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THE YOUNG LANKA.

VOL. I.

NOVEMBER, 1911.

No. 1.

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NOTICE.

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Look out for the next issue of the Young Lanka.
It will be out by the middle of January.

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MASTER S. W. COPLESTON DIAS BANDARANAYAKE.



The Young Lanka.

Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said :
This is my own, my native land !
Scott.

[A Bi-Monthly Magazine devoted to History, Literature, and Fiction.]

Editor :—J. A. WIJESINGHE, JR.

VOL. I.]

NOVEMBER, 1911.

[No. 1.

RISE, STIR LIKE MEN.

I.

Rise, stir like men ; help up the fallen one ;
Throw caste and creed ; be one in heart and soul ;
Scorn not the luckless one who hap may fall,
But cheer his weary heart and help, not shun.

II.

And rear, not kill, the Tamil in your blood—
They who have fought us in the days of old
And for us, too, full many a time untold—
Your union can't but be of lasting good.

III.

Their kings have sate upon our glorious throne,
Their race with ours has often inter-wed,
Like one we lived in happy days now fled—
Why draw a line to our grandsires unknown ?

IV.

Begin ye, great, and then follow ye, less ;
Sow harmony in Lanka, far and wide ;
Regain once more our nation's dying pride,
And on the paths of honour let us press.

V.

Deride not those who live by honest means ;
In work, whate'er it be, there lies no shame ;
He's not the only *man* who attains fame,
The honest labourer's nobler than he seems.

FELIX.

OUR RAISON D'ETRE.

It is with a certain amount of diffidence that we venture to lay before the public this the first issue of a magazine which is meant to supply a long-felt want. Weeklies, monthlies, and quarterlies have been prolific enough of late. They have sprung up like mushrooms and disappeared as quickly. But we are unaware of the existence of a single periodical expressly meant for and devoted to the interests of the Youth of Ceylon, a periodical which should have as its chief object the reviving of the national spirit amongst the young Ceylonese. The need for such an organ, especially in these days of national degeneration, is evident enough even to the most casual observer.

Shameful as is the confession, it must be admitted that the educated young Ceylonese are fast losing touch with their mother country. Lured on by the false glitter and glamour of a superficial western civilisation, they are in danger of becoming in course of time entirely denationalised, of becoming—what Mr. C. E. Corea aptly termed—*dic-shon dafyds* and *Anglicised corruptions*. The disastrous consequences which would follow such a course of blind imitation of the Westerner are too terrible to be contemplated.

"Take the warning," said Mr. Donald Obeyesekere, "given us by Australia, South Africa, and Canada, if not America, and act ere it is too late. We must retain, and if possible improve, upon the conditions which prevail in this country, which are characteristic of its people, and introduce only that much of the west as will clearly be an unmixed benefit to us. And then, and then only shall we be able to continue to command the respect of the civilised world."

Significant words these coming from one of the chief promoters of social reform in Ceylon. *Act ere it is too late!* Awake from your apathy and act, young Lanka. It is on the younger generation, on the student-population of Ceylon that her future depends. Let them be imbued with national ideals and act up to them, and we need fear nothing for the future glory of our country. The Students' National Movement was a step in the right direction. A Students' National Magazine has now become an absolute necessity. Ours is a modest and humble attempt to meet this necessity until others better qualified than ourselves should undertake the task.

The chief object we have in view in bringing out this Magazine is this then: to revive and foster the dying national spirit amongst the young Ceylonese. This could only be accomplished by instilling into them a knowledge of the past greatness and glory of this Island. Mrs. Annie Besant, in the course of a lecture she delivered on National Reform, expressed this thought in a manner most beautiful and striking. "The knowledge of your own past," she said, "is the bread of daily life. To know what Ceylon has done shapes the lines for what Ceylon can do; and out of the treasures of your past you must shape the national ornaments for the future." We have a great and glorious past to look back upon. But how few of us realize the greatness of that past!

Few nations could boast of a civilisation more ancient or a history more glorious than ours. Yet how do we show our appreciation of the antiquity of our civilisation and the glory of our history? By totally disregarding the one and striving to forget the other! Shame! Shame! Could we call ourselves Ceylonese after that? Are we no longer the

descendants of that mighty people who at a time when the greater part of Europe was steeped in barbarism, when the British Isles were inhabited by a nomad tribe of savages, who painted their bodies in woad and knew not the uses of clothing, were great, were powerful, were respected, and enjoyed all the blessings of a refined civilisation?

Pardon this digression. What we advocate is a closer study of the past history of this Island. Let the Ceylonese youth be infused from the very cradle with a love for those heroes who made his country so mighty in the days of yore. Let him take a just pride in their martial achievements. Let his heart beat quick and his pulse thrill when he hears some tale of their daring in war, or witnesses some awe-inspiring memorial of their skill in architecture.

Let him learn to love and venerate the name of Dutu-Gemunu, of Parakrama, of Dhatusena, of Raja Sinha, just as the Englishman loves and venerates the name of Nelson, or the Frenchman that of Napoleon. This—the proper study and appreciation of our past history—would be, as an able writer once remarked, the only panacea for all those evils, moral, social, and political, from which the Ceylonese have now been suffering for several decades. This, and this only, could bring about the regeneration of the Ceylonese and save them from losing their very individuality as a nation.

There seems to be current at the present day a widespread but erroneous notion that patriotism in the Ceylonese is incompatible with loyalty to the British rule. This false and demoralising doctrine has been preached, expounded, and propagated by that same section of our morning press that a few years back made futile and impotent efforts to “thwart the legitimate aspirations” of the Young Ceylonese as embodied in the Students’ National Movement.

We need not examine at length the sophistical reasons which these irresponsible scribblers have brought forward to show that the study of Ceylon history would only give rise to seditious thoughts and disloyal aspirations in the minds of the Ceylonese. Needless to say writers of this sort are never taken seriously in this Island. They are generally treated with the contempt they deserve. But still, in order to dispel any delusions that might arise in the minds of some people with regard to our aim and object, we will remark here that in our opinion—humble as it is—Ceylon could only become a great nation again by being loyal and true to the British. A hundred years of British rule have clearly demonstrated that under no other rulers could we hope to be governed so justly and so equitably. With the Britisher at the helm, and with the memory of our past greatness to encourage, to spur on, and to inspire us, we may yet accomplish great things in the future.

Our task is at an end. Our aims and aspirations have been made clear to all. In these aspirations many will sympathise with us. A few will condemn us. But it is not likely that we would be deterred from our objects by hostile and malignant criticism. And if as a result of our efforts there is engendered in the soul of but one young Ceylonese a proper spirit of national pride and a desire to be worthy of the high traditions of his race, then our purpose would have been accomplished and our labours amply rewarded.

MY FIRST VISIT TO THE BURIED CITIES OF LANKA WITH GUN AND KODAK.

It had always been my great ambition to visit the ruined cities of Lanka. I had heard so much about them that I was quite anxious to go and see them with my own eyes, and satisfy myself that the accounts I had read about them in books were not overdrawn.

I had often asked Father to take me there; but he had always put it off with one excuse or another. At last, after I had worried him a great deal he promised to pay a visit with me to Anuradhapura and the other ruined cities during the Easter vacation. He later on very kindly presented me with a kodak, so that I might take photographs of some of the famous places we intended to visit; and promised to let me shoot with his double-barrelled breech-loader any animals and birds that we might come across on our way. This made me very happy, and raised me to the seventh heaven of delight. Hitherto I had only been allowed to shoot rats between the almira's and the walls in my bed-room with my small rifle. Now at last I was going to make use of a real big gun. Wasn't this something to be proud of? No wonder then that I was very anxious to get away from my "sum", "I am" and "es" and "thou art" at school and be off on my shooting and sight-seeing trip. The holidays appeared to take ages in coming—at least so it seemed to me.

At length on the 25th of March, 1909, the Royal College broke up for the Easter vacation. We packed up and went to Veyangoda, to my Granduncle Sir Harry Dias' bungalow at Maligatenne, and stayed there with Uncle Charlie. There, to my great disappointment, a further delay occurred. Father had to attend to some business; and until that business was completed we had to kill the time as best we could at Veyangoda. So what with one thing and another our visit had to be postponed for some time; and it was only on the 22nd of April, when the holidays were almost drawing to a close, that we started for Anuradhapura.

We took the morning train from Veyangoda. Our party consisted of Father, my private tutor Mr. Tambi Rajah, myself, and three servants. At Polgahawela we were joined by my Uncle Francis, who had come down from his estate at Peradeniya especially to accompany us. I was very glad at this, as Uncle Francis is a crack-shot, and would be sure to render a good account of himself when we came to the shooting part of our trip.

The journey from Polgahawela to Anuradhapura was very tedious, and the scenery uninteresting. On either side a monotonous expanse of waving fields of paddy, broken here and there by patches of jungle and tracts of barren *chena*, met the eye. I tried to while away the time by reading Cave's "*Ruined Cities of Ceylon*", for I wished to know something of the places we were going to visit.

We reached Anuradhapura at about 1-30 p.m. Here we were faced with an unexpected difficulty, resulting from our not having taken the precaution of telegraphing beforehand to the Rest-House-Keeper asking him to reserve rooms for us. Uncle Francis however came to the rescue and took us to Mr. K. B. Ratwatte's residence, who gave us a right royal welcome. We stayed the night at Mr. Ratwatte's, and there engaged two double-bullock carts for our journey. In the dead of night we despatched our luggage in one cart in advance with our servants. Early next morning we started in the other for Tiripanne.

The road through which we had to pass was fringed on either side by large and extensive jungles, which stretched in an unbroken line for miles and miles.

The forest was simply teeming with birds and animals of all descriptions. Birds of bright plumage flew over our heads singing merrily sweet songs. Monkeys chattering with each other jumped from tree to tree and made hideous faces at us. I shot a Ceylon jay on the wing.

We had covered about half the distance when suddenly a large deer with a fine pair of antlers sprang into sight. He stood just in front of us sniffing the air majestically. We instantly seized our guns and rifles; but imagine our disappointment when we found that we had no cartridges. By an oversight they had been sent on in front in the luggage cart. So what was to be done? The deer stood for fully a minute in front of us. He looked at us boldly as if he were aware that we could not harm him. Then with a proud toss of his head he plunged into the forest followed by his doe and was quickly out of sight.

At 12 o'clock in the noon we reached Tiripanne Rest-House. Immediately after arriving I shot another Ceylon jay. We did not tarry long at Tiripanne. After breakfast we started at once for Maradankadawala, our next halting-place. This was seven miles from Tiripanne. On the way I brought down with one shot two cranes while on the wing, and Uncle Francis bagged a green-pigeon (*batta-goya*), which made excellent eating. We stayed for the night at Maradankadawala at a bungalow belonging to Mr. Ratwatte.

S. W. C. D. B.

(To be continued.)

PONNAMBALAM RAMANATHAN, K.C., C.M.G.,

Barrister-at-Law, ex-Tamil Member of the Ceylon Legislative Council,
late Solicitor-General, etc., etc.

YOUTH.

Ponnambalam Ramanathan was born on the 16th of April, 1851. His ancestry could be traced back to the twilight of the middle ages. His forbears held high and responsible positions under the native chiefs of India and of Ceylon before the advent of the British into the Island. Under the British Government too they have held many a post of honour, and conducted themselves with such advantage to the sovereign and such credit to themselves as would make any person proud of being the member of such a family. However, Mr. Ramanathan has no necessity to stand upon the greatness of his forefathers. His claims to honour do not depend upon the accident of birth, but on his own merit and ability. He has *achieved* greatness.

As a boy he was never very strong. Yet when quite a lad he was remarkable for his gentlemanly ways, his pensive and thoughtful look, his eagerness to learn, and his keen observation. At the age of seven he entered the Old Academy—now the Royal College. There he was for seven years, a period during which he won the confidence and esteem

of Dr. Boake and all other persons with whom he came in contact. In 1865 he went over to the Madras Presidency College, but his ill-health caused him to return to his *alma mater* in haste. Dr. Boake was glad to have him once again under his care, and did everything in his power to give his pupil a liberal education, for he found in the youth the certain signs of a coming *man* and genius. It is impossible to enter into a detailed account of the doings of the youth Ramanathan, ever so much as the writer may wish to, and although he is sure such a one will contain many profitable lessons to the rising generation.

LAWYER AND LEGISLATOR.

On leaving College, after a very bright and brilliant career, he was apprenticed as an Advocate Student under Sir Richard Morgan, of whom he speaks even now with the warmest admiration—a refreshing example of gratitude, particularly at this juncture, when we behold the meanest and basest ingratitude displayed by people, who though they cannot hold a candle to him, try to sit in judgment over Mr. Ramanathan.

At the age of twenty-one he passed his final examination and was called to the Bar, which was then graced by such eminent lawyers as Sir Samuel Grenier, Sir Richard Cayley, Sir Richard Morgan, Sir C. P. Layard, and the elder James van Langenberg. He soon made a name for himself as a sound and able lawyer, and commanded a very large practice. Like all great men, like all great geniuses he was never happy unless when busiest. In spite of the fact that his immense practice left him but very little leisure he set himself the noble yet herculean task of supplying a keenly felt want by reporting many valuable judgments covering the periods 1820-1833, 1847-1855, 1860-1888, which reports are in vogue even up to today. So well did he do this work—as he usually does whatever he undertakes—that he was requested by Sir John Phear, C. J., to edit the Supreme Court Circular. This he accepted at a sacrifice of personal interest, which won for him the highest appreciation of the Chief Justice.

Next, while an official he published the New Law Reports, and was editor of it until he retired from Service. Thus he laid the foundation of the Law Reports of Ceylon, thereby rendering both judges and lawyers a service the usefulness of which could be fully appreciated only by members of the legal profession.

He founded many a useful institution for which the sons of Ceylon should ever be grateful. The Ceylonese cannot forget, unless they are idiots, what Mr. Ramanathan has done for them, so long as they reap the fruits of his labours. He rendered yeoman service in the codification of the Laws of Ceylon. He was solely responsible for the "*Small Tenements Ordinance*", and was chiefly instrumental in securing for us the *Reformatories*, the *Reform of the Minor Courts*, the *Registration of Titles Ordinance*, the *Post Office Savings Banks*, and many others. His career in the Legislative Council won for him, not only the love of the people, but the regard of the high officials. Three years previous to his being appointed Solicitor-General the order of St. Michael and St. George was conferred on him by Her Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria of blessed memory. He was also made a K.C. upon the special recommendation of the then Governor, Sir West Ridgeway. The Law Students in particular are under deep obligations to him for having secured them a systematized course of study and for having brought them together, who

until then had been a scattered tribe. His interest in the Law Students did not stop there. He formed the Law Students' Union, and was the first President of it. Even now he evinces the keenest interest in their welfare, and is ever ready to help them both with his inspiring presence and his kindly advice, whenever they are in need of help.

His career in Council is so remarkable that even the anti-native *Times* admitted that "his work in the Legislative Council still loom large before the eyes of the Unofficial Members as an example, an inspiration, and a precedent".

THEOLOGIAN, EDUCATIONALIST, AND REFORMER.

There is no space in this short sketch for the publication of all the praises and encomiums he has received from great and good men—from different Governors, who were broad-minded enough to admire his respectful independence; from Chief Justices, who found him to be an invaluable source of help in the administration of justice; from other high officials, who always consulted him on matters of importance; and from the Ceylonese leaders, Mr. Dornhorst in particular—a leader by the general suffrage of the people and not by the puffings of a solitary scribbler.

In 1906 Mr. Ramanathan retired from office, and devoted himself to the study of comparative Religion, the questions of education, and their deeper problems of life with a view to the better understanding of the aspirations, ideals, deficiencies, and difficulties of the Ceylonese. And now, like a giant refreshed from sleep, he has come forth at the call of duty to enter the Legislative Council as the representative of the educated Ceylonese, to fight their battles and win as he fought and won of old. His creed is broad enough to admit men of all religions. His knowledge of the Scriptures is marvellous, and it was only the other day a Catholic gentleman whispered to the writer at the Public Hall: "Rama is more a Catholic than a Hindoo."

His fame as a Theologian spreads far and wide over the seas, especially in America, where he is known and honoured as a sage. Amongst the great Americans who have spoken of him in the highest terms of praise are: the Hon. Charles H. Aldrich of the Chicago Bar, ex-Solicitor-General of the United States, Hon. S. G. Benjamin, ex-Minister of the United States to Prussia and to Turkey, Revd. Walter A. A. Gardner, Revd. J. Newton Brown, Professor T. F. Crane, LL. D., Litt D., Professor C. K. Lawnman, and hundreds of others, all honourable and cultured people whose opinions are unprejudiced and sincere.

Mr. Ramanathan has contributed much to the literature of the Colony. His originality of thought, the simplicity and lucidity of his language mark him out as the most cultured philosopher and first *litterateur* of the Island.

As an educationalist and reformer he stands head and shoulders above the rest. Like Napoleon he has recognized the fact that "the future good or bad conduct of a child depends entirely upon its mother," and has already founded a stately and large school for the Education of Hindoo Girls.

CONCLUSION.

As a Lecturer, Politician, and Debater Ceylon never has seen the like of him. There is no doubt that he is not so fiery now as in the

prime of his manhood ; but he has given us ample proof in his lecture at Galle that he could "hit as hard as he ever did" if there were any occasion for it. Above all he is a man and a gentleman.

E. FELIX W. JAYEWARDENE.

[The kindness of the Editor of the Ceylon Law Students' Magazine has enabled us to reproduce almost in its entirety the above brilliant sketch of the "most prominent man on the political platform that we have at present". It is from the pen of a young gentleman who has already earned laurels for himself in the realm of literature. We invite the special attention of our readers to it. At a time when Mr. Ramanathan and his actions are so shamefully misrepresented it is well not to forget how nobly and disinterestedly he fought for the Ceylonese when he was in the Legislative Council.—Ed.]

TALES FROM THE MAHAVANSA.

SINHABAHU, THE LION-SLAYER.

The King of Vanga (our modern Bengal) had the misfortune to possess a daughter—Suppadevi—who was endowed with the strongest passions. It had been predicted of this young Princess that she would one day become the consort of the king of beasts. What the soothsayers doubtless meant was that she would secure for a husband a man who possessed all that fearful strength and ferocious courage which are the characteristics of the lion.

Be that as it may, certain it is that Suppadevi, though lovely in person, grew up anything but a modest and retiring damsel. Of a warm and ardent temperament, giddy, frivolous, and romantic, she caused her parents no small amount of secret sorrow and shame on her behalf.

Her adventurous nature craved for a life of independence. She detested the dull monotone of court-life, with its petty conventionalities, its formalities and limitations, which were so galling to a proud spirit like hers. In one of her solitary ramblings she fell in with a Caravan chief, whose handsome person and courteous behaviour did not fail to create a lasting impression on her young and susceptible mind. Her decision was soon taken. Here was a splendid opportunity for escaping from the stifling atmosphere of the palace. She would go with the Caravan chief. Not that she was in any way in love with him ; but the charm, the novelty, the romance of it all appealed strongly to her poetic and emotional nature.

Accordingly, disguising herself the proud daughter of royalty, fled with the good-looking merchant, who was so far below her in rank. Their destination was Magadha ; but when crossing a wilderness in the land of Lala, a district in Northern India, the Caravan was attacked by a daring outlaw, whose formidable exploits had procured for him the name of Sinha, or the Lion.

The Caravan chief and his servants fled precipitately, not daring to encounter the robber band, and leaving the fair prize behind.

Suppadevi was naturally a strong-minded woman. Boldly she advanced alone to meet the outlaw chief, who was agreeably surprised to find this fair vision of loveliness in the midst of that desert region. Her tale was soon told. Sinha was doubtless a gay, dashing young

fellow—an outlaw of the Claude Duval or Beau Brocade type. It was not every day that such a priceless treasure would fall into his hands. He determined—and wisely too—not to part with it, and asked her to become his wife. The reader could easily imagine that it did not require much persuasion to induce Suppadevi to throw in her lot with Sinha. His courage, his chivalry, his free and manly bearing contrasted so favourably with the pussilanimity of the Caravan chief who had so basely deserted her that she consented at once. And when she learnt that his name was Sinha her resolution was strengthened, for it seemed as if the fates themselves had conspired to bring them together. The prediction had come true. By a strange chance she had fallen in with the very man who, according to her horoscope, was destined to be her husband. And so the daughter of the proud sovereign of Vanga sank another grade lower and became the wife of a freebooter, on whose head a heavy price had been set by her own father.

In due course of time the Princess gave birth to twins—a son and a daughter. The son she named Sinhabahu, and the daughter Sinhasivali. And now who so happy as the outlaw Sinha! He idolised his wife and children, and the happiest days of his wild and chequered existence were those spent in their company.

Years passed away and young Sinhabahu had now attained his sixteenth year. With the dawning of manhood and the expanding of intellect he discovered the fearful fact that his father was a criminal whose hands were imbrued in the blood of a thousand victims. Simultaneously with this discovery came the knowledge that his mother was of royal birth and that he, *even* he, the obscure son of the outlaw Sinha, was the rightful heir to the throne of Vanga. A supreme loathing for his sire now filled Sinhabahu's heart. Forgotten were all Sinha's kind ministrations towards his mother, sister, and himself; forgotten was the tender solicitude with which he had reared him in his infancy. He only remembered that his father was a robber and an outlaw who was feared and detested by all men; and he shrank from the idea of associating and letting his mother associate with such a depraved being any longer. His one object now was to remove his sister and mother from the contaminating influence of Sinha and to go forth and claim his rightful position as the acknowledged grandson and heir of the King of Vanga. One day Suppadevi seeing him sad and sorrowful questioned him as to why he was thus despondent. The young Prince opened his heart to her and implored her to flee with him to her father's Court.

Suppadevi, for whom the life of an outlaw's wife had now lost its charm of novelty, readily agreed to the proposal.

Accordingly, seizing a suitable opportunity when Sinha was away on one of his predatory excursions, the mother and the two children bade goodbye for ever to their forest home. Entering one of the provincial villages they were conducted by the inhabitants to the standard-bearer of the King of Vanga, who was there superintending cultivation. This minister happened to be Anura, the cousin of Suppadevi. To him Suppadevi revealed her rank and name.

Time had made no ravages on Suppadevi's person. Her charms with the passing of years had only expanded to their full maturity. The slim, slender, petulant girl whom Anura had known at his uncle's court was now a grandly handsome woman in the meridian of her beauty. It was no wonder then that the minister was completely enamoured of her; and conducting her to the city of Vanga, that city

from which she had eloped with the Caravan chief over seventeen years ago, he made her his wife.

In the meantime what of Sinha? The loss of his loved ones drove him to the verge of despair. Wild with grief he searched for them in every nook and corner of the wilderness. But his efforts to find them were fruitless. They had vanished completely.

Then how great was his sorrow! How profound his affliction! Robber and outlaw though he was, yet had he loved his wife and children dearly. The one bright spot, the oasis in his vicious and crime-stained career had been his deep and unalloyed affection for them. That had tended to brighten his lonely life not a little. And now conceive how wretched the unhappy man felt when he saw that those who were nearest and dearest to him had abandoned him, for no longer could he blind himself to the heart-rending conviction that they had voluntarily gone away.

When the first wild paroxysm of agony had passed away a fixed resolve took possession of Sinha's mind. He would devote the rest of his existence to hunting out his wife and children. He would leave no stone unturned in the search. An utter disregard for danger henceforth characterised all his movements. His depredations increased at a fearful rate. No city or village was free from his visitations. His terrible reputation, the reports of his unbounded courage and almost superhuman strength of body paralysed the inhabitants; so that wherever he went he encountered little or no opposition. A veritable reign of terror was thus established over Vanga and the neighbouring regions.

The panic-stricken people now repaired to the capital from all the provincial towns. They clustered round the gates of the royal palace and implored the King to free them from this pestilence. The King, having pity on the deep distress of his subjects, caused it to be proclaimed throughout his kingdom by beat of tom-tom that three thousand pieces of gold would be given to the man who slew Sinha. There was no one in the whole country bold enough to accept the perilous commission.

Meanwhile Sinhabahu, the young Prince, was burning to distinguish himself by some deed of daring in the eyes of his newly-found grand-sire. And he—be it said to his shame—was so thoroughly lost to all sense of filial affection, that he proposed to take upon himself the parricidal task. The old King urged him on to the attempt by holding out the most munificent promises.

Accordingly, without consulting his mother, who on two previous occasions had dissuaded him from embarking on such a shameful enterprise, the undutiful boy repaired to the outlaw's den fully armed and intent on his deadly purpose.

Sinha perceived him at a distance, and with joy in his heart hastened towards him yearning to enfold him in his arms. And now in the deep solitude of that wild and desolate spot a frightful tragedy was enacted. The youthful Prince, steeling his heart against the dictates of pity and love, sent three arrows whizzing at his sire in quick succession. The first two flew wide, but the third found a fleshy sheath, and Sinha sank dead at his son's feet. Taking his father's gory head with him the parricide returned to the city, where glad tidings awaited him. The King of Vanga had died; and as he had left no children behind him Sinhabahu, as his grandson, was called upon to ascend the throne. The Prince accepted the sovereignty, but he did not hold it for long.

Of his own free will he bestowed it on Anura, his step-father, who, he considered, had a better claim to it. Pity that this act of true magnanimity should ever be recorded on the same page as that which is blackened by the story of his father's murder. Sinhabahu, taking his sister Sinhasivali with him, repaired to his native wilderness of Lala, where he founded a city Sinhapura and extended his canopy of dominion over a wide territory. He seems to have been a prince of great capabilities; and the chronicler tells us that he ruled justly and well. And it is to be hoped that when age had subdued his youthful impetuosity and the fire of his ambition he repented that one deed of infamy which forms an indelible blot on his character and holds him up to the execration of posterity.

HISTORICUS.

A THOUGHT AT EVENTIDE.

'Tis sweet, 'tis sweet to think of thee
 At evening's close, when work is done,
 When merry warblers from the lea
 Fly homeward with the setting sun.

Thy sweet face keeps its sacred place
 In my fond heart for ever true;
 True as bright Phœbus lends her rays
 To all the flowers begemmed with dew.

My cherished hopes can words express?
 The plighted troth, my first and last!
 Can Memory amid Life's stress
 Bid me forget the blisful past?

The sun is sinking once again,
 The gath'ring shadows gently fall;
 And at this hour my heart would fain,
 The days that used to be, recall.

ROLAND.

WANT OF NATIONAL UNITY IN CEYLON.

The subject on which I am going to write a few lines is one which may rouse up much hostile criticism against me; but I sincerely hope that a patriotic and kindly public will view my poor efforts with the sympathy and gentleness it is noted for, and overlook the faults which no doubt will be only too plain to a discerning eye, so that I may say with some great ones:—

“Friends were kind, and critics blind,
 And those who saw said: ‘never mind!’”

Though young in years, perhaps my experience of life and the policy or my countrymen may not be altogether despised; and I gladly take the opportunity of laying before the public a few of my own humble opinions and views on this subject.

To begin with, let us ask ourselves a few pertinent questions:—

- (1) Are we Ceylonese a united lot?
- (2) Why are we not so?
- (3) What injuries may result to us as a consequence of our disunity?
- (4) Can we remedy this?
- (5) How?

The answer to the first question must be only too obvious to any one who is interested in the state of our politics at present. No, we are far, far away yet, from unity. Never were a race yet so disunited as we are at present. Every selfish consideration seems to have stepped in to prevent any such unity between the races in Ceylon as may lead in every way to a better state of things as regards government, politics, and commerce, and result in the ultimate and permanent bettering of the premier Crown Colony of the British Empire.

The second question is just as easily answered as the first. Why are we not united? Alas! every distinction of caste, colour, and creed is rigidly adhered to amongst us; and the rivalry prevailing among the several castes (each one of which of course thinks itself as good or better than the other) is the prime obstacle to national progress in Ceylon.

The Vellala community stand aloof from, and thoroughly despise and abuse through the medium of the local papers every other community in the Island, who in their turn retaliate both upon the Vellalla and each other.

The Karawa community snarl at the Goigama and the Halagama, and so on *ad infinitum*, till the Island resounds with the noise and din, not of national progress, but the warfare of caste distinction. The poor man is trampled down by the rich man, who looks over his head every time he meets him, save when the rich man requires the poor man's aid at election time; but this of course is a universal disease, and prevails to a great extent even among the great-hearted, frank, and kindly Britishers.

It is only natural then that at such times the low class and the poor may make an effort to get back their own; and however fit a "high class" man may be for election to any certain office, he loses it for want of votes, for the rest rally round a man of their own caste and creed, and however lacking he may be in the required qualifications, he is triumphantly elected, because, as it unfortunately happens for the favoured of the gods, the lower class are always in the majority; but of course when it is the case that the low class candidate is the better of the two, he is the right man in the right place, but he should have been elected by all classes alike, unanimously, regardless of caste. Other minor causes prevail among us which all tend to retard our progress; but I believe I have stated the chief two.

Thirdly, with regard to what injuries may result to ourselves as a consequence of our want of unity we have not far to seek. I need not predict that if we conduct ourselves in this senseless, selfish, apathetic manner (for it is the most selfish thing we can do to cling so pertinaciously to what we deem our rights and privileges and put the

national progress of the Island second to our personal interests) ere another decade we will have bartered away our birthright and independence. We stand on the brink of a precipice: let us pause and inquire of ourselves what the end will be. Why does not Government respect our opinions and our merits and treat us as we should be treated? Why? Because we are not united. Let us not blame Government. The British Rule can never be otherwise than perfectly open, honourable, and just. If we force it to act in a way that may lead to misunderstanding, in such a way as to make us deem the white man is set over and above us, let us I say blame ourselves, our want of unity, our pig-headed obstinacy, and mulishness which *will* cling to caste distinction and tradition, and everything that divides us instead of sinking all such differences in one common well, for the welfare of our beloved country.

"The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in *ourselves*, that we are underlings." Sound advice, my friends. Let us take it to heart. Let us rise with one accord, filled with the lofty spirit of patriotism, a spirit before which every other consideration must give way. Let us found an active vigorous association, based on national and patriotic lines. Let us elect as leader a large-hearted and generous man, whom we will trust and follow as he leads us in the paths of honour and rectitude for the good of our country. Let us honour him who thus comes forward as a true patriot, and follow him irrespective of all differences of caste, colour, or creed. We must encourage agricultural and commercial pursuits, and not look upon them and those who pursue them from afar off, and refuse to come in contact with the poor toiling artisans of daily life, who after all compose the essential part of a nation. The Book of Books tells us that "a house divided against itself cannot stand"; and we have further the story of the old farmer, his quarrelling sons and the bundle of sticks, to teach us lessons. Let us not for want of unity and accord allow our rights and privileges to be invaded and wrested from us. Time was when the British Government respected us and appointed men of our race to high positions, which are denied them now and given only to the white man. No wonder at all, I say, when we ourselves have drawn down on our heads the distrust of a paternal and benevolent Government.

If we are not faithful in that which pertains to our own interests, how can we be trusted with higher matters?

Once again, in conclusion, let me urge upon you, my countrymen—feeble though my voice may be—to rouse up. Let us be up and doing before it be too late and we as a nation are irrevocably lost.

A. REGINALD W. WIJEYEKOON.

THE LOTUS OF LANKA.

"In the rose garden," whispered Meryl to himself, recollecting the information he had just garnered from the servants at the house. "That's just the place where one might expect to find her. There in that fairyland I can find my fair one." So saying he wended his way towards the rose garden.

A low stone wall, unpretentious and moss-grown, enclosed the garden. In the middle it was broken by an arch, artistically erected with the tender laths of the areca palm. Half a dozen horse-hair creepers, with their blossomed bunches of lovely white flowers, ran over the arch, and their labyrinth of tendrils, entwined with each other, formed an excellent canopy. The arch led to a flight of cemented steps, bordered by pots of tropical ferns and palms. The steps sprang from out the shadow of the arch into warmth, sunshine, and perfumed air.

It was a lovely afternoon in the month of June. White fleecy clouds sailed through a sky of laughing blue; gay butterflies danced over the roses. The hot air was filled with spicy aromatic scents, reminding one of the "spicy breezes", which, according to Bishop Heber, "blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle".

In the shade of a spreading mango tree at the extreme end of the garden a little table was placed, at which a lady sat writing. She wore a white dress, flecked with splashes of shadow and sunshine. On her hair the dancing shadows played bewilderingly.

Meryl stopped a moment when he reached the top step and stood looking at her with a certain fixedness of attention. Deeply absorbed in her work, she continued writing, quite unconscious of her visitor, who was now pacing the gravelled path towards her. He was close upon her when she laid down her pen, swept one of her hands over her ample forehead, and, leaning back on the rich cushions, which upholstered the back of a rattan chair of chaste workmanship, she began to read over what she had written. A smile of satisfaction, indicative of inward delight, beamed on her countenance as she said to herself: "One story more for Lanka's sake."

"Good afternoon!" Meryl said quietly. She started, raised her absorbed eyes to his face, and then, their expression suddenly changing, sprang up and held out her hand, while the last sheet of paper fell on the table, and thence slid over the edge to the grass.

"You here!" she cried gaily, "and at this hour! Did you come by the morning train?" He looked at his watch. "Three o'clock; and I call it a respectable hour. But I have come to bid you all good-bye."

"Why didn't you write us you are coming?" she asked reproachfully. "They are all gone out for the circus matinee, and won't be back till nightfall."

"So the servants at the house told me. But they didn't mention the circus. People of that class are not so imaginative, eh?"

She smiled, and he threw himself down near on the turf under the tree. "And now give me news, Meryl. It is an age since we last met. What news from the town?" she commanded.

"I have bidden it farewell," he replied distractedly, watching two lovely butterflies drinking in the sweets from a neighbouring rose bush.

"What do you mean?"

"Just that. I'm going to England, to prosecute my studies there. I had enough of it here, thanks for.....Do you always allow stray cattle to trespass on your garden? Just look there."

"Well, never mind. But when are you going away?"

"Next Wednesday. The few days before me you will see me busy in paying farewell visits and making the other necessary arrangements."

There was a rustling at the moment amongst the papers on the table, and the grass was all at once strewn with loose white sheets.

"I didn't think there was a breath of wind.....You don't look well," he broke off suddenly, rising to recover the fallen papers and arranging them in a neat pile.

Iris, for such is the name of our heroine, was leaning back in her chair; her hands were folded in her lap, and she was looking absently across the rose beds. They seemed to have now no charms.

"A novel?" he asked, tapping the papers and placing a stone on the top of the pile.

"A novel?" she repeated vaguely, bringing her eyes slowly back to his face. "Oh! no, no. Just some stories of Lanka."

Meryl looked at her critically a moment, and then smiled.

"You are amused? Why? The love for Lanka which you had fanned in me is still burning within me. This is the result. The present story is about the lotus flower. Amid the roses, which breathe of the western world, I am here with the lotuses—flowers reminiscent of the storied past."

"I congratulate you, Iris dear. But no more! You could not *then* be the pearl of sweet Ceylon! Good-bye!"

"That's just the worst and saddest of all tales," she could only utter, when Meryl, who boasted of his self-respect, rose from his grassy seat and with one long lingering look at her turned back with a full heart along the gravelled path, down the flight of steps, and then to the outer world.

She spent the evening in the rose garden. The songs of the birds and the gay world had no charms. She now lived in the past, and all hope seemed lost owing to his impending departure. Gradually, very gradually, the evening shadows fell, and the rose flush died out of the sky. The moon's pale beam began to silver. Bats wheeled noiselessly overhead, and dreamily she walked towards the old home. The merry household voices were absent. They had not returned from the matinee. She stepped out into the moonlight again and walked on towards the garden gate, and was there for about an hour when the roll of wheels became audible. Laughter and voices fall distinctly on the still air.

"It's Iris!" cried some one.

"Hulloa, Ira! You ought to have come. You were stupid not to come. It has been so jolly, has'nt it, mother?"

And then dismounting, an hour's babel of talk, of confusion, of laughter, and of questioning ensued prior to their dining and retiring to sleep.

The church clock struck one. Iris started incredulously. It must be later. She was just wondering how many centuries it was since she put out the candle and lay down to repeat a few monotonous sentences. "Two years ago since I refused him.....And now it's *he* who doesn't care. Two years ago and now——"

Ages passed, and it struck the quarter. She got up and crossed the room. She shed in the silence of the night many a tear of bitter repentance. Her window looked upon the rose garden, and was the only room in the house which had a view of it.

It was a breathless night—a night of unreal loveliness. She drew back the window curtain and recognized the magical effect of mist and moonshine. The garden was full of silvery mist, and seemed an exhalation from the moon itself. The shadows of the rose trees slept upon the grass. Every tree, every bush was enveloped in a luminous sheath of haze. Like the lightest, most ethereal of gauze veils, the haze

hung from the tops of the taller trees to the earth; but above the tree-tops the sky was clear, radiant, darkly blue, and spangled with faint stars.

Iris drew a long breath of wonder, and, kneeling down, rested her elbows on the window-sill. All at once she started back into the shadow of the curtain, and, trembling a little, bent cautiously forward.

Some one—a man—was walking in the garden. He had emerged from the arch and its black shadow and was now moving slowly across the grass. His leisurely movements calmed Iris' first fear; yet, when she had satisfied herself of the nightly visitant's identity, she trembled more than ever, and crouched still further back into the shadows. The man walked the length of the garden and paused under the mango tree, where the little table and the chair still remained.

He seated himself in her chair and leant back against the cushions. For a long time he was very still. She could see the glowing end of a cigarette in the darkness of the moon-charmed trees, and presently a tiny shower of sparks as it was flung away. He rose then, moving the chair a little from its place and so disclosing two white objects, which it had concealed.

He stooped for them. Iris saw that one was a sheet of paper—the leaf that had dropped when she rose to greet her visitor. The other, something smaller, she could not properly distinguish.

The man folded the paper and put it in his pocket; the other, a little white mass, lay in the palm of his hand. He looked at it, and presently, bending down, touched it with his lips.

Iris started. Of course it was a bunch of pansies which she had worn in her waistband!

The moonlight faded; its witchery gave place to the new magic of dawn. Dawn trembled into the rose and gold of another day. Iris went to the garden, took a sheet of paper, and seated at her little table wrote the following to Meryl:—"I cannot do without the last page of the last chapter of my story. I miss my bunch of pansies, which a nightly visitor must have taken away. Will you bring it to the rose garden before eight o'clock this morning? Never mind the 'pearl of sweet Ceylon'. You may wear instead the lotus of Lanka."

R. E. W. PEREIRA.

PANADURE.

LOVE, THE TYRANT.

A young man sat upon a rock by the sea-side and gazed dreamily into the vast expanse of living water that stretched before him as far as the eye could reach. The waves broke almost at his feet and drenched him with spray. Their white crests almost touched his feet. But he did not seem to mind them in the least.

He was watching the movements of a vessel that was just then steaming into the harbour. What was there singular about it? The coming in and going out of ships in the Colombo harbour was a daily occurrence. But *this* one was a mail boat. And that to him made all the difference. He gazed at it wistfully with a look of intense yearning

and then his expression changed, and he muttered: "Not so soon, not so soon. It is barely a week since I received her last, which gave the death blow to all my hopes. It is not likely I would hear from her again so soon."

And his face relapsed into its usual look of vacancy, and he gazed across the blue waves of the ocean with a fixed stare as if he expected to see some beloved one looking at him from behind the clouds that scudded across the horizon.

His was not an attractive face. It could not even be called good-looking. The corners of the mouth drooped at the ends, and the chin was weak and receding. But the eyes were fairly good. Indeed they were his only redeeming feature. He was thin, very thin—almost bordering on attenuation—and in his present sedentary posture the stoop of the narrow shoulders painfully obtruded itself upon one's notice.

It was a typical scene of sun-set in Ceylon. The whole beach from end to end was full of gaily dressed folk, who had come there to enjoy the cool fanning breeze. Troops of little children accompanied by their ayahs gambolled on the sands, making the air ring with their cries of innocent joy. The older men stood in small circles talking of the latest development in the political world or of the fluctuations in the copra market.

Stylishly dressed youngsters arrayed in Cargills' best promenaded up and down, ogling the pretty girls, and they—bless their dear souls!—pretended to be mightily offended, but cast sly glances at them from under their darkly fringed eyelashes whenever they could do so without fear of detection.

It was a scene of rare beauty and happiness. And *he*, with his unprepossessing appearance and dark moody countenance was the only blot on the fair landscape.

Buried in his melancholy reflections, he sat far apart from the rest. For *him* the clear laughter of the children on the beach had no note of music. The dusty beauties who paced up and down the shore exerted no charms over *him*. He was thinking of a fairer face enshrined in a glory of golden hair, a face belonging to one between whom and him thousands of miles rolled. With a sigh he plunged his hand into his breast pocket and drew out a letter, and for the twentieth time that day he scanned its contents. And he came to a part which ran as follows: "My dear friend, married life is not for me; I can never attain perfect happiness; I shall never marry."

Just a few simple words they were, but how his heart beat and how he trembled as he read them! His doom was writ large in those few sentences.

"My friend!" she called him. Ay, he was only her *friend*—nothing more. He was mad to think of her in any other light: she was as far above from him as the stars from the earth. Foolish boy! Why long after the unreachable? Why sigh for the unattainable? And there in that very letter she told him that she would *never* marry, and the "never" was emphasised with a line drawn under it. It was preposterous to suppose that *she*, who had been cold, icy cold, to so many suitors, that she would ever look upon him with any other feelings except those of pity and friendship. What had *he* to offer *her* that he should dare indulge in such hopes? He had nothing, absolutely nothing, to give her except a lifelong love and devotion. No, the very thought of it

was madness. Even to dream of that fair, radiant creature with such a hope seemed a sacrilege. He must be content to worship her from afar, worship her as a star that had once crossed his path and gladdened him with its rays and then passed out for ever out of his life.

He bent over that little bit of paper which was so sacred, so dear to him, and touched it lightly with his lips, and returned it to its resting place opposite his heart and gazed once more on the sea. And time and space and distance seemed to vanish, and he thought that his beloved was before him. Draped in something white and fleecy that clung closely to her, she seemed a being from another world. She came towards him with her wild, mischievous eyes dancing and a smile of gladness on her lips.

And he was about to get up and meet her and clasp her to his arms when, lo! the vision faded and he saw only the crested billows racing towards the shore, and heard only the monotonous beating of the waves at his feet. He awoke from his reverie to find that he was all alone. The shore was deserted. The sun had sunk to rest, and already darkness was on the land. He rose, descended from the rock, and walked slowly and silently homewards. A letter awaited him there from one of his school chums, who invited him to join him and a few others in a tour round the Island. "You must positively come," it concluded. "Since your last illness you have not been the same Fred as of old. We'll be a jolly rollicking set, and a few weeks in our company would banish the gloom from your brow."

Fred read it over once again with puckered forehead. Why not accept this invitation? True it would mean fun and excitement of the sort that was not quite healthy, for the chum who wrote him was not noted for his unimpeachable character; but still anything was better than the weary and aimless existence he was now dragging out. A few weeks spent with his friend's rollicking companions would serve to "banish the gloom from his brow", to mellow down his grief, to make him forget his hopeless love, or at any rate resigned to his lot. The next morning the following message was speeding over the telegraph lines to Fred's chum: "Yes. Expect me by evening train."

* * * *

Fred stood leaning against a pillar, drinking in the strains of exquisite music that floated on the still air. He was paler than when we last saw him and—thinner. His face was haggard, and bore the sure signs of recent dissipation upon it. The music soothed and charmed him. From the heated atmosphere of the ball-room he had escaped into the cool of the verandah to drink in the night air. The music brought in its wake a train of sweet memories. Music of any sort made him think of one whom he had once been foolish enough to love, but of whom he now thought only as a star shedding light on his life but for ever beyond his reach. He had rooted out that boyish fancy of his—at least so he thought.

A month's gay riot and dissipation had made him realise more than ever his own unworthiness and the vastness of the gulf which lay between her and him, a gulf which he could never hope to cross.

"Yes," he told himself once again, "I have conquered. I have got over my love for her. She shall be as a sister to me henceforth, and I will love her with the love of a brother." The band stopped with a sudden crash and a din. The music ceased, and then the opening notes of a voice clear and sweet fell on Fred's ears. Somebody was singing.

It was a song of love, of its happiness and misery, and of the parting of true lovers. The singer sang it feelingly, and Fred listened entranced. The last tremulous notes died away with a low cadence, and a burst of thunderous applause attested how much the audience appreciated the song.

And Fred threw away the stump end of a cigarette he had been smoking and walked into the spacious hall, where a crowd of "fair women and brave men" were assembled. His eyes flitted from face to face in search of the singer. He had been introduced to her earlier in the evening. At last they rested on the fair, girlish face of Lennie. She was talking to another girl. She raised her head. Their eyes met. She blushed, and he—thrilled. Was this love at last he wondered.

* * * *

"Twas done. Lennie and Fred were engaged. That she loved him was evident from the sudden pang of grief that crossed her face when he told her that he must now leave her, and the pained look in her eyes as he kissed her for the last time and the trembling of the lips and the sudden catch in the voice as she asked him never to be without writing her at least once a week. And so they parted. And Fred was soon being whirled through space in an express train bound for Colombo. And he, what were his feelings? He could hardly analyse them. But he felt convinced that he loved Lennie. How could it be otherwise? What was the meaning of that sudden thrill that ran through him when he first saw her and the great pleasure he found in her company? Yes, it *must* be love.

But was he happy? Had he found perfect happiness at last? He hardly knew yet. But this he knew. Even now, when he was all but irrevocably bound to Lennie, he could not think of that *other* one without a tightening at his heart-strings. He leant back against the padded cushions and closed his eyes, and his thoughts wandered. But whither? Did they hover round Lennie's innocent head? Was he thinking of the girl whose kiss was still fresh on his lips, whom he had barely an hour since folded in his arms? Difficult questions to answer!

The train steamed into the station. Fred jumped into a rickshaw, put his trunk into another, and drove home. He went into his room; but why did he tremble *so* as his eyes rested on two letters lying on the table, the superscription on which was in a familiar handwriting? The sight of that dear handwriting thrilled him through and through. And then his eyes wandered to the wall, where a photo was hanging, the photo of a woman fair as a goddess with dark laughing eyes. But it was not the photo of Lennie.

"My darling!" he ejaculated almost involuntarily; "what have I done, what have I done?"

And that ejaculation, wrung from the depths of a lacerated heart, revealed himself to him. The old heartache still remained. The old passion still burned within him. Was he mad when he bound himself to Lennie? Did he not know that there was one woman, and one only, whom he loved with all the strength of his being? True his love was unreciprocated. But what did that matter? Could he not have worshipped her from a distance? And now—what had he done, what had he done?

Oh the pity of it all! The awakening had indeed come, but it had come too late. Oh the pity of it! Tenderly he broke open the letters and read them, read them not once, not twice, but over and over again, until he knew their contents almost by heart. They were full of the

usual assurances of friendship. True she called him her "darling Fred", and said she was proud of him and all that sort of thing; but there was not a word of love in them, and his heart was longing for love, and not for friendship. He sat down and answered the letter informing her of his recent and altogether unexpected engagement, and he gave her to understand that he all but adored Lennie. Yes, that was the best thing to be done. Why let his lost darling—lost to him now for ever—know at all of his foolish hopes and presumptuous aspirations? She would only laugh at them. And he sent it to the post, although he knew well that this meant that the gap between him and his goddess had widened considerably.

* * * *

Once again Fred stood upon the wind-swept cliff by the seaside and gazed after a vessel that was fast receding from Lanka's shores. It was the mail boat; and it was bearing away the last week's mails to London. He had written to his darling again confessing all. He could not rest till he had done so. And now he was content to abide by her decision. If knowing all she still wished to be his friend, why, then, he would never again give her cause to repent having extended her friendship to him. Never again would he breathe a word of love in her ears. That secret would be for ever locked up in his heart. And however difficult was the task, he would endeavour to be true and faithful to his Lennie, to be worthy of the great love which she had given him, and to think of the loss of that *other* one with resignation. But if on the other hand his Love scorned him and declined to have anything more to do with him, and deprived him of the precious privilege of receiving her letters and calling himself her friend, why, then, he would bid good-bye to her for ever and pass out of her life just as he had glided into it—like a shadow. And he would bear in silence his heavy load of suffering. But in either case never again would perfect happiness be his. And the ship went out of sight. The sun sank once more to rest. And the evening shadows fell. And Fred returned home, and taking the photo of his beloved gazed long and yearningly upon it, studying carefully the lineaments of that dear face. The unbidden tears gushed into his eyes, blurring his sight. He brushed them off hastily, and bent down and kissed the pictured face and said: "God bless you, my Beloved. Farewell!" And a long last farewell it turned out to be. Fred received no reply to his last two letters.

And so he came to the conclusion that she had no forgiveness for him: that she scorned to be his friend any longer. Well! He could hardly blame her for that. He only hoped that she would be more fortunate than himself, and that in the years to come she at least would find "perfect happiness". And he would of course marry Lennie. Honour bound him to her. But he felt that he and happiness had shaken hands and parted never to meet again. Dust and ashes were his portion for the rest of his days. Dust and ashes!

DERFLA.

IN THE JOKE HOUSE.

(Selected.)

THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

Inquirer: Who is the man on the hill-top?*Cynic*: That's the fellow who climbed to fame and fortune.*Inquirer*: And who are the fellows at the foot of the hill?*Cynic*: Friends of his waiting to see how undignified he'll look when he rolls down.

WRITTEN IN FAVOUR OF THE WIFE.

Doctor: Now, Mr. Moses Ikey, I will take your temperature.*Moses Ikey (wildly)*: Ack, my frient, you cannot. Eferyting is in the name of my wife.

THE FALLEN LEAF.

They were walking in the garden taking their similes from nature.

"You are my dear little clinging ivy tendril," he murmured.

"Yes, and you are my darling big bamboo," she sighed.

"And what by thunder am I?" cried the rejected one as he burst from a clump of bushes.

"You," she answered coldly. "Oh you are a fallen leaf."

He retires crest-fallen.

BUYING A CAPACITY.

Rich but Uneducated Mamma: Madam, well 'ow is my little gal getting on?*Boarding School Principal*: Fairly well! fairly well! If she lacks anything at all, it is a capacity for work.*Mamma*: A capacity! Let her 'ave it at once. Thank God 'er father could afford to buy 'er anything she wants.

PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE.

Would-be-Son-in-Law: Say, Mr. Brown, I—er—love your daughter, and want to marry her. Is there any insanity in the family?*Mr. Brown*: No, young man, there's not; and, what is more, there ain't going ter be.

A BIT OF ADVICE.

The best and most flattering present to send your maiden aunt at Christmas is an anonymous love-letter.

HOW THE ANGELS PROTECTED HIM.

A lawyer, who was defending a burglar caught red-handed in the act, said with impassioned utterance: "Gentlemen of the jury, the cold-hearted minions of hate may sneer at my client if they will, but I see a white-robed band of angels hovering above his head and beckoning you to acquit him."

Six months!

PAID IN FULL.

An Irishman was sitting in a station smoking, when a women came, and, sitting down beside him, remarked :

“Sir, if you were a gentleman you would not smoke here.”

“Ma’am,” he said, “if ye wuz a lady ye’d sit farther away.”

Pretty soon the woman burst out again : “If you were my husband I’d give you poison.”

“Well, mum,” returned the Irishman, as he nonchalantly puffed away at his pipe, “if ye wuz me wife I’d take it.”

DEFINITION OF A KISS.

Something rather dangerous,
 Something rather nice,
 Something rather naughty,
 Though it can’t be called a vice.

Many think it nonsense,
 Others think it wrong,
 You’ll all agree it’s jolly,
 Though it doesn’t last long.

ASPIRATIONS OF YOUNG LANKA.

It is the endeavour of the writer to explain to a sympathetic public what is really felt in the inmost hearts of our Island-country’s youth, and to beg on their behalf for a wider recognition of, and a more generous interest in, their aims. The cry has been heard, spasmodic, and seldom it is true, but nevertheless sincere and earnest, that the older, more experienced, and recognised patriotic sons of the soil should devote greater time and attention to their interests. The more the cry has been heard the more do we notice abuse and criticism, warning and gnashing of teeth. We are told that any movement organized and engineered by young men savours of a spirit of sedition and anarchy, that we in Ceylon are foolishly following the vagaries of Indian seditionists, and that students should not study—not at least politics and its sister science. Why our critics should invariably fall into this particular line of error to think that agitation cannot be constitutional when proposed by the young, and that a study of the present needs of the country is fraught with danger, inevitable danger to young minds, it is not quite possible to conjecture.

It is a pity that well-meaning critics are not generous enough to attribute purity of motives and sincerity of endeavour to the subjects of their criticism.

It is possible, nay may even be very true, that in their attempt to study the young men may be pursuing winding and tortuous paths. They may be sincerely but mistakenly convinced of the correctness of the view they take. They may at times in a moment of superabundant enthusiasm say or do things which may not stand the scrutiny and

analysis of calm, sober judgment. Such things must be admitted. But after all what do they show? At most they show the truth of the saying:—

“Can the brain keep cool and the heart keep quiet
When the blood is a river that is running riot?
And boys will be boys the old folks say,
And a man is the better who’s had his day.”

What should be done in such a case? Is an enterprise so noble, so fraught with consequences to be neglected because of the craven fear that the young men may act indiscreet? Are our country’s sons to remain at a distance and tell us “Be quiet! Be quiet!” Then will certainly come a time when we shall hear no more of the public-spiritedness, the genuine patriotism and devoted interest which mark out a C. E. Corea. We shall no more hear of the wide grasp of knowledge of public questions, or the recognised ability for commission-enquiry so characteristic of a Dr. Fernando. The day will then come when the research-work experience, the historical activities of a Paul Peries and a Donald Obeyesekere will be forgotten and awake nothing but a passing interest.

If efforts will not be made to enlighten the present generation, fifty years hence it will be as rare, as it is common now, to hear of protests and public meetings, discussions of public questions, and “manifestoes to an educated constituency”. Steeped in the commercialism of the age, with all their political notions subjected to a crooked and angular vision, their patriotic instincts well nigh crushed down and following like dumb-driven cattle the opinions of a master-mind, the Ceylonese of the years to come will present a sad spectacle of talents untrained and opportunities wasted. Huddled together without any political creed, and unable to discuss intelligently any public question, the future ones will stand a memorial to the general incapacity of their own times, and, worse still, to the carelessness and negligence of the men of our own.

In the contemplation of such a possibility can one help crying out in the fullness of one’s heart’s anxiety:—Oh, my country! For long ages the home of a noble and free race! Thou the diadem of the East, the land of a once mighty Eastern nation! Thou who had witnessed in the hey-day of thy glory, thy warriors led to victory by thy kings unsurpassed, seen by the greatness of an Alexander or the endurance of a Hannibal! Is it going to be the fate that patriotism, the priceless gem of the possessions of a country, is not to find a response in the bosoms of thy renegade children? Thou art about to witness the humiliating spectacle of thy children’s shameful cowardice in a slavish imitation of the Western ways and the absence of a legitimate pride in thy glory, thy greatness, thy history, and thy mighty achievements. If our country is to be saved from a situation so dismal, it is to her future sons that we must turn. But, alas! what will desire do in the face of ignorance? How can earnestness succeed where training has been neglected? Nor will genius avail anything in the absence of a true political education.

“Aspirations of Young Lanka” is at best a very vague term. It may mean a revolutionary spirit or the harmless attempt of some young folk to better their position. Its latitude may range from the fanaticism of political independence of Ceylon to the highly praiseworthy idea of a popular assembly representing an enlightened community. Or, again, it may suggest a fusion of the different factions and races and the evolution

of a Ceylonese community—a consummation devoutly to be desired according to the opinion of some.

The idea of a united Ceylon is a *millenium* that cannot be reached for a long time to come. The process—considering the fact that it is opposed to some of the most cherished prejudices of the day—must necessarily be long, tedious, and fraught with great misunderstanding.

It will be a happy day for this country when a *Vellala* youth, breaking through the trammel's of custom, will lead to the hymeneal altar a coy maiden of the *Rodiya* caste. Happy too will it be when an aristocratic upcountry *Kumarihamy*, with all the glory of her wealth and name, will accompany the bridal procession at a *Durawe* wedding. It will be a pleasant spectacle, though a little grotesque, to observe a low-country Appuhamy, conspicuous with his tortoise-shell comb, responding to the strains of a *Merry Widow* or a "*Septembre*" with a dainty fair-skinned maiden at a public dance.

In the ordinary course of events such a picture will not be realized for a century of years or more. Meanwhile we in Ceylon have many a theme to interest ourselves in. There is, for instance, the all-absorbing topic of the administrative problems. In superintending one's house, directing its finance, educating its children, it is seldom that we see of the power vested in a foreigner. Yet it is the case in our country today. Whilst the native labourer and the merchant supply the revenue of the country, it is the European who constitutes the brain, the dispensing power of its wealth. We see the vast sum of money spent yearly for European importations. We notice with regret that the salaries in such instances are double or three times the paltry pittance meted out to a native officer, with equal or even higher responsibilities, and we are eager to study the problem of our country's finance, the amount spent annually to pay the Civil Servants, who are enjoying a pension in England, and the still greater and ever-increasing salaries that fill the pockets of foreign importations.

According to the opinions of liberal-minded Englishmen, the theory of government by subject races is receiving a great deal of attention today. Lord Morley, whose name is revered and loved by many, calls the word freedom a "sacred expression"! Verily has Lord Macaulay described the situation in his usual forceful way. "We are free, we are civilized to very little purpose if we grudge to any portion of the human race an equal measure of freedom and civilization." What are the credentials of the Ceylonese today? Are they emulating the greatness of the past, by their conduct, their expensive habits—too expensive, alas! to be harmless—and their slavish imitation of the pernicious introductions of the west?

Or is it not more true to say that ours is a degenerate generation, and that unless an earnest attempt is made to arrest the progress of the westernized ways our future will be as sombre as the past had been great, and that instead of being the proud inheritors of a great name the future sons of Lanka will descend to the humiliating level of "hewers of wood and drawers of water"?

No, no; let not the thought be so dark and pathetic. Amidst the encircling gloom there still lingers a silver ray of hope, and the future, to an optimist, is still full of great possibilities. After all it will not be too much to hope for happier times, and see in our country the realization of the prophesy expressed by no less a distinguished person than the Gaekwar of Baroda:—

"To teach philosophy to the West and learn its science; impart purity of life to Europe and attain to her loftier political ideal; inculcate spirituality to the American mind and imbibe the business ways of its merchants."

E. A. P. WIJEYERATNE.

A GIRL'S MASQUERADE.

(A SHORT STORY.)

What is love? The glow-worm-like glitter of a day or two which vanishes fast into darkness. She is seldom found in these awful days of materialism. Love is a strange admixture of liking for the gaudy glitter which the man possesses, and for the man himself. The greater the material wealth of the man himself, the stronger the "love" of the woman, though the owner of the riches be a monstrous beauty. How woman in these days crave for wealth, for fame, or at least for the soothing consolation of being the fiancée of a well-to-do man!

Evelyn Strafford was just returning home. An early moon had cast its glamour all around, and the massive cathedral looked sombre and spectral. Under the silvery rays of the moon Evelyn looked decidedly beautiful. Only the day before Ben Overleigh was introduced to her, and this evening's chance meeting was to be fateful to both. It was only a winning look and a smile, which stirred something within a heart, and Ben, believing that her heart responded to his, flung himself madly under her influence.

Under some pretext or other meeting after meeting followed, and the ties of intimacy were made stronger. Days turned to weeks, and weeks to months with its usual regularity; friendship gradually blossomed into love, as the dawn precedes the morning. Ah! friendship keep it with a woman and you would esteem her; allow it to grow into love, and you may learn to your cost how difficult it is to probe into a woman's heart.

Ben Overleigh walked to and fro from his duties with a joyful heart and firm tread. He believed he possessed his heart's desire—a young girl, just sixteen, with that deceptive look of innocence which has ruined many a man.

It was a bright May evening. Dusky twilight hushed the evening to rest. Ben and Evelyn were seated underneath a jasmine arbour, with whose sweet scent the air all around was redolent. They were discussing literature this particular evening, and were just occupied in analysing "Saleh", "Master Christopher", and the "Downfall of the Gods," if the gods be unprincipled Englishmen, when Ben whispered to Evelyn's hearing:

"Evelyn, I have something to ask you," said Ben, who the day before had prepared an elaborate introduction before he told her the question nearest to his heart. Introduction, preparation, and everything vanished, and he blurted out the question bluntly.

"What is it?" asked Evelyn.

"Something I have always longed to ask you."

"Tell it then," was the girl's reply.

Evelyn knew full well what he meant. She only longed to hear something sweet and tender, for she had arrived at the age when she could fall in love with Love.

"Evy," he said in a tremulous tone, "I love you. Will you promise to be mine?"

The girl's face clouded only for a moment. She gazed afar off, occupied in some sort of contemplation, and then said :

"Ben, I am sorry it has come to this. Not that I hold you low in my estimation. I have not yet decided as to what I am to do. At present, Ben, I prefer the life of a recluse in a convent."

The twilight which hushed the evening had faded into darkness. Innumerable stars shone in the blue skies, but Ben's heart sank with a sad presentiment.

* * * *

The morning was bitterly cold. Mornings away on the hills are generally cold; but to-day a thick mist enveloped the neighbourhood, and drops of dew fell pit-a-pat from the branches of the trees to the green sward.

Evelyn sat alone in the park, wrapped up in her furs and flannels, evidently expecting someone. Her keen and ever alert look betrayed the fact that hers was a pre-arranged tryst.

Through the dim mist the form of a young man could be seen approaching where Evelyn was seated. He was of the middle height, fair of complexion, and well-built; to some extent one may style him good-looking. He was no other than Frank Goodwin, Evelyn's young medical cousin.

Ere Frank approached her Evelyn, at the tramp of feet, turned round, and with a fascinating smile bade "Good morning".

"Good morning, Evy," and without much further ado he seated himself close to the girl. He was her cousin, and that was Evelyn's shield from the proprieties of society. But cousins often break the rigid rules enjoined both by the civil and canon laws, and enter into that state of familiarity which is known to us as matrimony,

The fact is Evelyn thought she dearly loved her young cousin; and when a girl loves a man she hunts him out at any cost. There they sat oblivious of the maxim that time flies, chatting and laughing gaily.

The sun had already risen and dissolved the mist, on the grass the dew lay like glittering pearls. Away they walked, these two happy in their society, homeward bound.

Evelyn after the flush of exercise looked charming, so charming that her cousin, unable to withstand her charms any longer, drew her closely to his breast and imprinted on her lips a very warm kiss.

"Oh! how naughty of you Frank!" said the girl. "Naughty!" replied Frank.

"Yes, and I would not meet you again in the mornings," protested the girl in a tone of hypocritical anger.

That evening the demon of wickedness seized Evelyn, and she wired to Ben: "Gave up convent, meet station tomorrow."

Poor Ben! how his heart beat with happiness, for he interpreted the telegram as a hint of her reply, in the affirmative, to the question he had already asked her.

The train puffed into the station just to time. Ben met her there, attended to all things which should make her comfortable, and drove home together. To Ben that morning the sun shone brighter than usual,

the sparrows chirped amorous ditties, in short his imagination conjured us everything in a very agreeable aspect. His thoughts ran thus: a home, cosy and comfortable, with Evy as his wife, chubby children playing around his knees, to him the consummation of all happiness!

* * * *

A few days after Evelyn's arrival. She was seated one evening at the piano. Her tender fingers ran deftly over the piano keys; she was playing with all the Bohemian variations "When other Lips". She was too pre-occupied to notice the arrival of Ben, who was standing by her side listening to what the girl played. At length she ceased, and turning round she saw Ben by her side.

"Holloa Ben," she exclaimed involuntarily.

"Holloa!"

"Have you brought the bracelet you carried away from me the other evening?"

"Yes, I have," replied Ben, and raising up his coat sleeves he showed her the bracelet fixed tightly round his wrist.

"Play me something, Evy. I like so much to hear you play," Ben said entreatingly, and approached closer to the girl, who was seated on the piano stool.

She turned over the leaves of the music book and hit upon the latest—"Love Me and the World is Mine". Having finished playing the song she coquetishly looked into his face.

Ben's heart beat faster, and he looked volumes at the girl. He seemed inclined to enfold her within the pale of his arms and smother her with kisses.

"Have you seen the postcard 'Love me and the world is mine'?" asked Ben. "It is really very lovely."

"No," replied the girl. "I should like to see it." She closed the piano, and, rising from the stool, seated herself on a chair. Ben was seated a few fathoms from her.

"Oh Ben, do give my bracelet," said Evy.

"On conditions," replied Ben.

"What are they?"

"That you allow me a kiss."

She looked sullen and angry. The girl pretended to dislike the idea of being kissed; but that is the trick of the trade, in common *parlance*, with women. Try as she might, Ben was determined not to return her the bracelet unless she yielded to his conditions. Thus they sat arguing and discussing various matters till the girl once more drawled out.

"Do return my bracelet, Ben."

"Not until you yield."

At last the girl, with much reluctance, yielded. Ben drew her nearer to him, and, satisfying himself that there were no curious eyes, kissed her with the burning warmth of Love's first kisses. This, thought Ben, is the best opportunity of plying his question again. Clasping her fingers lovingly he asked her: "Could you now be mine?"

What was it that made the girl to promise? Was it due to the mischievous gambols of Cupid, or to her own treacherous intentions? She looked lovingly, so lovingly at him—what man could have disbelieved her then?—and replied:

"Yes, I do not mind."

Thus, they were engaged. The promise contains every thing essential, and not in the formalities imposed by society and religion; not in the

beating of drums and the liturgy chanted by well-meaning priests, but in that one word "Yes". How few realise the sacredness of that promise! The sacredness of love, consummated by matrimony, is in that one word "Yes".

Years passed on, and still they were engaged—Ben Overleigh to Evelyn Strafford. Some day, thought Ben, the *Independent* may perhaps have a paragraph under the matrimonial column announcing his engagement. Ben worked hard and well. He was the favourite among his colleagues. A few months more, and he would have been in a position to support Evy as his wife with a comfortable home.

With the passing of years passed Frank Goodwin his medical exams, and passed the love of the girl over to her cousin. She loved him, did she? It is hard to answer. Her unscrupulous and avaricious father thought it a fit marriage, she "perfect puppet" to a father's threat, thought so too.

One day they were married—Frank and Evelyn. Was Evelyn happy? In a future number of the *YOUNG LANKA* this question may perhaps be answered. But this much I know, that retribution follows sooner or later for one's evil deeds. It was not in a playful spirit that the Sacred Text preached "Vengeance is mine saith the Lord and I'll repay them". As for poor Ben, he survived the shock of Evy's cruelty and treachery; and with the passing of time this incident was buried in the dust of oblivion, and "passed away like a tale that is told".

O. M. E. GEORGESZ.

THE HOPE OF LANKA.

(AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE.)

Chap. I.

THE COMING OF DHATSENA.

It was noon, hot sultry noon. The air was heavy and oppressive. Overhead a tropical sun blazed brightly, and under its scorching, pitiless rays two men—Buddhist priests by their dress—were toiling wearily onward. They were walking side by side in thoughtful silence.

One of them appeared to be about forty years of age. His head and face were clean shaven, in accordance with the custom adopted by the Buddhist priesthood. Austere habits and long meditation had left their marks on his countenance, and had completely effaced from every feature all trace of the grosser passions of humanity. He was strikingly handsome; but it was no earthly beauty that illumined his countenance. There was something so ethereal, so spiritualised about him that one at once understood that here was a man whose nature partook little of the petty follies and foibles of mankind. Not that he was a hard-hearted ascetic, a surly misanthrope who had no eye for the beauties of this world. Far from it. He was a man with a large sympathy for nature, both animate and inanimate, and his kindly eye and benign expression of face betokened that, though above the common herd himself, he yet looked with an indulgent eye on the failings of his less fortunate fellow creatures. Add to this that he had a broad, expansive forehead, denot-

ing intellect of the very highest order, and you have the picture complete.

His companion was yet a mere boy. Scarce sixteen summers had passed over his head. He was tall for his age, and well-formed, but rather delicate of limb and feature. As I have already mentioned, they were both arrayed as Buddhist priests. We in Ceylon are quite familiar with that dress—with the long flowing yellow robes, the priestly parasol upheld on high, (a frail protection from the burning rays of the sun), the mendicant's bowl, the fan. They had been on the road since break of dawn. Now it was nigh eleven o'clock in the forenoon, but still their destination seemed as far off as ever. The perspiration was pouring down their bodies. Their breath came in short, quick gasps. Yet they trudged on with indomitable perseverance, for danger lay behind them. Each moment's delay was fraught with the deadliest peril. And in speed alone lay safety,

The elder monk, whose name was Mahanama, showed no signs of weariness. His eyes had a hunted look in them; and it was plain that his thoughts were far away, and dwelt not on their present condition. But the lad was now utterly worn out. Yet no word of complaint broke from his mouth. Setting his lips tightly together the plucky little fellow hastened his tottering steps forward. But there is a limit to human endurance, and the little Dhatuseña had crossed that limit. The spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak. His aching limbs refused to support him any longer, and with a low sigh he sank down. That awoke the older man from his reverie. A sharp pang of self-reproach pierced his heart. A look of tender solicitude passed over his face. His eyes beaming with a wealth of love and tenderness, he bent over the little mite. The latter was quite motionless. He had fainted away.

Gently, with almost a woman's soft touch, the monk took the little Dhatuseña in his arms. Long and affectionately he gazed on the pale, rigid face.

"Poor lad," he murmured, "I was inconsiderate not to have known that his fragile form could not possibly support such fatigue. Yet methought he would tell me when he was tired out. What courage, what strength of will, what fortitude of spirit to have kept silent so long! My little Dhatuseña," and here he pressed the unconscious lad's lips warmly with his own, "my dear little nephew, thou art indeed worthy to be a king."

A huge mango tree grew by the side of the road and overshadowed part of it with its leafy branches fantastically interlaced. Here in the refreshing shade the monk softly laid Dhatuseña down and fanned him gently and bathed his brow with clear, limpid water from a purling stream hard by. Consciousness soon returned, and the lad, sitting up with a bewildered air, hastened to mutter an apology for having let weakness overcome him. But the monk cut his words short.

"Tut, tut," he cried. "It is I who ought to be blamed for what has happened. I overtaxed thy strength, and behold the result! Art hungry, dear boy? If so, here is some milk rice in my bowl, rice I got at the last hut we passed. Come let us partake of it. That will impart new vigour to thy exhausted frame. Then having rested awhile we will continue our journey. It is imperative that we reach *Gcnasadi Vihara* ere nightfall, for the forest is infested with bands of desperate robbers and outlaws, who reckon little of the respect due to our robe. And, mayhap, the baffled hirelings of King Pandu are even now riding behind us

in hot pursuit. Ah me! ah me! to think that the rightful heir to Lanka's crown is wandering this day a homeless waif with no other escort than that afforded by a feeble, irritable, imbecile old man."

"The heir to Lanka's crown, uncle," Dhatusena responded with a glow of pride, "will yet win back his rights." And the feeble, irritable, imbecile old man, (he could scarce help smiling at this ludicrous description of his uncle), who is his companion at present, will yet live to be his Prince Minister, his guide, his friend."

"The blessings of the Devas rest on thy head, Dhatusena," Mahanama made reply with a scarcely perceptible break in his voice, "I verily believe thou wilt win back thy rights. But as for me, I prefer the cloister to the palace, the company of my brother *Bikkshus* to that of courtly knights and high-born dames. And I would much rather go down to posterity as the author of the literary work I contemplate bringing out—a history of our fair isle—than as the victor of a hundred famous battles. In the hour of adversity I found consolation in the sacred robe I am wearing. I have since learned to love and cherish it. I would be churlish, nay more than churlish, were I to abandon it when fortune smiles on me again."

"But, Reverend Father," interposed Dhatusena quietly, "you forget that I too have taken the vows of a *Samanera*. So would it not be churlish on my part, if when the opportunity comes I lay aside this parasol for a king's sceptre, this light robe for the gilded raiment that decks a monarch's form?"

"Nay, nay, my son, there thou art wrong. A lofty destiny is reserved for thee. Thou must fulfil that destiny. 'Tis true thou hast taken priestly vows, but they are temporary. Thou hast not dedicated thyself to the cause of religion for the rest of thy life, as I have done. Besides, think of the duty thou owest thy country. See in what a pitiable state it is—subject to a foreign foe, its religion overthrown. Lanka, poor bleeding Lanka, has she no claims on thy person? Thou art her hope, her mainstay, her future, her all in all. Her prosperity, her happiness depend on thee. Thou art still young, very young. The time for striking a blow at our Dravidian oppressors has not come yet; but when it does come—which the *Devas* grant will be soon—then thou must obey the call, the call of honour, the call to arms."

Here Mahanama paused to see the effect of his words on the lad. Dhatusena was drinking in the fiery words greedily. Emotions he had never felt before were raging in his heart. Visions of future greatness danced before his eyes, and it was in tones thrilling with a new born joy that he ejaculated.

"But do you not think, Reverend Sir, that my religion should claim the first place in my heart and that a secondary position should be assigned to politics?"

"Thou art quite right," was Mahanama's response. "But remember this. Even the cause of religion thou couldst serve better as Dhatusena king of Lanka than as Dhatusena a Buddhist Priest in some obscure monastery. In the latter capacity thou couldst accomplish but little that others have not already done. But in the former thy work would be truly glorious. To become the champion, the regenerator of Lanka, to replace our fallen religion on the proud pedestal which it once occupied,—would this not be a noble ambition? Would this not be doing true service to the Master? But now it is time we continued our journey. We have tarried too long. Come, my son, lean on me if thou

art weary. It is dangerous to delay longer than is absolutely necessary." The two now rose, gathered up their few belongings, and leaving—not without some reluctance—the grateful shelter of the mango tree took to the dusty road once more. They did not make any more halts, but pressed on with as much speed as was possible under the circumstances. The shades of night were falling fast when they reached the hospitable roof of Gonasadi *Vihara*, where a warm welcome awaited the famished and belated travellers. There I will leave them for the time and proceed to give a brief account of the strange vicissitudes of fortune which reduced these two royal princes to their present deplorable state.

Chap. II.

A RETROSPECTION.

Fourteen years before this story opens—in 436 A.D.—Pandur, a Tamil chieftain from Southern India, invaded Lanka. After a sanguinary conflict Mittasena, the then King of Lanka, lost his crown and life, and with his death the direct line of the Wijayan dynasty became extinct. But there was a younger branch which had settled down in the wild and rugged district of Rubuna during the stormy days of Subbha. After Mittasena's tragic end the crown devolved on Dattha, prince of Ruhuna, the representative of that younger branch of which mention has been made. On hearing of his royal kinsman's death Dattha hastily collected what forces he could and determined to repel the Dravidian conquerors and assert his own right to the vacant throne. The result was fatal to the cause of Sinhalese independence. Pitted against a foe much superior to himself in numbers Dattha had not the slightest chance of success. His small but gallant army was almost annihilated; and he himself, receiving a mortal wound, sank dying into the arms of his brother-in-law Mahanama and gasped with his last breath:

"My boys, my fatherless Dhatusena and Silatissa! Take care of them, Mahanama. Be a father to them. Merciful *Devas*, my life-blood is fast ebbing away. My children—revenge!" And with that the noble spirit of the patriotic Dattha sped to the realms of the *Devas*.

Mahanama gladly accepted the sacred trust confided to him, Assuring himself that his brother-in-law was indeed no more, he goaded his elephant into the midst of the serried ranks of the Damilas and, with a few faithful comrades, literally hacked his way through the enemy. Sadly he turned his way homewards with the scanty remnants of that noble army which had marched out but a few days back with buoyant hopes of success.

The direful tidings came as a shock to the beautiful and high-born Ratnavali Dattha's wife. Broken-hearted, she died, and so the two little princes, of whom Dhatusena was the elder by a couple of years, were rendered motherless as well. Misfortunes never come singly they say. A few weeks after this sad bereavement a fresh catastrophe befell the ill-fated royal house.

One fine morning the two young princes were playing with their beautiful little cousin Pemavati, Mahanama's only daughter, in the grassy lawn that fronted the palace gates.

Suddenly Dhatusena came running in alone, much excited and flurried. His eyes were red with anger. His little fists were clenched. "Bad man take away little brother and sister," he cried in childish prattle, with the tears pouring down his face. Mahanama rushed

forward to ascertain what it all meant; but when he reached the playground the two children were nowhere to be seen. Not a trace could be found of them. They had disappeared as completely as if the earth had opened and swallowed them up. A search was speedily instituted. Parties of servants were sent out in all directions, but in vain. No traces of the missing children could be discovered. It was plain that some evil-intentioned person had stolen them.

Mahanama was well nigh overwhelmed with grief at this unfortunate occurrence. His wife had died at childbirth. The little daughter she had left behind as a pledge of affection was his all in all, the apple of his eye. And now she was gone; young Silatissa too, the boy who had been left to his care by his dead brother. He felt that he had been flagrantly neglectful in his duty in having allowed the children to play alone without an attendant to look after them. All these misfortunes preyed heavily on his mind. He became pale and thin. He lost his appetite. For hours he would remain plunged in a dull stupor.

At last the necessity for action aroused him from his apathy. The Tamils, flushed with victory, were marching upon Ruhuna. Mahanama rallied the Sinhalese round him and offered a desperate resistance. Battle after battle was fought and lost. City after city surrendered in submission to the triumphant Pandu. At last from the walls of Magama Mahanama witnessed the overthrow of his last body of efficient troops. Then he knew that all hope was gone. All his efforts were in vain. The work of emancipating Lanka was reserved for a greater, mightier hero. In the dead of night, divesting himself of his princely garments, he fled with the infant Dhatusena in his arms to no one knew whither.

A heavy price was set on his head by King Pandu, and the whole country was scoured for the fugitives, but with no satisfactory results. At last it was bruited about that he had perished, and King Pandu—perhaps the wish was the father to the thought—accepting this report as correct, gave up the search and consoled himself with the reflection that the last spark of opposition was extinguished.

Meanwhile, what of Mahanama and his charge? Escaping from the beleaguered city of Magama in the manner recounted he took refuge in a monastery at Anuradhapura.

The brothers there were staunch loyalists, and received the fugitive prince with a right royal welcome. A few months later another *Bikkshu* was added to that convent, and his name was Mahanama. That was fourteen years ago. Dhatusena grew up a promising youth. When he had attained his tenth year Mahanama induced him to take the robe. He would be safer thus, he said, for no one would surely dream of searching for the heir to the throne of Lanka under the garb of a Buddhist *Samanera*. So jealously was Mahanama's secret guarded, that the usurper had not the slightest inkling that his old time enemy of Ruhuna was still alive, and that in a *Vihara* at Anuradhapura, under his very nose as it were, a child was growing up who was destined to be the scourge of his race and the overthrower of his dynasty. A few days before this story commences an adventure befell Mahanama which was to have an important bearing on his future life as well as that of his pupil. He was walking down one of the principal streets of Anuradhapura when a richly-dressed distinguished-looking Tamil strode up to him, favoured him with a rude stare, and with a muttered apology fell back. Mahanama pretended not to have noticed this extraordinary

conduct; but all the time his heart was palpitating violently under his yellow robes.

He had recognised the man. It was Pithiya, one of Pandu's most intrepid warriors, and the man from whose hand Dattha, Dhatusena's father, had received his death-wound.

At any other time Mahanama would have endeavoured to avenge his brother-in-law's death. But he felt, and felt rightly too, that any disturbance created now would seriously imperil the safety of his charge, the young prince. His first duty lay by the living. Once Dhatusena was conveyed away from danger, there was time enough to think of avenging the dead. These thoughts flashed with incredible rapidity through the priest's mind. Assuring himself that he was not being followed, he started at a run for the *Vihara*. Old Abhaya, the gate-keeper, was shocked to see the unedifying spectacle. Did his eyes deceive him, or was it indeed the Reverend *Thero* Mahanama, the usually sedate and sober Mahanama, that was hurrying towards him with robes tucked up, and at a speed that a professional athlete need not have been ashamed of? Alas! it was indeed but too true. Abhaya groaned aloud, averting his eyes from the unclerical sight, and, with pious horror depicted on his face, rushed inside with the announcement that the worthy monk had taken leave of his senses. Mahanama had meanwhile arrived at the gate, and finding it locked began to thunder away at it with his fists. None of the priests dared even to approach him. His face looked so wild and haggard that their worst fears seemed to be confirmed. At last one bolder than the rest ventured to admit him.

A few words sufficed to clear away all doubts as to his sanity, and poor Abhaya looked extremely sheepish when it was found how groundless were his apprehensions.

Early next morning, after bidding the kindly brothers goodbye, Mahanama and his youthful *protégé* started for Gonasadi *Vihara*, a secluded monastery on the borders of Ruhuna. Scarcely had they taken their departure when a troop of soldiers, under Pithiya's command, surrounded the *Vihara*, and made a thorough search of every nook and corner, only to find the birds flown!

(To be continued in our next issue.)

J. A. W.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The Educated Seat.

At last, after an unaccountable delay of nearly eighteen months, the elections have once more hove into sight. That they would take place by the middle of next month is now almost certain. Our readers must not expect us to discuss in these columns the respective qualifications of the two candidates who have presented themselves for election. For the present we mean to have as little to do with politics as possible.

Ours is no party paper, and we do not propose to dictate to the public—as has been attempted in a certain quarter—whom it should support in the approaching contest. At the same time we make no secret of the fact that our personal sympathies lie with Mr. Ramanathan.

To us it seems preposterous to institute any sort of comparison between the renowned veteran debater, the greater part of whose life has been spent in fighting for the rights of the Ceylonese, and a gentleman who has *yet* to distinguish himself in the political arena. But let it also be clearly understood that we do not seek to impose our individual opinion upon the constituency. The educated young Ceylonese, we are sure, do not require the services of a mentor to direct them in the proper choice of a representative.

Ourselves. Great efforts have been made to make this Magazine worthy of its name and object. With this purpose in view we have spared no pains in securing for our pages contributions from writers of unquestioned talent and acknowledged repute. Our contents cover a wide and comprehensive range of subjects, and should appeal to and satisfy the requirements of all sets of readers. The general reader will find the current topics of the month exhaustively dealt with in our editorial columns. The student of history will find much to interest him in the writings of *Historicus*, who makes an attempt to depict in attractive and graphic language some of the more stirring incidents recorded in Lanka's annals.

A distinctive feature of our Magazine in this and all subsequent issues would be a short biography of some great man celebrated in history as a warrior, a statesman, a writer, or a philosopher; for is it not elevating as well as encouraging to read and muse upon the lives of those master-spirits who have from time to time influenced the thought or guided the destinies of mankind? In the present number our life-sketch is of Mr. Ramanathan, than whom no other living Ceylonese has contributed more to the political and intellectual advancement of the colony.

Then again our Magazine will not be wanting in the element of healthy and interesting fiction. Persons past the *premiere jeunesse* may be satisfied with long-winded essays on abstract questions or wearisome disquisitions on politics; but the young and romantic require something more exciting, more thrilling, something with a tender and more human note of interest. We have endeavoured to meet this want by including in our pages two entralling stories of Love and Lanka told by Messrs. Roland Perera and O. M. E. Georgesz respectively. We hope to make it a feature of the Magazine to have in our pages in every subsequent issue at least one complete love story. The poet was quite right,—was he not?—when he wrote:—

“Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below and gods above.”

Another contribution to which we wish to draw special attention is Master Copleston Dias Bandaranayake's—his photo by the bye is given on the frontispiece—account of his visit to the buried cities with gun and kodak. His is a splendid juvenile effort, and our readers would be agreeably surprised to learn that Master Bandaranayake is only fourteen years old.

We have also to offer our sincere thanks to Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, the talented Editor of the Ceylon Law Students' Magazine, for his well-written and well-thought-out article on the “Aspirations of Young Lanka”. It is the sort of article that might well grace the pages of a magazine of higher pretensions than our own; but then that is *just* what we expected from him when we requested him to honour us with a contribution.

The young Ceylonese ought to be proud of having so able a writer as Mr. Wijeyeratne to voice their opinions and advocate their cause. We hope to be able to provide our readers with many more articles of the same type from Mr. Wijeyeratne's facile pen. In the next issue of the YOUNG LANKA will appear the first of a series of articles on "Menticulture", by Mr. E. Felix W. Jayawardene.

**To
Would-Be
Contributors.**

One of our objects is to render available a fair and open field for all young literary aspirants. We know of many young men whose talents are—so to speak—hid under a bushel and allowed to rust for want of proper encouragement and stimulation. We assure our readers that contributions will receive at our hands all consideration. Contributions for the next number close by the 30th December, and must be written on one side of the paper only.

**To Our
Subscribers.**

The success of this Magazine would depend in a very large measure on the support and encouragement it receives at the hands of the public. We only request you to give us a fair trial, and we guarantee that you will never regret having become a subscriber to the YOUNG LANKA. We have no doubt that our appeal for support would be generously responded to. Subscriptions and donations would be thankfully accepted by the Editor, YOUNG LANKA, "The Walauwa," Mutwal.

