

ART. XXII.—*The Cinnamon Trade of Ceylon, its Progress and Present State*, by JOHN CAPPER, Esq.

(Read February 1, 1845.)

It is impossible to say at what particular period this spice first became known to the world, though there is but little doubt that the aromatic properties of the bark were no secret at a very early date.

The first mention we have of it is as being used by the Israelites on occasions of sacrifice, and afterwards by the Hindús in burning their dead; for these purposes the entire stick was probably used, or at most the bark may have been rudely stript from the tree without preparation. From being employed on sacrificial occasions, it would not be difficult to imagine that the priests, who in those dark days were the only persons practising the then mysterious art of medicine, should have brought the spice into use for various disorders, and for this the peel or bark was doubtless cut away from the sticks without regard to its appearance.

“The utmost Indian Isle Taprobano,” or in more modern language Ceylon, was known to the traders of Egypt at the period when they supplied Imperial Rome with all the luxuries of the eastern world. Their fleets sailed annually from various ports in the Red Sea, coasting the Indian continent as far as Cape Comorin, opposite to which the harbours on the northern part of Ceylon afforded them ample shelter, whilst they bartered their silver for the equally precious things brought thither by the traders of the far East. The many ruins of important cities, and the vestiges of a once extensive cultivation of grain, bear testimony to the value of the early trade of this part of the island, and to the wealth of the inhabitants. The vessels which brought the silks, the ivory, and the perfumes of distant and untravelled lands to the Egyptian merchants, carried back with them to the monarchs of Hindustan, the cinnamon and pearls of Ceylon as well as the silver of Rome. The traders of Egypt also took considerable supplies of the spice, to barter along the coasts of Persia and Arabia for the produce of those countries, whence it found its way into Asia Minor and the northern kingdoms of the East; thus they were the means of its distribution over nearly the whole of the known world.

The numberless sacrifices which the Greeks and Romans were at all times accustomed to offer to their deities, as well as the profusion of costly aromatics consumed at their funerals, will easily induce us to

believe that this spice was an article sought after by them at no small cost. If in those remote times it was far more costly than at present, from the long transit it made before reaching a market, we may fancy that the very dearness of it would render it more highly prized by the proud and wealthy of Rome.

From this period until the discovery of the passage round the Cape of Good Hope, the Red Sea and the Pambam passage continued to be the channel for the trade between the eastern and western worlds. From the opening of this new route, the decline of the northern ports of Ceylon and the ruin of the native fleets may be dated, the entire commerce of the East having passed into the hands of the Portuguese.

The quantity of cinnamon exported by the Portuguese was very trifling, as the spice had not then become an article of much demand in Europe. For many years much more was taken by the Arab merchants who continued to trade with the Ceylonese, than by Europeans; indeed these people took considerable quantities of the spice up to so late a period as the beginning of the present century, when cassia became its substitute with them at a much lower price; we have now lost their custom altogether.

The trade in cinnamon under the Portuguese did increase, though to but a small extent, and through them and their neighbours the Spaniards it was introduced into the new world, where at a later period the demand became very considerable. We cannot, however, discover that the Portuguese made any progress in improving the culture of this spice, or that they ever attempted it. The energies of this people were seldom directed to the improvement of any of their extensive conquests or colonies; to discover and subdue seemed to be their only pride, and to wring the greatest quantity of wealth with the least possible exertion or trouble from their tributaries, was their sole policy. When the Dutch therefore took possession of the island, they found the trade in this valuable spice extremely limited, and the cultivation of it in about the same state that it had been from its first discovery and use. In the western province, particularly about Colombo and Negombo, the bushes were found to be more abundant and in better condition than in any other part of the island, owing rather to the lightness of the jungle around than to any care bestowed upon them.

The Dutch have ever been an industrious and persevering people, however misguided and bigoted in their commercial policy; and it was not very long before one of their governors, Falk, turned his attention to the culture of the spice. He began the experiment in his own garden, near the Mutwall River, much against the opinions and wishes of the Chalias, who had always kept matters concerning cin-

namon entirely to themselves; and they now declared that the spice would deteriorate by cultivation. Falk, however, was not so easily deterred from his plans, but persevered in his labours; and after much vexatious opposition and annoyance from the native peelers, who fancied they should lose some of their employments if it were grown in abundance about Colombo, he succeeded in producing bushes superior in size and quality to any that had hitherto been known. Having been thus far fortunate, the Governor next commenced a partial cultivation of the best portions of the cinnamon land around Colombo; he employed great numbers of the neighbouring villagers and their headmen to free the bushes from low jungle, and from the thick shade of the larger forest trees, encouraging them in their exertions by the promise of honours and rewards; and in the course of a few years he had considerable tracts of land well opened, and obtained a far more abundant supply of the spice than had been previously collected.

Falk appointed a large number of watchers or lascoryns to keep cattle from the ground, and preserve the bushes from damage; severe enactments were passed against any who might cut or destroy cinnamon; heavy fines for the smallest offence, and severe punishment by public flogging for more serious depredations, were decreed: even the Modeliar and other headmen were sometimes flogged when it was discovered that any bushes had been destroyed in their districts, without the real offender being brought to punishment.

During the Dutch time, the exports of cinnamon to Europe and the Indian Continent appear to have been considerable. Ever intent on promoting their interests by peaceful and certain means, they entered into treaties with the Kandian sovereigns, by which they secured the right of purchasing annually, at a fixed rate, a large quantity of spice which was found growing most abundantly throughout the jungles of the interior. They took care to have the price fixed at as low a rate as possible, namely, about 20s. the bale of 88 lbs., and a good portion of this price was usually taken out in salt, which the Kandians could only procure from the maritime provinces, and in articles of European and coast produce. The greediness and oppression of the Dutch frequently led to quarrels with their Kandian neighbours; but as the latter depended entirely upon them for salt and cloths, the yearly quantity of cinnamon was nearly always forthcoming,—nor do we find that any alteration in price ever took place.

From documents in the archives at Amsterdam, it would seem that, in the middle of the eighteenth century, the quantity exported from Ceylon was, 6000 bales to Europe, 1000 or 1200 bales to the Dutch East-India Company for the Indian Continent, 400 to the Coro-

mandel Coast, and about 200 to Persia and the coasts of the Red Sea by the Arab traders, making a total of nearly 8000 bales.

The English found the trade on the decrease, and the cultivation of the spice confined to a few spots near Colombo, the same which Falk had long before begun upon; since his time no improvements had taken place, the ground being merely kept free from jungle, whilst in many parts water had collected and formed extensive swamps. But though the Dutch had done so little to increase the crops by improved methods of culture, they had used every endeavour to preserve what already grew in the island; they had passed the most severe enactments against any who rooted up a bush of cinnamon, even from his own ground, for all alike were decreed to be the property of the Government; fines of 50 and 100 dollars were levied for first offences, and confiscation of property followed a repetition. These enactments remained unrevoked when Ceylon became a British possession, and it was not until 1833 that any but Government were allowed to cut a single stick of cinnamon on their own property.

Our countrymen having driven out the Dutch, the Kandians, who had so long looked upon them as allies and friends, began to consider us their enemies, and showed no inclination to supply us with produce. Constant quarrels arose, and the usual exchange of spice for cloth and salt never took place; the latter they seemed generally to have obtained from the north, independently of us.

Governor North soon turned his attention to an article which was likely to become of so much importance to the revenue of the island; and we accordingly find that, in 1799, he enclosed the best portions of cinnamon land at Marendhan near Colombo, and at Kaderani in the vicinity of Negombo, with broad boundary ditches; a large number of labourers was placed upon these gardens, which in a very short time were in a comparatively flourishing state. The knowledge of the English in spice cultivation was at this period very limited, and that little they derived from the Cinghalese headmen, who have been at all times ignorant and prejudiced. It was, therefore, hardly to be expected that any improved system of cultivating the spice should be commenced immediately.

It was not until 1805 that any attempt was made at improvement; at that period Mr. Carrington, the chief superintendant of the gardens, began to root up the small jungle from amongst the bushes and to remove the superabundant shade. This was found to answer well; there were, however, large tracts of vacant ground in the gardens, the soil of which was evidently well adapted to the growth of cinnamon, and these in 1806 and 1807, Mr. Carrington proposed to the Modeliers of

the Mahabadda that they should plant at their own cost under promises of rewards, distinctions, and privileges. His wish was of course law to them, and they commenced the task towards the end of 1806, and during the succeeding rains of May and June, they planted the following quantities of ground:—The Maha Modeliar, 120 acres; the Wellisero Modoliar, 110 acres; the Welletotte Modoliar, 100 acres; the Roone Modeliar, 60 acres; and the Dadolla Modeliar, 100 acres. They were rewarded for this with medals and titles, and the lands planted by them have ever since been known by their names. The Maha Modeliar from his great influence had the command of a far superior force of labourers: his tract was consequently the best planted and the most cared for, and is at this time the most flourishing portion of Kaderani. They planted with seedlings raised in nurseries, and in 1811, a small peeling was obtained; about 12 bales from the 490 acres. Other parts of Kaderani and also a large tract of Marendhan was planted with cinnamon roots removed from the neighbouring gardens; but these nearly all failed, doubtless from the want of care, for it is far easier to plant in this way than from the seedlings. Transplanting was persevered in during the four following years, chiefly at the Murendhan garden.

In 1808, Mr. Carrington sent in a report to Government upon the state of the gardens, both preserved and otherwise, from which it would appear that many of the latter were being cleared of cinnamon and cultivated with other produce. He recommended that these gardens should be well watched, and as a proof of their value to the Crown, ordered the next peeling to be taken from them alone, leaving the plantations for the following year, and he succeeded in obtaining a crop of 3675 bales, one-third of which was, however, no doubt spurious. His views in these matters were approved of, and greater vigilance was exerted over the gardens of individuals which contained any quantity of cinnamon. As may be supposed, however, this did not prevent the work of eradicating the obnoxious plant, now rendered more offensive than ever: it was found impossible to command a supervision over the numberless small plots of ground containing a few bushes each, more especially as any information on the subject could only come from the natives, who are well known never to give evidence of the sort except from personal motives. Had those in authority had any experience, they would have seen the futility of the attempt at watching every half dozen bushes, and instead, should have given unlimited permission for rooting up cinnamon, on condition of bringing in the roots to the plantations, where, had they been placed, they would have been safe, and have quickly yielded a large and

certain return, with but little fear of their destruction. The loss from removal could not have equalled the quiet destruction carried on by the coerced owners of paltry cinnamon grounds. But these things were looked at in a far different way then; everything seemed to have been carried on in extremes, and accordingly we find that in 1810, Government, which two years before, had decided upon having every acre of village cinnamon well watched, was now on the very point of abandoning *all* their preserved plantations except Marendhan, and of forming new ones some way up the Mutwall river, to be defended from the Kandians by block-houses and fortifications, and sufficiently removed from the sea to prevent smuggling, then pretty extensively carried on. The scheme however fell to the ground, no doubt on account of another being placed at the head of this department with more enlightened views; Mr. Montgomery recommended that Government should add to their plantations, and thereby render themselves independent of both the Kandian jungles and native gardens, in which case they might gradually loosen the restrictions upon destroying the spice, and allow many tracts of good land to be profitably cultivated. The former suggestion was acted upon by the preserved gardens being more fully planted, but we find no signs of any leniency towards owners of private grounds.

Of the peelings in different years previous to 1804, there does not appear to have been any record kept, except an indistinct one in the office of the Export Warehouse Keeper. From the above year, however, we find the following stated as the crops from various sources.

YEAR.	Marendhan.	Morotto.	Ekelle.	Kaderanl.	Colombo Jungle.	Galle Junglo.	TOTAL.
1804	1223	378	840	871	68	49	Bales. 3440
1805	1153	279	561	498	68	228	2790
1806	1571	448	397	544	894	460	4315
1807	630	117	137	275	2107	1567	4837
1808	2147	345	472	1003	420	643	5032
Average...	1345	313	403	638	711	589	4083

In 1809 a different system was pursued on the recommendation of Mr. Montgomery; which was, to give the preserved plantations a respite to gain strength, by cutting them alternately with the jungles and private gardens, some portion of the latter being peeled every year.

YEAR.	Marondhan.	Morotto.	Ekelle.	Kaderani.	Colombo Junglo.	Gallo Junglo.	TOTAL.
1809	—	—	—	—	2795	2851	Bales. 5647
1810	2042	309	459	1161	242	357	4572
1811	—	—	—	—	2709	1699	4408
1812	2475	306	430	1102	440	150	4914
1813	—	—	—	—	2093	1346	3439
1814	2292	365	424	863	518	103	4507

The subjection of the Kandian country to British rule in 1815, enabled the peelers to enter that part of the island which had hitherto been cut only by great stealth, and very imperfectly. In the first year a large crop was carried away, not less than 9600 bales, which, when sorted, yielded about 7000 bales of good spice of second and third sorts. From this time the Kandian spice was cut alternately with the Colombo and Gallo jungles, or whenever the preserved gardens fell short of the required quantity.

At this period Government employed 296 labourers regularly on the three gardens of Kaderani, Marondhan, and Morotto; the latter had only recently been put in order, and soon afterwards Ekelle was treated in the same way, but the cultivation as yet merely consisted in keeping down the tall jungle, and removing the creeping plants from about the bushes. A year or so afterwards the neglected gardens at Wellisero were cleared and cultivated in a similar manner to the other plantations. In 1819, the chief superintendant recommended that the two principal gardens of Kaderani and Marondhan should be extended by purchasing the adjoining lands of the villagers, and planting them well with seedlings from the Toonhoul, or abandoned gardens. This suggestion was not, however, acted upon until 1823, under the superintendance of the late Mr. Wallbeoff; this gentleman infused a new spirit into the system of cinnamon culture, and his ideas met with the cordial co-operation of Government. Liberal supplies were granted him by Sir J. Campbell, whose successor, Sir E. Barnes, showed even more readiness to carry out his plans. Nine hundred men were employed in the new works. Largo drains were opened throughout Kaderani, and about 645 acres of new ground were planted; nearly the whole of the plantation was rooted and weeded, and freed from the shade of forest trees, except so many as were necessary. This work continued until 1828, when the force

was reduced, and in five years afterwards, 1833, the trade being thrown open, none but a few Lascoryns were kept on to watch the properties.

The false economy of this sudden change was shown by the wretched prices for which nearly all the gardens were sold in 1841, 1842, and 1843, chiefly consequent on their neglected state, though of course the then state of the spice trade had not a little to do with this. So totally had these fine properties been neglected since 1833, and such had been the rapid growth of the jungle trees, that at the period of sale there were hundreds of acres on which not a vestige of a cinnamon bush was to be traced; nothing but one dense mass of underwood below, with wide spreading forest trees shutting out the fresh air and light from above, was to be met with on almost every side; the only exceptions were small favoured patches near the roads and bungalows. Nearly all the drains opened by Government, at a large outlay, had become filled up by constant washing in of sand, and the consequence was, that large tracts of what had been but recently fertile spots were converted into bogs and swamps; and the bushes, covered for two-thirds of the year with water, ceased to put forth fresh shoots. Government, however, continued to peel their gardens up to the time of sale, getting of course less every year, as well as spice of a coarser description. Their last cutting took place in 1841, at Kaderani and at Marendhan, but they obtained very little of the finer qualities, and the low price of the article at the time offered no inducement to bestow particular pains upon the preparation of it.

The spice brought in from 1815 to 1821, varied from 4000 to 7000 bales per annum, a good deal of which was rejected on assortment. The plantations continued to be peeled every second year, alternately with the jungles and private gardens.

From 1822 to 1831, the average peelings of the five preserved gardens was as follows:

From Marendhan, containing	3794 acres,	1518 bales.
From Kaderani	„ 5139 „	1090 „
From Morotto	„ 1431 „	309 „
From Ekello	„ 1012 „	447 „
From Wellisero	„ 667 „	86 „

After this period the gardens appear to have been cut every year, and to have received less care than previously, no doubt from a knowledge of the opening of the trade which was so soon to take place. The crops fell off by about 25 per cent. in a very short time, and in 1833, the peelings on account of Government, amounted to no more than 1670 bales.

The ten years which followed witnessed some unprecedented changes in the state of this trade; up to the present period the Government had exported the whole of the cinnamon peeled for sale on their own account; it was illegal to deal in the article, as also to cut a stick, though growing in private grounds. But in 1833 the monopoly received the first blow; the Ceylon Government received instructions to dispose of their gardens and of their stock of spice on hand in such a way as should appear most advantageous; the sale of the latter to take place in the island, so that the merchants at last derived some benefit from it. The Ceylon stock of spice at this time amounted to 11,000 bales, and Government commenced by putting up 1000 bales monthly, at the following upset prices: for first quality 3*s.* 6*d.*, for second quality 2*s.*, and for third quality 9*d.*, upon the exportation of which 3*s.* per pound duty was to be paid. Parties possessing cinnamon bushes in their gardens were allowed to peel them and sell the produce, which, however, was obliged to be assorted in the Government sorting establishment at fixed rates. A further concession was made at this time to persons having not more than fifty bushes or trees in their grounds, who were allowed to remove them and cultivate the land; of this permission great numbers availed themselves. In 1836 the quantity offered for sale monthly was reduced to 410 bales, the export duty being at the same time fixed at 2*s.* 6*d.* for first and second qualities, and 2*s.* for thirds.

The following table shows the yearly quantities of private grown spice approved of by Government, with the total exports of cinnamon, and the prices ruling at home during those periods:—

Year.	Private Spice	Exports of all	Average Prices at home of Government		
	Exported.	kinds.	Spice.		
	Bales.	Bales.	First.	Second.	Third.
			10 <i>s.</i> 0 <i>d.</i>	9 <i>s.</i> 0 <i>d.</i>	6 <i>s.</i> 0 <i>d.</i>
1834 . . .	2803 . . .	— . . .	10 <i>s.</i> 0 <i>d.</i>	9 <i>s.</i> 0 <i>d.</i>	6 <i>s.</i> 0 <i>d.</i>
1835 . . .	1180 . . .	— . . .	9 0 . . .	8 0 . . .	6 0 . . .
1836 . . .	1822 . . .	7293 . . .	9 0 . . .	8 0 . . .	5 0 . . .
1837 . . .	1579 . . .	6083 . . .	7 10 . . .	7 0 . . .	5 6 . . .
1838 . . .	1349 . . .	4443 . . .	8 6 . . .	6 9 . . .	5 6 . . .
1839 . . .	— . . .	5321 . . .	7 6 . . .	6 0 . . .	4 9 . . .
1840 . . .	— . . .	3372 . . .	7 3 . . .	6 0 . . .	4 6 . . .
1841 . . .	— . . .	3056 . . .	7 9 . . .	6 0 . . .	4 2 . . .
1842 . . .	— . . .	1117 . . .	7 0 . . .	6 6 . . .	5 0 . . .
1843 . . .	— . . .	6522 . . .	6 6 . . .	5 6 . . .	4 3 . . .
1844 to August 31 . . .	31 . . .	6572 . . .			

From these data we perceive, that although the opening of the trade to private dealers was a step which gave a stimulus to exports at the time, and threw the operations in the spice into their legitimate channel, yet the good effects were not permanent, and even the reduction of export duty in 1836 failed to call forth any increased

activity in demand. Consumers of our Ceylon cinnamon began to find the article too costly for their means, and that another product might be substituted for it at a tithe of its price. Cassia consequently rose rapidly into demand, and has continued to the present time to supplant cinnamon in many of the Continental markets as well as in our own.

Although the Home Authorities had in 1832 instructed our Colonial Government to free itself entirely from the trade in and the cultivation of this spice, nothing was done towards effecting the latter until 1840. A beginning was certainly made before this time by advertising the Toonhoul, or abandoned gardens, tracts of land which had been planted with cinnamon by natives for the Government, but which had never been well cultivated, and had been for some years left to their fate. From 1834 to 1839 about 2000 acres of these lands were sold at prices varying from 10s. to 12l. the acre. A great part of these were no longer retained for cinnamon; the laws against rooting up the spice being no longer in force, the purchasers destroyed a vast number of bushes, and if we add to these the number rooted up by permits in private gardens, and those eradicated at a more recent date by coffee planters in the interior, we may be able to form some idea of the extent to which the production was becoming limited.

After 1833 Government, of course, ceased to cut from jungles or other than their own gardens. Their peelings from the five plantations for the following eight years were thus :—

For 1833.....	1631 Bales
1834.....	2470 „
1835.....	No peeling
1836.....	5349 Bales
1837.....	2524 „
1838.....	2312 „
1839.....	2210 „
1840.....	1795 „

which was a great falling off from previous years' crops. Morotto and Ekelle were sold in 1840 and 1841, so that in the latter year only 900 bales were peeled by Government, and this was the last spice ever cut by them, for before the crop time of 1842, the rest of their gardens were sold, except Marendhan.

Before putting up these properties to auction, tenders were received by private parties wishing to purchase them. Amongst the offers made were 500l. for Ekelle, or 10s. per acre; 1000l. for Kaderani, or 4s. per acre; and 40l. for Wellisere of 600 acres, whilst a Modeliar of the Mahubaddo, better acquainted with their real value, offered

15,000*l.* for all the gardens, which was at the rate of 1*l.* 5*s.* per acre, and about the figure at which most of them afterwards sold.

From this time until the close of 1843, the trade languished, in spite of the great alteration which took place in May of that year, viz., the reduction of the export duty on cinnamon to 1*s.*, and the sale of the Government spice at whatever it would fetch, by 200 bales per month. In May and June, 1843, the shipments of spice under the low duty were exceedingly large, so much so, that many expected the supplies would knock down prices at home, lower than they had ever been, and in consequence, Government obtained very little for their monthly lots. Early in 1844, however, folks began to perceive that stocks had been gradually decreasing, and that after the large imports at home of low duty spice, the quantity on hand was hardly sufficient for a six months' consumption; this and the fact that the Ceylon Government was getting near the end of its stock, gave buyers on this side renewed confidence; prices got up about 50 per cent. in a very short time, and it is thought that the whole of the cinnamon on hand here will go off at these improved rates.

The Mahabaddo is the name applied generally to all who are by caste or profession connected with the cultivation and care of cinnamon, but especially to the Modeliars and other headmen of the caste; the common appellation of Chalias being far too insignificant for them, and applied only to those in the inferior grades. The literal meaning of the term Mahabaddo, is "Great Tax," and it was used in consequence of the Dutch having compelled every villago of Chalias to bring in a certain quantity of cinnamon by way of tax. This caste like all others has a great number of grades and ranks within it; the highest is that of the Maha Modeliar, or principal headman; then follows the Maha Vidahn Modeliar, the Modeliars, Mohundirams, Aratchies, and Canghanies. The number of individuals composing this caste, varies at different times, but it has generally been from 6000 to 7000. The Mahabaddo is divided into four principal classes, which again have their sub-divisions, and these four are, 1st, headmen; 2nd, lascoryns, or watchers; 3rd, peelers, who prepare the spice, and 4th, cinnamon coolies; none of these can rise to the grade above them.

The Chalias, or men of the Mahabaddo have from the earliest times resided in particular districts, stretching from Negombo in the Western Province, to Tangalle on the East Coast of the Island, and this extent of country has for convenience been divided into six districts, each having a first and second Modeliar, with the Maha Modeliar over the whole. In 1824, the number of peelers in the caste was 3571; in 1833 it was 3119; and at present they do not amount

to more than about 2500. The Maha Modeliarship was an honorary office, and has not been filled for some years. The first Modeliar of each district receives his instructions and orders direct from the Government Agent of the Province, and he, through the Mohandirams and Aratchies, disseminates the wishes of Government, and collects the requisite number of peelers at the season for cutting the cinnamon crops.

During the system of compulsory labour, every district was obliged to furnish a certain quantity of spice at a low rate given in cloth, rice, salt, and a little money, the quantity being regulated, rather by the number of peelers in the district than by the bushes growing there, and for this the Modeliars were held responsible.

The Dutch gave the headmen no salary, but allowed the Modeliars to exact from every peeler and cooly employed by the Government one pice or one half farthing a-day: the Mohandirams received a challie or half a farthing, and the others in proportion; so that during the harvest time their emoluments must have been considerable, and it was of course to their interest to have as many labourers employed as possible.

The Modeliars of the Mahabaddo had far more power than any other headmen, for until of late years, no one but themselves knew any thing of the cultivation and preparation of the spice, consequently no operations were commenced, without the matter being first referred to them by Government. It was clearly to their interest to keep all information in their own hands, and enlighten their European masters as little as possible, whilst on the other hand, the superintendants cared little for the details of their department so long as the required quantities of spice came in. The time for commencing peeling the bushes, the quantity to be got from each district, the number of people to be employed, were all points left to the decision of the Modeliars; the Government merely intimating the gross quantity they required for the season; and this quantity had reference to the state of the European markets, or perhaps to the condition of their revenue, and their consequent ability to pay the peelers, rather than to the capabilities of the cinnamon districts to afford it. In later times, if the plantations and jungles of the Western and Southern Provinces failed to yield the usual number of bales, the peelers were driven like sheep further up the country, and spread themselves through the seven Korles and the Central Province, whence the wild spice was brought to make up the desired quantity.

When forced labour was abolished by the British the peelers received 3*d.* in money, and two-thirds of a seer of rice per day, with a seer of salt per month; for this pay they were expected to deliver

from 80 to 100 pounds per month, when cutting in the preserved gardens or the jungles about Colombo or Gallo. In 1829, the system was altered, and the labourers were paid according to the quantity and quality delivered, viz., for each pound of first or second quality, 3*d.*, and for each pound of third quality, 1½*d.*, the allowance of salt and rice being discontinued. In 1830, the rate for the fine qualities was raised to 3¾*d.* per pound, after many complaints from the Chalias, and this was again raised to 4*d.*, in 1833. In the following year they succeeded in obtaining 5*d.* for the fine sorts, and 2½*d.* for the thirds; and these were made 5*d.* and 4½*d.* in 1836. In 1837, they were paid still higher, viz., 5½*d.* for first sort, 5*d.* for second sort, and 4¼*d.* for thirds; since that period the pay has decreased and peelers now receive 4¾*d.* per pound on all qualities. An active Chalia with the aid of his wife will easily prepare 100 pounds of good [cinnamon in a month, and this at 4½*d.* the pound, will give him 1*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* or about 7*l.* for the season of four months, a very handsome earning for men having so few wants to satisfy, and altogether at variance with Miss Martineau's statements, regarding the wretched poverty of these people in her tale of "Cinnamon and Pearls." As is generally the case with those who earn money rapidly at certain seasons, the Chalias are very improvident and of dissolute habits, being generally in debt to the headmen of their districts, who consequently have a claim on their services.

The Mahabade enjoyed several privileges under the Dutch and the early British Governments, which no longer exist. One of these was exemption from tolls; another was that no Chalia man could be tried for any offence, unless by the superintendent of the cinnamon department; these and several minor privileges have been gradually limited, and at length altogether abolished.

The proper peeling season is from May to August inclusive, the mild showery weather of those months greatly favouring the operation. Peeling is, however, frequently carried on in November and December, and some proprietors of small gardens who may be anxious to realize their crops, will not hesitate to cut at any season of the year, however prejudicial it may be to their properties as well as to the spice cut.

Cinnamon peeled during very dry weather becomes of a dark colour, and will not form compact quills. There are few products so delicate as cinnamon, or requiring so much care and attention from its earliest stage, until it be placed on board ship. It is easily broken if roughly handled, and is extremely susceptible of mouldiness, whence the practice in former days of packing it amongst pepper, the absorbent qualities of which prevented any injury likely to arise from dampness.