were known. In one story, a Sinhalese who had exchanged a military career for the spiritual is represented as having found a place suited for the realisation of the Truth in a remote and rocky terrain in the Deccan¹⁸. Bhikkhus from other lands often came to Ceylon to worship at its shrines; the Samantapāsādikā has a story of four bhikkhus from the country of the Yonakas (Yavanas, i.e. Indo-Greeks) arriving at an unnamed monastery in this Island¹⁹. The intercourse between the Buddhists of Ceylon and those of the Andhra country and China has already been referred to in Chapter I of Book I20. These religious pilgrimages must have contributed not a little to the knowledge which the ancient Sinhalese possessed of the outside world, and to making them aware of new developments in thought as well as in art.

(h) Śaiva Shrines in Ancient Ceylon

Brahmanical places of worship continued to exist in Ceylon during these centuries of the greatest successes of Buddhism, particularly at seaports where the population must have comprised many people from India.

^{16.} Mv., xxix, vv. 29--44.

^{17.} Ras., I, p. 103. 18. Ras., II, pp. 108ff. 19. Spk., p. 1336. 20. See supra, pp. 17f.

Mahāsena directed his ardour for persecution to these non-Buddhist shrines when it was no longer possible to have the Mahāvihāra as its victim. He is said to have destroyed temples of gods; the commentator adds that these were shrines which housed phallic emblems of the Śaiva cult, at Gokanna, the modern Trincomalee, and two other unidentified places in Rohana. Buddhist monasteries were established on the sites of the shrines that were demolished²¹.

B. ARCHITECTURE

WITH the possible exception of a single dolmen (Plate III a) and three groups of cists, there are no structural remains, so far brought to light in the Island, that can be ascribed to a date prior to the introduction of Buddhism in the third century B.C. The Mahāvamsa refers to public buildings erected at Anurādhapura in the reign of Paṇḍukābhaya, and shrines dedicated to cults which were prevailing at that time. These, as well as the palaces of rulers of subsequent centuries up to the end of this period, have left no vestiges, for the reason that they, like the buildings of a similar character in contemporary India, were of wood. The fact that domestic as well as public buildings were of wood in those days explains why the word for architect in the chronicles, vaḍḍhaki (modern Sinhalese vaḍu), has the familiar meaning of 'carpenter'.

It was due to the efforts of the propagandists of Buddhism to impress on the imagination of the people, high and low, the greatness of their faith, that gave the first impetus in Ceylon to the creation of durable monuments, in which stone and brick were used. The early Buddhist missionaries to Ceylon were, no doubt, familiar with the revolutionary changes in building techniques and the formative arts that were then being introduced in the dominions of the Maurya empire, brought about by contact with countries in Western Asia and, among the guilds of artisans which Asoka is said to have sent to Ceylon along with the Bodhi Tree, there were no doubt craftsmen who had been influenced by these recent developments. utilising stone for building purposes, and making rock abodes for monks, was introduced to Ceylon from Mauryan India, but the sophisticated court art of Asoka's time does not seem to have travelled as far as Ceylon. The artisans seem to have worked at first with the means available locally, and to suit the local environment, as is proved by the rock caves meant as abodes for anchorites, which are the only monuments dating from the earliest period of Buddhism that we have today without being changed out of recognition by later modifications. In Ceylon, we do not have chambers excavated into rocks, such as those at the Barābar hills of Asoka's epoch, but natural rock caverns made fit for human habitation by cutting

^{21.} Mvt., p. 685.

BOOK III LATE ANURADHAPURA PERIOD

a drip-ledge to prevent rain-water flowing inside (Plate III b). The cutting of the natural rock, evidently with implements of iron, has been attempted for the first time, due to the demands of the new religion, but the abodes which resulted from this did not reproduce anything with which the Buddhist missionaries were familiar in their homeland. The transplantation of the ideology and the technical skill into a new environment has thus resulted in a different type of achievement in this sphere of activity.

In the domain of architecture, the demands of the new religion may be divided into two categories: buildings required by the members of the Sampha as residences and for the performance of such acts as were required by the rules of their order, and those required for popular cults which the Buddhism of those days had adopted so as to attract the layman and to

retain his devotion.

The buildings raised as residences for Mahinda and other apostles are usually referred to as prāsādas, a term which was applicable to the abodes of royalty as well as of the nobility. The king's residence in the park was utilised as the abode of Mahinda; Samghamitta, on her arrival, is said to have been assigned the house of a minister within the city as her abode. The monastic residences of those days, thus, do not seem to have differed in their architecture from the houses of the better classes of the laity. places meant for the performances of the acts of the Order, such as admitting new members to the Sanigha, were called māļakas, 'high places'. They must have been raised terraces of earth held in position by retaining walls of brick or rubble, with possibly an open pavilion of wooden construction. In view of the fact that the monasteries of Anuradhapura had been in continuous occupation for more than a thousand years, within which period new buildings were constantly being erected to take the place of the old, or the old ones were being thoroughly overhauled and re-built, we cannot expect to find actual remains of any structures dating from the epoch of Mahinda and Devānampiya Tissa.

It was by the veneration paid to the Bodhi Tree (Ficus Religiosa), under which the Buddha realised Supreme Knowledge, that the early Buddhists manifested their devotion to the Master and, as we have seen, this aspect of popular Buddhism was introduced to Ceylon by the transportation to Anurādhapura of a branch of the Mahābodhi at Bodh-Gayā. This was planted on a high terrace and, in the later centuries, a shrine of the type illustrated in the bas-reliefs of Sāñchī and Amarāvatī enclosed the sacred tree. In addition, there was a railing surrounding it, and to the north there was a gateway. At the four gates on the cardinal points were stone pillars surmounted by dharma-cakras. At the southern entrance was a throne of

stone²². It appears that the Bodhi-shrine at Anurādhapura was purposely designed in imitation of the one which existed in early days at Bodh-Gaya. Subsequent developments, however, have swept away all ancient features and, at the Bodhi-tree shrine at Anuradhapura, as it exists today, it is doubtful whether we can recognise any vestige of the architecture of the period with which we are concerned here.

From a very early date, at least as early as the time of Asoka, the stūpa shared with the Bodhi Tree the veneration of the faithful. A stūpa enshrining a corporeal relic of the Buddha was 'erected at Anuradhapura to signalise the conversion of Devānampiya Tissa. This, the Thūpārāma Dāgäba (Plate IV a), was of modest proportions, and it appears to have been erected in haste, as the dried mud of the neighbouring Abhayavāpi is said to have been utilised in its construction²³. Thus, as originally built, the stūpa was not entirely of brick. Its original shape is said to have been that of a heap of paddy. As it is today, after several renovations in the course of the centuries, the monument has a diameter of 59 ft. 6 in. at the base.

The chronicles credit Devānampiya Tissa and his immediate successors with the building of a number of stupas in various parts of the Island, including the monument enshrining a portion of Mahinda's relics on the summit of Mihintalē hill. None of these stūpas is identifiable today, with the exception of the last named monument, and that, too, in the form which it assumed after a subsequent restoration²⁴. The rulers of the branch of the royal family that settled in the south-east of the Island are said to have built several stūpas at Mahāgāma and other places in Rohana. Of these, the stūpas at Mahāgāma, particularly the Tissamahācetiya, far surpassed in size the monument at Anuradhapura built by Devanampiya Tissa. But we are not certain that these stūpas, when they were originally built, were of the same dimensions as they are today; the question cannot be settled as they have been recently renovated and are again objects of worship. In the case of the great dāgāba at Tissamahārāma, however, we know that it was repaired and possibly enlarged in the reign of Ilanaga.

It was under the patronage, and due to the initiative, of a scion of the Rohana royal family, who wrested the Anuradhapura throne from the Tamils, that the stūpa in Ceylon assumed proportions which put into shade the monument of Devanampiya Tissa. The Maricavațți (Mirisaväți), which was built by Dutthagamani not long after he came to the throne, has a diameter of 168 ft. at its base, as against the 59 ft. of the Thūpārāma²⁵.

^{22.} Mv., xxxvi, vv. 103 and 126.
23. Mv., xvii, v. 35.
24. ASCAR., 1951, pp. 21ff.
25. Mv., xxvi,; For a description of this stūpa, see Smither, Architectural Remains of Anurādhapura, pp. 19ff.

The Mahāthūpa or Ruvanväli Dāgäba, which the same monarch started to build later in his reign, and nearly completed before he died, was of truly gigantic proportions, being 294 ft. in diameter at the base, and nearly 300 ft. in height originally26. The great stūpa at Sānchī, which is the largest monument of this class of the same age in India, will be dwarfed by the side of the Mahāthūpa²⁷. Both these stupendous stūpas were of solid brick masonry, the foundations going down to a considerable depth below the courtyard.

Neither the religious enthusiasm nor the resources of the kings and people of the Island were exhausted by the building of these two colossal monuments, for stūpas of vast size, though inferior to the Mahāthūpa, were built at places other than the capital, for instance at Dighavāpi in Rohana. And, in the reign of Vattagamani Abhaya, nephew and a successor of Dutthagāmanī, two stūpas of colossal size were built at the capital. These were the Dakkhina-thupa and the Uttara-cetiya or the Abhayagiri Dāgäba. When originally built, neither of these monuments was as large as it was during the later Anuradhapura period. The Dakkhina-thūpa was enlarged in the reign of Kanittha Tissa, so that its diameter at base became 224 ft., and the Abhayagiri in the reign of Gajabāhu I (circa 114-136 A.C.). After its enlargement, the Abhayagiri had a diameter of 325 ft. at the base, and its height must have been about 350 ft28. In the second century, therefore, the Abhayagiri surpassed the Mahāthūpa in height as well as in

The Mahāthūpa on the summit of the Mihintalē hill, built by Mahādāthika Mahānāga, has a diameter of 136 ft. at the base, but the location of the monument must have made its completion a work entailing as much expense as one of the large monuments at the capital. The Kantaka-cetiya at Mihintalē, (Plate IV b), of about the same dimensions as the last named monument, was enlarged to its present size in the reign of Lanjatissa (circa 119-110 B.C.); neither the name of its founder nor the date of its original construction has been recorded²⁹. Mahāsena, the last king of the Mahāvanisa, a man of inexhaustible energy, has the honour of being the creator of the largest stūpa in Anurādhapura—the Jetavana (now erroneously called the Abhayagiri), which has a diameter of 367 ft. at its base, and still stands to a height of 232 ft. Its original height is said to have been 160 cubits, i.e. about 400 ft30.

^{26.} Mv., xxviii—xxxi; Smither, op. cit., pp. 27ff. The original height of this and other dāgābas has been calculated on the assumption that the carpenters' cubit of early days was of the same length as it was in the Kandy period.

27. The great $st\bar{u}pa$ at Sānchī has a diameter of 120 ft. at the base; its height was 54 ft.

28. Mv., xxxiii, vv. 81 and 88; Smither op. cit., 51ff; ASCAR., 1948, p. 16.

29. Mv., xxxiii, v. 25; ASCAR., 1935, pp. 4—6.

30. Mv., xxxvii, v. 33; Smither, op. cit., pp. 47 ff.

These colossal stūpas of Ceylon, dating from the second century B.C. to the fourth century A.C., in spite of leaving their Indian models far behind in size, retained their shape with only unimportant modifications. The essential part of the stūpa was, as it still is, the dome, which was bubbleshaped and flattened, though not very pronouncedly, at the summit. The dome rose from a base of three receding stages; the masonry of these, however, was not bonded to that of the dome. Surmounting the dome was a solid cube of brick masonry, the sides of which simulated a railing, and projecting above this square enclosure (hataräs-koṭuva) was a massive octagonal stone pillar with rounded top, of which the base was placed on the covering of the relic chamber, the floor of the latter being on a level with the surface of the uppermost stage of the base. By the side of this stone pillar was an umbrella of stone, or a series of such umbrellas, supported by a shaft of stone.

Not a single stūpa of this period is preserved to us with its superstructure complete in its original design. But the form of the early stupas can be understood from the references to the various parts given in the chronicles, particularly of the Mahāthūpa31, as well as from miniature gold models which served as reliquaries. Two such reliquaries (Plate V), one found in a stūpa on the summit of Mihintalē, and the other at Däļivaļa near Rambukkana in the Kägalla District, are of particular interest to us in re-constructing the shape of the early stupas of Ceylon. These reliquaries reproduce the type of the ancient Indian stūpa represented by the wellknown monument at Sanchi. The colossal stūpas of Ceylon have a triplebased platform as against the single medhi of the Sanchi stūpa, and the harmikā, which was a stone railing in the Indian monument, has become a

solid cube of brick ornamented with a railing pattern.

The model stūpa from Dälivala shows a railing encompassing it at the base. References in the Mahāvamsa also testify to the existence, in ancient Ceylon, of this architectural feature in connection with stūpas. Moreover, they also indicate that there was a railing at the base of the dome as well as at its summit. The chronicles also refer to toranas at the ancient stupas of Anuradhapura. These adjuncts of stūpas in ancient Ceylon were of wood, and not of stone as at Sanchi; no vestiges of them are therefore to be seen today.

Reliquaries in the shape of miniature stūpas datable in the second century A.C.32 contain a ringed cone, supported on a shaft, placed by the side of the stone pillar projecting above the dome (Plate V c). This is very much like the conical spire in the stupas of a later date, after the series of

^{31.} These references have been collected together and discussed in the Stūpa in Ceylon (ASCM, V), pp. 12ff. 32. ASCAR., 1946, p. 6.

stone umbrellas, being translated into brick masonry, had given rise to that feature. The spire of actual stūpas, or kotkärälla, as it is called, is however not to the side of the stone pillar, but incorporating it in the centre. The evidence of the reliquaries of the second century is, therefore, not decisive in coming to a conclusion that the conical spire, as we see today in the Abhayagiri at Anurādhapura and the Kiri-vehera at Polonnaru, developed at so early a date.

The three basal terraces of the Ruvanväli were faced, in the reign of Lañjatissa, with rectangular blocks of limestone, about a foot in length and neatly chiselled. Also at the Kaṇṭaka-cetiya at Mihintalē, which was enlarged to its present dimensions by Lañjatissa, we have a similar facing of limestone which is continued for two courses at the base of the dome above the uppermost terrace. This architectural treatment is not noticed at any other stūpa. Projecting elephant-heads of limestone were placed at equal distances on the basal terraces of some of the stūpas. Specimens of these are still to be seen at the Abhayagiri Dāgäba.

In the second century or thereabouts, the aspect of the colossal stupas at Anurādhapura, Mihintalē and Mahāgāma was altered, decidedly for the better from the aesthetic point of view, by the addition of frontispieces projecting from the base, and facing the cardinal points (Plate VI a). These frontispieces consist of moulded bases of limestone, the cornice of which is at a level with the top of the lowermost of the basal terraces, a succession of horizontal string-courses alternating with vertical bands, of limestone, and a superstructure of brick masonry consisting of a central vimāna and two similar features of smaller size on either side of it, corresponding to the two wings of the frontispiece. Projecting elephant-heads are placed above the cornice of the base at regular intervals, further above are projecting brackets in the shape of makara heads. There are lotus peterae between the elephant-heads as well as the makara brackets. The string-courses are ornamented with floral designs and friezes of ganas or of hainsas. The topmost vertical band is decorated with figures of lions, bulls, elephants and horses. On each side, the frontispiece is flanked by two stelae, the taller of which is surmounted by the figure of a lion, elephant, horse or bull, according to the direction which the structure faces³³. The front and the exposed side faces of the stelae are ornamented with sculptures, about which more anon.

At the Ruvanväli Dāgāba, these frontispieces have been built enclosing limestone platforms projecting from the lowermost basal terrace; embedded in the lime concrete which filled the interspace between the face of the earlier platform and the facing of the frontispiece, were found caskets of

^{33.} Paranavitana, The Stūpa in Ceylon, pp. 47ff.

pottery or limestone containing gold or crystal reliquaries and various objects like beads, coins, flowers of gold foil, personal ornaments, etc.

By what term these frontispieces, now called vāhalkadas, were referred to in ancient times is not quite certain. The southern frontispiece of the Abhayagiri dates from the reign of Kanittha Tissa, for reliquaries bearing inscriptions of the queen and the mother of that monarch have been found in the debris formed by its collapse³⁴. In the inscriptions of Kanittha Tissa engraved on a large slab of the pavement in front of the frontispiece, there is reference to four ayakas35. If this refers to the vāhalkadas, it is worthy of note that the offsets of the stūpas in the Andhra country appear to have been called by an almost identical name, the pillars on these platforms being called āyaka-khambhas36. But these offsets of the Andhra stūpas are structurally quite dissimilar to the vāhalkadas of Ceylon stūpas. If the frontispieces were really called ayakas, they must be considered identical with the āyāgas which are mentioned in the Apadāna37 as features of ancient stūpas.

On the other hand, Gajabāhu I, who enlarged the Abhayagiri Dāgäba, is recorded to have constructed the four ādi-mukhas of that stūpa38. is a reference in the Mahāvamsa to the addika-pillar on the east side of the Mahāthūpa39, the stelae of the southern vāhalkada being possibly meant. It is thus possible to amend the reading ādi-mukha to addi-mukha, 'mountainface'. Benjamin Rowland has pointed out the similarity of the stringcourses of the vāhalkadas to the moulded bands of the conventional representations of Meru, the Cosmic mountain⁴⁰. The vāhalkadas, unlike the Mahāmeru stones, which are four-sided, present only one side, the front. They may, therefore, be taken as meant to represent the face of the Cosmic Mountain, of which the stūpa itself is a symbol. Whatever the significance of the vāhalkada is, there is little doubt that it is the result of a syncretism in religion which developed at the time that it first came into vogue. The vāhalkadas of the Jetavana must be coeval with the stūpa itself, for that monument was built after these features had been fully developed.

Some of the smaller stūpas, like the Thūpārāma at Anurādhapura, were enclosed within circular shrines with a domical roof of wooden construction supported on pillars which were of wood in this period. Vasabha (circa 67-111 A.C.) is said to have constructed such a shrine for the Thūpārāma; Gothābhaya (circa 249-262 A.C.) renovated this, and also built a similar

^{34.} Parker, Ancient Ceylon, p. 302.
35. EZ., I, p. 258. In the published text, the word has been read as ayika.
36. ABIA., 1931, p. 14.
37. P.T.S. Edition, Parts, p. 89
38. Mv., xxxv, v. 119.

^{39.} Mv., xxxiv, v. 50.

^{40.} Art Quarterly, 1953, pp. 11ff.

shrine for the Ambatthala-thupa at Mihintale41. The stone pillars that are seen today at these shrines supplanted the earlier wooden ones at a considerably later date, i.e. about the eighth century.

Other objects of worship in the early period were the asanas (thrones), no doubt representing the vajrāsana under the Bodhi Tree at Gayā, seated on which the Buddha conquered the Evil One. Such asanas, or thrones, are said to have existed at the Bodhi Tree at Anuradhapura; 42 they were also found at stūpas. But there were shrines in which the sole object of worship was a throne in the shape of a large rectangular slab of stone, smoothly chiselled, set up on a raised platform. This type of shrine was known as āsana-ghara43, an example being still found at a site known as Puļukunāvi in the Batticaloa District (Plate VI b). It is a circular building, the plan being marked by the bases for wooden pillars arranged in a circle; the throne is on a platform at the back of the shrine.

Some of the prāsādas built in monastic establishments towards the close of this period, such as the Ratana-pāsāda built by Kaniṭṭha Tissa for a thera named Mahānāga, are described as splendid edifices, but we cannot identify their actual remains. Another type of edifice often referred to in the chronicles, and in the inscriptions, was the uposatha-ghara, wherein the monks assembled for the ceremony of confession, and for the performance of the various samgha-kammas. The famous Lohapasada (Brazen Palace) built by Dutthagamani, described as an edifice of nine storeys, was a building of this class. It was, no doubt, of wooden construction, and no remains of it, nor of its numerous successors during this period, are visible today. The stone pillars now pointed out as the remains of Dutthagamani's Lohapāsāda have been planted there on the last occasion of its re-building, i.e. in the reign of Parakramabahu the Great. The remains of buildings with massive stone pillars rising from a moulded stylobate faced with brick, found at many ancient sites, can be recognised as of uposatha-gharas44. In the middle of one of the longer sides, there was a flight of limestone steps, flanked by wing-stones shaped like makaras terminated by Naga guard-A semicircular slab of stone, called moonstone, was placed at the foot of the steps. The stone work of the entrance flight of steps in this type of building is generally found in an advanced stage of weathering.

A monastic establishment that may be ascribed to the close of this period. i.e. to the reign of Jettha-tissa, is the Pācīna-tissa-pabbata, near the Nuvaraväva at Anurādhapura45. Here, the shrines are located on a raised quadrangle, and the residences for individual monks, small rectangular buildings

^{41.} Paranavitana, The Stupa in Ceylon, pp. 75ff.

^{42.} Mv., xxxvi, v. 104.
43. Papañcasūdanī, P.T.S. Edition, pt. 4, p. 111
44. For uposathagharas, see Mv., xxxiv, 30; xxxvi, 16, 107, etc.
45. ASCAR., 1940—45, pp. 22ff.

with stone flights of steps, are arranged at intervals on the four sides of the quadrangle. An image-house that can be assigned to this period on stylistic grounds is found at Mädirigiri⁴⁶. This shrine which on the exterior appears like a square with a projecting bay, consists internally of one chamber. The guardstones and the moonstones are quite plain. At this shrine, as well as at the Pācina-tissa-pabbata, the moonstone, instead of projecting forward from a line connecting the faces of the two guardstones, is placed within such a line.

c. SCULPTURE

THE earliest sculptures are those which adorn the stelae of the frontispieces described above. Among these, the reliefs which decorate the stelae of the eastern vāhalkada of the Kantaka-cetiya (Plate VII a) belong to a class distinct from the rest, both in style and in subject matter. The face of the stele is divided into a number of panels by the bead-and-reel pattern, or by an arrangement of concentric semi-circular lines, and in these square panels are various motifs such as the elephant, a decorated vase with leaves and flowers issuing from it, a peacock with young and a palmette design. On the stelae of the other vāhalkadas, the motifs generally resemble those on the stelae at the Anuradhapura stūpas (Plate VII b, c, d and e). A common motif is a stem springing from a decorated vase, with symmetrically arranged leaves spreading on either side, surmounted by a symbol such as the triratna. At all these stūpas, a very common design is a stem springing from a vase, with broad spreading leaves and figures of Erotes alternating with those of lions, elephants, horses and bulls, emanating from the stem, at the top of which in some instances is a deity seated on a flower. At the Kantaka-cetiya we have a slender stem springing from a vase with leaves resembling those of the vine surmounted by symbols. In others, there are undulating creepers so arranged as to form circular spaces within which are the figures of the same four animals. In one at the Kantaka-cetiya, there is a cock, and in others from Anuradhapura, the circular space is occupied by some other type of bird. On the shorter stelae are figures of Nagas in the theriomorphic or in anthromorphic form (Plate VIII a); in the latter case, their identity is indicated by the multiple hoods behind the head. On the stelae at the Jetavana and the Abhayagiri Dāgābas, we have, in addition to the Nāga figures, those of human forms, male as well as female, no doubt meant to represent divine beings, holding diverse objects in their hands, and in various attitudes. There are also a few panels with groups of figures, but in no case crowded over much.

The motif of the stem springing from a vase with figures of men and beasts emanating therefrom is reminiscent of certain sculptures of the

^{46.} ASCAR., 1946, pp. 13ff.

stūpas at Sānchī and Amarāvatī. But, compared with the Indian examples, the ancient Sinhalese kalpa-vṛkṣas, Trees of Life as they undoubtedly were, do not show that exuberance which is characteristic of the Indian sculptures, and are restrained in the treatment of the details.

Stylistically, the reliefs of the eastern and southern vāhalkaḍas of the Kaṇṭaka-cetiya are shallow and flat, appearing more like silhouettes than three-dimensional figures (Plate IX a). The figure of the Nāga is stiff, and presents a frontal aspect, in the face there is the smile characteristic of archaic work. There is no attempt at modelling the figure to depict movement. In these and other characteristics, it is akin to the work of the earliest indigenous school of Indian sculptors at Bhārhut, Sāñchī and Bodh-Gayā. It may be taken as an established fact that the earliest plastic art of this Island was derived from the oldest phase of the indigenous Indian school of Central India.

In contrast to these sculptures of archaic character, there are, particularly at the frontispieces of the Abhayagiri and the Jetavana Dāgäbas, figure sculptures which show a much more developed technique. Some of the figures at the southern vāhalkada of the Abhayagiri, though carved to a much greater depth and modelled with a spatial sense, are stiff and frontal in their attitudes, as for example the figure illustrated at plate IX b. Others, as will be seen from the figures reproduced in Plate X, not only show clever modelling which very effectively indicates the suppleness of the limbs, but are also in graceful attitudes, with no suggestion of the primitive frontal aspect, and the expression in the faces is vivacious. These characteristics remind one of the sculptures of Amaravati, Nagarjunikonda and other Buddhist sites in the Andhra country. It is thus clear that contact with the mature school of Buddhist art in the Andhra country had transformed the methods and techniques of the early Sinhalese sculptors. In support of this conclusion, we have examples of sculptures in Amaravati marble, found in Ceylon (Plate XIa), that must have been imported to this Island in ancient days from the Andhra country⁴⁷. In the debris of the Dakkhina-thupa have been found marble tablets with floral and other designs and animal figures very shallowly carved in the most archaic style of Amaravati. There is at present in the Colombo Museum a fragmentary marble slab depicting a scene in which the figures have been carved to a considerable depth in the later developed style of Amaravati. There are also other examples, of which a detailed account need not be given here. Though, in form and technique, the early school of Sinhalese sculpture has been influenced by its contact with the Amaravati school, the subjects treated in them do not show this influence. There are no crowded scenes as in the Andhra sculptures, and the local work retained

^{47.} ABIA., 1936 pp. 15-18, Plate VII.

that quality of restraint which characterised the art of the Sinhalese right through the Anuradhapura period.

A Buddha image in the round, about six feet in height, carved out of South Indian marble, which must have been fashioned in the Āndhra country, and was brought to Ceylon in ancient days, has recently been discovered at Maha Iluppallama in the Anurādhapura District⁴⁸ (Plate XI b). This statue has the distinguishing characteristics of the standing Buddha type of the Amarāvatī school. A number of colossal Buddha images of limestone, for example those found in a shrine on the pavement of the Ruvanväli Dāgāba (Plate XII a), are identical in type with the Amarāvatī Buddha, and some of these have been attributed to the second or the third century of the present era. But we cannot be certain that all Buddha images bearing characteristics of the Amarāvatī type date before the reign of Mahāsena.

The Mahāvainsa states that a Buddha image was made in the reign of Devānampiya Tissa, but this is not in the account of that monarch's reign⁴⁹. In the description of the relic-chamber of the Mahāthūpa, also, Buddha images are listed among the objects deposited therein. But, as the statements refer to a period anterior to that in which the Buddha image first appeared in India itself, no credence can be attached to them. Scated images of the Buddha are said to have been installed near the Bodhi Tree in the reign of Vasabha. The type of the seated Buddha found at Anurādhapura is obviously not derived from Amarāvatī, as was the standing type. It seems to go back to the Mathurā type. No seated Buddha image found in Ceylon can be ascribed with certainty to the period dealt with in this book.

The colossal statue in the round near the southern gate of the Ruvanväli Dāgāba, popularly believed to be a representation of king Bhātiya, is too weather-worn for aesthetic appreciation (Plate XII b). In its heaviness and frigidity, it reminds one of the Yakṣa figures found at Parkham and Patna in India.

Copper images found under the feet of the Buddha in the shrine at Mädirigiri may date from the close of this period (Plate XIII a); but, meant as they were to be buried, and not to be seen by anyone thereafter, they are rather crude in execution. No example of a stucco or a terracotta figure found at an ancient site in Ceylon can with certainty be pronounced as belonging to this period. A noteworthy example of carving in ivory is the figurine of a nude female (Plate XIII b), wearing a girdle of beads at the waist, 3 in. in height, found in one of the relic-caskets in the southern vāhalkaḍa of the Ruvanväli Dāgāba; it can be attributed with

^{48.} ASCAR., 1952, p. 24.

^{49.} Mv., xxxvi, 128.

certainty to the second century. It thus is of about the same age as the ivory statuette of Indian workmanship discovered some years ago at Pompeii, and the ivories found at Begram in Afghanistan.

Relic-caskets of earthenware found in stūpas bear witness to the high standard that ceramic art had attained in Ceylon (Plate XIV). The relic-casket of polished black ware found in the stūpa at Mihintalē may possibly be of North Indian manufacture, and an importation to Ceylon, but it is of a type not so far found outside this Island. Sherds of red and black ware found at Anurādhapura have a glaze on the outside. The relic-caskets found in the Ruvanvälisāya are of varied types and artistic shapes; they are of polished red ware. Rouletted ware has also been found in the citadel of Anurādhapura. Several caskets of serpentine, turned in the lathe, are also known.

The goldsmith's craft had produced jewellery of delicate workmanship, as may be judged from the specimen from Ruvanvälisäya illustrated at Plate XIII c. The reliquary from the Dälivala Dāgāba is not only noteworthy for its balanced shape and regular lines, but for the delicate filigree work of the banners. The beads, pendants and intaglio seals that are products of the art of the lapidary, whose presence in Ceylon during the early period is attested by Brāhmī inscriptions, also exhibit technical skill of a high standard. Roman and Hellenistic influence is evident in some of the carved gems and intaglios. The finds of unperforated and unfinished beads indicate that the great majority of the vast quantities of beads of semi-precious stones—carnelian, bowenite, onyx, amethyst, banded agate, crystal, etc.—which have been found in the relic-caskets of the Ruvanväli Dāgāba have been manufactured locally. The reliquaries of crystal found at the same place, as well as in other ancient sites, are exceedingly well made with a high degree of polish. It is also possible that the technique of manufacturing glass of a coarse type was known in ancient Ceylon.

References to painters and paintings in the chronicles as well as in the Pāli commentaries afford evidence to the widespread practice of the pictorial art during this period from the earliest times, but no example of a painting datable to a time before the reign of Mahāsena exists in Ceylon.

D. LITERATURE

The Theravāda Buddhist Canon in the Pāli language, brought to Ceylon by Mahinda and his companions, was handed down, at first orally by different schools of 'reciters' of the various collections (nikāyas) to which it was sub-divided. These scriptures, as has been noted in Chapter III, were written down in the first century B.C. The preservation of the Theravāda Canon, which had been lost in India itself at a comparatively

early date, is the greatest contribution that the Sinhalese people had made to the intellectual heritage of mankind. A considerable literature in Old Sinhalese had grown around this Canon, consisting of exegetical texts, religious legends and historical accounts pertaining to India as well as to the Island. Of this literature, not a vestige has been preserved up to our day; but it provided material for the extensive commentarial literature in Pāli and the chronicles in that language written in the fifth century and later, which will be dealt with in the next book. The inscriptions of the period are generally in a matter-of-fact style, but there are a few documents, the earliest of which may be as old as the second century B.C., which indicate that the Sinhalese language had been used for literary purposes, and that there was poetry written in it from the earliest period of its separate existence.

CHAPTER I

THE INDIAN BACKGROUND

In Chapter V of Book II, the narration of the Island's history, so far as it is known, has been brought up to the point at which the earlier chronicles end, i.e. the reign of Mahāsena. Before the story is resumed in this book from where the Cūlavanisa begins its narrative, the fortunes of the various dynasties in India which influenced the course of events in Ceylon, in the political, cultural or economical spheres, will be briefly recounted in this chapter.

A. FOUNDATION OF GUPTA IMPERIAL POWER IN INDIA AND ITS RELATIONS WITH CEYLON

For more than half a millenniun after the downfall of the Maurya empire, India passed through a state of political disintegration. The whole of India was divided into a number of independent states, and successive hordes of foreigners, the Bactrian Greeks, the Parthians, the Śakas and the Kuṣāṇas invaded India through its north-western passes. Among these foreigners who established themselves in North India, the Kuṣāṇas alone founded a big empire extending over a considerable part of Northern India. in the fourth century A.C. one of the smaller indigenous states rose to great power under a succession of able rulers. Its king, Candragupta, married Kumāradevī, a princess of the ancient family of the Licchavis, and this alliance probably paved the way to his political eminence. He established his sway over Bihar and a considerable part of Eastern U.P. and Northern Bengal. He felt powerful enough to assume the imperial title of mahārājādhirāja, whereas his father and grandfather were content with the less pompous title of mahārāja. The first year of a new era founded by the Guptas falls in A.C. 319, which was probably the date of the accession of Candragupta and marked the turning point in the political career of the family. Before he died, he selected as his successor his son Samudragupta, born of the Licchavi princess.

Samudragupta proved himself to be one of the greatest kings in ancient India. He was literally a hero of a hundrde fights, and spent his whole life in military campaigns. He conquered a large number of states in North India, and then advanced along the eastern coast of India, as far south as ancient Kāñcī (Conjeevaram), if not even beyond it. By dint of his numerous victories, he made himself a powerful emperor, and his wise statesmanship was equal to his great military abilities. He did not try

the impossible task of bringing under one sceptre the extensive territories conquered by his arms. He kept under his direct administration only the vast stretch of territory in Northern India lying, roughly speaking, to the east of the Yamuna and Chambal rivers and north of the Vindhya hills. The other conquered states, some of which were ruled over by kings, and others by republican clans, acknowledged his suzerainty and were in various degrees of subordination to his imperial authority. The name and fame of Samudragupta spread all over India and even beyond it to the adjacent islands. Of these we have a definite record of his relation with the kingdom of Ceylon. Meghavarna, the ruler of this Island kingdom, decided to found a monastery at Bodh-Gayā in order to provide suitable residence for the Buddhist pilgrims who went from his country to visit that holy land. He, therefore, sent a political mission with rich presents to Samudragupta who gladly granted him permission to build a monastery. Three hundred years after it was built, the Chinese pilgrim, Hsüan Tsang, visited this magnificent establishment, accommodating more than a thousand priests, and was struck with wonder at its rich decorations and massive grandeur.

Samudragupta left the vast empire to Candragupta II who proved a worthy son of a worthy father. He completed the conquest of Northern India by extinguishing the power of the Śakas of Gujarāt, the last remnants of foreign rule in Northern India, and incorporating their dominions within the Gupta empire. His victorious army advanced as far as Bengal in the east and beyond the Hindu Kush, to Bactria or Balkh, in the west. One imperial writ now ran from the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian Sea, and the possessions of the rich ports on the west coast brought the Gupta Empire into contact with the Roman Empire on the west.

Kumāragupta, the son of Candragupta II, maintained intact this vast empire, and when the Hūṇas, the scourge of humanity in ancient days, invaded India, his valiant son Skandagupta inflicted upon them a defeat so severe that for half a century they dared not approach again the frontiers of India. Thus, for nearly two hundred years after the accession of Candragupta I, the Gupta Empire maintained the political unity of Northern India. Then decline set in, due partly to internal dissensions and partly to renewed aggressions of the Hūṇas. The shadow of the empire continued till the middle of the sixth century A.C., but then the inevitable disintegration set in, and a large number of small states arose on the ruins of the mighty empire.

But, though the empire perished, the memory of its greatness survived, and the cultural achievements under the aegis of the great Gupta monarchs surrounded, with a halo of glory, the entire period covering the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries A.C. It is collectively known as the Gupta Age,

and is justly called the 'golden age' or 'classical age' of Indian history. Never before, or since, has India witnessed such a high degree of intellectual development expressed through literature, science, religious and philos-

ophical ideas, sculpture and painting.

It was the age of Kālidāsa, the crest-jewel of Sanskrit poets. So long as mankind retains any interest in literature, the name of Kālidāsa will not be forgotten. His drama Śakuntalā has charmed the connoisseurs of literary art all over the world. His lyric poem Meghadūta is a unique production, and his two Mahākāvyas, Raghuvainsa and Kumārasambhava, have stood the test of time as brilliant gems of Sanskrit poetry. Another great poet, Bhāravi, and two great prose-writers, Daṇḍīn and Subandhu, also flourished during this age. The two great epics, the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, assumed their final form during the Gupta Age.

Āryabhaṭa, the greatest scientist that ancient India produced, was born in 476 A.C. and shed lustre on this age. He revolutionised the whole science of mathematics by the introduction of the decimal place-value system, which can express the highest number with the help of the symbols of 1 to 9 and zero. The scientific value of this system, as compared with the old crude system such as is now represented by Roman numerals, is clearly revealed by its adoption all over the world. It is impossible to exaggerate the value of this discovery not only to the development of mathematics, but also to that of science in general. Āryabhaṭa was also the first to prove that the earth was a sphere which rotated on its axis, and that the eclipses were caused by the shadow of the earth falling on the moon. Besides, he dealt with many mathematical problems which were not worked out till recent times.

Varāhamihara, a Junior contemporary of Āryabhaṭa, was another great scientist who distinguished himself in mathematics, astronomy, astrology and horoscope (horā-śāstra). His famous work, Bṛhatsanihitā, is an encyclopaedia of valuable information regarding a wide variety of useful subjects, such as heavenly bodies, the course of their movements and their effect upon human beings; architecture, construction of images, excavation of tanks, and laying out of gardens; analysis of the characteristics of different kinds of gems, timber, etc. Varāhamihara also gives an interesting account of the various systems of astronomy current in his age, which included both Roman and Greek systems.

Considerable progress was made in this age in other branches of literature, such as poetics and metrics, lexicography and grammar. Candragomin, the founder of the Cāndra system of Sanskrit grammar, certainly, and Amara, the author of the famous lexicon, Amarakoṣa, called after him, probably, belonged to this age. Most of the six great Hindu schools of philosophy also took definite shape during the period.

The vast Purāṇic literature which originated in, or at least took a definite shape, during the Gupta age, marks a turning point in the evolution of Hindu religion. The old Vedic gods had gradually receded into the background and new gods like Visnu, Siva, and others associated with them, under various names and forms, claimed the reverence and worship of the Hindus. The old Vedic sacrifices (yajñas) performed in temporary huts, with elaborate rituals but without any images, had almost disappeared, and the images of Viṣṇu, Śiva, and other gods, placed in magnificent temples, made of durable materials like brick and stone, were worshipped with flower, incense, and music amid endless ceremonies. Sincere and whole-hearted devotion (bhakti) to a personal god took the place of dry speculations and elaborate ritualism. New mythology and new philosophy of this novel system of religion were popularised in the Purānas, which also laid down elaborate rules and regulations for leading a pious and religious life which govern Hindu society till today. In short, the different forms of religious belief and practices which we find today among the Hindus all over India, may be traced to the Puranic literature of this period.

The Gupta Age also witnessed the triumph of the Purāṇic forms of Hinduism, specially Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism, over protestant religions like Buddhism and Jainism. The Gupta age marks the dividing line, not only between the dominance of the protestant Buddhism and Jainism, on the one hand, and of orthodox Brahmanical religion on the other, but also between the old Vedic and current Purāṇic forms of the latter.

The Gupta age also saw the culmination of the arts of sculpture and painting in India. The fine images of Buddha and other divine figures and specimens of decorative arts found in Sarnath and many other places have stamped the age with a characteristic all its own. The ideals of beauty were formulated with precision, and a high degree of aesthetic sense was developed which kept under perfect control the exuberance of emotional and decorative display which marked the degeneration of art in succeeding ages. A sublime ideal of physical beauty, informed with spiritual energy, rare elegance and refinement, technical perfection, and above all, an intellectual grasp of the true aims and essentials of art, characterise the Gupta sculpture. The same qualities are also displayed by the paintings of the period, some specimens of which still decorate the walls and ceilings of a few rock-cut caves at Ajanta and Bagh. Though in a decaying stage, and fast crumbling into dust, some of the painted figures, like some Gupta sculptures, are regarded as master-pieces. art. of the Gupta age is justly styled the classical, for in sculpture and painting it set a standard which was alike the ideal and despair of succeeding ages. The high development of technical art and metallurgy is shown by the iron pillar near Qutb Minar at Delhi. It has stood for fifteen hundred

years in sun and rain, and yet shows no sign of rust. Forging of such a huge mass of iron would have been a veritable wonder even in Europe three hundred years ago.

The brilliant and all-round culture, developed in India during the Gupta age, cast its influence not only over all parts of this great sub-continent, but even in remote regions far beyond its frontier, across the sea, to Ceylon, Indo-China, and the East Indies. The classical Sanskrit literature and Puranic religion flourished in Java, Cambodia, Annam and other places. Large bands of Indians—merchants, craftsmen, missionaries and adventurous Kṣatriya princes—sailed in wooden boats, along Indian coasts to Ceylon. and across the sea to those far-off regions. A vivid account of the perils of the sea is given by Fa-hsien, the Chinese pilgrim, who sailed in a large merchantman along with 200 Indian passengers in 414. A.C. The Indians carried with them the elements of Indian culture which took deep root in these foreign soils. A large number of Hindu kingdoms flourished in Cambodia, Annam, Siam (Thailand), Malay Peninsula, Java, Sumatra, Bali, Borneo and other islands of the Malay Archipelago. Sanskrit was the court language, and classical Sanskrit literature was highly cultivated. The Mahābhārata was regarded with reverence and daily recited in temples, and the two epics furnished the themes of art and literature. The Puranic religions-Vaisnavism and Saivism-were dominant, though Buddhism also flourished side by side, and temples and images were to be found all over the region, exactly as we find in India of the Gupta Age. Hindu social and political institutions, religious belief and practices and Puranic mythology moulded the lives of the people. Indian art made its influence felt everywhere. The sculptures and paintings of Ceylon bear unmistakeable stamp of the Gupta age, and the Buddhist images and decorative sculpture of Java display the characteristic features of the Gupta art. In short, the Gupta age left an indelible stamp on the culture of these far-off lands which are thus justly regarded as parts of Greater India.

B. PALLAVAS AND PANDYAS: THEIR RELATIONS WITH CEYLON

The Pallavas and the Pāṇḍyas, who ruled at Kāñcīpura and Madhurā, respectively, in the extreme south of the Indian peninsula, were in constant touch with Ceylon; their history is of much interest to the student of the ancient history of the Island. Kāñcī became early the most important centre of South Indian Buddhism, and the Buddhist monks of Ceylon are known to have maintained relations from the early centuries before and after Christ with the centres of South Indian Buddhism as far as the Kṛṣṇā valley. The political relations among these powers varied according to temporary exigencies, but the general trend till the rise of the Cola imperial power in the tenth century was for the Pallavas and the kings of Ceylon

to agree in treating the Pāṇḍyas as their common enemy. Political differences among the rulers which led to wars and invasions on occasions did not, however, prove a hindrance to economic and cultural intercourse among their subjects, and to their co-operation in common enterprises, the most notable of which was the colonisation and Hinduization of Indo-China and Indonesia.

Origin and Affiliations

On the origin and affiliation of the Pallavas, there has been much discussion but no consensus of opinion. In its account of the reign of Dutthagāmaṇī (161—157 B.C.) the Mahāvamsa¹ states that the wise Mahādeva came from Pallavabhogga with 460,000 bhikkhus to attend the consecration of the Great Stūpa, and follows it up immediately saying that from Alasandā, the city of the Yonas (Indo-Greeks), came the thera Yonaka Dhammarakkhita with 30,000 bhikkhus. Pallavabhogga means obviously 'the fief of the Pallava,' but the whole account, witness the number of bhikkhus involved, is a patent myth; the close association of Pallava and Yona may, however, be noted. True, the early centuries B.C. and A.C. formed a period when many foreign tribes entered into India and were absorbed in Hindu society, gaining for themselves some recognition as degenerate Kṣatriyas. But the gaps in space and time between this movement and the commencement of Pallava history proper are too great to be overlooked.

The occurrence of the form 'Pallava' in the earliest records of the dynasty authenticates it as the correct form, and invalidates the connection Pallava-Pahlava, which is the main basis for the theory of foreign origin. It is also clear that Pallava is a dynastic, rather than a tribal name. The use of Prakrit followed by that of Sanskrit in their charters may well be taken to indicate their North Indian origin, and it seems likely that they sought their fortunes in the time of Satavahana rule in the Deccan like many another dynasty that set up its independence on the disappearance of the Śātavāhanas. The Pallavas as such are not mentioned in early Tamil literature of the Sangam period. Kāncī and Tondaimandalam, the Pallava country par excellence in later times, were ruled by the Tiraiyar, claiming descent from the waves of the sea; one of the best known rulers of the line was Toṇḍaiman Ilandiraiyan, i.e. the man of Toṇḍai, the young (prince) of the waves. In later Tamil literature and epigraphy, the Pallavas are often called Kādavas, or Kāduveṭṭigal² (foresters, those who cut down forests), perhaps titles bestowed on them by their Tamil subjects in appreciation of their attempts at disafforestation and extension of cultivation.

^{1.} Mt., xxix, v. 39.

^{2.} This title occurs in the Cv., xlvii, v. 7, as 'Kanduvețti.'

It is the general belief among historians that, unlike the Pallavas, the Pāṇdyas were clearly a dynasty of Tamil origin, who set up rule in their country, roughly modern Tirunelvēli and Madurai districts, from time immemorial, like the Colas and Ceras in their respective territories. They developed traditions in relatively late historical times which traced their descent from the Moon, and brought them into close relations with the Five Pāṇḍavas, Pañcavar (the Five)—a name of the Pāṇḍyas also, and with God Siva who performed miracles for them in their capital Madhura, and with Agastya, one of the chief devotees of Siva and the family priest (kulaguru) of the Pandyas. Though no exact details are forthcoming, there is much to show that the Pandyas maintained close relations with Ceylon from early times. Māran was a specific Pāndya title, and the names of Paṇayamāra and Pilayamāra, two of the five Tamil kings whose rule in the first century B.C. is recorded in the Mahāvamsa, may indicate their Pāṇḍya origin.3 Tamils though they might have been, the Pandyas accepted Aryan culture with alacrity and one of their early kings is known as the performer of many Vedic sacrifices-Palyagaśalai Mudukudumi Peruvaludi.

The Early Pallavas

The Pallavas inherited the south and south-east of the Satavahana empire and its administrative tradition. The Mancikallu stone inscription of Sihavamma, the earliest known Pallava ruler, does not give him any imperial titles, though it mentions his kingdom (vejayika); he was still perhaps the feudatory of the Ikṣvākus.4 His relation to Skandavarman of the next two Prakrit copper-plate charters is not clear, and it is not easy to determine the interval between the two rulers. Beginning his career as yuvarāja, Skandavarman attained an imperial position as king, styled himself Dhammamahārājādhirāja, performed the aśvamedha (horse sacrifice) among others, and ruled over an extensive territory spreading from the Kṛṣṇā river to Kāñcī and a little more to the south, and from the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian Sea. The Gangas of Mysore were subordinates of the Pallavas, and Kadamba Mayūraśarman got his kingdom of Banavāsi, after a rebellion, as a gracious gift from the Pallavas-obviously some time after Skandavarman's reign. The latest copper plate grant of this period so far known5 mentions three generations of kings-Vijaya Skandavarman, his son Vijaya Buddhavarman and his son Buddhyankura. The Pallavas of the Prakrit inscriptions must be assigned approximately to the third and early fourth centuries A.C. This early Pallava empire was extensive and well organized. The grant of the emperor is addressed to lords of provinces, royal princes, generals, rulers of districts, custom-house officers,

^{3.} See *supra*, p. 166.

A I., No. 5, p. 53.
 British Museum plates of Cārudevī; EI., VI. p. 88 and VIII, p. 143.

prefects of countries (deśa), village and other officials by designation. Skandavarman's father had presented many crores of gold and one hundred thousand ox-ploughs. An elaborate tax-system, involving exactions in cash and kind, is indicated by the exemptions granted by the emperor to the donees of his grant.

The next Pallava ruler known is Viṣṇugopa of Kāñcī who figures among the opponents of the Gupta emperor Samudragupta during his raid into the Deccan in the middle of the fourth century. His name indicates the Vaisnava affiliations of the monarch. He seems to be related to the next group of Pallava kings who issued about a dozen copper-plate charters in Sanskrit which are all donative, and yield little history though they make it clear that the kings were generally worshippers of Vișnu. Their genealogy is clear, except for the exact position of the kings mentioned in one of the grants (Cendalūr), and they may be assigned to the fourth and fifth centuries on the basis of a Saka date corresponding to 458 A.C., found in a Jaina manuscript of the twenty-second year of the reign of a Simhavarman. Simhavarman is a common Pallava name, and the king of the name who started the best known dynasty of the Pallavas must have come much later. The Pallava administrative system made a further advance in the period of the .Sanskiit charters and the king adopted the additional title of bhattaraka. Other kings, e.g. Vīrakūrca Cūta Pallava of this early period, are named in much later charters; it is not easy, however, to fix their place in history.

Pallavas of the Simhavisnu line and the Pandyas

Now there comes another break, and the whole of South India undergoes a political revolution possibly arising out of religious antipathies. nature of the revolution that upset the polity and economy of South India in the sixth century is extremely obscure. A Pandya copper-plate charter of the end of the eighth century, the Vēļvikudi grant, says: 'Then a Kali king named Kalabhran took possession of the extensive earth driving away numberless great kings (adhirājar)'6. Later it mentions the Kaļabhras (in the plural) and their brave ocean-like army. We hear of a king of the Kalabbhakula (Kalabhra dynasty), Accutavikkanta (Acyutavikranta) by name, who was the patron of Buddhadatta who wrote his Vinayavinicchaya in a lovely monastery at Bhūtamangalam, a city on the banks of the Kāvērī and the hub of Colarattha.7 Accuta's patronage of Buddhism and the outburst of an intense Hindu revival under the Pandyas and Pallavas soon after the overthrow of the Kalabhras may be indications that the Kalabhra danger was not merely political, but religious and social. It must be noted, however, that Jainas seem to have been the chief antagonists of

EI., XVII, p. 306.
 Colas pp. 101-102,

Hinduism in this period of revival; the Buddhists are also mentioned though not so prominently. (Probably the Buddhists and the Jainas had both some close connection with the disturbances referred to above). Many later inscriptions ascribe the overthrow of the Kalabhras to a number of kings who ruled in different parts of South India in the seventh century, and Kadungon and Simhavisnu, who respectively began the Pāṇdya and Pallava dynasties with which we are now concerned, figure as the most prominent of such kings. It is not clear if there was any formal alliance between them to further this common effort.

Contemporary stone inscriptions and copper-plate grants supplemented by literary references yield a fairly connected account of the political and social history of the country after the accession of Simhaviṣṇu. The location of the kingdom of Kāncī forced on it a more or less continuous war on two fronts, on the north against the Cālukyas of Bādāmi and on the south against the Pāṇḍyas. The Pallava rulers, however, met the challenge bravely and with success, and their period is marked by signal contributions to the arts of civilization and peace, to literature in Sanskrit and Tamil, to architecture, sculpture and painting, to music, dance and drama. They played a large part in the expansion of Hindu culture in the east across the Bay of Bengal.

When he suppressed the Kalabhras, Simhaviṣṇu must have had only a small kingdom round about Kāñcī. He soon began extending his dominion and is said to have vanquished the Cola, Pandya and Simhala kings, and seized the fertile country watered by the Kaveri and adorned by paddyfields and areca-groves. His son Mahendravarman I (circa 600-630 A.C.) was one of the most interesting and forceful personalities in history. He was soldier, author, and artist; he delighted in assuming picturesque titles in Sanskrit, Telugu and Tamil, and these are engraved in ornate Pallava-Grantha characters on his monuments in different places such as Trichinopoly, Pallavaram, Dalavanūr and Māmandūr. He continued his father's policy of aggrandizement and sought to recover the ancient possessions of the Pallavas in the north up to the Kṛṣṇā river. This led to a conflict with the Cālukya Pulakeśin II of Bādāmi. That ruler was himself a great and ambitious solider who measured swords on equal terms with the powerful Lord of the North (Sakalottarāpatheśvara) Harṣa-vardhana, aspired to become Daksināpatheśvara in his turn and would not brook the rise of an equal to share his glory. The decisive engagement took place at Pullalūr within fifteen miles of the Pallava capital, and victory was with Mahendra though the Calukya claims to have compelled the valour of the Pallava to seek shelter behind the walls of Kāñcī. The Pallava, however, lost his porthern conquests to the Calukya as a result of the war. Mahendravarman professed Jainism at first and changed over to Saivism under the influence of



Appar or Tirunāvukkaraśu, who had himself undergone a similar conversion, and had suffered for it at the hands of the Pallava king when he was still a Jain. Mahendravarman was the initiator of a particular type of simple and well-proportioned rock-cut cave temples in South India. He dug out many irrigation tanks which bear his name or titles to this day. He was a litterateur and produced the delightful farce *Mattavilāsa*, in which the extreme and vulgar religious practices of the time are held up to ridicule.

Under his son, Narasimhavarman I Mahāmalla (630—668), the Cālukya war was renewed by Pulakeśin II who once more advanced into Pallava territory and fought several engagements. The Pallava king drove out the Cālukya forces from his country, then invaded the Cālukya dominion, invested its capital, and perhaps killed its monarch in battle. A rock inscription in the heart of Bādāmi dated in the thirteenth year of Narasimhavarman is clear proof of the Pallava success that created confusion in the Cālukya country for a dozen years or so. The part played by the Sinhalese prince Mānavamma in this war, and the assistance given by the Pallava to him to gain the Sinhalese throne, will be dealt with in Chapter IV. Narasimhavarman was a great builder who richly embellished Māmallapuram with monuments and sculptures, if he did not actually create the

port-city.

Mahendravarman II, the son of Narasimhavarman I, had a very short reign of two years, and was followed by his son Parameśvaravarman I. The Calukyas rallied under the able leadership of Vikramaditya I and renewed the war with the Pallavas, having secured the alliance of the Pandya Arikeśari Parānkuśa Māravarman I (670-760), the first important ruler of the rising Pandya kingdom, and most probably the ruler who was converted by Nanasambandar from Jainism to Saivism, becoming thus the Pāṇdyan counter-part of Pallava Mahendravarman I. Vikramāditya marched to the banks of the Kāvērī (674 A.C.) and encamped at Uraiyūr, the ancient Cola capital. Nothing daunted, Paramesvara contrived to send a force against Bādāmi where it encountered princes Vinayāditya and Vijayāditya, the son and grandson of Vikramāditya, and returned with considerable booty; meantime, with another powerful army, he inflicted a defeat on Vikramāditya and his Pāndya ally in the battle of Peruvalanallur (two miles from Uraiyur). After this, there was a lull in the hundred years' conflict between the Pallavas and Calukyas. The long reign of Narasimhavarman II (Rājasimha, 680-720), like the reigns of his Calukya contemporaries, was peaceful and prosperous. Architecture made signal advances; the first structural stone temple of the period had been erected at Kūram under Parameśvaravarman,8 and now much larger and more beautiful temples like the Shore Temple of Māmallapuram and

^{8.} Dubreuil, op. cit. pp. 44-5.

the Kailāsanātha at Kāñcī and the Panamali temple came up. Rājasimha was also a patron of literature; Daṇḍin, the celebrated rhetorician and prose writer in Sanskrit, probably spent some years at his court. He sent embassies to China and maritime trade flourished greatly in his time. He was followed by his son Parameśvaraman II (720—731), in whose reign Kāñcī was invaded and pillaged by the Cālukya crown-prince Vikramāditya II aided by the Gaṅga; Parameśvara's attempt at retaliation against the Gaṅga Śripuruṣa ended in disaster, as the Pallava king lost his life in a second battle at Vilande. The Gaṅga seized the Pallava royal umbrella, and assumed the title Permānadi.

The death of Parameśvara II caused a political crisis in the Pallava kingdom. There was no one to succeed him, and the officials in the capital, acting with the Ghaṭikā (college of learned Brāhmaṇas) and the people, chose a prince from a collateral branch, a son of Hiraṇyavarman, who bore the personal name Parameśvara Pallavamalla, and later crowned himself as Nandivarman II. There arose, however, other pretenders to the Pallava throne, among them Citramāya who gained not only some support within the kingdom, but aid from the Pāṇḍya ruler also.

In the Pāndya kingdom Arikeśari Parānkusa was succeeded by his son Kōccadaiyan Ranadhira, a brave soldier who occupied the hill country between Tirunelvēli and Travancore after suppressing a revolt, and extended his dominion into the Kongu country. The next ruler was Maravarman Rājasimha I who supported Citramāya,9 and inflicted several defeats on Nandivarman II before investing him closely in Nandigrāma or Nandipura, usually identified with Nathankoil near Kumbakonan where Nandivarman later built a Vișnu temple, as we learn from the hymns of Tirumangaiālvār.10 But the able Pallava general Udayacandra encountered the Pāṇḍya forces in several battles, raised the siege of Nandigrāma, caught and beheaded Citramaya, and thus rendered the Pallava throne secure for his master. The Cālukya Vikramāditya II, assisted by his Ganga feudatory Śripurusa, invaded the Pallava kingdom about 740, and this was the greatest danger to Nandivarman II in the early years of his long reign. Vikramāditya, however, was on the whole very considerate. Though he defeated Nandivarman in battle and occupied his capital for a time, he did no damage to the city, pleased the people by his liberal gifts, and returned

^{9.} Dubreuil postulated a dynastic alliance by which Kōccadaiyan married the daughter of Pallava Rājasimha and named his son after the maternal grandfather; he also thought that Citramāya was the son of Parameśvara II and legitimate heir to the throne, who called his relative Rājasimha Pāṇḍya to help (op. cit. pp. 68-9). This is to build too much on the title Rājasimha, and the Vaikuṇṭhaperumāl temple inscription clearly says that the kingdom was facing confusion (rājyam utsannamāka) before the choice of Nandivarman II.

^{10.} More recently, the claims of Nandivaram in the Chingleput district have been urged, but a place on the Pallava-Pāṇḍya frontier seems more likely.

to the Kailāsanātha and all other temples the heaps of gold that belonged to them. After recording these doings in a Kannaḍa inscription engraved on a pillar in Kailāsanātha and thus wiping off the disgrace that had befallen the Cālukyas by the occupation of Bādāmi by Narasimhavarman I, Vikramāditya withdrew to his own country, carrying with him some of the ablest architects and sculptors from the Pallava capital, and leaving Nandivarman to resume charge of his kingdom. In a few years (circa 744), towards the end of his reign, Vikramāditya sent out another expedition against Kāñcī under his son Kīrtivarman, who returned with many elephants and much gold and jewellery from the Pallava capital.

The Pāṇḍya Māravaman Rājasimha compensated himself for his failure against Nandivarman II by extending his empire further in Kongu and even beyond. He crossed the Kāvērī, subdued Malakongam on the border-land between the Trichinopoly and Tanjore districts, and defeated the Cālukya Kīrtivarman II and his feudatory Ganga Śrīpuruṣa in a big battle at Veṇbai, and made peace with them accepting the hand of a Ganga princess for his son.

As for Nandivarman, he had to face an invasion by the Rāṣṭrakūṭa Dantidurga about 750 A.C. or a little later. But Dantidurga who was aiming at the overthrow of the Calukyas, was more keen on securing Nandivarman's friendship than on humiliating him or taking his territory; so, after a demonstration of force, he made his peace with the Pallava monarch, to whom he gave his daughter Reva in marriage. The issue of this union was Dantivarman, the son and successor of Nandivarman II. Round about 775, Nandivarman, assured of Rāṣṭrakūṭa friendship, invaded the Ganga country, defeated Śripuruṣa and recovered the precious crown-jewel ugrodaya lost a century earlier by Parameśvarman I; some territory was also seized from the Ganga and handed over to Jayanandivarman, the Bana feudatory of the Pallava. A few years later (778) Nandivarman co-operated with Rāstrakūta Govinda II to enable Sivamāra II to gain the Ganga throne against the opposition of his brother Duggamara Ereyapa. But the chief enemy of Nandivarman at this time was the Pandya Jatila Parantaka or Varaguna I (765-815), the ablest of the Pandyan rulers of the age. The Pallava forces sustained a defeat at Pennagadam on the south bank of the Kāvērī, and Pallavamalla tried to form a confederacy with the rulers of Kongu and Kerala and the Adigaman of Tagadur (Dharmapuri, in Salem) against the Pandya. But the latter rose equal to the occasion, fought several successful battles, put Adigaman to flight, and captured the king of Western Kongu and imprisoned him at Madhura after annexing his territory. He also invaded Pallava territory and fixed his camp for a time at Araisūr on the banks of the Pennār in Tondaimandalam. Thus Nandivarman failed utterly in his attempt to arrest the progress of Varaguna Pāndya. His rule lasted till about 795.

The Pāṇḍya Varaguṇa I won other successes after that against the confederacy organised by Nandivarman. He conquered South Travancore and under him the Pāṇḍya empire attained its greatest extent, extending well beyond Trichinopoly into Tanjore, Salem and Coimbatore. This expansion continued under his son and successor Śrīmāra Śrīvallabha (815—862). He invaded Ceylon in the reign of Sena I (831—851).¹¹

Nandivarman II was succeeded by his son Dantivarman (785-836). The northern expansion of Pāndya power under Varaguna I and Śrīmāra deprived Dantivarman of a considerable part of his territory in the south. He was succeeded by his son Nandivarman III, a much abler ruler than his father. Having secured the alliance of the Gangas, Colas and Rastrakūtas, Nandi inflicted a defeat on the invading Pandya forces at Tellaru in the Wandiwash taluq of North Arcot, about thirty miles south of Kāñcī, and gained the title Tellarerinda (who gained victory at Tellaru). But now the Pāṇḍya forces were rolled back into their home country, Pallava advanced as far as the Vaigai river in the heart of the Pandya Śrimāra, however, recovered his strength and later, about 859, he defeated Nandivarman and his confederates in battles near Kumbakonam. Nandivarman III was a patron of letters; besides the anonymous quasihistorical poem Nandikkalambakam, a translation of the Mahābhārata into Tamil by Perundevanar belongs to his time. He is also said to have maintained a powerful fleet, and a Tamil inscription at Takua-pa in Siam attests to his overseas connections by mentioning a Visnu temple and a tank called Avani-nāraṇam after one of his titles; the tank and temple were entrusted to the care of the members of the merchant-guild Manigrāmam and of the Senāmukham (cantonment) resident in the place-a proof of the spread of the trade and military connections of the Pallava dominions at the time. Nandivarman married Sankhā, a daughter of the Rāṣṭrakūta Nṛpatunga Amoghavarṣa I, and had a son Nṛpatunga by her who succeeded him on the throne.

Soon after his accession, Nṛpatuṅga distinguished himself in the Pāṇḍya war by a decisive victory he won on the banks of the river Ariśil (Aricit), a branch of the Kāvērī which enters the sea at Karaikāl. This battle was, however, not an isolated event, but part of a turn of affairs which ended disastrously for the Pāṇḍya kingdom. Śrīmāra's aggressive campaigns which had earned for him the title Paracakrakolāhala (confounder of the circle of his enemies) naturally roused the hostility of his neighbours. Sena II (851—885)¹² of Ceylon allied himself with the Pallavas and supported a Pāṇḍya prince Varaguṇa who sought his aid against Śrīmāra. An account of this Sinhalese invasion of Pāṇḍya which resulted in the elevation of

^{11.} See infra, pp. 326-328
12. For a detailed account of Sena II's invasion of the Pāṇḍya country, see infra, pp. 329-330

Varaguna II to the throne will be given in Chapter IV. By his rebellion and intrigues, Varagunavarman perhaps gained the throne a few years carlier than he would normally have done, but at a heavy price. He played into the hands of the enemies of the kingdom he wanted to make his own, and brought about the death of his parents in tragic circumstances. had also to accept the position of a vassal of the Pallava Nṛpatuṅga, the ally of his Sinhalese patron.13 Later in his reign, Varaguna sought to regain his independence and invaded the Pallava territory; he reached Idavai on the north bank of the Kāvērī in the Cola country (circa 879), but soon found himself opposed by a formidable combination; Aparājita, the son of Nṛpatunga, was its leader, and the Ganga Pṛthvīpati I and Cola Āditya I co-operated. The decisive battle was fought at Śripurambiyam near Kumbakonam in 880, and Varaguna suffered a crushing defeat, though Pṛthvipati I fell on the battlefield. The Pallava victory was, however, illusory. Aditya was the chief gainer who turned the weakness of the Pallava power to much advantage and carried on many aggressive campaigns resulting in the enlargement of the Cola dominion. At last, he invaded Tondaimandalam, and in a battle that ensued, he pounced upon Aparājita when he was mounted on an elephant and slew him. That was the end of the Pallava kingdom which now merged in the growing Cola empire (897).

C. RISE OF THE COLA EMPIRE IN SOUTH INDIA.

The Colas, like the Pāṇdyas and Ceras, are generally believed to have been an indigenous dynasty of Tamil rulers. Their origin is lost in the mists of antiquity, and they were believed to have ruled in the country called after them (roughly the Tanjore and Tirucinapalli districts of the Kāvērī valley) from time immemorial. They are known to the grammarian Kātyāyana, and are mentioned in the inscriptions of Asoka among the independent states outside his empire. The Colas had the tiger as their crest, figured on their seals and banners, and were also known as Sembiyans (descendants of Sibi); Valavan and Killi were also titles often applied to The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea mentions the two regions of the Cola country, the coastal region which had Puhār or Kāvērīpattinam for its port, and the inland region which had Uraiyur (Argaru) for its capital. Uraiyūr was on the south bank of the Kāvērī, and Puhār at the mouth of the river. Ptolemy, the Alexandrine geographer, gives sufficiently precise data on the location of Khaberis (Kāvērīpaṭṭinam) and Nikama (Nāgapattinam). The references to Colas in the Sangam literature and in the Sinhalese historical tradition relating to early times have been noticed in previous chapters.14

Cv., li. vv. 27-51. Also Proceedings AIOC, Bombay (1949), pp. 294-297.
 See supra, pp. 144ff and 206ff.

After the Sangam age, the Colas suffered a political eclipse from which they emerged only in the ninth century A.C. That they continued to maintain an obscure existence on the banks of the Kāvērī during the long interval of four or five centuries may be seen from stray references to them in epigraphy and tradition. Like other kings of the Tamil country, they too must have suffered under the tyranny of the Kalabhras. The Cola country proper passed under the rule of an Accutavikkanta, a ruler of the Kalabhakula and patron of the Buddhist writer, Buddhadatta. We hear of some obscure Cola princes, but there is no doubt that the Colas had ceased to be a power during the centuries when the Pallavas of the Simhaviṣṇu line and the Pāṇḍyas of the Kaḍuṅgōn dynasty were at the height of their prosperity (seventh to ninth century).

However, when the Pallavas and Pandyas had exhausted themselves in perpetual mutual struggle, the Colas found their opportunity and seized it. Vijayālaya, we hear, took hold of Tañjāvūr (Tanjore) and there founded a temple of goddess Niśumbhasūdinī (Durgā). Vijayālaya is described as Parakeśarī (lion to enemies) and this title was held alternately with Rājakēśarī (lion among kings) by successive Cola monarchs of this period. Vijayalaya's capture of Tanjore occurred about the middle of the ninth century; and he must have acted as a Pallava vassal against the Muttaraiyar who are known to have held sway in the Tanjore and Pudukkottai areas as vassals of the Pāṇḍyas; by this success Vijayālaya so improved his position that his suzerain allowed him to assume titles and record inscriptions in his own name. He was succeeded on the throne by his son Aditya I (871— 907 A.C.), a Rājakēśarī. He fought for his Pallava overlords along with Prthvipati I at Śripurambiyam (880) against the Pandya Varaguna II, and the death of Prthvipati in that battle left Aditya the most powerful of the Pallava feudatories. Some years later, he defeated and slew in battle the last Pallava ruler Aparajita and annexed Tondaimandalam to the Cola kingdom, a task in which he was assisted by his son Parantaka. The western Gangas transferred their allegiance as a result from the Pallavas to the Colas and Prthvipati II, the son of Mārasimha, served them loyally till his death about 940 A.C. To strengthen his political position, Aditya married a Pallava princess among others. He also conquered the Kongu country (Salem and Coimbatore districts) partly from the Pandyas and partly from the Gangas, and constructed temples of Siva along the banks of the Kaveri in its entire course from the Sahyadri (Western Ghats) to the sea. The conquest of Kongu brought Aditya into friendly contact with the contemporary Cera ruler Sthānu Ravi, and a dynastic alliance by which a Cera princess was accepted as a bride for prince Parantaka. Aditya had another son by name Kannaradeva by a Rāṣṭrakūṭa princess,

^{15.} See infra, p. 390.

a daughter of Kṛṣṇa II. Under Āditya I, therefore, the Cola power established itself quite firmly as an independent state, and neighbouring states became eager to develop friendly relations with it.

The accession of Aditya's son Parantaka I to the throne can, thanks to the records of his reign dated in the Saka years and in the Kaliyuga era, be dated in the first half of 907 A.C. Parantaka who had taken part in Āditya's war against the Pallava Aparājita, continued the policy of conquest and aggrandizement, which landed him in difficulties, especially towards the end of his reign of forty-eight years or so. Soon after his accession, he undertook a campaign against the Pandya kingdom, and carned the title Maduraikonda (captor of Madurai). He had to lead a second expedition some years later, and his victory in the battle of Vellur (circa 915) led to the flight of Rajasimha II to Ceylon which had throughout stood by the Pāṇdya, and thence to Keraļa. Parāntaka now added Ceylon to his conquests and assumed the title Maduraiyum Ilamum konda; with what justification he did this will be seen later. Meanwhile, the Rastrakūta Kṛṣṇa II had invaded the Cola dominion to uphold the hereditary rights of his grandson Kannaradeva who had been passed over by Aditya's nomination of Parantaka to the succession. Kṛṣṇa II was no great soldier and suffered defeat in the battle of Vallala (Tiruvallam) about 910-911, and Parantaka took the title Vira Cola for this victory against the 'invincible Kṛṣṇarāja.' He extended his empire to the north along the east coast up to Nellore and beyond, and the smaller dynasties displaced by his conquests like the Bāṇas and Vaidumbas sought refuge in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa court and urged a war of revenge on the Cola. This was undertaken by Kṛṣṇa III who invaded Tondaimandalam and achieved remarkable success. He called himself captor of Kāñcī and Tañjāvūr after the decisive battle of Takkolam (949 A.C.) in which the Cola crown prince Rajaditya lost his life. The northern half of the Cola empire passed under his occupation for some years, and he raided the south as far as Rāmeśvaram, and encouraged revolts against the Cola. Parāntaka's reign ended in gloom about 955. The next thirty years were marked by confusion and slow recovery, hampered by Pandya wars and dynastic dissensions. The names of the sovereigns of the period with their probable dates are:

Rājakeśarī Gaṇḍarāditya Parakeśarī Ariñjaya	circa circa	949/50 — 957 956 — 957	A.C. A.C.
Rājakeśarī Sundara Coļa Parāntaka II (Madurai-koṇḍa)	circa	956 — 973	A.C.
(Parakeśarī Āditya II Karikāla murdered when heir apparent)	circa	956 — 969	A.C.
Parakeśari Uttama Cola	circa	969 — 985	A.C.

Uttama Cola was a son of Gaṇḍarāditya; he also bore the title Madurai-koṇḍa, and in his ambition to occupy the Cola throne, promoted a conspiracy for the murder of Āditya; the disconsolate Sundara Cola survived the tragedy for some years, and he and his younger son Arumolivarman agreed to a compromise with Uttama by which Arumoli was to get the throne after Uttama had satisfied his desire to rule. The accession of Arumoli accordingly took place in 985 A.C. by which time the Rāṣṭrakūṭa occupation of the northern half of the Cola kingdom had been cleared, and the restoration of Cola authority in South India had gone far.

Arumoli was crowned under the name Rājarāja, and with him began a century of exceptional progress and prosperity for the Cola power. South India below the Tungabhadra together with Ceylon was brought under one rule, and firmly administered by a bureaucratic central government which had hit upon the secret of combining efficiently central control with local autonomy. The kingdom of Vengi stretching along the coastal Āndhradeśa up to Kalinga (Orissa) was a protectorate under a dynasty which owed its restoration to Rajaraja, and entered into such close matrimonial relations with Colas for successive generations till in the end one of its princes (Kulottunga I) inherited both the thrones. Industry and trade flourished as at no other time, and an active naval policy was pursued which aimed at converting the Bay of Bengal to a virtual Cola lake. Learning and literature in Sanskrit and Tamil attained unprecedented developments, and the arts of architecture, sculpture and painting may be said to have attained their highwater mark. There was, however, almost continuous war with the Calukyas of Kalyani who ruled over extensive territory beyond the Tungabhadra, and the mutual hostility of these two great powers did no good to either, and had its repercussions on the history of Ceylon.

Rājarāja's greatness as conqueror and administrator is very well-marked. He began the practice, kept up by his successors, of leaving a contemporary record of the principal events of the reign in set praśastis (lauds), revised and brought up to date from time to time—a notable instance of an exceptional historical sense. Early in his reign he broke up a confederacy of Pāṇḍya, Cera and Ceylon, and brought the western hill country round Nilgiris into the empire. Then he overran the Mysore country up to the Tungabhadrā, which brought him into conflict with Tailapa II, the founder of the Western Cālukya power, and his son Satyāśraya. The crown prince Rājendra distinguished himself in the Cālukya war which was apparently marked by unusual savagery against the non-combatant population in Cālukya territory. Rājarāja gave shelter to the exiled Eastern Cālukya princes of Vengī, Śaktivarman and Vimalāditya; their kingdom had been captured by the Telugu-Coḍa chieftain Jaṭā Coḍa Bhīma who advanced

as far south as Kāñcī, but paid for it with his life. Saktivarman was restored to the throne of Vengi, and gratefully acknowledged Rajaraja's help by owning allegiance to him and accepting his daughter as the bride of his younger brother Vimalāditya. This virtual union of Vengi and Cola accentuated the hostility of the Calukya power, which began a long-standing fight against the Cola on two fronts-in Vengi to the east, and across the Tungabhadrā to the south. Rājarāja also conquered Ceylon and the Maldives, and organized a powerful fleet. He conducted an accurate land survey, and laid the foundations of a sound revenue system. Saivite though he was, he followed a tolerant religious policy, and allowed the Buddhist Sailendra ruler of Sumatra (Śrīvijaya) to build a vihāra for the use of his subjects at Nāgapaṭṭinam, and even endowed the vihāra with a whole village. Not religion so much as trade must have been the basis of the relations between Śrīvijaya and the Cola empire, and Rājarāja pursued maritime trade beyond Śrīvijaya by sending a mission to China, and thus setting a precedent followed by his successors whenever possible. The Great Temple now known as Brhadiśvara, and called Rājarājeśvara in the contemporary inscriptions, is a magnificient all-stone monument which must have been raised at enormous cost in labour and material; with its superb vimāna adorned by groups of masterly sculpture and fine paintings in true fresco in the pradaksina round the garbhagrha under the vimāna, it worthily commemorates the splendour of the reign of Rājarāja.

Rajendra put to excellent use the resources of the powerful kingdom bequeathed by his father. The range of his ambition became much wider and the Cola empire sought and won recognition not only in the whole of India but in many lands outside especially in the East. He began by pressing the war against the Calukyas, and his armies attacked and took Banavāse (Vanavāsi) in the west, Koļļipākkai (Kulpak, 45 miles N.E. of Hyderabad-Deccan) and even assaulated Manyakheta (Malkhed), once the capital of the Rāstrakūtas and still an important fortress city of the Cālukyas. He completed the conquest of the south by campaigns in south Kerala and Pāṇḍya, and appointed a viceroy at Madhurā. In Vengī, where the Cālukyas tried to set upon the throne a candidate of their own, Rājendra successfully maintained the claims of his nephew and son-in-law Rajaraja Narendra, and followed up the fighting in that direction by a military raid to the banks of the Ganges in Bengal and Bihar, and took the title Gangaikonda (captor of the Ganga) which he bestowed on the new capital he erected, and the great temple at its centre called respectively Gangaikonda-Colapuram and Gangaikonda-Colesvara. Nothing has survived of the city, but the temple, even after all the ravages of time and the spoliation of man, still constitutes a worthy memorial of the great emperor; it excels the Great Temple raised by his father at Tanjore by its more sinuous

silhouettes and superior sculpture. The relations with Śrīvijaya, friendly at the commencement of the reign, took another turn with the development of an active maritime policy on the part of Rājendra, which could not brook the long-standing and strict control by Śrīvijaya of the sea lanes of Malayasia on the sea route to China. This expansionist policy also required the completion and consolidation of the Cola conquest of the whole of Ceylon, and these were effected (as we shall see in detail later) before the despatch of a powerful naval expedition against Śrivijaya which was a great success (1025); many cities including Kaḍāram (Kedah) and Śrivijaya (Palembang in Sumatra) were captured, and the monarch taken captive. But no permanent annexation followed, though some political connection was maintained and occasions arose for Cola interference in the affairs of Śrivijaya off and on. The closing years of Rājendra I's reign may well be taken to mark the apogee of the imperial Cola power.

CHAPTER II

MAHĀSENA: SIRIMEGHAVANNA TO SUCCESSORS OF **UPATISSA**

MAHASENA was succeeded, in or about 301 A.C., by his son Sirimeghavanna, who is the first king of the Cūlavamsa. His name is given as Kitsirimevan or Kirtiśrimēgha in the Sinhalese works.1 The Tonigala rock-inscription, which records the name of the king for the purpose of dating, confirms the statement in the chronicles that Sirimeghavanna was Mahāsena's son.2 It is said in the chronicles that his reign was devoted mainly to the expiation of the ill deeds of his father, Mahāsena, who destroyed the Mahāvihāra and its establishments on the evil advice of Samghamitta and the minister

Sirimeghavanna was the contemporary of the great Indian emperor Samudragupta, with whom he had established friendly relations. The Allahabad pillar-inscription of Samudragupta mentions Saimhala (i.e. people of Ceylon) among the peoples who paid homage to him.³ The relations between the two kings are recorded in the Chinese source Hingtchoan of Wang Hiuen-ts'e. According to the story related there, two bhikkhus whom Sirimeghavanna (Chi-mi-kia-po-ma) sent to India on a pilgrimage to the sacred Bodhi Tree reported to the king on their return the great inconvenience they had to undergo owing to lack of suitable accommodation in the vicinity. Thereupon, the king is said to have sent an embassy with presents, asking for permission to build a monastery there. The request was granted by Samudragupta and, at the time Wang Hiuen-ts'e visited the place, the monastery was the abode of many pilgrims.4 The establishment of a shrine at Buddhagayā by a sthavira Mahānāman from Lanka, as recorded in an inscription discovered at this site, could be connected with this event.5 The Pali chronicles and the Sinhalese sources, however, make no reference to any of the events, or to any association between the two kings.

It is possible that in the Allahabad pillar-inscription, which is panegyrical in character, the courtier who composed the praśasti regarded the embassy

^{1.} Pv. Tr., p. 24, Ns. Tr., p. 16; Rv. Tr., p. 45; Rrk., p. 24.
2. Si Puviya Mahasena Maharajaha puta Sarimekavana Aba maharajaha cata legitaka tinavanaka vasahi. 'Hail! In the time of the third year after the raising of the umbrella by the great king Sarimekavana Aba, son of the great king Mahasena', EZ., III, p. 172f.

3. CII, III, p. 8.

4. JCBRAS, XXIV (No. 68), pp. 75ff.

5. CII, III, pp. 274—278; IA, XV, pp. 356—359. See infra, p. 392.

and the presents sent by the Ceylon king as a form of homage paid to the Gupta emperor. Perhaps Sirimeghavanna thought it politic to maintain friendly relations with the mighty Indian monarch, particularly because of the existence within his empire of places of worship esteemed by the people of this Island. The synchronism of Sirimeghavanna and Samudragupta is one of the most important landmarks in the reconstruction of the Island's chronology.

Sirimeghavanna's reign is best remembered in history for the bringing of the Tooth Relic (danta-dhātu) which later became the palladium of the Sinhalese kings. It is said that, in the ninth year of his reign, the daughter of the Kalinga king, in the guise of a Brahmin woman, brought here the Tooth Relic which was received with the honour due to such a sacred object.

Jetthatissa II6 succeeded his elder brother in 328 A.C. and ruled for nine years.7 He is said to have been highly proficient in the art of ivory carving (danta-sippa), and is even said to have taught this art to many people. The name 'Jetthatissa' in this context is interesting as jettha here does not signify seniority of birth, for he was the younger son of Mahasena. Paranavitana is of the opinion that ' jettha in this and other similar names does not signify seniority of birth, but is an old official title which in course of time came to be used as a proper name.'8 It may even be that, in this particular instance, this king was merely given the name of his father's brother who was the first ruler known to have borne the name 'Jetthatissa'.9 He also appears to have had 'Sirimegha' as one of his names. 10 The name 'Sirimegha' was borne by his elder brother as well as by his grandfather, Gothābaya.11

Buddhadāsa, the son and successor of Jetthatissa, is famous in history for his great skill in medicine and surgery; marvellous cures have been attributed to him. Several incidents are related in the chronicles to illustrate his proficiency in the art of healing not only men, but beasts also. Buddhadasa did much for the social as well as moral upliftment of his people. The welfare works undertaken by him come up to modern standards. He instituted hospitals (vejja-sālā) all over the Island, and maintained physicians at state expense not only to look after human beings, but also animals needing medical attention. Establishments were set up for the care and maintenance of the blind and cripples. In order to promote

^{6.} Called the Second to distinguish him from the earlier king of the same name.

^{7.} Geiger takes Jetthatissa to be the youngest son of Sirimeghavanna's brother, Cv. Tr., I, pp. xvii and 9. The Sinhalese sources referred to in foot-note l, however, are against this.

^{8.} EZ., III, p. 122. 9. Cv., xxxvii, v. 1. 10. EZ., III. p. 122.

^{11.} Mv., xxxvi, v. 98.

the moral well-being of his subjects, he arranged for the preaching of the dhamma in various parts of the kingdom. Institutions like the Moraparivena in the Mahāvihāra and several other religious buildings were founded by him; income from various villages were set apart for their maintenance, and the bhikkhus were given regular alms. It is recorded in the chronicles that the suttas12 were translated into Sinhalese by a thera named Mahādhammakathin during the reign of this king. Tradition also credits Buddhadāsa with the authorship of a medical work named Sārārthasanigraha, but the work known in Ceylon under this name is certainly not of so early a date as the reign of this monarch.13 The inscriptional records reveal that Buddhadāsa had adopted his grandfather's name as well. He has been referred to as Budadasa Mahasena (i.e. Buddhadāsa Mahāsena)14 or by the name of Mahāsena alone.15

Buddhadasa died in the twenty-ninth year of his reign, and was succeeded by his eldest son Upatissa, who was as virtuous, pious and benevolent as his father. The Cūlavamsa records a number of incidents in illustration of his kindly disposition. He continued the welfare services undertaken by Buddhadasa and looked after cripples, expectant mothers, the blind and the sick. Upatissa is credited with the construction of several tanks and a large number of religious buildings. He also solemnised religious festivals. None of the tanks built by him have been identified, except for the Topaväva at Polonnaru which is generally attributed to him. A severe famine and plague occurred in the reign of the king, and it is said that, in order to overcome these misfortunes, he had the city gaily decorated and the Ratanasutta recited by the bhikkhus and the water sprinkled along the streets. Upatissa reigned for the comparatively long period of forty-two years before he met with his death at the hands of his own queen who murdered him to make way for her paramour, the king's younger brother, Mahānāma, who was a monk at the time.

Mahānāma gave up the robes, married his brother's consort and ascended the throne in 406 A.C. He too followed the footsteps of his elder brother, and continued the welfare services started by their father. He constructed several new vihāras and renovated those that were in ruins. The most important historical event that took place in the reign of this king is the translation into Pāli of the commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā), which then existed in the Sinhalese language, by Ācariya Buddhaghosa who came from India. He is said to have been a Brāhmaṇa from Buddhagayā who, after his conversion to Buddhism, came to Ceylon for this very purpose of translating

^{12. &#}x27;Sutta' is one of the three divisions of the Buddhist scriptures, the other two being Vinaya and Abhidhamma.

^{13.} EZ., III, p. 121.
14. Ruvanvälisäya pillar-inscription, EZ., III, pp. 122ff.

into Pāli the vast volume of exegetical literature which was not available in India. In one of his own works, Manorathapūraṇī, Buddhaghosa refers to his connections with South India, and mentions Kāñchī as one of the places where he resided for a time. On his arrival here he had to prove his scholarship and ability to undertake this stupendous task before the work was entrusted to him. He wrote several commentaries, more than half the existing works of this category being his contributions. He is undoubtedly the greatest Theravāda Buddhist commentator, and there is small wonder that so many legends have grown around his name.

It may be of interest to note that two of Buddhaghosa's works, Samanta-pāsādikā and Dhammapadaṭṭakathā, refer to the king, during whose reign the commentaries were written, by the names 'Sirinivāsa' and 'Sirikuḍḍa,' respectively. These were only honorific epithets for Mahānāma; in fact, inscriptions have been found where this monarch has been given the epithet of 'Tiripali' or 'Taripala' which, in meaning, is not very different to the epithets given in the commentaries. He too like his predecessors bore the grandfather's name, 'Jeṭṭhatissa' 20, also.

The celebrated Chinese pilgrim Fa-Hsien, who visited many countries in search of Buddhist scriptures, probably came to this Island during the reign of this monarch, and stayed here for about two years. In the account of his travels, he gives valuable information not only about the state of the religion at the time, but also about the conditions of the country in general and of Anurādhapura in particular.

According to the Chinese sources, there had been intercourse between China and Ceylon during the period covered by the reigns of Buddhadāsa and his two sons, Upatissa and Mahānāma. One account records that an embassy with an image of the Buddha from the king of Ceylon to the emperor Hiao-ou-ti of the Tsin dynasty arrived in China in the course of the period 405—418 A.C., after ten years delay en route. The Ceylon king Tsa-li-Mohanan (Kṣatriya Mahānāman) is recorded to have sent a letter and presents to the Chinese court in 428 A.C., and two embassies from Ceylon bearing the products of the country are said to have reached China in 430 A.C. and 435 A.C., respectively. Mention is also made of the arrival of nuns from Ceylon for the ordination of Chinese women.²¹ It is not likely that the relations between the two countries were merely

^{16.} Cv., xxxvii, vv. 215-246. For further information, See infra, pp. 388ff.

^{17.} Inscription from Monaragala, CJSG., II, p. 18; Tiripali Mahanama Jetatisa.

18. Tissamahārāma Slab Inscription, now in Colombo Museum, AIC., No. 67. Budadasa

Tiripala Mahanamika Jetatisa-maharaja.

19. Tiripala = Pali Siripālita 'protected by the Goddess of Prosperity'; Sirinivāsa = Sirikudda 'abode of the Goddess of Prosperity.'

^{20.} EZ., III, p. 124.
21. For detailed discussions of relations with China, see JCBRAS., XXIV, (No. 68), pp. 98ff.

cultural; the indications are that there was a considerable amount of trade. Ceylon at this time was the centre of an extensive entrepot trade extending on the one side as far as China, and on the other to Persia and beyond. The goods received in Ceylon from China for distribution in the outer ports included silks, aloes, clovewood, sandalwood, etc.²² Presents taken from Ceylon to China consisted mainly of pearls, precious stones, filigreed gold, valances etc. and these might very well have been articles of trade. Fa-Hsien himself mentions a Chinese merchant who made an offering of a fan of white silk at the Abhayagiri monastery.

The direct line of the Lambakanna dynasty founded by Vasabha appears to have become extinct with the death of Mahānāma. This monarch, apparently, had no sons by the queen, and on his death, Sotthisena, a son borne to him by a Tamil consort, ascended the throne. The Sinhalese sources give his name as Sengot. Evidently, he had no claim to the throne, and he was killed by his half-sister Samghā, Mahānāma's daughter by the queen, who made her husband the king. He held the office of the parasolbearer (chattagāhaka) in the royal household before he was made king, for he is referred to by this title in the Pāli chronicles and not by his name. Chattagāhaka died in the course of a year. He was probably a scion of the Lambakanna dynasty, Tissa by name. Some of the Sinhalese sources give his name as Lämäni Tissa (Lambakanna Tissa).

The next ruler Mittasena was an imposter who was placed on the throne by one of the ministers who in effect wielded the power. This unlawful succession and the weakness of the kings who preceded him must have, in all probability, resulted in confusion and chaos in the country. A Tamil named Paṇḍu who probably took advantage of this situation invaded the Island and seized the throne. Mittasena's rule did not last more than a year.

The exact place of origin of the Tamils who invaded Ceylon at this time is uncertain. The name 'Paṇḍu', of the first of these rulers, has given rise to the view that they came from the Pāṇḍya country. The Sinhalese sources, Pūjāvalī and Rājāvalī, call them Tamils from the Coļa country. The period from about the fourth century A.C. to about the middle of the sixth century in South Indian history is usually referred to as the Kaļabhra interregnum and, according to Tamil tradition, the Kaļabhras kept the Coļas, the Ceras and the Pāṇḍyas in subjection. Perhaps the incursion of Tamils to Ceylon in the fifth century was not unconnected with the disturbed conditions that prevailed in South India at that time.

The invasion of Pandu imposed foreign rule on Ceylon for a little over a quarter of a century. This was a period of protracted warfare between the contending Tamils, who were attempting to maintain their power,

^{22.} Cosmas, pp. 365-368.

and the national forces endeavouring to regain the lost freedom. Six Tamils ruled in succession till the last of them was overpowered by Dhātusena.

Pandu, the first of these adventurers, ruled for about five years, and was succeeded by his son Parinda, who reigned for only three years. He was succeeded in turn by another son of Pandu named Khuddapārinda, in whose reign the Sinhalese champion, Dhātusena, made his first attempt to eject the foreign rulers, but without success. Tirītara, Dāthiya and Pīthiya succeeded Khuddapārinda in that order. Tirītara ruled for only two months before he was defeated by Dhātusena. Dāthiya was defeated after ruling for three years, and with the defeat of Pīthiya, whose reign lasted only for seven months, the period of foreign domination came to an end.

According to the chronicles, Tamil rule did not extend to the southern part of the Island. In fact, it is expressly stated in the Cūlavamsa that their authority did not penetrate into Rohana where the Sinhalese nobles took refuge, Gangā i.e. Mahaväli Ganga, being the boundary. When Dhātusena and his uncle crossed the Gona river (Kalā Oya) into safety, they were probably beyond the frontiers of the enemies. As against this evidence in the chronicles in regard to the area over which the Tamils held sway, there is an inscription which supports the view that Tamil rule extended beyond these limits. Paranavitana has identified Mahadaļi Mahana (= Pāli Mahādāṭhika Mahānāga) and his father Sarataraya (= Pāli Sirīdhara) mentioned in an inscription at Kataragama with the Tamil rulers Dathiya and Tiritara respectively. Paranavitana himself, in editing this inscription,23 suggested that the king mentioned in the record was a local ruler of Rohana, who assumed the title raja when the northern part of the country was under Tamil domination, but at the same time drew attention to the similarity of the names to those of the two Tamil rulers mentioned above. Subsequently, however, he has given very plausible reasons for the identification of the rulers of the Kataragama inscription with the Tamil kings mentioned in the Cūlavamsa.²⁴ If this identification is accepted, the possibility of the Tamils gaining at least temporary ascendency over Rohana cannot be altogether ruled out, for it is difficult otherwise to explain how a record of a foreign king who ruled in Anuradhapura came to be set up in this part of the country, where the resistance to the enemy rule was concentrated. It may therefore be asserted that the rule of at least some of the Tamil kings extended beyond the limits to which the chronicles confine their realm. An inscription ascribed to another of the Tamil rulers, Parinda (Paridadeva), has been found at Aragama in Hiriyāla Hatpattu, Kurunāgala District.25

EZ., III, pp. 216—219.
 CJSG., II, pp. 181—182; EZ., IV, pp. 113—114.
 CJSG., II, p. 181.

These Tamil rulers appear to have been patrons of Buddhism. The inscription of Pārinda at Aragama, referred to above, records donations made by him to a Buddhist monastery. The benefactions made by the queen of Khuddapārinda to a Buddhist monastery have been recorded in another inscription where the king himself is given the epithet of 'Budadasa,' i.e. 'Servant of Buddha.'26 The inscription from Kataragama attributed to Dāthika also records the benefactions made by this king to a monastery. Paranavitana makes the following observations on this record: 'As the epigraph is fragmentary, we cannot say exactly what its contents were, but from such parts as have been preserved, it seems that its purport was to register a grant of land made for defraying the expenses connected with the ritual at the Mangala-mahacetiya at Kajaragama, which doubtless is the modern Kirivehera.'27

There is no specific reference in the chronicles either to the faith of these rulers, or to the monasteries that benefited by their donations, but the inscriptions which record these benefactions to Buddhist monasteries afford evidence of the fact that they supported the Buddhist religion. may be that, even though they themselves were not adherents of the Buddhist faith, they supported the religion as a matter of political expediency in order to win the favour of the people.

Dhātusena, to whom reference has already been made, belonged to the line of Moriyas who fled through fear and lived scattered here and there in the country ever since the door-keeper Sabha usurped the throne from Yasalālakatissa nearly four centuries before. His grandfather was a descendent of this line, a house-holder (kutumbika) living in a village called Nandivāpigāma, while his father, Dāthanāma by name, lived in the village of Ambilayagu. Dhatusena had a brother called Silatassabodhi, of whom very little is recorded.

The origin of the Moriyas is obscure, and nothing certain is known of them. In fact, Dhatusena is the first king who is expressly mentioned in the chronicles as having belonged to the line of Moriyas, although this account has been interpreted as an indication that the kings who ruled prior to Sabha's usurpation belonged to this same line.28 Later tradition traced the origin of the Moriyas as well as the Lambakannas to the Sākya princes who accompanied the Bodhi Tree to Ceylon, and thus connected them with the Imperial Mauryas of India. The view has also been expressed that the ancient families of Ceylon, such as the Moriyas, originated from the The Sangam literature makes totemistic tribes of pre-Aryan origin.29

^{26.} EZ., IV., p. 114.

^{27.} EZ., III, pp. 216—218.
28. Cv., xxxviii, vv. 13ff.
29. Cv., Tr., I, p. 29, footnote 2. Moriya is connected with Sanskrit mayūra, 'peacock.'

reference to an invasion of the Tamil land by the Moriyar (Mauryas), possibly at a period anterior to Asoka's accession,30 but no connection between them and the Moriyas of Ceylon has however been suggested. It is of interest to note that the Sinhalese works, as well as a fourteenth century inscription, refer to this monarch as Dasen-käli.31

Dhātusena underwent ordination as a boy, and lived in Dīghasandaāvāsa of Mahāvihāra at Anurādhapura with his maternal uncle who played an important role in shaping his destiny. Although the young prince was in comparative safety, and less open to the suspicion of the Tamils, in the robes of a monk, his uncle realised the danger of living so very close to the enemy, and removed the prince to an outlying monastery further south on the other side of the Kalā Oya. The new environment was not only safer, but also more conductive to the moulding of the character of the future monarch whose greatness was portended by more than one incident.32 It did not take long for the news of the young prince to reach Pandu's ears, but by the time he planned to apprehend him, the uncle and the nephew had already made good their escape.

When Dhatusena came of age, he started his campaigns against the invader and was supported by the Sinhalese who awaited an opportunity to overthrow the Tamils. The nobles of Anuradhapura, who had fled to Rohana as they did not want to submit themselves to Tamil rule, found in the young prince a leader in their struggle for the liberation of the country.

At the end of a long-drawn struggle lasting some twenty years, Dhātusena succeeded in vanquishing his enemies with the help of his brother, and proclaimed himself king in Anuradhapura in or about 463 A.C. Once he was secure on the throne, he punished the Sinhalese nobles who had supported the Tamils by depriving them of their lands, and leaving their villages defenceless, while on the other hand, those who shared his tribulations during the dark days of the struggle and who stood by him were adequately rewarded. Having established political stability, Dhātusena next turned his attention to works designed for the welfare of his subjects. A liberal patron of Buddhism, he built many vihāras and renovated those that needed repairs, and did much for the promotion of the religion. chronicle gives an impressive list of religious works carried out by him,

^{30.} Cōļas, pp. 20-21.

EZ., IV, pp. 164ff; Pv. Tr., p. 27; Ns. Tr., p. 16; Rv. Tr., p. 47.
 Cv., xxxviii, vv. 17ff. Geiger, in his translation, takes Gonisavihāra as the name of the monastery to which the prince was removed (Cv., xxxviii, vv. 17—21). Paranavitana, in an interesting article contributed to the UCR, XV. pp. 127—133, re-examines this passage and offers an alternative translation, adducing very plausible reasons to support that the Gonisādivihāra mentioned in this passage refers only to a particular type of monastery, and not to a monastery named Gonisavihāra.

which obviously is not exhaustive. He promoted agriculture by constructing a large number of tanks, the best known among them being the Kālavāpi (Kalāvāva) which, together with the Balalu-väva, covers an area of over 6000 acres. It was one of the largest irrigational undertakings in ancient Ceylon, and it ensured a perennial supply of water to the large tract of land lying between the rivers Kalā Oya and Malvatu Oya.³³

Dhātusena had a tragic end. He had two sons, Kassapa, by a mother of inferior rank (bhinnamātuka) and Moggallāṇa by a mother of equal birth (samānamātuka), and a daughter whom he gave in marriage to his sister's son who was the commander of the army (senāpati). Possibly in a quarrel between the daughter and the mother-in-law, the senāpati punished his wife. This made Dhātusena burn alive his son-in-law's mother who was his own sister. The son-in-law, in retaliation, joined Kassapa who had no claim to the throne as he was not the son of the queen, and instigated him to usurp the throne. The old king was imprisoned and later put to death, walled in a dungeon. Moggallāna, the rightful heir, escaped to India.

The chronicles give but a brief account of the parricide Kassapa who usurped the throne with the assistance of the commander-in-chief, and became king in or about 479 A.C. It is said that Kassapa, in fear of his brother, betook himself to the impregnable rock fortress of Sīhagiri (Sīgiri), fortified it still further, collected his treasures there, built a magnificent palace on its summit as if it were a second Ālakamandā, and dwelt therein

like Kuvera.

Sigiri, which is about forty miles south of Anuradhapura, is an unscaleable rock, rising abruptly to a height of about 600 feet from the ground. On the summit of the rock, nearly three acres in extent, was the king's palace and the other buildings whose remains can still be seen. Ramparts and moats enclosed a rectangular area of over 100 acres which formed the inner city or the citadel with the base of the rock itself serving as a defence on one side. The ramparts even now average about 30 feet in height, and the moat is 14 feet deep, 72 feet broad at the bottom and 82 feet at the top. The entrance to this fortified area was through two gateways placed on the northern and southern sides, and through a drawbridge in the middle of the western rampart. Inside the walled-in area are remains of pavilions, ponds, picturesque boulders which appear to have served as bases for edifices, caves, a throne carved out of a boulder and a pleasure garden. The principal remains of Sigiri include, besides these, the flight of steps that led to the rock, a gallery constructed along a concavity of the rock extending over 500 feet with a parapet wall popularly called the mirror-wall

^{33.} For further information about Dhātusena's irrigation works, see infra, pp. 352 f.

because of its glass-like plaster which is still preserved, and the figure of the lion through whose body was the path-way leading to the summit. The area enclosed by the ramparts on the eastern side, where there are no visible remains as substantial as those on the west, is popularly known as the Royal Pleasure Gardens. It is probably in this area that the common people lived. The most arresting feature of the remains of Sigiri is the paintings, commonly called the frescoes. All that can be seen today are only 22 figures in one rock pocket on the western side of the rock, although there is evidence that the entire western face between the drip-edge and the gallery was once covered with paintings. These halfsized female figures rising from clouds have evoked much speculation and given rise to several interpretations as to their identity. Bell thought that these figures represented Kassapa's queens on their way to the neighbouring temple, while Ananda Coomaraswamy took them to be apsarases, or celestial maidens. The most ingenious interpretation has been given by Paranavitana who argued that the fair maidens portrayed Lightning (vijjukumāri) while the darker ones stood for Clouds (megha-latā). The graffiti on the mirror wall, the casual remarks inscribed by the inspired visitors throughout the centuries, though they have nothing to do with Kassapa and are of a later date, may be mentioned because of their unique value.

The allusion in the chronicle to Alakamanda and Kuvera is generally dismissed as a mere figure of speech used for literary embellishment which has no particular significance in the interpretation of the account, and the widely accepted view is that Sihagiri was built by Kassapa as a measure of defence against Moggallana. Paranavitana has recently re-examined this popular notion of Sigiri being built solely for military purposes, and has put forward a thesis which is not only bold in its assumptions but also most fascinating in its arguments.34 He argues that, in many of the ruins to be seen at Sigiri today, there are features which were not due to military or engineering necessity, and that their existence cannot be explained if the popular view is accepted. On the other hand, he points out that most of these features assume special significance and become understandable if the reference to Alakamanda and Kuvera is taken literally to mean that 'the palace on the summit of the rock was actually intended to be a miniature Alakamanda and, in residing there, Kassapa proclaimed himself to be known as Kuvera on earth.'35 He supports this view further by arguing that such an interpretation is in keeping with the concept of divinity of the king, and buttresses his arguments by drawing parallels with monuments which have been influenced by such politico-religious

^{34.} *JCBRAS*., New Series, I, pp. 129—183. 35. *Ibid.*, p. 136.

conceptions from countries in Further India and Indonesia which like Ceylon shared a common culture derived from India.

After he became king, Kassapa is said to have done many meritorious deeds in atonement of his foul crime. He himself is said to have led a virtuous life. He restored Issarasamana monastery, the modern Vessagiri, and renamed it by giving it his own name and the names of his two daughters, Bodhī and Uppalavannā,³⁶ and carried out several other religious activities which included the holding of festivals and maintenance of bhikkhus. The Mahāvihāra bhikkhus were, however, cautious in accepting his munificence.

A senāpati Migāra is mentioned as having fallen out with him on his refusal to permit the performance of a certain religious festival. It is said that he awaited the arrival of the rightful heir, and performed the abandoned

ceremony when Moggallana became king.

Kassapa, as the chronicler quaintly puts it, 'lived in fear of the other world and of Moggallāna.' The latter, who had fled to India, determined to avenge the murder of his father, returned to the Island with an army in the eighteenth year of Kassapa's reign, and encamped at the Kuṭhāri-vihāra in the Ambaṭṭhakoladesa. When Kassapa heard of this, he left the fortress and advanced with his forces to give battle to Moggallāna. In the course of the encounter, Kassapa turned his elephant to avoid a stretch of swamp that was before him. His troops, mistaking that their king was retreating, broke their ranks and fled in disorder. Kassapa, finding that his cause was lost, committed suicide on the battle-field.

Moggallāna performed the funeral rites of his brother, came to Anurādhapura with the regalia, and ascended the throne in 497 A.C. He exterminated the supporters of Kassapa by putting them to death, mutilating them or banishing them from the country, and thus avenged the murder of his father. The Hair Relic (kesadhātu) was brought to Ceylon during this time by a kinsman of Moggallāna, a Lambakaṇṇa prince by the name of Silākāla, who had fled to India with him in fear of Kassapa. The King gave him his sister in marriage, appointed him to the office of asiggāhaka (swordbearer), and entrusted him with the custody of the Relic brought by him. He instituted a coastal guard to prevent possible invasions from India. Having himself brought to Ceylon an army from India, he probably did not want that to be repeated at least during his reign. A liberal patron of the religion, he did much for its improvement during the eighteen years of his reign.

Kumāradhātusena succeeded his father and reigned for nine years. He is properly known as Kumāradāsa, the name by which he is referred to in

^{36.} EZ., I, p. 31f, CJSG., II, p. 182, and EZ., IV, p. 128ff.

the Sinhalese sources and in more than one inscription.³⁷ The Sinhalese works represent him as a scholarly king who died by jumping into the funeral pyre of his friend Kālidāsa. Kālidāsa, according to tradition, was a son of one of his father's ministers, while some identify him with the famous Indian poet of the same name. Tradition also attributes the authorship of a Sanskrit poem called Jānakīharaṇa to this king, though he has actually no claim to it.³⁸

His son Kittisena ruled only for a short time before he met with his death at the hands of his maternal uncle Siva who in turn was done to death by Upatissa II of the Lambakanna clan who established himself on the throne and revived the line of Lambakannas. Kittisena was the last of the direct

line of Moriyas founded by Dhātusena.

^{37.} EZ., IV, pp. 115—128; ASCAR, 1954, p. 29. 38. For the Jānakīharaṇa and its author, see infra, p. 393.

CHAPTER III

THE PERIOD OF DYNASTIC INSTABILITY

For over a century and a half after the failure of the line of Dhātusena to preserve itself, there was no dynasty that was strong enough to establish itself and hold power for any length of time. Though there were a few able rulers, the traditions behind them were not sufficiently deep-rooted to carry the many weak rulers that followed. The dynasties established by Silākāla (518-531 A.C.) and Mahānāga (569-571 A.C.), though short, were strong while they lasted, and were undisputed. They produced such able rulers as Moggallana II, Aggabodhi I and Aggabodhi II. One dynasty followed the other without any considerable dislocation of the country. But the eighty years that followed the last-named ruler were characterised by incessant conflict caused by the rivalry of two factions that contended for the throne. Neither of these parties acquiesced in the rule of the other; but neither was strong enough to eliminate the other from the contest. They carried on their vendetta to the bitter end till both were exhausted. Kings followed each other in quick succession while the people suffered under them. The country's riches were plundered or squandered while the economy was ruined. In the end, it was with the help of a Pallava army that a scion of one of these factions was able to establish himself firmly on the throne. This was Manavamma whose dynasty held power till the Cola invasion.

There was, in the time of Kassapa, a man called Dāṭhāpabhuti who took service under him. He belonged to the clan of the Lambakannas and was a distant connection of the royal family. He fell out with Kassapa over some matter and fled to a distant province. When Kassapa came to have complete sway over the country, Dāthāpabhuti's son Silākāla, to whom reference has already been made in the previous chapter, considered it necessary to flee the country and made his way to India with his kinsman Moggallana. While in India, he was ordained as a monk at the famous Bodhimaṇḍa-vihāra at Bodh Gayā, and became known as Ambasāmaṇera. During his sojourn there, he came into possession of the Hair Relic of the Buddha. We do not know how this came about, but the author of the Cūļavanisa directs the reader to the Kesadhātuvanisa (The History of the Hair Relic) which, unfortunately, is now lost. After Moggallana had ousted his brother Kassapa from the throne and conditions seemed favourable, Ambasamanera returned to the Island with the Hair Relic. He was received with great honour by his friend Moggallana, and the Relic became one of the most treasured objects of worship in the kingdom. Ambasāmaņera's influence was firmly established in the country due to the part he played in bringing the Relic to this Island. He gave up his robes and was appointed the lay custodian of the Relic which was housed in the capital. He received the rank of asiggāha (Sword-bearer), after which he came to be called Asiggāha Silākāla. As a further honour, Moggallāna gave his sister in marriage to him. She must have been fairly well on in years, unless she was a step-sister born of a later wife of Dhātusena.

Silākāla seems to have retained his influence undiminished throughout the reigns of Moggallana and Kumaradhatusena. In the unsettled period that followed, he must have been the most dominating personality in the kingdom. But while others vied for the throne, he seems to have kept aloof for a time from these rivalries. But when Upatissa, the husband of another sister of Moggallana, seized the throne, Silakala must have judged his own claim to the throne as good or even better. Upatissa realised the importance of winning the favour of so influential a person as Silākāla, and gave his daughter in marriage to him. This, however, failed to curb the rising ambitions of Silākāla. When he finally decided to make a bid for the throne himself, he retired to southern Malaya. There he built up a considerable army, and plundered the border to build up his resources. He then advanced against Upatissa, and arrived near the capital. Upatissa was old and blind, and was incapable of taking the field against Silākāla. It was his son Girikassapa who fought on his behalf. Silākāla was worsted in several skirmishes and was forced to retreat. The main cause of his failure was the absence of a satisfactory base of operations. He, therefore, by a stratagem, brought under his authority the districts lying in the east and west of the kingdom, and pitched his camp at Pācīnatissapabbata.1 From there, he spread disaffection in the kingdom and gradually brought it entirely under his power. When the opportune moment arrived, he advanced with a large army and beseiged Anuradhapura. After seven days Kassapa was forced to give in. He tried to flee to Malaya with his aging parents and the royal treasure. But the guides failed them, and they wandered around on the outskirts of the capital till morning. When Silākāla heard of this, he had them quickly surrounded. They did not, however, give in without a fight. When Kassapa realised that the situation was hopeless he committed suicide. Upatissa, when he heard of the death

^{1.} The ancient monastery at the moated site near the Nuvaraväva in Anurādhapura is known, from evidence of a fifth century inscription, to have been called Pajina-tisa-pava (Pācīnatissapabbata) in ancient times; see ASCAR, 1940—45, p. 22. But, in the chronicle's accounts of military engagements which took place at the Pācīnatissapabbata in the reigns of Upatissa and Saṃghatissa, a hill or eminence (pabbata) figures prominently. There is no such feature at the Nuvaraväva site; Pācīnatissa-pabbata, at which two decisive battles were fought in the period dealt with in this chapter, must therefore have been somewhere else.

of his son who had done so much for him, died of grief. He had reigned in all for a year and a half.

The way was now open for Silākāla, and he became king in 518 A.C. In addition to the names 'Silākāla' and 'Ambasāmaņera,' the Sinhalese chronicles call him' Salamevan (Silāmeghavanna)'.2 This was his throne name. It has been pointed out by Paranavitana that his personal name was probably 'Kassapa' as in the Cūļavanisa he is referred to as 'the elder Kassapa' to distinguish him from Girikassapa. This is supported by the identification of Silākāla with 'Kia-che Kia-lo-ha-li-ya' mentioned in the Chinese texts, in whose reign an embassy was sent to China. The Chinese name, when restored, would read 'Kassapa Kālasela.' The latter name is taken as a transposed form of 'Silākāla.' This identification is important for the chronology of the period, and gives evidence of the embassy that was sent to the Chinese court.3

Silākāla ruled for thirteen years, governing the Island with justice, and always concerned for the welfare of his people. It is in the sphere of religion that his reign is most significant. He was already well-known as the person who brought the Hair Relic here and he had leanings towards Mahāyāna Buddhism. In the twelfth year of his reign the Dhammadhātu, a Mahāyāna book of some importance, was brought to Ceylon, and was received with great honour and ceremony. The orthodox group was quite perturbed, for the author of the Culavamsa describes the king as one incapable of distinguishing truth from falsehood as the moth which flies to the lamp takes it for gold.'

Another significant act of his was the handing over of two provinces of the kingdom to his two elder sons for the purpose of administration, retaining the rest for himself. To his eldest son, Moggallana, he granted the Puratthimadesa which lay to the east of the capital, and to Dathapabhuti, his second son, he granted the Dakkhinadesa which was the southern part of the Anuradhapura kingdom, together with the care of the sea-coast. It was the practice in later years to grant this province to the heir-apparent. Dāthāpabhuti also carried the title of malayarāja4. Upatissa, the youngest son who was his favourite, he kept with him at the court.

The only political event of some significance, and one that was fraught with important consequences for the future, took place in Rohana. It began a chain of events that in the end gave rise to a new dynasty for the Island. There lived in Rohana a person named Mahanaga who belonged to the Moriya clan. Though of humble origin, he was ambitious and high-minded. He therefore gave up the life of a peasant and became a

Pv. Tr., p. 28; Ns. Tr., p. 16. The Rājāvalī refers to this king as Lämäni Akbō, Rv. Tr., p. 48.
 EZ., V, pp. 89—90; 90—99.
 This title occurs here for the first time.

bandit and lived in the forest. His wants were sometimes supplied by his relations. There is a tradition about him recorded in the Cūlavanisa that he was assured by a prophecy that he would one day become king. The story is that once during a famine he did a good turn to a man who was learned in the magic arts. In return for his kindness, the magician took him to the Gokanna sea (near Trincomalee) and by his incantations, summoned the Nāga king. He then commanded Mahānāga to touch the Nāga king. Mahānāga was afraid. This happened in all three watches of the night. In the third and last watch, however, he caught the tail of the Nāga with three of his fingers. From this, the magician prophesied that he would contend with three kings and would slay the fourth to become king in his old age for three years. We do not know whether this prophecy sustained his ambitions over the many years he had to wait to become king. It is more likely that it was a tradition that arose later to explain the circumstances of his rise to supreme power.

Whether influenced by the prophecy or not, he gave up his life of banditry and took service under Silākāla in Anurādhapura. He was then appointed collector of revenue in Rohaṇa, where his previous experience of that province stood him in good stead. It is also possible to interpret this train of events as an attempt on the part of Silākāla to legalise a situation that was beyond his control, and that he was making a virtue of necessity. Mahānāga did his work so well that he was given the rank of Andhasenāpati,' the significance of which title is not quite clear. Success fanned his ambitions, and he sent for his cousin Aggabodhi and came out openly against Silākāla. As a result of this rebellion he became virtually the independent ruler of Rohaṇa.

Silākāla died in 531 A.C. His death was the signal for a scramble for power between his three sons. Dāṭhāpabhuti first seized the throne. When Upatissa, who was in the capital, tried to prevent him on the ground that it was not his turn to rule, Dāṭhāpabhuti turned on him and had him murdered. This wanton murder greatly angered Moggallāna. He marched north with his army and encamped at the Karinda mountain to make war on his brother. The two brothers, out of consideration for their soldiers, decided not to commit them to battle. They argued that the country was bound to support one or the other of them, and so agreed to settle their differences by resorting to single combat. It was a well-fought contest, but Dāṭhāpabhuti had to give way when his elephant was wounded. Seeing that he would be defeated, he committed suicide, in spite of his brother's entreaties not to do so. He had reigned only for six months.

Meanwhile, when war broke out between the brothers, Mahānāga, who was now in complete control of Rohana, decided to fish in the troubled waters of the north. He marched with an army to make a bid for the

throne. But events moved too quickly for him, and so he turned back when he realised that he had to face the victorious Moggallāna. But Moggallāna does not seem to have been sufficiently well established to risk his army to pursue Mahānāga. Thus Rohaṇa continued to be in the

possession of Mahānāga.

Moggallāna succeeded to the throne in 531 A.C. as the second of that name. He had a long and uneventful reign of twenty years during which he won the love and esteem of his people. He had poetic gifts, though none of his works have survived, and he is described as 'a shining light of the good doctrine.' He honoured the Samgha with abundant gifts and had the three Pitakas, together with the commentaries, recited and later written down. He built three tanks for the material welfare of the people.⁵ But the good work done by him was largely dissipated by his queen who systematically eliminated his close relations by poisoning them. Her desire seems to have been to remove all obstructions in the way of the succession of her son, Kittisirimegha, and then to carry on the government herself. It is possible that her son, who was in the line of succession, was a weakling.

On the death of Moggallana in 551 A.C., he was succeeded by his son Kittisirimegha. He was the last ruler of the family of Dhatusena. Though his reign was not wanting in meritorious deeds, it was one of slow decline because the real ruler of the kingdom was his mother. She was not quite equal to the task of governing the kingdom, and there was much maladministration. In the absence of any strict supervision, the officials stooped to bribery, and the powerful in the land overawed the weak with impunity. The people were naturally disheartened and the time was ripe for rebellion.

This was the opportunity Mahānāga was waiting for.

It is said in some manuscripts of the Cūlavanisa that Kittisirimegha ruled for nineteen days after which he was slain by Mahānāga. This obviously is a mistake, for the corruption which the Cūlavanisa describes must have grown over a number of years. Besides, some of the manuscripts of the Cūlavanisa and the Rājāvalī and the Pūjāvalī attribute to him a reign of nineteen years.⁶ In editing the Tämgoḍa-vihāra pillar-inscription, Paranavitana points out that the king mentioned in it is none other than Kittisirimegha, and it is dated in the fourth year of his reign. We have thus to take nineteen days as a copyist's error and take the reign as having extended for nineteen years. Thus Mahānāga seems to have waited that long in order to be absolutely sure of his steps. He moved into action in 569 A.C. and re-established order in the kingdom.

With the accession of Mahānāga, the Moriya clan which had been eclipsed for a time came back to power again. Mahānāga was quite old

^{5.} See infra, p. 353.
6. See EZ., V, pp. 80—96, for a discussion on the duration of the king's reign.

when he ascended the throne, and had a difficult task ahead of him. He first invited his sister's son to be his uparāja6; but he died and so he gave that honour to Aggabodhi, the son of his mother's brother. To make his rule acceptable to the people of the northern kingdom, he wasted no time in inaugurating a programme of religious works and a lavish dispensation of grants of various kinds, especially to the vihāras in the capital city. But he had only a reign of three years and he died in 571 A.C. All the Sinhalese chronicles7 insert a king after Mahānāga, whose name is Lämäni Singānā Saladaļabonā (Pūjāvalī) or Lämäni Simha Saladaļabonā (Rājāvalī) and who is given a reign of nine years. The Cūlavamsa does not refer to this king.

Mahānāga's short reign was a fitting prelude to that of his nephew (bhāgineyya) and successor Aggabodhi I. He is apparently not the uparāja mentioned above, for the latter was Mahānāga's cousin. It is possible that the chronicler at this point confused the sister's son, whom he first invited, with the one who later became uparāja. If the chronicler is correct, this would be another nephew of Mahānāga. This is the interpretation given by Geiger. Aggabodhi's long reign of thirty-four years was one of peace and splendour, not to be rivalled for many years to come. He was loved both by the people and the officials. He gave the office of yuvarāja to his brother, and granted him the province of Dakkhinadesa. Since the yuvarāja was probably still quite young, he made his mother's brother the uparāja8. He made his sister's son the governor of Malaya with the title of malayarāja, and gave him his daughter Dāthā to wife. His special advisor in affairs of state was the thera Dathasiva. His achievements were those of peace. Many poets flourished under his patronage. He built many vihāras, and made generous grants of villages, lands, tanks and servants to them. He undertook renovations and new works in the better known vihāras and shrines in the capital. He seems to have favoured the orthodox sect and, in his reign, the Vaitulya sect was beaten in a controversy with the thera Jotipala.

On the death of Aggabodhi I in 604 A.C., the Malayaraja, who had succeeded as yuvarāja on the death of his uncle, became king as Aggabodhi II. He had as his queen his maternal uncle's daughter named Sanighabhadda and he appointed as his asiggāha (sword-bearer) a kinsman of the queen. He was to become king later on as Samghatissa. He is said to have built some vihāras and a number of tanks. But the greatest event of his reign was undoubtedly the re-building of the Thūpārāma. The entire work

^{7.} Pv. Tr., p. 28; Ns., Tr. p. 17; Rv. Tr., p. 48.
8. The office of uparāja seems to be distinct from that of yuvarāja and the titles as they occur in the Cūļavamsa are retained. For these titles, see infra, 367.

of Devānampiya Tissa was renewed and, while this was being done, the Relic of the Right Collar-Bone was placed in an inner room of the Lohapāsāda. The work was completed in a very short space of time, because the king was warned in a dream that, unless he completed the work soon, the devatās would take the Relic elsewhere.

Another event recorded of this reign is that a prince of Kalinga together with the queen and his minister came here as refugees. He had been disturbed in his mind by the carnage that accompanies war. This was the time when Pulakeśin II was extending his dominion throughout the whole of the Deccan. Aggabodhi took them under his patronage, and after they were ordained under the thera Jotipāla, he made ample provision for them. The royal thera predeceased the king. Aggabodhi died in the tenth year of his reign; he does not seem to have left any heir.

The period that follows (614-684 A.C.) is rather confusing because there were three rivals to the throne Samghatissa, the asiggāha of Moggallāna, the senāpati of Aggabodhi II, and Silāmeghavaṇṇa who began as the senāpati of Samghatissa. Moggallāna left no heir, and his family fell out of the conflict. The families of the other two maintained their rivalry over the whole of this period. The descendants of Silāmeghavaṇṇa occupied the throne most of the time, but were ousted for some time by their rivals. The family of Samghatissa ended with the death of his son. But the conflict was continued by their minister Daṭhāsiva and his descendants. It is they who were ultimately successful. One of them, Aggabodhi IV, had the most stable reign of all the kings of this period. But all parties were so exhausted that in the end a scion of the line of Silāmeghavaṇṇa, named Mānavamma, with the help of a Pallava army, established himself on the throne.

On the death of Aggabodhi II in 614 A.C. his asiggāha, Saṃghatissa, assumed power. He is the second of that name. Though the Pūjāvalī and the Rājāvalī make him a younger brother of the previous ruler, the Cūļavaṃsa calls him 'a kinsman of the mahesī.' It seems safe to assume that he had no legal right to the throne, and that this was the reason why immediately after his assumption of power, the senāpati of the king, Moggallāna, who was resident in Rohaṇa at the time, raised the standard of revolt. He first occupied Mahāgalla, 10 a fortified post situated in the Dakkhiṇadesa. Saṃghatissa's first attempt to crush the rebellion proved a failure. His own army suffered a severe defeat. But Moggallāna did not pursue this advantage, but only moved his position. Saṃghatissa made another

10. Māgala, the modern Nikavarāți in the Kuruņāgala District.

^{9.} It may, however, be mentioned that the name 'Kalinga,' in this context, has been restored by the editors of the $C\bar{u}lava\dot{m}sa$; the Mss. have preserved only the initial syllable of the name, Ka.

attempt to crush Moggallana and this time he dealt a severe blow to his prestige by defeating his army at the battle of Kadalinivata. Nothing daunted, Moggallana gathered together his scattered forces and marched to Rahera to do battle again. This time events turned against Samghatissa, for he had another enemy to face. His own senāpati, later to be Silāmeghavanna, feigning illness, stayed behind in the city while the king went to war accompanied by his son. The battle was joined at Pācīnatissapabbata.11 While the fight was going on, the senāpati marched up with his forces and attacked the king from behind. Wedged in between these two armies, the king was in a precarious position and was forced to divide his army to meet the enemy in the rear as well. In the midst of this, the king sought the shade of a tree close by, and while doing this his umbrella knocked a branch of the tree and fell down. It was captured by the enemy and handed over to Moggallana. When he raised it aloft, all the soldiers thought that he was now king and gathered round him. Samighatissa fled from the field to a neighbouring forest with his son and a minister.

Moggallāna, having thus captured the entire army of his enemy, entered the capital and proclaimed himself king. He is the third to bear that name and began his reign in 614 A.C. To remove all claimants to the throne, he ruthlessly exterminated the family of Samghatissa. One son, captured in the capital, was murdered. Samghatissa, with another son and his minister, fled south in the disguise of a monk. He was recognised, and the three of them were apprehended at Minnēri and imprisoned at Sīgiri. They were all executed on the orders of Moggallāna. One son, however, escaped and fled to Malaya. He was to continue the fight till he at last became king as Jeṭṭhatissa. He was no doubt sustained in this ambition by the tragic fate that overcame his family at the hands of Moggallāna.

The treacherous senāpati whose defection enabled Moggallāna to become king was rewarded by being made the malayarāja. His son was given the office of asiggāha. This arrangement, however, was not bound to last because Moggallāna could never be sure that the malayarāja would not turn against him, as he had turned against his previous master. Therefore, over some trivial offence, he had him arrested and executed. But his son, the asiggāha, who was later to be king as Silāmeghavaṇṇa, escaped to Rohaṇa with his son.

Moggallāna's short reign of five years was full of meritorious works. He made offerings at the sacred shrines in the city, reformed the Samgha and had the sacred scriptures recited. Among the numerous grants he made were the revenues of a number of salt-pans.

^{11.} See note I on page 131.

Silāmeghavanna was not slow to avenge the murder of his father. He first contacted Jetthatissa who was hiding in Malaya, and with his help seized the district of Janapada. They next took up a position in Dohalapabbata, and prepared to give battle to the king. Moggallana's army at that time was weakened by some disease that had broken out among his soldiers. Silāmeghavanna took full advantage of this, defeated the army and slew the king. He next sought to kill Jetthatissa too in order to make himself secure on the throne. He sent a message to him inviting him to take over the throne. But Jetthatissa was too wary to fall into this trap. He therefore fled again to Malaya.

Thereafter Silāmeghavanna entered the capital and was crowned king in 619 A.C. He began a dynasty which was to last till the end of the Anuradhapura kingdom. 'Silāmeghavanna' was not his personal name, for it is only a viruda title that he bore probably after he became king. It was used alternately with 'Sirisainghabodhi' by the kings who come after this time. The Sinhalese chronicles refer to him only as asiggāhaka. with the Sanigha, which would be referred to in detail in Chapter VII,12 were not happy.

There was one rebellion that took place in his reign; it was probably fostered by Jetthatissa. His maternal uncle, a senāpati named Sirināga, attempted to invade the country from the northern province with the help of a Tamil army. But he was defeated at a village called Rajamittaka. The soldiers who escaped the slaughter were made to suffer various indignities and were distributed as slaves to vihāras. Silāmeghavanna died of some disease while he was in Dakkhinadesa. It is said that he contracted it as he was unrepentent after his conflict with the monks. His reign lasted nine years.

His son Aggabodhi became king in 628 A.C. as the third of that name. He adopted the throne name 'Sirisanighabodhi.' In the Sinhalese chronicles,13 he is known only by this viruda title. He made his youngest brother Māna the uparāja, and gave him the province of Dakkhinadesa with the necessary forces and retinue. Aggabodhi was quite young when he succeeded to the throne. Jetthatissa, who was still in Malaya, thought this was the right moment to make a bid for the throne. He established himself near the Arittha mountain, the modern Ritigala, and won over to his side the southern and eastern districts. He next sent his minister Dāṭhāsiva to threaten the regions in the west. Aggabodhi, when he heard about this, retaliated by sending the uparāja Māna to the western districts. Dathasiva fled, but was later captured by the king near a place called Mayetti. When the king attempted to capture Jetthatissa too in the same

See infra, p. 382.
 Pv. Tr., p. 29; Ns. Tr., p. 17; Rv. Tr., p. 48.

nanner, he was severely defeated. His army was scattered and the king was forced to flee from the field in disguise, leaving everything behind. Jetthatissa at last achieved his ambition and became king in 628 A.C., as the third of that name.

Almost at once he busied himself making grants to vihāras both large and small, and he undertook extensive renovations in them. But he was not destined to remain on the throne for very long. Five months after his accession he was ousted from power. Kālavāpi (Kalāväva) proved to be the centre of resistance to his authority. Aggabodhi's relations who lived in this area assiduously fomented trouble. Jetthatissa led his army against them. In the meantime Aggabodhi, who had gone to India, returned to the Island with Tamil troops, and the battle was joined in earnest. When he found the battle going against him, Jetthatissa committed suicide after leaving instructions to his wife to forsake the world and to find solace in religion. Thus ended the family of Samghatissa. Before the battle, he was warned by some premonition of danger to send his minister to India. It is possible that he may have been instructed to lie in wait in the rear of Aggabodhi's army to cut off his retreat. It is just as well he parted from the main army, for he escaped the slaughter and lived to continue the cause upheld by his master. But from now on, he carried on the conflict on his own account in the hope that he would one day become king.

Thus, in 629 A.C., Aggabodhi III was restored to the throne. There was peace for some time, and he undertook the usual works of merit. In his twelfth year occurred a train of events which led to the loss of his throne. His yuvarāja named Māna was slain by some court officials for an offence committed in the women's quarters of the palace. This was done in spite of the assurance that his life would be spared. The king's inability to do anything about his brother's murder was no doubt an indication of weakness. When Dāṭhāsiva heard of this state of affairs he came from India with an army of Tamil mercenary troops and encamped at a village called Tintiṇi. Aggabodhi advanced with his army, but he was defeated and, in the twelfth year of his reign, was forced once again to flee to India.

Dāṭhāsiva now took the name of Dāṭhopatissa and proclaimed himself king. Not to be outdone, Aggabodhi seized power again. They were equally matched and therefore for the next five years (639-644 A.C.) it was not possible to say who was ruling at any one time. In the absence of any stable government law and order collapsed, and the country passed through one of its darkest periods. In the words of the chronicler, 'the whole people suffering under the wars of these two kings, fell into great misery and lost money and field-produce. Dāṭhopatissa exhausted the whole property of former kings and seized objects of value in the three

fraternities and in the relic-temples.' While he plundered all the gold and precious stones in vihāra and thūpa to carry on his campaign, his Tamil troops burned down the Relic Temple and the royal palace. Later he repented for his misdeeds and made some amends. The looting was not on one side only, for once when Aggabodhi was in the ascendant, the yuvarāja Kassapa 'to provide for his army ... broke open by force the cetiya of the Thūpārāma and plundered the valuable treasures given by Devānampiya Tissa, the younger Aggabodhi and (other) former kings. He also broke open the cetiya of the Dakkhina-vihāra and seized the valuable treasures, and he had yet other cetiyas broken open.' In 644 A.C., after continuous fighting, Aggabodhi, at last defeated by Dāṭhopatissa, retired to Rohaṇa to re-organise the army and to renew the conflict. Dappula who was ruler there was his brother-in-law. But he died in the sixteenth year of his reign (644 A.C.).

In this same year, Kassapa, the yuvarāja and youngest brother of Aggabodhi III, finally ousted Dathopatissa who fled to India, and brought the kingdom under his control. He does not seem to have been crowned, however, till the year 650 A.C. This may probably be because the conditions in the kingdom were not quite settled, or because the objects necessary for the coronation were lost or had been removed to India by Dathopatissa. He himself became king without 'the chain of one string of pearls.' In that year, Dathopatissa came once again from India with a large army, but was defeated and slain. This was the twelfth year of his reign and the seventh after he fled to India. Kassapa now proclaimed himself king as the second of that name. He ruled for another nine years (650-659 A.C.). The issue between the two families was not yet closed, for the task of continuing the struggle now devolved on Hatthadatha, a sister's son of Dathopatissa, who was present at the battle in which his uncle lost his life. He fled to India after this battle. Kassapa tried to make good the losses he had inflicted on the vihāras in the course of the fighting. He repaired damaged buildings, and undertook new works on the thupas.

Kassapa had many sons, but they were quite small and almost children and 'not yet in riper years.' He was concerned for their future, for although he had made an end of Dāthopatissa, there were others who belonged to that same faction and were waiting for an opportunity to strike. He therefore summoned from Rohann his sister's son, named Māna, who belonged to the royal family there, nad entrusted to him both the government and the care of his sons. Shortly after, Kassapa was struck down by some serious illness and died.

Trouble began almost immediately. Māna first performed all the funeral obsequies required by custom and then tried to win over the people. He was a southerner, though a member of the royal family, and therefore

was probably not quite sure of himself. He sought the favour of the Sampha by making a gift of three thousand kahāpaṇas. His biggest problem was however the Tamil mercenary troops in the capital. They had been brought into the Island by successive rulers, and now formed a group within the kingdom which was bound to be dangerous in any internal conflict. He therefore tried to expel them. But they retaliated by inviting Hatthadatha, who was in India at the time, to come over and take the kingdom. Fearing that the lack of a ruler might aggravate the situation for him, he invited his father Dappula, who was king in Rohana, to come to Anuradhapura and be crowned as king of the whole Island. Kassapa's son Mānaka was probably overlooked because he was too small to face these troubles. Māna and Dappula made a mock treaty with the Tamils in order to allay their suspicions. Thus Dappula became king in 659 A.C. as the first of that name. As there was some doubt about the issue of the impending conflict with Hatthadatha, Mana despatched all the provisions and treasure of the palace to Rohana so as to prevent them falling into the hands of the enemy. It was just as well he did this, for Hatthadatha was not slow in responding to the invitation that was extended to him by the Tamils. When Hatthadatha landed on the Island, the Tamils flocked in large numbers to join him, and many more swelled his ranks as he approached the capital. Mana thought discretion the better part of valour, and retreated to the eastern part of the kingdom. He sent his father back to Rohana. Dappula had been king in Anurādhapura for only a week.

Hatthadāṭha, with the help of his Tamil supporters, occupied Anurādhapura and became king with the name Dāṭhopatissa, and thus became the second monarch to bear that name. He appointed his father's brother's son, Aggabodhi, as the yuvarāja, and gave him the province of Dakkhinadesa which normally went with that office. He was careful to retain the support of his friends by giving them various offices, and maintained good relations with the Sanigha by performing the usual works of merit. But he once fell foul of the monks of the Theravāda sect when he built within the boundaries of this fraternity a vihāra for the monks of the Abhayagiri. In their resentment, they turned down their alms bowls as they went past his gate, thus branding him as an unbeliever.

Māna did not remain idle. He collected troops in the eastern district of the kingdom and summoned his father's army too from the south. With these combined forces he marched to Tīsucullasagāma and prepared to give battle to Dāṭhopatissa. Dāṭhopatissa marched with his army to face this threat, and at Tambala there was a great battle in 662 A.C., in which Māna was killed and his army defeated. Thus Māna's attempt to save the dynasty of Silāmeghavaṇṇa ended in failure, and the faction representing Saṃghatissa and Dāṭhāsiva emerged victorious. One of their

number, Dāṭhopatissa, now became the undisputed master at Anurādhapura. The line of Silāmeghavaṇṇa all but ceases. When the fight is resumed by Mānavamma, a son of Kassapa II, it is almost another dynasty that struggles to be born.

Māna's threat was simple compared to that which was held out from India by Mānavamma. He was a scion of the Silāmeghavanna family who was sojourning in the court of the Pallava ruler Narasimhavarman I. In return for the services that he rendered to that king in his wars against the Calukyas, he was given an army to make a bid for the Sinhalese kingdom. He landed on the Island with this army. His victorious march on the capital does not seem to have been resisted at all. On hearing the news of this advance, Dathopatissa fled the capital. Manavamma, when he reached Anuradhapura, did not wait to be crowned king, but went in pursuit of Dathopatissa. But, unfortunately for Manavamma, news reached the Island that the Pallava king Narasimhavarman was seriously The army therefore left off the engagement and returned to India. Dāthopatissa now fought back and Mānavamma, realising that without an army his position was untenable, went back again to the court of his benefactor. The campaigns of Mana and Manavamma were probably independent of each other and unconnected in spite of the similarity of names and the fact that they were, according to the relationship given in the Cūlavamsa, cousins. Though they both occur in the same reign, they are recorded in two different places in the chronicle, and they are not related one to the other.

Dāṭhopatissa died in the ninth year of his reign, and was succeeded by his cousin, the yuvarāja Aggabodhi who became Aggabodhi IV with the throne name 'Sirisainghabodhi 'in 667 A.C. At first his uparāja was Samghatissa, but the latter seems to have died, for he has later on an uparāja named Dāṭhāsiva. Their relationship to the king is not given in the records.

His main task was the rehabilitation of the kingdom. He made many grants of villages to numerous vihāras in the Island, and assured the monks of a regular supply of their necessaries. It was probably on orders from him that the heads of districts began to build vihāras and parivenas in their respective areas. He won the confidence of the people by avoiding favouritism and by respecting rank and clan. He seems to have satisfied the Tamils in the Island by giving some of them very high office in the State. A few of them such as Potthakuṭṭha, Potthasāta and Mahākanda appear as benefactors of the Sanigha. Mānavamma in India probably considered it inadvisable to invade Ceylon at this time when Aggabodhi was at the height of his popularity. He was held in such high esteem by his subjects that, when he died, they all mourned for him and preserved the ashes that remained to be used as medicine in the belief that the ashes of the pyre

in which so good a man had been cremated must have curative properties. His death occurred at Polonnaru, for he had made that his temporary capital. This is the first time that this place is mentioned as the residence of a king. It is possible that one of his objects in coming here was to avoid the influence of the Tamils. The sixteen-year reign of Aggabodhi was a memorable one, for he had given peace to the Island after many years of wasteful and destructive warfare. He once again measured up to the ideals of kingship accepted from ancient times.

The Tamil influence which Aggabodhi endeavoured to avoid engused his family after his death. According to the normal mode of succession, the yuvarāja Dāṭhāsiva should have been king. But instead Potthakuṭṭha, a wealthy and influential Tamil, who had already figured as a benefactor of Buadhism, threw the yuvarāja in prison and administered the kingdom himself. Thus nemesis caught up with the family of Dāṭhopatissa which had depended so heavily on Tamil mercenary troops. This virtually put an end to the rivalry between various factions which began with the reign of Sanighatissa.

Potthakuṭṭha did not assume sovereignty himself, but sought to rule through puppets. His first choice Datta, the governor of Dhanapiṭṭhi and a member of the royal family, died two years later in 684 A.C. Potthakuṭṭha next selected a person named Hatthadāṭha from Uṇhānagara. He too was consecrated king, but six months later was driven out by Mānavamma. Both he and his friend Potthakuṭṭha died in the course of the invasion.

It is not always that one gets a glimpse of the southern principality of Rohaṇa. Throughout most of the reign of Silākāla and his successors, Mahānāga had effective control over Rohaṇa, first as a rebel, then as the accredited governor of the province, and finally as an independent ruler. When he became king in Anurādhapura, he united both kingdoms under his authority. It is possible that under the peaceful rule of the two Aggabodhis who followed him, Rohaṇa was under the authority of the kings of Anurādhapura, for at the death of the second Aggabodhi, Moggallāna, his senāpati and the rival of Saṃghatissa II, is said to have been in residence in Rohaṇa and marched up from there. During the troubled century that followed, Rohaṇa must have become independent again under local rulers. We hear no more about it for some time.

The seven-day rule of Dappula I at Anurādhapura and the rôle of Māna as king-maker gives an opportunity to the chronicler to furnish a short summary of the history of Rohaṇa. This was probably taken from sources that were available at the time and which are now lost. It must have been shortly after the time Moggallāna III became king in Anurādhapura (614 A.C.) that a local ruler set himself up as an independent king in the south.

We do not know his name, but his daughter named Samghasīvā was married to one who belonged to the line of Okkāka, named Mahātissa. They had three sons, Aggabodhi, Dappula and Maṇiakkhika. The eldest of the brothers succeeded the father as the ruler of Rohaṇa. The assumption of sovereignty is indicated by the list of meritorious deeds that the Cūļavanisa records.

On the death of Aggabodhi, his brother Dappula succeeded to the throne. These rulers were undisturbed by the conflicts that raged in the northern capital. The Cūļavainsa statement that 'he made Rohaņa secure' may be taken to mean that he prevented the violation of Rohaņa by the rival factions of the north. Silāmeghavaṇṇa (619-628 A.C.), called Silādāṭha in this portion of the chronicle, was his contemporary in Anurādhapura. He gave his daughter in marriage to Dappula, and gave him the honorary title of yuvarāja, which only indicated that he was considered a person of royal rank. This proved to be a fateful connection which later involved Rohaṇa in the affairs of the northern kingdom. Māna was the eldest son of this marriage.

Dappula must have had a long reign, for he was still ruling in 659 A.C. when he became king of the northern kingdom as well. Dappula, by his marriage, was the brother-in-law of Aggabodhi III. It is therefore natural that he should take refuge in the south when he was driven from his kingdom by Dāṭhopatissa I. He seems to have made Rohaṇa his headquarters to continue the struggle, but he died shortly after his expulsion. Kassapa, his youngest brother, took up the fight and drove out Dāṭhopatissa. Throughout his reign, too, there must have been friendly relations with Dappula, his brother-in-law. When he had some premonition of his end, it was his nephew, Māna, the eldest son of Dappula, whom he summoned from the south to take charge of the administration and to look after his children who were then quite small.

Māna's regency after Kassapa's death was a troubled one, and he had to summon Dappula, his father, from Rohana to be king in Anurādhapura to give some semblance of stability to the kingdom. But, as seen earlier, he had to flee back to his own kingdom after only a week, and three years later Māna lost his life in the battle against Dāthopatissa II. When Dappula heard of his son's death, he too died of grief. Once again the affairs of Rohana lapse into obscurity.

CHAPTER IV

THE DYNASTY OF MĀNAVAMMA

THE reign of Manavamma opens a new chapter in the history of the Island. Unlike the two preceding centuries, the period dealt with in this chapter is almost completely free from internal strife. Peace and prosperity characterise this age, and it is only with the foreign invasions in the latter part of this period that this peace is broken. The only reign in which there was any serious opposition was that of Mahinda II. This was because he was not in the normal line of succession to the throne. Kings follow each other in the succession of brother to brother, and the dynastic stability was so great that the sons of brothers follow each other in order over a whole generation in the latter half of the period. This is indeed a great achievement after the numerous wars of succession that marred the dynastic history of the past centuries. One consequence of this is that the reigns of the kings of this period tended to be short. The only long reigns were those of Mānavamma (34 years), Aggabodhi VI (40 years) Mahinda II (20 years) Sena I (20 years) and Sena II (35 years). Besides, the kings were usually in their middle age when they ascended the throne.

The dynasty of Mānavamma lasted for well over three centuries, and is the second longest in the Island's history. If, however, we take note of the fact that Mānavamma was the son of Kassapa II, and is a descendent of Silāmeghavaṇṇa, then this line of kings is indeed the longest, though not always in the correct line of succession. This long and effective exercise of power by Mānavamma and his successors gave the dynasty a sanctity and an authority which few of the dynasties before this possessed. The belief that the king was divine was more widespread, and was partly fostered by the growth of Mahāyāna ideas in this period. Thus, even when weak kings ascended the throne, a stable and accepted mode of succession and the sanctity that surrounded the king made it difficult for pretenders and rivals

to command a following.

The period falls naturally into two parts. In the first, which extends up to the reign of Sena I (833-853 A.C.), there was peace. Politically, the history of this period is of little consequence, except that it probably saw the gradual elaboration of the administration. The numerous benefactions to the Sanigha and the glittering festivals held in honour of stūpas, images and other shrines are an indication of the riches which the kings amassed during this time. It is little wonder that the rising Pāṇḍya and Coļa kings turned their greedy eyes on this fair Island. The latter part of

the period saw many invasions from the continent, and these grew in intensity till at last the Colas made it a part of their empire. Almost till the very end, the kings of the Island were able to defend themselves, and there was both good administration and a stable dynasty, except when a few weak kings frittered away their resources and advantages. The main reason for the final debacle, however, was that the Island could not escape being part of the system of power politics of South India.

According to the Cūļavanisa, Mānavamma was 'a son of Kassapa, the depredator of the Thūpārāma.' His father can therefore be none other than Kassapa II. He married a daughter of a Malayarāja. The text which Geiger uses has Sanighamāna as the name of the king, while another text makes Sanighā the name of the daughter. The Cūļavanisa goes on to say that 'they were living in retirement in the Uttaradesa when they were discovered by Hatthadātha (Dāṭhopatissa II), and then they took refuge in the court of the Pallava king Narasinhavarman I.' The Cūļavanisa, earlier in the narrative, mentions that the eldest son of Kassapa II was called Mānaka. There is a possibility that this could be the same as Mānavamma. But the author of the Cūṭavanisa does not make the inference. There is no record of what happened to the sons of Kassapa II after Māna failed to save the kingdom for them. We cannot therefore be certain whether Mānavamma and Mānaka are identical.

The order of events as given in the Cūļavanisa does not lend itself to this easy identification. At the time of Kassapa's death, his children were yet quite young. The chronicle says that 'they were not yet in riper years, children without much sense,' and that they were 'incapable of reigning.' That was the reason why he sent for Māna. Hatthadāṭha became king that same year, and took the name Dāṭhopatissa II. The Cūļavanisa says that Hatthadāṭha discovered Mānavamma. If we assume that this refers to the period before he became king, then this would have taken place almost immediately after the death of Kassapa. We have therefore to presume either a very early marriage for Mānavamma, or that Mānaka and Mānavamma are not identical. If, on the other hand, this section of the Cūļavanisa is taken from a different source, and Hatthadāṭha here means Dāṭhopatissa II after his accession, we could assume that Mānavamma went into hiding soon after his father's death, and that he was leading a quiet life there. It is possible that the marriage to a daughter of a Malayarāja indicates that, for a time, he sojourned in Malaya.

Another reason which can be adduced against this identification is that, although Dāthopatissa II had to face both Māna and Mānavamma within a short time after his accession, there does not seem to be any indication

2. Cv., xlv, v. 6.

^{1.} Cv., xlvii, v. 3; EZ., V, pp. 100-103.

in the Cūļavamsa that there was any collaboration between them as one would expect. Even the two accounts of these invasions are recorded in two different places in the chronicle, one in the reign of Dāṭhopatissa, and the other in the account of the life of Mānavamma. One could, of course, cite this as the reason why the author of the Cūṭavamsa does not make the connection between the two invasions.

Another point in favour of this view is that, in later tradition, there seems to be some dynastic break at this reign. Mānavamma was looked upon as the founder of the line of kings that followed him. Says the chronicle, in dealing with the lineage of Kitti (Vijayabāhu I). 'From the pure race of this king Mānavamma versed in the law and statecraft, that was propagated in sons and grandsons with Aggabodhi at the head, that was first among the princely dynasties, there went forth sixteen (sovereigns) of equal birth who held legitimate sway in Lankā.' There is little doubt that Mānavamma was of royalrank and that he belonged, according to the author of the Cūlavansa, to 'the line of Mahāsammata.' He was accepted as an equal in the court of the Pallava kings, and was even provided with an army to win back his throne. The tradition that he was a son of Kassapa II can therefore be accepted, through the identification of Mānavamma with Mānaka, the eldest son of Kassapa, is not entirely free from doubt.

Manavamma's first attempt to seize the throne during the reign of Dathopatissa II ended in failure because the Pallava army returned to India on receiving news of the illness of their king. He did not get a second chance for another twenty years. The popular reign of Aggabodhi IV intervened. He made his second attempt when Potthakuttha was ruling the Island through his nominees. In the reign of Hatthadatha (684 A.C.) he returned to Ceylon with a large Pallava army given him by Narasimhavarman II, and swept everything before him from the time he landed. He first consolidated a foot-hold in Uttaradesa. Potthakuttha marched with his army to face this threat. The two armies clashed in a fierce battle. Potthakuttha and Hatthadatha both fled from the field when defeat seemed certain. The former was discovered in flight by the chief of the Merukandara district. But since they were friends, he mercifully provided him with the means of committing suicide. Hatthadatha too was slain, and his head taken to Manavamma. Thus Manavamma became king in Anuradhapura in 684 A.C.

There is at this point a lacuna in the text of the Cūļavanisa. Geiger opines that this mutilation may be due to the loss of a leaf in the archetype. The account of the reign of Mānavamma breaks off in the middle of his list of meritorious works, and we do not have the record of the latter part of his

Cv., lvii, vv. 25—26.
 Cv., Tr., Vol. I, p. 109.

reign. From other evidence, we can deduce that he must have reigned for about thirty-five years and died in 718 A.C. The account of the beginning of the next reign too is missing, and the name of the ruler is not given, though a substantial portion of the account of his reign is preserved. The Pūjāvalī and the Rājāvalī not only mention the length of Mānavamma's reign, but also give the name of his successor as Akbō (Aggabodhi). This is confirmed by a later reference in the Cūlavanisa itself where, in giving the genealogy of Kitti (Vijayabāhu I), it speaks of 'the pure race of this king Manavamma that was propagated by sons and grandsons with Aggabodhi at the head' The successor of Mānavamma was therefore an Aggabodhi who would thus be the fifth of that name. He and the next two rulers were brothers, presumably the sons of Manavamma, and were with him in exile in the court of Narasimhavarman. The Pallava influence in the court of the Sinhalese kings must date from this time, for not only were these rulers well acquainted with the practice of the Pallava court, but must have maintained contact with their friends there, after they became kings in the Island.

Aggabodhi ruled for six years, and was succeeded by his brother Kassapa III, in 724 A.C. Of Aggabodhi, we have only a long record of the good deeds that he performed. Of the reign of Kassapa, little is known beyond a few gifts to the Sanigha, for there is another lacuna in the text. It is again from the later chronicles that we learn that he ruled for seven years.

A short rock-inscription at Gärandigala in the Mātalē District,⁵ recording a grant of land, is attributed to the reign of Kassapa III. He is identified as the Sirisangabo mentioned in the record, for it states that he was born in India (Dambdiv-dunu) and that he had a yuvarāja (mahapāṇan) whose name was Mahinda. Being a son of Mānavamma, he was probably born in the court of the Pallava king Narasinhavarman I, and his yuvarāja must be his brother who became king later as Mahinda I.

The last of the sons of Mānavamma to ascend the throne was Mahinda, who is the first ruler of that name. He became king in 730 A.C., and had a short reign of three years. It is said of him that he did not take the royal title, but remained as ādipāda Mahinda, the name and title he had while he was a prince, because he was stricken with sorrow by the memory of a friend named Nīla who had died. This fact enables us to identify him as the Mahayay Mihinday of the Virandagoda pillar-inscription,6 for it is proclaimed in the third year of his reign, though he does not bear any royal titles. This is one of the earliest records of grant of immunities to land. According to the practice of the time, the office of uparāja (heirapparent) was given to Aggabodhi, the son of his elder brother, Kassapa III.

EZ., III, No. 19, pp. 195—199.
 EZ., V, No. 9, pp. 119—124.

To him he assigned the Pācīnadesa (the Eastern District) as a perquisite, and to his own son he gave the province of Dakkhinadesa. These princes ruled these areas as governors.

The mode of succession that prevailed at this time was one that was likely to make brothers impatient to get rid of their elder brothers, so that they might enjoy the powers and the pleasures that go with the throne. There was the danger that they might be cheated out of their dues by death before their turn came round. Thus untimely deaths were likely to be a common feature of kingship. The strength of a dynasty therefore depended on the degree of amity that prevailed among the members of the royal family, and the willing acceptance of the mode of succession laid down by tradition. The family of Mānavamma gave a good account of themselves on this score. Their days of adversity in a foreign land must have strengthened the ties of kinship. They all had short reigns, and they all succeeded in order. This spirit of amity was carried over to the next generation as well.

On the death of Mahinda I, his son Aggabodhi, the governor of Dakkhinadesa, who happened to be in the capital, took charge of the administration. But he sent word to his cousin Aggabodhi, the son of Kassapa III, who was the governor of Pācīnadesa, to come and take over the kingdom as he was the rightful heir. He thus ascended the throne as Aggabodhi VI, and adopted the throne name 'Silāmegha.' He conferred the office of uparāja on his cousin Aggabodhi who had shown such consideration towards him. Aggabodhi had a long and peaceful reign of 40 years (733—772 A.C.).

The example of brotherly affection shown by the two Aggabodhis seems to have roused the jealousy of some who set about to create enmity between them. They whispered in the king's ears that he was king in name only, while the other was in fact the power behind the throne. This probably was so. Consequently, they fell out with each other as the seeds of suspicion grew. The uparāja now became a rebel, and he made use of his governorship of Dakkhinadesa to build up an army against the king. When the two armies met at Kadalīnivāta, the uparāja was defeated and was forced to take refuge in Malaya. Later, when he remembered the faithful support the uparāja had given him even to the extent of handing over the kingdom to him after his father's death, he repented of what he had done. He went alone to Malaya to meet his cousin, and after reconciliation brought him back to the capital. Their friendship was further cemented by a marriage between the uparāja Aggabodhi, and his daughter Samghā.

This marriage had certain political consequences. Shortly after this there was a quarrel between husband and wife and she left him to become a nun.

But she was abducted by another Aggabodhi who was a cousin of hers, and who had been in love with her for a long time. He fled with her to Rohana. It is possible that he was the ruler of that kingdom. The king and the *uparāja* pursued him there in order to punish him and to rescue Sanighā. In the course of the campaign they undertook for this purpose, the whole of the kingdom of Rohana was brought under the authority of the king. In a final battle, Aggabodhi the abductor was defeated, and Sanighā was rescued. This fairy tale episode ended as in a fairy tale, for the Cūļavanisa goes on to say that 'from that time onwards the three lived happily and in harmony.'

The uparāja, the son of the ādipāda Mahinda who had refused consecration, succeeded to the throne as Aggabodhi VII in 772 A.C., and ruled for six years. He conferred the office of uparāja on his own son Mahinda, but the prince seems to have died before he could succeed to the throne, for we do not hear any more about him. It is said of this king that he reformed the Sanigha by 'legal acts' (dhammakamma), and that he removed unjust judges from office. He was interested in medicinal herbs, and made a study of plants all over the Island to determine their curative properties. He died at Polonnaru, which was probably a temporary royal residence.

The circumstances surrounding the succession of the next ruler need some comment. According to the Cūļavamsa, Aggabodhi VI, the elder cousin, had a son called Mahinda. He should have succeeded to the throne. But, for some reason, he was overlooked when Aggabodhi VII conferred on his own son the office and little of uparāja. The Cūlavanisa makes out that, when Mahinda was born, his father, Aggabodhi VI, consulted astrologers who said that he was 'fitted for royal dignity.' He then bribed them into secrecy. There does not seem to be any reason why he should do this if his son was in the direct line of succession to the throne. When he grew up, his father made him his senāpati, and for a short time when he was fighting with his brother (Aggabodhi VII), he was even put in charge of the entire administration. On the accession of his uncle, Aggabodhi VII, Mahinda refused to continue as senāpati under him. normally have become the heir-apparent if he was in the line of succession. Instead, he took some other office under the government at the seaport of Mahatittha, and lived there. The only explanation that can be given to all this is that he was probably not a legitimate heir, though he was a son of Aggabodhi VI. This may also explain the stormy beginning he had when he ascended the throne.

When Aggabodhi VII died in 777 A.C., it does not seem as if his son Mahinda who was *uparāja* succeeded his father. He may have died earlier. Mahinda, the son of Aggabodhi VI, on hearing of the death of his uncle, hurried to the capital because he feared that the kingdom might be captured

by others. Such apprehensions would have been groundless if he was the recognised heir to the throne. His fears were, however, not without foundation, because there was a general uprising in many parts of the kingdom, and people refused to pay their taxes. But Mahinda first occupied the capital, and took control of the army. He did not crown himself king at once. Either the tasks that demanded attention were too urgent to be delayed, or he did not have a queen with whom to go through a proper abhiseka ceremony. He had to use considerable tact and patience, as well as ruthlessness when necessary, to suppress these rebellions and to make himself acceptable to the people. It is in large measure due to him that the line of Mānavamma, which had such a propitious beginning, was continued.

He realised that his most pressing problem was in the north, in the Uttaradesa, where the chiefs had practically declared independence. Mahinda went north with a large army and crushed all the rebels. He next endeavoured to strengthen his position by marrying the dowager queen. He went to the place where the former king had died and, having comforted the queen, he offered to make her his queen so that she may retain her royal dignity. By her silence she seemed to give him her consent, but secretly she planned to kill him. When Mahinda discovered this, he set a close watch on her, and when he was convinced of her guilt, he fought and put to flight a large number of her followers, and put her in chains. He returned to the capital with the queen, and seized the royal treasure.

He was faced with a still more serious problem. His father, Aggabodhi VI, had an elder sister who had a son named Dappula. We are not told what position he held, or who his father was. But he commanded a large army and had considerable resources. He rallied his forces at Kālavāpi (Kalāvāva), and then marched towards Sangagāma to challenge Mahinda. Mahinda, too, marched with a large army to meet his rival. He brought the queen too with him; he did not think it safe to leave her behind in the capital, for he feared that she might incite a revolt. There was a terrible battle out of which Mahinda emerged victorious. Dappula, seeing that his army was defeated, fled to Malaya with such of them as escaped the slaughter. In the meantime, the chiefs of the northern districts, seeing that the capital was unoccupied, entered Anurādhapura and attempted to hold it. But Mahinda hurried back after his victory over Dappula and put them to flight. He did not pursue them as he had more urgent tasks to attend to. He set his hand to the task of re-ordering the kingdom.

He was disturbed in this important task by Dappula who was not reconciled to his defeat. He had collected his scattered forces once again, and built them into a reserve army. To strengthen his forces, he had brought up from Rohana a large army commanded by the two sons of his sister. With this immense army, he marched on Anurādhapura by night and invested it. Mahinda was equal to the challenge, and the troops were full of confidence. When it was dawn, he broke through a gate in a surprise attack and unleashed with his picked warriors an irresistible onslaught on the enemy. Dappula's forces were scattered, and those that escaped the slaughter fled to Rohana. But, due to his elemency, Mahinda did not wish to pursue the defeated. The two princes from Rohana were captured alive, but were eventually released. Dappula, however, escaped again and fled to Rohana.

Once firmly established in the capital, he sent his army to the border provinces to bring them under his control. He first sent his troops to the Pācīnadesa (the Eastern District). He then directed them to the troublesome Northern District, and firmly established his authority there. The whole country was now at peace, and he felt himself sufficiently secure to assume sovereignty. His tolerance and tact is nowhere better exemplified than in the treatment of his uncle's queen who plotted against him. He had at first to take her wherever he went, for he could not trust her. But he realised that she was a great asset to him, and so he tolerated her. He could not set her free, for she might turn rebel with her supporters. Nor could she be slain, for he had not the heart to do so. So he made her his queen, and he was crowned king with her. His patience was rewarded, for when in time she bore him a son, all her antagonism vanished. To appease her further, he conferred on his son the dignity of uparāja with the revenues that went with the office.

His troubles were not yet over. When the princes in the south saw their chances for the throne recede with the appointment of an uparāja, they raised an army in the province of Pācīnadesa, which they seem to have recaptured from Mahinda. They then summoned their uncle Dappula from Rohana, and entered into an agreement with him, which was probably concerned with the throne and the succession. When they were ready for war, they assembled their armies on the banks of the Mahaväli Ganga. Mahinda took no chances. He summoned his officials, and with persuasive words reminded them of their duty and their loyalty. But, as a warning, he imprisoned a few who were obstinate, and even executed some whose loyalty he was not sure of. He next arranged for the safety of his capital while he was away, and gave detailed instructions for the period of his absence. Then, with a large army, he took up his position at a village called Mahummāra. The two armies met at the battle of Koviļāragāma. Mahinda was victorious again. The two princes fell in the battle, but the ādipāda Dappula fled once again to Rohana.

Mahinda returned to his capital, but he was not left in peace for long. Dappula, his remaining enemy, began to make preparations again in Rohana

to renew the conflict. Mahinda too wished to settle the matter once and for all. But he thought he would use tact rather than force. He summoned, to the Thūpārāma, bhikkhus and other important people, and explained the situation to them. He then made arrangements for the administration of the capital while he was away and, taking with him a large and well-equipped army, set out for Rohana. When the people of Rohana saw the destruction the army caused on its way thither, they surrendered through fear. He then sought out Dappula and, instead of eliminating him as he might have done, imposed a treaty upon him taking from him his elephants, horses and jewels. The treaty decreed that the Galhaganga (Gal Oya) was to be the boundary between the two kingdoms. He thus shifted the traditional boundary between the kingdoms further south away from his border provinces, and included in the Anuradhapura kingdom the region north of the Gal Oya, the district known as Digamadulla. For close on two centuries, this region continued to be part of the Anuradhapurakingdom.

He had yet one last problem: that of his succession. His son whom he appointed uparāja died young. He had, however, another son named Udaya, who was born when he was the senāpati. He could not by right be the uparāja, as his mother was not a consecrated queen. Yet, he was a capable young man who had already proved his mettle in the invasion of Uttaradesa, at the battle of Sangagama, at the seige of Anuradhapura and at the battle of Kovilaragama. He had thus endeared himself to his father. Therefore, the office of uparāja was conferred on him. But it was left to him to prove himself acceptable to the people. The latter part of Mahinda's reign was one of peace, and he seems to have had the leisure to turn his attention to the works of peace. He has an impressive record of public and religious works, which included the construction of the famous Ratanapāsāda and the strengthening of the dam of the Kālavāpi. His reign lasted twenty years, and he died in 797 A.C. The many details that the chronicles provide about this ruler give us a far greater insight into his character than to that of any other king of this period.

His son, the *uparāja*, succeeded him and came to be known as Udaya, the first of that name. The *Cūlavanisa* does not give his name, but it is mentioned in all the other chronicles. He conferred the office of *uparāja* on his eldest son, Mahinda. The name of his queen was Senā, and he conferred the titles fādipāda er rājinī on all his children. It is possible that

^{7.} Much confusion has been caused by this king being named Dappula on the ground that he gave his name to the Dappula-pabbata-vibāra built by him (Cv., xlix, v. 30). Consequently, in some books and articles, the kings who bear the names 'Udaya' and 'Dappula' are numbered wrong. Vide Cv. Tr., p. 126 n.l. The mistake first arose in the Sinhalese translations of Sumangala and Batuvantudave, and the English translation of Wijesinghe.

he took these measures early in order to forestall any attempt to oust him and his family from the throne. He did not quite belong to royalty, and he must have resorted to this method to make good the deficiency. He undertook a great many religious works, and made many benefactions to the Sanigha. He did all this in the short space of five years. For part of the time he seems to have made Polonnaru his capital. In order to prevent the miscarriage of justice, he inaugurated the practice of recording judgments that were just, in books which were kept in the royal palace.

His reign was not free from trouble. The accession of a ruler who was not quite of royal rank, and one who was the son of their inveterate enemy, Mahinda, was the signal for a fresh uprising in the Uttaradesa. Udaya despatched his senāpati and his (the senapāti's) son to quell the revolt. when they got there, they were instigated by the rebels to turn against their king, and they began to take possession of the country. When Udaya heard about this he at once went up north with an army. He defeated the enemy at Dūratissa, and slew both the senāpati and his son as well as their accomplices. On another occasion, a prince named Mahinda from Rohana, the son of the ādipāda Dāthāsiva, appealed to him for assistance to fight against his father with whom he had quarrelled. Udaya supplied him with the forces necessary to fight his father, expel him and to take possession of the kingdom. To strengthen this newly formed friendship, Udaya gave his daughter Devā in marriage to the young prince Mahinda, a union of some dynastic significance as will be seen in the sequel. The ādipāda Dāṭhāsiva, who was forced to flee to India, appears in an inscription at Rassahela in which he makes a grant of land to the Arittara-vihara. He is called äpay Daļsiva (ādipāda Dāṭhāsiva).8 This inscription throws some light on the probable reasons for the readiness with which Udaya I assisted Mahinda against his father, the ādipāda Dāthāsiva. It is located at Rāssahela, in the Batticaloa district. This could mean that the ādipāda had, in contravention of the treaty imposed by Mahinda II on Rohana, extended his authority beyond the Gal Oya, the stipulated boundary between the two kingdoms. It is possible that part of the price Mahinda had to pay for the assistance received was the acceptance once again of the Gal Oya as the boundary between Rohana and the Anuradhapura kingdom.9

Udaya died in 801 A.C., and was succeeded by his son Mahinda, who is thus the third of that name. He had a short and uneventful reign of four years, and died in 804 A.C. He was also known as Dhammika Silāmegha, (Silāmegha, the righteous). This was his throne name.

He was succeeded by Aggabodhi, the eighth of that name. The Cūļa-vamsa does not give his relationship to his predecessor directly. But it is

^{8.} EZ., IV, No. 20; pp. 169-176.

^{9.} EZ., V, pp. 135-136.

recorded that he built the Udayagg, abodhi-parivena, naming it after himself, and his father. We can, therefore, deduce that he was the son of Udaya I and a brother of Mahinda III, his predecessor. He too had an uneventful reign of eleven years, and died in 815 A.C. There is one characteristic about him that struck the imagination of the people of his time, and which the author of the chronicle sets down. He held his mother in extreme reverence and affection, and personally attended to her wants. He respected his slaves too, and would not so much as use the word 'slave' on them. If he unwittingly did that, he would permit the slave to call him 'slave' in return.

Dappula, who now succeeds to the throne, is important for the dynastic history of this period. He was the youngest of the three sons of Udaya I, and a brother of the preceding king. Dappula, who is the second of that name to occupy the throne, was one who did not honour the law of succession. He should have made the son of his eldest brother Mahinda III, also called Mahinda, the yuvarāja. Instead, he seems to have refused to give him even the title of ādipāda, which was normally borne by all the princes of the royal line. He wanted thus to ensure the speedy succession of his own sons. Mahinda, who could not bring himself to pay respect to a younger kinsman, fled to India. Dappula had five sons of whom only the first two, Aggabodhi (IX) and Sena (I), became kings. His only daughter Devā he gave in marriage to Kittaggabodhi, the ruler of Rohana. The other three sons were Mahinda, Kassapa and Udaya.

The only matter of political interest in his reign is the short war with Rohana. The two royal lines of Anuradhapura and Rohana were brought together by Udaya I when he gave his daughter Devā in marriage to Mahinda of Rohana. Thus Mahinda became the brother-in-law of Dappula II. This was the beginning of many such alliances between these two royal houses, and this led inevitably to the kings of Anuradhapura being drawn into the family quarrels of the Rohana rulers. Mahinda, who had Udaya's help to oust his father from the throne, gave his own sons the treatment which his father had given him before, by driving them from the court. We are not told the reason for this strange behaviour. But the sons naturally turned to their maternal uncle Dappula II at Anurādhapura. Mahinda was quite satisfied with this, and Dappula did nothing for the time being. But shortly after this, Mahinda lost his life defending his throne against a kinsman who rebelled against him. That kinsman too lost his life in the course of the rebellion. Dappula now helped the elder of the two nephews, who was called Kittaggabodhi, to become the sovereign of Rohana. Following the example of his father Udaya, he gave his daughter, also called Deva, in marriage to him. The other, whose name

too was Dappula, continued to live in the court of his uncle at Anurādhapura. Apart from this, Dappula's long reign of sixteen years is uneventful, and we have only the record of his religious works. He died in 831 A.C.

His eldest son Aggabodhi lost no time in assuming the throne; he was the ninth of that name. The reason for his hurry was no doubt his fear that Mahinda, his elder cousin, might return from India to dispute the throne. He did indeed come back to fight for what was his right. But Aggabodhi sent out a strong army, defeated him and seized many of his followers. Mahinda himself escaped and fled once more to India. The Rājāvalī and the Rājaratnākara mention an invasion by the Tamils that took place in the reign of this king. The Cūļavanisa, however, has no record of this. If it is not a confusion with the invasion of the Island by the Pāṇḍyas that took place in the reign of his successor, this is a precursor of what was to follow. It is stated that they sacked the capital and carried away much booty. Aggabodhi died in 833 A.C. after a short reign of three years.

He was succeeded by his younger brother named Sena, the first of that name. He conferred the office of yuvarāja on the next brother, whose name was Mahinda. His queen-consort was Sanighā. The Cūļavanisa refers to him at one place as 'Silāmegha,' thus indicating that that was his throne name. This is confirmed in two inscriptions recording grants of immunities which have been attributed to him, the Kivulēkaḍa pillar-inscription and a pillar-inscription discovered at the Vaṭadāgē at Polonnaru.¹0 In both these, he has the throne name 'Abhā Salamevan' (Abhaya Silāmeghavanṇa). From this time on, numerous epigraphic records support or add to the evidence of the chronicles. But they are mainly of religious and administrative interest. They throw some light, however, on the dynastic history of this period.

Sena seems to have been rather apprehensive about the throne because Mahinda, his cousin, was still alive in India. It was quite likely that he would try once again to win back his throne. On his accession, therefore, Sena took steps to meet this threat. He sent agents to India and had his cousin murdered. In this manner, he removed from his path one who was likely to make trouble for him in the future.

Sena I is best remembered as the king in whose reign there was a calamitous invasion from the continent. The kings of the Island were probably not unaware of the events in South India. But, being rulers of an Island, they were unaffected by them till the very last moment. For some time, the Pāṇḍya empire had been growing at the expense of its neighbours. In the reign of Varaguṇa I (765-815 A.C.), almost the entire region south of the Kāvērī was under Pāṇḍya rule. His successor, Śrīmāra Śrīvallabha,

^{10.} EZ., III, No. 31; pp. 289-294.

looked for further conquests, and it was only a matter of time before he decided to invade the Island.11 We do not know the exact date of the invasion, but it must have taken place in the early part of Sena's reign. The Pāndya king landed with a large army, and gradually took possession of the entire Uttaradesa. Sena sent his forces to eject the enemy from the Island. But, due to discord among the leaders of the army, it was of no avail. Śrīmāra established his position at Mahātālitagāma, and many Tamils who lived in those parts swelled his ranks. While the Pāṇḍya army was led by the king in person, and was full of courage and determination, the Sinhalese army was thoroughly demoralised and was without leadership. In the battle that followed, the Sinhalese army was vanquished and put to flight. When the yuvarāja Mahinda, who was present at the battle, saw the fate of his army, he committed suicide even in the field, for he preferred that to death at the hands of the enemy. When the yuvarāja's body was discovered, Śrīmāra gallantly ordered a royal cremation for him, with all the ceremonies and rites that were usually accorded to Pandya royalty.

When the news of this debacle was conveyed to the king, he gathered together the royal treasury and fled to Malaya. The Cūļavanisa account of the war is a bit confused after this first battle. One of the brothers of Sena, the ādipāda Kassapa, escaped after the battle and fell back on the city. He seems to have made a last stand at the northern gate of the capital. But, being defeated here, too, he escaped to Koṇḍivāta. In probably what was another clash with the Pāṇḍyas at Polonnaru, he was captured and slain on orders from the Pāṇḍya king. Thus Sena I lost two of his brothers, and only Udaya remained.

The vihāras of the capital, which were brimful of treasure, the donations of pious kings and nobles over the centuries of peace and plenty which the Island had enjoyed, were the main objects of Pāṇḍya cupidity. In the words of the chronicler, describing the looting by the Pāṇḍya king, 'all these he took and made the Island of Lankā deprived of her valuables, leaving the splendid town in a state as if it had been plundered by Yakkhas.' Meanwhile, Sena took up a position well to the south, near where the Mahaväli and the Amban Ganga meet, and set guards along the high road to the capital to warn him of any impending danger.

Śrīmāra, however, had no intention of making a permanent conquest. He was after loot, and once satisfied, he was ready to leave. He, therefore, sent his officials to Sena to effect a treaty. Sena was only too glad, for he had nothing to lose, and he agreed to all the conditions that were laid

^{11.} K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, The Pāṇḍyas, pp. 68-76; the larger Sinnamanūr Plates.

down. He had, however, to surrender all his jewels, and probably other treasures as well. His mission accomplished, Śrīmāra handed over the city that very day to Sena's messengers, and returned to his country. Sena set about the task of bringing the Island back to its former glory, and once more there was peace in the land.

The office of yuvarāja, fallen vacant by the death of the valiant Mahinda, should have gone to the next brother, the ādipāda Kassapa. But he, too, had died in the fighting. Thus Udaya, the youngest of the brothers, was given that office and for his revenues was assigned the province of Dakkhiṇadesa. But he too was not destined to live very long, for he fell ill and died. The king, therefore, conferred on Sena the office of mahādipāda or yuvarāja, together with the province of Dakkhiṇadesa. Sena was the son of the ādipāda Kassapa, who died during the Pāṇḍya invasion. This seems to imply that, of the five sons of Dappula II, only the ādipāda Kassapa had sons who could succeed to the throne. The royal line was, therefore, preserved through his sons, though he himself never became king.

Sena I, too, like his father before him, had to interfere in the affairs of Rohana on behalf of his kinsmen there. On the death of Kittaggabodhi, who was ruler of Rohana, his sister seized the kingdom and murdered Mahinda, Kittaggabodhi's eldest son. The rest of the family, consisting of three sons and three daughters, in fear of their lives, fled to the court of their maternal uncle Sena I. Sena, who loved his little nephews and nieces, brought them up in his court and treated them like royal princes. When Kassapa, the eldest of the sons, was old enough, he gave him an army and sent him to Rohana to recover the kingdom. Kassapa was successful, and he sent for his two brothers, Sena and Udaya, so that they might share the kingdom with him. The sisters remained in the court at Anurādhapura with their uncle. When they came of age, he gave Sanghā on whom he had conferred the title of rājinī, to his nephew, the upārāja Sena, and the other two princesses, Tissā and Kitti, to Mahinda, the younger brother of the uparāja.

Sena reigned for twenty years, and died in 853 A.C. The latter half of his reign was taken up with the repair of the damage caused by the Pāṇḍya invasion. He tried to make good the other losses as well. He was the eldest of the four sons of the ādipāda Kassapa, the others being Mahinda, Udaya (II) and Kassapa (IV).

The yuvarāja Sena now became king as Sena II. He had a long reign of thirty-five years. There was peace in the land, and he continued the task of rebuilding begun by his uncle to raise the capital once again to its former glory. His benefactions and works of piety rivalled those of former kings. He invaded Pāṇḍya and, by placing on the Pāṇḍya throne his own nominee, he wiped out the indignities and losses inflicted on his family. He was,

without doubt, one of the great rulers of the line of Manavamma. The

chronicler himself pays his tribute in a glowing prasasti.

He consecrated his consort Samghā as mahesī. She thus came to be called, both in the chronicle and in the inscriptions, 'the twice-consecrated queen.' He had as his yuvarāja his brother Mahinda, to whom he gave Dakkhinadesa as his perquisite. There was an early estrangement between them over an offence which Mahinda committed in the women's quarters. When he was found out, he fled to Malaya with his wife and child. However, he soon made up with his brother through the kind offices of the bhikkhus of the three fraternities. He was more than eager to make friends after he heard that the new-born son of Sena and Sanigha had been conferred the title of yuvarāja. This was indeed an unprecedented procedure. Kassapa maintained this title along with others who had the same title, his uncles who were in the line of succession, till his own turn came round. This was a signal honour paid to the infant prince. He was named Kassapa and the king granted him a share of his own revenues as well as 'all the extra ordinary revenues of the kingdom.' In later years, the king had him married to Sanighā, the beautiful daughter of the yuvarāja (Mahinda). Thus, any antagonism that may have existed between them on account of their both having the title yuvarāja was removed. The Cūlavanisa says that they had other sons too, but does not give the names of any. It is possible that Dappula III was one of them. The Vessagiri slab-inscription of Dappula IV12 seems to indicate that his father was Sena II, and his mother's name is given there as Devā. She probably was another queen of Sena II. The yuvarāja did not live long enough to succeed to the throne. He died in 885 A.C. By his consort Tissa, he had a daughter named Samgha who was married to the yuvarāja Kassapa, and by his consort Kitti he had four sons and a daughter, two of whom were the ādipāda Kittaggabodhi and Udaya (III). On his death, the next brother Udaya (II) was made the uparāja with the revenues that went with that office.

Sena is best remembered for his invasion of the mainland. The shameful surrender of his uncle Sena I must have rankled in his mind. It is not likely, as the Cūlavanisa would have us believe, that it was only when he saw the empty pedestal of the golden image of the Buddha at the Ratana-pāsāda, and enquired about it, that he came to know about the depredations of the Pāṇḍyas. He was no doubt a young boy when his father was slain by them, and remembered the incident. He was probably on the look out for an opportunity to wipe out the insult to his family, to avenge the death of his father and uncle, and to bring back the treasures that were removed. He got the chance he was looking for when the son of Śrīmāra, who had fallen out with his father and had rebelled against him, came to

^{12.} EZ., 1, pp. 23-29.

Ceylon, probably in search of a champion. Sena decided to back him and it is almost certain that he made some kind of alliance with the Pallava ruler, Nṛpatuṅga. They both attacked the Pāṇḍya kingdom simultaneously from the north and the south. Śrīmāra first went north, and was severely defeated at the battle of Aricit. In the meantime, Sena assembled a large and well-equipped army at Mahātittha, and sent it across the strait to India under the senāpati Kuṭṭhaka. The general laid waste the country-side as he went along, and then, after a short seige, captured Madhurā, the Pāṇḍya capital, and put the garrison to the sword. Śrīmāra, when he heard of the danger that threatened his capital, hurried back from the north with his army. His depleted troops were unable to dislodge the Sinhalese, and Śrīmāra lost his life in the battle for the city.

While his troops pillaged the city, Kuṭṭhaka examined the treasures of the royal palace. He not only recovered the treasures which the Pāṇḍyas had removed from the Island, but brought back the Pāṇḍya treasure as well. He placed Śrīmāra's son, Varaguṇavarman II, on the Pāṇḍya throne (862 A.C.) as the nominee of Sena II and, having made arrangements for the administration of the kingdom, he returned to the Island. There was great rejoicing in Anurādhapura; the senāpati Kuṭṭhaka and the returning troops were duly honoured. Kuṭṭhaka is mentioned in the Īripinniyāva inscription as Kuṭṭhā Senevirad; he was the founder of the Sen-Senevirad-pirivena, which is the Sena-senāpati-pariveṇa of the Cūṭavamsa¹³. There are three other inscriptions that have been attributed to him: the Viyaulpota pillar-inscription, the Nāgama pillar-inscription and the Kaludiyapokuṇa cave-inscription.¹⁴ Sena II died in 887 A.C. in the thirty-fifth year of his reign.

The uparāja Udaya now became king as Udaya II. The inscriptions give him the throne name 'Abhā Salamevan.' He made Kassapa, the youngest of the brothers, his uparāja or mahādipāda. He believed in strengthening family ties by marriage, and so had Senā, the daughter of the uparāja Kassapa (Kassapa IV), given in marriage to the yuvarāja Kassapa (Kassapa V), son of Sena II. He himself married the other daughter called Tissā.

Udaya reigned for eleven years, and the only incident of political importance is the rebellion of Kittaggabodhi. He was the son of the ādipāda Mahinda, the elder brother of the king, who died before he could succeed to the throne. His mother was the princess Kitti, the sister of Kassapa, Sena and Udaya, the three princes of Rohana. For some reason not

^{13.} EZ., I, No. 12; pp. 163—171. 14. EZ., IV, No. 21; pp. 176—180; II, No. 4; pp. 14—19; III, No. 27; 253—260. 15. EZ., I, No. 12, pp. 163—171; EZ., I, No. 13, pp. 172—175; EZ., II, No. 1, pp. 1—5; EZ., II, No. 2, pp. 5—8.

mentioned in the chronicle, he rebelled against the king. Seeing that he could not do anything in Anurādhapura, he escaped to Rohana when Udaya attempted to have him seized. In Rohana, he laid waste the countryside, and brought the people under his control. He then murdered his maternal uncle who was ruling Rohana at this time. It is not possible to determine which of the three brothers this would be, though Geiger presumes it was Kassapa. Udaya was furious when he heard of this, and he decided on a course of action. He wanted to seize Kittaggabodhi to punish him, and then to place his own nominee on the throne in Rohana. It is likely that both Sena and Udaya, too, the other brothers of Kassapa, lost their lives at the hands of Kittaggabodhi. The king, therefore, summoned the yuvarāja Kassapa (Kassapa V) and put it to him that the person best suited to be king in Rohana was his own son, the young prince Mahinda. He had a claim to the throne because both his grandmothers were daughters of the former Kittaggabodhi of Rohana. Kassapa readily gave his consent to this proposal. Udaya then placed the young prince under the care of the senāpati Vajiragga, and sent him with a large and well-equipped army to Rohana. Mahinda was welcomed by all the inhabitants and officials of the province, for they were disgusted with the oppressive rule of Kittaggabodhi. Kittaggabodhi, when he saw what was happening, was seized with panic, and fled to Malaya with his army and the royal treasure. He was worsted in several skirmishes by Mahinda's forces and he and his army were relentlessly pursued into the mountain fastness of Malaya. In his anger, he flung his treasure into rivers and bogs as he went along, and finally hid himself in a cave. But he was at last captured and taken before Mahinda, to his headquarters at Guttasala (Buttala). Mahinda handed him over to the senāpati, who took him to Anurādhapura, where he was imprisoned by the king. Mahinda proceeded to Mahagama and became the ruler of Rohana. There he redressed the wrongs done by his predecessor, and brought the country back to normal.

Udaya died in 898 A.C. and the yuvarāja Kassapa now succeeded to the throne as Kassapa IV. We learn from his inscriptions that he had the throne name 'Sirisamghabodhi (Sirisangbo).' The yuvarāja Kassapa now became the actual heir-apparent, and received the province of Dakkhinadesa which goes with that office. Kassapa consecrated as his chief queen the princess Tissā, the daughter of the yuvarāja Kassapa, his nephew. According to the evidence of the Velmilla16 and Rambava slab-inscriptions,17 he had a queen by the name of Dev Gon (Deva), and her son Udaya (IV) later became king.

EZ., III, No. 32, pp. 294—302.
 EZ., II, No. 12, pp. 64—70.

Kassapa had a long reign of seventeen years, and the only matter of interest, apart from religious works, is the invasion of Mahinda from the south. Mahinda who was ruling Rohana decided that the southern principality was not enough for him, and cast his jealous eyes on the throne of Anuradhapura. He had by this time brought order and good government to Rohana, and had strengthened his forces there. He, therefore, advanced with his army on Anuradhapura. The defeat of the army which Kassapa sent against him must have encouraged him further. Kassapa now changed his strategy and decided on tact. He sent the yuvarāja Kassapa, Mahinda's father, to persuade his son to give up his folly and turn back. With many an exhortation, he argued patiently with his son, and at length persuaded him to give up the fight. Mahinda went back to Rohana to find the kingdom almost in revolt. He had to execute some district chiefs in order to enforce his authority. But the people rose in rebellion, and he had to flee north. He was reluctant to seek the aid of his grand-uncle as he had but recently attempted to oust him from the throne. But the monks came to his rescue and acted as intermediaries. When he was brought before the king, there was a reconciliation, and the king even gave his daughter in marriage to him. He then sent him back to Rohana. He must have been given adequate forces to get back his kingdom, though the Cūļavamsa is silent on this point.

Wickremasinghe, in editing the pillar-inscription found at Mayilagastoța, ¹⁸ a village in the Hambantoța district, identified the author of the record (äpā Mihiňdu) as Mahinda IV. His parents Abhā Salamevan and Saṅg Gon were identified as Kassapa V, and his queen Saṁghā, the daughter of the yuvarāja Mahinda. Though the latter identification is correct, it is not possible to accept the identification of the äpā Mihiňdu with Mahinda IV, because, as will be seen in the sequel, his mother was named Devā (Dev Gon). It is much more appropriate to take äpā Mihiňdu as the ādipāda Mahinda who ruled in Rohaṇa. The author of the inscription exercised a

royal prerogative here in issuing immunities to land.

There are two further matters of interest in this reign. Up to this time, in the list of benefactions and pious works of each reign which the Cūļavamsa unfailingly sets down, it is the king that takes the prominent part. But in this reign the officials outshine the king. One in particular, the senāpati Sena Ilanga, who was a relation of the royal family, to judge from the nature and extent of his activities, must have wielded immense influence in the state. The senāpati Rakkha was also a relation of the king. The other is that Kassapa IV has a number of inscriptions in which he mades grants of immunities to various establishments within his kingdom. They are

^{18.} EZ., II, No. 11, pp. 57—63.
19. EZ., I, Nos. 11 and 17; II, Nos. 3, 5 and 37; III, Nos. 5 and 28; and IV, No. 32.

of little political interest. In some of these, Kassapa refers to himself as the brother of Udaya, but does not mention the name of his father, the ādipāda Kassapa.

On the death of Kassapa IV in 914 A.C. the yuvarāja Kassapa became king as the fifth of that name. The inscriptions give him the throne name Abhā Salamevan.' If, as it seems probable, Kassapa was born soon after the accession of his father Sena II in 853 A.C., he would have been sixty years old when he succeeded to the throne. He gave the office of yuvarāja to Dappula, another son of Sena II. The post of sakkasenāpati, which seems to be a new appointment, he gave to his son by the Queen Deva. Kassapa is recorded as having had four queens. It is not possible to determine who the chief queens were. They were probably not all living at the same time. Their names are Sainghā and Senā who were cousins, being the daughters, respectively, of the mahādipāda Mahinda and Kassapa IV, and Devā and Rājinī. Four of his sons are mentioned, and it is possible that one of them became king as Mahinda IV. It is also possible that Sena IV too was one of them. Mahinda, who was sent to Rohana, continued to rule there, and probably died before it was his turn to succeed to the throne. The son who was made sakkasenāpati died early, and also probably Siddhattha, the son of Rājinī, who held the office of malayarāja. Kassapa V's reign is dynastically important because he begins a new generation of rulers, grandsons of the ādipāda Kassapa, the brother of Sena II. About six of Kassapa's brothers and cousins were to rule before his own son Mahinda IV succeeded to the throne. The last of the line were his two grandsons, the sons of Mahinda IV, Sena V and Mahinda V.

Kassapa, in his time, was looked upon as a very great king. This is clear from the eulogies which the author of the Cūļavanisa includes in the account of his reign. Having held the title of yuvarāja from his birth through the reigns of many kings, he held a unique position in the state. The fact that he was the son of the great Sena II who conquered the Pāṇḍya country and captured Madhurā is proudly mentioned in the Mädirigiri pillar-inscription,²⁰ and the Bilibāva pillar-inscription.²¹ Further, he took pride in the fact that his mother was a twice-consecrated queen. Throughout the long reign of his father, Kassapa was carefully brought up and given the best education of the time. He was, therefore, a learned prince. He is the author of the Dampiyā-aṭuvā-gāṭapada, a Sinhalese glossary to the commentary on the Dhammapada.²² He was deeply read in the Abhidhamma, and it is said that he even recited the scriptures before the bhikkhus. His reign of nine years was full of meritorious works, among which must be

^{20.} EZ., II, No. 6, pp. 25-33.

^{21.} EZ., II, No. 8, pp. 38-43. 22. Godakumbura: History of Sinhalese Literature, p. 31-33.

mentioned the great honour paid to the book Dhammasaiigani, which was worshipped as a relic. He also carried out a reformation of the Sanigha. The Anuradhapura slab-inscription of Kassapa²³ contains the rules that he laid down for the administration of the establishments connected with the Abhayagiri-vihāra, and is the earliest record of its kind. There are a number of inscriptions which fall within his reign,24 and he is referred to in the inscriptions of his son, Mahinda IV. They are politically unimportant, and there is little in them that we do not know already from the Cūlavanisa, except his throne name 'Abhā Salamevan', and the fact that Mahinda IV was probably his son.

During this reign, there were rumblings from the continent that portended danger for the future. Kassapa V's unsuccessful expedition to the Pandya country will be dealt with in the next chapter.25 From this time, the Island was deeply affected by the events in India, for the Sinhalese had thrown in their lot with the Pandyas against the Colas, and this was neither forgotten nor forgiven by the Colas. The rulers of the Island were, therefore, inevitably drawn into the maelstrom of South Indian politics. Since Ceylon was an Island, she did not feel the effects of the Cola power immediately; but, when the gathering storm burst upon the Island, she was unable to meet it. There was a calm that presaged the storm when there was invasion and even a counter invasion by Udaya IV. But it was not the might of the Cola armies alone that paved the way for their success in the Island. There was a general decline in the country, and an administrative laxity caused by the appearance of a number of very weak and inefficient rulers such as Udaya III and IV, Sena IV and Mahinda V. Officials and nobles, some of them forcigners, bloated with power, got out of hand, and the kings were unable to keep them under control. For these reasons, some of the kings of this period show a partiality for Polonnaru, where they would have been free from the pressures of the court. There was, therefore, a perceptible decline, which ultimately resulted in the chaotic conditions that prevailed in the northern kingdom when the Colas made their final invasion. Anuradhapura was a ripe fruit that just fell into their

Although the Cūļavainsa invariably gives the relationship of each king to his predecessor, for the six rulers from Dappula III to Sena IV it is for once strangely silent. We, have, therefore, to depend on other sources for this information. The Sinhalese sources are sometimes helpful, but it is the inscriptions that give us most of the data when the kings mentioned in them are satisfactorily identified. But still there are some difficulties

^{23.} EZ., I, No. 4, pp. 41—57. 24. EZ., II, Nos. 9 and II; EZ., I, No. 1b, II. No. 7; and IV Nos. 5 and 22 may belong to either Kassapa V or Dappula IV, both of whom had the same *viruda*. 25. See infra, p. 344f.

that remain unsolved for lack of evidence. It is likely that all these rulers, except probably Sena IV, belong to the same generation and were the sons of the brothers, Sena II, the yuvarāja Mahinda, Udaya II and Kassapa IV. The alternate use of the throne names 'Abhā Salamevan' and 'Sirisangbo,' and the assumption that we have the names in the order in which they reigned together with, sometimes, the names of the uparājas, enable us to unravel their dynastic relationships.

Kassapa V died in 923 A.C. and was succeeded by his yuvarāja as Dappula III. Since Dappula IV is known from inscriptions to be the son of Sena II, it is likely, since Dappula III held the office of yuvarāja, that he too was a son of the same king, if the normal order of succession is assumed. Dappula has no inscription of his own yet discovered, nor can we be certain that he is mentioned in any inscription that we know. He had only a short reign of seven months, and he died in 924 A.C.

Dappula was succeeded by his yuvarāja who was also called Dappula. He thus became king as Dappula IV. The inscriptions give him the throne name 'Abhā Salamevan.' The Cūļavanisa does not give his relationship to the former king, but the Pūjāvalī, Rājāvalī and the Rājaratnākara call him the younger brother (mal) of the previous ruler. From two inscriptions, one at Vessagiri26 and the other at Kondavattavan,27 attributed to Dappula IV, we learn that his father was a king called Sirisangbo Abhā, and that his mother was Devā Räjna or Dev Gon. This Sirisangbo could be Kassapa IV, but it is far more likely that he is Sena II and his queen Devā (who is not mentioned in the Cūlavaiisa). He would thus be a halfbrother of Kassapa V. He conferred the office of yuvarāja on the ādipāda Udaya, who was to be Udaya III later. A fragmentary pillar-inscription ar Anuradhapura, dated in the second year of Dappula IV, refers to a Kasubmahāparadāṇan.28 He must have been a yuvarāja under him. We are further told that he was the son of yuvarāja Mahinda, who has been identified as the brother of Sena II, for he is called the uncle (silipiya) of the king, and that he was nurtured by the queen Sanighā (Sangā-rājna), probably the queen of Sena II. The Cūlavainsa mentions the fact that the yuvarāja Mahinda had sons, but does not say anything more about them. know from this record that one of them lived to become the yuvarāja of Dappula, but died before he could succeed to the throne. Dappula IV's relations with the Pandya king will be narrated elsewhere.29

An inscription at Kataragama, dated in the sixth year of this same king,30 shows that at that time the yuvarāja Kassapa was dead and that the yuvarāja

^{26.} EZ., I, No. 2 iii; pp. 23—29. 27. EZ., V, No. 10; pp. 124—141. 28. EZ., III, No. 8; pp. 126—131. 29. See infra, p. 345. 30. EZ., III, No. 21c; pp. 219—225.

Udaya (Udaya III) was in office. This inscription is further important in that it refers to a campaign conducted by the son of Udaya (Udā Mahayā) named Lämäni Mihind, in Rohana and Malaya. After this successful invasion of the south, he seems to have been made the governor of that kingdom, for the inscription records a grant of immunities to the Kapugampirivena at the site. The Kondavattavan pillar-inscription of the reign of Dappula IV, which was discovered recently in the Gal Oya valley, is also relevant here as it shows that the king at Anuradhapura had full control of this region which, in ancient times, was known as Digamadulla (Dighavapimandala), and that sometimes they placed it under military governors such as the Sangva Rakus-senevirad mentioned in this record. These inscriptions show that the settlement made half a century earlier by Udaya II in placing Mahinda, the son of Kassapa V, on the Rohana throne had broken down, His successors had probably violated the agreement about the boundary, and thus brought upon themselves this invasion by Dappula IV. Dappula, like Udaya II before him, had again to place a nominee on the throne of Rohana, and the person he selected was the son of the yuvarāja. This episode in the reign of Dappula IV is not mentioned in the Cūļavamsa. Dappula reigned for twelve years and died in 935 A.C.

Udaya now became king as the third of that name. There is an inscription which throws some light on his parentage. In the Puliyankulam inscription of the twelfth year of Dappula IV,31 he (Udā Mahayā) is said to be the son of Mihind Mahayā, who has been identified as the yuvarāja Mahinda, the younger brother of Sena II, and his consort Kitā, who must be Kitti the daughter of Kittaggabodhi of Rohaṇa who, according to the Cūlavamsa, too, was his consort. The other is the inscription at Kataragama, dated in the sixth year of Dappula IV, already cited, in which we have the name of Udaya's consort Dev Gon and the name of his son, Lämäṇi Mihind (Lambakaṇṇa Mahinda).32 Udaya had as his uparāja, the prince named Sena. His throne-name was 'Sirisanighabodhi.'

A serious palace revolt, in which figured the king and the yuvarāja, the army and the monks, marred his short reign of three years. There was a quarrel in the court as a result of which his officials fled in fear to the sylvan residence of some ascetics. The king and the yuvarāja violated the rights of sanctuary to march into the grove to execute these officials on the spot. The monks who lived there, who were held in great reverence by the people, were much annoyed and left for Rohana. There was great uproar

^{31.} EZ.. I, No. 15; pp. 182—190.

The Giritale pillar-inscription (EZ., III, No. 10; pp. 138—140) also makes it certain that Udaya was the son of Mihind Mahayā (the ādipāda Mahinda). But as the genealogical details in this inscription have not been satisfactorily resolved, this record cannot be used as evidence.

^{32.} EZ., III, No. 21c; pp. 219-225.

in the capital, and the people and the troops rose in revolt. They threatened the life of the king, who was forced to take refuge in the Ratanapāsāda of the Abhayagiri-vihāra, and murdered the officials who were responsible for the quarrel. The yuvarāja and another prince sought safety in flight, but they were chased up to the borders of the kingdom of Rohaṇa. The princes went at once to the offended ascetics, fell down at their feet, and with many tears begged their pardon and implored them to return to Anurādhapura. Wise counsel prevailed in the end, and the bhikkhus of the three fraternities used their good offices to calm the ruffled tempers of the people and of the army. The troops of the yuvarāja, too, were pacified by these same monks, and thus prevented what might have developed into a civil war. The ascetics finally returned from the south. The king, at the head of the bhikkhus of the three fraternities, went out to meet them, and asked their pardon. He then conducted them to their accustomed residence in the grove. Udaya reigned for three years and died in 938 A.C.

The yuvarāja Sena now succeeded as Sena III. According to the Sinhalese chronicles, he was the brother (mal) of his predecessor. That would make him a son of yuvarāja Mahinda, the brother of Sena II. But the evidence of the Sinhalese chronicles is not always reliable and at this point the evidence of the inscriptions is to be preferred. Sena III can be identified as the Mahasen-maharaj of the third of the Kaludiyapokuņa inscriptions,33 which is in a very fragmentary state. If this identification is correct, he would be the son of Uda-maharaj who could only be Udaya II (the brother of Sena II), and his mother is Vidurā-räjna, a queen who is not mentioned in the Cūļavamsa. His relationship to his predecessor, Udaya III, would, therefore, be that of cousin. Another inscription of his at Velmilla is dated in his eighth year.34 But it has no political or dyanstic interest. Cūlavanisa records some of his religious and public works, but his reign is unimportant politically. He had, as his yuvarāja, a prince named Udaya. The malayarāja during this time was a minister named Aggabodhi. He had a reign of nine years, and died in 946 A.C.

His yuvarāja was consecrated king as Udaya IV. His parentage, which is lacking in the Cūļavanisa, is supplied by the Velmilla inscription just cited. It refers to Udaya as Udā-mahapā, and states further that he was the son of Kasub Sirisangboyi. He is very easily identified as Kassapa IV, the youngest brother of Sena II. He had as his uparāja, the ādipāda Sena. The main interest of his reign is a Coļa invasion which would be dealt with in the next chapter.³⁵

EZ., III, No. 27b; pp. 260—269.
 EZ., III, No. 32; pp. 294—304.

^{35.} See infra, p. 346.

The well-known Badulla pillar-inscription36 was inscribed in July or August of the second year of the reign of this king. It is recorded here that, when the king was on a visit to the famous vihāra at Mahiyangana (Miyugun-mahaveher), merry-makers from the village of Hopitigamu came to see him. It was a deputation of merchants and citizens from that markettown bringing a complaint against the oppression of the people by the royal officials. The king listened to their allegations and later issued a new code of regulations through his secretariat for the better administration of the market-town. This visit to the Mahiyangana-vihāra took place very probably while he was returning to his capital from Rohana after the Cola army had departed. This record is very valuable for the light it throws on the local administration of the time. Udaya's record of religious works is short. He died in the eighth year of his reign.

His successor was Sena IV, who came to the throne in 954 A.C. Neither from the Cūlavanisa, nor from the inscriptions, can we be certain as to his relationship to the other rulers of this time. One possible cluc is that the Mahasen-maharaj of the third Kaludiyapokuna inscription is Sena IV, and not Sena III, as identified earlier.37 If this is accepted, he would be a son of either Udaya III or Udaya IV. A point in favour of the latter is that the Cūlavamsa refers to a lady of the harem of this king named Vidurā, who could be identified with the Vidurā-räjna of this inscription. But she does not appear to have been of royal rank. The genealogy of Sena IV is closely linked with that of his successor, Mahinda IV. If, as will be seen later, he is taken to be the son of Kassapa V, Sena would be either a brother of Udaya IV and a son of Kassapa IV, or he would be a brother of Mahinda IV and a son of Kassapa V. He gave the office of yuvarāja to prince Mahinda.

Though his reign lasted for only three years, he earned the praise of the chronicler. He had poetic gifts, and was learned in the scriptures; though a laymen, it was his practice to explain the Suttantas even to bhikkhus. He died in 956 A.C. The Sinhalese sources including the Nikāya-sanigraha insert at this point another king named Sena, who is represented as a son of the former. He is given a reign of three years and the father, a reign of nine years. But this late evidence is generally not accepted. The names, as they appear in the Nikāya-sanigraha, are Päsulu Sen and Mädi Sen.

The yuvarāja of the former ruler became king as Mahinda IV in 956 A.C. It is indeed surprising that the Cūlavamsa does not give the genealogy of such an important king as Mahinda IV. There is, however, some slight evidence in the inscriptions that may be a clue to his place in royal line. The Mihintalē tablets38 can without any doubt be attributed to him on the

^{36.} EZ., III, No. 4; pp. 71—100. 37. EZ., III, p. 262. 38. EZ., I, No. 7; pp. 75—113,

ground that palaeographically they belong to this period and that they are dated in the sixteenth year of a king who had the throne name 'Sirisamghabodhi.' Further, an inscription at Vessagiri, dated in the ninth year of a king named Sirisangbo Mihind-maharaj, 39 must belong to him as there is a reference there to the victory he won against the Indian army. This is an exaggerated reference to his clash with the forces of Kṛṣṇa III. We know, therefore, for certain that he had the viruda 'Sirisamghabodhi.' Hence we can accept the evidence of the Mihintale tablets that his father and mother were a king named Abhā Salamevan and his queen Dev Gon. None of his other inscriptions, such as the Polonnaru Rajamāligā pillar⁴⁰ and the Jetavanārāma (Abhayagiri) slab41 give any additional data. are three rulers of the previous generation who had this throne name, Kassapa V, Dappula IV and Sena III. We could include as a possible father of Mahinda his predecessor Sena IV. The only evidence on which one of them can be selected as the father of Mahinda is the name of the queen, Dev Gon. Kassapa V had a queen named Deva, who was the mother of Sakkasenāpati who lost his life during the campaign in India. There is no reference to any other son of Deva by Kassapa. But it is possible that Mahinda was one. The Cūļavanisa does not mention the names of the queens of the others, and Devā is a common name. But since this is the only information we have to go by, we may tentatively take Kassapa V to be the father of Mahinda IV. This would make Sena IV also probably a son of Kassapa, or may be even of Udaya IV, the son of Kassapa IV. The Cīlļāvanisa mentions that Udaya IV was Mahinda's maternal uncle.42 His mother would thus be a sister of Udaya IV, and a daughter of Kassapa IV. Thus we can exclude the possibility of Udaya IV being the father of Mahinda IV. Devā was not the only daughter of Kassapa IV who was married to Kassapa V, for the Cūlavaiisa mentions that Senā was another.

If the above identification is correct, Mahinda must have been well on in years when he became king. He had a queen by the name of Kitti. But his chief queen was a princess from Kalinga. The chronicler emphasises the importance of the marriage with the Kalinga princess when he says: 'Although there was also in Lanka a race of nobles, the Ruler of men had a princess of the line of the Ruler of Kalinga fetched and made her his first mahesī. Of her were born two sons and a charming daughter. He made his sons ādipādas and his daughter a queen (rājinī); thus the Ruler founded the royal house of the Sihalas.'43 This marriage was so interpreted at a time when the Kalinga influence at the court at Polonnaru was on the

^{39.} EZ., I, No. 2 iii 2A, pp. 29-38.

^{40.} EZ., II, No. 10, pp. 49—57. 41. EZ., I, No. 20, pp. 230—241. 42. Cv., liv, v. 48. 43. Cv., liv, vv. 9—11

ascendant. For Mahinda, however, it must have had a different connotation. We do not know whether this marriage took place before or after the invasion from India, but the fact that Sena V, the eldest son of Mahinda IV by the Kalinga princess, was twelve years old when he succeeded to the throne after Mahinda IV,44 makes it reasonable to suppose that Mahinda IV married the Kalinga princess in his third year. This was probably before the invasion of the Vallabha ruler. But Mahinda must have realised the importance of having allies in India who were enemies of his enemies according to the accepted theory of the mandala. We cannot, however, identify the princess or her father as belonging to any of the dynasties known to have been ruling in Kalinga at this time.

Mahinda, on his accession, had to face a minor rebellion, which he successfully suppressed through the loyalty of his district chiefs who upheld his authority. The Cūlavanisa records that 'the Vallabha king' sent an army to Nagadipa in the north of the Island. Mahinda thereupon sent a force to resist this invasion under the command of the senāpati Sena. The Vallabha king was defeated, but it was not a rout. He made a treaty with Mahinda and withdrew his troops. There is some controversy as to the identity of the king who invaded Ceylon. Some take him to be Parantaka II, while others have identified him with the Rastrakūta king Kṛṣṇa III.45 Kṛṣṇa III, after defeating the Colas, conducted many raids on Southern India; in his inscriptions, he claims that he exacted tribute from the kings of Cera, Pandya and Ceylon, and that he crected a pillar of victory at Rameśvaram.46 It is quite likely that, on that occasion, a part of the army raided the northern part of the Island, and that they were expelled. There was probably no serious threat of a wholesale invasion of the Island, nor was there any idea of occupying it. It was part of the digvijaya of Kṛṣṇa III at the height of his power. The claim that Mahinda makes in the Vessagiri inscription of his ninth year⁴⁷ that his senāpati Sena conquered all the kings of India is no doubt a reference to this invasion. It must have, therefore, taken place before his ninth year.

It is likely that, in addition to the invasion of Kṛṣṇa III, Parantaka II (Sundara Cola), too, sent an expedition to the Island in the reign of Mahinda IV. It is recorded in the Pūjāvalī that Mahinda defeated a Tamil ruler at Hūrātota (Urātota, i.e. Kayts). This is probably a reference to the Cola raid in the reign of Parantaka II which would be dealt with in the next chapter.48

^{44.} Cv., liv, v. 57. 45. EZ., V, pp. 107—108; CHJ, IV, pp. 21—22; and Colas, I, pp. 186—187, 46. EZ., IV, pp. 278 ff; II, pp. 52—53. 47. EZ., I, pp. 29—38. 48. See infra, p. 347.

Mahinda had a long reign of sixteen years. The Cūļavanisa gives a long account of his numerous benefactions and works of piety and also those of his family. Four long inscriptions—the Jetavanārāma (Abhayagiri) inscription of his eighth year,49 the Vessagiri inscription of his ninth year,50 the Mihintalē tablets⁵¹ and the Anurādhapura slab-inscription of the last year of his reign52—show his concern for the Sanigha, for in them he lays down rules for the proper administration of some of its important establishments in the capital.

On the death of Mahinda IV, his son, who was twelve years old at the time, succeeded him as Sena V in 972 A.C. He conferred on his brother Udaya the office of yuvarāja. His father's senāpati, Sena, continued in office, and must have helped the young king on to his throne. But he soon fell out with him.

The senāpati had a younger brother named Mahāmalla. The young king discovered that he had an affair with his mother, the Kalinga princess, and so had him slain. The senāpati Sena was away in a border province at the time. Therefore, the king promoted a court official by the name of Udaya to the position of senāpati.53 Sena, when he heard about this, was angry and marched on the capital with his army. The king fled with his court to Rohana. But the queen-mother, (the Kalinga princess) taking with her the yuvarāja and the princess returned to the capital and summoned the senāpati Sena. The queen was no doubt angry with her son for murdering her lover. Sena now took charge of the kingdom, and took up his residence at Polonnaru. He was supported in all this by the queen-mother. His Tamil mercenary troops made this an opportunity to plunder and ravage the kingdom. There does not seem to have been any attempt to put down the lawlessness that arose. The king sent an army from Rohana to fight Sena, but it was routed. He then consulted his ministers and, to prevent further disorder in the kingdom, opened negotiations with Sena. The king was forced to banish his other senāpati (Udaya) from the kingdom, and further he had to take Sena's daughter as his mahesī. By her, he had a son named Kassapa. There is little doubt that this revolt was a struggle between the new Kalinga faction and the old Sinhalese nobility. Sena, the king, was probably not amenable to control, and the actual cause of the conflict was only the occasion for the struggle to come out into the open. The instigator of the revolt was without doubt the Kalinga princess, the queen-mother. They did not prevent the pillage and the plunder, because it was the local faction that suffered most from it. We do not

^{49.} EZ., I, No. 20; pp. 230—241. 50. EZ., I, No. 2 iii. 2A; pp. 29—28. 51. EZ., I, No. 7; pp. 75—113. 52. EZ., I, No. 8; pp. 113—120, 53. Cv., liv. v. 60,

know whether the troops too were from their own country, for they are represented as Damilas. One of the main points at issue was the elimination of Udaya, the leader of the Sinhalese faction. The stipulation about the marriage was no doubt to ensure that the succession would pass into the Kalinga family.

The action of the king, who was himself a Kalinga, might seem strange. It is probably to be explained by his character. He was evidently a spoilt child, and the early accession to power turned his head. After his surrender to the Kalinga faction, he became a mere figurehead. He gathered round him a coterie of 'low class favourites' who introduced the young king to the pleasures of drink. After these drinking bouts, he was like 'a wild beast gone mad.' It is thus no surprise that he died in the tenth year of his reign, at the early age of twenty-two. Though he returned to the capital, actual power was in the hands of the *senāpati* Sena.

Mahinda, the younger brother of the preceding king, now succeeded to the throne in 982 A.C. The yuvarāja Udaya had probably died earlier. Mahinda, who is the fifth of that name, is therefore the son of Mahinda IV. But it is not quite clear how he stood in relation to the factions of the previous reign. The main issue in this is the identity of his mother. Cūļavanisa does not say anything about this. A pillar-inscription discovered at Polonnaru, which without doubt belongs to Mahinda V, gives the name of his mother as Sangā-räjna.54 But, in the Cūļavanisa, Mahinda IV does not have a queen by that name. There was, first, the Kalinga princess who is nameless and then there was the consort Kitti. It is possible that Sangā (Sanghā) was the Kalinga princess. But the Cūlavanisa distinctly says that she had two sons and one daughter. The two sons would be Sena V and the yuvarāja Udaya, who died without succeeding to the throne. Thus Mahinda is either omitted, or the Kalinga princess is not his mother. One solution is that Sanga was another queen not mentioned in the Cūlavainsa, and there are many queens known from inscriptions who are thus omitted.

Mahinda went back to the old capital for his consecration. But his position there was very precarious. Throughout the ten years he lived there, he had troubles and difficulties. Anurādhapura was full of foreigners and mercenary soldiers whom the senāpati Sena had brought here from abroad. The struggle between the two factions in the previous reign had led to a slackening of authority, and the troops who had plundered with impunity in the time of Sena were now practically out of control. Sena is heard of no more, and he was probably dead by this time, so that his party too was leaderless. Mahinda's position was, however, aggravated

^{54.} EZ., IV, No. 8, pp. 59-67.

by his own inexperience in administering a kingdom, and the weakness of his character. When the peasants discovered the administration to be slack and the central government to be weak, they refused to pay the customary taxes. Mahinda had no means of enforcing his authority, for his army had not been paid. For some time he was compelled to meet their demands by dipping into the reserves in the royal treasury. But when this was exhausted he was in a quandary. Armed soldiers surrounded his palace and refused to let anyone pass carrying food for the king. They hoped to starve him into submission. But the king is said to have escaped through an under-ground tunnel. He fled to Rohaṇa, the usual refuge of defeated kings. Thus the Anurādhapura kingdom was abandoned to disorder in 992 A.C., the tenth year of his reign, and the troops, Sinhalese as well as Keralas and Kaṇṇāṭas, took control of it.

Mahinda meanwhile established himself at a place called Sīdupabbatagāma in Rohaṇa and set up his court there. He made his brother's wife his mahesī. When she died, he raised his brother's daughter to that position. Here again we cannot say who her mother was. There was a son by this marriage named Kassapa. The brother mentioned is presumably the king Sena V and not the yuvarāja, Udaya. He later moved to Kappagallakagāma, which he improved and made into his capital. He was satisfied to rule the principality of Rohaṇa and leave Anurādhapura alone. So he was actually king of Rohaṇa for the rest of his reign, though legally he was the ruler of the whole Island. It was when the political situation of Ceylon was in this chaotic condition that the Colas invaded the Island and caused the downfall of the Anurādhapura kingdom which had lasted for a millenium and a half.55

^{55.} For the Cola invasion in the reign of Mahinda V, see infra, pp. 348 ff.

CHAPTER V

COLA INVASIONS: DOWNFALL OF ANURADHAPURA

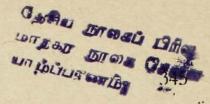
THE early quasi-legendary connections between Ceylon and the Cola country have been noticed in Chapters III, V and VII of Book II. We shall now deal with the conquest and administration of Ceylon by the imperial Colas of the line of Vijayālaya.

In the ninth century, Ceylon appears to have attempted to establish a claim for some kind of hegemony over the Pandya kingdom. The invasion of that kingdom by Sena II at the time of the battle of Aricit (861-2 A.C.), the siege of Madura by the Ceylon troops, the death of Śrimara who failed to raise the siege, and the enthronement of Varagunavarman at Madhurā by the Sinhalese commander apparently gave rise to this claim; for the Cūlavamsa says definitely that Sena II brought the formidable Pāṇḍya king into his power.1 But this position soon became untenable when the active expansion of Cola power on the mainland began after the battle of Śripurambiyam (880 A.C.) and the overthrow of the Pallavas by Āditya I (circa 897 A.C.). Āditya, aided by his able son, Parāntaka, invaded the Pāṇdya country early in the reign of Rājasimha II; this was the natural sequel of the Cola conquest of Kongu (which was Pandyan territory at the time) in campaigns in which it is probable that Rajasimha's father Parāntaka Vīranārāyana (circa 880-900 A.C.) lost his life. The first attack on Madhurā was, however, little more than a demonstration of force meant more to consolidate the Cola conquest of Kongu than to capture the Pandya kingdom proper; but the campaign enabled Parantaka I to assume the title 'Captor of Madurai' (Maduraikonda) perhaps even before he began to rule in 907 after the death of his father, Aditya I; in any case the title appears in Parantaka's inscriptions as early as 910.

After Parantaka repulsed the attempt of Rastrakūta Kṛṣṇa II to dislodge him from the throne in the battle of Vallala (910-11), he undertook the serious conquest of the Pandya country and invaded it in strength. Two stone inscriptions of his twelfth year mention incidents in a battle at Vellur in which Pandyan and Sinhalese troops were defeated by the Cola army; this must have been about 915 A.C. The part of Ceylon in the war is clearly set forth in the Cūļavanisa:2 'While thus the sovereign of Lankā (Kassapa V, 914-23) held sway in justice, the Pandu king was vanquished

^{1.} Cv., li, v. 136. 2. Cv., lii, vv. 70—78.

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in battle by the Cola king. To gain military aid, he sent numerous gifts. The king, the ruler of Lanka, took counsel with his officials, equipped military forces, appointed his Sakkasenāpati as leader of the troops, and betook himself to Mahātittha. Standing at the edge of the coast he spoke of the triumph of former kings, and having thus aroused their enthusiasm, he made his troops embark. With his army the Sakkasenāpati thereupon safely crossed the sea and reached the Pandu country. When the Pandu king saw the troops and him, he spoke full of cheer, "I will join all Jambudvipa under one umbrella." The king took the two armies; but as he could not vanquish him (the king) of the Cola line, he gave up the fight and retired. Sakkasenāpati thereupon set out once more with the purpose of fighting further, made halt, and died of the upasagga (plague) to the undoing of the Paṇḍu (king). When the ruler of Lanka heard that the troops were also perishing of the same disease, out of pity he had the army brought back.' The Udavēndiram plates of Ganga Prthivīpati II, a feudatory of Parāntaka, are dated some years later (921-2 A.C.) and confirm the story of the war as we find it in the Culavanisa and the earlier inscriptions; they tell us that as a result of this victory Parantaka came to be known as Sangramaraghava, i.e. Rama in battle, a title indicating victory against Ceylon. The king also added Ilam to his Tamil title and called himself Maduraiyum Ilamum konda, 'who captured Madurai and Ilam (Ceylon).' After this, Rajasimha Pandya lost ground rapidly, and fled to Ceylon, carrying with him the crown jewels and whatever else he could take. In the reign of Dappula IV (924-35), the Cūlavanisa records: 'At that time the Pandu king through fear of the Cola (king) left his country, took ship and came to Mahātittha. The king had him brought to him, rejoiced greatly when he saw him, gave him an abundant income and granted him a dwelling outside the town. When the king of Lankā had armed with the purpose, "I will make war on the Cola king, take from him his two thrones (Cola and Pandya) and give them to the Pandu king," the nobles dwelling on the Island for some reason or other stirred up a sorry strife to the undoing of the Pandu king. The Pandu king thought his sojourn here was of no use to him. He left his diadem and other valuables behind and betook himself to the Keralas.'3 The flight of the Pāṇdya to Ceylon is also mentioned in the Tiruvālangādu plates of the reign of Rajendra I. Though the Sinhalese king was inclined to renew the Cola war, his army leaders evidently felt they had enough of it, and the plan had to be abandoned. Rājasimha's continued presence in Ceylon was not acceptable to them, and he had to move out to Kerala, the home of his mother, despite the fact that the ruler of Kerala was at the time a close ally of the Cola king.

^{3.} Cv., liii, vv. 5ff.

Meanwhile, Parantaka carried out the complete subjugation of the Pandya country, and when the country had been sufficiently settled, he thought of holding a formal coronation in the Pandya capital, and for this purpose, wanted to recover the Pandya crown jewels from the Sinhalese monarch. This attempt led to the first Cola invasion of Ceylon in this period. Again the Cūļavamsa is our main authority: when Udaya IV (946-54) was ruling in Ceylon, 'the Cola king hearing of his sloth was greatly pleased, and as he wished to achieve consecration as king in the Pandu kingdom, he sent (messengers) concerning the diadem and the other (things) which the Pandu (king) had left behind (in Lanka). The king did not give them up, so the mighty Cola equipped an army and sent it forth to fetch them by force. Now, at that time the Senapati here (in Ceylon) was absent in a rebellious border province. The king had him fetched and sent him forth to begin the war. The Senāpati set forth, delivered battle and fell in the fight. Thereupon the king (Udaya) took the crown and the rest and betook himself to Rohana. The Cola troops marched thither, but finding no way of entering Rohana, they turned and betook themselves through fear to their own country.'4 Thus, when diplomacy failed, Parantaka resorted to force. The Cola army won an easy victory and probably occupied Anuradhapura; but it did not succeed in its mission and failed to recover the Pandya regalia. The failure was not merely due to the Cola army 'finding no way of entering Rohana' and the return of the army to the mainland was also not just due to 'fear.' The empire that Parantaka had built up was crashing under the blows of a powerful invader from the north, the Rastrakūta Kṛṣṇa III. The crown prince Rājāditya had fallen in the battle of Takkolam and Parāntaka needed all his resources to check the invader; and was in no position to continue hostilities in Ceylon. The Cūļavamsa continuing its account adds: 'Thereupon (i.e. after the Cola army went back) the ruler of Lanka appointed the general Viduragga, a man of great energy and discernment to the position of Senāpati. The Senāpati laid waste the border land of the Cola king and forced him with threats to restore all that he had carried away from here as booty.' It is not easy to decide what is meant by 'the border land of the Cola king; ' if we locate it on the Island itself, it would mean that a part of it had passed under Cola occupation as a result of the invasion. But even in that case, the Sinhalese, probably recovered it during the troubles that befell Parantaka at the end of his reign. It is quite probable that there was a counter-invasion of the mainland, and some fighting there which turned to the advantage of the Pāṇdya kingdom which regained its independence at the time.

^{4.} Cv., liii, vv. 41ff.

When the Cola power recovered from the effects of the Rastrakūta invasion it naturally sought to regain its suzerain position in the Pandya country, and the kings of Anuradhapura went to the aid of the Pandya in resisting this attempt. Sundara Cola Parantaka II (956-73) bore the title Maduraikonda, which implies that he gained signal success in restoring Cola suzerainty over the Pāṇḍya. We hear of Vīra Pāṇḍya who 'took the head of a Cola,' and of the Cola crown-prince Aditya II, who distinguished himself in the battle of Cēvūr, where he played with Vīra Pāṇḍya like a lion's whelp sporting with a tusker, and gained the title 'who took the head of Vīra Pāṇḍya.' 'Taking the head' did not necessarily mean decapitation, but the obcisance of the vanquished king who laid his head at the feet of the victor.5 Cevur, the field of the main battle, lay to the south of the Sevali hills on the southern border of the former Pudukkottai state; after the victory here, the Cola army pressed on into the Pandya country, and compelled Vira Pandya to flee to the forests for refuge. These occurrences may be dated round about 960 A.C. The Cola general Siriyavēlār of Kodumbālūr followed up the successes on the mainland by an invasion of Ceylon where, after a successful landing at Urātoṭa (Kayts), he fell in battle some time before 965, the ninth year of Parantaka II. The Culavanisa says: 'The Vallabha (Valava i.e. Cola) king sent a force to Nāgadīpa to subdue this our country. The ruler hearing this, the king sent thither the Senāpati Sena by name, to whom he had made over an army, to fight with the troops of this (Vallabha king.) The Senapati betook himself thither, fought with the troops of this (Vallabha) King, defeated them and remained master of the battle-field. As the kings with the Vallabha (king) at their head, were unable to vanquish our king, they made a friendly treaty with the ruler of Lanka. In this way the fame of the king penetrated to Jambudīpa, spreading over Lankā and crossing the ocean.'6 The Sinhalese ruler was Mahinda IV (956-72) whose Vessagiri slab-inscription confirms this account and refers to the successful campaign of Sena against the invaders, saying: 'who (Mahinda) has brought to his feet all the riches of the whole of Dambadiva (Jambudipa) by means of the valour of his commander-in-chief, Sena'.7 The Colas apparently gained no permanent advantage by this campaign, which was perhaps intended only to consolidate the results of the campaigns in the Pandya country on the mainland.

The real Cola conquest of Ceylon began under Rājarāja I whose accession marks the strengthening and broadening of the aims of Cola imperial policy: a soldier and a statesman endowed with vision, Rājarāja gained

^{5.} Cōlas, p. 143.
6. Cv., liv, vv. 12—16. For the king referred to as Vallabha, see EZ., V, p. 107 and supra, p. 340.
7. EZ., 1, pp. 34—51.

more assured success in the field than his predecessors, and success widened the scope of his ambition. He pursued an active maritime policy calculated to extend the commerce of his country and convert the Bay of Bengal into a Cola lake, and the possession of Ceylon was no longer merely a buttress to his continental empire on the mainland, but an integral part of the plan of building up Cola sea-power. The characteristic *praśasti* of Rājarāja includes Ceylon among his conquests from the beginning, from say 993 or so. He is said to have conquered the Ilamaṇḍalam owned by the Sinhalese famed for warlike deeds and thus to have carned the praise of all the eight quarters. The Tiruvālangāḍu plates (of the reign of Rājendra I) contain the following picturesque account of Rājarāja's invasion of Ceylon:

'Rāma built, with the aid of the monkeys, a causeway across the sea and then slew with great difficulty the king of Lankā by means of sharp-edged arrows. But Rāma was excelled by this (king) whose powerful army

crossed the ocean by ships and burnt up the king of Lanka."

The invasion must have occurred fairly early in the long reign of Mahinda V (982-1029). Mahinda was an incompetent ruler 'smitten with indolence; ' at his accession Anuradhapura was full of strangers brought in by Senāpati Sena, and Mahinda held rule there with great difficulty for ten years. Says the Cūļavanisa: 'As he wandered from the path of statecraft and was of very weak character, the peasants did not deliver him his share of the produce. As the Prince in his tenth year had entirely lost his fortune, he was unable to satisfy his troops by giving them their pay.' The Kerala mercenaries besieged the king in his palace, and he escaped with the valuables he could carry by an underground passage to Rohana where he carried on the government for some years. 'But in the remaining parts of the country, Keralas, Sihalas and Kannātas carried on the government as they pleased.' After stating this, the Cūlavamsa directly passes to the invasion of Ceylon by Rājendra I, which ended in the capture of the Sinhalese king and the Cola conquest of the whole Island. But we may be certain that the Cola inscriptions are correct in placing the beginning of the definitive Cola conquest of Ceylon soon after the flight of Mahinda to Rohana, and in the reign of Rajaraja I. The Cūlavanisa may be correct in saying that the Cola king heard from the traders of his country of the anarchical conditions in Ceylon which furnished a favourable opportunity for his conquest of the Island. The chronicle says: 'But a horsedealer, who had come hither from the opposite coast, told the Cola king on his return about the conditions in Lanka. On hearing this, the powerful (prince) with the purpose of taking possession of Lanka, sent off a strong

^{8.} Co., lv. vv. 4-12.

body of troops. They landed speedily in Lanka. From the spot where they disembarked, oppressing the mass of the inhabitants, the Cola army advanced on Rohana.'9 In the last sentence, the chronicle effects a transition from the occurrences of the reign of Rajaraja I to those of Rajendra's, and mixes up two more or less distinct invasions of the Island by the Cola forces, of which we get a clearer picture by consulting the Cola records. The invasion of Rajaraja's reign (circa 992-3 A.C.) resulted in the fall and final destruction of Anuradhapura which had been the capital of Ceylon for over a thousand years, and in the Cola conquest of the northern part of the Island which was organised as a Cola province under the name Mummudi-śōla-mandalam. Polonnaru, otherwise known as Kandavuru (Skt. Skandhāvarā)-nuvara or 'the camp-city' in memory of its having served as a military outpost of the ancient capital Anuradhapura, now became the capital of the province, and the seat of its government. Under Rājarāja I, Coļa maritime policy takes a wider sweep and aims at commanding the entire Bay of Bengal and the trade to Malayasia and China, and for the fulfilment of this aim, the control of the entire Island of Ceylon became a necessary pre-requisite. Hence it is that, unlike the earlier Tamil invaders who aimed at the control of only the north of the Island (Rajarattha), the Colas aimed at the conquest and rule of the whole of Ceylon. From this point of view, Polonnaru was better suited to be the capital, as it was more central than Anuradhapura, and rendered easier the task of controlling the turbulent province of Rohana. 10 There are no traces of Cola rule in Anurādhapura, and Polonnaru was now renamed Jananāthamangalam after a well known title of Rajaraja I. His inscriptions have been found on the Island and, as we shall see, there are references in the Tanjore inscriptions towards the close of the reign to regular supplies from the villages of the Ceylon province for the use of the Great Temple in the imperial capital. It is also probable that Rajaraja signalised the establishment of Cola rule in Ceylon by constructing a moderate sized stone temple to Siva in Polonnaru. Constructed of granite and limestone within the walled confines of the old city, this beautiful little Siva Devālē is one of the few Hindu monuments of Ceylon still in a good state of preservation: 'and its architectural form seems at once to class it with the Hindu fanes of South India created from the tenth to the twelfth centuries, of which the great temple of Tanjore is the finest and most elaborate exponent.' The earliest inscription found in the temple is dated early in the reign of Rājendra I. Another temple called Rājarājeśvara was built at Mahātīrtha (Mātoṭa) by Tāli Kumaran, an officer from the Cola country,

^{9.} ibid., vv. 13-15.

^{10.} See CJSG., II, p. 146.

who also made endowments for the ardhajāma-pūjā in the temple, and a seven days' festival of the Vaikāśi (Viśākha).

The wider aims of Cola maritime policy unfolded themselves early in the reign of Rajendra, and in his fifth regnal year (1017) which more or less coincided with the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Mahinda V of Ceylon, a fresh Cola expedition undertook the completion of the conquest of the Island. In the standard Tamil praśasti of his reign, Rājendra claims to have captured the crown of the kings of Ceylon, the exceedingly beautiful crowns of their queens, the fine crown and the garland of Indra which the Pāṇḍya had previously deposited with them (the kings of Ceylon) and the whole Ilamandalam on the transparent sea. The Karandai (Tanjore) plates of Rajendra confirm this account in two well-turned Sanskrit verses; saying that Rajendra conquered the king of Ceylon with a fierce army and seized his territory, his crown, his queen and her crown, his daughter, all his wealth, his transports and the spotless garland of Indra and crown of the Pandya left in his charge; after having lost the battle and being shorn of his queen, son and other belongings, the king of Ceylon out of fear came and sought the two feet of Rajendra as shelter. The Cūļavanisa also gives a straight account which does not mince matters and confirms the claims registered in the Cola records cited above: 'In the sixth and thirtieth year of the king's (Mahinda V's) reign the Colas seized the Mahesi (queen), the jewels, the diadem that he had inherited, the whole of the royal ornaments, the priceless diamond bracelet, a gift of the gods, the unbreakable sword and the relic of the torn strip of cloth.11 But the ruler himself, who had fled in fear to the jungle, they captured alive, with the pretence of making a treaty. Thereupon they sent the monarch and all the treasures which had fallen into their hands at once to the Cola monarch.' This, if true, and we have no reason to distrust the account, means that the Cola generals lured Mahinda to a conference for negotiating a settlement, and there treacherously made him captive, a tact that naturally finds no place in the Cola version of the events. Great must have been the damage Ceylon sustained on the occasion, for the Cūļavanisa continues; 'In the three fraternities and in all Lanka (breaking open) the relic chambers, (they carried away) many costly images of gold etc., and while they violently destroyed here and there all the monasteries, like blood-sucking Yakkhas, they took all the treasures of Lanka for themselves. With Pulatthinagara as base, the Colas held sway over Rajarattha as far as the locality known as Rakkhapāsānakantha.' This last statement which confines Cola rule to Rajarattha, the northern part of the Island, is in striking

^{11.} Cv., lv., vv. 16—18. The text has chinnapaṭṭikādhātuka, which Geiger thinks might-have been a Buddha relic, highly prized, among the regalia of the Sinhalese kings. Wijesimha translates: 'and the sacred forehead band.'

contrast with the Cola claim to have subjugated the whole Island; the best means of reconciling the two accounts seems to be to suppose that while Cola rule was accepted and held peacefully in this part of the Island province, the southern half of the Island never gave willing allegiance and always kept up an opposition to the alien rule.

CHAPTER VI

CIVILIZATION OF THE PERIOD: ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

THE period of over seven centuries from the death of Mahasena up to the end of the nominal reign of Mahinda V, dealt with in this book, was not one of uniformity in the economic, social and political conditions under which the people of the Island lived. Broadly speaking, for nearly two centuries after the demise of Mahāsena, the normal course of development of the institutions transplanted in the Island by the settlers from North India, some six centuries before the beginning of the Christian era, continued as in the period ending with Mahāsena. Culturally, there was an efflorescence in the centuries immediately preceding and following the Christian era, and the norms established then continued to be accepted for a century or more after the death of Mahāsena. A period of stagnation, and even of disintegration, seems to have intervened after that, during which new forces, material as well as ideological, were introduced, mainly from the neighbouring lands of South India; and a new integration of the ancient economic, social and cultural values, which had still not lost their vitality, with forces newly introduced, seems to have taken place about the seventh or eighth century. This continued to be accepted as the norm until the catastrophe of the Cola conquest at the beginning of the eleventh century. The general conditions which Ceylon presents to the student of history in the ninth and tenth centuries, therefore, are very different from those which were prevailing in the fourth or the fifth.

A. IRRIGATION

Ceylon was not disturbed by invasion or aggression from the Tamil kingdoms of South India from the first quarter of the second century to the year 429, a space of three centuries, and it was during this long period of tranquility that the transition in irrigation engineering from moderately large to stupendous works took place. Of the fourth century kings, Upatissa I (365-406) was prominent for his activities in promoting irrigation; three of the six tanks ascribed to him were, however, not original works, but enlargements or extensive restorations of reservoirs constructed by his predecessors.

In 473 Dhātusena liberated Ceylon from the foreign rule of Tamil conquerors, which had lasted for twenty-six years. Just as Mahāsena's name

is indelibly linked with Minnēri tank, so the name of Dhātusena is associated for all time with the great tank Kālavāpi (Kalāväva) which he built. This immense reservoir has an area of 6,380 acres and irrigates 7,000 acres. It may be assumed, since the chronicles are silent on the point, that the great canal Jaya Gangā, 54 miles in length, which conveyed water from Kalāväva to Tisāväva at Anurādhapura, and irrigated the intervening territory, was constructed at the same time as the tank. This augmentation of the supply of Tisavava may have been necessitated by the demands of increasing population at the capital city. The Cūlavanisa credits Dhātusena with eighteen tanks but names only four, while the Pūjāvalī names fifteen of them. the Pūjāvalī's list is Mānāmatu, identical with Mānāmatta mentioned later in the Cūlavanisa as a district in the north, and it is probable that this is the tank now well-known as Giant's Tank. This reservoir was supplied by a canal, 17 miles long, which took off from a dam across the Aruvi Aru (Malvatu Oya). Giant's Tank and its fellow, Akattimurippukulam, built later and similarly fed by a canal on the left bank of the same river, are strikingly different in constructional plan to the general pattern of the major tanks in other parts of Ceylon: they were designed to suit a flat terrain without rocky hills or elevated ground to which the extremities of the bunds could be tied. Both have long, low bunds, that of Giant's Tank being 7 miles in length and only 14 feet high. Dhātusena also dammed the Mahaväli Ganga, and thereby 'created fields which were permanently watered:' possibly this was an extension of Mahāsena's Pabbatanta scheme.

Moggallana II (531-551) was the next of the great tank-building rulers. He dammed the Malvatu Oya and built three tanks, one of which, Pattapāsānavāpi, can be identified from epigraphical sources with the present Nāccadūva tank, 7 miles south-east of Anurādhapura. This large reservoir submerges 4,408 acres, and irrigates 4,200 acres. Its supply from the river was supplemented by a canal about 6 miles long, which branched cff from the Jaya Ganga. Simultaneously with its construction or shortly afterwards, a canal about 5 miles long was constructed to convey water from it to Nuvaraväva at Anurādhapura. Nuvaraväva is not mentioned in the chronicles by that name, but it existed in the second century and is called Nakaravavi in an inscription of Gajabāhu I (114-136): it did not attain its later dimensions till its supply was augmented by the canal from Nāccadūva tank. From Nuvaraväva, a canal led northward for 9 miles to the reservoir now breached and known as Mahagalkadavala. Although Nuvaraväva has an area of 2,960 acres, it irrigates only 703 acres, a small area in relation to its capacity, and it may be that irrigation was not its main function: the Nuvaraväva augmentation scheme of the sixth century may, like the earlier Tisāväva augmentation scheme, have served principally as an addition to the water supplies of the capital city.

Another king of the sixth century notable for the irrigation works which he constructed was Aggabodhi I (571-604). His principal projects were: (1) Kurundavāpi, (2) the Maṇimekhala dam, and (3) a great canal leading out of Minnēri tank. Kurundavāpi or Kurundavāva is the large tank now called Taṇṇimurippukuļam, lying below the ruins known as Kuruntaṇ-ūr, the ancient Kurunda-vihāra, in the Mullaitīvu district: it impounded the waters of the Manal Āru. The Maṇimekhala dam was the dam on the Mahaväli Ganga which gave rise to the Miṇipe canal; this scheme was extended in the ninth century, and Aggabodhi's original Miṇipe canal was probably not more than 17 miles in length.

Aggabodhi's nephew and successor, Aggabodhi II (604-614), must be accorded a high place among the tank-building kings. The Cūļavamsa credits him with three tanks, the Pūjāvalī with twelve, and Rājāvalī with thirteen. Four of these tanks were built in previous reigns, and the work carried out on them was not original construction. The most important of the new tanks built by Aggabodhi II was Gangātatavāpi or Gangataļāväva, the present Kantalay tank. This reservoir, which has an area of 3,263 acres, and irrigates 4,900 acres, was supplied by a canal 29 miles long which issued from Minnēri tank, and this canal, undoubtedly, was 'the great canal leading out of Manihīravāpi' which was constructed in the preceding reign; although Aggabodhi II built Kantalay tank, the project was planned and the feeder canal constructed in his predecessor's reign. The total length of canal from the Alahara dam on the Amban-ganga, through Minnēri tank, to Kantaļāy tank was now 541 miles, almost exactly the same length as the Jaya Ganga. Aggabodhi II also built Giritatavapi or Giritaļāvava, the present Giritaļē tank between Polonnaru and Minnēri; this tank was fed by a branch, $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length, of the Alisara (Alahara) canal. The extension of the Alahära-Minnēri-Kavudulu scheme of Mahāsena to include the new tanks, Kantaļāy and Giritaļē, involved a prolongation of the length of canal by a further 35 miles, and made necessary a substantial increase in the supply of water; this additional supply was found by the construction of the Hattota-amuna dam on the Kalu Ganga, the main tributary of the Amban Ganga, and a canal 28 miles long which carried the water diverted by the dam and discharged it into the Amban Ganga just above the Älahära dam. Had the reign of Aggabodhi II not been a short one, it is possible that he might have rivalled Mahāsena and Dhātusena in his accomplishmts.

In the second decade of the seventh century, the more important of the irrigation works which were then functioning were :—

River-diversion Schemes :-

1. Hattoța-amuna on the Kalu Ganga—canal to Amban Ganga—Äļahära dam—Äļahära canal—branch canal to Giritaļē tank—main

canal to Minnēri tank—canal—Kavudulu tank—canal—Kantaļāy tank; total length of canal, 95 miles.

. Dam on Mahaväli Ganga—Pabbatanta canal, as extended by

Dhātusena; length of canal, probably 30 miles.

3. Maṇimekhala (Miṇipe) dam on Mahaväli Ganga—Miṇipe canal; length of canal, probably 17 miles.

4. Dam on Malvatu Oya—canal—Giant's tank; length of canal, 17 miles.

Storage Reservoir Schemes :-

1. Kalāväva—Jaya Gangā canal—Tisāväva; length of canal, 54 miles.

2. Jaya Gangā canal—branch canal—Nāccadūva tank—canal— Nuvaraväva tank—canal—Mahagalkaḍavala tank; length of canal, 20 miles.

3. Mahakanadarā tank.

4. Huruluväva.

5. Tannimurippukuļam.6. Tissamahārāma tanks.

The above list is not a complete one, because it does not include named tanks which are not now identifiable, as well as some large tanks whose dates of construction have not been recorded in the chronicles. The total length of the major canals was well over 250 miles.

This achievement, accomplished by the seventh century, reveals the extraordinarily high technical ability of the Sinhalese engineers of ancient times who were responsible for the planning, design and construction of these works. Several of these projects, if put in hand today, would still be regarded as major undertakings. Nothing is known today of how these engineers of old and the technicians under them set about their work, what preliminary surveys and gaugings they made, what mathematical formulae they employed in their calculations and what instruments they used; all this information must have been contained in text-books because it could not have been imparted orally. Surveys made in modern times for the restoration of ancient works have disclosed that the instruments they used were capable of the same precision as modern instruments. Their contour levelling was exceptionally accurate because the fall in the ancient canals was generally one foot in a mile, though in some sections it was as small as six inches in a mile.

Civil war which lasted for 60 years from the year 620 was a great set-back to progress during the greater part of the seventh century. The people suffered great misery from loss of property and field produce. The irrigation works were neglected and suffered damage. Order was restored by Mānavamma, but he had much to do to restore what was in ruin or disrepair.

The eighth, ninth and tenth centuries were, on the whole, a period of affluence and progress for the Sinhalese people, It is true that Ceylon was invaded four times, but the Sinhalese were sufficiently strong to resist three of these attempts to conquer them, and to counter-invade South India on two occasions. The record of irrigation works constructed is, however, by previous standards, a comparatively meagre one.

Mahinda II (777-797) strengthened the weir of Kalāväva. In all probability, this work was undertaken in connection with the augmentation scheme by which the Demäda Oya was dammed above Nālanda and the water conveyed by canal to the Dambulu Oya and thence to Kalāväva. This provided an additional and almost perennial supply of water for Kalāväva. To this period may also be assigned the construction of the canal, 16 miles long, which issued from the southern outlet of Kalāväva and carried water to Tintinigāmakavāpi, now breached and known as Siyambalāgamuväva, near Galgamu.

Sena II (853-887) extended the Maṇimekhala (Miṇipe) scheme originally constructed by Aggabodhi I, giving the canal a total length of about 47 miles. This was an engineering achievement of the first rank, and the canal is described in the Miṇipe inscription of the early thirteenth century as 'like unto a noble son given birth to by the queen named Mahaväligaṁ.' Sena II also built a dam at Kaṭṭhantanagara to supplement the supply of Kāṇavāpi (Mahakaṇadarā): this doubtless refers to the dam on the Malvatu Oya near Maradankaḍavala, from which a canal about 12 miles long carried water to Mahakaṇadarā tank. A third work of Sena II was a canal leading out of Minnēri tank, probably the long canal which runs to east of Giritalē tank, and then turns north-eastward.

Udaya II (887-898) dammed the Mahānadī (Valave Ganga) in Rohaṇa: this is probably a reference to the building of the dam on this river at Tänkäṭi, from which a canal about 14 miles long carried water to Paṇḍu-kolambavāpi, now the large, abandoned tank known as Pāṇḍikkulama. He also built a dam on the Malvatu Oya; this dam may have been the headworks of the left bank canal, about 20 miles long, which led to Ākaṭṭi-murippu tank in the Mannār district. Another canal, 6 miles long, taken off the Kal Āru, also fed this tank which is a shallow reservoir with a low bund, 4½ miles long. The same king enlarged the bund of Mayettivāpi, now known as Mahavilacci-väva; this, undoubtedly, was the augmentation scheme under which the Jaya Gangā was tapped and the water carried for about 5 miles along an artificial canal, the Talāve-āļa, and then discharged into the Talāve Oya to be impounded in Mahavilacci tank.

Sena III (938-946) carried out a general restoration, repairing the decayed bunds of all the major tanks and the larger canals.

The inscriptions of the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries add little to the information given in the chronicles. Kassapa V (913-923) declares in an inscription that 'by affording facilities for the cultivation of fields by means of invocation of Podon (Parjanya) and Pulunda (Agni), he dispelled the fear of famine.' Mahinda IV (956-972) claims that he 'repaired the dilapidated tanks and by means of the water thus supplied he put an end to the scarcity of food in Ceylon.'

The apparent decline in the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries in the building of large new dams, canals and tanks—only half a dozen major projects are mentioned—cannot be readily explained. It may be that what had already been accomplished, with occasional extensions, sufficed. Perhaps, the earlier irrigation works did not begin to be utilised to the full extent of their productivity till mediaeval times. The references to famine and scarcity of food in the inscriptions of Kassapa V and Mahinda IV quoted above may mean that food crises could occur if the irrigation system failed to function at full efficiency owing to neglect, or to natural causes such as floods or droughts. In that case, the time for embarking on new projects was approaching, but these undertakings would have been delayed by the invasions, disturbances and conquest during the second half of the tenth century. It was not until Parākramabāhu I ascended the throne in the middle of the twelfth century that the next mighty development in the construction of irrigation works was inaugurated.

After every prolonged civil war or foreign conquest, the chronicle records as a matter of course the repair or restoration of damaged irrigation works. 'The piercing of tanks filled with water and destroying the weirs on the canals' as a strategem in warfare is specifically mentioned for the first time in the twelfth century, but it is very probable that the practice was much older. But, apart from destruction by enemies or from abnormal devastating floods, any prolonged interruption of proper maintenance would have been followed by severe damage, if not breaching. It was, therefore, a very important responsibility of the State to maintain the vast and complex irrigation system in efficient working condition.

Some tanks and canals are mentioned in the chronicles and inscriptions in contexts not connected with their construction or restoration, but few of them are important. The Rahera canal, close to and north of Anurādhapura, and the Kolomb canal, which led water away from Tisāväva to the northward, appear to have been sections of the 22-mile-long canal which issued from Tisāväva as a continuation of the Jaya Gangā, and ran on the left bank of the Malvatu Oya; the termination of this canal cannot now be traced, but it is not impossible that it entered Mahavilacci tank. The Cīramātikavāra canal, mentioned in the sixth century, was associated with Cīravāpi or Sirivalassaväva, built by Mahāsena. This tank was apparently

known as Valāhassa or Siravalaskäṭi after it was enlarged by Aggabodhi II; it was a major work but its identity is not now known. Udaya I (797-801) built the Nīlagalla-vihāra and a large canal in the vicinity which he donated to the vihāra; this was either an extension of the original Miṇipe canal, or a separate project which was afterwards merged with the Miṇipe scheme.

The chronicles and the epigraphs contain no information about the construction of the immense reservoir Padīvāpi (Padavi); it is not in the list of tanks restored by Vijayabāhu I, although Parākramabāhu I restored it. The ancient name of the large, breached Vāhalkaḍa tank on the Yān Oya cannot be traced. Other large tanks whose identity lies concealed in the chronicles are:— Iraṇaimaḍukulam in the Jaffna district; Pāvaṭkulam and Vavunik-kulam in the Vavuniyā district; Allai tank in the Trincomalee district which was supplied by a feeder canal from the Virugal Āru; Paṇikkaṇ-kulam, close to the boundary of the Anurādhapura and Puttalam districts, which was the termination of a canal about 13 miles long on the right bank of the Kalā Oya; Rūgamkulam and Unniccaikulam in the Batticaloa district; and Ridiyagamaväva in the Hambantoṭa district. Information is also lacking about the dates of construction of the large tanks:— Tabbavāpi (present Tabbova); Tintiṇigāmakavāpi (present Siyambalāgamaväva); and Paṇḍukolambavāpi (present Pāṇḍikkulama).

The chronicles say little about the irrigation works in Rohaṇa, the reason being that nothing on the scale and magnitude of the works in Rājaraṭṭha existed in Rohaṇa. The dam on the Valave Ganga at Tankaṭi and Paṇḍu-kolamba tank have already been mentioned. The Kirindi Oya was dammed to feed the tanks at Tissamahārāma. It is probable that the large Manḍagala tank, now breached, in Yāla was constructed before the eighth century because the epigraphical records in this region appear to end about that time; this tank was supplied by a canal about 10 miles long on the right bank of the Kumbukkan Oya. Large tanks in Rohaṇa, other than Paṇḍu-kolamba (now Pāṇḍikkulama) and Manḍagala were:— Mahakaṇḍi, Rūgam, Unniccai, Ampārai and Irrakkāmam in the Batticaloa district, Etimolē in lower Uva, and Ridiyagama and Baḍagiri in the Hambantoṭa district.

Archaeological evidence, based upon the constructional design or the materials of dams, sluices, spillways, bunds and other features of irrigation works, offers but slender material for building up a table of chronology. We are dependent almost wholly on the chronicles and the inscriptions.

The statistics with regard to the major canals and tanks that were functioning in the tenth century, given below, would convey some idea of the magnitude of the achievement of the ancient Sinhalese up to this period.

Lengths of artificial canals taken off the principal rivers:

Mahaväli Ganga		132 miles	
Amban Ganga		197	,,000
Kalā Oya, Modaragam	Āru		
and other rivers		177	,,
	Total	506	miles

Dimensions of three major tanks:

Tank	Bund Length	Height	Catch- ment Area. Sq. Miles	Full supply Area. Acres	Capacity Acre Feet	Area Irrigated Acres
Giant's Tank	3 m.	14 ft.	38	4547	26,596	14,093
Kantaļāy	1 m.	521 ft.	77	3263	37,124	4,908
Kalāväva	3 ³ m.	40 ft.	323	6380	72,687	6,971

B. AGRICULTURE

We do not possess detailed information about the administrative and social organisation which enabled the construction and maintenance of the stupendous irrigation works, on which the life of the community depended to a great extent, noticed in the preceding section. The smaller reservoirs in the villages were no doubt looked after by the communities which depended on them for their needs. The great measure of autonomy which the village communities enjoyed in those days must have resulted in a collective responsibility being imposed on each of them for the upkeep and repair of the irrigation works which served it. In this matter, as well as in others which affected the life of the community, the village elders, under the leadership of the headman, carried out such works as were necessary for the upkeep and repair of reservoirs within their limits.

The maintenance of the major irrigation works, which served the needs of more than one community, appears to have been the responsibility of the state, i.e. the king, and a department to which this work was entrusted finds mention in the inscriptions of the tenth century. This, called the 'office of the twelve great reservoirs' (dolos-maha-vātān), was normally empowered to commandeer the labour of the villagers whenever necessary. We also learn about an officer called vā-vājārama, 'inspector of reservoirs,' who is mentioned in the inscription of the reign of Sirisamboy (Sena II) at the so called Bhojana-sālā at Mihintalē. From an edict set up by Mahinda IV with regard to the issue of water from the Tisāväva near the capital, we can also gather than the officials entrusted with the duty of issuing water from the reservoirs for the seasonal cultivation were entitled to certain

dues from the owners of the fields; the disputes which the payment of these dues gave rise to, resulted in the water being not issued at the proper season, with consequent loss of harvest. When the parties who suffered loss on account of the dereliction of their duty by the officials happened to be influential personages such as inmates of a monastery, the loss was made good by the king, if the officers had acted on instructions from the palace. Otherwise appropriate measures were taken against the peccant officers.

In the irrigation works which were owned by a village community as a whole, it was an imperative necessity to ensure that the supply of water was distributed equitably, so that one individual did not obtain an advantage to which he was not entitled, and that the maximum benefit was derived from it in the all-important task of raising rice crops. Elaborate regulations had been drawn up for the guidance of the village communities in this respect. Buddhaghosa, the commentator who wrote in the fifth century, gives us a sample of such salutary regulations which guided agricultural practice in his time. 'All men in the community have a proprietary right to the water in the reservoir, for crops are raised on land below it (i.e. the reservoir). In order to feed the crops, a main channel issues forth from the reservoir and goes through the fields. The water in that channel, too, when it flows along it, is common property. From that main channel, smaller distributory channels branch out and supply water to individual fields. The water from such feeder channels is not allowed to be taken by persons other than those whose fields they serve. In seasons of drought, when the supply of water in the reservoir is reduced, water is distributed to each field by turns. If any (owner of a field) whose turn had come does not receive water, his crop will be dried up. Therefore, one should not receive water in the turn of another. Where a person diverts the water into his own channel or field, or that of some one else, with dishonest intention, from the distributory channel or the field belonging to another, or allows the water to flow into waste land, he has committed an offence. In the case of one who, reflecting that his own turn will come very soon, but in the meantime his crops are drying up, blocks the course of water to the field of another, and leads the water into his own field, he also has committed an offence. Should one place obstacles for the passage of water, before the water had come to the intake of the distributory channel belonging to another, while the channel is still dry and the water had not yet issued from the reservoir, so that the water, when it comes out of the reservoir, comes into his own field, there is no illegality if the obstruction is placed before the water had issued forth, but one is liable to a fine if it is done after the water had started flowing. There is no offence committed

by one, should one go to the reservoir, open the sluice-gate and lead water into one's own field. Why? Because his field depends on the reservoir.' With regard to the last provision, however, legal opinion of those days had not been unanimous, and the person who himself takes action to get water into his field, without going through the authorities entrusted with its distribution, was held by some to be guilty of transgressing the law.

From the extract quoted above, it becomes clear that though the reservoir itself was held in common by the village community, fields irrigated by it were divided into plots, no doubt of varying extent and productivity, which were individually owned. But, in order to prevent wastage of water, it was necessary that the ploughing of the fields and their flooding should be undertaken in an orderly sequence and, in order to control these and other matters connected with the cultivation of the fields, there were officers who are referred to, in inscriptions of the ninth and tenth centuries, by such terms as vel-kämi, etc. Owners of fields who contravened the orders with regard to ploughing etc. were fined; so were those who neglected the ploughing of their allotments at the due date. Not only matters concerning the supply of water and ploughing at the due season, but also the type of seed that should be sown in particular fields, was not left to the choice of the individual farmer. The inscription of Mahinda IV which legislates on the distribution of water from the Tisāväva, lays down that in the fields under that reservoir, which belonged to the Isurumuni monastery, the variety of paddy called sihinäti (modern hīnați) 'small grain' should be grown. The references in inscriptions to lands on which dry grains and pulses were grown also indicates that, in the tenth century, the different tracts of land on which particular crops were to be raised were detailed by authority.2

Agricultural production in the ninth and tenth centuries appears, therefore, to have been subject to a certain amount of planning, so that commodities necessary for the life of the community were produced according to its requirements, avoiding shortages of some and over-production of others. The freedom of the individual farmer was thus restricted so far as it was necessary for the good of the community as a whole. With regard to the type of crops grown on the land, and agricultural economy in general, conditions during this period do not seem to have differed in essentials from those of the earlier period. The primary producer, in almost every case, was obliged to pay a certain portion of the produce to an overlord who, when it was not the king or his local representative, was one of the numerous ecclesiastical establishments, a high dignitary of state, a favourite of the court, or some charitable institution like a hospital. The peasant

Smp., pp. 345—6. See also CJHSS, 1, pp. 4ff.
 See EZ., 1. 37; II, 234—5; IV, 44 and 252; V, 140—1.

cultivator had, of course, to give a stipulated share of the produce as waterrates. A share of the produce of his gardens and plantations, as well as of his cattle, was also due to the overlord, but we are not in possession of precise details with regard to these matters. The usage in one part of the country appears to have been different from that in another.

TRADE, COINAGE, ETC.

Its geographical position had conferred on Ceylon an important rôle in international commerce by the beginning of this period. Cosmas Indicopleustes, who wrote at the beginning of the sixth century, has recorded that Ceylon, in his time, received imports from all the seats of commerce, and exported to them in return. At that time, it was in the emporia of Ceylon that vessels arriving from the western countries received goods that had been brought hither in Chinese junks. Merchantmen from Persia and the Roman or rather the Byzantine world were regular callers at the ports of Ceylon. In addition to acting as a distributing centre, Ceylon also exported its own produce to the countries of the East as well as of the West. Cosmas has also recorded that Ceylon, at that time, used to send its ships in all directions.3 Agreeing with this is the statement of Arab historians that, in the first decade of the eighth century, the king of Ceylon sent to Hajaj, the viceroy of the eastern Caliphate, the orphan daughters of Muslim merchants who had died in his dominions, and his vessels were attacked and plundered by pirates off the coast of Sind.4 Whether the Sinhalese themselves owned and manned these vessels, it is not possible to say, but it has been recorded in the chronicles that, in the reign of Silākāla (518-531), a merchant named Pūrņa went from Ceylon to Kāsi (Benares).5 There is nothing to indicate that this Pūrna was not a national of this Island. As has been stated in Chapter II, the series of embassies which Sinhalese kings despatched to China between 405 and 762, must have had trade as one of their purposes. Among the 'tribute' offered by the Sinhalese kings to the emperors of China are mentioned pearls, filigreed gold, gems for necklaces, ivory, valances and some very fine shaggy stuff of white colour. It is noteworthy that no envoys arrived at the Chinese Court after 762 until relations with China were resumed in the fifteenth century. This is the period during which the Malay empire of Śrīvijaya maintained regular commercial intercourse with China.

Colonies of foreign merchants had, however, settled at the principal ports as well as in the capital city. Apart from those of Indian nationality,

^{3.} Cosmas Indicopleustes, The Christian Topography, ed. F. O. Winstedt, pp. 321ff. For the translation, see Periplus, pp. 250—2.
4. CHI., III, p. 2.
5. Ns. Tr., p. 17; Cv., xli, v. 37.

particularly those from the Tamil country, we are informed, again by Cosmas Indicopleustes, that there was a colony of Nestorian Persians settled in this Island for purposes of trade.6 The principal seaport of the Sinhalesc kingdom continued to be Mahātittha; Gokanna (Trincomalee) also was a flourishing port. There were regular trade routes between Nagapattana in the Cola country and Mahātittha, and a haven in the Kalinga country and Trincomalee. The most valuable exports from Ceylon continued to be pearls and precious stones. Varāhamihira, in the fifth century, refers to pearls from the land of the Sinhalese (Simhalaka)7, and Rājaśekhara, writing in the ninth century, says that the Sinhalese king had two store-houses of wealth, namely the Ocean which produced pearls, and Mount Rohana (Adam's Peak) with its mines of precious stones.8 The Rajatarangini has recorded that, in the reign of Mihiragula (fifth century), silk saris from Ceylon were used by high-born ladies in Kashmir. In return for these, Ceylon obtained precious metals, copper, silk, chinaware and horses. From the account of Cosmas, it is revealed that a royal officer, stationed at the seaport, attended to affairs relating to foreign merchants, and collected from them the dues to the state. The officers called Mahaputu-laddan in the ninth century inscription9 from Mannar appear to have been of this class.

Internal trade appears to have been in the hands of local corporations. From inscriptions of the fourth and fifth centuries we learn that such corporations received deposits of paddy and other grains and paid regular interest which, from modern standards, are exorbitant.10 The annual interest on paddy in the reign of Sirimeghavanna was fifty per cent; for other varieties of cereals, twenty five per cent. These corporations also received deposits of money that was current at the time, but the rate of interest is not certain. The Sinhalese equivalent of the ancient kahāpaṇa is mentioned in inscriptions up to about the seventh century, but it is not certain whether puranas (eldlings or punch-marked coins) continued in circulation up to that time. Large hoards of Roman coins, mostly of copper, have been found at Sigiri and a number of other places in the Island, and it appears that the Sinhalesc kalanda was based on the Roman solidus. A gold coinage, with the kalanda as the standard, and fractional pieces of one fourth known as pala and eighths called aka, was in circulation during the last two or three centuries of the Anuradhapura period. The fact that the legends on these coins are in North Indian Nagari, indicates that these were meant mainly to serve the needs of foreign trade. These Ceylon coins were also accepted as legal

Cosmas Indicopleustes, op. cit., p. 322.
 Bṛhat-samhitā, Chapter 81, v. 2.
 Bālarāmāyaṇa, Act III, v. 41; Rājatarangiṇī, I, 294ff.

EZ., III, pp. 105 and 113.
 Ibid., pp. 178ff, 250ff.

tender in the Tamil country, for Ilakkāśu, as they were known there, are referred to in an inscription of Parantaka I. Chinese and Arabic coins dating from the ninth and tenth centuries have been found in Ceylon.11

Mercantile corporations continued to flourish up to the end of the Anurādhapura period. An inscription of the reign of Udaya IV (946-954) refers to one such named vaniggrāma at a trading centre near Mahiyangana, whose relations with the local government officials were regulated by a royal edict.12 From this document, we learn that the state levied excise duty on goods passing from one place to another. Stringent regulations were enforced to prevent the state being defrauded of such dues. Commodities, for instance, could be sold only at places which were set apart for that purpose. Weights and measures were regulated by the government. No excise duty was levied on transit goods and, in the event of any goods being not shown to the royal officers for the assessment of the excise duty, double the usual rates was charged, when such frauds were detected. Octroi dues were levied on merchandise brought into the capital; one pata of grain from every sack passing through the gates was levied in the tenth century and utilised for the upkeep of the Royal Alms-hall.13

POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANISATION

(a) The King

The position which the king occupied in the administration of the kingdom continued to be the same as at the close of the earlier period. The theory that the king was a god seems to have come to the fore at times as, for instance, in the reign of Kassapa I. This was generally accepted by the people as a whole; normally, however, it was not permitted to express itself in such a manner as to cause the expenditure of the resources of the kingdom for the satisfaction of the megalomania of individual rulers. The ancient royal titles, 'Gāmaṇi' and 'Devānampiya,' had gone out of vogue long before the beginning of this period, but the latter title suddenly re-appears in the reign of Upatissa II (517-518), probably due to an effort at revivalism.14 Some of the kings in the fourth to tenth centuries bore the title of 'Budadasa (Buddhadasa),' indicating that the kings, as a rule, wished to be known as devoted followers of the Buddhist faith. 15 Another royal title during this period was 'Abhaya.' The two names 'Sirisamghabodhi' and 'Silāmeghavanna,' which are known from the chronicles to have been the personal names of two kings who came, one after the other,

^{11.} Codrington, *CCC.*, pp. 50ff., 166—167; *ASCAR*, 1931, p. 8; *ibid.*, 1946, p. 6. 12. *EZ.*, III, p. 78ff and 89ff. 13. *1bid.*, p. 133. 14. *EZ.*, V, p. 77. 15. *EZ.*, I, p. 24 and IV, p. 114.

in the third century, are given in the chronicle as epithets of certain kings, the title 'Sirisanighabodhi' being applied in this manner to Aggabodhi II for the first time, and 'Silāmegha' to Aggabodhi VI, in the Pāli chronicle. But Sinhalese literary sources indicate that 'Salamevan,' the equivalent of 'Silāmeghavanna,' was borne by Silākāla. Pāli literary references establish that Mahānāma had the epithet of 'Sirisanighabodhi.' When inscriptions become numerous in the eighth to tenth centuries, they establish that the epithets 'Sirisangabo' and 'Salamevan,' very often with the addition of 'Aba,' before or after the epithet, were borne alternately by Sinhalese kings of this period as throne-names.16 This practice is parallelled in South India by the use of the epithets 'Rājakeśarī' and 'Parakeśarī' by the Cola kings, and 'Māravarman' and 'Jaṭāvarman' by the Pandya monarchs.

The Sinhalese kings claimed to belong to the Ksatriya lineage tracing its origin from Iksvāku of the Solar dynasty of Ayodhyā in India. A prince, to be entitled to the succession, should have been of this lineage not only on the father's, but also on the mother's side. The Sinhalese rulers, consequently, found consorts within their own family circle, at times marrying ortho-cousins or even nieces. Instances of queens belonging to other royal families are very rare. The succession was not always from father to son; the rule followed appears to have been for the eldest surviving male member of the royal family to succeed to the throne, unless there was some disability which debarred him, or he was kept out of the succession by the intrigues of the Court.17 A new reign was inaugurated by the consecration (abhiseka) of the sovereign, and this ceremony was repeated every year. The chronicle has recorded of Sena II that he received the consecration at the Hemavāluka-cetiya (Ruvanväli-säya) and decreed that the ceremony should be performed every year.

Kings of the tenth century, in their inscriptions, have informed us that they graduated to the sovereignty through the ranks of apa and mahaya or mahapā.18 There are numerous inscriptions, found in the modern Kuruņāgala, Kāgalla and Mātalē Districts, which embody edicts issued by princes who bore the epithet of mahapā, and who later came to occupy the throne at Anuradhapura.19 Similarly, inscriptions found in the south-eastern districts of the Island, i.e. the principality of Rohana, contain edicts issued by princes having the title apa, who also later became sovereigns of the whole Island.20 As a rule, neither an apa nor a mahapa dates such documents

^{16.} EZ., II, p. 9f.
17. Cv., Tr., I, pp. xv ff.
18. EZ., I, p. 225.
19. EZ., IV., Nos. 21, 22 and 23.
20. EZ., 11, No. 11 and III, No. 21.

in his own reign, but in regnal years of the paramount king at Anurādhapura. In the ninth and tenth centuries, therefore, a well-recognised practice had been established for the heir-apparent, called mahapā, mahayā or māyā, to be placed in charge of the districts which formed the southern portion of the kingdom of Anurādhapura, and for the heir-presumptive, the āpā, to be ruler of Rohaṇa. The territory which formed the appanage of the māyā came to be known as the Māyā-raṭa. Thus the Island of Ceylon came to be known as divided into three kingdoms, referred to in later times as the three Simhalas. From ancient times, Rohaṇa had been a separate principality under the prince who bore the titte of uparāja. But, in the ninth and tenth centuries, this title does not occur in contemporary documents.

The title apa occurs in the Culavamsa as adipada, which is an erroneous rendering into Pāli of the Sinhalese word apā; this has originated by the addition of the honorific -paya (Skt. -pāda) to the title aya (Skt. ārya), regularly used for princes in the centuries preceding and following the beginning of the Christian era. The title, in its etymology, is thus equivalent to ayyan-adigal current in the ancient royal family of Kerala. The title adipāda occurs in the chronicle for the first time in the reign of Silākāla. king bestowed the title on his eldest son, Moggallana, and gave him the charge of the Eastern Quarter of the kingdom. Thus it appears that, at that time, the title was borne by the heir-apparent, and not the heir-presumptive. The district that was then considered to be the appanage of the heir-apparent was the Eastern, and not the Southern Quarter as in the ninth century. The Southern Quarter of the kingdom was entrusted by Silākāla to his second son, the heir-presumptive. Rohana did not come into consideration, on this occasion, when the king distributed administrative responsibility among his sons. Whether as heir-apparent or heirpresumptive, the prince who bore the title apa (adipada) had the expectancy of normally succeeding as paramount king. The circumstance that one was the son of a king does not appear to have made an apa of one automatically. For we are told that Dappula II, in order to ensure the succession for his own sons, refused to confer the title of ādipāda on Mahinda, son of his elder brother. This prince considered the matter to be so serious as to raise the standard of revolt, and lost his life in the attempt. Corresponding to the title of ādipāda or āpā for male members of the royal family was that of rajini for females; it had also to be formally conferred by the reigning monarch.21

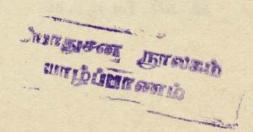
The seniormost among the princes who had been created apā was known as māpā or mahapā or mahapā. The word has originated by the prefixing of maha-, 'great' to the princely title aya. Its Pāli rendering, mahādipāda,

^{21.} EZ., III, pp. 82-3.

occurs for the first time in the reign of Aggabodhi I. That king conferred the title on his nephew, also called Aggabodhi, who succeeded to the throne on the death of his uncle. Thus, at its first occurrence, the title is borne by the heir-apparent, as it was in the ninth and tenth centuries. The title uparāja appears from the chronicle to have been synonymous with yuvarāja, though there were occasions when the two titles were borne by two different Princes who are referred to in the chronicle as the yuvarāja (heir-apparent) in a particular reign, figure under the title mahapā or its variants in inscriptions of that reign, but never with the Sinhalese equivalent of yuvarāja. In inscriptions, the title varada (uparāja) is borne by personages who were not in the line of succession to the throne.

The heir-apparent and the heir-presumptive need not necessarily have resided within the territories of which they were the rulers. There is, in fact, evidence which goes to prove that they normally resided in Anuradhapura. An inscription of the ninth century has a reference to the three royal palaces (tun-radola),22 which probably indicated the establishments of the king, the heir-apparent and the heir-presumptive. The heir-apparent (mahayā) had his own personal guard of archers who, in one instance, were entrusted with the duty of settling any disputes that may arise with regard to an endowment made to a monastery outside Anuradhapura.23 Perhaps the apa and maya entrusted the administration of their respective appanages to some high dignitary, and visited the territories when it became necessary to quell a rebellion, or some such occasion.

As in India, so in Ceylon, too, a prince destined to the throne was given a careful education, and many of the kings during this period seem to have been imbued with a deep sense of the responsibility which they bore towards their subjects. There are instances recorded of rulers touring their dominions, inquiring into the details of the administration, and redressing wrongs.24 Some rulers were loved and respected for their virtues. The chronicle says that when Aggabodhi IV died, his subjects mourned in deep grief and, after the funeral ceremonies, made for themselves medicines from the ashes of the pyre.25 There was a custom in the tenth century to call former kings by the number of the regnal year in which they expired; for instance, Kassapa IV has been referred to in inscriptions subsequent to his reign as 'the lord who expired in the seventeenth year.'26 used in reference to the passing away of the Buddha is also used in referring to the death of a king. A document of the tenth century, found in the Abhayagiri-vihāra, categorically states that none but a Bodhisattva, i.c.



^{22.} *Ibid.*, p. 269. 23. *EZ.*, I, p. 190. 24. *EZ.*, III, p. 78. 25. *Cv.*, xlvi, vv. 36—37.

^{26.} EZ., III, p. 87.

a future Buddha, would become a king of Ceylon. The Buddha Himself is said to have assured this. The same document states that the monarchs of Ceylon had their kingship bestowed on them by the Order of monks for the purpose of defending the bowl and the robe of the Buddha, and were wont to wear the diadem to serve and attend on the community of monks on the very day they celebrate the coronation festival.27 It is thus clear that the king, at least in theory, had to rule according to the behests

of the Sanigha.

To be in full possession of the royal dignity, it was necessary for the king to be consecrated according to rites that had been handed down by tradition, and to be in possession of certain regalia. An important article of the ancient Sinhalese regalia was a string of pearls called ekāvalī, and an abhiseka performed without this does not appear to have been fully valid. When Dathopatissa I fought with Aggabodhi III for the sovereignty, the latter fled to South India, taking the ekāvalī with him. Dāthopatissa I was thus obliged to ascend the throne without wearing the ekāvalī;28 it is perhaps due to this shortcoming that, in a document published in his reign, the title of raja or maharaja is not prefixed to his name.29 He had to be content with the lesser title of purumaka (Skt. pramukha), 'lord.' We have also an instance of a prince who exercised authority without the trappings of kingship, bearing only the title of apa, for grief at the death of a dear friend discouraged him from going through the abhiseka ceremony.30 Aggabodhi IV was Buddhist enough to disregard the magical potency of the ekāvalī, and to use it as a rosary in his religious meditations.31 Among the regalia which fell into the hands of the Colas when they captured the last king of Anuradhapura were 'the diadem that had been inherited, the priceless diamond bracelet which was believed to have been a gift of the gods, the unbreakable sword and a fragment of the belt of the Buddha.'32 The Cola inscriptions give a somewhat similar list, including 'the necklace of Indra' which had been deposited with the Sinhalese king by the Pāṇḍya monarch.33

His descent traced back to mythical personages of the past, the traditional rituals undergone by him at the consecration and the magical potency believed to reside in the regalia in his possession, made the person of the king sacred, and the commands emanating from him demanded implicit obedience as the expression of the will of the gods. The king, therefore, wielded absolute authority, and had power of life and death over the most exalted

^{27.} EZ., I, p. 240. 28. Cv., xliv, vv. 127—8. 29. EZ., V, p. 69. 30. Cv., xlviii, vv. 26—28.

^{31.} Cv., xlvi, v. 17. 32. Cv., lv, vv. 16—17. 33. SII., Vol. II, p. 94.

of his subjects. This absolute power, which the king possessed in theory, was, however, limited to a great extent in practice by public opinion which demanded of the ruler to follow fundamental principles of justice and equity (dharma) and custom and precedent (vyavāhāra or cāritra, S. sirit), as established by the policies followed by earlier rulers who served as models of kingly behaviour. The idea implanted in the mind of every member of the royal family, by his early training as well as by the social milieu in which he had his being, that the ruler should hearken to the counsel of the elders of the Sangha, also limited his freedom of action. A king who disregarded former custom, or offended the Sangha, alienated the sympathy of his subjects, and there was always a rival aspirant to the throne who would take advantage of such discontent and supplant the ruler who had transgressed the norm of kingly conduct.

How effective popular resentment could be against a king who infringed established institutions is proved by the events which followed the violation of the sanctity of the Tapovana in the reign of Udaya III.

Moreover, the king had to enforce his will through the instrumentality of the high officers of state, and these, as a body, advised him on every important matter which affected the well-being of the state. There is nothing to show that the king was bound to abide by the counsel of his ministers and high dignitaries, but if such counsel was unanimous, no ruler who desired the maintenance of his authority as well as the continuation of his dynasty would have treated it with disrespect.

(b) Officers Entrusted with Administrative and other Duties.

This leads us to a consideration of the high dignitaries of state who stood close enough to the king to influence his policies and conduct. Among these, there were two whose functions were ceremonial and not executive, but whose importance in the body politic was evident from the fact that they very often were close relatives of the king, and themselves came to occupy the throne in certain cases. These were the chatta-gāhaka, the 'umbrella-bearer' and the asiggāhaka, 'the sword-bearer,' of whom there is no mention in the earlier period. The first mention of a chatta-gāhaka is with reference to the events which followed the death of Mahānāma (406-428). Sotthisena, the son of Mahānāma by a consort of Tamil race, was murdered at the instance of Saṃghā, Mahānāma's daughter by his anointed queen. This princess was married to a person named Jantu, who held the office of chatta-gāhaka, and he occupied the throne for one year.³⁴ The office is no more heard of until after the end of the Anurādhapura kingdom. King

^{34.} Cv., xxxviii, vv. 2-3.

Moggallana I (491-508) gave the office of sword-bearer (asiggahaka), together with the hand of his sister, to Silākāla who later became king and ruled for thirteen years (518-531).35 In the reign of Aggabodhi II (604-614), the asiggāhaka was a kinsman of the queen, named Samghatissa, who succeeded to the throne after the death of his master.36 Moggallana III, who ousted Samghatissa, gave the office of asiggāhaka to one who had helped him to secure the throne. The latter wielded the sword which he bore with such effect in his own interest that he supplanted his master on the throne, and became the founder of a dynasty which ruled Ceylon for several centuries.³⁷

The office of the commander of the armed forces continued to be one of the highest importance, as it had been in early days, and was often held by a close relative of the king. The senāpati of Dhātusena (circa 455-473) was a son of his sister. Aggabodhi VI (circa 733-772) conferred the office of senāpati on his son, Mahinda, who later became king, the second of that name. Mahinda II, in his turn, appointed his own son as the commanderin-chief. The senāpati of Kassapa IV (circa 898-914), Sena Ilanga, was also a scion of the royal family.38 The chronicle mentions several senāpatis without mentioning the relationship that they had, if any, to the king. The inscriptions of the period also testify to the important position held by the senāpati. In the reign of a king styled Sirisamghabodhi, of the sixth century or thereabouts, a senāpati named A.bi Mahidala issued an order manumitting all children who were slaves.39 Officers who were under the command of the senāpati had a share in the proclamation and enforcement of royal edicts, granting immunities to land, in the ninth and tenth centuries. In these documents, many of the officers who set up the inscriptions receive the title of mey-kāppar (body-guard), and came under the orders of the commander of the body-guard (meykappar-vädärum).40

In one of the documents, the commander of the body-guard had also the title of Bamba-senevi (Brahma-senāpati).' It is interesting to compare this title with 'Sakka-senāpati,' the office or title granted by Kassapa V to his own son, who led an unsuccessful expedition to the Pāṇḍya country.41 A similar title is 'Andha-senāpati,' 'Andha' being equal to 'Āndhra,' the ancient name of the Telugu people.42 A number of inscriptions refer to a high dignitary named Dāpuļa, who rejoiced in the epithet of 'Pāndiraj (Pāṇḍyan king)' and under whom were the royal body-guards. The

^{35.} Cv., xxxix, v. 55.
36. Cv., xlii, v. 42; xliii, v. 1.
37. Cv., xliv, vv. 43, 63—64.
38. Cv., xxxviii, v. 82, xlviii, vv. 78—82; 154; lii. v. 16.
39. EZ., V, p. 29.
40. EZ., III, pp. 109—110. The variant form mekāppar is of more frequent occurrence.
41. EZ., I, p. 34; Cv., lii, 72.
42. Cv., xli, 87.

Culāvamsa refers to a minister of Kassapa IV who was called 'Cola-rāja (king of Colas). '43 It thus appears that the Sinhalese kings of the ninth and tenth centuries conferred titles on their military chiefs, meaning 'king of Cola,' 'king of Pāṇḍya,' etc., just as the Cola and Pāṇḍya kings of a somewhat later date conferred titles such as 'Kālinga-rāyar (king of Kālinga)' and 'Ilattaraiyan (king of Ilam, i.e. Ceylon)' on their feudatories. It is significant that a high military officer, if not the senāpati, in the ninth and tenth centuries, held a title of Tamil origin and that the persons entrusted with the safety of the king also bore a Tamil title (me-kappar), But the members of the body-guard themselves, from their names, do not appear to have been of Tamil extraction. Their names are the same as those borne by the average Sinhalese of those days.44 The members of the armed forces are referred to in general by the term balat (P. balattha) in documents of the period,45 in which there is a reference to padi-meheya, paid service,' probably mercenaries in the Sinhalese army.46 The vast majority of the armed men under the command of the senāpati consisted, no doubt, of the militia.

The high dignitary who had an equal share with the senāpati in the promulgation and enforcement of the royal edicts was the chief secretary, called maha-lē (P. mahālekhaka) in contemporary documents.47 In its Pāli garb, the office is mentioned in the chronicles, though not so often as the senāpati. The mahālekhaka in the reign of Kassapa IV, named Sena, founded an edifice named Mahālekha-pabbata in the Mahāvihāra.48 The inscriptions often couple the term rak- or arak-samana with maha-le; sometimes the dignitary is referred to as arak-samana without the addition of the title maha-lē. The subordinate officers of the maha-lē or araksamana were called kudasalā, to which vatkāmi was at times appended.49 Vat may be equated with Skt. vārtā which, in the Arthaśāstra of Kauṭalya denotes 'economics' in general, i.e. agriculture and cattle-breeding. The mahālekhaka or mahale was probably in charge of the Treasury, and his officers dealt with economic matters. The maha-le, thus, was responsible for the civil service of the state, just as the senāpati was for the military services.

In some royal decrees figures a dignitary called sabhāpati, 'president of the council.'50 The epithet prthvi-deva is attached to the name of the person who held the office of sabhāpati. Prthvī-deva, 'the god on earth,'

^{43.} EZ., III, p. 273.
44. See, for example, the persons with the title mekāppar at EZ, II, pp. 33, 48 and 56.
45. EZ., II, pp. 31, 44, 47.
46. EZ., III, p. 104.

^{47.} EZ., II, pp. 12, 15, 17, 30—33, 233. The word occurs both as mahale and mahale. 48. Cv., lii, v. 33.

^{49.} EZ., III, pp. 78, 274; IV, p. 250. 50. EZ., III, pp. 271—2; EZ., II, pp. 7—8, EZ., I, pp. 247—8, 251.

would suggest that the holder of that sobrioquet was a Brāhmaṇa. However this may be, there appears to have been more than one sabhāpati who functioned by turns, for members of the sabhā proclaiming royal orders are referred to as having come for that purpose on the day of a particular dignitary who was the sabhāpati. Members of the sabhā are sometimes mentioned in the edicts as proclaiming the royal order without reference to the sabhāpati. In some documents, the functionaries who were subordinate to the military commander and the chief secretary or the araksamana are mentioned together with members of the sabhā. In such cases, the members of the sahhā take precedence over the underlings of the senāpati and the chief secretary. The constitution and the functions of the sabhā are not known; its members do not receive any other official title. There was a section of the sabhā, called lekam-gē, 'the house of secretaries or scribes,' which was charged with the duty of drafting legislation. In the Badulla pillar-inscription, for instance, it is stated that, when the king made certain orders to redress the grievances of the inhabitants of a village named Hopitigamu near Mahiyangana, these instructions were given legal form by the lords of lekamge who held a session for this purpose.

The administration of the capital city and its environs was entrusted to an officer called the mivara-ladda, corresponding to the nagara-guttika of the earlier period. This officer figures in edicts of the ninth and tenth centuries found in the vicinity of Anuradhapura, and it appears that he was responsible for any misdemeanour which was undetected in his jurisdiction. For instance, he had to pay a stipulated sum of money to the royal treasury in the event of fishing in the Abhaya tank, which was prohibited.⁵¹ Another officer figuring in the edicts is called demela-adhikāra, corresponding to the damilādhikāri of the Polonnaru period. It is when the edicts are concerned with the disposal of lands set apart for the maintenance of Tamils in the king's service that this dignitary takes a part in the promulgation of edicts,52

The administration of the four quarters or provinces, the passas, into which the territories under the direct rule of the king were divided, was apparently the function of the officers called pasladu figuring in the documents of the ninth and tenth centuries.53 The provinces or passas were subdivided into smaller administrative units called rat, which were placed in the charge of officers called rat-ladu, corresponding to the rativas or ratikas of the early centuries of the Christian era.⁵⁴ From two documents, namely the Badulla pillar-inscription and the Kondavatavana epigraph, we learn

^{51.} Müller, AIC., No. 111.
52. EZ., III, pp. 272, 274.
53. EZ., I, pp. 168, 170; II, p. 42; III, pp. 104, 111, 274, 290. The inflected form of the word is pas-laddan.
54. EZ., III, pp. 104, 111, 290.

that officers called danda-nāyakas were in charge of certain areas. 55 These dignitaries, in addition to military functions which their designation implies, appear also to have been in charge of administrative matters. But they are met with in regions close to the border between the king's territory and Rohana, and were stationed in strategic positions to keep the turbulent elements in that principality under control.

Certain territorial units, particularly those in which mercantile interests predominated, enjoyed a good deal of autonomy. In the market town of Hopitigamu, for instance, the amount of dues to be paid to the dandanāyaka, who was the king's representative, had to be assessed, after due deliberation, by the subordinates of the latter, representatives of the mercantile guild and the village corporation in joint session. Villages inhabited by royal servitors known as dasagam managed their own affairs, even to the extent of inflicting capital punishment on murderers. The chiefs of these villages had, it seems, given security to the king for the good behaviour of the inhabitants, and in the event of a theft or other offence being not detected, they had to pay a stipulated sum to the king.56 The proceedings of the village court had to be written and kept for inspection by the king's officers who went on circuit every year. Village assemblies appear to have constituted themselves into various committees for specific functions. In the Badulla inscription, for instance, we read of a committee of eight entrusted with the management of affairs relating to village forests, and the Mädirigiri inscription mentions a committee of five supervising fields.57

An officer of consequence attached to the king's court, who perhaps was entrusted with the management of the state hospitals to be mentioned lator, was the maha-ved-nā, 'the chief physician.' Under him was his deputy, sulu-veda-nā. These officers find mention in the ninth and tenth century inscriptions, as well as in literary sources of later periods.58 An important functionary was the mādabi, whose existence is vouched for by a number of inscriptions of the ninth and tenth centuries. He seems to have been entrusted with the collection of customs and excise dues. officer in charge of the royal parks was called uyan-väjärama.59

An army of subordinate officials, civil and military, functioned in the ninth and tenth centuries, for collecting the revenues due to the state, for keeping proper accounts of them, for supervising the supply of necessities to the palace, and for the administration of justice. These functionaries

^{55.} EZ., III, p. 86; V, p. 137. 56. EZ., I, pp. 246ff.

^{57.} EZ., III, p. 97ff. 58. EZ., IV, p. 44nf. 59. EZ., III, p. 256.

are referred to under the generic designation of radol, raj-kol-kāmi and similar terms. There were also officers called ley-daru, 'clerks.' Some of the classes of these subordinate civil servants of those days who figure in the epigraphs are de-kam-tān vāssan, 'officers of two office establishments,' arākkan, 'guards,' vel-kāmi or vel-vāsi, 'officers who had to perform duties with regard to the cultivation of fields,' and piyo-vadārannan, 'inspectors of administrative matters.' The designations of the vast majority of these minor functionaries do not convey any meaning today. Some of them, like kol-pātri, 'staff-holders,' ya-muguru-gatuvan, 'bearers of iron clubs,' whip-crackers, drummers etc., must have belonged to the entourage of the king and the nobles.60 The officers who had to deal with matters concerning irrigation and agriculture have been mentioned in Section B.

(c) Taxes; Land Tenure, Social Conditions, Etc.

The purpose of the majority of the edicts assignable to the ninth and tenth centuries was to declare that certain villages, belonging to influential personages or, most often, religious institutions, were spared the attentions of the gentry named above and others of that ilk. The grants of immunities begin to appear about the eighth century; at first they are very briefly worded, but, in course of time, develop into elaborate legal documents, which give us an insight into the administrative procedure of the day. These favoured villages or estates had the right of sanctuary, particularly in the case of those belonging to religious institutions. Royal officers could not enter them even to arrest a murderer. They had to remain outside the boundaries of such villages, and negotiate with their lords to have the criminals extradited. The privilege seems to have been abused at times, for in some grants the right of sanctuary excludes those who had committed high treason and five offences which were considered to be particularly heinous.⁶¹

The immunity grants also enumerate the dues from which the villages affected by them were made exempt. A proper understanding of these would give us a fair idea of the king's revenue in those days; but, as with the case of the designations of officials, the precise connotation of these terms indicating dues is not clear in many instances. One of the oftrecurring taxes is mel-āṭsi in many variant forms. This is a Tamil word which is the exact translation of Skt. upari-kara, occuring in North Indian immunity grants, and probably denoted the overlord's share from the produce of the land, which was the principal source of the king's revenue

^{60.} For a discussion of the significance of some of the official designations occurring in the inscriptions of the ninth and tenth centuries see EZ., III, pp. 143ff.
61. EZ., III, p. 141.

in ancient days in India as well as in Ceylon. It could also denote an imposition over and above the normal land tax. Another term that is repeated in many documents is väri, forced labour exacted by the state from the villagers. The term maha-var appears to refer to the number of days (literally, 'turn') which every peasant was obliged to work for the king, and suļu-var, additional days of labour. Furthermore, villagers appear to have been obliged to contribute their labour in the maintenance of roads, as is indicated by the terms, maṅg-maha-var and maṅg-div. Royal officers, acting on behalf of the king, could impress bulls and milch cows. Trees in gardens, homesteads and wells were taxed.⁶²

There is no reference to salaries paid to the king's officers, high or low. The practice seems to have been, as it was under the Kandy kings, to allot the revenues of a village, or some plot of land, for the maintenance of the officers who performed services to the king. The Kondavatavana pillar-inscription informs us that the revenues of a village named Ärāgam were enjoyed by a danda-nāyaka. The peasants were obliged to supply provisions to the royal officers who came on the king's business to their villages. In addition to what they were entitled to, according to custom, these minor officials at times demanded meat, liquor, ghee, etc. from the villagers, and supplemented their legitimate sources of income by engaging in illicit trade. These abuses were, of course, not known to the higher authorities, and were prohibited when brought to the king's notice.⁶³

From the documents of the ninth and tenth centuries, interpreted in the light of the later Sinhalese literature, it appears that two broad divisions existed in the society of those days. These were the vast majority of people who tilled the land, referred to as kudīn, gam-väsi and has-karu, and a privileged class, the members of which were entitled to receive a share of the produce of certain lands tilled by the peasants. The members of the upper class had the designation of sam-daru, 'lords' or more literally, 'sons of lords.' The officials of the royal palace and the various departments of the administration were recruited from among them. The land-holdings of the sam-daru belonged to several categories. The most desirable form of land tenure was the panunu, an estate possessed in perpetuity by a family in hereditary succession, or by an institution like a monastery or a hospital. In some cases, the owner of a panunu estate had full rights over it and apparently was not obliged to pay any dues to the state. In others, a nominal quit-rent, such as an amuna of grain for every kiri of sowing extent, had to be paid to the state, or some commodity had to be supplied to a charitable institution. For instance, a panunu land possessed by the chief

^{62.} For example, compare the imposts the levying of which was forbidden by the Mannar Kacceri pillar inscription, EZ., III, p. 105.
63. EZ., III, p. 79.

physician had to pay annually a pāļa of dried ginger to a hospital. Those who enjoyed pamuņu lands were referred to as pamuņu-laddan, and they appear to have held their estates irrespective of any services which they rendered to the state. Gam-laddan, on the other hand, appear to have held their lands as recompense for the services they rendered to the state, and were not obliged to pay to the Treasury any share of the revenue that they derived from them. A third class of land holders, named käbäli-laddan, most probably were allotted shares from a large estate.⁶⁴

If the lord lived on his estate, the tenant-cultivators paid their dues direct to him, or his underlings; but in the case of a large monastery or a high dignitary entitled to receive the revenue from a land, the lord appears to have entrusted a third party with the responsibility of collecting the dues, himself receiving a stipulated sum from the revenue-farmer, referred to as pātta-ladu.65 The village which existed in the ninth century at the modern Kondavatavana tank, and was assigned to a danda-nāyaka, for the expenses of his maintenance, was thus leased out, and a special edict was issued by the king to regulate the relations between the lease-holder and the tenants. Among the regulations was one that prohibited the lease-holder from ejecting the tenants who had been cultivating the lands. Any dispute arising between the lease-holder and a tenant had to be settled by a decision of the other tenants. The rights of the tenants were thus secured, but they, too, had their obligations, such as ploughing on the due date, and flooding the fields in accordance with the rules, the transgression of which made them liable to a fine.

A factor which had a great bearing on the social and economic conditions of the age were the extensive landed properties owned by the principal monasteries. A considerable proportion of the population consisted of tenants who cultivated the lands belonging to the monasteries. The administration of these lands required a numerous supervisory staff; the designations of these officers are often the same as those employed by the palace and the administrative departments. Allotments of lands from the estates owned by the monasteries were given to these officers in lieu of salaries, sometimes in addition to fixed rations of rice which they drew from the monastery stores. Similarly, the various types of artisans in the service of the monastery were also allotted portions of land for their maintenance. We are not certain whether these artisans themselves cultivated the lands allotted to them, or employed others to do that work for them. With regard to the lands owned by the ancient monastery of Mihintalē and, to a lesser extent, by the Abhayagiri, detailed regulations have been preserved

^{64.} For pamunu, see Codrington, ALTR., p. 13: for gam-laddan, ibid., p. 22ff; for käbäli, ibid., p. 16.
65. The significance of this term has been discussed at EZ.. V. pp. 127ff.

concerning the general administration and the payment of the employees. The Mihintalē monastery appears to have managed its property directly through paid employees, but the Abhayagiri had recourse to the system of middlemen called pāṭṭa-laddan; i.e. the lands were leased. We also read, in the documents, of lands that were mortgaged (ukas-gam). With regard to lands owned by the monasteries also, the actual tiller of the soil had his rights and could not be replaced so long as he satisfied the conditions of his tenancy which was hereditary from father to son.66

In addition to these peasant cultivators, who were free men, there were people who worked for wages. There were also slaves of different categories, some of them attached to monasteries. The slave could purchase his freedom.67 On the whole, slaves were treated humanely, and the horrors which come to one's mind by the mention of the word due to one's awareness of the inhumanities of the slave trade in the West were not a feature of life in ancient Ceylon.

(d) Welfare Services

A notable feature of the Sinhalese civilisation was the importance attached to the establishment and maintenance of hospitals for the treatment of the sick. King Buddhadāsa (circa 337-365) who was reputed to be a skilful physician himself, is said to have appointed a physician for every ten villages throughout the Island, and refuges for the sick were set up in every village. Upatissa I (circa 365-406) erected great nursing shelters and almshalls for cripples, for women in travail, for the blind and for the sick. King Udaya I (circa 797-801) built hospitals at Polonnaru and Padavi and endowed them with grants of villages. Kassapa V (914-923) founded hospitals at Anurādhapura to treat patients suffering from epidemic diseases, and established free dispensaries in various parts of the city. Kassapa V (898-914) and Mahinda IV (956-972) are also recorded to have been active in this matter.68 The references in the chronicles are fully corroborated by inscriptions of the ninth and tenth centuries,69 a number of which are concerned with endowments for the maintenance of hospitals, some of them founded not by the state, but by wealthy private individuals. There were also lying-inhomes. The ruins of some of these hospitals have been identified.70

⁶⁶ EZ., I, pp. 49ff. and 98ff. 67. EZ., V, p. 34, 60f. 68. Cv., xxxvii, 171; Pv. Tr., p. 25; Cv., xxxvii, 182; Cv., xlix, I, 19—21, Cv., lii, 25, 26, 57; liv. 31.

^{69.} EZ., I, p. 161, ibid. IV, p. 45; ibid., IV, p. 276. 70. ASCAR., 1954, p. 22; ibid., 1910—11, pp. 19—20.

CHAPTER VII

CIVILISATION OF THE PERIOD: RELIGION, LITERATURE AND ART

A. RELIGION

(a) Buddhism

In Chapter IX of Book II, an account has been given of the upheavals which disturbed the even tenor of religious life in Ceylon in the reign of Mahāsena, and finally divided the Buddhist Church of the Island into three sects. Sirimeghavanna, Mahāsena's successor, made amends for the wrongs suffered by the Mahāvihāra at the hands of his father, and that fraternity lost no time in recovering the position it enjoyed before being subjected to persecution. Sirimegha's reign is noteworthy for the acquisition by the Buddhists of Ceylon of a sacred object which was destined, in later centuries, to receive for itself the principal share of the religious devotion of the king and people of Ceylon, namely the Tooth Relic of the Buddha. This had been the object of veneration for many centuries by the Buddhists of Kalinga, and was preserved in a shrine at Dantapura, the capital of that country; but the subjugation of its Buddhist dynasty by a ruler of a different family persuaded the vanquished monarch to send the sacred object which he revered so much to a place where it was bound to receive the honour due to it. Consequently, he enjoined his daughter and son-in-law to find refuge for themselves as well as for the Tooth Relic in Lanka, whose king Mahāsena had earlier given expression to his deep reverence towards it. The two royal exiles bringing the sacred relic were forced to come in disguise; no enthusiastic reception awaited them on their arrival in Ceylon. However, Sirimeghavanna, being ultimately appraised of the arrival of the Relic at Anuradhapura, paid it due honour and had it installed in a shrine, within the precincts of the royal palace, which was known as Dhammacakka-geha, probably as it housed a Wheel, the symbol of the Buddhist Law. The orthodox Mahāvihāra does not appear to have been very enthusiastic about this new arrival, and in the annual celebrations in its honour, the Tooth Relic was conveyed to the Abhayagiri-vihāra for exposition to the public.2 Fa Hsien, the Chinese pilgrim who visited Ceylon about a century after the arrival of the Tooth Relic in the Island, has left

^{1.} Cv., xxxvii, vv. 61-65.

^{2.} Cv., xxxvii, vv. 92-97 and Dathavainsa, cantos 2 to 5.

on record a graphic description of the festival held on such an occasion.3 From this, we can form an idea of the great hold which the cult of the. Tooth Relic had taken of the minds of many Sinhalese Buddhists, and the enthusiasm displayed by the king for its worship, though the chronicle has very few references to it during this period. The occurrence of so many personal names, borne by royalty as well as high dignitaries, containing the word Dāṭhā (S. Daļa), meaning 'Tooth,' as the first member of a compound, testifies to the importance which the cult of the Tooth Relic acquired for itself in course of time. Other Buddhist lands seem to have envied Ceylon during this period, just as in later times, for possessing this Sacred Relic, for the embassy to China in the reign of Mahanama presented to the Emperor a 'model of the shrine of the Tooth.'

Fa Hsien resided at the Abhayagiri monastery, and refers to it as the most important religious establishment in Anuradhapura. The belief had then gained ground that the Abhayagiri stūpa had been built over an impression of the Buddha's feet. This vihāra also claimed to have a branch of the sacred Bodhi Tree in India, which a former king is said to have secured by sending an embassy to Mid-India. By the side of the Bodhi Tree was a shrine which housed a jasper image of the Buddha, described as 22 ft. in height. Under the Bodhi Tree was placed another Buddha statue. The Abhayagiri monastery gave accommodation to 5,000 monks, while the older establishment had only 3,000 inmates. One of the latter number was of a particularly saintly character, and had the reputation of being an arhat. At his passing away, the king accorded him a grand funeral, of which Fa Hsien has preserved for us an eye-witness's account. The shrines of Ceylon used to attract pilgrims and devotees from other countries. Fa Hsien also gives us the interesting information that the scriptures of sects other than the Theravada were known in Ceylon at this time. He obtained a copy of the Vinaya-pitaka of the Mahisasaka school in Ceylon.4

In the reign of Buddhadasa, a concerted attempt was made by the king to make the teachings of the Buddha known among the average man. The king is said to have made as much provision for the spiritual well-being of his subjects as for their physical welfare. He appointed a pandita well versed in religion as preacher for every ten villages. With the same aim of popularising the doctrines of Buddhism, the Sutta-piţaka was translated into Sinhalese by a learned thera named Mahadhammakathin.5 Time has not bequeathed to us this Sinhalese version of the Sutta-piţaka. The opposite tendency to translate religious literature in Sinhalese to Pāli manifested itself in the reign of Mahānāma, on the ground that the doctrines as settled

Samuel Beal, Buddhist Records of the Western World, p. lxxv.
 Ibid., p. lxxix.
 Cv., xxxvii, v. 175; Pv. Tr., p. 25.

by the Mahāvihāra should be of benefit not only to the monks of Ceylon, but also to those of the Theravāda persuasion in other lands. The three great authors associated with this work of rendering into Pāli the exegetical literature in Sinhalese, hailed from South India; two were natives of that region.⁶ All the important Pāli commentaries had been written by the time of king Kumāradāsa, who is reported to have published a revised edition of the canonical texts (a dhamma-sangāyanā), and purified the Order.

Thus, for two centuries after the death of Mahāsena, the rivalry between the three sects of Ceylon Buddhism was a healthy one, and the claims of each party for the authoritativeness of its own interpretation of the doctrine, so far as we can gather from the records available, did not lead to the perpetration of un-Buddhistic acts in the name of Buddhism. Old rivalries, however, flared up again in the reign of Silākāla (518-531), whose youth had been spent as a sāmanera at the monastery attached to the Mahābodhi in India, and who must, naturally, have come under the influence of religious ideas then gaining ground in North India. When the defeat of Kassapa I made it no longer necessary for Silākāla to wear the yellow robe for his personal safety, he returned to Ceylon with the Hair Relic of the Buddha, which he had acquired in India, and added it to the already impressive list of Relics which the Buddhists of the Island could boast of; this service to the religion gained for him the hand of Moggallana I's sister. The Hair Relic was kept in a shrine which also contained an image of one of the previous Buddhas, Dipainkara, whose cult must also be a sign of the growing influence of the Mahāyāna. The chronicle also adds the interesting information that Moggallana 'had statues made of his maternal uncle and of his wife, and placed them there (in the shrine of the Hair Relic) as well as the beautiful figure of a horse.' Elaborate provision was made for the worship of the Relic newly introduced to the Island, and Silākāla was placed at the head of the organisation instituted for that purpose.7 The influence thus gained enabled him to ascend the throne.

In the twelfth year of Silākāla, a merchant named Pūrņa who went to Benares from Ceylon brought hither the *Dhammadhātu* which, according to the *Nikāya-sanigraha*, was a scripture of the Vaitulyakas, i.e. the Mahā-yānists. Silākāla received it with great respect, and instituted an annual festival on the occasion of its being taken in procession to the Jetavana-vihāra. The *Dhammadhātu*, it thus appears, was a book meant more to be worshipped than to be studied. The name is applied to the first of the three Bodies of the Buddha according to the doctrine of Trikāya elaborated by the Mahāyānists. The *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, which has much to say about Buddha's Dharmakāya, has several passages which expatiate on

^{6.} See infra, pp. 389-391

^{7.} Cv., xxxix, vv. 44-56.

the merit that one obtains by worshipping it; we may, therefore, conjecture that by Dhammadhātu is meant this important scripture of the Mahāyanists. A copper label in Nagari characters, containing old Sinhalese words meaning 'two leaves from the Dhammadhātu,' found at the ancient monastery now called Puliyankuļam near Anurādhapura, is evidence of the practice that leaves from the book, not to mention the whole, were even treated as objects of worship.8

The Nikāya-samgraha states that the inmates of the Jetavana-vihāra were at first reluctant to show honour to the Dhammadhatu, not indeed from a conviction that the scripture contained teachings contrary to the true doctrines of Buddhism, but due to the memory of the disgrace suffered by adherents of the Vaitulya views, at the hands of former kings. They, it is said, were persuaded to change their lukewarm attitude towards the Dhammadhātu by the members of the Abhayagiri fraternity. For this espousal of the cause of the Mahayana, the Abhayagiri monks are characterised, by the chroniclers of the Mahāvihāra persuasion, as villains of the deepest dye, and the members of the Jetavana sect, for allowing themselves to be converted to the views of the Abhayagiri, as ignoramuses who could not discern between the true and the false. But, on account of their liberal attitude towards the Mahāyāna, the adherents of the Abhayagiri sect gained in esteem among their co-religionists outside Ceylon. The reputation of the Abhayagiri brethren that reached the Chinese pilgrim Hsüan Tsang, when he was sojourning in South India, was as follows: 'Abhayagirivasins studied both vehicles, and widely diffused the Tripitakas. The priests attended to the moral rules, and were distinguished for their power of abstraction and their true wisdom. Their correct conduct was an example for subsequent ages; their manners grave and imposing.'9

In spite of the hostility of the Mahavihara, the Mahavanists gained ground steadily. In the reign of Aggabodhi I (571-604), the orthodox school found an able champion in the great thera named Jotipala who, according to the Nikāya-sanigralia, hailed from the continent. In a public controversy, this doctor worsted the Vaitulyavadins. Feelings seem to have run very high on this occasion, and among the sympathisers of the heterodox was no less a personage than prince Dāṭhāpabhuti who, seeing his side silenced in argument, sought to obtain victory by resorting to personal violence against the champion of the Theravada. He, it is said, lifted his hand to strike Jotipāla-thera, but a miracle intervened and an ulcer suddenly appeared on his hand before he could bring it down on the intended victim. But miracles were hardly necessary, for the king was on the side of the

Cv., xli, v. 42; Ns., Tr. p. 16; CJSG., II, pp. 38 and 46.
 Beal, op. cit., II, 247.

orthodox, and extended to Jotipāla-thera his powerful patronage. Dāṭhā-pabhuti, however, refused to be reconciled with Jotipāla-thera and, in the significant words of the chronicler, 'so died.' Aggabodhi I placed Jotipāla-thera under the protection of his nephew, who was nominated heir-apparent after the death of Prince Dāṭhāpabhuti.¹¹¹ The Mahāvihāra thus gained the upper hand for the time being.

Referring almost to the same time that Hsüan Tsang was writing in such commendatory terms of the inmates of the Abhayagiri-vihara, the chronicle, based on the records of the Mahāvihāra, gives us a rather lurid picture of the religious community which dwelt in the former monastery. In the reign of Silāmeghavanna (619-628), a young bhikkhu named Bodhi, who dwelt in the Abhayagiri-vihāra, was so disgusted with the undisciplired conduct of his colleagues, that he, in spite of his lack of seniority, approached the king and requested that a regulative act concerning the conduct of the brethren be proclaimed by royal order. The king acceeded to this request, and entrusted the enforcement of the royal edict to Bodhi himself, ignoring those who by their seniority were entitled to enforce discipline in the community. Bodhi carried out this task of cleansing the Augean stables with great vigour, and many bhikkhus, whose conduct did not bear examination, were expelled the Order. These disgraced monks plotted among themselves, and had the young reformer murdered secretly. The enforcement of the disciplinary act thus came to an abrupt end. The king, however, was not to be baulked by such high-handed conduct on the part of the monks. He had a number of the expelled bhikkhus instrumental in the murder of Bodhi arrested, and punished them by having their hands cut off; and, in fetters, they were made to function as guardians of bathing tanks. A hundred more were banished to India.

This vigorous action against the Abhayagiri-vihāra was considered by the king to have effected the purification of that sect. He next desired to put an end to the divisions that had sapped the vigour of the Buddhist Church in Ceylon for several centuries and, for this purpose, approached the elders of the Mahāvihāra and requested them to conduct the uposatha ceremony together with members of the other fraternities. The principles of the Mahāvihāra, however, did not allow them to accede to the king's request. Thwarted thus in his attempt to create unity in the Sanigha, the king flew into a rage at what he considered to be the obduracy of the Mahāvihāra elders, and reviled them with harsh words. Not long after this, Silāmeghavaṇṇa succumbed to a dread disease, and the fact is mentioned in the chronicle as if it was the result of his irreverent attitude to the elders of the Mahāvihāra, for which he never showed penitence.

^{10.} Cv., xlii, vv. 35—38; Ns. Tr. p. 17.
11. Cv., xliv, vv. 74—82.

Eminent Mahāyāna teachers visited Ceylon on their way from India to the Far East; some of them were received with honour by the kings of the Island. Gunavarman, who belonged to the royal family of Cashmere, but had renounced a throne for a religious career, came to Ceylon and dwelt in a village named Kie-po-li, before he proceeded to Chö-p'o (Java or Sumatra), converted the king of that land to Buddhism, and propagated the religion there. Vajrabodhi, who had stayed for a considerable time at the Pallava court, paid a visit to Ceylon before he went to China, and was an honoured guest at the Abhayagiri-vihāra towards the close of the seventh century. He visited a number of holy places in the Island, including Adam's Peak, and expounded the Mahāyāna doctrines to the ruler of Rohana, whose leanings were towards the orthodox sect. Vajrabodhi paid a second visit to Ceylon when the reigning king was called Chi-li-chi-lo (Śrī-śīla or probably Śrī Śilāmegha)12 According to some accounts, Vajrabodhi's pupil, Amoghavajra, was a native of Ceylon. Amoghavajra was sent as an envoy to China by Aggabodhi VI in 746.13 Inscriptions with Mahāyanistic contents, written in Pallava Grantha characters, found at Tiriyay and Mihintalē, were probably due to these teachers who came to Ceylon from the Pallava country. The Mahāyānistic inscription at Kuccavēli belongs to a rather earlier period than the time of Vajrabodhi.14

In the reign of Dāthopatissa II (659-667), two doctors of the Sāgaliya sect, both named Dāthāvedha, but who resided in two different cloisters of the Jetavana monastery, wrote treatises on the Vinaya, in which allegations uncomplimentary to the Mahāvihāra were made, but the dispute between the two monasteries on this occasion did not go beyond the bandying of words. 15

A sect called Vājiriya-vāda was introduced to Ceylon in the reign of Sena I (833-853). According to the Nikāya-saingraha, the teacher who championed the cause of this school was a heretic of the Vajraparvatanikāya, and gained the favour of the king by inducing the palace cook, for a present of fifteen kaļandas of gold, to speak well of him. This teacher of the Vājiriya sect, who came from India and resided at Vīrāmkura monastery in Anurādhapura, referred to his tenets as the esoteric doctrines of Buddhism. Sena I became a convert to these newly introduced doctrines, and the king's example must have been followed by many others. It is said that the scriptures like the Ratnakūta were also intoduced to Ceylon on the same occasion. 'Vājiriya' is the name of one of the sects into which Buddhism was divided in early times, but we do not know enough of its doctrines to decide whether the Vājiriya-vādins who converted

^{12.} Pelliot, Deux itinéraires, pp. 264-5. JCBRAS., xxiv, pp. 87ff.

^{13.} *Ibid.*, p. 86. 14. *EZ.*, IV, pp. 312—319; 242—246; III, pp. 158—161. 15. *Mvt.*, p. 176.

Sena I belonged to it. The reference to the doctrines of the sect as esoteric teachings, and the practical identity of names, would suggest that these Vājiriyas were the same as the Vajrayānists who had scriptures like the Guhya-samāja.16 The subsequent defeat of Sena I at the hands of the Tamils is suggested by the Nikāya-sanigraha to have been a consequence of the support that he gave to the heretics.

In the twentieth year of Sena II (853-887), a group of monks who had vowed to wear only robes collected from refuse-heaps, and hence known as pamsukūlikas, separated themselves from the Abhayagiri-vihāra. 17 precise significance of this event for the religious life of the times is not clear.

Another sect, with advanced Tantric leanings, which became known in Ceylon about the same time as the Vājiriya-vāda, was the Nīlapaṭa-darśana, the adherents of which donned black, instead of the usual yellow, robes. They are said to have substituted a triad of women, wine and love in place of the three jewels of Buddhism. 18 As proofs of the veracity of literary sources with regard to the introduction into Ceylon of Mahāyānistic and Tantric teachings, there have been found a number of stone inscriptions in which are dhāranīs or mystic incantations, prevalent among such sects, written in the Nagari script that was current in North-eastern India.19 There have also been found clay votive tablets with Nagari legends, and copper plaques on which were written extracts from Mahāyānistic texts, one of which is that very Ratnakūta-sūtra referred to in the Nikāya-samgraha.20 Moreover, there have been discovered numerous images, in stone and bronze, of divinities of the Mahāyāna and Tantrayāna pantheons. Colossal Mahāyānistic images at Buduruvegala and Väligama, which will be referred to in the sequel, indicate that, towards the close of the Anuradhapura period, the heterodox schools of Buddhism counted large numbers of adherents. The conquest of Ceylon by the Colas at the beginning of the eleventh century engulfed the orthodox as well as the heterodox sects of Buddhism in a common disaster.

The annual festival of the Tooth Relic has already been referred to. There were also public festivals in connection with the older objects of religious veneration, the Bodhi Tree and the stūpas, in which the king and the people took part. A festival regularly celebrated in honour of the Bodhi Tree was known as sinānāpūjā, the ceremony of bathing the holy tree, still conducted in the height of the drought as a means of causing rain to fall. The Mihintalē tablets refer to a festival called the somnas-mahabō-mangula, which

^{16.} Ns. Tr., p. 18; CJSG., II, p. 39. 17. Cv., li, v. 52. 18. Ns. Tr., pp. 18—19. 19. ASCAR., 1940—45, p. 41.

^{20.} C.I.S.G., II, p. 47; EZ., III, pp. 199-212; Ibid., IV, pp. 238-246.

has been interpreted as 'the merry festival of the great Bodhi-tree,' and another called ruvan-asun-mahabō-mangula, of which the exact significance is not evident. An inscription of the tenth century refers to a Budu-bisomagula, the festival of the lustration of the Buddha image. Images in connection with which this ceremony was periodically held were probably those referred to as abhiseka Buddhas. Similar festivals were held at the great stūpas. All these festivals were solemnised with music, dancing, exhibitions of royal paraphernalia, and lavish offerings of flowers, flags, etc. During these festivals, there was visible expression of rejoicing among the devotees. A tenth-century edict lays down that within the precincts of a religious institution at Mahāgāma, there should be no laughing and singing with joy, except during the procession of relics. There were celebrations, accompanied by gifts to the Saingha, on occasions of the beginning and end of the annual retreat (vassa and pavāraņā) by the monks. Festivals in honour of Mahinda, the Apostle of Ceylon, were celebrated with great eclat on the anniversary of the Saint's death; on these occasions, an image of the Saint was carried in procession to Mihintale.

Apart from these normal religious festivals which regularly fell due, there were special ceremonies to counteract calamities like prolonged droughts, famine and pestilence. These took the form of an enactment of the Gangarohana, by which the Buddha saved the city of Vaisali from the triple scourge of drought, famine and epidemic. In the reign of Upatissa I, when Ceylon was afflicted with such visitations, the king, on the advice of the monks, 'made an image wholly of gold of the departed Buddha, laid the alms bowl of the Master (filled) with water in the hollow of its hands, and placed this figure in a great chariot.... Then after he had adorned the town (so that it was) comely as the world of the gods, he descended, surrounded by all the bhikkhus dwelling in the Island, to the principal street. Then the bhikkhus who had gathered there reciting the Ratanasutta and pouring out water, walking about the street, not far from the royal palace, near the wall, round which they walked with their right side towards it in the three watches of the night.' After this celebration, rain is said to have poured down bringing relief to the people. In the reign of Sena II also, a similar religious demonstration took place for a similar purpose, in which the image of Ananda, that most lovable of the Buddha's disciples, was taken round the city in pradakṣiṇā, accompanied by the recital of the paritta by the bhikkhus. Public invocations were also made to the Vedic deities adopted by Buddhism, for instance Parjanya and Agni, to make the land prosperous.

There were also festivals on days associated with the main events in the career of the Buddha. The most important of these was the Vesākha festival, celebrated on the full-moon day of the month of Vesak (April-

May) which, according to Theravada Buddhism, was the birthday of the Buddha. Sena II is said to have celebrated this festival in the company, not of his ministers nor of the ladies of his harem, but of the poor, giving them food and drink and clothing as they desired. It is quite appropriate that, on this day, the king divested himself of the divinity with which the political theories of the time had clothed him, and acted in consonance with the humanity which he possessed in common with the meanest of his subjects.21

(b) Other religions

Puranic Brahmanism, which spread in India in and after the Gupta age, particularly in the form which it assumed in South India, was also prevalent among some people in certain regions of the Island during this period. The Tamil Saiva hymns, known as the Tēvāram, attributed to about the seventh century, contain eulogies of the Saiva shrines which then existed at Mahātittha (Māntottam in Tamil) and Gokanna (Tirukkonamalai).22 These two places, being seaports, must have had a cosmopolitan population of different religious faiths. The Tamil rulers who preceded Dhatusena appear to have adopted the Buddhist faith of the people whom they subjugated.23 The soldiers and commanders of the Tamil armies, whom some of the Sinhalese kings of the fifth to eighth centuries introduced to Ceylon to take part in the struggles among the rival claimants to the throne, must have counted a large number of non-Buddhists; but many were Buddhists. Some Tamils who held high positions in the reign of Aggabodhi IV are recorded to have founded Buddhist institutions.24 There exist a number of Tamil inscriptions of the ninth and tenth centuries which register donations to Buddhist institutions by persons of Tamil race.25 On the other hand, there are, to the north of the old city of Anuradhapura, remains of several small Hindu shrines belonging to the latest period of that city's history. The Bālarāmāyana and the Anargharāghava, two Sanskrit dramas of about the ninth century, refer to a shrine of Agastya on or near Adam's Peak (Rohana Mountain).26 According to Tamil hagiography, the Saiva saint Mānikkavāśagar, who probably flourished about the seventh century, is said to have had a religious dispute with the Buddhists of Ceylon.27

^{21.} Cv.. xxxviii, v. 55; EZ., I, pp. 94—95, 108—109; Cv., xxxix, v. 6; xxxvii, vv. 66ff; xxxviii, v. 58; xxxvii, vv. 189ff; li, v. 80—81, 84; lii, v. 80; Artibus Asiae, xvi. pp. 179f.

^{22.} Periyapurānam, edited with commentary by C. K. Suppiramaniya Mudaliyar, Madras, 1950, Vol. V., pp. 1125 and 1128.

23. EZ., IV, p. 114.

24. Cv., xlvi, vv. 19—24.

25. See, for example, SII, IV, Nos. 1403 and 1405.

^{26.} Paranavitana, God of Adam's Peak, pp. 18-19.

^{27.} G. U. Pope. The Tiruvāśagam, Oxford, 1900, pp. lxvii-lxxii.

Fa Hsien has recorded that the Sinhalese king of his day purified himself according to the strictest Brahmanical rules.28 For domestic as well as certain public ceremonies, the Sinhalese kings maintained Brāhmanas at Court. It has been recorded of Kassapa III, who was born and bred in the Pallava kingdom, that 'for laymen, bhikkhus and Brāhmanas, the king encouraged the way of life fitting for each ';29 in other words, freedom in religious observances was allowed to the full. Sena II, it has been recorded, 'gave to a thousand Brahmanas a thousand jars of gold filled with pearls, with a costly jewel placed on the top of each jar, and fed them with milk-rice in pure jewelled goblets'.30 The cults of the ancient national gods continued to flourish at some centres; a shrine of Upulvan (Varuna) at Kihiräli (Devundara), at the southern extremity of the Island, was built by Dappula I in the seventh century.31 The practice of selecting the abbot of a monastery after consulting the divine will by making a bhikkhu spend the night in the temple of a god existed at one time, possibly among the Abhayagiri monks.32 The worship of Nāgas, Yakṣas and other spirits was wide spread among the common people, and the services of the practitioners of demonology were in demand.

Cosmas Indicopleustes informs us that, in the seventh century, there was in Ceylon a Church of Persian Christians who had settled here with a presbyter appointed from Persia, and a deacon and all the apparatus of

public worship.33

At the end of the Anuradhapura period, there were also communities of Muslims at seaports like Mahātittha, though we have no details of them. A Kufic inscription dated in 929/30 had been discovered in the Muslim cemetery of Colombo.34 By the ninth century, Muslims had come to believe that Samanola-kanda bore the footprint of Adam, and the mountain attracted pilgrims of that faith.35

B. LITERATURE

(a) Pāli

The first two centuries of the period dealt with in this book are noteworthy for the extensive literature in Pali, mainly exegetical in nature, which lies to the credit of the Mahāvihāra. There is evidence to indicate

^{28.} Beal, op. cit., p. Ixxiv.

^{29.} Cv., xlvii, v. 23. 30. Cv., li, v. 55-57. This truly sumptuous entertainment of the Brāhmaṇas, and costly gifts to them, must have taken place in the Pandya country after Sena II 's victorious campaign.

^{31.} Paranavitana, The Shrine of Upulvan at Devundara, pp. 1-5 and 59. 32. Cv., lvii, vv. 38-39.

^{33.} E. O. Winstedt, The Christian Topography of Cosmos Indicopleustes, p. 322.
34. Transactions, R.A.S., I, p. 545.
35. Paranavitana, God of Adam's Peak, p. 20f.

that the rival monasteries of Abhayagiri and Jetavana made their own contributions to Pāli literature, but Time has not spared any of their work. If we do not take into consideration the section of the Vinaya-pitaka known as Parivāra, the Dīpavamsa is the oldest Pāli work originating in Ceylon that has been preserved up to the present day. It is the chronicle of the religious history of Ceylon, with references to India where necessary, and is continued up to the reign of Mahāsena. Buddhaghosa quotes from the Dipavamsa, which must therefore have been compiled in its present form at some date between the death of Mahāsena and the accession of Mahānāma. The Dīpavamsa is the work of an author who was neither an adept in the language which he chose as his medium of expression, nor conversant with literary graces. His style is clumsy, and his work is full of repetitions.

The commentaries on the Pali scriptures which have come down to us, severally, under the authorship of Buddhaghosa, Buddhadatta and Dhammapala are, on the contrary, the works of writers adroit in the use of their medium, and possessed of considerable literary ability, which they have not been able to exercise to the fullest extent due to the nature of their work. Of these three commentators, none of whom was a native of the Island, Buddhaghosa, to whom reference has already been made briefly in Chapter II, is by far the most celebrated. His commentarial work has settled the doctrines of Sinhalese Buddhism for the generations after him, and he is held as authoritative in all the lands of Theravada Buddhism, i.e. Burma, Siam and Cambodia. Legends have therefore grown around his name, obscuring the authentic biographical details. His own works contain very little information bearing on his life.

Omitting sundry supernatural elements, the career of Buddhaghosa, as narrated in the Cūlavamsa,36 is given below: Buddhaghosa was born in a Brāhmana family in the neighbourhood of Buddha Gayā and, in his youth, mastered all the traditional lore of his caste. He adopted the life of a wandering sophist, and on many an occasion showed his prowess in disputation. Arrived at a Buddhist monastery on a certain occasion, he found in the abbot of that institution a rival disputant who could convince him of the errors in the doctrines that he then followed. Thus he became a convert to Buddhism and, having been admitted to the Order, soon mastered the Tripitaka and engaged himself in writing explanatory treatises thereon. Whilst in his home country, Buddhaghosa wrote a treatise called the Nanodaya, a commentary on the Abhidhamma called the Atthasālinī, and began to work on a commentary on the Paritta.37 His tutor, by name Revata, then brought to Buddhaghosa's notice that the traditional

^{36.} Cv., xxxvii, vv. 215—246.
37. Paritta, literally, 'protection,' is the name given to a collection of Pāli texts which are recited by Theravada Buddhists to avert evil influences or to bring good luck.

interpretation of the Pāli scriptures had been best preserved in Ceylon, and that he should gain a knowledge of them if he would complete the work that he had undertaken, in the best interests of the religion. He accepted this advice and, having arrived in Ceylon in the reign of Mahānāma, requested the elders of the Mahāvihāra to make available to him the exegetical works which then existed in Sinhalese,38 so that he could utilise them in writing commentaries on the canonical works. The elders of the Mahāvihāra, however, wished to be satisfied of Buddhaghosa's abilities before they acceeded to his request, and gave him a Pāli verse from the Sutta-pițaka to comment upon. În the form of a commentary on this short text, Buddhaghosa wrote the Visuddhimagga, which is a detailed exposition of the whole Buddhist system. Impressed with his extraordinary talent, the elders of the Mahāvihāra gave Buddhaghosa all the facilities necessary to complete the task that he had set upon himself. Residing in the Ganthākara-vihāra, Buddhaghosa wrote the works that go under his After the completion of this work, he returned to India.

Burmese tradition asserts that Buddhaghosa was a native of that country, and that, after his literary labours in Ceylon, he returned to Burma and occupied himself in spreading the faith there. But the Burmese traditions are found in a Pāli work of late date, which is not of a character to inspire confidence in its statements about Buddhaghosa. The passage found at the end of the manuscripts of works reputed to be of Buddhaghosa, ascribing the authorship of each of these to him and eulogising him in superlative terms, is of late origin. In none of the works considered to be of Buddhaghosa is there any statement by the author himself supporting such ascriptions. On the other hand, there are statements that each of these was composed at the request of an important dignitary of the Mahāvihāra, one being a Buddhaghosa himself. The thera, at whose request the commentary to the Anguttara was written, resided with the author at Kāñcī in Southern India, and he who urged the compilation of the commentary on the Majjhima-nikāya was a co-resident of the author at Mayūra-rūpapattana, most probably Mylapore near Madras. Assuming that Buddhaghosa was the author of these two commentaries, it follows that he resided for some time in the Tamil country, before he came to Ceylon, if he was himself not a native of South India.

There is very little in Buddhaghosa's own works to indicate that he was well versed in Brahmanical lore, which should have been the case if he was born of a Brāhmaṇa family, as stated in the Cūlavamsa; but against this, it may be urged that the nature of his work gave him no occasion to parade

^{38.} With regard to the nature, extent and date of the early Sinhalese commentaries, see E. W. Adhikaram, *Early History of Buddhism in Ceylon*, pp. 10ff. These ancient Sinhalese works appear to have been preserved up to the tenth century.

his learning. The Atthasālinī, which is said to have been written by Buddhaghosa while in India, bears ample testimony to its compilation at Anuradhapura. But it may be said that the original work written in India was later revised in Anuradhapura. Ganthakara-vihara, which according to the Cūļavamsa, was the scene of Buddhaghosa's activity, is not mentioned in the commentaries themselves, whereas other institutions receive the honour of giving lodgings to the distinguished commentator while he was engaged in his work. The Samantapāsādikā, for instance, was written while he was residing in an edifice to the south of the Bodhi Tree, built by the Lord of Mahanigama. There is one important matter, however, in which the Cūlavanisa account gains support from the commentaries, i.e. that the great exegetist's labours fell at least partly during the reign of Mahānāma. This name itself does not occur in the commentaries. The Samantapāsādikā, it is said in the colophon, was begun in the twentieth year of a king who had the epithets of 'Sirinivasa' and 'Siripala,' and completed in the twenty-first year. In an inscription at Monaragala, and in another from Tissamahārāma now in the Colombo Museum, Mahānāma is given the epithet 'Tiripali,' which is equivalent in old Sinhalese to the Pali 'Siripāla.'

The works which go under the name of Buddhaghosa are so numerous, so lengthy and so unequal in style, that it has been doubted, and with good reason, whether they are works by one and the same hand. It is of course possible that Buddhaghosa had many helpers in his task, and his share in many of the works was to give them the finishing touches, together with the imprimatur of his celebrated name. The Visuddhimagga, as well as the commentaries on the four principal Nikāyas and the Vinaya-piţaka, are generally accepted to be Buddhaghosa's own works. Buddhaghosa does not show an original mind; in fact, originality would have been a disqualification for the type of work that he had to perform, and the elders of the Mahavihara, before they entrusted the work to him, must have extracted a guarantee from Buddhaghosa that he would not exercise that taculty even if he was gifted with it. It is in the Visuddhimagga that Buddhaghosa had exhibited to the best his powers of exposition, which are inferior to those possessed by Sanskrit Buddhist writers like Vasubandhu. The credit that should be given to Buddhaghosa for the Visuddhimagga is somewhat minimized by the consideration that it is modelled to a great extent on the Vimuttimagga of Upatissa-thera, a doctor of the Abhayagiri-vihāra: this work is known only from its Chinese translation.³⁹

Buddhadatta, the author of two digests, one of the Vinaya and the other of the Abhidhamma, and a commentary on the *Buddhavamsa*, was a native of the Tamil country, and wrote his works there when Kalabhra rulers

^{39.} JPTS., 1917-19, pp. 69-80.

were on the ascendant. Tradition has it that Buddhadatta and Buddhaghosa were contemporaries. He has a place in the literary history of Ceylon as Buddhadatta belonged to the Tambapaṇṇiya (i.e. Sinhalese) school of Buddhism, and as his works have been extensively studied in the Island, giving rise to commentaries by Sinhalese authors in later times.

Dhammapāla, whose reputation is only second to that of Buddhaghosa as the exegetist of Sinhalese Buddhism, resided in a monastery at Badaratitha, the modern Kaḍalūr in South India. All the works that go under the name of Dhammapāla are evidently not of the same author. The commentary of the Visuddhimagga appears to be by another hand. So is the commentary of the Nettipakaraṇa, whose author resided in a monastery at Nāgapaṭṭana in the Coļa country. Paramatthadīpani, the commentary on several texts of the Khuddaka-nikāya, is the best work of Dhammapāla.

The lesser names among Pāli exegetists are Upasena and Mahānāma. Upasena wrote a commentary on the Niddesa, entitled Saddhamma-pajjotikā. This work was completed in the twenty-sixth year of a king styled Sirinivāsa Sirisamghabodhi. We have seen that 'Sirinivāsa' was the distinctive epithet of Mahānāma; no other king is known to have borne it. 'Sirisamghabodhi' was a throne name borne by many rulers. It therefore appears that the king referred to is no other than Mahānāma. But the chronicle gives him a reign of only twenty-two years. It is likely that his regnal years were used for purposes of dating even after his death, for the reason that this event was followed by a period of confusion, during which there was no legitimate ruler who had received the consecration. Upasena, according to a Burmese authority, was also the author of a commentary on the Anagatavanisa, which was written at the Kālavāpī-vihāra (the modern Vijitapura), while the author was residing in a dwelling founded by Dhātusena. It is also possible that we have two writers named Upasena in the authors of these two commentaries.

The Saddhammappakāsinī, the commentary on the Paţisambhidāmagga, was the work of a thera named Mahānāma, who resided in a college founded by a minister named Uttara, and completed his work in the third year after the death of Moggallāna I (508-516). His literary activity fell in the reign of Kumāradāsa, with whom the author was obviously not persona grata, for he ignores the reigning king, and dates his work referring to the demise of the previous king. In Mahānāma's commentary, there are passages which also occur in the work, already referred to, of Upasena. One appears likely to have been the pupil of the other. And as Upasena has to be ascribed to an earlier date, it is likely that Mahānāma was his pupil.

A Mahānāma, according to Sinhalese literary tradition going back to about a thousand years, was the author of a Pāli work which, judged as literature, is far superior in merit to any of the Pāli works so far passed in

review. This is the Mahāvamsa which, in addition to its being the principal source of our information for the early history of Ceylon, is also a poem of no mean merit. It is the commentary to the Mahāvamsa, dating from about the eleventh century, which for the first time furnishes us with the information that the author of the main work was Mahānāma who resided in a monastic dwelling originally founded by Dighasanda (Longcloth), a general of Devanampiya Tissa. Turnour, who first translated the Mahāvariesa into English, and brought it to the notice of Western scholars, identified the author of the chronicle with the thera who, according to the Cūlavanisa, lived in the same monastic residence, and brought up Dhātusena, The Cūlavamsa, however, has not given the name of this thera, and Turnour's identification cannot, therefore, be accepted as proved. Neither can it be accepted that the statement in the Culavanisa that Dhatusena 'gave orders, with the outlay of a thousand gold pieces, for the interpretation of the Dipavarisa' is a reference to the composition of the Mahāvarisa in that monarch's reign. A thera named Mahānāma who resided at Dīghāsena (probably a misreading for Dighasanda)-vihara was a recepient from Moggallana I of the vihara established by that monarch on the rock of Sigiri. It is possible that this Mahānāma was no other than the author of the Mahāvamsa as well as of the Saddhammappakāsinī.

In this connection, reference should be made to a Sanskrit inscription found at Bōdh-Gayā, which records that a thera named Mahānāman from Ceylon caused a shrine to be built on that holy spot. This Mahānāman was a pupil of a thera named Upasena, who in his turn was a pupil of an earlier Mahānāman. It has already been pointed out that Mahānāma, the author of the Saddhammappakāsinī, was most likely a pupil of Upasena who wrote the Saddhammapajjotikā. Therefore, it is not impossible that Mahānāman, who founded a shrine at Bōdh-Gayā, was the same as the dignitary of that name who wrote the Mahāvanisa as well as the Saddhammappakāsinī, and that his teacher Upasena was the author of the Saddhamma-pajjotikā, The inscription in question is dated in the year 269 of an unspecified era which, if taken as the Gupta era, would make the date equivalent to 588-89 A.C., and would go against the identification, but if taken as the Kalacuri or Chedi era, as Fleet later suggested, would give the equivalent 518 A.C., in accordance with the proposed identification.

According to views held by most Pāli scholars, all literary activity in the Mahāvihāra ceased for about five centuries after the completion of the commentaries in the generation after that of Buddhaghosa. It is, however, not improbable that some of the numerous works handed down under the names of Buddhaghosa and Dhammapāla, which, from the evidence of language and style, are obviously the works of less competent writers, may belong to the centuries between the sixth and the tenth. A work of

the later Anurādhapura period is the *Paṭipattisanigaha*, dealing with the conduct of laymen, of which the author is not known. The work is said to have been compiled at the request of *yuvarāja* Kassapa. If this prince is one of that name who occupied the Sinhalese throne, the monarch named Kassapa most likely to have taken an interest in literary activities while yet a *yuvarāja*, was the fifth of that name, for he was himself a Pāli scholar and author. The *Mahābodhivainsa*, written in an ornate style by a *thera* named Upatissa, at the request of another *thera* named Dāṭhānāga,

belongs most probably to the tenth century.

The literary output of the Abhayagiri-vihāra has bequeathed to us only one work, the Saddhammopāyana, which is in verse, and discourses in a general way on the doctrines of Buddhism. Its old Sinhalese paraphrase supplies us with the interesting information that its author, Ānanda, styled a Kavicakravartin, composed the work for the benefit of a friend and colleague of his, named Buddhasoma, who had become lukewarm towards the religious life, and was contemplating a coming back to the lay life. The work is written in a simple and dignified style and, in addition to its literary merit, is of importance to establish that the Abhayagiri-vihāra did not deviate from the orthodox school in any important matters of doctrine.

(b) Sanskrit

Sanskrit, the sacred language of the Brahmanas, was studied by the Sinhalese, during certain epochs of this period, with such assiduity as to produce works of great literary merit, in spite of the fact that the language of Ceylon Buddhism was Pāli. The earliest evidence of the knowledge of Sanskrit in Ceylon is afforded by inscriptions of Mahāyānistic content, and the inmates of the Abhayagiri-vihāra, who studied the Mahāyāna, must have had a knowledge of that language. But the contribution which Ceylon made to Sanskrit literature was not by a work on the Mahāyāna, but by a poem named the Jānakīharaņa, which has as its subject the story of the Rāmāyana. The tradition among the literati of Ceylon, going as far back as the thirteenth century, ascribes the authorship of this poem to king Kumāradāsa (508-516), who is represented as a friend of the celebrated Indian poet, Kālidāsa. This tradition has been rightly doubted, but the manuscripts of the complete poem found in Malabar furnish data to establish that the poet of the Jānakīharaṇa was indeed named Kumāradāsa, and was a scion of the Sinhalese royal family, though not a king.40 We are told in four autobiographical verses at the end of the poem that Kumāradāsa's father was a prince named Manita, who lost his life at the hands of his enemies on the very day the poet was born. Kumāradāsa was brought up by two of his uncles, one named Śrimegha and the other Agrabodhi, both of them

^{40.} Tirumalai Śri Venkajeśvara, Vol. I, pp. 203-212.

brothers of his mother, who was the daughter of a king. On grounds of style and language, the Jānakīharaņa has been ascribed by scholars to about the seventh century. Ancient Indian critics accorded to Kumāradāsa a very high place among Sanskrit poets, and his name has been mentioned in the same breadth as Kālidāsa's-very high praise, indeed. Modern critics, too, have not been slow in recognising the merit of Kumāradāsa as a poet. It is not possible to identify with certainty the father of the poet Kumāradāsa, or his uncles, with personages figuring in the chronicles, but there is a possibility that his father, Manita, is the same as Mana, the yuvarāja in the reign of Aggabodhi III (629-639), who was slain by the court officials for having committed an offence in the women's apartments of the palace.41

(c) Sinhalese

We have already mentioned that the Pali commentaries of Buddhaghosa and Dhammapāla were based on old Sinhalese exegetical works which were preserved in the Mahavihara as late as the tenth century. The extensive collection of the Jataka stories as well as the legends connected with the verses of the Dhammapada, which we have today in the Dhammapadatthakathā, existed in the old Sinhalese language before they were translated into Pāli. Moreover, there was another collection of edifying stories in old Sinhalesc, on which is based the Pāli work Rasavāhinī. These alone must have constituted an extensive prose literature which, had it been preserved to our day, would have been invaluable for the student of Indo-Aryan. The Mahāvanisa-ţīkā also mentions an historical work called the Sīhalaṭṭhakathā Mahāvanisa, on which the existing Pāli chronicles were based.42 We are also told that, when the Tooth Relic was brought to Ceylon in the reign of Sirimeghavanna, a poem was composed in Sinhalese, having the story of the Relic as its subject matter. The ceremonies connected with the Hair Relic brought to Ceylon in the reign of Moggallana I formed the subject of another old Sinhalese work.

Sinhalese poetry was cultivated from early times, and kings took pride in their skill in composing poetry. Moggallana II (531-551) is said to have composed a poem in praise of the doctrine, and had it recited from the back of his elephant at the close of the sermon in the town.43 As the poem was evidently meant to be understood by the average man, it must have been composed in Sinhalesc. The Cūlavamsa has recorded that, in the reign of Aggabodhi I (571-604), flourished a number of poets who composed in Sinhalese many poems distinguished for their literary excellence.44 The Pūjāvalī refers to them as the twelve great poets and names them as follows:-

^{41.} Cv., xliv, v. 123. 42. Mvt., p. 48. 43. Cv., xli, v. 60.

^{44.} Cv., xliv, v. 13.

Dähämi, Temal, Bābiri, Bisōdaļa, Anurut, Daļagot, Puravaḍu, Daļasala-kumara, Kitsiri, Kasub-Koṭa, and Äpa.⁴⁵ Not a single work of any of these has come down to us, but the verses scribbled on the gallery wall at Sīgiri by casual visitors to the place in the eighth to tenth centuries give us some idea of the poetry that was prevalent a century or two after Aggabodhi I.

The earliest Sinhalese literary work that is now preserved is the Siyabas-lakara by a king who styles himself Salamevan, and whose name is suggested to have been Sen (Sena). It is very unlikely that Sena I is the author of this work, as is accepted by some; it is more likely that he was Sena IV, who is described in the chronicle as an excellent poet, and learned. The Siyabaslakara is a work on rhetoric, being a Sinhalese version of the well-known Sanskrit treatise on poetics, called Kāvyādarśa, of Daṇḍin. The author has, in many places, adapted the text he was rendering into Sinhalese to suit that language; with regard to certain theories, he has gone out of his text to other writers on the subject. He refers to a thera named Kalanamit (Kalyāṇa-mitra) of the Abhayagiri-vihāra, who was the author of a work on Sinhalese prosody, and furnishes us with indirect evidence for the view that poetics had been studied in Ceylon for a long time before he composed his treatise.

Kassapa V (914-923), who had the throne name of Abhā Salamevan and was also called Debisevdā, 'Born of the Twice Anointed,' was the author of a glossary to the Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā. Sikhavaļaňda and its commentary Sikhavaḷaňda-vinisa, served as introductory texts to the Vinaya rules; from the language, they must be attributed to about the tenth century. The glossary of Kassapa V and the two works last named were text books used in monastic schools, and have no literary pretensions, though they are invaluable to students of philology and the history of the Sinhalese language. Of greater literary merit would have been another work of Kassapa V, which is lost, namely a work in Sinhalese, possibly a poem, in which the great qualities of the Buddha had been extolled, and which is referred to in that monarch's inscription in the Abhayagiri-vihāra.

C. ARCHITECTURE

The stupa continued to occupy an important place in Buddhist devotion, and the monuments of this class, which owed their existence to the piety of earlier kings, were maintained throughout the whole of this period.

^{45.} Pv. (2), p. 19; Pv. Tr., p. 28. The names as given in the Ns. Tr. p. 17, are Sakdāmala. Asakdāmala. Dāmi, Bābirī, Daļabiso, Prince Anurut, Prince Dalagot, Prince Dalasala, Prince Kitsiri, Prince Puravadu, Sūryabāhu, Kasubkoṭa Āpā. The list in the Ns. appears to be more reliable.

New stūpas were also built, but no king of this period attempted to emulate Dutthagāmanī or Mahāsena with regard to the size of the monuments that they raised. Judged by earlier Indian standards, however, some of the stūpas built during this period were of considerable magnitude. The stūpa of the Mahānāga-pabbata-vihāra (now called Rāmakälē) in the vicinity of Sigiri,46 which dates from about the fifth century, has a diameter of 92 ft. at its base : the monument, of which the name has not been handed down, crowning the summit of a spur of the Mihintalē hill to the east of the Kantaka-cetiya, which was built in the seventh or eighth century, has a diameter of 88 ft. at the base.47 These monuments followed the lines of the earlier stūpas in their general architectural features. The bubble-shaped dome rose from a triple berm; but the superstructure above the solid cubical feature (hataräs-koţuva) consisted of a conical spire (kot-kärälla) supported by a cylindrical neck which was known as the devata-kotuva, for the reason that it was adorned by figures of deities between pilasters.48 The early dagabas which, when originally built, had a different type of superstructure, were made to conform to the newly evolved design when it became necessary to renovate the earlier work.

The platforms from which the colossal stūpas rose, which were originally circular on plan, were converted to the square shape sometime during the middle of this period, and their areas greatly enlarged. The retaining walls of these platforms, built of brick, were originally plain, save for the moulding at the base and possibly at the cornice; but, in some cases at least, as at the Ruvanväli, they were later adorned with the fore-parts of elephant figures, built of brick masonry and coated with plaster. The huge, mountain-like structure, together with the platform on which it stood, thus appeared as if it was supported on the backs of these mighty beasts, just as the earth itself was fabled to be supported by the elephants of the quarters (Plate The stone paving of the great stūpas of Anurādhapura dates from the ninth and tenth centuries, as is indicated by the donative records on some of the slabs used for the work. The broad flights of stone steps which gave access to the platforms at the cardinal points, the procession paths bordered by enclosing walls outside the platforms and the monumental gateways wnich pierced the enclosing walls on the cardinal points, with flights of stone steps ascending to and descending from them to the processional paths, together with the architectural features which embellished them, were all the work of the ninth or tenth century.49

A number of stūpas of relatively small size, founded in the eighth or ninth century, exhibit an important development in the architecture of

^{46.} For a detailed account of this stūpa, see ACSAR., 1910—11, p. 41.

See ASCAR., 1951, p. 23.
 Paranavitana, The Stūpa in Ceylon, pp. 31ff.
 Ibid., pp. 64ff.

this class of monument in Ceylon. The dome is elongated, and the triple berm has become a series of bold stone mouldings. The dome itself is faced with stone up to a height of about two feet. The platform is square with flights of stone steps on one side, or on all the four sides. The retaining walls of the platform, as well as its paving, are of stone. This type of $st\bar{u}pa$ is best represented by the Indikatusaya at Mihintale (Plate XVb); inscribed copper plaques recovered from its masonry establish that the shrine was of the Mahāyānists and dates from about the eighth century. So also is the $st\bar{u}pa$ at the Vijayārāma to the north of Anurādhapura. 50

The circular shrines which enclosed stūpas of smaller size had dignity and durability imparted to them during this period by the substitution of stone for wooden pillars. The pillars of the Vatadage (as shrines of this type are referred to in Sinhalese) at Mihintale are, as shown by an inscription on one of them, of the seventh or eighth century, and the reference in the Cūļavanisa establishes that the Vaṭadāgē at Mädirigiri (Plate XVI a) dates from the reign of Aggabodhi IV (667-683).51 The circular shrine of Tiriyay (Plate XVI b) is proved by the donative inscription on one of the slabs of the pavement to be a work of the seventh or the eighth century.52 The other well-known examples of this type of shrine, the Vatadages at Thūpārāma and Lankārāma in Anurādhapura, and the one at Attanagalla in the Western Province, must, on these analogies, belong to about the same period. The Vațadage at Polonnarua, in its basical features, must also have been of the same period. The pillars, but for the capitals, are monoliths, and are octagonal in section in some shrines, while in others they The tallest of these change to the octagonal from a square lower portion. pillars, at the Thūpārāma, are 22 ft. 10 in. in height. They are arranged in concentric circles, four at the Thūpārāma, three at Mädirigiri and two at Mihintalē, diminishing in height as they proceed further away from the base of the stūpa. The shafts are of slender and graceful proportions, and the capitals which surmount them, a conventionalised lotus in their basic form, are ornamented with figures of ganas (dwarfs), hanisas (geese) or lions and other decorative motifs (Plate XVIIa). The disposition of the pillars proves that their purpose was to support a wooden roof which, from literary references and the evidence of the rock-cut cetiya-gharas in India, was of domical shape, and constructed of curved ribs of wood joined at the summit to a circular boss called kannikā in Pāli and kānimadala in Sinha-These circular cetiya-gharas of Ceylon are evolved from an architectural type which was not uncommon in ancient India; in this Island,

^{50.} Ibid., pp. 97ff; EZ., IV, pp. 238-242; H. C. P. Bell, Seventh Progress Report,

pp. 12—15.
51. For the Vaṭadāgē at Mädirigiri, see ASCAR., 1940—45. pp. 31ff.
52. An account of the Tiriyāy Vaṭadāgē will be found in ASCAR., 1951, pp. 26ff.

however, they received an elaboration not given to them in the land of their origin.53

The bodhighara was a type of shrine that is not infrequently mentioned in the chronicles; the early Buddhist sculptures indicate that this type of shrine was also common in India. But the only hodhighara, of which substantial remains are yet preserved, is found at Nillakgama in the Kurunāgala District (Plate XVIIb). This consists of two platforms, the lower one measuring 34 ft. square and the upper, on which the sacred tree stood, 13 ft. square. A stone parapet wall, 7 ft. in height, borders the lower platform, on which were sixteen stone pillars which supported the pavilion enclosing the tree. The doorway which gave access to the lower platform on the two sides, as well as the retaining walls of the upper platform, are ornamented with sculptures. The building is of very chaste and harmonious proportions, and the stonework is technically of a high standard. Of the bodhighara at Anuradhapura, later restorations have left no indication of its original design; the monument at Nillakgama, therefore, is the only specimen now preserved of a type of shrine that was at one time not uncommon in the Buddhist world.54

The vast majority of the architectural remains of the later Anuradhapura period consists of stylobates with moulded retaining walls of brick or stone, and flights of stone steps leading to them. On a consideration of their ground plans, these stylobates fall into two distinct categories (Plate XVIII). The first consists of a square sanctum from which projects a perron of smaller dimensions, the flight of stone steps giving access to the shrine being at the end of the longitudinal axis at one of the narrow sides of the building. Internally, the shrine consists of two inter-communicating rooms, the larger one behind the smaller. The other type is oblong on plan, and the flight of steps giving access to the shrine is placed in front of a porch projecting from the middle of one of the longer sides. In the case of the second type of building, a larger edifice in the centre of a walledin quadrangle is surrounded by four smaller edifices of the same type at the four corners. The pillars rising from these stylobates are monoliths, square in section, and their height is 12 ft. on an average. Some of them have capitals consisting of an abacus adorned with rows of ganas, supported by a base broadening upwards with sides of a cyma curve. The capital and the shaft together form a monolith in some specimens. There were also pillars which were embedded in the masonry of the outer walls. The superstructures of these edifices were of wood, and have left no traces; nevertheless, some idea can be formed of what they looked like from

^{53.} For Vațadăges in general, see Paranavitana, Stūpa in Ceylon. pp. 75ff.
54. For an account of the Nillakgama bodhi ghara, see ASCAR., 1954. pp. 25ff.

bas-relief representations of them adorning urinal stones in the privies of monasteries (Plate XIXa).

The mouldings favoured by the architects of this period were the cyma recta and the torus at the base and the fillet and the cyma reversa or the beak at the coping. Stones of extraordinary size have been used in these stylobates; the coping of the side of one of these platforms, 62 ft. in length, is formed of two pieces. The graceful curves of the mouldings against the plain straight lines of the rest of the stone work, and the harmony and balance of the various parts of the stylobates must have imparted an air of dignity and stability to the edifices which rose from them.

It is, however, on the flights of steps which gave access to these shrines that the ancient architects have lavished all their decorative skill. The faces of the risers are ornamented with lotus-petal mouldings, scroll designs, ganas and other motifs. Flanking the steps are wingstones ornamented with a volute issuing from the mouth of the composite and fabulous animal known as the makara, whose feet are placed on pilasters on the sides of the wingstones. These terminate against slabs of stone with rounded top, on which are representations of multi-hooded Nagas in athropomorphic form, or vases containing flowers (Plate XXa). The Nagas themselves hold vases with flowers and flowering branches. Placed at the foot of the flight of steps is a semicircular slab of stone which, in numerous instances, is elaborately sculptured (Plate XXb). The flight of steps leads to a monolithic landing of gigantic proportions, 13 ft. by 8 ft., by 2 ft. in thickness being not uncommon. The various members forming these flights of steps are integrated to form a very satisfying whole according to the strictest of aesthetic canons. There is little doubt that the striking beauty of these flights of steps is incidential to their having conveyed a religious message to the devotees in ancient days. Some of the edifices that we have described were meant to house images of the Buddha and of Bodhisattvas.

A class of monastic edifice which was developed to a high degree of perfection in the later Anurādhapura period was the padhānaghara, or meditation house, which must have had its origin in the humble hut of the ascetic, perched on a rock in the forest, and surrounded by a moat to ward off wild beasts. Several of these padhānagharas are found to the west of the old city of Anurādhapura. In each of these padhānagaras there are two platforms with moulded retaining walls of stone. The inner of the two platforms was invariably built on a flat hummock of natural rock, and had a moat enclosing it on all the four sides. The sides of the moat were lined with fine ashlar masonry. Stone pillars planted on this plat-

^{55.} The pudhānagharas, referred to in the Archaeological reports as Western Monasteries, form the subject of ASC Memoirs, Vol. I. These monuments are popularly, but erroneously, referred to as palaces.

form supported the wooden roof of a structure of modest proportions. In front is a second platform, open to the sky, with moulded stone facing, and a flight of steps. The two platforms were connected by a monolithic bridge which in some cases assumes proportions as large as 14 ft. 8 in, by 13 ft. 6 in., by 2 ft. 3 in. in thickness. A stone-lined pond, raised walks, outhouses and porches are other features of these padhānagharas which we have no space to describe in detail here (Plate XXI).

Various other types of buildings were necessary for the monastic life; some of them are: the sannipāta-sālā, where the monks assembled on public occasions, the mahāpāļī, where they met together at the morning and midday meal, and the hospitals, where the sick were tended.56 The particular need which each type of building was intended to serve determined its peculiar ground plan and its architectural details. The individual residences of the monks were small edifices symmetrically arranged round the shrines which were grouped on a raised quadrangle in the centre of an establishment. The bathing tanks in the monasteries, as well as in the royal pleasure gardens (Plate XXIIa), were an arresting feature in the ancient city of Anuradhapura. The sides of these tanks (pokkharani in Pali, pokunu in Sinhalese) were faced with well-cut granite slabs, in a stepped arrangement in two or three tiers. They had flights of stone steps flanked by wingstones, and beautified by stone vases on pedestals placed on either side of the entrance. The most magnificent specimens of bathing tanks are the pair known as the Kuttam Pokuna at Anuradhapura (Plate XXIIb). The larger of this pair is 132 ft. in length and 51 ft. in breadth, while the smaller is 91 ft. long, the breadth being the same. There were underground ducts bringing water into these ponds, and others for emptying them. The baths in the royal pleasure gardens, whilst equally satisfying from the artistic point of view, are much smaller in size.

Up to about the time of Kassapa I, limestone was used for steps, balustrades and moulded bases in Sinhalese buildings, as it was in the early period. From about the sixth century, the hard granite that is common in the northern regions of Ceylon came to be used in place of limestone. At first, the chiselling of the granite shows evidence of technical imperfections, the lines being not very straight and the surfaces not quite smooth, as for instance in the moulded kerb-stones and the wingstones of the flights of steps at the Convocation Hall (so-called Bhojana-sālā) at Mihintalē, which as evidenced by inscriptions on the steps, dates from about the sixth century. The Sinhalese stone masons, however, gradually mastered the technique of carving the intractable gneiss, and the pillars of the circular shrines of

^{56.} For an example of a sannipāta-sālā, see ASCAR., 1948, p. 82; for a mahāpāļī see ASC. Memoirs, Vol. III, pp. 24ff; and for a hospital, ASCAR, for 1910--11, p. 20 and 1954 pp. 21--22.

the eighth century are elegant in execution. Intricate details of great delicacy are noticed in the sculptures dating from the ninth century or earlier.

The use of stone in buildings, however, was limited in scope as well as in function. As a rule, the Sinhalese architects of this period made no attempt to construct walls of stone up to their full height, nor to roof edifices with that material. The only exceptions were a few porches of modest dimensions which were roofed over with slabs placed on beams supported by pillars, all of stone. Thus the constructional methods adopted in these structures were of a most elementary nature. In the neighbouring Tamil land, the wooden architecture which prevailed there, as in Ceylon, up to the seventh century, began to be replaced by one of stone at that time. This development was not without its influence on Ceylon, for at Devundara (Plate XXIIIa), the southernmost extremity of the Island, there was built a shrine, dedicated to Upulvan, which was the result of translating the wooden architecture of the Sinhalese into the medium of stone. This shrine is very well balanced in design, of pleasing and harmonious proportions, exhibiting a restraint in the application of ornament that is foreign to Dravidian styles of all periods. In this building, too, the śikhara, which is no longer preserved, must have been of brick.⁵⁷ The earliest building in Ceylon which was entirely of stone construction is the Gedige at Nalanda which is in the late Pallava style, and therefore dates from about the eighth century (Plate XXIIIb). The history of this shrine, which was dedicated to a Mahāyāna cult with pronounced Tāntric leanings, is obscure, and its very name has been forgotten.58

A type of building that was almost entirely of brick construction, with vaulted roof and arched openings, is known from the later Anuradhapura period. The true arch was known to the architects who raised these edifices; but, in the vaults, they seem to have resorted to the method of corbelling. The walls are disproportionately thick, and the bricks are embedded in a very adhesive lime mortar. The edifice of this type, of which substantial remains still exist, is now called the Gedigē, situated within the precincts of the Royal Palace of Anuradhapura. The remains of a building of the same type in the vicinity of the former are dated in the eighth century by an inscription on the asana inside the sanctum.59 The most magnificent building of this type was the image-house to the west of the Jetavana Dāgāba, which has suffered from vandalism much more than the other two mentioned above. Buildings of this type, called giñja-

^{57.} The baths in the royal pleasure garden are described in *JCBRAS.*, XXXVI (No. 97) pp. 203ff; for the Kuṭṭam Pokuṇa, see *ASCAR.*, 1951, p. 39 and 1955, p. 19. 58. For an account of this monument, see *ASCM.*, Vol. VI, pp. 6ff. 59. A description of the Nālanda Gedigē will be found in *ASCAR.*, 1910—11, p. 43ff.

kāvasatha in Pāli, and gedigē in Sinhalese,60 probably existed in earlier centuries, too, though no remains are extant, and attained their full stature in the Polonnaru period.

The outstanding achievement of the ancient Sinhalese in military architecture and engineering was the city of Sigiri, which had a brief existence of eighteen years in the fifth century. The broad moats lined with blocks of granite extending for over two miles on either side of the rock, the earthen ramparts and stone walls which enclosed the city, the retaining walls of the terraces into which the sloping sides of the hill were carved, the utilisation of the immense boulders which litter the base of the rock, the flights of stone steps leading to the pathway which was carried along the overhanging and precipitous sides of the rock, and the layout of the summit on the rock forming a series of terraces for enclosed gardens with a pavilion on the uppermost terrace, are evidence of originality in planning, boldness in conception and daring in execution which have not been equalled at any other place or time in Ceylon (Plate XXIV).

The utilisation of an almost inaccesible rock as the abode of royalty, and the planning of a city with this rock as the central feature, appear to have been dictated by ideologies which ran counter to normal developments in the religion as well as the art of ancient Ceylon, and Sigiri remains a unique achievement. The layout of the pleasure gardens on the western side of the city is not parallelled by anything similar known in the whole range of Indian civilisation. The technical excellence attained by the craftsmen of those days is revealed by the glass-like lustre of the polished lime plaster of the gallery wall, which is appropriately called the Mirror Wall; the paintings will be noticed in the sequel.61

Of Sinhalese architecture meant for secular purposes, during this period, the most notable examples are found in the royal pleasure garden by the Tisāvāva, known anciently as the Ranmasu-uyana (Gold-Fish Park). addition to the remains of summer houses, pavilions and baths, we have an example of a shower-bath (dhārā-gṛha) wherein were stone couches on which royal personages reclined while jets played. Of palaces dating from the later Anuradhapura period, a full ground plan of one has been exposed near the Basavakkulama (Abhayavava).62 The plan is one very common in India and other Asian countries, namely ranges of rooms around a quadrangular courtyard, in the middle of which there was a small edifice.

^{60.} ASCM., III, pp. 1—13. 61. JCBRAS., XXXVI, (No. 90), pp. 126—129. 62. JCBRAS., Centenary Volume, New Series, I, pp. 129ff; ASCAR., 1952, pp. 15—19.

D. SCULPTURE

The early school of Sinhalese sculpture, which produced the carvings on the vāhalkadas of the colossal stūpas, and which had intimate connections with the Vengi or Andhra school, seems to have declined after the reign of Mahasena. A few pieces showing figure sculptures of late Andhra style, such as those found in the Pidurāgala Dāgāba near Sīgiri, and the Girihandu-vehera near Ambalantota, may have come from South India.63 In the period immediately following Mahāsena, Sinhalese sculptors appear to have begun working in gneiss for both bas-reliefs and figures in the round. The well-known relief of an amatory couple,64 popularly known as 'the lovers,' and other sculptures now found at the so-called Isurumuni at Anuradhapura, have been ascribed, on grounds of style, to the period corresponding to the Gupta age in India, i.e. fourth and fifth centuries (Plate XXVa). The Gupta characteristics of refinement of features and serenity of expression are prominent in these works, particularly in the relief of the man and woman. The sunken relief of the figure of a seated man (Plate XXVb), with the head of a horse emerging from the rock behind him, also at Isurumuni, has been ascribed, on grounds of style, to the period corresponding to the era of the Pallavas in South India, i.e. about the seventh century.65 This work has earned the highest encomiums from art critics; and, in the studied restraint which characterises the form of the man, the paucity of jewellery which accentuates the plastic form, and in the elongated slender limbs, the work is reminiscent of the sculptures executed under the patronage of the Pallavas of Kāñchī. A Bodhisattva figure, in the round, found at Situlpavu,66 and a similar figure at Kurukkalmadam in the Batticaloa District,67 can also be attributed to the same age on considerations of style.

The art of the sculptor during the last three centuries of the Anuradhapura period is best represented by the Naga dvārapālas and the semicircular slabs of stone, known as moonstones (in Sinhalese sanda-kada-pahan) adorning the flights of steps of monastic edifices. The dvārapāla figures at the circular shrine at Tiriyay, which is datable in the eighth century, (Plate XIX b) exhibit the elongated limbs and the cold severity of expression which distinguish Pallava work. The dvārapālas at the shrine to the southwest of the Thūpārāma at Anurādhapura are of a different style (Plate XX a). We have here fleshy rounded limbs, and the expression in the face of the Naga king is serene and beneficient. Jewellery is shown in greater profusion, but in such a manner as not to obtrude on the form, In

^{63.} ASCAR., 1951, pp. 29-31.

^{63.} ASCAR., 1951, pp. 23—31.
64. ASCAR., 1951, p. 26, Plate VII; ABIA., 1936, pp. 15—18.
65. Artibus Asiae, Vol. XIX, pp. 335ff.
66. Ibid., XVI, pp. 167ff.
67. Indian Arts and Letters, Vol. XI, p. 28, Plate II (a).

contrast to this, the Naga king guarding the entrance to the Ratanapasada68 is decked in a wealth of ornaments, the background is greatly elaborated and the sculptor's aim was not so much to emphasise form as to exhibit his skill in the techniques of modelling the limbs, in depicting the folds of the drapery which reveals rather than conceals the outlines of the body, and in faithfully representing the intricate details of the ornaments. In many respects, this Naga figure exhibits characteristics of the contemporary Pala school of sculpture in North India.

Of moonstones, there are six examples at Anuradhapura, two in the Abhayagiri precincts, and four in the grounds of the Mahāvihāra, which are master-pieces of the sculptor's art. The general characteristics in the design ornamenting a moonstone are: a conventionalised half-lotus in the centre enclosed by concentric bands which, proceeding outwards, are decorated respectively with a procession of geese, an intricate foliage design, a procession of the four beasts—the elephant, the lion, the horse and the bull-racing each other and an outermost band of stylised flames (Plate XX b). Contrasting with the abstract nature of the creeper design, of the lotus and of the flames, is the naturalism exhibited in the representations of bulls and elephants. The various elements of the design are skilfully integrated into a very effective whole. The carving of the hard granite has been executed with precision to a considerable depth, exhibiting a mastery of technique unequalled in subsequent ages. That the motifs which go to the constitution of the design on moonstones is symbolic is generally agreed, but the interpretation of this symbolism as suggested by different scholars is necessarily not the same. 69 Many of the motifs found on moonstones are also met with in the ornamentation of the doorway of the bodhighara at Nillakgama. 70

Standing Buddha images of the type introduced from the Andhra country in the second century A.C. or thereabouts, continued to be made almost up to the end of this period, with little modifications as regards the attitude of the hands, the details of the drapery, the expression in the face and the general proportions of the body. These images, in course of time, assumed colossal proportions; for instance, the Buddha image of limestone in the shrine at the site now called Māligāvela near Buttala in the Uva Province, most probably the same as the image referred to in the Cūļavainsa as the work of Aggabodhi, prince of Rohana about 600 A.C., in Kāṇagāma. This image, which now lies prone on the ground, battered and weatherbeaten, was over 34 ft. in height, the breadth across the shoulders being 10 ft. This colossal image was carved in the round, transported from the

^{68.} CJSG., II, p. 78, Plate LI. 69. Ibid., I, Plate LI, B. 70. Artibus Asiae, XVII, pp. 197ff.

quarry to the site, and set up on a pedestal of proportions appropriate to it. Such an image can very well be called 'the great' and described with the words 'produced as by a miracle.' Compared to this, the carving of

colossal images on the face of natural rocks is an easy task.71

The rock-cut colossus at Avukana (Plate XXVI), which is almost in the round, there being a narrow strip left to hold the image to the rock, is only three or four feet taller than the great Buddha at Māligāvela, but it is in a wonderful state of preservation. The shrine built to enclose the Avukana image is proved by a donatory inscription to date from the eighth or the ninth century; the image must at the latest be of that date. It is, however, not impossible that the shrine, of which the remains are preserved up to the present, was meant to replace one of still earlier date. In that event, the Buddha at Avukana may well be the image referred to in the Cūlavamsa, in its account of the reign of Dhātusena, by the name of 'Kālasela,' which is the Pāli equivalent of 'Kalāgala,' the old name of Avukana occurring in documents of the Kandy period.72 It would thus appear that the vogue of installing colossal images, either free standing or carved on the face of rocks, came into being in this Island at a rather early period, not very long after such images came to be fashioned by the Hellenised Buddhists of the lands to the north-west of India. The standing colossus at Sässēruva, not far from Avukana, the seated and recumbent images at Tantrimalai and the recumbent image at Alahara, must also be ascribed to the later Anuradhapura period, though we have no data to fix their epochs with more exactitude.

The tallest among the rock-cut Buddhas of Ceylon, over 50 ft. in height, is to be seen at Buduruvegala near Vällaväya in the Uva Province. This image is not in so high relief as the Avukana example, and much of the finer details were rendered in the plaster coating. It is balanced on either side by images of Bodhisattvas, Avalokiteśvara on the right and Mañjuśri on the left, which are smaller than the Buddha, but of a size to match the principal figure. Each of the Bodhisattvas is attended by his Śakti and another personage (Plate XXVII). This remarkable creation of the Mahāyanists of Rohana must be ascribed, on grounds of style, to a date between the seventh and tenth centuries. Somewhat later in date than the rockcut images at Buduruvegala must be another colossus of Mahāyāna inspiration, that known today as the Kuṣṭa-rajā (leper king) which, from the figures of Dhyāni Buddhas on the head-dress, is identified as a representation of Avalokiteśvara.

^{71.} ASCAR., 1954, p. 27.

^{72.} ASCAR., 1934, pp. 21—22; Cv., xlv, vv. 43—44. 73. ASCAR., 1955, p. 24.

^{74.} For Buduruvegala, see CJSG., II, p. 50.

The seated Buddha images that can be assigned to this period, as a rule, differ from the standing ones in the treatment of the robe, which is shown as clinging to the body in the former, while schematic folds are shown in the latter. The seated images, too, are often of colossal size, though not to the same degree as the standing images referred to above. Of the numerous Buddha images of the seated type, the date can be determined with reasonable certainty with regard to two only. The image at Pankuli (Plate XXVIIIa), with one hand in the abhaya-mudrā, must be of the seventh or eighth century, for that is the date of the forms of letters in a commemorative inscription carved on one of the steps leading to the shrine which housed the Buddha.75 The four Buddhas, placed on asanas facing the cardinal points in the circular shrine at Mädirigiri (Plate XXVIIIb), may be taken as of the same date as the construction of the shrine itself, i.e. the reign of Aggabodhi IV (667-683). Other seated images will have to be assigned their dates by a stylistic comparison with these icons. The well-known Buddha on the Outer Circular Road at Anuradhapura strikes one as more archaic in style than the Pankuli example, and may date from the early part of this period (Plate XXIX). A date still earlier has been suggested for it by some authorities.76 On the aesthetic plane, the Buddha image of Sinhalese sculptors appears to have been designed to impress on the devotees the superhuman might and power of the Buddha, the great Conqueror who subdued the forces of the external world by subduing the individual self.

A considerable number of bronze images, that can be ascribed to this period, have been discovered in various parts of the Island. The Buddha image from Badulla, 1 ft. 51 in. in height, now in the Colombo Museum, represents an iconographical type somewhat different from the seated images in stone (Plate XXXa). The gilt bronze image found at the Ruvanväli Dāgāba and that in a stūpa at Mihintalē, are each representative of other types.⁷⁷ The most important Buddhist bronze of this period, however, is an image of Maitreya Bodhisattva, 1 ft. 61/2 in. in height, discovered in the vicinity of the Thūpārāma Dāgāba at Anurādhapura, now preserved in the Colombo Museum (Plate XXXb). This image is in the graceful tribhanga pose, well proportioned, and with a noble and benevolent expression in the face.

Bronze images of a Mahāyānistic character, representing Vajrasattva, Avalokiteśvara, Tārā and Jambhala have also been discovered. 78 An interesting class of bronzes are the two-faced figures of the Lokapalas (Guardians of the Quarters), each holding the weapon appropriate to him

^{75.} CJSG., II, pp. 49 and 77, Plate XLIX.
76. Ibid., p. 418; Inscription No. 418.
77. Coomaraswamy, HIIA., p. 161; Plate xeviii.
78. JCBRAS., No. 101, Plate IIi; ASCAR., 1951, Plate V (c).

in one of the back pair of hands, while the normal pair of hands is held together in the attitude of worship, buried in the porches facing the cardinal points of some mediaeval Buddhist shrines at Anuradhapura. Lokapalas with only one face and two hands for each were found installed under the feet of the Buddha at Avulana at the four points of the compass inside a cavity in the centre of which was a figure of the four-faced Brahma.79 This figure of Brahma is iconographically unique, in that it stands on the figure of a tortoise.80 Artistically, these figures of Brahmanical gods, intended to be buried underground, are of mediocre quality. Finally, we may mention the figure of a goddess, 4 ft. 10 in. in height, found at an ancient site in the Trincomalee District, and now in the British Museum.81 Its iconographical type is unlike anything else found in India or Ceylon; it has been referred to as Pattini, but is now labelled Tara.

Terra-cotta and stucco figures adorned the superstructures of the shrines of this period, but it is difficult to assign individual specimens to particular dates. Stucco figures found in the debris near the outer entrance to the pleasure garden at Sigiri belong, in all probability, to the fifth century. To about the same period, or a century or so later, must be assigned the terracottas picked up in the debris near the vāhalkadas of the Kantaka-cetiya at Mihintale.82 These figures represent ganas and other divine beings, installed on the brick superstructure of the vāhalkadas which must have been renovated on more than one occasion after the original construction of the monument of which the lower part is faced with stone.

E. PAINTING

Painting was an art practised by the people of ancient Ceylon, in common with others of the Indian civilisation, from the earliest historical times,83 but no remains anterior in date to those at Sigiri, which are of the fifth century, have so far been discovered in the Island (Plate XXXI). In furtherance of the object which the king had in view in the designing of the city and palace of Sigiri, a large part of the western face of the rock was coated with lime plaster, and hundreds of figures of divine damsels were painted thereon.84 Of these, we have today twenty-one figures, some in pairs, others single, of females cut off below the waist by clouds, in a rock pocket where the sheltered position has spared them from the destructive effects of the weather. These females are wearing a profusion of jewellery

^{79.} Coomaraswamy, HIIA., p. 266, fig. 299.

^{80.} Coomaraswamy, Bronzes of Ceylon, pp. 21-23, Plate XXIII; Paranavitana, God of Adam's Peak, pp. 48—51, fig. 12—13. 81. ASCAR., 1955, Plate IV.

^{82.} Coomaraswamy, Bronzes of Ceylon, p. 17: Plate XXVI, fig. 171.

^{83.} ASCAR., 1937, plate.
84. Unesco World Art Series, Ceylon Paintings from Temple. Shrine and Rock, Introduction, pp. 17ff.

and have elaborate coiffures. Some who are golden-coloured are nude above the waist, others, of a dark complexion, wear a breast-band. Most of the damsels hold flowers in their hands, or rain them down, while the ladies of a darker complexion hold trays of flowers. The poses in which they are represented appear to be appropriate to dancing. The pallette of the Sigiri artists consisted of yellow, brick-red and green. The outline of the figures had been drawn at first in red, and the pigments applied afterwards, in such a manner as to show the roundness of the limbs, but no attempt has been made to follow nature with regard to light and shade. The drawing is expressive, particularly in the delineation of the hands.

Compared with the paintings of the same age in India, for example in the caves of Ajaṇṭā, the work of the Sinhalese painters is less refined and graceful,85 but exhibits greater vigour. They are frankly sensuous, and portray the ideal of feminine beauty that was universally accepted at the time—slender waists and full rounded breasts. Though the artists must naturally have been influenced in the drawing of these figures by the beauties whom they had seen with their own eyes, the fact that the damsels are represented as rising from clouds clearly indicates that they do not represent earthly creatures. It is likely that the golden-coloured ones are the Lightning-princesses and the dark ones the Cloud-damsels of whom we read in the ancient writings of Ceylon. The technique is tempera, that is to say, the painting was executed when the plaster was dry, and the colours are from minerals.

Belonging to about the same period as Sīgiri, are fragmentary remains of paintings in a cave at Hiňdagala about six miles south-west of Kandy. 86 The pigments used and the technique followed are the same as at Sīgiri; but here, the figures are so disposed as to give us an idea of the methods of composition followed by the ancient artists. The line drawing is of a more refined nature than at Sīgiri, and the delineation of the human figure in various attitudes and poses has been successfully tackled by the artist. The scene is the visit of Indra (Sakka) to the Buddha in the cave of Indraśāla; the method of continuous narration, followed by the sculptors of Bhārhut and Sāñchī and the painters of Ajaṇṭā has been resorted to at Hiňdagala.

The purpose of pictures in ancient days was not exactly the same as it is today, for the walls of relic-chambers were at times covered with paintings, which would not have been seen by human eyes once the chamber was closed and the *stupa* built over it. In a *stūpa* of about the eighth century at Mihintalē have been discovered outline sketches of divine beings rising

^{85.} Paranavitana, 'Sīgiri, Abode of a God-King' in JCBRAS., New Series, Vol. I, pp. 154ff: India Antiqua, pp. 267ff.

¹⁵⁴ff; India Antiqua, pp. 267ff. 86. Benjamin Rowland Jr, The Wall-Paintings of India, Central Asia and Ceylon. Boston, 1938, p. 85.

RELIGION, LITERATURE AND ART

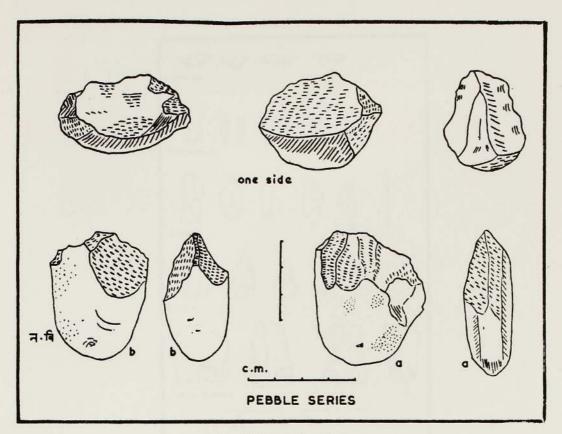


from clouds. Whether this was all that the artist was expected to do or whether, due to some reasons, the paintings could not be completed, remains a mystery. In one drawing, the centre line which the artist used as a guide in placing the figures in a balanced composition is still visible. A figure of a dwarf playing a flute and other fragments of paintings were existing on the eastern vāhalkaḍa of the Ruvanväli Dāgāba, and floral designs in red are still traceable on the stelae of the eastern vāhalkaḍa of the Jetavana Dāgāba.

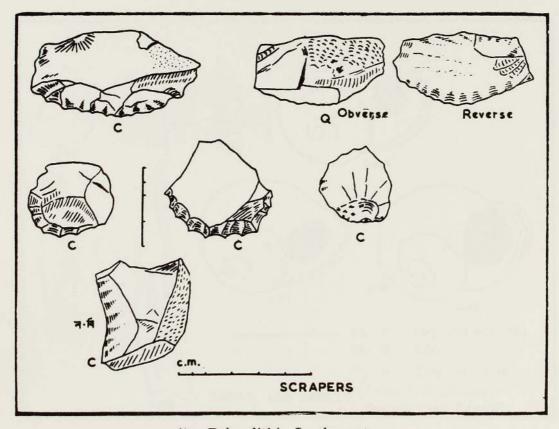
F. OTHER ARTS

Ivory carving is referred to in the chronicle, but no specimens of any note belonging to this period are forthcoming. Jewellery of beautiful designs of the tenth century has been discovered at the Ruvanväli Dāgāba and elsewhere, and the art of the lapidary continued to flourish, though not with the same vigour as in the pre-Christian and early Christian centuries. The pottery of this period is mostly of utilitarian character. Goblets with spouts, of the variety called *kotala* in Sinhalese, covered with a red slip on the outside, are dated in the eighth century from graffiti incised on some sherds. Large storage jars decorated with incised lines and pots used for drainage purposes are other types of earthenware of the period. Vessels of foreign manufacture, for instances vases with a green glaze of Persian origin, have been discovered at Mihintalē. Glazed roof tiles of various colours, found at Anurādhapura and Kantarōdai, appear to be of local manufacture.

Unesco World Art Series, op. cit., Plates 11—14.
 ASCAR, 1951, p. 23, Plate VI.

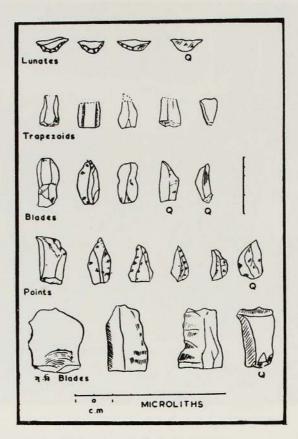


(a) Pebble Implements

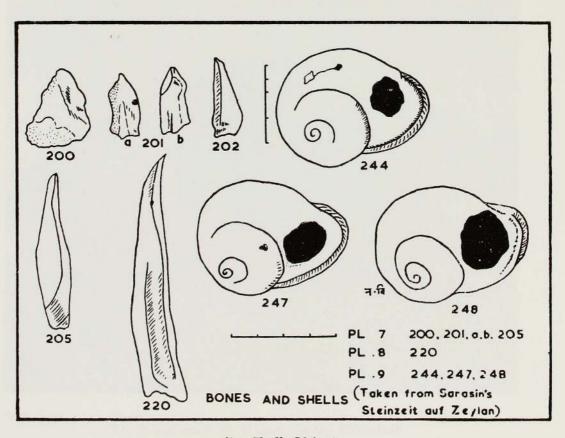


(b) Palaeolithic Implements



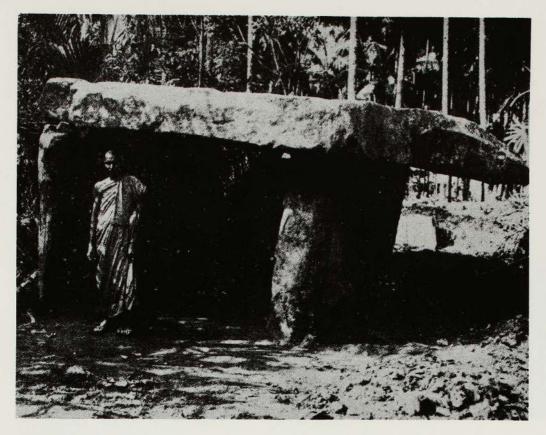


(a) Palaeolithic Implements



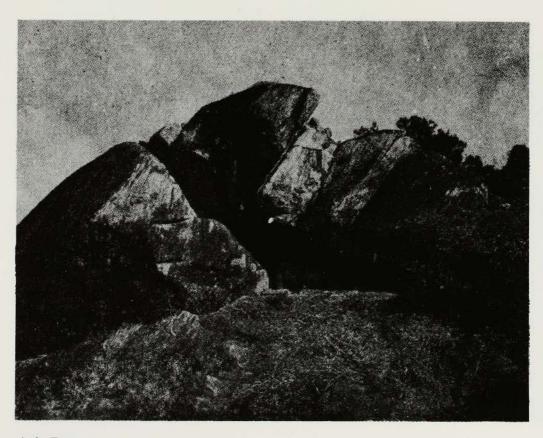
(b) Shell Objects





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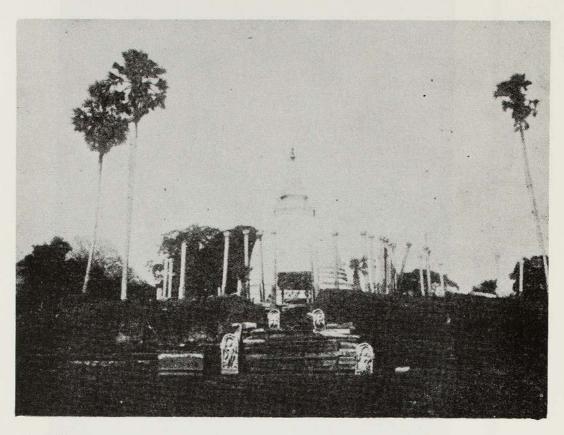
(a) Dolmen at Padavigampola



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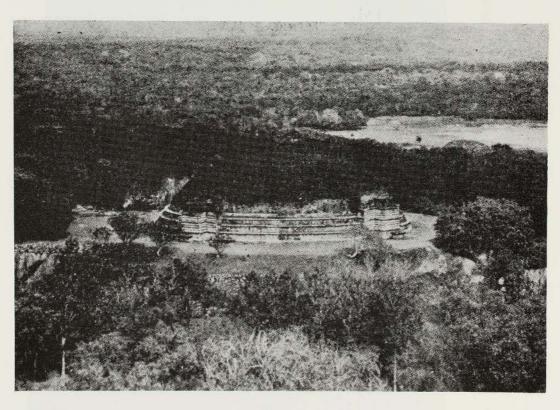
(b) Rock-cave at Rājagirileņa, Mihintalē

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(a) Thūpārāma Dāgāba, Anurādhapura

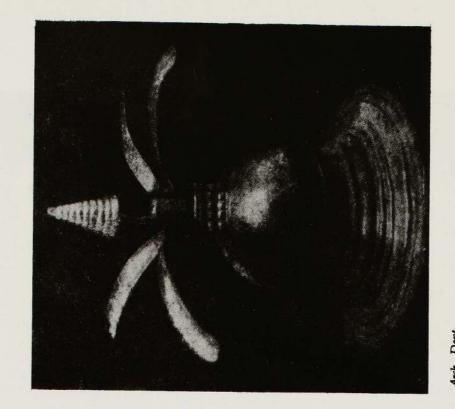


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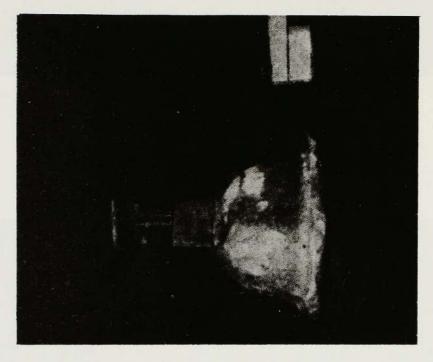
(b) Kaṇṭaka-cetiya at Mihintalē

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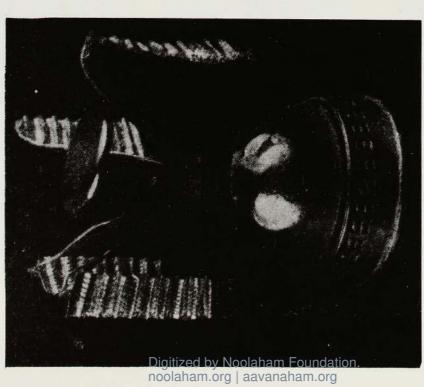




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(c) Reliquary from Ruvanväli Dāgāba,
Anurādhapura

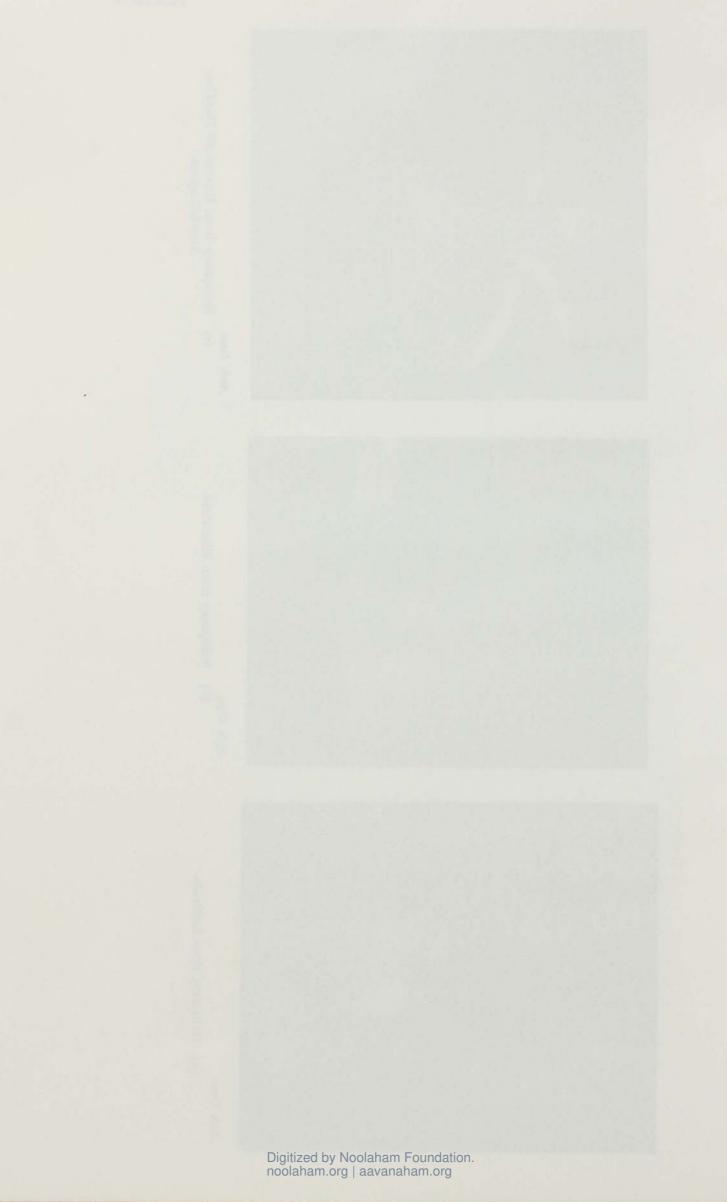


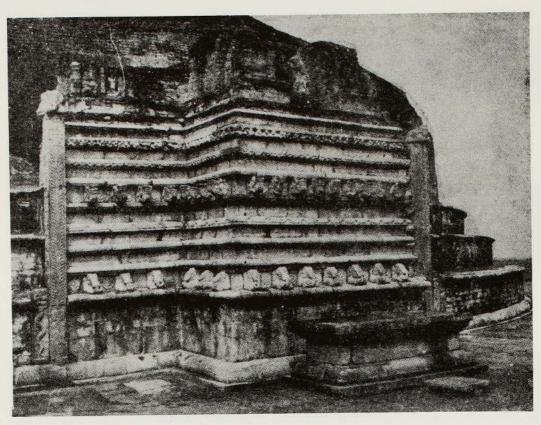
Arch. Dept.
(b) Reliquary from Mihintalē



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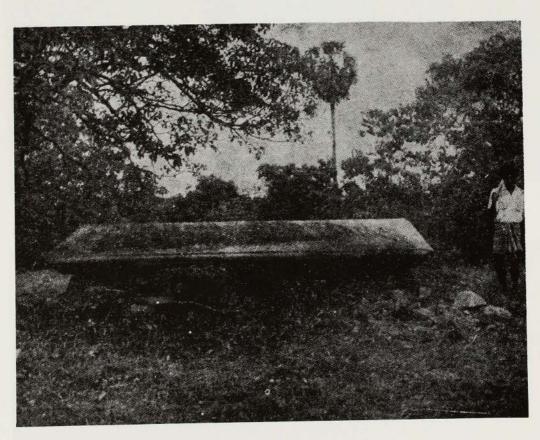
(a) Reliquary from Dälivala





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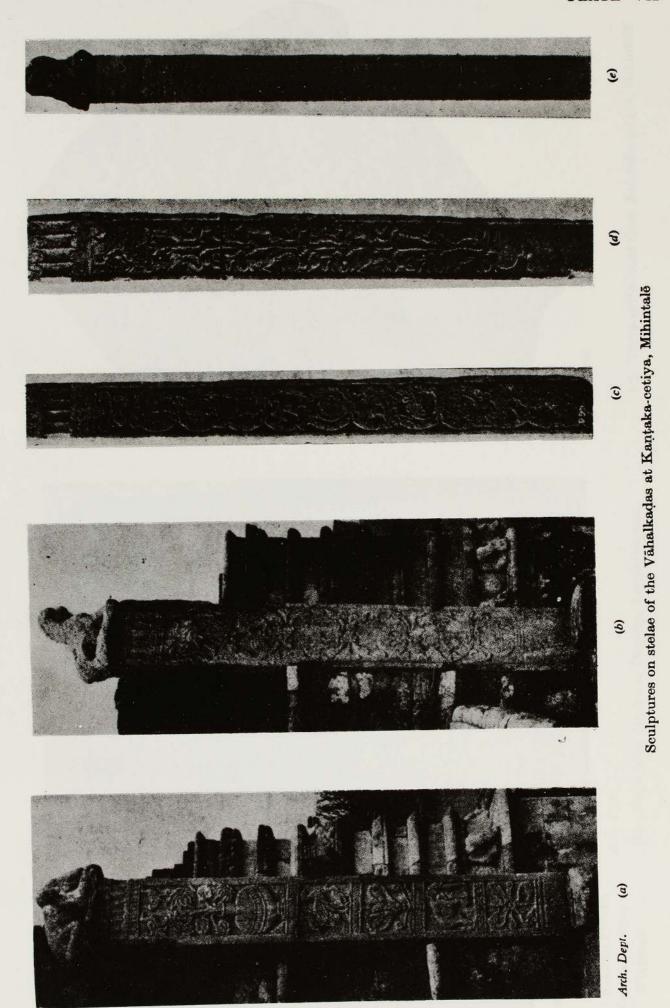
(a) Eastern Vāhalkaḍa, Kaṇṭaka-cetiya, Mihintalē



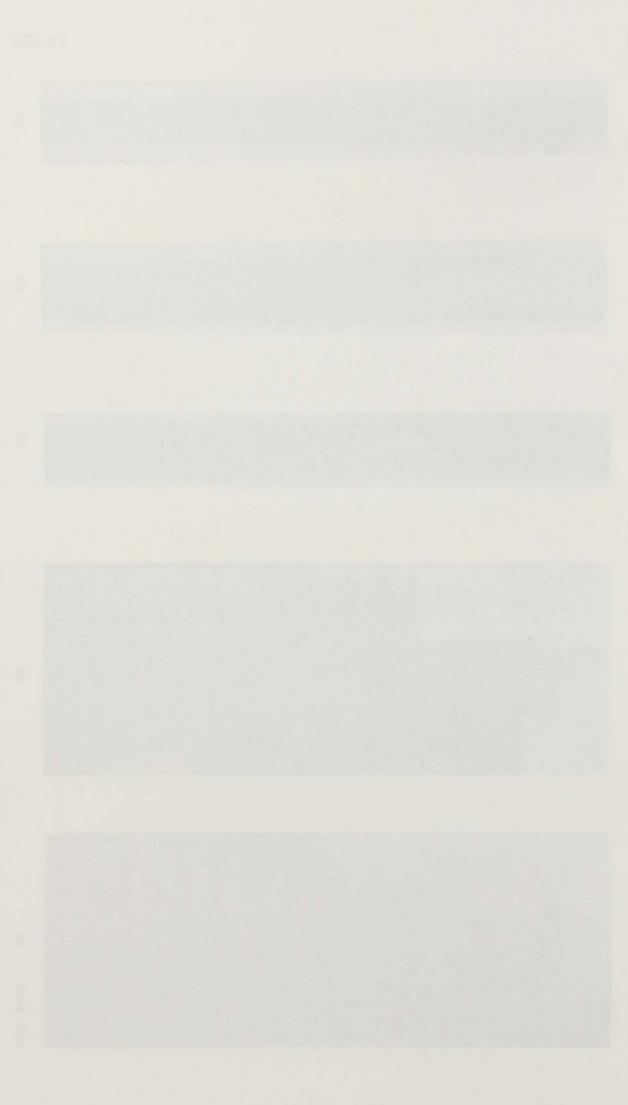
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(b) Remains of Āsanaghara, Pulukunāvi

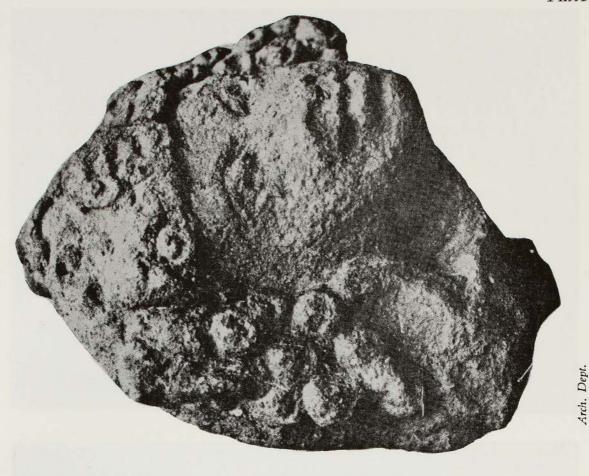




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(c) Terra-cotta head from Kanṭaka-cetiya, Mihintalē





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(b) Nāga from Jetavana Dāgāba, Anurādhapura

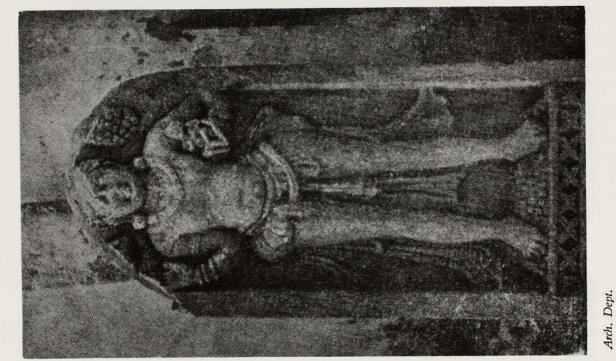
Kantaka-cetiya, Mihintalē

(a) Nāga on a stele,

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Arch. Dept.
 (c) Sculpture on a stele, Eastern V\(\text{a}\)halkada, Jetavana D\(\text{a}\)g\(\text{g}\)ba, Anur\(\text{a}\)dhapura



(b) Sculpture on a stele, Southern Vāhalkaḍa, Abhayagiri Dāgāba, Anurādhapura



(a) Nāga figure on a stele at Kaṇṭaka-cetiya

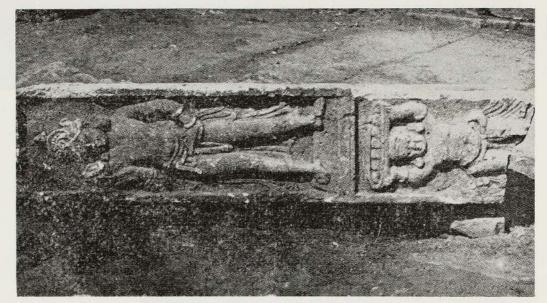
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(c) Sculpture of Cakravarti king and seven jewels, on a stele at Abhayagiri Dāgāba, Anurādhapura

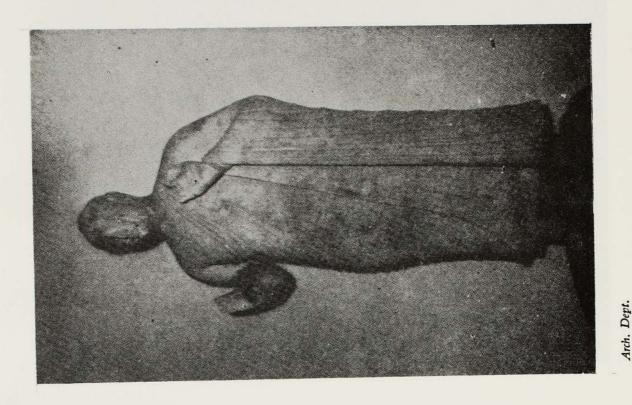


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(b) Figure of deity (Sūrya) on a stele at Abhayagiri Dāgāba, Anurādhapura



Arch. Dept.
(a) Nāga on a stele, Eastern Vāhalkaḍa, Jetavana Dāgāba, Anurādhapura

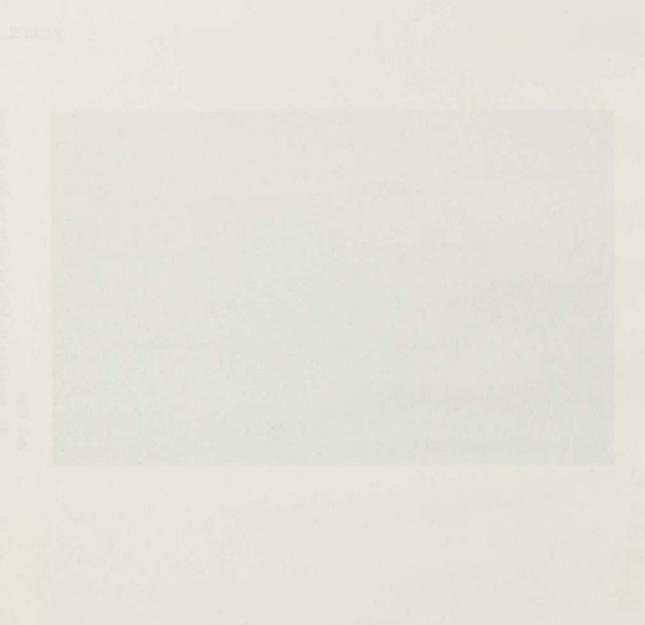


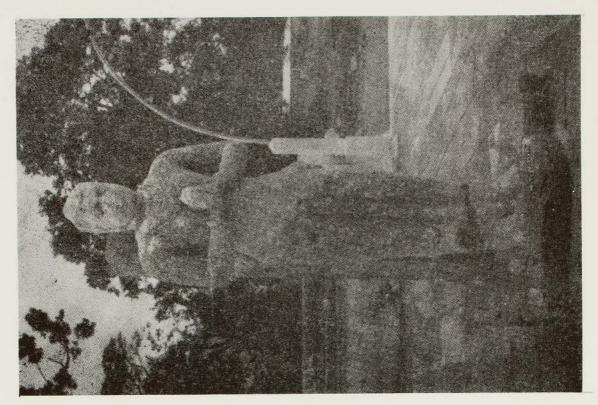
(b) Standing Buddha of white marble at Maha. Iluppallama



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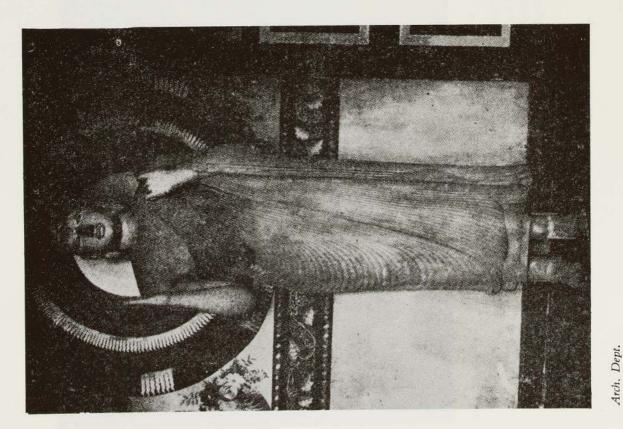
(a) Sculpture in Āndhra style, on a white marble slab, depicting Māyā's dream, now in the Colombo Museum



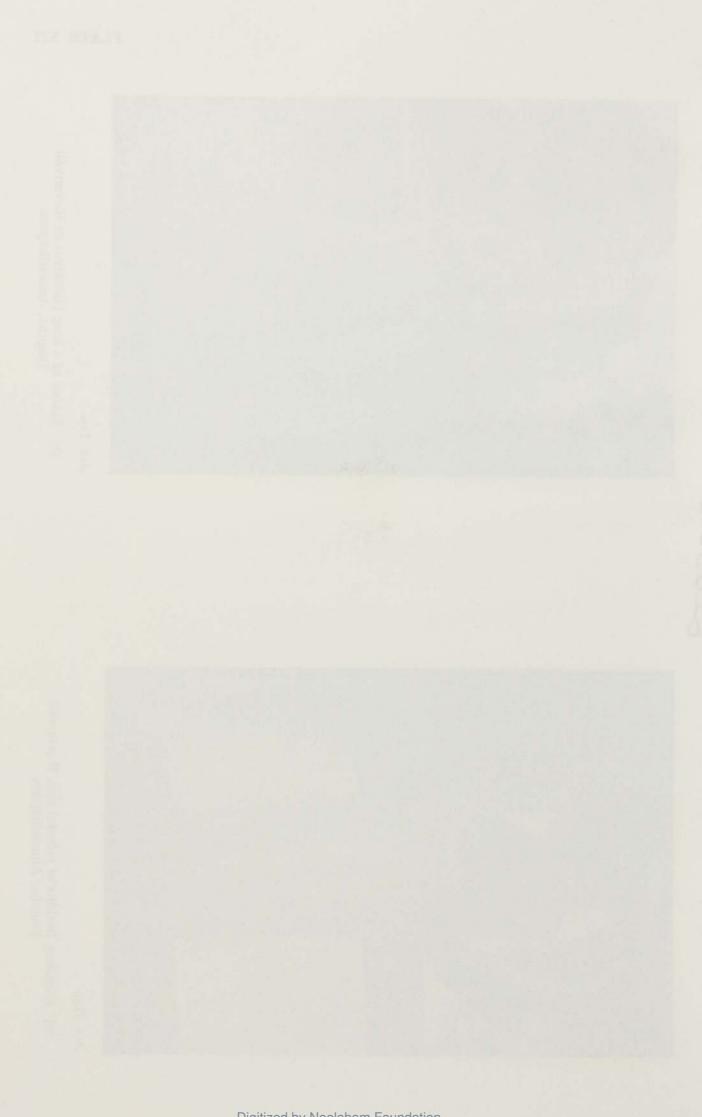


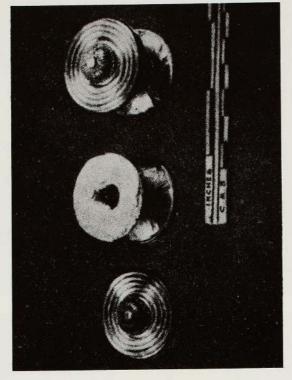
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(b) Statue of a king (Bhātiya) at Ruvanväli Dāgāba, Anurādhapura



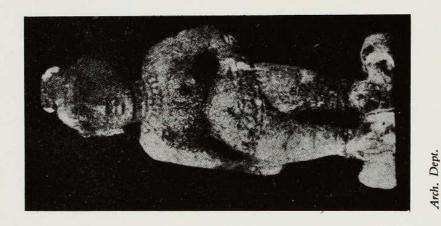
(a) Standing Buddha of colossal size, Ruvanväli Dāgāba, Anurādhapura





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(c) Specimens of jewellery in a relic-casket, Eastern Vāhalkaḍa, Ruvanvälisāya, Anurādhapura (b) Ivory figurine found in a casket at Southern Vāhalkaḍa, Ruvanväli Dāgäba, Anurādhapura



(a) Copper image of Kuvera, buried in a garbha below the pedestal of a Buddha in image-house, Mädirigiri



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(c) Soap-stone Reliquary from Southern Vāhal kaḍa,
Ruvanväli Dāgäba, Anurādhapura



Arch. Dept.

 (b) Reliquary of polished red ware from Southern Vāhalkada, Ruvanvāli Dāgāba, Anurādhapura

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(a) Reliquary of polished black ware from Stūpa at Mihintalē

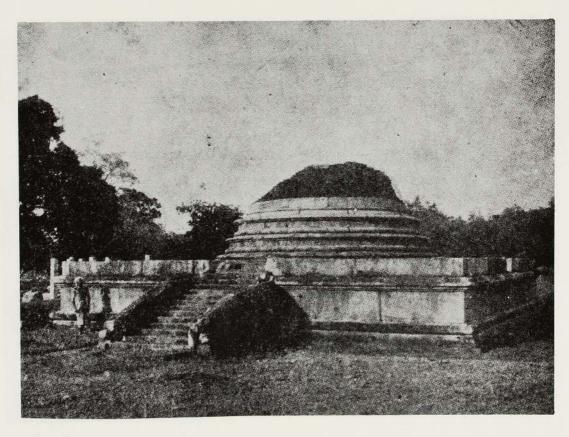
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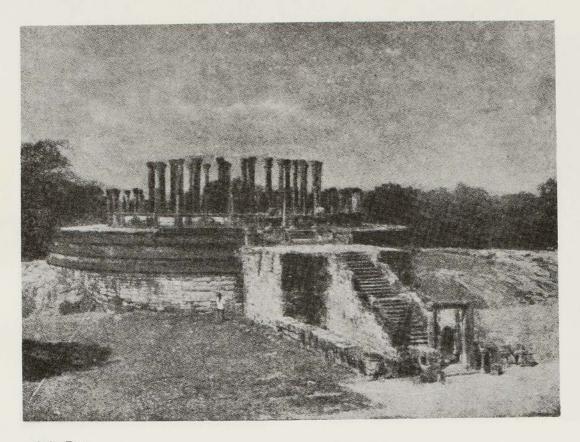
(a) Elephant Retaining Wall, Ruvanväli Dāgāba, Anurādhapura



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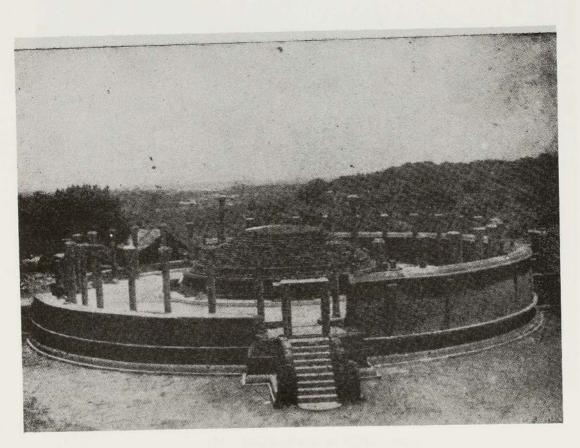
(b) Iňdikatusåya, Mihintalē





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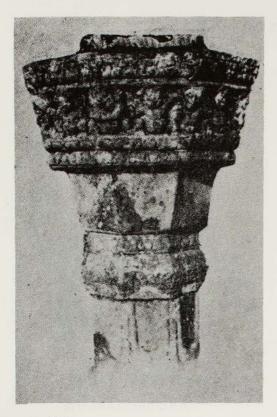
(a) Vaţadāgē at Mädirigiri



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(b) Vaṭadāgē at Tiriyāy



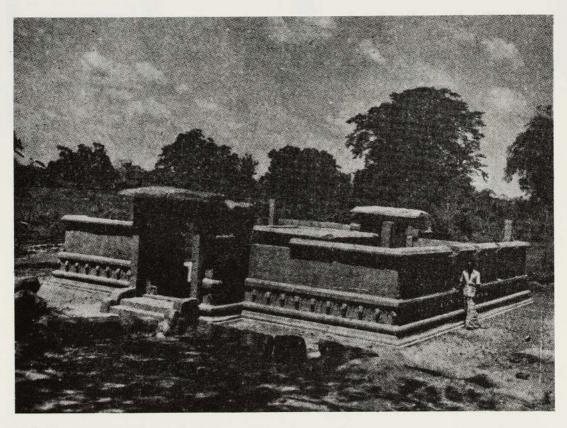


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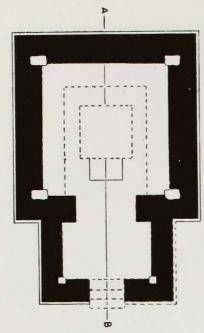
(a) Pillar Capitals from Vaṭadāgē, Mädirigiri



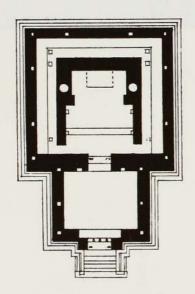
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(b) Bodhighara at Nillakgama

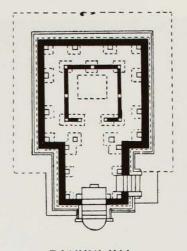
GROUND PLANS OF SHRINES



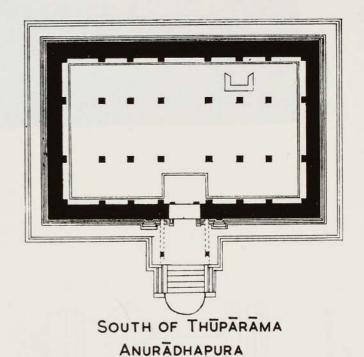
KIRIBAT- VEHERA ANURĀDHAPURA

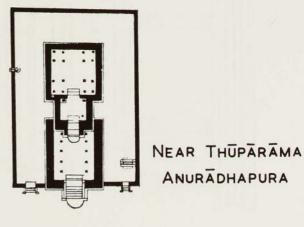


TOLUVILA ANURĀDHAPURA



PANKULIYA NEAR ANURĀDHAPURA





Ground-plans of shrines, Anurādhapura

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Guardstone from Tiriyāy

(q)

(a) Façade of building in bas-relief on a urinal stone at Anurādhapura

FACADE OF BUILDING ON URINAL STONE EAST OF RUVANVALI ANURADHAPURA



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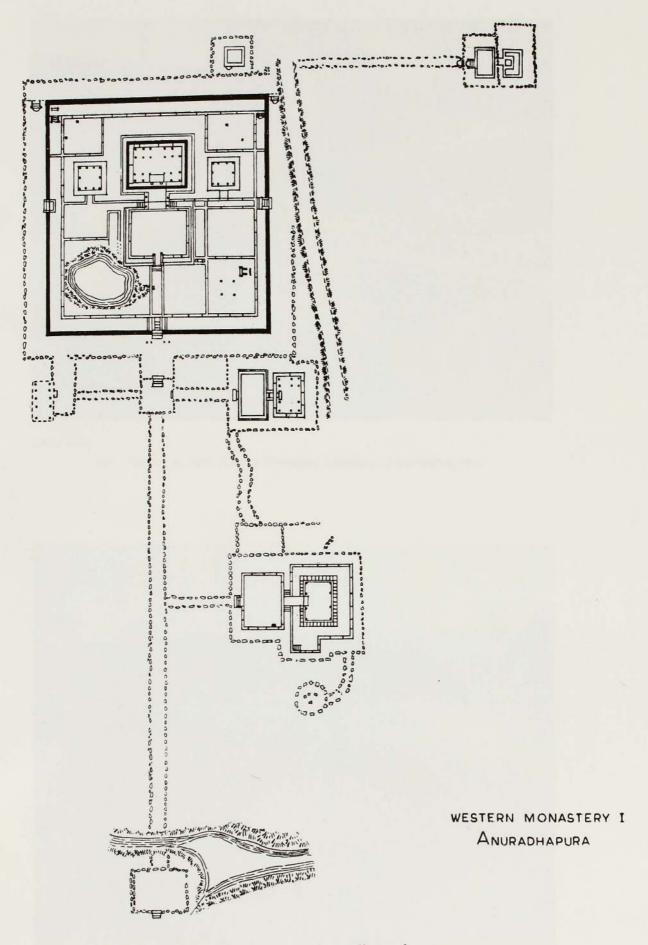
(a) Guardstone at shrine near Thūpārāma, Anurādhapura



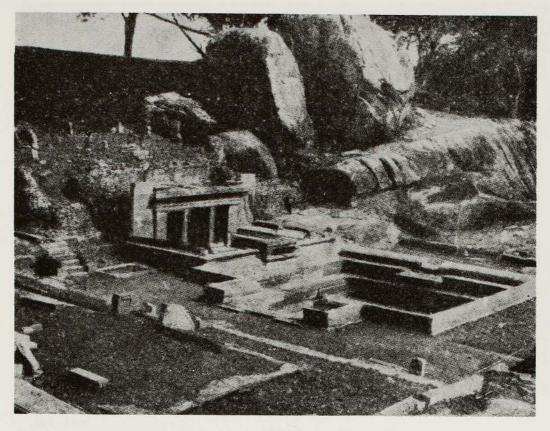
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(b) Moonstone on Outer Circular Road, Anurādhapura



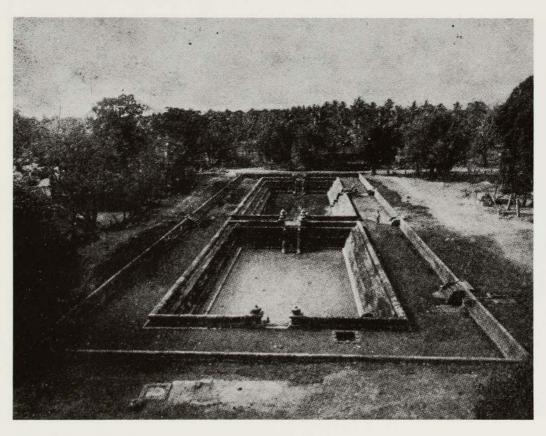


Ground-plan of a padhānaghara



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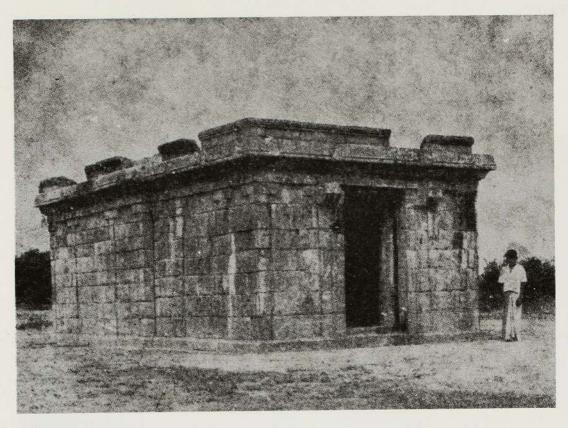
(a) Baths in the Royal Pleasure Garden, Anurādhapura



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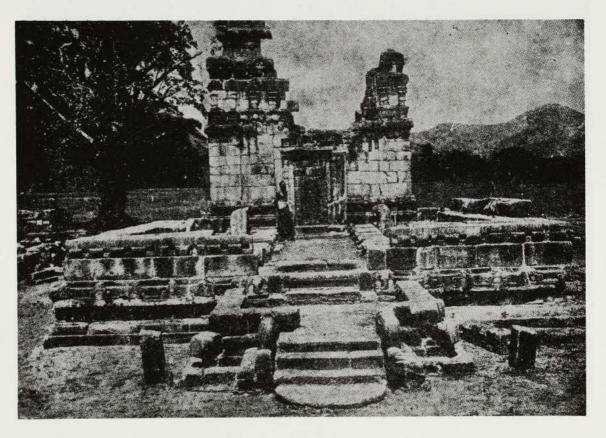
(b) Kuṭṭam-pokuṇa, Anurādhapura

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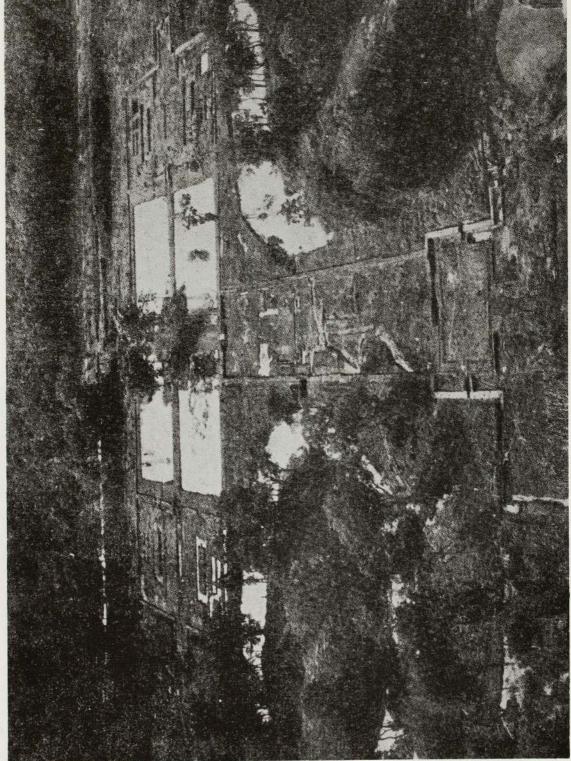
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(a) Shrine of Upulvan, Devundara

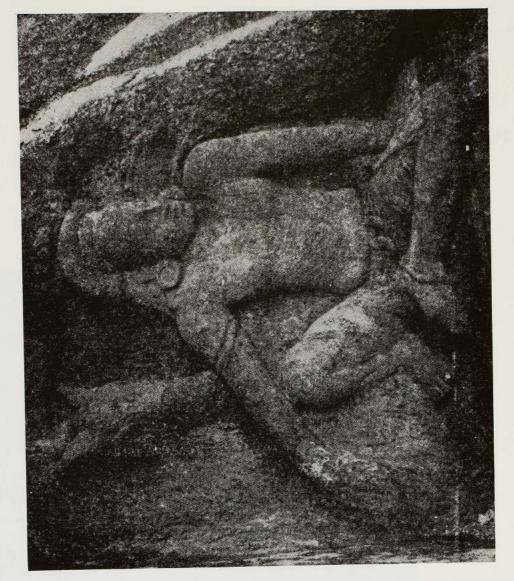


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(b) Gedigē at Nālanda



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(*q*)

Sculpture of Man and Horse, Isurumuni, Anuradhapura



(a)

Sculpture of Man and Woman, Isurumuṇi, Anurādhapura

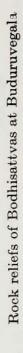


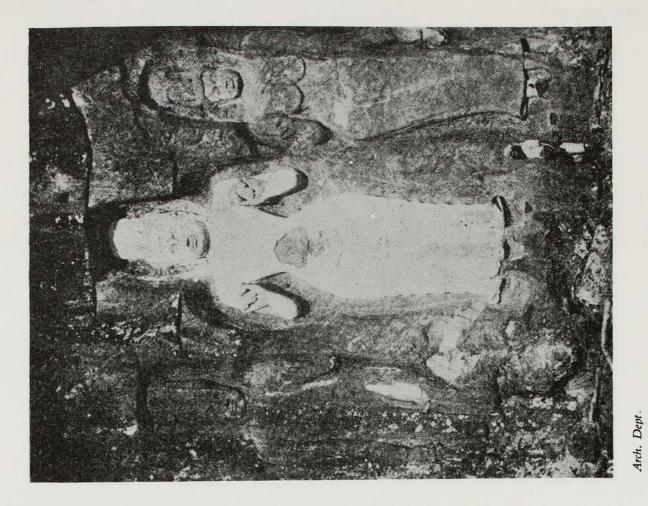
PLATE XXVI

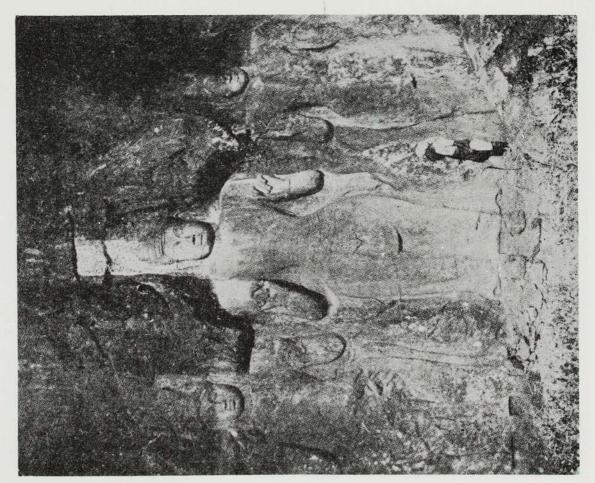


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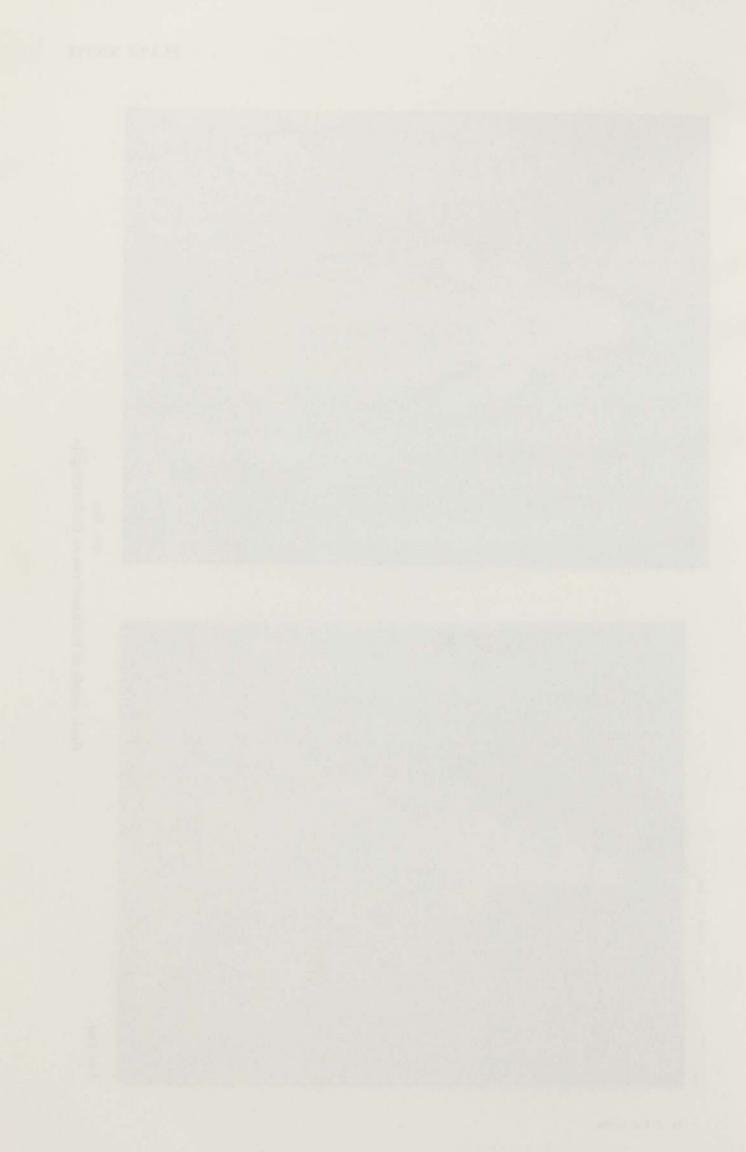
Rock-cut standing Buddha at Avukana

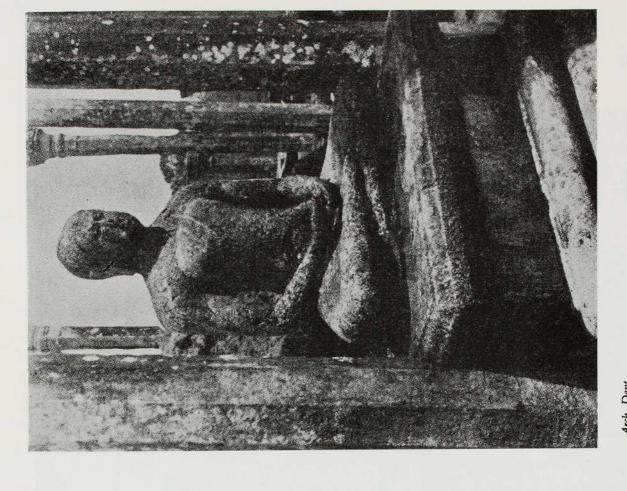






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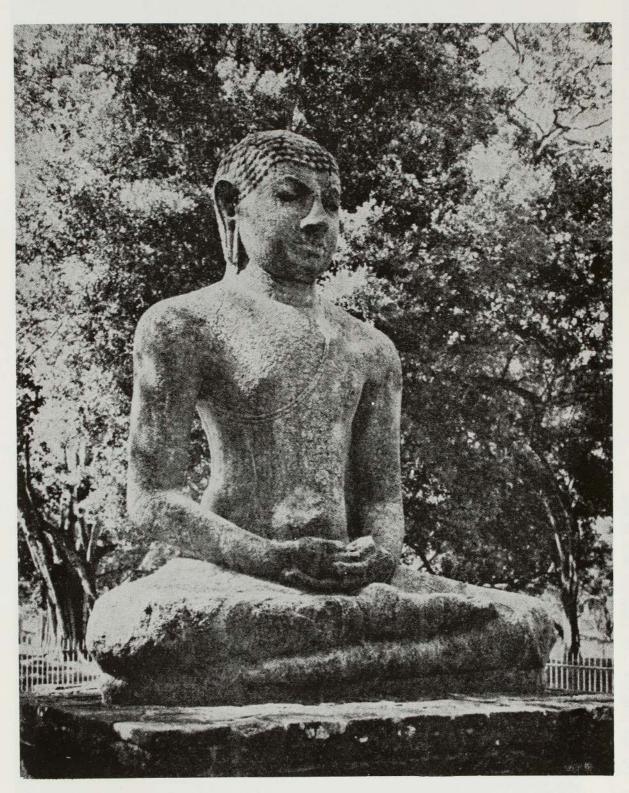
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(b) Seated Buddha in the Vaṭadāgē, Mādirigiri



(a) Seated Buddha at Pankuli

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Seated Buddha, Outer Circular Road, Anuradhapura





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(b) Bronze Image of Maitreya Bodhisattva from Anurādhapura, now in the Colombo Museum



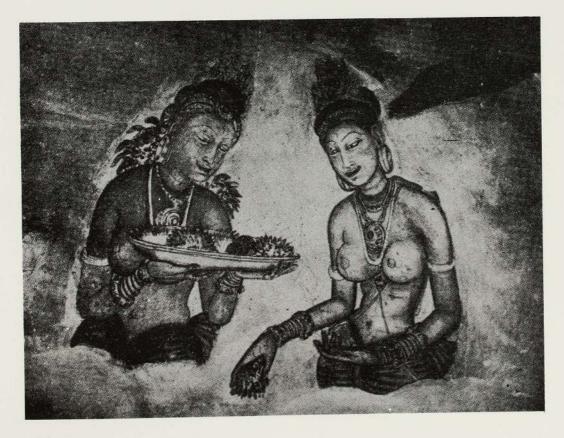
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(a) Bronze Buddha from Badulla, now in the Colombo Museum



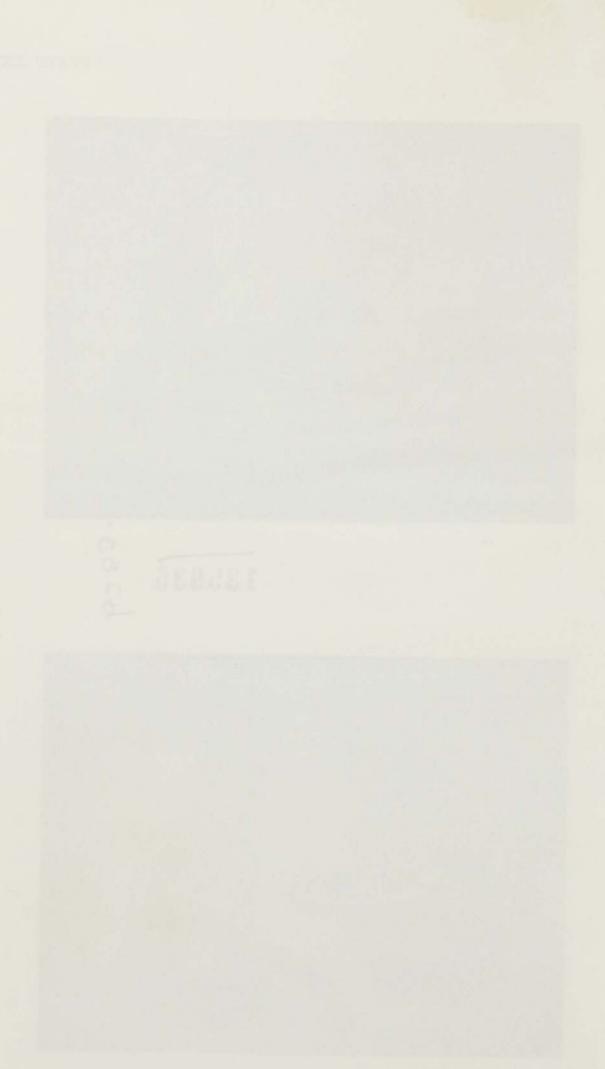


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Frescoes of Sīgiri



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