

# Ceylon Literary Register

THIRD SERIES.

VOL. III.

JUNE, 1933.

No. 6.

## The Trustworthiness of the Mahāvamsa

BY

WILHELM GEIGER, PH.D.

(Reprinted from the *Indian Historical Quarterly*)

THE "Great Chronicle" of Ceylon, the *Mahāvamsa*, is generally divided into two main parts, the Mahāvamsa in the narrower sense of the word and the so-called Cūlavamsa, the "Little Chronicle." The end of the first part is easily recognised at ch. XXXVII, v. 50 where the history of King Mahāsenā's reign terminates (362 A.C.) Here in all our manuscripts we read the words *Mahāvamsa nitthito* and in most of them also *Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa* clearly indicating the end of a work and commencement of a new one. The Dīpavamsa, which appears to be a ground-work of the Mahāvamsa, similarly ends with the death of Mahāsenā; the Mahāvamsa Tīkā also does not extend beyond ch. XXXVII, v. 50.

Nevertheless the end of the Mahāvamsa must have been mutilated. Each chapter of the chronicle has a final stanza composed in an artificial metre, and we expect such a stanza also at the end of the whole poem. But its last half sloka simply runs as:

*evam puññam apunnam ca subahum so upācīni,*

and the Cūlavamsa begins with the verse:

*asādhusamgamen' evam yāvajīvam subhāsubham  
katvā gato yathākammaṃ so Mahāsenabhūpati.*

It is clear that the compiler of the *Cūlavamsa* has intentionally veiled the break, and it is difficult to find it out without the help of the *Dīpavamsa*, the *Ṭikā*, and the manuscripts.

The *Cūlavamsa* as far as I now can see, consists of three different portions.<sup>1</sup> According to the opinion which hitherto was generally accepted, the first part of the *Cūlavamsa* ends with the reign of Parakkamabāhu II (end of ch. 85). Tradition calls its compiler *Dhammakitti*. This name occurs more than once. Wickremasinghe<sup>2</sup> identified our *Dhammakitti* with the Thera bearing that name who is mentioned in 84, 11. He was a famous monk, living in Tambaraṭṭha. King Parakkamabāhu II invited him to Ceylon to help him, no doubt, in purifying the church. Malalasekera following Wickremasinghe says :<sup>3</sup> "The history of the island from the reign of Mahāsen A.C. 302 [*sic*] to the time of Pandit Parakkamabāhu of Dambadeniya [= P.II] was compiled by *Dhammakitti* II under royal patronage."

But I succeeded in finding out unquestionable traces of a break in our chronicle after 79, 84. In four of the manuscripts the words *Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa* are inserted and a fifth manuscript has three division marks after v. 84, as is generally done at the end of a pariccheda. Now just at 79, 84 the history of the reign of Parakkamabāhu I comes to an end, and the preceding verses contain a summary of the meritorious works performed by the king, probably an extract from his *Puññapotthaka*. It is, therefore, clear that Parakkamabāhu I was the favourite hero of the compiler of the first portion of the *Cūlavamsa*, that this portion ends with his death A.C. 1186, and that the chapters 80 following constitute a second part compiled by another chronicler. Further it now becomes probable that the compiler of the first portion of the *Cūlavamsa* (37, 51-79, 84) was not *Dhammakitti* II mentioned in 84, 11, but an older Thera bearing the same name, perhaps the author of the *Dāṭhāvamsa* *Dhammakitti* I, who lived under Parakkamabāhu I about the end of his reign and under his immediate successors. The exact date of the composition of the *Dāṭhāvamsa*, according to the introductory stanzas compared with *Cūlavamsa* 80, 49f., is the year 1211 A.D.<sup>4</sup>

1. I do not take into consideration the final chapter 101 which has been added by Sumaṅgala and Batuwantudawa, the authors of the *editio princeps*.

2. Catalogue of the Sinhalese Manuscripts in the British Museum, p. 31.

3. The Pāli Literature of Ceylon, p. 142.

4. Malalasekera (p.66) says that the *Dāṭhāvamsa* was written in the twelfth century. This appears to be a slip of the pen.

The second part of the Cūlavam̐sa does not end with Parakkama-bāhu II's reign (89, 71), but it extends to chapter 90, v. 102 or 104 (Parakkamabāhu IV, 1303-1333). This is clearly shown by the manuscripts. One of them abruptly ends at v. 102. In another manuscript the portion of the leaf after v. 104 is left blank and the sequel begins on a new leaf. Two manuscripts have a double division mark after the same verse. The difference in the manuscript regarding the final verse of the second part seems to prove that the compiler of the following portion again intentionally mutilated the end of the preceding one and composed the two stanzas 103 and 104 in order to make the break unnoticeable.

The third and last part of the Cūlavam̐sa extends from the reign of Bhuvanekabāhu III (ch. 90, v.5) to that of Kittisirirājasīha (1747-81). We learn from the chronicle itself (99, 76ff.) that it was composed at Kirtisirirājasīha's direction, as the Mahāvam̐sa on examination proved to be deficient. It ended with the kings of Hatthiselapura (now Kurunegala). This perfectly agrees with what I said above about the break in the manuscripts after the history of Parakkamabāhu IV, for, *this king had in fact his residence at Kurunegala.*

The author of the last part of the chronicle probably was the Thera Tibbotuvave Sumaṅgala who had come from Siam and played an important part in the Buddhist church in the second half of the 18th century.

The whole Ceylon chronicle, therefore, consists of four parts:—

- I. *Mahāvam̐sa*—chs. 1-37 50; 544 B.C.—362 A.C.
- II. *Cūlavam̐sa* :
  - 1st portion chs. 37, 51— 79, 84; 362 A.C.—1186 A.C.
  - 2nd „ „ 79, 85— 90, 102; 1186 A.C.—1333 „
  - 3rd „ „ 90, 105—100, 292; 1333 A.C.—1781 „

The author of I is *Mahānāma*, of II. 1, *Dhammakitti*, of II. 3, *Sumaṅgala*; the author of II. 2 is unknown.

I need not say that, if we try to inquire into the question of the trustworthiness of the chronicle, each part must be treated separately. As to the *first part* (chs. 1-37, 50) I shall confine myself to a few remarks, as the matter has been fully dealt with in the Introduction to my translation of the poem.<sup>1</sup>

1. *Mahāvam̐sa* or the Great Chronicle of Ceylon translated, London, Pali Text Society, 1912, pp. xiiff.

1. There is a good number of fables, legends and tales of marvels in the Mahāvamsa, and we must in each particular case attempt to find out whether there is in the narrative an historical kernel or not. It is, for instance, evident that the story of the three visits of the Buddha to Lankā in ch. 1 is purely legendary, invented at a later time in the island itself in order to legitimate its sanctity. But we stand on a firmer ground in regard to the report of the three Buddhist Councils (chs. 3-5). It is not necessary to assume that the report is correct in all its details. But the fact itself can hardly be called into question. The Northern Buddhist tradition mentions only two Councils, but the confusion that exists in this tradition regarding the date of the Second Council does not recommend it as more worthy than the Southern tradition.<sup>1</sup>

There is also some discrepancy between the Mahāvamsa on the one side, and the Jaina books and the Purāṇas on the other concerning the list of Indian kings preceding Asoka. Chiefly the name of Kālāsoka occurring only in the Dīpavamsa and the Mahāvamsa is much disputed. But at least the names and facts mentioned in Mhvs. 5. 15ff., are accepted as true history even by such scholars who otherwise look upon the Ceylon chronicles with the utmost scepticism.<sup>2</sup>

The passage runs thus :

Nava Nandā tato<sup>3</sup> āsum kamen' eva narādhipā  
 te pi dvāvisa vassāni rajjaṃ samanūsāsisaṃ./  
 Moriyānaṃ khattiyānaṃ vaṃse jātaṃ sirīdharaṃ  
 Candagutto ti paññātaṃ Cāṇakko brāhmaṇo tato/  
 navamaṃ Dhananandaṃ taṃ ghātetvā caṇḍakodhāvā  
 sakale Jambudīpasmiṃ rajje samabhisiñci so./  
 So catuvisa vassāni rājā rajjaṃ akārayi  
 tassa putto Bindusāro aṭṭhavisati Kārayi/  
 Bindusārasutā āsuṃ satamaṃ eko ca vissutā  
 Asoko āsi tesamaṃ tu puññatejōbaliddhiko/

It is sufficiently proved by this and similar passages that the compilers of the Dīpa—and Mahā-vamsa did not arbitrarily invent the narratives, but took their information from a source which not only contained legends and fables but also good historical tradition prevailing

1. See Mhvs. trsl., pp. lixff.

2. Smith, Early History of India, pp. 110ff.

3. *i.e.* after Kālāsoka. I do not lay stress upon the exactness of the numbers.

in India. We would cast away the good with the bad, if we neglected the Ceylon chronicles in the reconstruction of the Indian history during the period from the Buddha's death to king Asoka.

2. The oldest period of Sinhalese history from Vijaya to Muṭasiva (Mhvs. ch. 6—ch. 11, 6) is rather obscure. The story of Vijaya's descent from a lion is a typical legend of totemistic character and explains his clan name Sihalā. The colonisation of Ceylon by a group of immigrants from India may be taken as historical, and perhaps also the name of Vijaya as their leader. But not even the question from which part of India the colonists came can be answered in an unobjectionable manner. The reports in the *Dīpavaṃsa* and *Mahāvāṃsa* can hardly be harmonised. The chronology is certainly arranged with the purpose of arriving at a chronological coincidence of Vijaya's landing in Ceylon with the year of the Buddha's death. What the chronicle tells us about the deeds of Vijaya and his immediate successors is a mixture of sound tradition and legends, and it is impossible to disentangle all the difficulties.

3. Things change for the better during the reign of Devānampiyatissa. There is a widespread tradition in Ceylon, the fundamental tradition of the whole ecclesiastical history, (1) that king Devānampiyatissa was a contemporary of king Asoka, (2) that Buddhism was first preached in Ceylon under king Devānampiyatissa, and (3) that it was preached by Mahinda, a son of king Asoka. We may, of course, criticise the details of the narrative in Mhvs., chs. 13-20, but to contest the fact itself, pure and simple, would not be criticism but sterile scepticism. The missionary work of king Asoka, as it is described in Mhvs. 12, 7-54, has received a striking corroboration in inscriptions of relic-urns discovered in Sāñci where some of the names mentioned in Mhvs. and *Dīpa*<sup>1</sup> occur. The name of Mahinda as the missionary sent to Ceylon is confirmed by Hiuen-tsang, who, however, calls him not a son but a brother of king Asoka. The planting of the Bodhi-tree at Anurādhapura can also be taken as an historical fact, since sculptures on the East gate of the Sāñci tope seem to be representations of that event.<sup>2</sup> These representations would only be 100 to 150 years later than the event itself. After all, as to chronology, the date of Devānampiyatissa's coronation, 236 years after the parinirvāna, belongs, I think,

1. See Mhvs. trsl., p. xix.

2. Grundwedel, *Buddhistische Kunst in Indien*, pp. 72-73; Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, p. 302.

to those reliable single dates which were handed down by tradition from generation to generation and which, together with the facts that are supported by external testimony, must serve as skeleton of Sinhalese chronology. We should renounce all attempts of forming an idea of Ceylon history if we reject without hesitation all those dates as worthless invention.

4. We now gradually approach the time which may be called historical in the true sense of the word. The numbers given in the Mahāvamsa for the reigns of the successors of Devānampiyatissa—10, 10, 10, 22 (or 12), 10—appear, it is true, somewhat schematic but it would be altogether groundless to doubt the historical character of the traditions about Elāra and Duṭṭhagāmaṇi. The former was a Damiḷa. He came to Ceylon from the Coḷa country and seized the kingdom (Mhvs. 21, 13). It certainly tells in favour of the fairness of the Sinhalese chroniclers that they judge the usurper from a remarkably objective standpoint by emphasizing that he ruled with even justice towards friend and foe. And they also speak with similar impartiality about less dominating personalities like the Damiḷas Sena and Guttika, who had conquered king Sūratissa: *rajjam dhammena kārayum* (Mhvs. 21, 11).

Duṭṭhagāmaṇi is the national hero of the Sinhalese people. Even today, as I noticed when I was touring in Rohana in January and February, 1926, many tales of Duṭṭhagāmaṇi are current in this province about the place from which he started and those which are hallowed either by some important event of his life or by his mere presence.

Such popular traditions are also mixed with the historical account in our chronicle but it is easy to separate the two elements, and we have hardly any reason for calling into question the genuineness of the main facts. These facts are: (1) the war of Duṭṭhagāmaṇi with his brother Saddhātissa about the sovereignty of Rohana, and the reconciliation of the twin brothers; (2) the campaign against the Damiḷas who had occupied Northern Ceylon and Anurādhapura; (3) the defeat and death of king Elāra in a single combat with Duṭṭhagāmaṇi and the great chivalry exhibited by Duṭṭhagāmaṇi at the time of his burial; (4) the restoration of the national Sinhalese kingdom; (5) the foundation at Anurādhapura of the Marīcavaṭṭicetiya, the Lohapāsāda, and the Mahāthūpa.

All these facts are told in the Mahāvam̃sa in a sober and reliable form. We must not forget, however, that the Mahāvam̃sa is not a dry chronicle in the modern sense of the word, but a poem. In a poem, embellishments and sometimes also exaggerations may occur. But within these limits I have the strong impression—and whoever reads the Mahāvam̃sa without prejudice will have the same—that the author at least *wished to tell the truth*. He is perhaps sometimes misled by his education and by his conviction, on account of his priestly mode of viewing things, but he never tells a falsehood intentionally.

5. The same holds good with the last chapters 33 to 37. Nay, the historical character of the account stands forth even in a bolder relief in this part of the chronicle. The dissensions and quarrels within the Buddhist community are, of course, described from the standpoint of an orthodox Theravādin, but we get a vivid picture of them and of the ecclesiastical history of the period. Very few passages only can be found out, indeed, which invite our criticism. Even the greatness of the last king of the old dynasty, Mahāsena, who was no doubt a ruler of high qualities, is not entirely obscured in the chronicle, although he was at a certain period of his reign a reckless adversary of the Theravāda.

Things alter and become more complicated when we pass over to the Cūlavam̃sa, Mahānāma, the compiler of what we call Mahāvam̃sa in the narrower sense of the word, was a comparatively simple-minded author. He treated exactly with the same material as his predecessor, the author of the Dipavam̃sa. This work chiefly seems to be a collection of verses quoted from the various Aṭṭhakathās and other works of the Porāṇas which existed in Ceylon and were composed—in the prose parts—in old Sinhalese language. Mahānāma enlarged and adorned the narration by details which he found in those prose parts of the Aṭṭhakathā, or which he knew by oral tradition. He is entitled to the name of a poet but all refinements of a very high order were far from him.

The compilers of the three parts of the Cūlavam̃sa were to a great extent influenced by the Indian kāvya literature and by the rules of the Indian poetics, the *alamkāra*. This influence is considerably stronger in the second part than in the first, composed by Dhammakitti, and stronger again in the third portion than in the second. The reliability of the three portions and their value as historical sources is also

different; it decreases, generally speaking, from portion to portion, while on the other hand, the language becomes more artificial and sometimes even abstruse.

Nevertheless there are some features which are common to all the three portions, viz.:

(i) *The want of originality* and the monotony of the representation are remarkable. Nearly all the descriptions of a battle or a festival and so forth are purely schematic and composed after a fixed model. In 78, 56ff. king Parakkamabāhu I is described determining the boundary (sīmā) of a monastery. The passage shows a considerable resemblance, even in the wording, to the description in 15, 188ff. of the same act performed by Devānampiyatissa.<sup>1</sup> In the latest portion of the chronicle the descriptions of processions and feasts performed in honour of the tooth relic (cf. e.g. 99, 42ff., 53ff; 100, 1ff., 24ff.) are as alike as two peas. They are mere repetitions consisting of a number of conventional phrases, and the compiler clearly imitates similar passages found in the preceding portion (85, 112ff.; 89, 19ff.). At the same time in one of these descriptions (100, 1ff.) he strives to show also his botanical knowledge or rather his knowledge of the *kosas* and of the botanical names contained therein. Such details of the chronicle must therefore be estimated as only poetical embellishment without any historical value.

(ii) The compilers of the three portions of the Cūlavamsa have each his *favourite hero* whom he wishes to extol and to glorify. As already Dr. Rhys Davids has rightly observed,<sup>2</sup> each new chronicler hurries over the kings preceding his favourite and then enlarges at length on the events of that monarch's reign. Dhammakitti's hero is Parakkamabāhu I (1135-86), that of the second chronicler is Parakkambāhu II (1225-69) with his son and co-regent Vijayabāhu IV, and Tibbotuvave Sumaṅgala's favourite is Kittisirirājasīha (1747-80). In the first portion of the history, Parakkamabāhu's reign occupies 18 chapters (62-79) and 241 pages of my printed translation, that of his predecessors—nearly eight centuries—fills 24 chapters and 231 pages. In the second part of the chronicle the disproportion is still more remarkable. There the history of Parakkamabāhu II and of his co-regent comprises 8 chapters and 58 pages, that of his predecessors, from

1. See my translation of the Cūlavamsa, II, p. 108, n.6.

2. See Malalasekera, Pāli Literature of Ceylon, p. 142.



1186 to 1225 A.D., 2 chapters and 18 pages. There is also a short appendix belonging to this part which describes the reign of the immediate successors of Vijayabāhu IV (Bhuvanekabāhu I to Parakkamabāhu IV, 1272-1333 A.D.) in 102 verses on 9 pages. Finally in the most recent part of the chronicle the history of the reign of the favourite king Kittisirirājasīha is dealt with in two long chapters (99 and 100) in 45 pages, and that of all his predecessors from 1333 to 1747 A.D. in 8 chapters in 44 pages.

The peculiar character of the chronicle must be kept in mind when we try to criticise its reliability. It is clear that in the passages where the chronicler deals with the deeds of his favourite hero, scepticism is justified, for the panegyrist is always prone to make exaggerations suppress facts or even to invent stories. There can be no doubt, for instance, that in his report of Parakkamabāhu I's campaigns in Southern India, Dhammakitti suppresses the fact of the failure which overtook the expedition after its first success.<sup>1</sup> The narrative in the Cūlavam̐sa ends abruptly. But we learn from South Indian inscriptions that Parakkamabāhu's general was finally defeated and his head with those of his officers was nailed to the gates of Madhurā.

There is also a great difference between what the Mahāvam̐sa tells us about Parakkamabāhu II's reign and what we learn from South Indian inscriptions. According to the chronicle the king's army freed the whole island of Lankā from the Pāṇḍyas (83, 48) and Parakkamabāhu is described as the absolute monarch in Ceylon. But the inscriptions tell us that about the middle of the 13th century, *i.e.*, just at Parakkamabāhu II's time, Ceylon was invaded by the Pāṇḍyas, that several kings were reigning there at the time, that one of them was killed and another was forced to pay tribute. This at least shows that Parakkama could never unite the whole island under his rule.<sup>2</sup>

Finally I need not add much to the history of Kittisirirājasīha, the favourite hero of the last chronicler. Except the very interesting passage 99, 108-139 where the military events of the year 1765 are dealt with,<sup>3</sup> chapters 99 and 100 have purely a panegyric character. The king is praised therein as the liberal patron of the Buddhist church and as faithful adherent of the holy doctrine. All the failures during his reign are passed over in silence.

1. See my translation of the Cūlavam̐sa, II, p. 100, n. 1.

2. See H. W. Codrington, *Short History of Ceylon*, pp. 77, 87.

3. See also 99, 155-166.

However we must not be too hasty in our conclusions. Even such passages, where the favourite king is glorified, may contain a kernel of historical truth. This especially holds good for the chapters dealing with the life and the deeds of Parakkamabāhu I. He is depicted, no doubt, by Dhammakitti as a model king endowed with all the royal virtues and with a full knowledge of the Niti literature. Nevertheless I have tried to show<sup>1</sup> by an analysis of the history of the king's youth, how with cautious criticism we can find out the actual course of the events.

Chapters 70 to 79, as even the most careful critic must admit, are rich in historical information about the reign of Parakkamabāhu the Great. First the campaigns of the king, (chs. 70-72), his struggle against Gajabāhu and Mānābharana for the kingdom, and then (chs. 74, 22-75), his various expeditions against the rebels in Rohana are described by the chronicler in detail. But obviously he derived his knowledge of all these particulars from reliable documents. A good deal of the numerous geographical names occurring in the report has been identified by Mr. H. W. Codrington.<sup>2</sup> If with the help of these identifications we carefully examine the statements of the chronicle, we never meet with serious contradictions or with impossible things, but we are able to understand the strategical plan of each campaign and its tactical performance as well as the course of the single events whether the king's army met with good or temporarily even with ill success. It may be sufficient to refer to the explanatory notes which I appended to such passages in my translation of the Cūlavamsa.

Parakkamabāhu's expedition to Rāmañña, *i.e.* Burma (76, 10ff.) is also mentioned in the Devanagala inscription.<sup>3</sup> The name of the port *Kusumi*, occurring in both the Cūlavamsa and the inscription, is certainly the same as Kusumanagara, in Burmese corrupted to *Kusmein*, the old denomination of the town Bassein on the western side of the Irawadī Delta.<sup>4</sup> The name of one of the two leaders of the expedition, Kitti (76, 60), also occurs in the inscription. The second one, Āditta, seems to have died in Rāmañña or soon after his return to Ceylon, for he is never mentioned again, neither in the chronicle nor in the inscription. It is hardly doubtful that the report in the Cūlavamsa of the

1. In the Introduction to my translation of the Cūlavamsa, vol. I, pp. ivff.

2. Mediaeval Topography, Ceylon Historical Association, 4, 1925 Notes on Ceylon Topography in the twelfth Century, JRAS. Ceylon Branch, xxix, No. 75, pp. 62ff, 1922.

3. H. C. P. Bell, the Kegalla District, pp. 73ff.

4. Yule and Burnell, Hobson-Jobson, s.v. Cosmin. See also Major R. C. Temple, Indian Antiquary, xxii, 1893, p. 18.

Rāmañña campaign is much exaggerated, as the Burmese chronicles have nothing to say about such a catastrophe having overtaken their country.

Regarding the other great military undertaking of Parakkama, his expedition to Southern India under general Lankāpura, it has been already said above that its final failure has been suppressed in the Cūlavam̐sa. The fact itself however is confirmed by South Indian inscriptions.<sup>1</sup> The name Kulottuṅga of the Coḷa king in these inscriptions corresponds to the Kulasekhara of the chronicle.

Chapters 73, 12ff. and 78, 5ff. contain an account of the church reforms of Parakkama. It is confirmed by an inscription of the king in the Galvehera at Polonnaruva.<sup>2</sup> There is also some similarity between the two accounts externally. Both start with the schism of the Buddhist order under Vaṭṭagāmaṇi. Both speak of the intention that the order now should be stable for 5,000 years. In both Mahākassapa is mentioned as president of the council, and a parallel is drawn between the church reform in Pāṭaliputta under Dhammāsoka and that under Parakkamabāhu.

Finally I have to add a few words about the buildings erected in Pulatthinagara (Polonnaruva) by king Parakkamabāhu. They are enumerated in chs. 73, 55ff. and 78, 31ff. The description in our chronicle is reasonable and well intelligible. Mr. W. Codrington has rightly observed<sup>3</sup> that the arrangement is topographical running from south to north. It is indeed possible to identify most of those buildings with ruins, detected and excavated in Polonnaruva. The *citadel* and the *royal palace* therein (73, 60) can be traced with certainty. The palace was an imposing building although the thousand chambers attributed to it in the chronicle are a poetical exaggeration. To the *Jetavanārāma* (78, 32) correspond the ruins of the so-called Quadrangle, and among them the Vaṭa-dā-gē to the "round temple of the tooth relic." The *Ālāhana-pariveṇa* (78, 48) seems to be identical with the group of ruins, now popularly but wrongly called Jetavanārāma. To it belongs the image-house Lankātilaka which even now, as far as I know, bears this name among the inhabitants of the place. The *Uttarārāma* (78, 72) with its three grottos (*guha*) is no doubt the so-called Gal-vehera. Not far from it an immense heap of ruins, overgrown with jungle and looking like a natural hill, represents the site of the *Mahāthūpa* or *Damilathūpa* (78, 76).

(To be Continued)

1. See Smith, Early History of India, p.340 ; H. W. Codrington, Short History of Ceylon, pp. 62, 74.

2. Ed. Müller, Ancient Inscriptions of Ceylon, p.54 ; Wickremasinghe, Epigraphia Zeylanica, II, 256ff.

3. Short History of Ceylon, p.74.

# The British Monopoly of Cinnamon.

BY

COLVIN R. DE SILVA, B.A., PH.D. (LOND.)

(Contd. from page 206)

## Early History of the Cinnamon Trade.

The history of the cinnamon trade is the story of the break-down of an attempt to set up a rigid monopoly. The successive European Governments in Ceylon all established a monopoly of the spice.

The Portuguese limited the annual export to 1,000 bahars of 376 to 440 lbs. each.<sup>1</sup> This was shipped at Colombo for Cochin, where the quantity needed for the Eastern market was separated, and the rest conveyed to Goa, to be sent thence to Europe. But the actual annual produce was much above this figure; 3,200 bahars, for instance, being produced in 1630.<sup>2</sup> A depreciation in the value of the commodity had resulted, and restriction of production was consequently ordered.<sup>3</sup> Baldaeus says the Portuguese produced three types of cinnamon—Canel Fino, which was the best; Canel Grosso, which came from thick and old trees; and Canel Mato or jungle cinnamon. The first type sold for fifty or sixty Rix Dollars the bahar; but the Canel Mato was of such poor quality that it fetched no more than ten or twelve Rix Dollars.<sup>4</sup>

The Dutch pursued a similar course. By the middle of the 18th century, the annual production had risen to 10,000 bales of 92½ lbs. each.<sup>5</sup> This, however, fell away again to some 6,000 bales towards the end of the Dutch regime.<sup>6</sup> Strained relations with Kandy had closed that source of supplies. At first the Dutch sales took place both in Ceylon and in Holland. This was later stopped. The entire supply of each year was shipped to Holland, and was brought to auction at Amsterdam.<sup>7</sup>

1. "Ceylon—the Portuguese Era." i. 426.

2. Ibid. ii. 62.

3. Ibid. ii. 62.

4. "Description of Ceylon." Chap. 4.

5. "Ceylon and the Hollanders." 97.

6. Marshall. 28. p. 822.

7. De Meuron's Report.

The Dutch marketing system is of interest; particularly as it was later adopted by the British. When the cinnamon was shipped at Colombo it was already graded according to quality. The bales were, however, untied and re-assorted in the warehouses at Amsterdam. They were put up for sale in small lots, each of a few bales of uniform quality. The quantity to be offered at the quarterly sales was advertised beforehand. But it did not follow that the whole of such advertised quantity would be sold, even if there was a demand for it. The Dutch Company always fixed a certain price on its cinnamon, below which it would not sell. If offers did not come up to its expectations, the Company bought in the cinnamon on its own account.<sup>1</sup> The cinnamon imported in any one year was brought to market in the succeeding year.

The Dutch were supposed to have sold about 400,000 lbs. a year in the European market. A memorandum of the East India Company calculates the Dutch imports for the period 1785-1791 at 2,415,645 lbs., *i.e.* 345,092 lbs. a year. In the comparable period of 1786-1792, 2,165,590 lbs. (309,370 lbs. a year) were sold. The price realised varied from 180 to 200 pence for the first quality to 102 to 120 pence for the third. This works out at an average of about 11 s. 6 *d.* per lb.<sup>2</sup>

### Domestic Trade.

The British, too, adopted a monopoly of production and trade. In December, 1798, a regulation was issued by the President-in-Council, Fort St. George, directing that every vessel, on board which above twenty pounds of cinnamon was found without authority from Government, should be confiscated with all her cargo; and that for every such pound, the quantity being less than twenty pounds, a penalty of fifty Star Pagodas should be extracted.<sup>3</sup> This regulation continued, in a modified form, to the end of our period.

The total prohibition of the sale of cinnamon in the Island, an inheritance from the Dutch, was causing great inconvenience, as much was needed for medicinal purposes. North therefore confirmed a proposal of the Board of Revenue and Commerce to establish licensed retail shops at Colombo, Galle, Batticaloa, Trincomalee, and Jaffna. Sales were not to exceed one pound per person, and the price was fixed

1. C. O. 54. 9. East India House Memorandum, 2nd December, 1802.

2. *Ibid.*

3. C. O. 54. 56. Brownrigg to Bathurst, 8th June, 1815. enclosure Marshall's Memo.

at two Rix Dollars the pound. The Master Attendants at the ports were also permitted to sell quantities not exceeding 10 lbs. to ships, for their own use.<sup>1</sup> The regulations of sale were embodied in a Proclamation of 1st December, 1801. Breach of its provisions involved heavy penalties, including corporal punishment.

This latter regulation was repealed in 1823. The same Regulation further amended the penalties for possessing or selling cinnamon without license. In each case, a fine of ten Rix Dollars for every pound or part of a pound was imposed; a separate fine being levied for each distinct offence however small the quantity involved. If the fine was not paid, a month's imprisonment for every ten Rix Dollars of the fine was decreed; the total period not to exceed six months.<sup>2</sup>

### The Markets for Cinnamon

The documents speak of two markets for cinnamon—the European market and the Eastern market. The latter included all the countries eastward of the Cape of Good Hope and within the East India Company's privileged trading limits. Arabia, India, China and the Eastern Islands were the chief consumers.

For the European market, London was the centre. Its trade was chiefly entrepot; for, of the 400,000, lbs. and more that the East India Company annually imported, only about 7,500 lbs. were, on the average, consumed in England. On this latter amount a customs duty of 2s. was paid. The rest was re-exported to Europe and America by merchants who purchased it at the Company's sales.<sup>3</sup>

The chief market was Spain and the Spanish Empire. Cordiner says that 1,000 bales a year were consumed by slaves in the Spanish-American mines.<sup>4</sup> Germany, Holland, France and the West Indies were also large buyers. With the emancipation of the Spanish-American colonies, and the growth of British influence in that region, sales further increased in that quarter.

Annual exports for the European market from London averaged 435,887 lbs. during the period 1797–1802.<sup>5</sup> At the end of our period, in 1830, British consumption was much as before, but European and

1. B26. Board of Revenue and Commerce to North, 28th August, 1801.
2. C. G. G. 27th October, 1823. Regulation 17 of 25th October, 1823.
3. C. O. 54. 9. East India House Memorandum, 2nd December, 1802.
4. Cordiner. i. 417.
5. East India House Memorandum.

American consumption had risen to 535,223 lbs. a year.<sup>1</sup> Mexico, the United States, and the West Indies had largely increased their purchases. The real consumption, however, must have been much above this figure, for much cinnamon found its way to Europe and America which ostensibly had been destined for the East. The following figures for 1830 will be of interest :—<sup>2</sup>

EXPORTS FROM ENGLAND, 1830.	
To Russia, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Prussia,	lbs.
Germany, and the Netherlands . . . . .	33,040
To France, Spain, Italy, Greece, and Turkey . .	342,687
(of which Spain alone took 223,997 lbs.)	
To Canada, the West Indies, and the United States	75,255
To the States of Central and South America . . . . .	84,235
(of which Mexico alone took 80,547 lbs.)	
535,217	

### The Eastern Market.

The value of the Eastern market is difficult to estimate, for a knowledge is necessary of the amount of Chinese, East Indian and Malabar cinnamon sold there. Some estimate of the value to Ceylon of this portion of the trade is possible.

In 1800, North sold for 37,470 rupees 210 bales, to be shipped East of Bengal.<sup>3</sup> The result of this experiment is not traceable, as North writes that he had heard nothing about it.<sup>4</sup> But, by 1803, North fears that “the bastard cinnamon of China and the Malabar Coast has, notwithstanding its inferiority, gained a preference in the market by its cheapness.”<sup>5</sup> To counteract this tendency, he sold 250 bales of seconds at a low price to Messrs. Latour and Company of Calcutta, to be shipped to the Manillas.<sup>6</sup> North hoped gradually to enhance sales in every country East of the Cape.

Maitland, though he ridiculed North’s grandiose projects, realized the value of this market. He tried to sell thither the cinnamon rejected by the East India Company’s agent. In 1806, he shipped some of it

1. C. G. G.

2. C. G. G. 27th June, 1835. Table of Imports to and Exports from Great Britain of cinnamon. 1830 and 1831 extracted from Parliamentary Papers.

3. C. O. 54. 2. North to Court of Directors, 5th April, 1800.

4. C. O. 54. 3. North to Court of Directors, 18th February, 1801.

5. C. O. 54. 11. North to Hobart, 20th April, 1803.

6. B 29. North to Wellesley, 26th May, 1803.

direct to America in an American vessel.<sup>1</sup> Further, in 1808, he contracted to supply one D. K. Baboon, an Armenian merchant of Bombay, rejected cinnamon (and several other articles) in exchange for a quantity of rice.<sup>2</sup> The agreement was renewed for 1809.<sup>3</sup> Cinnamon for the Eastern market was sold under a bond prohibiting its export to Europe. Further, by the East India Company's contract, any cinnamon needed for the Eastern market was to be received by the Government of India to such amount as the latter might deem necessary. In accordance with these provisions, Maitland sold a great deal of rejected cinnamon to the East—about 30,000 to 40,000 lbs. annually. It went chiefly to Manilla, and thence to Acapulco.<sup>4</sup> Bertolacci says the average price of rejected cinnamon was  $1\frac{1}{4}$  Rix Dollars (2s. 6d.) per lb.<sup>5</sup>

The system was continued by Brownrigg. In 1814 he writes "I am now shipping 40,000 lbs. on board a vessel returning to Batavia, where I understand there is a good market, as an article of trade from thence to Manilla, and as the cinnamon is of good quality though not of the fine description sent to England, I trust it will not yield less than 60,000 Rix Dollars."<sup>6</sup>

Finally, in 1815, Brownrigg entered into a contract with Messrs. Palmer & Co. of Calcutta, by which they were to purchase all rejected cinnamon for the Eastern market, on the usual conditions.<sup>7</sup> This agreement was annually renewed till 1822. The quantity thus disposed of averaged 157,065 lbs. a year, at  $1\frac{1}{8}$  Sicca rupees (2s: 10d.) per lb.<sup>8</sup>

In the 1821 negotiations, the East India Company complained that this cinnamon ultimately found its way to Europe, despite all assurances and guarantees to the contrary.<sup>9</sup> To avoid this unfair competition, the Company offered to instruct Fort St. George to purchase all rejected cinnamon that was offered.<sup>10</sup> But Barnes pointed out that this offer did not apply to the inferior cinnamon, which was the chief article of sale in the East.<sup>11</sup>

1. C. O. 54. 20. Maitland to Camden, 28th February, 1806.
2. C. O. 54. 27. Maitland to Castlereagh, 28th February, 1808.
3. C. O. 54. 36. Mr. Grant's Paper respecting, cinnamon
4. Bertolacci, 246.
5. Ibid.
6. C. O. 54. 51. Brownrigg to Bathurst, 28th February. 1814.
7. C. O. 54. 80. Barnes to Bathurst, 27th December, 1821. encl.
8. Ibid. Also C. O. 55 63. Bathurst to Brownrigg, 30th November. 1819.
9. C. O. 54. 81. East India Company to Bathurst, 24th May, 1821.
10. C. O. 55. 66. Bathurst to Barnes, 2nd November, 1820.
11. C. O. 54 80. Barnes to Bathurst, 27th December, 1821.



With the opening of the trade in 1822, the contract with Messrs. Palmer & Co. lapsed. But the importance of the Eastern market was to gain a new significance in the near future.

The total income to Ceylon from sales in Colombo between 1797 and 1824 was £322,437. 13. 11,<sup>1</sup> but this includes the income from the 165,000 lbs. sold under the 1822 scheme. The total must have been about £300,000.

### Trade under the Madras Administration

The Dutch ships were captured in 1795 and Ceylon in 1796. The prize cinnamon which fell into British hands amounted to 732,885 lbs.<sup>2</sup> But the Dutch company had a large stock in hand in its warehouses at Amsterdam. The sales in Holland therefore continued to the end of the century, the quantity put up for sale averaging about 175,000 lbs. a year.<sup>3</sup>

The British East India Company purchased the 732,885 lbs. of prize cinnamon from the captors for £180,000.<sup>4</sup> The actual produce of the years 1797 to 1801 was:—

			lbs.
1797	...	...	440,542
1798	...	...	412,022
1799	...	...	495,591
1800	...	...	406,438
1801	...	...	280,266
			2,034,859

With the prize cinnamon, the amount exported on behalf of the Company over this period of five years therefore averaged 553,749 lbs. a year, or 2,767,744 lbs. in all. Over the comparable period of 1798-1802, 2,559,862 lbs. were sold by the Company, *i. e.* 511,972 lbs. a year.<sup>5</sup> If added to the annual Dutch sales, this works out at over 600,000 lbs. a year—an unprecedented quantity. Simultaneous sales in London and Amsterdam, the consequent over-stocking of the market,<sup>6</sup>

1. C. O. 416. 5. B7.

2. C. O. 54. 9. East India House Memo. 2nd December. 1802.

3. *Ibid.*

4. C. O. 54. 56. Brownrigg to Bathurst, 8th June, 1815. encl. Marshall's Memo.

5. C. O. 54. 9. East India House Memo. 2nd December, 1802.

6. C. O. 54. 9. Extract of a letter from an Amsterdam firm to Messrs. Peacocke & Lawyer, through whom they corresponded with the East India Company.

and over-speculation by individual buyers,<sup>1</sup> led to a rapid fall in prices. The East India Company realized on the average, only 4s. 7d. to 4s. 10d. per lb. on its cinnamon.<sup>2</sup> Some restriction of the quantity put on the market was clearly necessary if the Company was to realize the high prices which the Dutch had commanded.

The costs of production in Ceylon, under Dutch and British, amounted to about 5d. a lb.<sup>3</sup> Freightage to England, insurance and interest charges, customs duty, and other expenses amounted to about 18 $\frac{1}{3}$ d. per lb.<sup>4</sup> Thus, while Ceylon was under the Company's administration and the production of cinnamon was directly in the Company's hands, the total cost of cinnamon to the Company was about 2s. per lb. The profit to the Company on the cinnamon of the years 1797-1801 must therefore have been over £30,000 a year.

*(To be Continued.)*

1. East India House Memo.
2. C. O. 54. 9. Memorandum on cinnamon, 8th July, 1802; and East India House to W. Ramsay, 29th November, 1802.
3. C. O. 55. 2 Agnew's Minute, 10th November, 1798
4. C. O. 54. 19. East India Company to Castlereagh, 12th September, 1805  
encl.

# Macdowall's Embassy to Kandy

KANDYAN AFFAIRS UNDER THE GOVERNMENT OF FREDERIC  
NORTH, 1799-1800.

*(Continued from page 223)*

D. 128

Frederic North to Hay Macdowall

SIR, Colombo, 1st May, 1800.

I have received Your Excellency's letter of the 29th and hope that the Court of Candy will not reject the very equitable proposals which I have made to them. Indeed I do not see what objection they can form to the Commercial treaty unless it be to the opening of the rivers. If they show any unwillingness to the article, you may assure them I shall not insist upon it, as it was only for their advantage that it was proposed and would be exercised on their requisition by mutual consent.

Although I cannot but regret that your Excellency's efforts have not had the success which they deserved and which we desired, I shall be by no means dissatisfied with the result of your negotiation if the Commercial treaty be agreed to. Our situation with respect to the Court of Candy will be exactly what I could wish to be at present. We have opened a degree of correspondence with the principal persons who comprise it, which will keep us informed of whatever passes there and every party in that Court must of necessity canvass our Favour.

Had we succeeded in our intention of establishing a force in Candy by engagements with any one of the parties in that Court, those engagements would have entailed the necessity of acting in a manner perhaps disadvantageous and probably discreditable to ourselves who have certainly many more advantages to be derived from a character of moderation than of power in India.

Our union with Candy must grow every day more intimate and the politics of that Court are virtually changed by the manner in which the Nobles concur in laying open their wishes to us and soliciting our assistance. I have caused it to be intimated to the Adigar's spies here, that I am very much offended with him, but as my friendship has been great proper conduct on his part may perhaps bring about a reconciliation. General expressions of goodwill towards the Dessave of Leuk

will likewise be prudent, and after the conclusion of the Treaty of Commerce, a regular plan may be adopted for bringing them of themselves to wish for the establishment of the troops in their country.

But that must be the operation of time or of unforeseen accident, for at present such an object obtained by the entire Concurrence and agreement with either of the parties would not in my opinion be desirable.

If they object to the number of Guards proposed it is no matter, as the object is merely to guard the warehouses, it is not my wish to keep up more than will be necessary for that purpose. The ultimate arrangement of the articles of the treaty will require time and may be made by Commissioners at Colombo, after the principle shall have been agreed to and signed by you and the King's plenipotentiaries at Attepitty and ratified by the King and me. The very length of their stay here and the discussions to be carried on with such Commissioners would contribute to familiarizing them to us and to give us a considerable knowledge of their country.

Should this treaty therefore take place in any of the three shapes proposed Your Excellency may be sure that I, and I hope my Superiors, will consider it, to be fully as honorable and advantageous as if that which was originally proposed, had been immediately agreed to and carried into effect.

I have the honor, etc.,

Colombo,  
May 1st, 1800.

FREDERIC NORTH.

D. 129

Hay Macdowall to Frederic North

SIR,

Attapitiya, 1st May, 1800.

An answer arrived this morning from the Court of Candy which I forward to Your Excellency. Although I was prepared to meet with a refusal on their part to form any alliance with your Government I think their reply to your proposal might have been couched in terms more civil and respectful.

No Treaty which Your Excellency could have proposed and which removed from the Adigar the prospect of being King would ever be supported by him. It is now evident that this ambitious man finding he could not prevail upon Your Excellency to furnish so small a force as 400 men to remain in the centre of the Island, which he certainly in

some degree might have had it in his power to control and have wished to employ those troops for purposes far different from those intended—this aspiring character being disappointed in his daring projects hopes to involve his nation in a war with us and to take advantage of such occurrences as may tend to accelerate his elevation to the throne. It has appeared clear to me that from the moment Your Excellency rejected with honor and indignation, the daring villain's proposal, to obtain the Crown by British influence at the expense of his Sovereign's life and dignity, he has neither acted with zeal or sincerity in our cause, and it is more than probable he would never have fulfilled the splendid promises he at one time made, but as the price of his being supported in his inordinate schemes of aggrandizement and seemed in the undisputed right to govern this Kingdom, the hope of accomplishing this event will only quit him with his existence, and having already imbrued his hands in blood of many respectable men, it is impossible to say how far so cruel and vicious a disposition will lead him.

Under these impressions I come to reply to Your Excellency's secret letter of the 29th ultimo received last night.

The first Adigar having by his base and shameful conduct forfeited all claims to Your Excellency's confidence and protection, and as it is at this particular time both advisable and necessary, that a friendly intercourse should be promoted between Your Excellency and some of the leading Chiefs of the Candian Court, I see no person so likely to be of service to the English as the Dessave of Ouwa, although I apprehend that this Nobleman is more attached to the exiled family than to the reigning prince (from whose presence he is entirely excluded except in public) yet in his private communications with me, he never hinted at any design of placing another King on the throne should the English conquer Candy. Whether the seeds of ambition are now springing up in his own breast, or that it is his intention to reinstate the legal heir, I cannot determine, but from his free and undisguised offer of assistance in case we should be forced into a war, and without making any stipulation for himself or for others, it is probable he is sincere in his professions to aid us, as by our success he will be gratified by the downfall of his implacable enemy whose disgrace and ruin would offer him the greatest satisfaction. In case of a revolution your promise to appoint him first Adigar might have its effect but the greatest caution and secrecy must be preserved as were such intelligence conveyed to the prime minister, who has spies in every quarter, he would assuredly

find means to remove a person who had formed a cabal against his interest, and who had presumed to entertain thought of supplanting him in the rank and power he now holds in the state.

Although the King is well inclined towards the Dessave of Ouwa, His Majesty's restrained condition does not permit that they should often meet privately, the Adigar's creatures have the prince in the most complete thralldom whether their principal is present or absent from Court, nor can he be visited by any person whatever without the Adigar's consent, who has people to watch the conversation. The description given me of the King's situation is truly deplorable and he is so entirely in his minister's power that he is under constant apprehension of being made away with, he has not one friend in whom he can confide; and his hours are chiefly employed in the society of women and in listening to the discordant notes of a miserable set of musicians.

Your Excellency has from the commencement been actuated by such just and virtuous motives in respect to the King that we have only now to lament that all your attempts have proved fruitless, and that His Majesty's life is now in more danger than ever.

The avowal of your designs to the Dessave of Ouwa and a knowledge of your honorable designs towards the prince and his friends (which no doubt has been carefully concealed) cannot fail to be attended with the best consequences, and unite the Adigar's opponents to remove him by the British troops from the overgrown power which he possesses in the Kingdom. At any rate it will furnish you with a further light upon the transactions of this mysterious court and enable you to judge whether the Dessave is serious or whether he is leagued with the Adigar (with a view to enter into some fresh intrigue) who I very firmly believe is bent upon risking everything that mankind are supposed to hold dear, for the purpose of advancing his project of succeeding to the Crown.

Upon the whole it will be Your Excellency's duty to be prepared, should a civil war ensue, and the forces at your disposal be called upon to restore tranquillity, I am convinced that in a few months such interposition may become necessary and we shall by and bye acquire that consideration in the Counsels of Candy, as will render us independent of wicked ministers and place us in that much to be wished for state of protecting the Island from its centre and by establishing a regular communication with the surrounding Garrisons secure it from foreign attacks and domestic insults.

After the insolent message of this morning I shall proceed tomorrow to Idemalpane and on the 4th be at the King's garden.

To the letter I forwarded to the Court yesterday I have as yet no answer, but I do not expect a satisfactory explanation.

I have the honor, etc.,

Attapetty,

May 1st, 1800.

HAY MACDOWALL.

D. 130

Enclosure—Hay Macdowall to the Nobles of the Court of Candy.

30th April, 1800.

AFTER COMPLIMENTS

H. E. the Governor has learned with extreme surprise and indignation that the Candian Court have prohibited all communication and trade as in former times between the English subjects and the inhabitants residing on the Eastern side of the Island particularly in the Wanny and towards Mullativoo and having of late observed many proofs of their jealous and unfriendly disposition towards H.E.'s Government he demands an immediate explanation of a conduct so unwarrantable and suspicious, being determined to adopt such measures as may render the English nation respected and be ready to redress the grievances of all persons living under the British protection whenever they may be injured or oppressed.

HAY MACDOWALL.

30th April, 1800.

D. 131

Enclosure—Translation of the Reply from the Court of Candy to the Ambassador's Letter of the 29th April, received at Attapetty, May 1st, 1800.

The letter addressed to the Nobles of the Court of Candy has been received. It is therein said that the four hundred men who are to remain near Candy are to be paid by the King and several other things are proposed for the King's protection.

The Native soldiers of the Island have at all times been his sufficient Guard.

Should enemies to the Court of Candy arise the English will be the first to know it. It is the duty of the English to defend the coasts from all enemies,

The Nobles of the Court of Candy  
and lower Pilimatalawe.

To General Macdowall,

A true translation from the French of Mr. Jonville.

WM. MACPHERSON,

Attapitty,

Secy. to the Embassy.

1st May.

D. 132

Frederic North to Hay Macdowall

SIR, Colombo 3rd May, 1800.

I have received Your Excellency's letter of the first with the extraordinary answer of the Candian Minister to the three proposed treaties of which I gave them the choice.

I am not surprised at their declining the two first proposals, although they might have couched their refusal in more civil terms. But their total silence with respect to the third, to which they could not with decency object as they had agreed to all the articles it contained at Candy is I think a clear indication that their intentions are inimical to any agreement which I may make with the present Government.

What measures may follow this I cannot pretend to foresee, but that some great crisis is approaching in the Court I have no doubt.

As I am determined not to neglect any opportunity of preventing a war with that country, or a Civil war among themselves or a revolution, I have ordered the Maha Modeliar to write to the Adigar to inform him that I am extremely surprised as well as offended by his conduct towards me in refusing even the very moderate terms which I have lately proposed and that I can attribute it to nothing but to a desire to draw his country into a war with us, and I assured him that if such an event should take place, the whole of the war should be directed against his person and that neither the King nor the people of Candy should suffer by it as it is of him alone that I consider myself entitled to complain after his deceit and notorious breach of faith with me.



Your Excellency judges very properly in proceeding immediately on your journey which I should wish you to continue to Colombo as I desire to confer with you concerning our present situation with Candy and the means to be adopted and I request you to leave directions with Colonel Torrens, not to treat with any person who may come to him from the Court of Candy but to send such persons on to Colombo.

Should you at the same time think that the stay camp at Rouvanelly would be prejudicial to the health of the troops and of no great utility in case we should be driven to hostilities Your Excellency may give order for breaking up the camp immediately, and if you wish to superintend its return I will proceed to meet and converse with you at Hangwella or at Sittawaky as soon as you can arrive at any of the places.

I have the honor, etc.,

Colombo,

FREDERIC NORTH.

May 3rd, 1800.

D. 133

Frederic North to Lord Mornington.

Colombo, 3rd May, 1800.

MY LORD,

In my letter of the 30th of March when I informed Your Lordship of having directed Major-General Macdowall to proceed to Candy with a small escort I at the same time stated my opinion that the measure would defer the conclusion of the treaty which I had proposed and which the Adigar had agreed to and promised to carry into effect. But I thought the obtaining a perfect knowledge of the situation of the Court and of the parties who compose it would very essentially forward our general interests and would prevent the dangers and inconveniences which I plainly perceived would have happened to us by following implicitly the directions of a man whose ultimate intentions I knew to be atrocious and such as I could never consent to abet.

I shall soon have the honor of sending to Your Lordship the whole of the proceedings of the Embassy. In the meantime I send you a summary account of them.

The Ambassador was received with great expressions and appearance of respect and kindness and soon after his audience entered upon business.

The treaty with certain modifications was proposed by him to the ministers who declined agreeing to it and proposed a counter project nearly similar to what they had formerly proposed to the Government of Madras. Upon this he very properly would not enter into any discussion and desired his audience of leave, but just before he was to take it the Ministers fell in their demands and consented to every part of the treaty except that of a considerable body of troops near the capital, the number of which they wished to reduce to four hundred men. As this number could be of no use and indeed not secure at such a distance from our territories, General Macdowall declined the proposal, and not thinking himself authorized to conclude any treaty which should not stipulate for the admission of the troops, took his audience of leave from His Majesty and quitted the Court, leaving, as he said, the ministers in great dejection.

When I heard of the proposals made by the ministers, I immediately wrote to the General directing him to halt on the receipt of my letter and to forward to the Court of Candy three proposals, of which I gave them the choice of the alternative.

The first was that I should keep up near the capital, a force of a thousand men for His Majesty's protection, of which only four hundred should be paid by His Majesty.

The second that I should keep a force within my Garrisons sufficient when called upon to protect His Majesty and that to alleviate the expense of their maintenance the Court of Candy should cede such parts of their territory as lie within 5 or 6 Dutch miles of the sea coast.

And the third that no stipulation should be made about Military succour, but that the Treaty should be confined to the commercial articles,

The only answer they have returned has been a short and sharp refusal of the two first and no observation whatsoever as to the last of the three proposals which indeed they could not object to as they had acceded to them at Candy.

But the case I believe to be this that the Adigar whose power is extremely great finding us determined not to enter into his iniquitous views is now endeavouring to embroil his country in whatever manner he can, that he may have an opportunity of deposing the present pageant and of placing himself on the throne; and he trusts that when

he is once seated there he will be purchase (*sic*) his own safety by still greater sacrifices than those which he has refused to make on account of his master.

The Dessave of Leuk, who, as I informed Your Lordship in my last, is favourite of the King and an enemy of the Adigar is too much afraid of the latter to take any open measures which may be disagreeable to him. He is as I have reason to believe, secretly attached to the exiled family, and of course would be glad to bring on a war which may end in the re-establishment and the downfall of his enemy. He was at Candy the most violent and determined opponent of the proposed treaty. But on the General's leaving the Court he gave him secretly to understand that if *a war should take place* he would join the English with all his adherents. That a war shall not take place as long as it can be avoided with propriety, shall be my object, but under the present circumstances preparations for such an event are evidently necessary, nor will either decency or policy allow me to hold too humble or conciliatory a language. During the very time the General was at Candy they prohibited all communication between their frontier and the Wanny, without giving him the smallest information of it. I have desired him to send up a remonstrance and demand an explanation on the subject and from their answer I shall be able to judge of their general intentions.

I have at the same time made use of the spies of the Adigar and those of the Dessave of Leuk to acquaint the former that I am highly offended with his conduct and that I shall consider him as the cause of all the harm that may happen and at the same time have let it be insinuated that although I am much displeased yet perhaps I may again be reconciled by proper conduct on his part. To the latter I have expressed my surprise that he should have persuaded the King to reject a treaty which would have placed them both out of the reach of any danger they might fear from the Adigar and that my intention has always been favourable to the existing power of Candy and to prevent all those evils which I foresee to be the consequence of their intrigues and jealousies.

Should their intentions be such as they dare avow, or such as we may conscientiously concur with these insinuations will naturally draw them to explanations with me and to settlement of an intimate and cordial union.

But as I rather suspect that they wish for hostility and will have recourse to every means in their power to produce it, I expect no satisfactory answer from either of them, and shall after making them understand that no profit can accrue to them from a war with us leave them entirely to themselves.

At the same time I do not think I should be justified in recalling the troops from Rouvanelly till some explanation shall be made nor in neglecting any means of carrying on either an offensive or defensive plan of hostilities.

There is at Jaffnapatam a pretender to the Crown named Buddha Samy, whose claim is considerably stronger, according to the usages of Candy than that of the present King. I have hitherto kept him out of delicacy to the Court, as a prisoner of State, as well as several other persons who are attached to the late King and his family, and who have great influence among their partizans all through the country.

I have hitherto avoided all conversation and connection with these persons and it is far from my wish or intention to form any connection with them at present. But the giving them their liberty with suitable alimony at Colombo appears now highly advisable to me, as I do not know how soon the internal as well as the external affairs of that country may make their interposition necessary.

Although the failure of this negotiation has certainly proved a great disappointment to me, our relative situation with Candy has however been very considerably ameliorated by it. We have at present a knowledge of the Court and an intercourse with it, and are not liable to be made the instruments of an intriguing and perfidious minister, the support of whose pretensions might have involved us in endless difficulty and perhaps in atrocious crimes. We remain at full liberty to form such connections and to take such opportunities as suit us, although the interests of the chief courtiers at this moment may induce them to avoid all communication between their Court and my Government the necessity of so powerful a support must operate in general to persuade all persons wishing to establish their own authority to have recourse to it.

I am concerned that the King's life is exposed as it is now, to such imminent danger, but I have done all that I could and more than I was obliged to do to save it and in some degree I have succeeded. I hope in whatever scenes may follow it still may be in my power to do so.

In the meantime I can assure Your Lordship that nothing shall be wanting on my part, which the National Honor will allow, to prevent hostilities and to bring those infatuated and ambitious courtiers to a proper sense, both of their duty of their Sovereign and of the true interests of their country.

I have the honor, etc.,

Colombo,  
3rd May, 1800.

FREDERIC NORTH.

(Concluded.)

# Colebrooke's Secret Report on Forced Labour

(Contd. from page 215.)

Of the numerous representations<sup>1</sup> addressed to us by the people who were employed on public works, the following may be noticed:—

No. 397. “Five persons complain that since the establishment of the British Government they are obliged to pay a tax in respect of their lands and to perform some of the former services in addition to dragging and conveying timber, making roads, etc.”

No. 417. “198 persons state that for the last ten years they have been obliged to perform public work—that they pay to Government one-tenth of the produce of their lands—that they are continued gratuitously at road making—that some of them are pressed for a week—that on such days they begin to work early in the morning and discontinue from 10—12 in the forenoon, during which intermission they serve others for their food, not being able to buy it for money. They pray that the Commissioners will obtain for them a daily pay from Government when employed on such services.”

On referring to the Agents of Government in the Districts, the abuses to which the system is liable have been generally admitted, but the opinions of the Agents have varied.

From the Province of Matale it is stated that “the Kandyan system has been virtually overturned by the Proclamation of 21st Nov., 1818, which imposed a fixed tax as an equivalent to Government for most services and imposts, yet left by the 30th clause a power by which the services of the people have been employed by Government, in a much greater degree than by native sovereigns with few exceptions, and then the direct taxes were much less. In this province the Ratta<sup>2</sup> people have been often employed in services they would not have been called upon to perform under the Kandyan Kings, in building and repairing

1. See Petitions Nos. 374, 376, 431, 446, 462, 465, 693.

2. People tributary to the Govt. who are of high caste.

rest-houses, court-house, offices, granaries, tappal (post) stations, cutting and dragging timber, driving and watching elephants. These and minor services have been gratuitous as well as road and bridge service, and often without regard to former customs or classes."

"It is now ordered that no gratuitous services shall be required unless road and bridge services."

"The authority of the Headmen is liable to abuse in the collection of tithes—in calling out people for Rajakaria (Govt. labor) and in supplying provisions according to the 26th section of the Proclamation of 21st Nov., 1818.

"If a few men are required for Govt. work, the Headmen warn many excusing their own friends. Those who are rich or cannot attend give presents or bribes, and thus the labor falls heavy on a few. Supplying provisions gives opportunity for heavy exactions, the people are seldom paid and ten times the quantity required, such as oil, salt, rice, etc., is collected and no part returned to those from whom it is raised.

Under the present system there is no way of checking such practices, for with the terrors of Rajakaria (Govt. work) and summary punishment, no one would complain and successfully. It is well known that Headmen do exempt people from Govt. service and employ them in their own but the people do not venture to complain.

"The provincial Headmen *in confidence* have not screened these abuses and would willingly adopt a system that would remove them." 1

In other parts of the country the people have also represented their grievances. In the petitions of the "*Chalias*" or "Cinnamon Peelers" who are paid according to certain established rates for their labor, they represent that they are liable to be sent into forests away from their homes and occupations for long periods, that they have been employed not only in collecting Cinnamon but in felling and dragging timber in the forests. That many who were employed in the forests have been taken ill with the fevers and had died. 2

It is also stated by them "that they are suffering under greater poverty and distress than those of any other caste and pass their days in the same service upon the salary itself without any freedom from labor."

1. Ev. of Capt. Forbes, Govt. Agent for Matale.

2. Petitions Nos. 286—287

“That under the Dutch East India Company they had lands assigned to them<sup>1</sup> (accommodessans) which were resumed by the first British Governor who exempted them from forced services (Rajakaria) and paid them for voluntary labor that the Headmen separated the people into classes which are employed in clearing Cinnamon Gardens and in cutting and peeling Cinnamon.

“When not employed in Government work they serve the District Headmen in carrying their baggage, cultivating their lands, etc.”<sup>2</sup>

Encouragement was given by the Dutch to the Native Headmen to form Plantations. Each Cinnamon peeler had a portion granted to him with directions to preserve the Cinnamon trees and to pay to the Company 5 Pingoes of Cinnamon (weighing each 55 pounds) receiving 12 parrahs of rice in payment.<sup>3</sup> Besides these plantations the Headmen cultivated Cinnamon and delivered the produce at the same rate, a system which they preferred.

The abandonment of the Plantations in the Southern Districts and the extension of those near Colombo have led to the employment of these people at a distance from their homes.

It is stated that “many of the people from the Korles (districts) serve as substitutes for the Chalias, who are brought from a distance and work voluntarily for the wages given by the Department (sixpence a day)—that in the Dutch time persons registered themselves as Chalias to avoid other services and to obtain certain privileges which have since been taken away from them while the service has been hereditarily enforced.”<sup>4</sup>

Of the other classes it is stated that the Lascoryns are bound to work in various ways for six shillings a month, that they frequently employ substitutes and pay them higher than the Government rates, according to the nature of the work, that when called out to dig canals they have to pay twice the Government wages for a substitute.

In elucidation of the effect of the system introduced by the British Government in the Maritime Provinces it is observed “that in the Dutch time they received no pay but held lands for which they rendered

1. No. 530.

2. See also Ev. of Rajapakse, Head Modeliar of the Cinnamon Dept.

3. 275 lbs. of Cinnamon for 12 parrahs of rice valued at 3/- per parrah. The price therefore paid for Cinnamon was 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per lb. nearly.

4. Ev. of Johannes Corea Modeliar.

services. When an estate was granted to a man he was called out to serve for it but the English Government changed the system and call out every man without reference to the land he may hold."

The employment of the people in laborious services appears to have induced many to quit the country. In a petition<sup>1</sup> from Putlam it is stated that "nearly a hundred families of Weavers had removed to avoid being pressed for Government service in cutting canals, making roads, carrying salt, felling trees, etc.," and the Collector of Mannar has stated the inhabitants of that thinly people district often remove their families when a pearl fishery is expected, to avoid being pressed.

In a petition from Putlam<sup>2</sup> signed by 296 persons in Oct., 1829, they stated that besides the taxes and duties which had been imposed on them by the British Government which they enumerate,<sup>3</sup> they were liable to perform public labor to which many were unequal. That cultivators were taken from their fields sometimes at the season for sowing, or when requiring watching and watering.

That Fishermen were taken before they could salt and dry their fish, that Traders, Shopkeepers and Weavers were also taken from their occupations and subject to great losses and injury.

It is stated by the Collector that the work on which the people are compulsorily employed is in deepening a canal and in carrying salt for Government for which they are paid  $4\frac{1}{2}$  *d.* a day.

In June, 1829, sixty-four persons represented from Matura that the work they required to perform was very hard, that they were not paid, and were liable to be flogged.

At Galle the Moormen complained that they were pressed by the Headmen and worked without pay or even the subsistence allowed to criminal prisoners, that they were subject to corporal punishment and reduced to poverty and distress, by being taken from their occupations. Similar representations were made from other quarters.

That the inhabitants are not unwilling to contribute to the execution of useful works is apparent from various communications.

1. Petitions Nos. 303—428.

2. Petition 428.

3. Tax on grain, tax on timber, duty on fish, duty on cocoanuts, monopoly of salt.



In a petition from the Landholders of the Mannar District<sup>1</sup> it is stated "that the want of rain had prevented them from cultivating their lands during the last six years and had obliged many to sell their lands and to emigrate for subsistence into the Kandyan provinces, that if Government has pity on the district it can supply their fields with water by repairing the Great Tank called Tekrum (Giant's Tank). The fields would then yield two crops a year and to provide for the expense the "inhabitants would pay a fair additional tax on their rice fields."

Having referred to various persons who are settled in different parts of the country, the following explanations have been afforded by them.

Mr. Winter, a settler at Caltura, who is engaged in agriculture and in the manufacture of Rope, and the Distillation of Arrack, represents that he has 79 Mechanics and laborers in his employ, all voluntarily hired, the laborers receiving from 4*d.* to 6*d.* a day and the Mechanics from 6*d.* to 1*s.* and 1*s.* 6*d.* a day. He says "the whole of these are obtained in the neighbourhood. I have found no difficulty in obtaining laborers except when the cultivation of their fields required their attendance. At this time some have remained away a few days.

"If the Collector gives orders to the Headmen not to interfere with the Coolies (laborers) of an individual which he has done in my case there is no difficulty in obtaining laborers in the district with whom he does not interfere, exclusive of the Chalias, which caste is numerous here, and if they could be employed without the liability of being called away the number of the laborers procurable would be very great."

"I did at one time employ ten of these at lower wages than the ordinary Coolies but from the continual change by some of them being ordered to Government employ, I discharged them. Should I however succeed in my Sugarcane, I intend taking more again, as in the cultivation of this they cannot be taken away."<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Winter adds that the laborers he thus hired are exclusive of about 600 people who are employed in the distillation of Arrack which he rectifies, and in the preparation of Coir rope yarn.

From the statements of the European Missionaries it also appears that voluntary laborers have been readily obtained by them in erecting their buildings. At Cotta in the Colombo District it is stated that from

1. Petition No. 698.

2. Letter of Mr. Winter dated Caltura, 21st June, 1830. Also see Regulation No. 4 of 1829.

eighty to a hundred workmen were employed, and there was no difficulty in procuring them. The Mechanics were paid 9*d.* and the laborers 6*d.* a day.<sup>1</sup>

At Badagam in the Galle District it is stated that "a hundred voluntary laborers were employed daily from the village, they worked for more than ten hours a day for 4½*d.* Many more persons than were employed came daily to offer their services till the harvest commenced."

"Excepting in the seasons of preparing land for seed, and of harvest, there is no difficulty in obtaining laborers."

"The people are willing to labor but they want encouragement."<sup>2</sup>

From Galle it is stated that "the daily wages of laborers has undergone no change in this district for the fourteen years, it has uniformly been three fanams (4½*d.*) per day. I have not on any occasion found it difficult to obtain voluntary laborers at this rate. They are to be had in abundance in this district."<sup>3</sup>

From Jaffnapatam it is stated that from fifty to eighty persons had been variously employed, who worked voluntarily from nine to ten hours daily, Mechanics receiving from 6*d.* to 9*d.* a day and laborers from 2*d.* to 4*d.* a day, subsisting themselves from the land.

"With some exceptions no difficulty is found in obtaining the services of the people for at least eight months in the year. They are not merely willing to labour but very desirous of obtaining employment. The number of good Mechanics and laborers depends much upon the regular demand. The practice of obtaining labor by compulsion greatly tends to increase the difficulty of hiring voluntary laborers."<sup>4</sup>

It has been remarked in the Galle district<sup>5</sup> that the power which the Headmen have over the people and the oppressive exercise of that power is a source of great distress and discouragement to them. The natives are often obliged when called on to labor in the service of the Government without any remuneration, and it is in the power of the Headmen to appoint whom they please to do the required work, excepting those classes who have special exemption. They ascertain who are

1. Letter of Mr. Lambrick, 8th Oct. 1830.

2. See letters of Mr. Trimnell, 21st June and 8th July, 1830.

3. See letter of Mr. McKenny dated Galle, 8th July, 1830.

4. See the letters of Messrs. Meigs, Poor and the other American Missionaries, Jaffna, 20th Sept, 1830.

5. See letter of Mr. Trimnell, 8th July, 1830.

the persons under them to whom it would be at that time the most inconvenient to be employed in the required service in order that they may receive a fee from them to appoint some other person in their stead.<sup>1</sup>

Those who are not Lascoryns are liable to be called on by the Headmen at any time and to any place within the district to labor gratuitously for the Government.

In regard to the Chalias the Superintendent of the Cinnamon Department has observed that "their services are not willingly rendered as a man coming from Galle and Matura would prefer to earn as much without quitting his neighbourhood that they are a very active, industrious and intelligent people continually employed as Fishermen, Cultivators and Traders when not serving the Government, that they are liable to corporal punishment at his discretion but that it is seldom inflicted and does not exceed 25 lashes excepting in cases of desertion when they have received advances of pay—that in 1823 a great number were punished for neglect of work."<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Walker, an Assistant in the Cinnamon Department, has stated that the Chalias object to employment in the interior as it removes them from their homes, and that numbers had died from the unhealthiness of the climate, that many people of other castes are now employed in the Cinnamon Gardens and many more would come forward if they did not apprehend being registered and compelled to work as Chalias.<sup>3</sup>

This feeling has been occasioned by the enforcement of the Dutch regulations of 1753 by which the descendants of persons so registered are bouned to the same service.

Mr. Walker has added that besides the abandoned plantations there are many private gardens which the inhabitants were encouraged by the Dutch Government to plant in Cinnamon, and which are now rendered almost useless to the proprietors by the regulations which prohibit them from cutting the plants or clearing the ground and that if they were allowed to collect and deliver Cinnamon at a higher rate than is now paid to the Chalias, many would find their account in doing so, and persons would employ themselves in going about the country to collect it.

1. An instance is stated of a Cook who was ordered to work in the woods near Galle and who was excused by application of his employer to the Modeliar. The man was entitled to 3*d.* a day being a Lascoryn which exempts him from gratuitous labor.

2. Evidence of Mr. Walbeoff.

3. Evidence of Mr. Walker.

The Moormen thus employ themselves in collecting Coffee which they obtain by bartering cloths and other merchandize with the cultivators.

Were this system introduced the expense attending the cultivation and care of the plantations and the superintendence of laborers and peelers would be saved.

Many parts of the process of preparing the Cinnamon<sup>1</sup> is performed by the wives and children of the Chalias who attend them in the gardens, and this would be done by the families of proprietors who collected it on their own grounds.

If the Government grounds should ultimately be cultivated by individuals on this tenure the only public establishment required would be for receiving and sorting the Cinnamon.

Mr. Anstruther<sup>2</sup> who, as Collector of Colombo, superintended the execution of the roads, canals and other works in that district has stated his opinion that it would be more expedient to employ the voluntary labor of the inhabitants than to bring workmen from a distance—that in all ordinary cases volunteers can be had by offering sufficient wages and that it of the utmost importance that such should be resorted to wherever it is practicable. It is impracticable to procure volunteers on all occasions particularly where Coolies are required for a distant journey or works to be carried on requiring unusual exertion or in distant places.

When volunteers cannot be procured the rate for pressed laborers ought to be very high, perhaps not less than double the ordinary hire.

The works in the Dock Yard at Trincomalie have been entirely carried on by voluntary laborers, and as the population of that district is small they have generally been hired at Madras, the Coolies or common laborers receiving 7 Rupees a month or about sixpence a day.

“The following observation is made by the Naval Officer at Trincomalee:—

“The natives of those part of the Island have been found readily to engage in the duties of the Department and to the extent required. In point of labor those employed as Mechanics have been considered quite as intelligent and industrious as those of the Continent when possessing equal advantages of instruction.”

*(To be Continued.)*

1. Evidence of Mr. Walker.
2. Evidence of Mr. Anstruther.

# Kandyan State Trial

EDITED BY

FATHER S. G. PERERA, S.J.

(Contd. from p. 240)

Fifth Day, Friday, January 16th.

*Twenty-seventh witness* — Amunugame<sup>1</sup> late Rate Mahatmeya—I recollect when the Chiefs were arrested. I attended the District Court of Kandy shortly before that. I went to Mr. Armour's house about 12 days before the arrest. *I know Tibbotowewe.* I saw him at the Malwatte Wihare. I met him at the temple near the Pagagey. He asked me to walk into his cell to chew betel. I went into his cell; he presented me betel and a seat and told me that he intended going to Dembewe Unnanse's Wihare and at the same time to call at my house. I asked on what account. He said that the doctrine of the Gods and of Buddho which had been in existence from ancient times in Kandy were about to be lost. I asked "what were you looking for me for?"—he answered, that there were not many of his confidential acquaintances in Doombere. *I said that on a former occasion a similar proposal was made and was attended with melancholy results. He said this occasion would not be so. I asked him what assistance there was now to make war. He said the things which are deficient in our country are lead, arms, gunpowder, and to get these things we have now spoken to the Malay soldiers. He did not say who he meant by we. He added that it was known to the superior Chiefs also, therefore "the Ratemahatmeya must not be under any alarm." That it was known to the Maha Nilemes (the Adigars), and he said if we can only engage the aid of the people of the country it was quite enough, that I must try to engage them and that he had also spoken to the Ratemahatmeya of Doombere.* He mentioned, that he was going to Matele and when he went he would come thro' Amunugama, where I reside. I answered, very well. Madugalle Rate-mahatmeya is the Chief of my Province; when I stated that he said he had spoken to Doombere Ratemahatmeya, I meant him.

1. Amunugama Palle Wahale Nilame, Ratemahatmeya of Dumbara 1815, D'Oyly's Diary 226, 251.

*Cross-examined by Mr. Staples.*—When this priest spoke to me in that manner, I did not think it would take place. I thought within myself, I could not tell what his motives were; we know each other, I am not on terms of intimacy, nor on bad terms with him; never had any dispute with him, had spoken together before that, no one was present on this occasion. It was in his cell at the temple, no one was in the cell, there was no one who spoke to me besides him on that day about this conversation, it gave me some alarm. I gave no information of it to any body after the Priests was (*sic*) arrested, until I mentioned it to Government—to the Government Agent not to anyone else. I live in Amunugama. *It was shortly after I heard of the Proclamation that I gave information.* There is no other Agent nearer me to whom I could mention this circumstance. I know David Modliar. I did not tell him, did not see him when I came to give information. I did on a subsequent occasion. I knew Mahawalatenne Dessave, saw him on that occasion. He asked me what I knew. I told him and he said I should give information. He did not say those who did would get situations. I did not hear it said at all.

*Re-examined by Mr. Carr.*—*Dembewe told me to speak about that business to our country people.* He did not tell me to tell no one about it.

---

*Twenty-eighth witness.*—Ukkuwele Banda—I live in Ukkuwele in Matele, *recollect meeting Tibbotowewe* when I was going to bathe, 10 or 12 hours before night fall. I met Tibbotowewe going to the Welligalle Wihare from Werioda temple. Tibbotowewe spoke to me first and said it was his intention to come and look for me. *He said the religion and religious ceremonies are about to be lost, our respects are going, therefore it is in our contemplation to do something.* He said it was the intention of the Chiefs to give an entertainment to the Governor, the Judicial Commissioner and other Gentlemen of superior rank in Kandy—an entertainment on tables; that the Malays also sided with them, and would join with us to kill the Governor, the Judicial Commissioner, the Revenue Commissioner and all the other Gentlemen who came to the entertainment and he asked me what I would do about it. I said I will give an answer on that subject hereafter. He said it was intended also to give food to the Malays, you must also render assistance for this and speak to the people of our country (Matale) and have some victuals prepared. I said, “I will give you an answer on that subject hereafter” He did not tell me when it was to take place. He began this conversation in this way—“Now

our religion is going to be destroyed and then they are going to establish taxes to the detriment of the poor people. In that way there are a great many injustices done to them." He said the principal Chiefs and Priests intend to do something—to kill the Gentlemen by giving an entertainment in which the discharged Malays were to join. I think that was ten or fifteen days before the arrest. I heard of the Proclamation offering pardon; a child of mine having been ill I could not come to give information then.

*Cross-examined by Mr. Staples.*—I had not made up my mind what part I was to take; I had no suit in Court at the time. I had an office formerly. In a certain cause I was examined twice. The first time I happened to speak the truth and from forgetfulness I spoke with difficulty the next time I was examined. I know the village Welegalle, never had a dispute with Tibbotowewe, 4th prisoner, I have no claims or share in that land, never had a dispute with him. I think this conversation took place ten or fifteen days before the arrest. I think I gave information about four months ago, and about ten or twenty days after the arrest. I did not go before the Agent at Matele, I did not go to him on account of the Proclamation. I was not asked because I did not go.

---

*Twenty-ninth witness*—Obbokotowe Unnanse—I have been in confinement for six months. I have not heard that I was to have a free pardon if I spoke the truth. (Mr. Carr here said that in the event of his speaking the truth he would have one.) I know Tibbotowewe Unnanse, I reside in the temple of Malwatte and there go to him constantly. I know his servant Manika; cannot say that it was in January that he came to me. I used to go to him very often we used to have long conversations frequently. There are different things which I have spoken to him about Government. The last time I saw Tibbotowewe was when he was put into gaol. I saw two other Priests three months ago. I have not spoken to him nor Dembewe for three months. I can't confine myself to any particular communication I had with Government. I can't comprehend the way in which I am examined. I want to know if the other witnesses were brought to this Court in the charge of a sentry. If I am culpable I shall be punished; if innocent I shall be released. I was first of all confined and informed by Mr. Turnour, that I was the principal culprit; a few months afterwards Mr. Turnour came and asked me if I heard that Tibbotowewe and

Embilmee game had spoken to me to raise a rebellion. I said I never knew anything about it. I did not send any statement. Mr. Turnour came and took it. That statement is not true. Mr. Turnour came and told me to say such and such facts, and I wrote them down. Mr. Turnour asked me if I knew that Tibbotowewe and Embilmee game said. My answer was, no. Then Mr. Turnour said if you don't state these facts you will be subject to corporal punishment and other severe penalties; no one was present. There was no guard, Mr. Turnour came to the room and opened the door. He did the same when I came to his house; there were two peons and some sentries, but not in the room. Mr. Turnour said this several times. At the Council I was asked by Mr. Turnour about the rebellion. Mr. Turnour did not tell me this at the Council. I was asked if I knew about the Malays, I said I knew them. I was asked what I knew about the Captain. I said I did not know what was meant by Captain. I saw him two or three times at the house of the Priest Kettakumbure Unnanse, to get some medicine; nothing else was said. I did not go to call the Malay officer. I used to go to Kettakumbure Unnanse to be instructed in medicine; once when I went on a similar occasion, I met the Captain. I know the Captain used to come to Kettakumbure Unnanse. He once told me that there was a Padrie at the Malay officer's. I was to go and see how he was, I was not desired to go and bring him. Embilmee game had some boiled rice which I saw him give to the Malay officer and others. I cannot say that I did not go to tell him to come. I did not tell him to come, neither on that day nor any other. I don't know what brought him there. I have known Tibbotowewe Unnanse two or three years. I have stated that there was a statement in my handwriting - Mr. Turnour gave me a pen and asked me to write so and so, and I wrote it down - He told me "you know such and such facts, write the same down." This is my handwriting. I can't recollect going to Tibbotowewe Unnanse's house nor his sending his servant away, nor having been asked to sit on a mat at his house. There were things about the religion spoken of which I was enjoined to keep secret; it cannot be repeated in this Court. I don't know so much of the former rebellion; he belongs to Matele and I to Welassey; he would not tell me of such important facts. Tibbotowewe never told me anything of the former rebellion. (*Mr. Carr here said "All you say is now written down, if you don't speak the truth you may receive corporal punishment).*") I must receive any that the Court awards. I don't remember any conversation about the rebellion with Tibbotowewe. I can swear that I don't



recollect. I don't remember his telling me that it would not do to commence it here, but in Wellasey, which was a wilderness. I was in the habit of going to Palwatte Unnanse, and was told to inquire after his health; never stated that the rebellion was to commence there, in my life. I don't know except by my answering yes to what Mr. Turnour said. I can't say if I wrote down anything or not. (He is shown a statement) I cannot say it is mine. There are many writings in the country—I wrote it in the gaol. Mr. Turnour threatened to kill me. He said you will have to suffer death the same as Kahawatte did. I first saw Mr. Turnour near the Payagey, in the temple; I gave Mr. Turnour the paper in the gaol; after I gave the paper already written Mr. Turnour carried it away. Welassey Annu Nayeke Unnanse was present when I gave it. It was handed to Mr. Turnour near the apartment of that Priest. I said nothing. I only gave the paper. Two or three times I was threatened by Mr. Turnour—the first time was near the Payagey in the temple, the day after the arrest took place—no one was present. Mr. Turnour used to call on each individual and speak separately to each, we were confined at the Pansele, several Priests were confined—I was in a separate room, I don't recollect Mr. Turnour saying anything to me when I gave the paper—I can't swear to everything which was said each time by Mr. Turnour—I can't call it to my recollection. Mr. Turnour looked at it, put in his pocket and came away. He did not read it. He never asked any question about it—I came to Mr. Turnour and told him “I have given you a written statement, what have you to say to me about it?” Mr. Turnour said it is known to Government that you are an offender, and I told him “I have nothing to say about it.” The result must take place at the Supreme Court. Mr. Turnour did not read it, looked at it and took it away. I am now here after having already exerted myself as Mr. Turnour told me—I don't recollect what was said then—I am doubtful and can't say one way or the other—I don't know if there was any alteration made; if there was Mr. Turnour must know; how could I alter it while the writing was with him? Mr. Turnour told me “refer to your memory a little.” He said this “it is not that you don't recollect, you must know this fact”—I don't see any alteration or erasures. Mr. Turnour did not read it over to me. I don't recollect any explanations—I can only say I don't recollect if any explanations were asked—No alterations were made. I don't remember his saying the alterations were to be made in my own handwriting—Major Douglas was present, I came from Welassey—I had a conversation every day. I did not say

anything about the Malays—I used to go to Kettakumbure very often. I don't recollect Tibbotowewe saying anything about gaining over the Malays—I went to a certain Pansele in Welligalle, one person named Embilmeegame and another person went with me—we saw Tibbotowewe there, nothing particular was said, he asked what road I came, and so and so—nothing treasonable was said—Tibbotowewe and I had separate servants.

[*This witness was committed to gaol to take his trial for Perjury.*]

---

*Thirtieth Witness*—Jemidar Abdul Passer, sworn—I am a Jemidar in the Ceylon Rifle Regiment. *I saw the fifth prisoner (Kettakumbure) first*—the man with the grey beard—I saw him last April. Serjt. Vera Sorta brought him to me, and recommended him to me as a good Doctor and saying he attended his children and I might avail myself of his services when my children required it. He lives at a Pansela near the lake—we both stood talking for a little while and went away; four or five days after, Serjt. Vera Sorta came to me and made a communication to me; the old man some days after came to me, saw my wife and children; felt their pulses, said they were not well and required medicine. I told him the time was not fit it was too rainy. He sat a little while and said he had news to give me—I asked what. *He said a Kandyan Chief had desired him to procure a few Malays. The Chief would pay them well and give them plenty of rice and paddy. I concluded there was something here to deceive me,* and I said “for what service do you want those men?” I won't tell you that now but hereafter—I asked “who is the Chief that has desired you to procure men?” after I knew who the person was that had desired him, it was my intention to take him to my Commanding Officer. He replied “I will mention the name of the Chief hereafter.” *I concluded it was a falsehood and did not give credit to it*—Two months and a half after I met him on the road. He said “when your children are sick send for me.” I said they were all well—fifteen days after this I met him (Kettakumbure) near the lake—He did not talk to me and I took no notice of him. Then three months passed. In the month of July he came to my house again in company with another Priest—he was a tall man—he was here yesterday—This old man told me the other was a good man, that he had much rice and paddy. I replied “why should you talk of rice—those who have gardens and fields have plenty?” The other Priest told me he had news to communicate to me—There was a Kandyan

Chief who had desired him to get a few Malay men—this Priest said it was time and he desired me also to procure a few unemployed Malay men. *I then thought to myself this man said the same thing to me the other day, there must be some treachery in this*—I must consider what this is—and if the name of the Chief is mentioned I will take the news to my Major.<sup>1</sup> I asked “what occasion is there for men?” He said “you shall hear that hereafter, a number of Chiefs have agreed upon this. They remained a little while and went away. 2 or 3 days after this those two came attended by another—the Priest (Obbokotowe) who was brought here a prisoner, the last witness. The old man and the fair man said this is a good man and has plenty of rice and paddy. If men can be procured he will give them plenty. I told them all this was not right, “tell me what the name of the Chief and you shall have the men.” After two or three days passed, the old man (*Kettakumbure, 5th prisoner*) came and the other dark man, and brought plantains and cakes. I asked what they were for. They said for my children, and gave them to the children. They made an excuse that it was rainy and went away. Two days after, about 4 p.m., the old man (5th prisoner) came to me alone. I asked what he came for, and he said to see my children. I said that a Bengal Priest who had come sick from Colombo, had been 15 days at my house, I asked him to give the poor Priest some medicine. He gave him some and went away. He went away promising to return the next day and give him some more medicine and that I was to give him only broth but no rice, that he would come to see the patient in the evening or next morning. The same morning at 10 o'clock I dressed and went to my Major respecting the guards I had mounted the day before; at about 11 o'clock I returned home, and returning home I saw the last witness (Obbokotowe) standing at my door. He said the Doctor (5th prisoner) wanted me and he could not tell me what for. I desired him to speak the truth and tell me what I was wanted for. He said the Priest wished to see me, I went to the Priest. A table was spread at his house. *The three Priests were there, the last witness (Obbokotowe) the old Priest (5th prisoner) and the fair man (Embilmeegame)* of whom I have been speaking. They led me to the table, I asked what for, they said they were going to eat rice and had sent for me to join them. I concluded that it was intended to deceive me. He first spoke to me about

1. Major Henry N. Douglas, 78th Regiment, Commandant Badulla, Agent of Government, Uva and Bintenna.

medicine and now he asks me to eat with him, I said Malay people don't eat rice which others cook; the 5th prisoner said I should eat. If you won't eat rice sit here; for our time of eating is passing away; they sat down and eat (*sic*). There was a couch and I sat on it. I eat. (*sic*) a plantain; while I was eating all three laughed, *the fair person asked if I had people who would go to Paranagama (Matele) and make a karella (Rebellion)*. I said "what proud words are you speaking? What you have said is not proper." He laughed. I asked who the Chief was that wanted men. He said "it shall be told you hereafter, I will come to your house and let you know the names of those Chiefs." I said tell them now. We will not tell you now, come tomorrow or the day after and we will tell you the names of those Chiefs. The 5th prisoner and last witness laughed, both said it is true there are two or three Chiefs and that they had proposed to them three to procure men. I asked who those Chiefs were; both replied they would come in a day or two and let me know. I then went away saying I hoped they would come the next day and let me know, intending to take them to my major; nothing was said about money, nor pagodas.

*Cross-examined by Mr. Staples—The Fair man (Embilmeegame was the principal speaker.* I don't know David Mudliar. I did not see him there. *Saw only three Priests, the dark man (Obbokotowe), the last witness called me.* No one was present at the conversation I have stated but the children. I am quite sure. There was sergeant three months before, he was not present when I was called in, I did not say I would work for any one that paid me. Did not say I could get 50 men soon enough if 2 pagodas were given to each. They never spoke about pagodas or any money. The Priests did not tell me what the men were for, they spoke in Cingalese, I understand it a little. There was no inducement held out to me. I was arrested on the 19th July, and stated what I knew to the major. I used to speak a few words in Malabar to the old Priest. When he spoke about my wife and children he spoke in Malabar.

*Thirty-first witness—Hainkumbore—I am the late Mohottale of Oodogodda in Matele.* I resigned the office on account of sickness. *I was appointed headman over the Elephant department. I recollect the 1st and 2nd prisoners coming into Kandy through Matele from Anooradhapoora.* I received an order from the 2nd Adigar to come to him. He called me into the house and told me I have sent for you to mention a certain subject, saying "it is our endeavour to raise a rebellion in

*Oodogodde-Korle, you and others must endeavour to procure some men from Oodogodde.*” I said “I must of course attend to what you say.” He then said “when you receive another order you must come.” I cannot say with certainty whom he meant when he said *our* no one had been spoken of before. As I was returning from the 2nd Adigar’s I met the —[Here witness was stopped by the Court].

*Cross-examined by Mr. Staples*—This circumstance took place at the house of the 2nd Adigar at Doolaiwe. No one was in that apartment of the house I neither saw any one neither do I recollect any. I was not there the whole day. I went to the Walauwe and returned the same day, only remaining a short time. When I went to the Walauwe, he who came and called me told the 2nd Adigar I was come. I should know him if I saw him again; I may have been very often to the house; I know several of his attendants, but on that day none of them were present. I came about six miles, I got nothing whatever to eat. *The Adigar said he had sent for me to raise a rebellion.* As I was returning I mentioned this to the Rate Adikareme. I think four or five months after this I went to Kandy. I knew of the Proclamation; it was after that, but I can’t speak of the exact time, I went to the Assistant Government Agent at Matele. At the time, I did not tell him because I had been advised by the Rate Adikareme not to tell any one of it, but again the Rate Adikareme having wrote (*sic*) to me I mentioned it. The Rate Adikareme told me you must not get into a scrape and lose your life. Go to your village and keep yourself quiet.

(Prosecution Closed.)

### Sixth Day,—Saturday, 17th January.

The business of this day commenced by the learned Judge suggesting to the Counsel for the Prisoners, that as the prosecution had closed, Mr. Turnour should be present in Court, to assist the Crown Counsel in suggesting questions which could only originate with a person possessing sufficient local knowledge.

Mr. Staples stated that individually he had not the slightest objection to Mr. Turnour’s being present, but wished that the question should be put to the prisoners direct by the Court.

The question being accordingly put by the Interpreter of the Court to the prisoners, they replied that they would submit to any order of the Court, but that it was certainly their wish and request that

Mr. Turnour should continue to be excluded during the examination of the witnesses for the defence also. His Lordship said he must over-rule their application unless some sufficient reason should be given for it.

The Counsel for the prisoners then said, that he had already expressed his individual opinion on this matter, and that he entertained the utmost respect for Mr. Turnour; but as his Clients has declared their wishes openly in Court, it was now his duty to support their application. His Clients apprehended that Mr. Turnour's presence, from his high station and personal influence, would over-awe the witnesses they intended calling, and however unfounded such an apprehension might be, he must insist on the rules being enforced.

Mr. Turnour observed, that he was summoned by the prisoners also and that he was willing to give his evidence first, if by that means the objection would be obviated; but as it appeared to be the wish of the prisoners that he should be excluded, under any circumstances, he would not avail himself of the learned Judge's disposition to over-rule the application of the prisoners. Before he retired, however, from the Court, he considered it his duty to state that his sole object in wishing to remain there was for the purpose of affording that assistance to the Crown Law Officers which they had a right to expect from his local knowledge; and he also thought it proper to apprise the Court that he had learned from a District Judge, a fortnight before the Libel had been made out, that Tikiri Banda had made it public that the prisoners would summon him (Mr. Turnour) and all the District Judges and their Interpreters from whose Districts any information was supposed to be obtained, and most of the principal persons in the Central Province, with the avowed object in view of embarrassing the selection of a local Jury in this trial, and of excluding from the Court every person who could be supposed to have any knowledge of the information obtained by Government. The list of witnesses summoned corroborated this information, and moreover on that list were some persons who had given information which led to important evidence being obtained, and others on whom suspicion had been cast. The cross-examination of these persons, if they were called by the prisoners on those particular points, would now be defeated by Mr. Turnour's absence. Mr. Turnour then retired.

*(To be Continued.)*

# Notes and Queries.

## THE LISBON ARCHIVES

BY

FATHER S. G. PERERA, S.J.

Portugal has the obligations of her glorious past and has to maintain four costly establishments in Lisbon, each with a separate staff and buildings, for the proper custody and preservation of historical records. These records cover a period of many centuries and concern, not Portugal alone, but many countries of Europe and especially of Asia, Africa and America. They range from trifling private notes to the most important historical documents. The number of manuscripts that refer to Ceylon is astounding. In one section alone of one library I began to compile a list, but the mere record of the library numeration and date filled thirty-eight pages and cost me so many days of labour that I had to give up the idea of attempting anything of the kind in other sections, and be content with nothing only such documents as concerned my immediate quest.

This quest of mine was a subject of Ceylon history after the Portuguese period, and yet to my great surprise I found in the four libraries of Lisbon and in that of Evora something over a thousand folios of hitherto unpublished material of great value and interest. I could not however close my eyes to the Ceylon documents that I came across in the course of my search. Among the many things I thus found were two letters of Don Juan Dharmapala, bearing his sign manual and seal, as in his letter to Pope Gregory XIII., now in the Vatican library. I also came upon a letter of Joao Vaz Monterio de Setuval, which has a curious interest. His tombstone is the earliest of its kind in Ceylon, discovered in the Fort in the eighties of the last century, afterwards said to be missing, but now lying neglected in bits in the verandah of the Colombo Museum. Now the date of the letter I found in the Torre do Tombo is much later than the date of his death as given, or rather misread, in the tombstone. This fact explains the problem that the erudite Donald Ferguson raised, namely, how a verse of a later day came to be inscribed on the stone. I came upon a Portuguese-Sinhalese treaty of 1533, a Supplementary Tombo of Ceylon, which also mentions Alagiyawanna Mohottala, and a large number of other historical records of which I took note only of those of importance or of special interest to me.

I must say that to the great credit of this country, the arrangements for the inspection and study of these historical documents, and the facilities and opportunities given to *bona fide* students is a matter for admiration and gratitude. The Directors of the Libraries not only show visitors the greatest courtesy and consideration, but even go out of their way to render assistance in their search. The subordinate officials, likewise, are most willing to be of service and are unremitting in their attentions. However great may be the trouble that a visitor gives by calling for document after document merely to see whether it contains anything of interest to him, they show not the least impatience but are even pleased to be of service. This may seem exaggerated, but it is the plain truth, and I record it with pleasure because it greatly impressed me.

Yet it happens that some visitors abuse this kindness. Not long ago a foreign lady who was working in these archives and whose interest has been directed to researches on Ceylon, was found to have grossly abused the generosity of the Portuguese people. After her departure some documents which she handled in these archives were offered for sale in Holland and Germany. The Portuguese authorities at once communicated with the Governments concerned. Holland promptly and readily caused the documents to be restored, and some of these rescued documents were actually shown to me as they dealt with Ceylon. But nothing was recovered from the other country with which, I was informed, Portugal exchanged bitter diplomatic notes.

The outcome of this misadventure is the strictest enforcement of the rule requiring foreign investigators to be presented by the accredited Lisbon representatives of their respective Governments. I had thus to trouble the British representative in Lisbon four times in succession for credentials, which were given me with courtesy and despatch. I was spared the trouble of going a fifth time by the Director of one of the largest libraries to whom I had been introduced and whom I had met several times before I began work in his library and who in consequence took it upon himself to be responsible for my *bona fides*. Among the Ceylon manuscripts belonging to his library was one which I had translated for the Ceylon Government some years ago, and which he, unaware of the fact, caused to be placed before me one day as a surprise. The Government of Ceylon, I was sorry to see, had not thought it necessary to send a copy of the translation to the library in which the original is found. That library had also a complete set of the Sinhalese writings of Father Jacome Gonsalvez, beautifully written in eighteenth century script. It had also a part of the Tamil writings of the same author, the other part of the set having found its way to another library, where I came upon them and where in return for the very cordial and ungrudging assistance I was given by the Director and his assistant, I was able to enlighten them on the title and author of the only manuscripts in an Indian language found in the shelves.