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Partners in the Commonwealth

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FEBRUARY, 1956

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CEYLON TODAY

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Partners in the Commonwealth

HIS EXCELLENCY MR. P. R. GUNASEKERA (*High Commissioner for Ceylon in Australia*)

WE, who are members of the Commonwealth, are certainly partners in a great adventure and an enterprise unparalleled in world history. Nowhere in the pages of history can one find such an association of free and independent nations whose sole link with each other lies, not in rigid organisation and mere constitutional forms but in their hearts—in a sincere desire and belief that they can work with each other for the common weal.

This link—more enduring than any other—begotten of a faith in one another—is something really powerful. It is truly said that faith can move mountains. A large section of the world appears to be engaged in the fruitless task of trying to solve the world's problems through pacts, armaments and threats. The futility of such efforts is recorded in the history of man—it is, therefore, a pity that they are repeated. On the other hand, every sage and prophet has proclaimed the all-pervading power of faith, and anything that has survived has always been based on faith. Out of faith the Commonwealth was born, because of faith it continues. Yet it is no nebulous thing, this Commonwealth. It is a living reality—it is an established fact. And

not only an established fact but an example for the rest of the world to follow.

The Commonwealth, as every impartial student of history will concede, is a great stabilising influence in the world. To be partners of that, therefore, is to make an important contribution to the well-being of mankind. While we, in partnership, seek the common weal of each other, we are not blind to the needs of the world outside.

To us in Ceylon, partnership in the Commonwealth provides us with a source of strength as well as an ideal of aspiration. Ceylon is a small island of 25,000 square miles. Our Island is of the same size as Tasmania. In size Australia is 110 times the size of Ceylon but we have a population of 8½ millions which is only half a million less than the population of the whole of Australia. We who live in this small island find our partnership in the Commonwealth a source of strength. Our economy is mainly agricultural and we are dependent to a very large extent on imports from outside for which we pay by the sale of our agricultural produce like tea, rubber, cinnamon and coconut. Our trade is largely with Commonwealth countries though not exclusively so. For this we are largely dependent

on our Commonwealth partners and we in turn buy largely from our Commonwealth partners. This too is a source of strength from our partnership in the Commonwealth.

On the other hand, Ceylon's geographical position is of vital importance to the Commonwealth and—I may even say—a source of strength to the Commonwealth. The importance of the strategic position occupied by Ceylon cannot be over-emphasised. It is here that she makes her vital contribution to the Commonwealth. I am now using the phrase "strategic position" in a military sense. There is a wider application of the phrase which I shall discuss later.

Military Aspect

TO take the military aspect for the present—every maritime power had realised the strategic importance of Ceylon both in peace and in war. In recent history, the Portuguese, the Dutch, French and the English did. During the last two wars, the strategic importance of Ceylon to the Allies was immense—and there must be amongst you some who were stationed there or passed through. We did all we could to make you feel at home and I hope you did. For a far-flung Commonwealth that girdles the globe, Ceylon's partnership in the Commonwealth, I venture to say with modesty, is not insignificant. That strategic importance, I further venture to say, is not confined solely to that element over which Neptune holds sway.

As I said earlier, the strategic significance of Ceylon is not confined only to the military aspect. Its significance is reflected in another aspect and one which I may say is equally important. In Ceylon, if I am permitted to speak in a purely objective way, one finds a happy blending of the East and the West, a valuable bridge, and an excellent opportunity to understand each other. This happy blending is symbolised in the evolutionary rather than revolutionary process by which Ceylon became a member of the Commonwealth. You will agree with me when I say

that human feelings are largely similar and human reason is one and identical. In spite of this similarity, human minds in different countries have adopted a different approach to some of their common problems. Even where the approach has not been different there has been a tendency to place a different emphasis in the solution of these common problems. It is from this point of view that East is differentiated from the West. The West has approached the concept of man from an external point of view and has devoted greater attention to what man does rather than to what man is.

East and West

THE progress of science and the increase of man's power over nature has made the West develop a materialistic outlook on life. The East has always emphasised man's intrinsic spirituality and this spiritual concept of man has been responsible for some of the highest spiritual attainments of man. The East has always placed emphasis on individual salvation and has encouraged man to seek knowledge for his own salvation. This Eastern concept of man with its pre-occupation with individual salvation has had a tendency to neglect the social and economic welfare of man whereas the West has always laid greater emphasis on the need for social and economic progress. Today, East and West have been brought nearer one another through the advancement of science and it has become necessary to evolve a system combining the Eastern conception of the individual and of man's status with the Western concept of progress. Such a system will open out to man the possibility of advancement without the risks implicit in the misuse of science and make science an instrument for the establishment of human prosperity, peace and progress and not of destruction. I wonder whether, in that little Island home of mine, the ideal of "One World" in so far as the cultures of the East and the West go, has not been realised already in a happy synthesis.



The High Commissioner for Ceylon in Australia, His Excellency Mr. P. R. Gunasekera (centre), photographed with the Ceylon Premier, the Rt. Hon. Sir John Kotelawala, when the latter visited the Dominion Dental Clinic in Wellington, in the course of a goodwill visit to New Zealand in November last

That takes me to the other aspect of the Commonwealth partnership—the ideal of aspiration.

*“Ah! that man’s reach should exceed his grasp
Or what’s a Heaven for”*

is truly said. Even in this hard materialistic world it is not possible to live without ideals. In my view, the Commonwealth is an excellent association to keep up the ideals of human life. I grant that ideals change in the changing world

or at least *appear* to do so though, of course, the ideal of bettering one’s lot has always remained the fundamental aspiration. Bettering one’s lot while doing harm to none—taken in a national context, makes this ideal sublime, and the same taken on an international plane, raises it to even greater heights. This is where the Commonwealth plays its constructive role.

Call it “the greatest happiness of the greatest number”, call it the “socialistic pattern of Society”, call it “socialistic democracy”—call it what you will, the ideal of the betterment of

man's lot has always been there from time immemorial to the present day. But with the exception that never before had such an association of free and independent people existed voluntarily pledged to pursue that ideal as in the Commonwealth today.

Partners

IN the Commonwealth one finds "autonomous communities . . . equal in status, in no way subordinate to one another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance . . . and freely associated as members" of this world-wide institution. It is in a way a League of Nations, it is in a way a United Nations. The true ideal of the partners in the Commonwealth is to develop the fullest mutual understanding and co-operation amongst the partners in the political, economic and cultural fields as well as to develop a feeling of close unity and to bring about a genuine understanding amongst the partners to work out agreed policies and agreed solutions to problems. In order to achieve this we, the partners, recognise the right of every nation to do things in its own way without interference from outside. We believe in evolutionary constitutional methods rather than in revolutionary methods to attain this ideal.

In this set-up of the inner core of international understanding, where does my country come in and how does her traditional background fit in with the concepts that mould the Commonwealth? To understand that, it will be necessary for me to trace, in very brief outline, the main trends in my country's history—trends which have moulded her outlook on life. You will agree that a knowledge of the past is necessary to understand the present and that the present projects into the future. But history, even in its briefest outline, has to be understood against the background of geography. I shall now seek to dwell on these salient points in the briefest outline.

As you know, Ceylon is a pear-shaped Island off the South-East end of the Indian sub-continent.

She is separated from India by a narrow stretch of water more or less as England is separated from the Continent by the Channel. The channel separating Ceylon and India is known as the Palk Strait. The Island is surrounded by the Indian Ocean. The area of the Island, as I mentioned earlier, is 25,000 square miles and is irrigated by the many rivers that fall into the sea from the central highlands. As these highlands are located in the south central regions, there are more rivers irrigating this area than the north. Consequently the southern and central portions of the Island are more fertile than the northern and north-central portion. But strangely, because perhaps of the thickness of the ancient jungles, the earlier settlers of the Island preferred to occupy the northern area and make their own arrangements to supply water regularly for irrigation from the rivers that flowed over that flat plain. The northern part of Ceylon and the entire coastal belt form a plain while the centre, which I mentioned earlier, contains a mountain heart which proved unconquerable to many an invader.

The climate varies from tropical, in the low land areas to a very mild and temperate one, in the hills. The land is rich in vegetation and natural beauty and also fertile enough to enable the people to feel that nature had been lavish in her gifts.

In prehistoric and very ancient times it appears that there had been a race of hunters living in the Island. They were in the Stone Age of civilisation when the Sinhalese, more than 2,000 years ago, took possession of the Island. The aborigines were called Veddahs and appear to have been of the same stock to which the Australian aborigines belong. Some still survive in their natural haunts and are of anthropological interest only.

The Sinhalese

THE arrival of the Sinhalese in the Island is shrouded in the dim past of history. Tradition, folklore

legend and whatever else that can be sifted in historical evidence, indicate that they were a people who spoke the parent Aryan language of modern Sinhalese and that they came by sea to settle down in Ceylon. It is considered that they came from North India just as the Angles and the Saxons came over to England from the neighbouring Continent. Just as the Anglo-Saxon settlers are reputed to have been led by Henjist and Horsa (which literally translated means "Horse and Mare"), the Sinhalese settlers are reputed to have been led by Vijaya (which translated literally means "Conqueror"). He is said to have arrived with seven hundred followers and landed in the north-western part of the Island at a place called Tambapanni, (identified as a place close to modern Mantai). Legend says that he married Kuveni (which literally means Queen) from among the inhabitants already living in the Island. From a purely historical angle it does not appear to be surprising that the "Conqueror" married the "Queen" and thus started a new phase in the history of Ceylon.

Incidentally, the similarity of this portion of the history of the two Island peoples continues further. Just as the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records in its own way the arrival of Henjist and Horsa, so in like manner is recorded in the Mahavansa, the Great Chronicle of Ceylon, of the sixth century A.D., the arrival of Vijaya, and his union with Kuveni so many hundreds of years before the birth of Christ.

With the landing of Vijaya and his followers in our Island five centuries before Christ, the Sinhalese nation came into existence. Vijaya is said to have been a Prince of the Lion Race. The word "Lion" translated into Sinhalese is Singha. Hence the people in Ceylon were called Singhala or Sinhalese. We also adopted the lion on the emblem of the Sinhalese flag from the very inception of the Sinhalese nation.

The name given to our Island by Vijaya was "Tambapanni"—meaning copper coloured, as

the sand on the coast on which he landed was said to have been copper coloured. Ceylon was called "Tambapanni" during the early period as seen in the references made to Ceylon by the Greeks as Taprobane. The name "Taprobane" seems to have changed in the course of time to "Sri Lanka" which means "Blessed Isle". Later, the Portuguese referred to Sri Lanka as "Ceilao" which in turn changed into French "Ceylan" and got anglicised into "Ceylon".

And so these settlers multiplied, colonised more and more land and spread over the Island and with that process spread the new Sinhalese civilisation over Sri Lanka. They established a highly developed democratic system of administration through village councils and capped it with a monarchical tradition which has lasted to the present day. They took to agriculture as their main pursuit and established an elaborate irrigation system which is a marvel even to modern engineers. Hill streams were tapped and these waters were guided into great storage tanks in many parts of the Island. Some of these tanks were thousands of acres in extent. Ceylon not only produced sufficient rice to feed her population but had excess to export to her neighbouring countries. She has been referred to as the "Granary of the East".

Buddhism

THEN, in the first century before the birth of Christ, occurred one of the most significant events in the history of the Island since the arrival of the Sinhalese. Like the arrival of St. Augustine in Anglo-Saxon England and the consequent introduction of Christianity there, the advent of Mahinda in Ceylon bringing the philosophy of life contained in Buddhism was of unique significance. It gave Ceylon a fresh cultural outlook and a philosophy which has moulded the lives of the people in the Island ever since. Emperor Asoka of India and King Devanampiya Tissa of Ceylon were close friends. Great missionary zeal was displayed by King

Asoka who sent Buddhist Missions wherever he could, proclaiming the Dhamma contained in Buddhist philosophy (i.e. the Law of Righteousness). Among the friends who received one of these Missions was King Devanampiya Tissa of Ceylon. In the Island of Ceylon this new philosophy was embraced with great enthusiasm, took root, pervaded every aspect of life and flourished to such an extent that while it virtually disappeared from the land of its origin, it continued and still continues to be a vital force in the life of the people of Ceylon. The fundamental teaching of its philosophy—"Live and let live"—no doubt made a strong appeal to a people whose institutions were already shaped by that ideal. The spirit of tolerance displayed in Ceylon history through the ages no doubt has its origins in the philosophy of Buddhism.

What better philosophy can be had for a partnership in the Commonwealth than one that stresses such an ideal and what greater contribution can a philosophy make to that association as well as to the rest of the world than is revealed in the following quotation from the words of the Buddha :

*"Nahi verena verani sammanthidha kudachanan
Averenacha sammanthi esa dhammo sannanthano."*

which translated means—

*"Hatred is not dispelled by Hatred, Hatred is dispelled by Love
That is the eternal Law".*

By the time Buddhism came to the Island, the Sinhalese settlers had formed a strong kingdom, with their King having his capital at Anuradhapura. Buddhist shrines were erected and their decorative motifs, as well as those of palaces, assumed a religious touch or else the secular blended with the religious in a very flourishing civilisation. The archaeological remains of this

civilisation show strong Buddhist influence if not sole Buddhist influence. It was certainly a very proud period of Sinhalese civilisation, the period from the time of King Devanampiya Tissa to Mahinda V in 1017 A.D.

The holy city of Anuradhapura was studded with Buddhist shrines and halls. One of the outstanding works of this period is the Brazen Palace, the preaching hall standing on 1,000 stone pillars and with nine storeys containing 1,000 rooms for the priesthood. Of the other stupendous monuments Ruanveli Saya Dagoba, 200 feet in height and 400 feet in diameter, stands today as a shrine to corroborate the historian's record of bygone splendour and greatness of our ancient civilisation.

Sigiriya

MENTION must also be made of Sigiriya, the rock fortress built by King Kasyapa who murdered his father, the ruling King, and built this fortress for his safety. On the top of a rock 400 feet in height, he built his palace on grounds covering three acres. On this area, his palace with living quarters installed with drainage, his Royal throne built of pink granite, a large pond, cisterns and sentry boxes were crowded with amazing skill. One side of the rock where the staircase was constructed was plastered and portraits of twenty-one ladies were painted in pairs—a princess and a maid—after the fashion of the famous Ajanta Frescoes of India. Sensuous in appeal and almost life-size in dimensions, these frescoes (which have been preserved up to date) are an example of ancient Sinhalese art and are the work of a master painter. The fortress was surrounded by massive ramparts over 30 feet in height and the great moat which ran round the fortress was as wide as 80 feet. This fortress stands today as a monument to a crime, a landmark in history and a treasure house of rare art. Today, in the stillness of a jungle that has encroached on shrines and palaces, silent works

of art—a fallen guardstone, a deserted stair—
proclaim the civilisation that was Anuradhapura.

*“What monks and monarchs, passing souls
of men,
Have filled, and faded from, yon forest-
scene!
What hearts have yearned, past human
count or ken,
What ruins sighed, what histories here have
been !”*

And so another coincidence with English history occurs: It was about the time of the Norman Conquest. Ours, however, was in 1017 and not 1066. The civilisation, the wealth and beauty of the Island attracted invaders. There were hostile bands ravaging the northern portion of the Island from the adjoining sub-continent. The raids were sporadic but all the same disturbing to a settled life. Moreover, they made it a point to breach the reservoirs which provided water for paddy cultivation. The idyllic conditions of a paradise were apparently passing away. It became necessary to shift the capital to the greater safety of the south-central region and hence it moved to Polonnaruwa. In the year 1017, therefore, the capital was shifted there and remained there for a little over 200 years.

This period saw an attempt being made to recreate the grandeur that was abandoned at Anuradhapura. Polonnaruwa is of great archaeological interest, therefore, and contains some of the finest works of art carved in monolithic style. Every attempt was made to restore Anuradhapura as well. The invaders were kept at bay and King Parakrama Bahu the Great even undertook punitive expeditions across the seas to the neighbouring regions. Parakrama Bahu the Great is one of the greatest heroes of Ceylon history vieing with King Duttugemunu (who ward off very successfully a powerful invasion of Anuradhapura while the capital was there) for turning the tide of hostile invasions. His palace still can be seen as a ruin at Polonnaruwa

defying time as its owner once defined the invaders.

The Tamils

BUT the Polonnaruwa stand against the invaders collapsed in 1235, when Magha of Kalinga attacked and destroyed Polonnaruwa. The Aryan civilisation of the Sinhalese was thereafter confined to the south, the central and the south-eastern and the western parts of Ceylon while the new invaders who were of a Dravidian stock settled down in the north of Ceylon. Their descendants today are the Tamils of Ceylon. They speak a different language and are Hindus by religion. They introduced into Ceylon the Dravidian element of modern Ceylonese culture. Coming as they were from regions which were not so fertile as Ceylon, they had a tradition of hard work. They contributed their share to the well-being and prosperity of the Island.

Since the destruction of Polonnaruwa by Magha of Kalinga, the capital of the Sinhalese Kingdom shifted to various places and finally came to Kotte, near Colombo. By that time Vasco da Gama had discovered the route to the East and Portuguese traders were making their way to the East, looking for spices, rubies and other commodities. In 1505 the Portuguese arrived in Ceylon.

That year is of great significance in the history of Ceylon. It marks a renewed contact with the West since the days of the Greeks and the Romans. It also coincided with the decline of the Sinhalese Kingdom. Fragmentation had already taken place. The north of the Island was under the Tamil ruler Pararasa Sekaran, King of Jaffna, the western and southern parts were under (Vira) Parakrama Bahu VIII, King of Kotte, while the central and south-eastern region were under Vickrama Bahu, King of the Hill Country. Eight years after Vasco da Gama had rounded the Cape of Good Hope, therefore, Laurenco de Almeida was drifted by a storm to Galle, the southern capital of modern Ceylon. He had set out from Goa

to intercept an Arab fleet that was carrying merchandise from China to the Persian Gulf—the Arabs and the Portuguese as the seafaring nations in the Indian Ocean were great rivals.

The discovery of the fabled island of Ceylon made the Portuguese decide on a trade agreement with the King of Kotte. Once that arrangement was made the political authority in the Island little by little disappeared till the Portuguese had their own protégé in Dharmapala on the throne of Kotte. He even went to the extent of changing his name to Don Juan and getting baptised as a Catholic. In the meantime the King of Jaffna had been conquered by the Portuguese. Hence the entire coastal strip of Ceylon was under Portuguese hegemony. Nor was this all. As Dharmapala changed his name to Don Juan so did his subjects. It is interesting to note that a fair proportion of Ceylonese names of the present day are of Portuguese origin. Roman Catholicism was also introduced into the Island. Flag had followed trade for the Portuguese. Evidence shows that there had been a considerable intercourse between the Sinhalese and the Portuguese and though they came as traders and became rulers, the Portuguese were never a colonial power in Ceylon. Though a fair proportion of the Sinhalese Kingdom was thrust upon them, they still remained essentially merchants. Besides the influences I have mentioned above, I like to mention in passing that they left the imprint of their music in the modern Ceylonese "baila"—a haunting melody which makes any Ceylonese jump to his feet even today and dance to its rhythmic music. It is much to the fore in independent Ceylon.

The Portuguese, however, were not left alone to themselves by the Sinhalese Kings of the Hill Country or Kande (anglicised into Kandy) after they had over-run the coastal plains. A stern resistance was maintained against them. The Portuguese were worried about this more as traders than as a colonial power. These incursions into their territory from the Kandyan hills disturbed their trade and often disrupted

their communications. The torch of Sinhalese independence was now being held aloft among the lush Kandyan Hills where a nation determined and proud to keep their independence were once again mustering their strength.

Events in Europe soon prevented Portugal from pursuing her conquests in the East and the next powerful maritime power in Europe naturally ventured a field and ousted the Portuguese in Ceylon. The Dutch took possession of the Island in 1656 and continued there till 1796 when the British, who were fast becoming the most powerful naval power took over.

Dutch Period

THE Dutch period was a continuation of the Western influence originated by the Portuguese. Here again, though to a lesser extent, Dutch names were adopted. The Dutch contribution to the Island was the introduction of Roman-Dutch Law and the foundation of a number of Christian schools. They, of course, introduced the Protestant form of Christianity to the Island. Though among the Christians of the Island today, the larger number are Roman Catholics, the Dutch did make a contribution in including an element from the reformed Church. The descendants of the Dutch are still a part of the Ceylonese community and have contributed, and continue to contribute, their share to the well-being of the Island.

The Dutch were followed by the British in 1796. Though the Dutch did make several attempts to bring the Sinhalese Kandyan Kingdom under control, their attempts were futile. It was the British who succeeded in doing so in 1815 when a powerful Sinhalese chieftain defected and joined hands with them to bring his King to surrender. Even then it was not a conquest or an unconditional surrender. The Kandyan Kingdom was handed over to the British after a negotiated treaty known as the Kandyan Convention of 1815. By this Convention the sovereign of England was accepted as the

sovereign of Ceylon but so great was the adherence of the Sinhalese to their religion, Buddhism, that one of the conditions of the Convention was that the British were to protect and maintain the religion of the people.

However, modern Ceylon was in her birth pangs. Once again a unified and united Island was coming into being. Ceylon began to be governed as a Crown Colony but as early as 1833 constitutional reforms were introduced and thereafter the people of Ceylon sought their further progress within the Constitution and on constitutional and evolutionary lines. It is not necessary for me to dwell in detail on the constitutional development of the Island which in stages prepared the Island for self-government, and ultimately brought it to the Status of a Dominion within the Commonwealth. Suffice it to say that there had never been a better understanding between Ceylon and the other Dominions in this process of constitutional evolution to complete independence and nationhood. There has never been any bitterness, there has never been any misunderstanding. To a people whose ideals I have already explained, it could not be otherwise. Once again, she was Sri Lanka, the Blessed Isle.

I can describe the period from 1505 to 1948 in no better words than in those of one of the greatest lovers of Ceylon, the Rev. W. S. Senior, an Englishman, whose son, I believe, is a Chaplain in the Royal Australian Navy ;

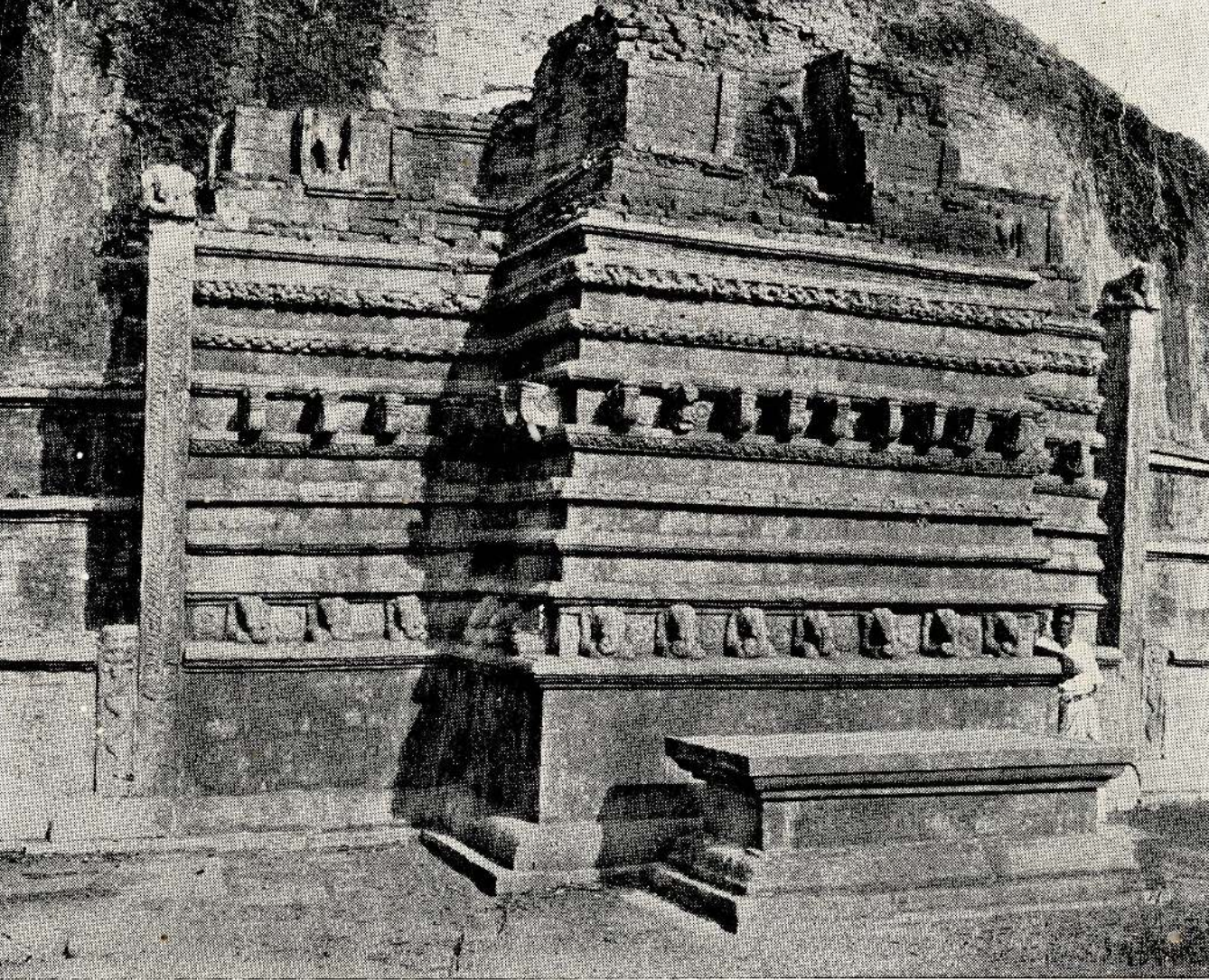
*“ Not vain the prying of the Portuguese,
Of Dutch and English fast their foam upon ;
The bellying sails, high builded Argosies
Hungry for rubies, spices, cinnamon.*

*Not vain the instructive pressure of the West
That did but stir, not steal, thy natural soul ;
A People thou, full royal with the rest,
Shinest at last essential to the whole.”*

I have traced this history in the briefest outline to show you how much we have in common with each other and how that little Island from which I come has stood through the centuries for those very ideals which you and I cherish as partners in the Commonwealth. In my country you find a partner who has found unity in diversity, to whom both Western and Eastern culture are not alien, to whom democracy had been a fundamental asset from time immemorial, who has not lost in a material world the spiritual values of life, who though small is mature in the wisdom of her history and who has demonstrated to the world her ability to fulfil her international responsibilities and her determination to work for the promotion of world understanding.

To you, our brothers and sisters in Australia, who are gathered at this Seminar, I have a special word. Like you, we are seeking to improve the lot of our people in every way by peaceful and evolutionary means which leave behind no rancour and hatred. Like you, we are intensely interested in the welfare and safety of every member of the Commonwealth. Like you, we believe in democracy and in the Commonwealth and above all, like you, we love that greatest link of our Commonwealth, our Queen. God bless her.

(Text of a lecture delivered recently at the Tasmanian Summer School. It was one of a series given by Commonwealth Heads of Missions.)



Kantaka Cetiya, Mihintale, Eastern Vahalkada

Archæology in Ceylon, No. 5

W. S. KARUNARATNE

MR. A. H. LONGHURST was the Archæological Commissioner of Ceylon for a period of five years from 1935. Before he came to Ceylon he was a Superintendent of the Archæological Survey of India, and was connected with important archæological discoveries at the Buddhist site of Nagarjunakonda in the Madras Presidency. During his tenure of office here, he concentrated

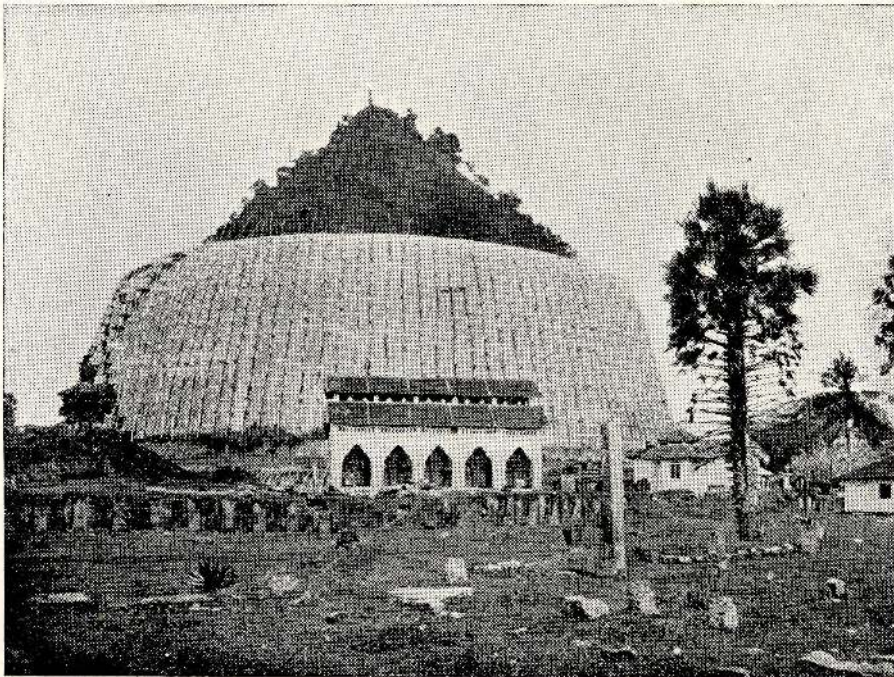
mainly on the conservation of monuments, particularly at Polonnaruva. In 1936 he wrote a small popular book entitled "The Story of the Stupa". It describes in detail the origin and development of the Buddhist Stupa or Dagoba and at the same time, it shows what a remarkable influence Buddhism exercised over the Art and Architecture of ancient India and

the Far East. During the time of Mr. Longhurst, Dr. S. Paranavitana was his Epigraphical Assistant. Dr. Paranavitana's thesis on the Stupa in Ceylon was accepted for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by the University of Leiden. This was enlarged and published as the fifth volume of the Memoirs of the Archæological Survey of Ceylon. After describing the origin of the Stupa in India, Dr. Paranavitana says :

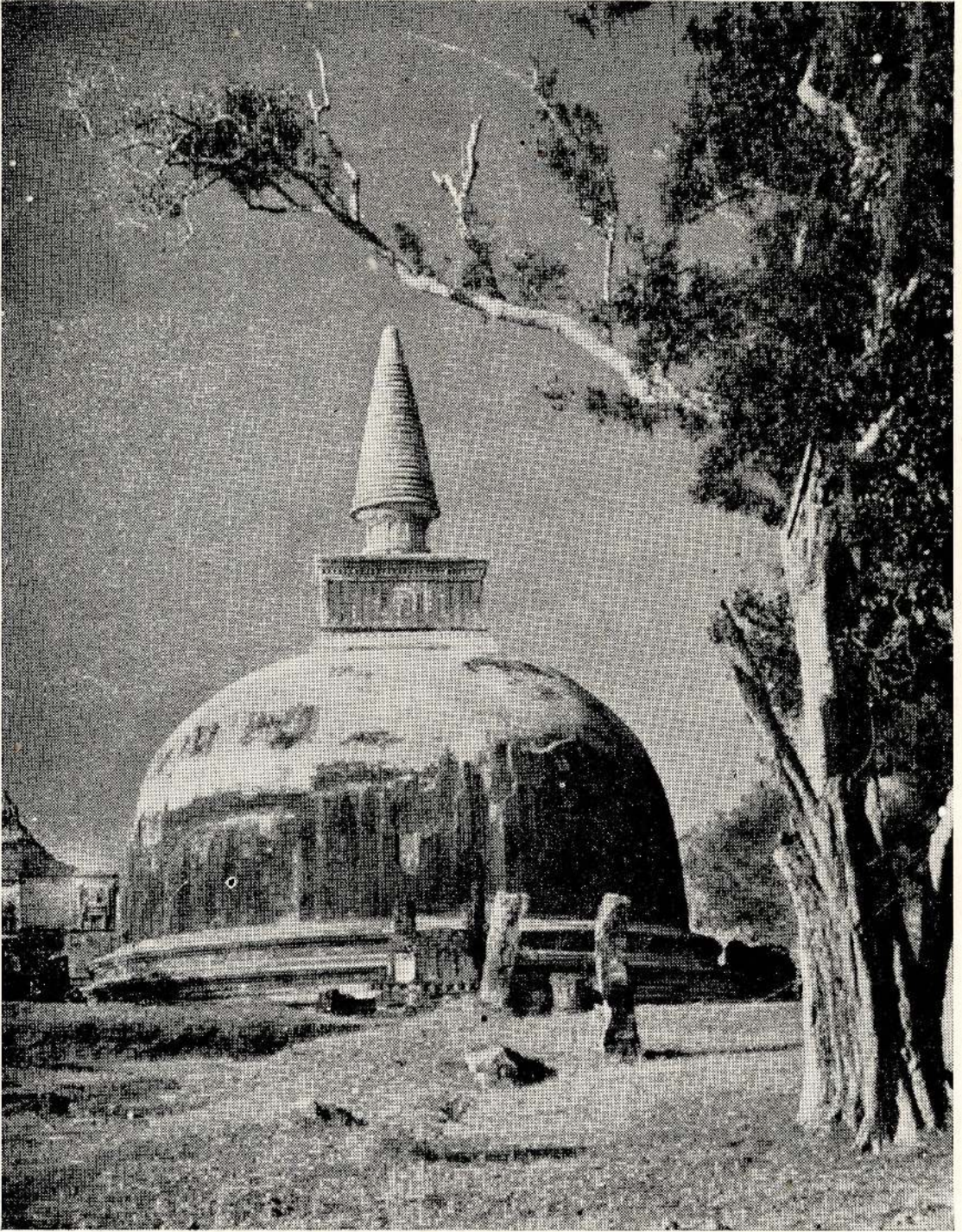
"In the evolution of the *stūpa* in Ceylon, it is the superstructure, i.e., the portion above dome, which underwent considerable development. The terraces and the dome remained, during a period of a millennium and a half, substantially the same ; and the shrines, even of today, show very little change so far as these parts of the structure are concerned. But it is otherwise with the superstructure. In such *stūpas* of ancient Ceylon as have still a considerable part of their superstructures preserved, the features are quite different from those of the oldest extant *stūpas* in India. But there is evidence in the chronicles to show that

the earliest *stūpas* of Ceylon resembled those of *Sāñchi*

"Many of the larger *stūpas* at Anuradhapura and elsewhere in Ceylon, have, at the cardinal points and facing the gateways offsets or projections which are often referred to as 'frontispieces' and are called *vāhalkada* in modern Sinhalese. The *vāhalkadas* at the three larger *stūpas* of Anuradhapura are in a more or less ruined condition. The western *vāhalkada* of the *Mirisavāṭi* is in a fairly good state of preservation and was, till recently, the most complete example of this type of structure. The excavation of the *Kaṇṭaka Cetiya* at Mihintale carried out in 1934-35, has, however, revealed the *vāhalkadas* of that *stūpa* of which the eastern one is much better preserved than any similar structure now in existence, while the northern and southern ones are in as good a state of preservation as that facing the western gate of the *Mirisavāṭi*. These *vāhalkadas* are, from an architectural point of view, among the most important features of the Ceylon *stūpas* and supply the earliest



Ruwanveliseya, Anuradhapura, before restoration (Photo taken in 1927)



Kiri-Vehera, Polonnaruwa

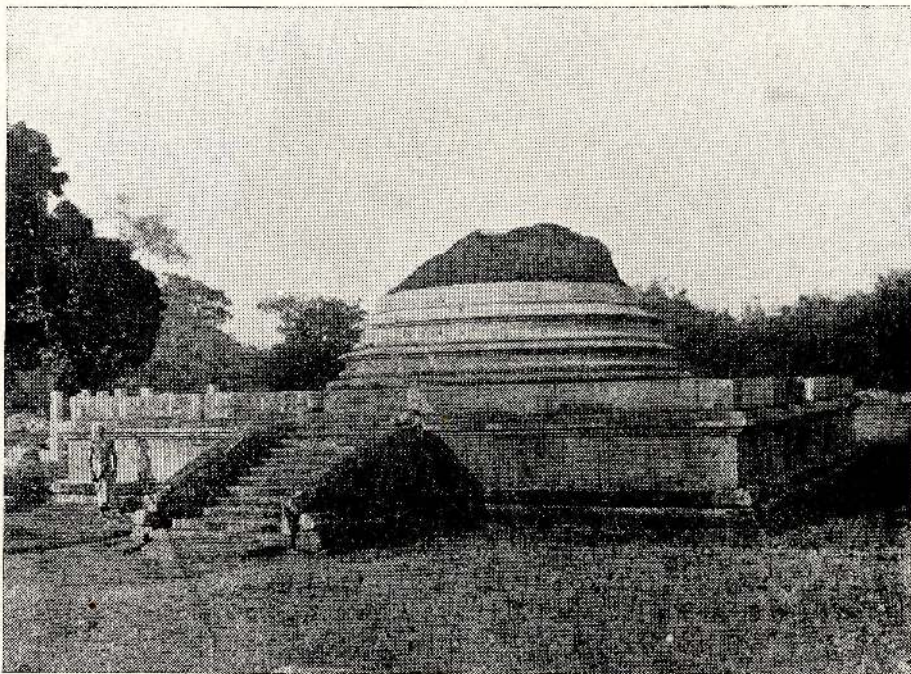
examples of the plastic art of the Island. In design and construction they are all similar and an architectural description of one of them applies to all the others, save the necessary variations in dimensions and decorative details

“The Buddhists of ancient India and Ceylon did not consider the establishment of a relic-shrine completed with the work of the *stūpa* itself. Various accessory features were considered appropriate, and sometimes necessary, in the vicinity of a *stūpa*, in order to enhance its sacred character, to increase the artistic and architectural attractions of the shrine or to make the ritual conducted there of a more impressive character. These subsidiary features of a *stūpa* were very often not the work of its original founders, but were added as time went on, by rich and pious devotees as an expression of their faith in the religion. As regards these features, therefore, one *stūpa* could have differed considerably from another, and the precincts of the same *stūpa* could have presented a different aspect in one period from that it had in another.

Some of these accessory features developed later with changes in the doctrine and cults and these probably varied at the *stūpas* belonging to different schools of Buddhism. The references we come across in the chronicles to such features of the ancient *stūpas* of Ceylon are only incidental and often separated one from the other, by a wide interval of time. Some other features which are noticed to-day at the remains of *stūpas* do not find ment on in the chronicles ; or, even if they are mentioned, it is by an obscure name which is not intelligible now. It is, therefore, not possible to gain from the chronicles an idea as to exactly how the precincts of a *stūpa* appeared during a particular epoch. Sculptures depicting *stūpas* and their environs, which have been found most useful for this purpose so far as Indian monuments are concerned, are wanting in Ceylon.”

Difficulties

WITH the commencement of the second World War began a period of difficulties for the



Indikatusaya, Mihintale, where copper plaques containing Mahayana doctrine were found

Archæological Department. In this period of stress, the country had to utilise all its resources for the war effort, and the major works of the Archæological Department were suspended till the state of emergency was over. Dr. S. Paranavitana, who was appointed Archæological Commissioner in 1940, could write only one report for the five years from 1940 to 1945. During the three years from 1948 to 1950, the Archæological Department entered a phase of expansion. Its activities were extended to almost every district of the Island, with the result that there was a considerable increase of personnel. This department, which comprised a handful of officers and a hundred men under Bell, now had an officer for every branch of work and a labour force of over a thousand. The expenditure per annum was about a million rupees, compared to Bell's time when the average annual expenditure was Rs. 35,000. That was a clear indication that the country had come to realise its cultural heritage, which lay hidden in the jungle or under heaps of rubble. Today, roads have been built to all these inaccessible sites.

In every Province—and in every District of every Province—intense archæological activity went on so that mistaken ideas were removed. Take, for instance, the famous "Elara's Tomb". Even Pilimatalauva in his flight from the British is said to have got out of his palanquin and paid his respects to what was thought to be Elara's Tomb near the Tisaväva bund.

Bell had an idea that the site was not the southern gate of the citadel but the Southern Monastery. His efforts to clear this point were brought to nought by a swarm of black hornets. When the department attacked this jungle-covered ruin through a mass of rubble, a *stüpa* with remarkable carvings of the earliest type came to light. Bell's idea was thus confirmed, that the site was the Southern Monastery. In 1948, digging down into the relic chamber, Dr. S. Paranavitana found a layer of charcoal. From the *Mahavamsa* he inferred that this was

probably the cremation ground of the rival of Elara-Dutugāmunu.

Valuable Inscription

IN 1949, a humble villager of Panakaduva in Moravak Korale, after dreaming of finding a treasure, came upon a metallic object which he put away in his hut giving up all hopes of realising his dream. A year later, after going through a period of misfortune, he was rewarded by the Rt. Hon. the Prime Minister himself with Rs. 500 for what is considered to be a most valuable copper-plate inscription. This is not the usual land grant but is a record of the privileges granted to a high military officer of Rohana, lord Budal of Sittaru-bim, from his king Vijayabahu I after he was crowned king at Anuradhapura for protecting him and his father in that very area when the Cholas held sway over most of Ceylon. Full details of this copper-plate grant have been published in a recent volume of the *Epigrapbia Zeylanica*. (Vol. V, Pt. I.)

The collection of antiquities housed in a building adjacent to the circuit-bungalow at Anuradhapura, had reached such proportions after about sixty years that extensions were made to the building and the objects were labelled and scientifically arranged so that the student of archæology or history could gain all the information he wanted. This is now called the Archæological Museum of Anuradhapura. It is no longer a store for antique objects for the department, but a modern museum for the public. The Archæological Commissioner, in his Report for 1950, stressed the point that the visitor to the ruins on his coming to the museum sees here on a comparative scale what he observed on the site there, and here he studies the evolution of style down the ages.

Guide Books

WITH the appointment of Mr. D. T. Devendra as Assistant Commissioner (Publications) in 1948, the department launched on a wider programme of publicity. Guide books on important sites,

(Continued on page 29)



A scarecrow pair in front of a maize field, intended to terrify flocks of parrots and troops of monkeys by day; and pig, deer and buffaloes at night. One cannot but laugh at the peasant's humorous version of this guarding couple—one seated and the other standing by

Guarding Ceylon's Crops from Ruin

S. V. O. SOMANADER

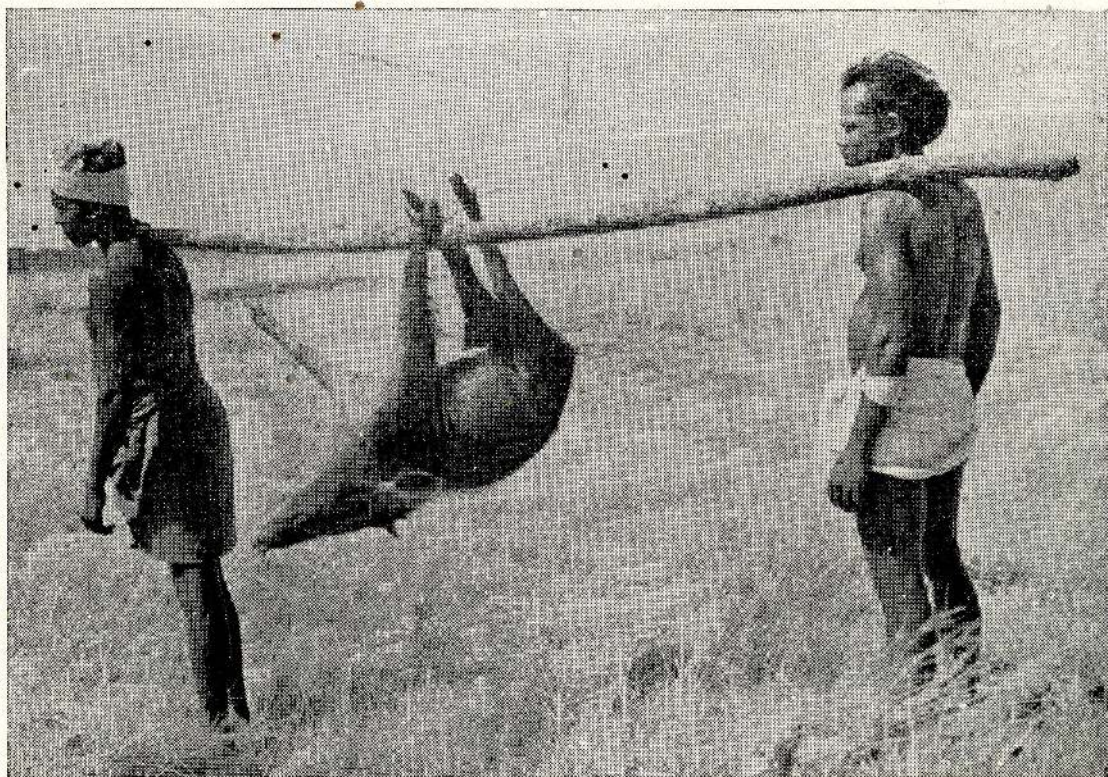
THE guarding, from serious loss to the cultivator, of a Ceylon paddy-field, or a "chenai" plantation, is no easy matter.

Those of us, who are accustomed to live in towns and who like our rice and curry served on dainty tables, seldom realise how difficult a matter it is for the peasant to save his crop from ruin.

True, he is an illiterate fellow, scantily clothed and living mostly in a crude hut thatched with "cadjan" or straw. But, in spite of his

simplicity, he is resourceful and dauntless his courage rising with his difficulties and dangers. And, knowing very well the problems which confront him, he rises to the occasion, using every means in his power to see that his paddy-field or "chenai", which is his mainstay, yields him a good return—for his benefit and ours.

Among the many novel methods he adopts to protect his crops from intruders—and they are legion—is the erection, during the ripening time of the grain, of various types of scarecrows



Peasants carrying to the market for sale a wild boar which had been shot overnight in the field. Pigs are very destructive to crops, and the cultivator is very glad to get rid of them

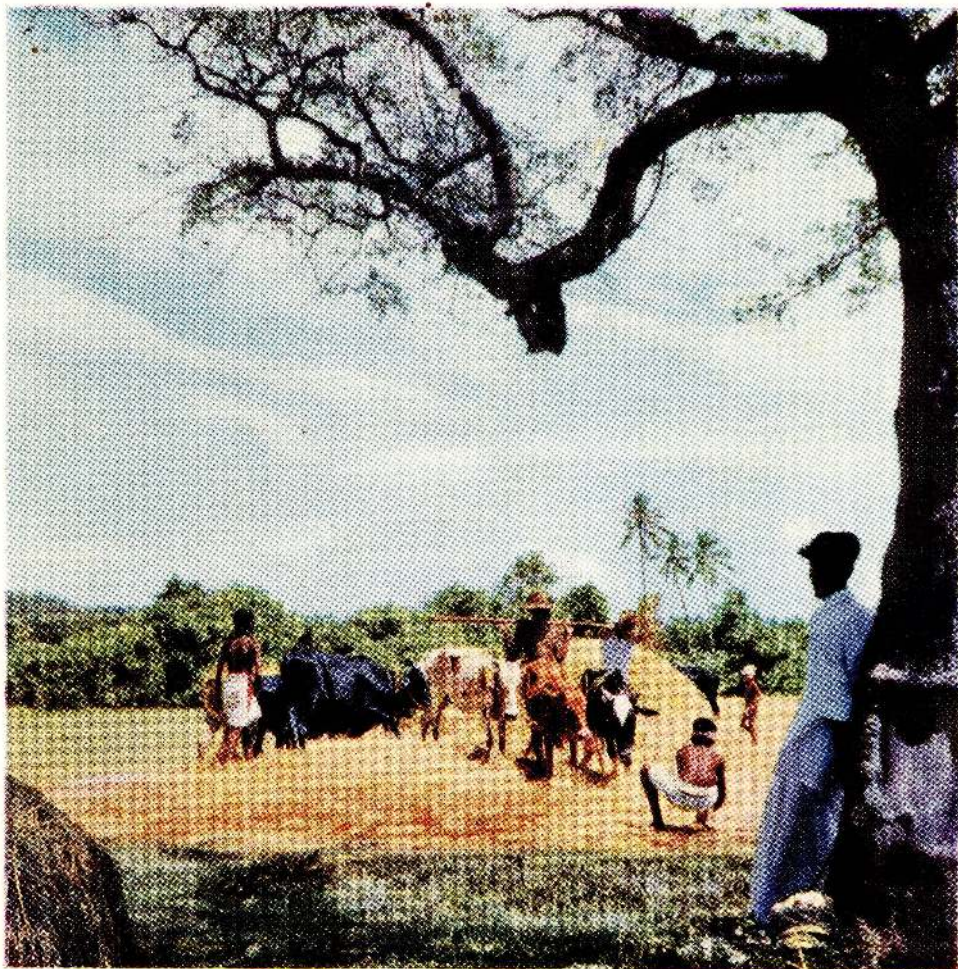
(some very queer, and illustrating his country humour, not to say rural intelligence), to terrify depredating animals and birds which constantly pester him.

Among the wild beasts, one of the most troublesome is the wild boar. Emerging every night from the adjoining jungles in sounders of a dozen or more, it makes depredations on the cultivated land. I remember, late one moonlight night, counting a herd of no less than eighteen of these wild pigs of all sizes and ages, as they crossed a jungle-fringed road to enter a field, which, fortunately, had been already harvested. These animals not only wallow in the farmer's land, churning up the ground into a horrible mess, but dig up the roots of the seedlings to eat them, thus causing the poor peasant considerable loss.

In view of the extreme fecundity of these beasts, it is not an easy thing to keep the prolific bearers in check. In any case, since the Government gives village hunters the liberty of destroying these animals without a licence, they often shoot them down at night. And, early morning, it is not an uncommon sight to see a couple of rustics carrying the shot beast, pingo-fashion, to the nearest market for sale. Pork, by the way, is very popular among certain classes of people, and sells in my district at about forty cents per pound.

Watch-huts

OTHER wild animals like buffaloes, spotted deer, porcupine, monkeys and hare also give the cultivator no little trouble, though the damage



Harvesting Scene

that these animals do cannot be compared to that caused by the formidable elephant. I know of several instances of wild elephants, chiefly "rogues", not only uprooting boundary fences and damaging the crop, but also shattering the watch-hut, and even trampling to death the helpless occupant. For this reason, watch-huts in elephant-haunted areas, especially in fields or "chenas" surrounded by thick forest, are

erected high on tall posts, or placed on the upper branches of lofty trees overlooking the field.

Even then, in spite of guns and fires, the nights are spent in terror. And I know of a field-watcher who had shouted himself so hoarse throughout a dark night to scare away a stubbornly-mischievous "rogue", which was breaking branches in the neighbourhood, that he had a sore throat early morning—and temporary loss

"I'll give it to you with this stick, if you intrude into this plot", so this scarecrow seems to say at a tobacco plantation in North Ceylon



A baby scarecrow, palm in hand, set up in a field to keep away unwelcome bird and animal visitors





Rural urchin in watch-hut guarding the field by day against predatory birds and beasts. Note the dog he has as companion

of voice, in addition to suffering from the effects of shock. "Rogue" elephants frequenting cultivated areas can do terrible mischief, and to prevent this, the Government, in the interests of cultivators, offers a licence to sportsmen to destroy such beasts.

Nor are the elephants the only serious source of menace to the peasants. Leopards, for instance, prowl about at night. And though, being "non-vegetarians", they will not damage crops, they visit the fields to explore the possibilities of spirited away a calf from a herd of cattle, which is often kept in the open field for purposes of manure, or for the supply of milk. Once "Mr. Spots"—apparently a man-eater—killed an old woman-watcher sleeping in a hut in a remote East Ceylon forest village. The beast dragged her out, and, tearing her to pieces, fed on her. Village shikaris, therefore, regard such wild "jungle-cats" as vermin, and, whenever an opportunity presents itself, the leopards are trapped by ingenious methods to be destroyed,

or shot down over a kill off a "machan" (raised platform on tree)—the destruction in either case bringing a state reward to the killer, if the beast has been "proclaimed."

So much about the depredations caused by wild animals!

Grain-Eating Birds

THEN there are grain-eating birds like the spotted-munias, weaver-birds, ash-doves, crows and paroquets to be reckoned with. Being gregarious in habit, these feathered thieves are a constant pest, and the worst of it all is that, owing to the small size of some of these birds, the damage is effected more or less unseen. But, small as they are, they can work terrible havoc, because they make the raids in large numbers.

Weaver-birds, especially, are the worst enemies. Building their elaborate bottle-nests, which are suspended on palms or trees overpeering their feeding grounds, these "mighty atoms" can do untold damage. And, when we remember that these "weavers" build their hanging homes in colonies and raise more than one brood in the year, we can realise what awful havoc they can work, in order to find food not only for themselves but for their hungry nestlings.

Munias of various species too, build their globular nests in colonies in low but thorny bushes flanking the paddy-fields. Sometimes, placing their structures near red-ants' nests to ensure additional protection, these tiny pilferers, as voracious as they are determined, are an unmitigated nuisance to the cultivator's toil. The problem becomes all the more grave when we remember that, like weaver-birds, munias are fast and prolific breeders, and difficult to keep in check.

To overcome these difficulties, the peasant sets up various contrivances including watch-huts and noise-producing apparatus to scare away the unwelcome visitors. More interesting

than these are the different types of scarecrows he erects right in the middle of his field to terrify the intruders. His methods of prevention, most of which are only temporarily effective, incidentally illustrate his sense of humour.



A scarecrow effigy put up in a paddy field to strike birds like crows, doves and munias, with awe. The large but fearsome head and neck, as well as the out-stretched arms, are calculated to put more fright into the intruders

One of the common contrivances he adopts is the setting up of the skeleton of a buffalo's head, with the horns on. This he usually places on a stick stuck into the clayey ground. Not

infrequently, tender coconut or plantain leaves, plaited together to resemble a skirt or skilt, are hung up with the express object of attracting the intruder's attention, and preventing it from entering the field. Such structures are often given a banian for the upper part of the body to make them resemble a human figure standing among the tillering plants. To add reality, and a touch of humour to the structure, a stick-pipe is inserted in the mouth, and a rod, or bow-and-arrow in hand.

I once observed that a resourceful rustic had stuck the white bones of cuttle-fish picked on the sea-shore, attaching them to a green bush, with the purpose of scaring away, especially during dark nights, the animal marauders of the neighbourhood. What an original idea!

Not infrequently, white cloth, waving in the breeze, is tied to sticks planted in the muddy ground to drive away nocturnal trespassers. In the darkness of the night, the white shows itself so well that animals mistake it for a moving human figure and so keep away. Another contrivance adopted by the peasant, to prevent parrots, crows, and spotted doves helping themselves to the ripening grain or the stored-up crop, is to plant on top of the paddy-stack a white "flag" which flutters in the wind.

Towering Giant

ONE of the most elaborate scarecrows I ever saw was a structure resembling a towering giant. He had a cone-shaped hat on top of a masked face made of card-board, in addition to a belt and a pair of old stockings he wore. His frayed and embroidered suit was decorated with black crepe and vari-coloured tinsel, besides other adornments which helped to raise a good laugh. Some days later, I found that, as a finishing touch to the stately, giant-like figure, a specially-improvised "air gun" had been placed in his hands, thus adding to the effectiveness of the whole structure.



The skeleton of a Buffalo's head (with the horns) mounted on a stick, and planted in the middle of a field to serve as a scarecrow

Sometimes, such a "bogey-man" was made up of straw, his head being no other than an old, inverted, black earthen pot, with markings in white chalk or burnt lime to form the eyes, nose, mouth and ears. And to add to the joke, the figure wore medals which were no other than soda-bottle covers. One day, on such a figure, I saw an old top-hat placed as head-gear. Goodness knows from where our country cousin

got it. All the same, I laughed and laughed—till my sides ached!

But so persistent and depredatory in habit, and so shrewd and intelligent, are these paddy-pilferers that even scarecrows fail at times to serve the purpose for which they are intended. Not long ago, for instance, I saw some spotted munias coolly perching on the branches of a bush where cuttle-fish bones had been stuck,

And, on another occasion, I found a number of sparrows not taking the slightest notice of a human-looking scarecrow. On the other hand, they were pecking away the straw-material of which the structure was composed—apparently to line their nests with. A significant thing is that, once the intruders begin to find out that the scarecrow is not a real man but a mere structure, they lose all fear. And, gaining confidence, they start coming to the field in large numbers to continue their havoc.

Bird-watchers

TO meet such contingencies, the cultivator employs "bird-watchers" who are sometimes semi-nude village urchins who are paid in kind (paddy) for their services. These lads, taking up their temporary abode in the raised "cadjan" sheds dotted all over the field, keep vigil right through the day, and are replaced by others to guard throughout the night. With loud "halloos", these watchers, long sticks in hand, and often with only a country mongrel as companion, help to check the animal and bird raiders from destroying the precious grain.

Not infrequently, the rattling of an empty kerosene oil tin, or an old bucket, or the banging of an old perforated tar-barrel with a club, serves to drive away the robbers. Once, I came across an empty bottle to which was attached an iron ring, and both these were suspended on a bent stick planted in the field. A palmyra leaf was tied to the bottom of the bottle, and as the wind, caught by the leaf, rocked the structure to and fro, the tinkling noise the iron made on the glass helped to warn possible intruders of danger.

Another device practised for night-watching is not without interest. In order to ensure that watchers in a large field keep themselves awake and not go off carelessly to sleep in their respective huts placed along the field boundary, they shout to one another to check up that all is well. As a further precaution, they exchange sticks or flaming torches in strict rotation—and woe be unto the man who is "caught napping" when the "Vadda-vidhan" (headman of the field) enters, with burning torch in one hand and a cane in the other, to supervise the work and to see that it is well and truly done. Fearing a good "telling-off" or a few sound lashes on their back for remissness of duty, the watchers are in mighty dread of him. For one watcher's carelessness, in spite of the constant vigilance of the others posted in the remaining parts of the field, is sufficient to spell considerable ruin to the entire field, especially if the smaller nocturnal animals start attacking the crops, unseen.

With these and other methods, infinite pains are taken by the farmers to save their crops. When, however, as it often happens, all these devices are of no avail, the good old muzzle-loading gun, which is still in evidence in the antiquated villages of the interior, is pressed into service, either to scare away or to kill the uninvited guests. Even then, it is often without success; for the wild animals, though frightened away for a time, will return to continue their damage.

And so, as I said at the beginning, it is no fun guarding a paddy-field, simple though the work may appear. On the other hand, it is a terrible and tricky business—and only the farmer knows! And I know!



• The Italian Foreign Minister, Dr. Gaetano Martini, who visited Ceylon at the beginning of the year, photographed with the Ceylon Premier, the Rt. Hon. Sir John Kotelawala, at a party held in Dr. Martini's honour at " Temple Trees "

Foreign Affairs

THE Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Sir John Kotelawala, made a statement to the Cabinet on December 15, on Ceylon's admission to the United Nations. He said: "It gives me great pleasure to announce that the Security Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations have admitted Ceylon along with 15 other countries to membership of the United Nations. This successful termination of an 8-year-old deadlock was due primarily to the efforts of Ceylon since the Bandung Conference.

On my return to Ceylon from Bandung I drew attention to the resolution passed at the Conference and made certain proposals to various powers in regard to a plan to be followed in order to solve the problem of new membership. In the months preceding the meeting of the General Assembly I also kept up continuous discussion with the Asian-African powers, members of the Commonwealth and other members of the United Nations. I have already announced in the House the substantial assistance

I received in this connection from Mr. C. E. L. Wickremasinghe, who acted as my honorary adviser at the Asian-African Conference too.

Mission to U. N.

"IN August, this year, I sent a Mission to the U. N., consisting of Mr. R. S. S. Gunewardene, our Ambassador in the United States, and Mr. C. E. L. Wickremasinghe, who was appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary in an honorary capacity by Her Majesty the Queen for this purpose. This Mission was mainly responsible for the present success. Every single delegation was personally contacted, and subsequently Foreign Ministers and Heads of delegations were interviewed on several occasions and concrete proposals made to them. I am sure everybody in Ceylon must have been very happy to note from Press reports that have been coming in during the last few months how effectively Ceylon was the spearhead of the effort to place the case of all the applicants for membership before the United Nations.

"On behalf of Ceylon, I should like to thank all who assisted in the settlement of this important issue, particularly the member countries of the Assembly and their delegations. With this decision giving wider representation in the U. N. I am certain that world peace has been brought nearer."

Ceylon Press Comments

THE "Ceylon Observer", in an editorial said: "In our opinion Ceylon's application would have received the scantiest attention of the world but for the forceful manner in which Sir John Kotelawala placed Ceylon's viewpoint on international affairs before the massed representatives of more than half the world's population gathered at Bandung."

The editorial continued: "The congratulations of this country must certainly be given also to our Ambassador in Washington, Mr. R. S. S.

Gunawardene, without whose efforts Ceylon's application may very well have failed by default once again."

"The Times of Ceylon", in an editorial, said: "Ceylon can now take her place in the comity of nations and contribute her share to bringing about better understanding and goodwill among the peoples of the East and the West. In the recent past this country has played no small part in the advancement of peace and progress in South-East Asia—a part which, apart from other considerations, clearly indicated her fitness to be admitted to membership in the United Nations."

The editorial further said: "As for Ceylon, its admission to the U. N. is a matter of great joy and satisfaction. It is the end of a campaign begun in May, 1948. Its success is due to the personal prestige of the Prime Minister, Sir John Kotelawala, and the untiring efforts of our Ambassador, R. S. S. Gunawardene."

"The Ceylon Daily News" editorially commented that the admission of 16 of the 18 applicants for membership was a substantial victory for goodwill and good sense in the United Nations. For Ceylon, which had been knocking patiently on U. N.'s doors for seven years, her unanimous acceptance was a gratifying recognition of her status in the international comity of nations and of her policy of non-involvement in power conflicts, said the editorial.

The editorial continued: "We offer our congratulations to the Prime Minister, for whom Ceylon's entry represents the fruition of his labours in putting his country on the political map. His forceful advocacy of Ceylon's case and that of the other Asian and African applicants played a leading part in crystallising world opinion in favour of their admission. We congratulate also the Ceylon Ambassador in Washington, Mr. R. S. S. Gunawardene, who rendered his country the most assiduous and devoted service in pressing her claims on every delegation at the United Nations."

P. M.'s Message to the U. N.

THE Prime Minister sent on December 16, the following special message to Mr. R. S. S. Gunawardene, Ambassador of Ceylon in the U. S. A., and Ceylon's first Representative to the U. N., to be included in his Speech at the General Assembly :—

“Today is a memorable day in the history of my country. A representative of Ceylon is to be seen for the first time in this distinguished assembly, which now comprises 76 nations. It is also, if I may say so, memorable in the history of the United Nations, in that a problem that defied settlement for some eight years has at last been approached in a spirit of understanding and compromise.

“I do not wish to recount the events of these past years. I wish only to say how glad we are to be able to take our place here and to have the opportunity of working together with you all in your efforts to preserve world peace and the dignity and work of mankind.

“Ceylon is a small country, but I think we have demonstrated to the world our ability to fulfil our international responsibilities and our determination to work for the promotion of world understanding. We desire to be friends with all nations alike, even though they may differ from us or disagree with us. We have quite definite views on the ultimate values of basic human concepts, and we are quite clear on how we wish to direct our own lives. We believe, however, that every other nation is similarly entitled to have its own views on these matters. We therefore see no cause for conflict between nations as long as there is mutual respect for one another's views and a recognition that every nation has a right to do things in its own way without interference from outside.

“There are many issues still before the United Nations which are vital to the future progress of mankind. We have studied the debates on these issues from the outside, and we have often been disturbed by the complexities of the

doubts and misunderstandings that appear to exist between great nations assembled here.

“I am not without hope, however, that these issues will soon be settled in a spirit of compromise and goodwill, for I am a firm believer in the intrinsic good sense of the human race, and, after all, our strongest instinct is that of self-preservation and progress.”

P. M.'s Message to Soviet Premier

LATER the Prime Minister in a personal message to Marshal Bulganin, the Soviet Premier, thanked the Soviet Union for the role she played at the U. N., which enabled Ceylon, along with 15 other countries, to gain membership of the U. N.

Marshal Bulganin in his reply thanked Sir John for his message and stated that “the Soviet Government and the Soviet people note with satisfaction that Ceylon and a large group of other Bandung (Afro-Asian) Conference countries have been admitted into the United Nations.”

Burma Independence Day Celebrations

THE Governor-General, His Excellency Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, proposed the toast of the President of Burma at the eighth anniversary celebrations of the Union of Burma at the Galle Face Hotel on January 4th. He said: “Ceylon and Burma are travelling together in a period of the greatest importance to both countries. We share today the glory of a great religion. We help each other in our respective problems in a very substantial and real manner.”

Commenting on the assistance that the two countries render each other, Sir Oliver said: “This is the bond which keeps nations together. The tenuous threats of propaganda even at summit levels achieve nothing. My Prime Minister and I would particularly wish to remember on this occasion U Nu, the Prime Minister of Burma. Ceylon has in him at all times a true and sincere friend.”

His Excellency added: “On behalf of my Prime Minister and the people of Ceylon, I wish



The Metropolitan of the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon, the Most Rev. Arobindo Nath Mukerjee, is greeted by Sir John Kotelawala at a reception held in honour of the visiting Bishops who were in Ceylon in connection with the Episcopal Synod and General Council of the Anglican Church

the President of the Union of Burma and his people another year of great happiness and prosperity."

Ceylon in U. N.

THE Burmese Minister in Ceylon, His Excellency U Ba Lwin, in his reply said : " While celebrating the eighth anniversary of our Independence we can rejoice with added pride and pleasure, because Ceylon has succeeded in attaining the membership of the U. N. recently. With Ceylon's entry into the U. N., I am confident

that our two countries can work much closer in future in reducing international tension and consolidating peace in South-East Asia and the world."

- Continuing, the Burmese Minister said : " In international relations, Burma has endeavoured its best to maintain peace and lessen world tension as much as possible. With the co-operation of friendly nations these efforts have achieved a fair measure of success. In contributing towards the cause of maintaining peace in the world in general and South-East Asia in particular, Burma has the co-operation of her neighbours including Ceylon."



The Most Rev. Dr. M. H. Lucas, Papal Nuncio and Apostolic Delegate to Ceylon, chats with the Prime Minister in his office. Dr. Lucas visited Ceylon in January

P. M. Receives the Tripitaka

THE Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Sir John Kotelawala, formally received on January 6, on behalf of the Ceylon Government, sets of the revised version of the Tripitaka from the Burmese Envoy, U Ba Lwin, at a special ceremony at the Independence Memorial Hall in Colombo.

The Prime Minister said: "Today is a memorable day for the Buddhists of both Burma and Ceylon. The Burmese Government has presented to the Government and the people of Ceylon the Tripitaka, which has been revised at the Sixth Sangayana held in Rangoon. This Sangayana is an outstanding example of the great achievements that are possible in Asia

through mutual co-operation. The laudable project planned and inaugurated by U Nu, the great Prime Minister of Burma, received from all Buddhist countries in the world the encouragement and assistance which it so richly deserved. The revised Tripitaka, I am very happy to observe, is the first joint undertaking of the Buddhist countries of Asia," observed the Premier.

SIXTH SANGAYANA AT RANGOON

Continuing, the Prime Minister said: "In January, 1953, when Burma sent Ceylon a Buddhist Mission and requested us to assist in holding the

Sixth Sangayana in Rangoon, we pledged our support wholeheartedly. The Sangha of Ceylon undertook the collation of Manuscripts and the compilation of a Ceylon version of the Tripitaka. More than a hundred learned monks carefully examined every text of the Tripitaka and worked hard for several months to prepare an authentic version of the Tripitaka as found in Ceylon. I am happy that with this organization we have succeeded in assisting the Government and the people of Burma in one of their very important Buddha Jayanti activities."

Speaking further, Sir John said: "On behalf of the Government and the people of Ceylon, I thank the Burmese Government and the people of Burma for their wholehearted participation in our Buddhist activities and for the revised Tripitaka, which they have gifted to us to-day. It is my sincere wish that the friendship which exists between our countries will grow in strength and that together we succeed in giving the world the proper direction it urgently requires to save itself from craving, hatred and ignorance," concluded the Premier.

Italian Foreign Minister Visits Ceylon

THE Foreign Minister of Italy, Dr. Gaetano Martino, who arrived here on a two-day visit on December 31, called on the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Sir John Kotelawala. Later, in a joint statement, the Italian Foreign Minister and the Ceylon Premier declared that they discussed the present international situation and reviewed the most important problems relating to world peace and democracy.

They noted with satisfaction that the relations between Ceylon and Italy had always been most friendly and they recognised the necessity for promoting the greatest measure of economic co-operation between their countries in their mutual interest. This they hoped would be achieved in a practical manner by the conclusion of a Trade Agreement and a Civil Aviation Agreement which are now in contemplation.

Later, at a Press conference on the following evening, Dr. Gaetano Martino said that Ceylon's Prime Minister had played an active part in securing the admission of Ceylon and Italy into the U. N. He also revealed that the Ceylon Premier had told him that the next Afro-Asian Conference was not likely to be held in Cairo as planned earlier.

The same night at a dinner given by Dr. P. Solari, the Italian Minister here, the visiting Italian Foreign Minister congratulated Sir John, who in 1956 would be completing 25 years as a Parliamentarian. He also forecast closer ties of friendship and increasing co-operation between Ceylon and Italy.

Sir John in reply thanked Dr. Martino and said that the associations between Ceylon and Italy were not new. In fact, they were very ancient and went back to the time of the Roman Emperor Claudius, during whose reign they were told there was an exchange of diplomatic representatives between the two countries. He said he was glad to resume those ancient connections between the two countries.

Many Similarities

THE Prime Minister further said: "There are many similarities between Italy and Ceylon. We are both countries with very old civilizations, we are both ardently attached to the cause of democracy and we are each the custodian of a great world religion. It is good to know that, based on these similarities and affinities, our friendship is daily growing stronger and firmer and that we are being brought into closer and closer contact, both in the field of commerce and culture.

"And in the midst of this developing friendship there could not have been a happier augury for either country than their admission to the United Nations on the same day three weeks ago. We shall now be able to work for the cause of humanity on a common platform with the

other nations of the world", observed the Premier.

Dr. Martino and his party left Ceylon on January 2, for India.

Chief Minister of Malaya on brief visit here

THE Chief Minister of Malaya, Tengku Abdul Rahman, arrived here on January 5, on his way to London, accompanied by three Ministers and four Malayan state rulers. He told the Prime Minister, Sir John Kotelawala, that he would like a suitable person from Ceylon to serve on a commission that would be appointed to draw up a new constitution for Malaya when his country got independence.

The Tengku discussed with Sir John matters connected with independence for Malaya and the problems involved in the changeover to freedom.

Trade Agreement between Ceylon and Czechoslovakia

THE Government of Ceylon and the Government of the Republic of Czechoslovakia concluded on December 16, a trade agreement with a view to promoting and facilitating trade between the two countries.

The agreement provides for the mutual extension of "most-favoured-nation" treatment. Schedules of items available for export between the two countries have also been agreed upon. Among the items for export from Ceylon are tea, rubber, fresh coconuts, desiccated coconut, coconut oil, copra, graphite, coir fibre and coir yarn. Some of the items listed for export from Czechoslovakia are machinery and plant, motor cars and cycles, rolling stock, hardware, stationery, textiles, glassware, chemical products and cement.

The Government of Czechoslovakia has also accepted the Ceylon Government's policy of



Ex-Queen Rambhai Barui of Thailand, who visited Ceylon in January, with the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Sir John Kotelawala

Ceylonisation of trade, and has agreed to encourage the appointment of Ceylonese as agents in Ceylon for products of Czech origin. The Agreement is subject to ratification by the two Governments. An exchange of letters has also been effected whereby a Payments Agreement will be signed between the two countries within three months of signing the trade agreement.

The trade agreement was the result of a visit to this country of a Czech trade delegation, led by Mr. Ladislav Maly, Secretary to the Ministry of Foreign Trade in Czechoslovakia.

Metropolitan Calls on Malwatte Mahanayake

THE Metropolitan of the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon, the Most Rev.

Arobindo Nath Mukerjee, accompanied by the Bishop of Kurunegala, the Rt. Rev. Lakdasa de Mel and the Bishop of Amritsar, paid a courtesy call on January 8, on the Mahanayake Thero of Malwatte Chapter, the Ven. Weliwita Saranankara. The two Anunayake Theros, the Ven. Amunugama Rajaguru Vipassi and the Ven. Ambanwelle Sri Dhammananda, were also present on this occasion.

In the course of the conversation, the Metropolitan recalled his visit to Kandy 2½ years ago, when he had the privilege of meeting the previous Mahanayake Thero, the late Rambukwelle Sri Sobitha.

The Mahanayake Thero expressed his great pleasure at meeting the Metropolitan and the two Bishops and thanked them for visiting him.

The proposed visit to Asgiriya temple did not materialise as the Mahanayake Thero of Asgiriya was engaged at a special exposition of the Sacred Tooth at Dalada Maligawa for the benefit of a party of Burmese pilgrims.

The Metropolitan and the Bishop of Amritsar were here for the Episcopal Synod and General Council of the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon, along with several other Anglican Bishops from the region.

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such as Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Sigiriya, Mihintale, Yapahuva, Parakramapura (known as Panduvasnuvara), were published containing information of a popular nature. These were supplemented by picture postcards of a superior type of print covering all interesting aspects of what a visitor usually sees. Exhibitions of archæological objects held in Anuradhapura drew the attention of many a sightseer, both literate and illiterate. A large number of foreign visitors were taken round the ancient sites by lecturer-guides appointed by the department. Educational lectures were also given to various bodies who requested them. The photographic section, too, was provided with better equipment.

Wherever there are ancient monuments in the world, visitors have had the desire to write on them. In Egypt, Greece and Rome this

desire has given us Graffiti on the very walls of the monuments of those countries. Sigiriya was no exception. The Government of Ceylon through the Oxford University Press has just published two volumes by Dr. S. Paranavitana, on the Graffiti of Sigiriya. The most important feature of these graffiti is that they are in verse (*gī*); incidentally, they happen to be the earliest extant ones in the Sinhalese language. In addition to these decipherment and the interpretation of the graffiti, the author has also elucidated the language and the finer points of grammar, giving clues to the solution of many a knotty problem over which pandits have long differed. To the layman, who looks at the picture-gallery of Sigiriya, this book will add interest to what he sees. The work involved twenty-five year's study and the publication is a landmark in the story of archæology in Ceylon.

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(To be continued)

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