

# British Governors of Ceylon

H.A.J. HULUGALLE



Mr. H. A. J. Hulugalle, by profession a lawyer, has spent the greater part of his working life as a journalist. He was editor of the *Ceylon Observer* in 1930 and editor of the *Ceylon Daily News* for seventeen years (1931-48). During this period he was also a Director of The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. He was Ceylon Government Information Officer from 1948 to 1954 when he was appointed Ceylon Minister in Rome. Subsequently he was Ambassador in Rome and Athens, retiring in 1959. He is a Member of the Victorian Order, a Grand Officer of the Italian Order of Merit and one of the few non-Catholic Papal knights. He is the author of *The Life and Times of D. R. Wijewardene* *Introducing Ceylon* and joint author of *A Ceylon Investor's Guide*.



## BRITISH GOVERNORS OF CEYLON





Sir Thomas Maitland

*Abundant common sense and iron will.....*

# BRITISH GOVERNORS OF CEYLON

*by*

H. A. J. HULUGALLI

**With a Postscript by**

SIR HENRY MONCK-MASON MOORE

*the last Colonial Governor of Ceylon*

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*To my Wife*

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## PREFACE

By **Dr. G. C. Mendis**

Ph.D., D. Lit. (Lond.)

IT is a pleasure and a privilege to introduce this book on British Colonial Governors by Mr. H. A. Hulugalle. As a writer Mr. Hulugalle requires no introduction. In 1918 he took to journalism and from 1931 for seventeen years he was Editor of the *Ceylon Daily News*. In this busy period of his life he was co-author of a book on investments, entitled *The Small Man and His Money*. Next year in 1942 he wrote for the Oxford Pamphlets on Indian Affairs a booklet on Ceylon. In 1948 when he became the Information Officer of the Government of Ceylon he rewrote this pamphlet which had gone into four editions, under the title *Introducing Ceylon*. To celebrate the first anniversary of Ceylon's independence he edited and published an interesting collection of articles on Ceylon's diversified life. Then on his return to the Island, after serving as Minister and later as Ambassador in Rome, he wrote his best known work *The Life and Times of D. R. Wijewardene*.

With this experience as a writer he now gives an account of the careers of the British Colonial Governors of Ceylon. In his lucid style he deals with their parentage and ancestry, their class background, their early training and education, their experience prior to their arrival in Ceylon, their relations with the Secretaries of State, the officials and the people of Ceylon, and how they tackled the problems they had to face. Incidentally he sheds much light on many important officials, giving an insight into their characters. He gives also some idea of the political, economic and social conditions of those times and relates many an interesting detail of which a professional historian may lose sight.

Mr. Hulugalle takes a balanced view of the work of the Governors. British rule in Ceylon is undervalued by many today. This belittling began in the period of the agitation for constitutional reforms when we made a claim to self-government not only on grounds of our political maturity but by over-emphasizing the inadequacies and defects of British rule. After we attained independence and had

shed our subordinate status, before we could acquire a dispassionate attitude of mind for assessing the work of the British, an agitation to get to our roots, for the restoration of the Sinhalese language and of Buddhism to their rightful place, has made us devalue British rule further. But the history of the British Period continues to receive attention in spite of these developments. In recent years it has been examined and assessed by many writers both British and Ceylonese.

It would be wrong to judge the importance of British rule only in the light of the development of the Sinhalese language and of Buddhism alone. The scope of history is far wider than cultural developments. It covers political, economic and social movements. Cultural history is only a part of social history, and it too is governed by political, economic and social factors. The changes that took place in the British Period in these three spheres were more radical than all those that occurred in the previous recorded history of Ceylon. By stages, a commercial and capitalist economy replaced the agrarian and barter economy which came down from the settlement of the Aryans in this island. The old form of travelling gave way to modern means of communication. A parliamentary form of government took the place of the old autocratic form of government and a bureaucratic system that of the old headman system. Race and caste were deprived of their legal status and all rights were conferred on individuals enabling them to develop new associations on modern lines. New ideas such as those of equality before the law and of equality of opportunity replaced caste ideas which distinguished people according to birth. Within the British Period itself the *laissez-faire* state they introduced was replaced in time by the introduction of important features of the welfare state. When hardly anyone seems to want to go back on these reforms it would be strange if Mr. Hulugalle did not appreciate the work of men who steered the country through all these far-reaching changes and brought Ceylon to its present state among the peoples of the world.

Mr. Hulugalle's book is also of value as it covers fresh ground. He attempts to fill a gap in our historical studies of the British Period. The developments in this period were governed by four main factors: the political, economic and social background of the British people, the conditions in Ceylon, the Secretaries of State for the Colonies who functioned in Britain, and the Governors who

ruled in Ceylon. Many have dealt with the political and economic changes in Ceylon during this time but have examined little the part played by persons in bringing about these changes.

The Governors came with a knowledge of their British background and the changes taking place there. They realized that they were the servants of the Secretary of State and of Parliament and obeyed the orders that came from them even if they disagreed. They made a study of changing conditions in Ceylon and kept their masters informed about them to gain approval for their actions. Apart from these considerations they acted on the powers granted to them and as their training and character guided them.

The powers of the Governors varied from time to time. In the period up to 1830 he was almost a despot. He was the chief military, executive and legislative authority in the Island. He was the chief judicial head in all civil matters. In the Kandyan provinces he was, in addition, the final judicial authority in all criminal matters. By the right of services due to the state he was able to compel people to work, regulate their wages and employ them with and without payment according to caste and custom. The system of trade monopolies gave him indefinite control over their resources. He was beyond the jurisdiction of the courts. He could imprison or banish any person without trial or assigning any reason and no court could question his right to take such action. The Secretary of State could control him little, as at this time a letter from England to Ceylon took four to six months and he could not do much more than laying down policy.

From 1830 his powers were diminished. In that year his power to imprison or banish anyone without trial was taken away. From 1832 with the abolition of *raja-kariya* and the trade monopolies he lost further powers he had over the people and their resources. With the increase in the powers of the Supreme Court his judicial powers came to an end. With the establishment of the Executive and Legislative Councils he had to consult them before he took any important decisions.

The status of the Governor was affected further with the developments in communications. With each improvement the Secretary of State was able to increase his control over him. From 1841, with the construction of the steamships, a letter to or from Ceylon took only four to five weeks. With the opening of the Suez Canal a letter from London could reach Galle in about three weeks. In

1870 the laying of the submarine cable enabled the Secretary of State to give orders from London.

But yet the Governor was the keystone of the government arch. He alone was responsible for the good government of the Island. He was the President of the Legislative Council and the chief spokesman on behalf of the Government. Though he came more under the control of the Secretary of State with the development of communications, he at the same time, with the construction of the roads, the railway, the telegraph and the telephone, gained a greater ascendancy over his officials. Besides, whatever powers the Secretary of State possessed, he could not rule Ceylon from England. He had to trust the man on the spot who knew local conditions, and leave him to make most decisions. In fact, throughout British rule, only two Governors were recalled for misgovernment and apart from following the recommendations of the two Commissions sent in 1829 and 1927, the Secretary of State generally acted on the advice of the Governor.

The powers of the Governor, however, were effectively reduced as power was gradually transferred to the Ceylon legislature. In 1924 the Governor ceased to preside over the Legislative Council and act as the chief spokesman of the Government. At the same time the elected majority in the Legislative Council made it difficult for him to enforce his wishes. With the Donoughmore Constitution he received the status between that of a constitutional Governor and one of the old type associated with crown colony government. The Soulbury Reforms restricted his powers of interference further until he became a constitutional ruler in 1948. Thus from 1796 to 1924 the Governor played an important part in the developments of this most important period in Ceylon history and even what happened for the next twenty-four years depended much on him.

A study of the careers of the British Governors of Ceylon is therefore a *sine qua non* for an understanding of the British Period. As stated already the history of the British Period has been dealt with from various angles. But so far no book has been written on it from the angle of the Governors. Mr. Hulugalle has rendered a service by filling to some extent this gap in our knowledge of the British Period, and it is hoped that it will inspire others to follow in his footsteps. Those interested in this personal aspect of British rule, which Mr. Hulugalle from his wide experience of men and matters is qualified in every way to deal with, will find his book a valuable source of information.

G. C. MENDIS

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## INTRODUCTION

**T**HIS book is not presented as a potted history of British rule in Ceylon; nor is it a collection of self-contained biographical sketches of the Governors, though it can hardly escape the charge of mixing biography with history.

The excuse for its appearance at this time is that it attempts to bring together information not readily available to the general reader, some of it important, which may disappear if no trouble is taken to garner it. There will be some readers who would be interested in glimpses of gubernatorial life in Ceylon through the fifteen decades in question. A historian too may find clues in the deeds and words of the Governors and what others said about them.

Although it is no longer fashionable to think of history in terms of captains and kings, it is sometimes convenient to accept the generalization, as writers like Thomas Carlyle were inclined to do, that while geography is about maps, history is about chaps. Nor is it fanciful to think that, in considering the lives and work of the thirty British Governors of Ceylon, we discern a thread of economic, social and political development, from a relatively primitive society to the premier Crown Colony and in course of time an independent nation of the Commonwealth.

At the end of the Eighteenth Century, during the struggle between the maritime nations of Europe, it was not possible for a small island in a strategic position in the Indian Ocean to stand alone and defend itself. For three hundred years the coastal regions had been under the sway of the Portuguese and Dutch successively. Ceylon fell into British hands in 1796 and became a Colony in 1802. William Pitt said in Parliament that it was "to us the most valuable colonial possession on the globe, as giving to our Indian empire a security which it has not enjoyed from its first establishment". The Kandyan kingdom in the centre of the island was reduced in 1815.

The population of Ceylon when the British arrived was about 800,000. At the first regular Census taken in 1871, it added up to

2,405,287. Today it is around 11 million. Such an increase does not by itself imply that the people were well governed but it could not have taken place, at the rate it did, without continuously improving health conditions, an adequate food supply and a stable civil administration.

No one would today deny that British rule brought important benefits to the country and the people, such as law and order, capital and communications, science and technology, western art, music and literature, democratic forms of government, cricket, football and other sports and pastimes, better living conditions and economic development which today sustains the population at an income level above the general average of south Asia. Critics of British rule often make the claim that the material benefits enjoyed by the people of Ceylon would have come without the intervention of a Colonial power, and would have come without upsetting the traditional patterns of society and religion. There is little evidence to support such a theory and, in any case, the new ferments which attacked the caste system and superstitions of many kinds were beneficial.

The goals of Colonial policy in Ceylon were defined by the British rulers as early as 1832 when the findings of the Colebrooke Commission were accepted in principle. These were: equality before the law, representative government, an independent judiciary, a uniform system of government and free enterprise. But the loss of independence was not accepted tamely by the people or their leaders. There were rebellions in 1817 and 1848 which were suppressed at considerable cost in life and property. Later, with the spread of education of western type and liberal ideas, a growing minority was restive under foreign rule and resentful of their own impotence. The climate was thus created for the germination of the seeds of nationalism and the realization by slow degrees that good government is no substitute for self-government.

In this realization Ceylonese were encouraged by broad-minded Britons some of whom were in advance of their times. Sir Alexander Johnston, who came to Ceylon as Advocate Fiscal and was made Chief Justice in 1811, was one of them. He had spent his boyhood in India where he developed a life-long sympathy for the people. Before he came out to Ceylon he gave a report to Charles

James Fox, at the latter's request, on what should be done to improve the social and economic conditions of the sub-continent. When he had travelled about the island and studied the customs of the inhabitants of Ceylon, Johnston submitted a report to the Government in England in which he recommended bold action to enable Ceylonese to participate in the legislative and administrative branches of the Government of Ceylon. The movement for political reforms also owed much to the efforts of unofficial Englishmen like George Wall and William Digby.

In the initiation of political reforms, the Governors moved warily. The last word was of course with the British Parliament, represented by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. The existence of racial and religious minorities was for a long time regarded as an insuperable obstacle to parliamentary government in Ceylon. The Governors sought to reconcile and co-ordinate the interests of all sections and take the country along the path of responsible government.

Ceylon was at the start held mainly for strategic reasons, as already indicated. Like Aden, Bombay and Singapore, the harbours of the island provisioned ocean-going ships and guarded the sea routes. The time came, however, when the authorities in England felt that the Colony should pay its way by the development of its land resources and the pearl fisheries. Private capital was attracted and British planters and merchants followed in the wake of the administrators and soldiers. With a booming tea industry, the export and import trade of the island grew by leaps and bounds. In 1895 Sir Joseph West Ridgeway, who had just been appointed Governor, underlined the importance of commerce in a speech at a banquet given in his honour by the Ceylon Association in London which consisted largely of City men connected with the tea plantations. He said: "To put it shortly, one of the primary duties of the Governor is the promotion of commerce. Commerce is the bond of union between all parts of the empire—commerce is the *raison d'être*—but I suppose I am speaking to the converted."

The Colonial Governors, however, were not obsessed with pushing trade to the exclusion of other considerations. They were interested in all forms of development calculated to improve the living standards of the people. The fact is that, prior to the creation of the Colonial Development Fund in the 1920's, most Colonies were

expected to find the money for development out of their own resources, and to squeeze a grant-in-aid out of the Treasury was never easy. So any Governor anxious to improve conditions was bound to consider how, by stimulation of trade or local production, he could find the necessary revenue for the purpose. Every Colony was loath to go on the Treasury dole as it meant that the Colony's Budget had to be approved by the Treasury as well as by the Colonial Office, with much resultant delay.

The background and way of life of the rulers and the ruled being so different, opportunities for social exchange were limited in scope, and mistakes were made through inability to appreciate the thoughts and ideals of each other. The British rulers are rightly criticized as a class for being aloof, and even arrogant. Too few among them were able to see anything admirable in the ancient civilisation of the country or in a culture different from their own. They are also blamed for interfering too much by implanting alien traditions and values among an oriental people with age-old traditions and values of their own. These criticisms are sometimes self-contradictory. In any case, a conscientious administrator can do no better than act according to his own ideals and beliefs, which is what most Governors did. Furthermore, aloofness is often the path of expediency when a small number of foreigners rule a large indigenous population with whom they have little in common. The British were able, when the time came for them to withdraw, to do so with more grace than certain other Colonial powers who were more deeply involved in the social and economic life of the people they governed.

The Governor of a British Colony in the nineteenth century was not unlike a proconsul of any other imperial power. Subject to instructions and corrections from home, he was an autocrat when he had the strength of personality to command his Executive Council composed mainly of his own subordinates. He was like the captain of a ship into whose care the lives and welfare of his charges were committed. The main qualification was a capacity to exercise intelligently the power which the office conferred and take decisions on behalf of a Government several thousands of miles away.

Ceylon was for a long time regarded as the premier Crown Colony, and the men selected to be her Governor had usually served

in one or more other Colonies in a similar capacity. Having learned the ropes and taken the measure of the Colonial Office, they knew how far they could go on their own. In the days of sailing ships and before the transoceanic cables were laid, instructions from London took several months to reach their destination, and the man on the spot was allowed considerable discretion. With improvement in communications between England and Ceylon and the establishment of Unofficial representation in the Legislative Council, the exercise of autocratic power by the Governor was markedly curtailed. But it is interesting to recall the description of the head of the government of the island by George Wall, a well known planter, merchant and politician in the middle of the century:

"The Governor concentrates in his person all the power of the State, without restraint or responsibility. He is the dispenser of place, patronage and promotion; and has the virtual disposal of the revenue. Every individual and every public body in the country must depend for the benefits they may desire, or for the redress they may seek, on the will and pleasure of the Governor. The arrival of a new Governor is, therefore, the signal for a new set of hopes and fears throughout all classes of the community. Those who have been in favour scheme how best they may retain their supremacy, whilst those who have been neglected hope their turn may come. Inquiries into his antecedents and speculation as to his policy, occupy and excite the public mind before his advent; and on his arrival, each word and act, however insignificant, is studied to ascertain his proclivities."

The Governor's wife, when he had one living with him—which was usually the case—was without question 'the first lady'. None of the wives has written about what it meant to be the Governor's consort though some of them, like Lady Clifford, possessed exceptional literary talent. The main tasks of a Governor's wife in Ceylon were those of any other consort of a country's ruler: to make a home for him, to entertain his guests and take an interest in social and charitable institutions. She was the mistress of three official residences, in Colombo, Kandy and Nuwara Eliya, respectively.

More often than not, the Governor's wife was an amiable middle-aged woman, bravely confronting the rigours of a tropical climate.

## BRITISH GOVERNORS OF CEYLON

But some exceptionally beautiful and charming women lived at Queen's House. Byron wrote a poem about his cousin, Lady Horton, who "walked in beauty, like the night of cloudless climes and starry skies". Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie was a Scottish chieftainess in her own right. The wife of Sir Herbert Stanley has been described in a recent book as "one of the most beautiful women of the century in any country of the world". Lady Moore was an artist of uncommon talent.

There were in all thirty British Governors of Ceylon, if we include Viscount Soulbury who was Governor-General and did not therefore wield the powers of a Colonial Governor. Mr. Philip Woodruffe has written two books on the rulers of India which he subtitled "Pioneers" and "Guardians", respectively. The same rough division could be made about the Governors of Ceylon, but the comparison can be misleading. The choice of a Viceroy was made on different principles from those applicable to the selection of the Governor of a Colony. The ideal Viceroy was an inspired amateur while in nine cases out of ten the Colonial Governor had risen in the Colonial service on merit. No past Chief Justice of England or future Foreign Secretary was sent out to Ceylon as Governor though in India such appointments were not uncommon. This does not mean, however, that the average Viceroy was in all cases superior to the abler among Colonial Governors. Men like Sir Thomas Maitland, Sir Edward Barnes, Sir Henry Ward, Sir Hercules Robinson, Sir William Gregory, Sir Arthur Gordon and Sir Joseph West Ridgeway would have made their mark in any country and were as able and successful as any but the greatest of the Viceroys.

The thirty Governors can be broadly divided into three groups: soldiers, administrators and politicians, by profession. Some were scholars, like Frederick North, the first Governor, Charles MacCarthy and Robert Chalmers. North and Gordon were sons of Prime Ministers. Chalmers, John Anderson and Graeme Thomson were distinguished British civil servants who made their name during the first world war. Brownrigg, Paget, Barnes and Campbell had fought with the Duke of Wellington in the Peninsular War or at Waterloo. Maitland, Horton, Mackenzie, Ward, Gregory, Gordon and Ramsbotham (Soulbury) had been Members

of Parliament before they were appointed to Ceylon. Two versatile Governors, Clifford and Caldecott, came through the Malayan Civil Service. Moore started as a young cadet in the Ceylon Civil Service. Longden rose from the position of a junior clerk in the Falkland Islands, George Anderson graduated in the Indian service and Blake was in the Irish Constabulary. Torrington was probably the only one who owed his appointment to influence.

The Governors, taken as a whole, were men of ability and displayed great devotion to duty. Like any other similar body of men, they differed in background, character, training and temperament. Their achievements varied in size and quality and some were dogged by ill health. Conditions in Ceylon did not demand the qualities of a restless genius like Raffles of Singapore.

The transition from the Colonial era to Independence was effected smoothly, thanks to the good sense of the British Ministers concerned at the time, the statesmanship of Ceylon's first Prime Minister, Don Stephen Senanayake, and his advisers, and the clear-cut recommendations of the Soulbury Commission. The concluding chapter of this book, contributed by Sir Henry Monck-Mason Moore, the last of the Colonial Governors, is a fitting curtain to the British phase in Ceylon. Readers both in Ceylon and abroad will be grateful to him for a first hand and authentic record of a Governor's life and work.

In compiling this book I have drawn on many sources, some of which are listed in an Appendix. I have not exhausted the sources and offer what follows as a series of sign posts for those who may be interested in the part played by the British Governors in the economic, social and political development of Ceylon.

H. A. J. H.

**FREDERICK NORTH**

(1798-1805)

*Young Man in a Hurry*

**F**REDERICK North, the first British Governor of Ceylon, was the third and youngest son of Lord North, the Prime Minister during whose administration Britain lost her North American colonies.

He was thirty-two years of age when he arrived in the Island. Young, charming and talented, he did not possess any obvious qualification based on experience or aptitude for a task which seemed difficult and complicated.

The maritime provinces of Ceylon were at first attached to the Madras Presidency and administered by the East India Company through military governors. The Dutch had surrendered the island to the British on February 16th, 1796, after a somewhat one-sided battle in Colombo following the withdrawal of the Swiss mercenaries from the garrison. Madras civil servants were brought to Ceylon to carry on the civil government under the general control of Robert Andrews, the Resident, who was also Superintendent of Revenue. He was paid a commission of  $1\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. on the net revenue in addition to a salary of £60 per month. The revenue from the three pearl fisheries of 1796—98 alone was £396,000, so that it cannot be said that the Resident was ill paid.

The introduction of the Madras revenue system to Ceylon and an extortionate tax to replace the traditional system of land tenure resulted in a formidable revolt among the Sinhalese in, which losses were heavy on both sides. Lord Hobart, the Governor of Madras, was seriously perturbed by the reports which reached him from Ceylon. On June 9th, 1797, he appointed a Committee, composed of General de Meuron, a former commander of the Swiss regiment which garrisoned Colombo under the Dutch as president, Colonel



Agnew, the Adjutant-General of the British Forces in Ceylon, and Andrews, the Resident. In London Mr. Secretary Dundas decided, even before the Committee could report, to place the Government of Ceylon under the Crown, and appointed the Hon. Frederick North to the post of Governor.

North was born on February 17th, 1766, the third son of the second Earl of Guilford, better known in the history books by his courtesy title of Lord North, the Prime Minister of King George III. His mother was Anne, daughter of George Speke. He was admitted to Eton but, being a delicate child, spent most of his youth in foreign health resorts. At Christ Church, Oxford, he took a keen interest in classical studies and modern languages, and was made a Doctor of Civil Law by his university at the age of 27. All his life he was an ardent philhellene. He was an accomplished Grecian and spent the closing years of his career as Chancellor of the Ionian University on Corfu where, donning a classical costume, he lived the life of an elderly eccentric.

North was a brilliant conversationalist and spoke German, French, Spanish, Italian and Romanian and read Russian easily. One of his early publications was a Pindaric ode in honour of ex-Queen Catherine of Russia, printed in Leipzig and reprinted in Athens. At the age of 23 he was appointed to the office of Chamberlain of the Exchequer, a sinecure. He travelled in Spain and the Ionian archipelago and, returning to England, entered Parliament, succeeding his brother in the pocket borough of Banbury. In 1794 he was appointed Comptroller of Customs and in the same year was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society.

Seeking a milder climate, North went to Corsica for two years as secretary to the Viceroy, Sir George Eliot. In 1798 he was appointed Governor of Ceylon. He reached Bombay on June 4th of that year and on September 15th received his Instructions from the Court of the Directorate of the East India Company, and his Commission on September 22nd. "I have all power, civil and military", he wrote to a friend, "but depending upon and corresponding with the Court of Directors and the Secretary of State." On January 1st, 1802, the control of the East India Company over the island was abolished, and Ceylon became a Crown Colony under the Colonial Office.

North reached Colombo on October 12th, 1798, on board the *Intrepid*, a cruiser furnished by the Presidency of Bombay, after a passage of twelve days. On his arrival he had the Commission read on the parade ground and later at Government House, and took the oaths approved by the King's Instructions and also took the oath of fidelity to the East India Company. He received a salary of £10,000.

He was accompanied by nine officials, most of whom were appointed by Dundas at his suggestion. Among them was Hugh Cleghorn, the Chief Secretary, on a salary of £3,000. A little more should be said about Cleghorn before he disappears from these pages. He was Professor of Civil History in the University of St. Andrews but paid little attention to his academic duties after he was taken up by Pitt and Dundas. He undertook secret missions for them in the Continent during the Napoleonic wars. During one such mission he made the acquaintance of the Comte de Meuron of Neuchatel, the owner of the Swiss regiment which was in the service of the Dutch in Ceylon. Amply supplied with funds by Dundas, Cleghorn was able to buy off the regiment and weaken the garrison of Colombo. To do so he took the old Count across Europe and the Arabian Sea to south India whence he was able to get a letter across to his brother, Colonel de Meuron, who was in command of the regiment. The letter, which was concealed in an Edam cheese, ordered his brother to break with the Dutch and go over to the British with his regiment. Cleghorn was paid £5,000 for his trouble.

As a reward for his competent handling of the delicate mission Cleghorn was appointed Chief Secretary of Ceylon by Dundas. For a time the Governor was highly pleased with his Secretary. He was "sincerely happy in having such men as de Meuron, Cleghorn and Agnew", he wrote. But the tempers of North and Cleghorn were incompatible and they were soon at cross purposes. The Governor suspected his Chief Secretary of conspiring with the Madras officials against him and of the corrupt management of the pearl fishery of 1799. North suspended Cleghorn, and in January 1800 Cleghorn threw up his appointment and returned home.

"Heaven be praised", wrote North, "the *Preston* with Cleghorn has weighed anchor from this place." Cleghorn had done good

work in organizing the administration of the country and his minutes and reports are State papers of value. He bought the estate of Strathvithie in Fife from the Marquis of Titchfield and lived for another thirty-four years. It is stated on his tombstone that Cleghorn "was the agent through whose instrumentality the island of Ceylon was annexed to the British Empire".

Among others who accompanied North to Ceylon were William Boyd, who acted as Chief Secretary after the departure of Cleghorn; H. A. Marshall, nicknamed Iniquity Marshall to distinguish him from Sir Charles Marshall, a lawyer, who was called Equity Marshall; Joseph Joinville, a naturalist; and Anthony Bertalocci, North's Corsican private secretary, who wrote a valuable book on the economy of Ceylon. There were also three boys of thirteen, Sylvester Gordon, Robert Barry and George Lusignan, who were expected to learn the languages of the country and work under the first assistant to the Chief Secretary until they were fitted for promotion to responsible posts. Of the three, Lusignan alone survived the wars and fevers, and rose to hold high office.

North was a bachelor and at first lived in a house in the Fort of Colombo which had belonged to a Dutch official (Gezaghebber) of the name of Sluyskens, a ground floor bungalow "hot and confined". On its site, at the junction of Prince Street and York Street, rose many years later the large and imposing building of Cargills Limited. Government House, of which the present St. Peter's Church premises formed a part, was in a state of disrepair.

The Governor next moved to a villa at Hultsdorp. It was the scene of many sumptuous entertainments. The back verandah used for dancing was "upwards of one hundred feet in length, and so broad that a coach might be driven in it with perfect safety". But the house was stuffy and the Governor moved again, this time to a house called St. Sebastian on the hill which till recently bore that name. It was a "less splendid mansion but in a more eligible situation... surrounded with pleasant prospects, and fanned by perpetual breezes... It formed the theatre of all gay and festive entertainments. Suppers were served up in fine weather under extensive canopies formed of the roofs of tents; in rainy seasons they were laid out in four lower and two upper rooms of the house."

The Governor had also a bungalow, thatched with coconut leaves, at a place called "Pilligory", three miles up the Kelani river on the further bank, where he "occasionally gave entertainments and gratified his friends with a further variety of scene... excellent boats were always ready to carry over the party, and a band of music added gaiety to the other luxuries of the feast". When North arrived in Ceylon there were two clubs. The older one was the "Cocoa-nut" or "Whist Club", which met at a bungalow near the mouth of the river afterwards named Whist Bungalow. The other was the "Quoit Club", the members of which were not content with anything less than "the choicest viands".

The English community in Colombo consisted of "about one hundred gentlemen and only twenty ladies". Wives seem to have been scarce among the civil and military chiefs. "Governor North had none, and we hear nothing of a Mrs. Macdowall, a Mrs. Arbuthnot or a Mrs. Boyd. Colonel Baillie, of the 51st Brigadier in the Kandyan war, was certainly a bachelor, and so was Major Wilson," writes J. P. Lewis. In the days of the sailing ships few women were ready to risk the hazards of a voyage to Asia. It was only when steamers made travel easier and quicker that girls with relations in the Island arrived in increasing numbers. They were sometimes referred to as "the fishing fleet" because many of them were in search of husbands.

A considerable number of British officers and civilians of the time married Dutch girls. C. E. Layard of the Ceylon Civil Service during the North regime, a son of the Dean of Bristol, married Barbara Bridgetina Mooyart, daughter of Gaulterus Mooyart, Administrator of Jaffna under the Dutch Company, on December 9th 1804. They had twenty-six children. The Dutch ladies were evidently sticklers for propriety. On one occasion Governor North offended them by inviting them to a ball before he had asked them to dinner. They had resented his "horrible breach of etiquette" but he conciliated them by giving them a dinner.

Frederick North was popular with the Europeans and ~~Ceylonese~~ and might have ended his career with a good reputation for statesmanship had he not been in too great a hurry to make the Kandyan king a British puppet. North did many foolish things, beginning with the despatch of an embassy to Kandy in 1800 under General

Hay Macdowall with an unnecessarily large escort. The embassy failed, the King rejecting a request that he should sign a treaty agreeing to allow a British garrison to be stationed in his capital.

Although North openly refused to enter into "an unjust conspiracy", he encouraged the intrigues of the king's chief minister, Pilame Talavve Adigar, and once just escaped being captured by the king's agents. At length he declared war against Kandy, gambling on an easy victory. The British forces set out from Colombo on January 3rd, 1803. A dinner was given to General Macdowall and his officers on the eve of their departure at the Cocoa-nut Club, near which the troops had encamped. The Governor and the civil officials were present to wish good luck to the expedition.

North's invasion of Kandy did not work out according to plan. The operation was bungled and hundreds of the invading force were stricken by fever. A large number of the British troops were massacred. The pretender, a scion of the royal family hastily enthroned by North, was beheaded after the beleaguered garrison had surrendered him to the King.

To make matters worse, Macdowall's successor, General Wemyss, was determined to be obstructive. Taking advantage of the Kandyan war then in progress, Wemyss refused to discuss his demands from the Treasury in detail, and embarrassed the public finances by extravagant expenditure on the army. The Governor complained to London of "the impossibility of carrying on the government without more control than I have of the army".

As sometimes happens when the Governor is not himself a strong man, senior officials of the Colony became a law unto themselves. The Secretary of State, preoccupied by problems connected with the Napoleonic wars, does not seem to have had the time to attend to domestic quarrels in distant lands.

The Supreme Court, which had been recently established with a Chief Justice and a Puisne Judge, held its sittings in the Fort of Colombo, near the parade ground which the Court used as a convenient place for administering floggings. The military objected to this and, in September 1804, Colonel Baillie, the Commandant of Colombo, forbade the use of the grounds to any but the troops. The Supreme Court demanded that Baillie withdraw the order, since the Charter of Justice of 1801 commanded all officers, civil and



Hon. Frederick North



• Sir Robert Brownrigg



Sir Edward Barnes



Sir Robert Wilmot Horton

Right Hon. J. A. Stewart  
MackenzieSir James Emerson  
Tennent

military, to aid and assist the Court in the execution of its powers. Baillie refused and the Court bound him to keep the peace. North intervened and while soothing the ruffled feelings of the Court upheld the action of the military.

Wemyss, without any warning, locked the gates of the Fort, on the ground that Kandyan spies were trying to gain access to it. North ordered the gates opened, whereupon the General declared that, as his authority in Colombo had been flouted, he would withdraw to some place where it was still unimpaired. "Your Excellency will therefore consider yourself responsible", he complained, "for the safety of the Fort of Colombo, so violently seized from my authority." Meanwhile Mr. Justice Lushington had found himself locked out of the Fort on the day the gates were closed. And so, in the middle of the campaign against Kandy, the General was hauled before the Supreme Court on a charge of contempt and bound over to keep the peace. Wemyss complained that the Chief Justice had acted from "the most indelicate motives".

When the Brigade chaplain at Colombo preached a sermon on St. Paul's trial before Felix, the judges had no doubt that Felix was to be taken as symbolizing the Supreme Court. One evening in June 1805, the General met Sir Edmund Carrington, the Chief Justice, and his wife. While politely addressing Lady Carrington, he pointedly cut the Chief Justice. The fact that she was noted for her Italian beauty—she was the daughter of J. Belli of the Bengal Civil Service, Secretary to Warren Hastings—did not improve matters.

These tiffs might have been forgotten had it not come to the knowledge of the judges that Wemyss had written an intemperate letter to the Governor attacking them. The letter was made public and they decided to bring an action against the General in the King's Bench division in London.

A phrase in the letter led the then Attorney-General (he was called the Advocate Fiscal), Alexander Johnston, to challenge General Wemyss to a duel. The Governor heard about it and tried to settle the dispute by sending Rose, the Registrar of the Supreme Court, to receive a promised explanation from Wemyss. The General lost his temper and called Rose a "damned scoundrel" and challenged him to a duel in England.

Wemyss deposed before a magistrate that Johnston had challenged him to a duel. When the magistrate was about to bind over the Attorney-General to keep the peace, the case was removed to the Supreme Court. After a hearing which lasted two whole days, the Court held that no challenge had been intended. Johnston was reprimanded from the Bench and Wemyss apologized. The comic opera quality of official life at this period may be seen from the fact that Alexander Johnston shortly afterwards succeeded Sir Edmund Carrington as Chief Justice.

North established the Ceylon Civil Service, the law courts and the fiscal system of the Island. In his dealings with the indigenous population he was probably too much influenced by his Maha Mudaliyar, of whom he wrote that he was "always resident near the presence of the Governor, never sits down in my presence, nor appears before me in shoes, but is in fact the Grand Vizier. Every order I give him is immediately executed and everything taking place in the Island is communicated to me. The great object is to gain marks of distinction, such as sabres, gold chains, medals etc., by which the Dutch Governors well knew how to secure their attachment."

The Governor's faults of character intensified his difficulties and led to serious mistakes. Honest, talented and versatile, he was popular but was not a good judge of men. In his policy towards the Kandyan kingdom he was involved in the toils of a clever intriguer, Pilame Talavve. North himself had doubts on the wisdom of depending on the adigar's support. "I hope I have not done wrong", he wrote, "but I am not yet certain whether I have acted like a good politician or a great nincompoop."

North's regime ushered in a new and exciting era for Ceylon. His term of office as Governor ended in 1805. He was not yet forty but he was a sick man and asked to be recalled. A scholar and traveller, he was not capable of settling down to a quiet life in England. In 1812 he was elected the first president of a society in Athens for the promotion of culture. He acknowledged the honour and accepted the office in a letter "equally remarkable for the ardour of its philhellenism and the purity of its Attic"

On the establishment of the British protectorate over the Ionian Islands, North devoted himself, with his friend Count Capodistrias,

to a scheme for founding the Ionian University, a cause he was better able to support upon his succession, on the death of his elder brother, to the earldom of Guilford. When the university was founded on a site in Corfu he lavished much money on it, and resided there as Chancellor, wearing the classical dress, conduct which excited ridicule in England.

The state of his health took him back to England and he died in the house of his nephew, the Earl of Sheffield, on October 14th, 1827. He was buried according to the common Greek rite.



## II

## SIR THOMAS MAITLAND

(1805-1811)

*A Rough Old Despot*

SIR THOMAS MAITLAND, North's successor as Governor of Ceylon, had the same aristocratic background but was a man of very different type and calibre. He does not seem to have had any formal education although at the age of fifteen his name was entered at Lincoln's Inn to enable him to read for the Bar. Notwithstanding his lack of learning Maitland made a resounding success of every important task he undertook.

As Governor of Ceylon it fell to him to retrieve the administration from the consequences of North's many and serious blunders. It was a stroke of good fortune that the British Government should have sent to Ceylon a soldier with abundant common sense and an iron will to follow the charming and inexperienced intellectual. Maitland's shrewdness and caution could have been inherited from his mother, the grand-daughter of a Norwich weaver who had amassed a fortune. The daring and craft of the Maitlands seem to have been happily blended in Thomas with the conciliatory temper and habit of compromise which go to make a successful man of business.

He was born in December 1759, the second son of James Maitland, 7th Earl of Lauderdale, by his marriage with Mary Turner, daughter and co-heiress of Alderman Sir Thomas Lombe. He was appointed at birth—so it is recorded—a lieutenant in the old Scots 17th Light Dragoons or Edinburgh Light Horse. After that corps was disbanded in 1763, he drew half-pay of his rank until, at the age of nineteen, he took up his commission and raised a company for the Seaforth Regiment or 78th Highlanders. The Maitlands could have done this as they came from the oldest, sturdiest and most stubborn stock of the Scottish nobility. The family had remained

for 400 years of simple knightly rank till, in the 16th century, its chief was raised to the peerage, and in 1624 advanced to the dignity of the Earl of Lauderdale.

After a short spell in the Channel Islands, Maitland left for India with his regiment in which his younger brother also had a commission. He was employed at Calcutta where he came under the notice of Lord Cornwallis, the Viceroy. He served ashore in the campaign against Hyder Ali and afloat against the French Admiral Suffren.

Maitland returned to England with the rank of Major and entered Parliament as the member for Haddington Burghs. He held the seat from 1794 to 1796 and from 1800 to 1805 but never broke out once into a Latin quotation at a time when to be able to quote the classics was the mark of an educated man. But he made sensible speeches on India, drawing on his first hand experience. As a parliamentarian he is said to have had a fine presence, easy flow of language and undaunted courage.

In 1797 Maitland obtained the San Domingo command and earned the congratulations of His Majesty's Government for the skilful manner in which he secured the evacuation of the threatened British settlements in that island. On November 1st, 1803, he was appointed a member of the Board of Control of the British East India Company. He was made a Privy Councillor to qualify for membership and received an annual allowance of £1,500.

At the age of 46 Maitland was appointed Governor of Ceylon. He arrived in Colombo on July 17th, 1805, and went into residence in a house which belonged to the last Dutch Governor Van Angelbeck, which was on the site of the present Queen's House, now the residence of the Governor-General. He also had a country house on the charming headland at Mount Lavinia, which was improved by his successors, Brownrigg and Barnes, and which later became the well-known hotel of that name. There are no records of sumptuous parties given by Maitland such as were common during the regime of Governor North. To Maitland, according to ~~some~~ his biographers, "life meant work, work that it would have crushed ordinary men even to attempt. His diversion, his solace, was gross indulgence. He was not a brilliant or popular man. He was a great human force controlled by a will of iron."

He lost no time in acquainting himself with the problems of the island and spent six months travelling over the British territory in Ceylon. After examining the working of the administrative machine, his first report to the Secretary of State ran into 123 folios of manuscript with 57 enclosures. As a result of the reforms suggested by him, an annual sum of £ 300,000 was saved to the revenue of the Island.

Mainly as a result of his ill-starred adventures, North had left an empty Treasury. Maitland loved to balance the Budget and roll up a surplus. In the public service, he was not only careful, he was miserly. To a man of his practical outlook there were many directions in which money could be saved. There was no formal peace with the king of Kandy but Maitland was not to be tempted to resume hostilities. Firstly, it was expensive to do so. Secondly, it was risky, as the experience of North proved. Maitland preferred a cheaper method of extending British power in Kandy. "I shall be able", he declared, "to get by under-hand means and very little money indeed more complete possession of the Kandians than by war of any kind." Among the gifts showered on the chief high priest of Kandy by the Governor was a large looking glass. He also opened a correspondence with the High Steward of the royal court.

Maitland took steps to reorganize the army and cut out extravagance. He was now in full control and could not be brow-beaten by General Wemyss, the commander of the troops, as North had been. "As Governor I have the right", said Maitland, "to order the troops on this island to be employed on any service I think fit: but I have nothing to do in that capacity with the discipline or detail of the army. As Lieutenant-General Maitland, on the other hand, I have everything to do with the discipline of the army but cannot move a man without the order of the Governor."

He abolished North's military council and criticized Wemyss's behaviour in his relations with the Governor. "The executive ~~government~~", he wrote to the Secretary of State, "was totally paralysed by the unhappy differences that existed between it and the military power. This, under the command of Major-General Wemyss, had assumed a character of independence incompatible with the existence of good government, and the exertion of this

independence was generally manifested in some attempt to harass the civil power by forcing it, under the plea of military necessity, to break through every rule that had been laid for the establishment of economy in the military department in the island... In short, one would imagine, instead of having due regard to economy, the Major-General's sole object was to embarrass the Government by increasing the expenditure, and that instead of supporting and maintaining the character of His Majesty's arms in this colony, he had assiduously studied how he could most completely disgrace and degrade it."

Maitland criticized his predecessor's organization of the Civil Service. Salaries were too low and, instead of trying to raise them, North had rewarded the deserving or favoured officers by creating minor posts with insufficient or nominal duties. He had also tacitly allowed civil servants to engage in private trade, either on their own account or as agents of Latour & Co., the Madras firm which had the monopoly of Ceylon commerce and of supplying the Government with most of its requirements. Expenditure was uncontrolled owing to the extravagant, confused and inefficient manner in which the Treasury was conducted. Maitland discovered a specially bad case of corruption in Jaffna where Lusignan, one of the 'boys' who had come out to Ceylon with North, was the Agent of Revenue. Lusignan had allowed his principal headman to control the district. When Maitland investigated he found "peculation, fraud and iniquity... cruelly oppressive to the natives". He transferred Lusignan to an inferior post and recovered from him the amounts of which the Government had been defrauded.

Maitland divided the Civil Service into three classes. The Chief Secretary remained "the organ of the Government upon all occasions", although during Maitland's regime the office was almost a sinecure. In the provincial administration the Agents of Revenue and Commerce were abolished and replaced by ten Collectors under the complete control of the Commissioner of Revenue who could suspend them subject to the Governor's approval.

In 1805 Maitland forbade Civil Servants to engage in trade, although to encourage agriculture he allowed them to own and cultivate land. In 1810 he persuaded the Secretary of State to abolish Dundas's Regulation of 1801 which prohibited Europeans

from acquiring land in the Island except within the district of Colombo.

Maitland took a bold step when he reverted to the ancient system of service tenure which the Portuguese and Dutch had accepted but which the Madras administration of Ceylon, during its short rule, abandoned. When the British occupied the maritime provinces of Ceylon the system of taxation and land tenure was as follows: The king or the European government which had inherited his rights was the owner of all land, and granted it to individuals in return for the performance of services or the payment of a percentage of the crops. In 1796 service tenures were abolished and replaced by a tax of one-half of the estimated value of the produce. This led to unrest in the Island and the Government was unable to find labour for public works. North had to get down gangs of labourers from south India and this cost about £30,000 annually.

Maitland, with the approval of the Secretary of State, restored the old system of service tenure. The Government had lost heavily by its abolition. "It is impossible", wrote the Governor, "to collect men with all your money, for there being no penalty, there is not an inhabitant on this island that would not sit down and starve out the year under the shade of two or three coconut trees, the whole of his property and the whole of his subsistence, rather than increase his income and his comforts by manual labour." Echoes of this statement have been heard during the century and half that followed.

There was no important problem relating to the good administration of the Island which Maitland was not prepared to tackle. He reformed the minor judiciary despite the trouble he had with the Chief Justice, the Hon. Mr. E. H. Lushington. Although the Secretary of State had impressed on Lushington the necessity of acting cordially with the Governor, there was a series of disputes between them. Maitland addressed Lord Castlereagh, the Secretary of State, on the shortcomings of the Supreme Court of Ceylon. He had already proposed, very probably on the advice of Alexander Johnston, the Advocate Fiscal, the introduction of trial by jury in criminal cases. He said that trials were prolonged by the judges' lack of local knowledge—an evil accentuated by Lushington's defects of character.

One of the disagreements between Governor and Chief Justice arose over a technical matter. Although Royal Instructions directed that public instruments should be countersigned by the Chief Secretary and by order of the Governor in Council, it had been customary for the Deputy Secretary to sign them in the Chief Secretary's absence. The Chief Justice had himself stated that the Deputy Secretary's signature would, in such cases, give sufficient legal authority to public instruments. When, however, the Governor pardoned a prisoner on Lushington's own recommendation, the Chief Justice without any notice declared publicly from the Bench that the mandate was insufficient because it was signed only by the Deputy Secretary.

Maitland was furious and wrote a tart letter to Lushington who refused ostentatiously to enter into a correspondence on a judicial matter. This made things worse. Maitland, exercising the powers of suspension vested in him, on April 5th 1808 dispensed with the Chief Justice's attendance at meetings of his Council. Alexander Johnston, who was now a Puisne Justice, was given a seat instead.

This slap in the face could not be taken by Lushington in silence. He appealed to the Lord Chancellor and to the Secretary of State. But he received cold comfort from London. He resigned his post and was consoled with an appointment in England.

Maitland now reigned supreme and swelled with importance. Lord Castlereagh hinted to him that he had been somewhat harsh and imperious to Lushington. Sir Charles Napier—the same Napier who announced his victory in Sind with the single word *peccavi* (I have sinned)—was not far from the truth when he described Maitland as "a rough old despot". But, though quarrelsome, the Governor always took care in choosing his ground.

Maitland prepared his plan for judicial reforms by getting Alexander Johnston to collect information on the laws of the Island. Johnston was then sent to England to prepare a new Charter of Justice. He returned to Ceylon on August 9th, 1810 with not only a new Charter but the job of Chief Justice, on an enhanced salary of £6,000 per annum, safely in his pocket. Under the new Charter the Chief Justice was given sole responsibility for the judicial department. Further, he was to be President of the Council, the Governor himself being considered as representative

of the Crown. The Great Seal, which had to be affixed to all public acts, was to be in the custody of the Chief Justice in his capacity as President of the Council.

The new arrangements lasted for only four months. The Charter of 1810 had gone far beyond the intentions of Maitland who, having now returned to England, made representations to Lord Liverpool against such "altogether unnecessary and inadvisable" change in the administration. The amending Charter of October 30th, 1811 revoked the special powers given to the Chief Justice. It was brought to Ceylon by Sir Robert Brownrigg, the new Governor, and promulgated on March 16th, 1812. The Council was remodelled and the Chief Justice delivered the Seal to the Governor.

'King Tom', as Maitland was nicknamed, did not regard even the Colonial Office as sacred: when he felt it was wrong he never hesitated to announce that he proposed to disobey orders. "The honour of His Majesty's service" was a phrase which appeared constantly in his despatches.

Sir James Mackintosh, the Scottish lawyer and historian, who visited Ceylon, said of Maitland: "It is impossible for me to do justice to General Maitland's excellent administration which I came convinced never had an equal in India. By the cheerful decision of his character and by his perfect knowledge of his men, he has become universally popular amidst severe retrenchments. In an island where there was in one year a deficit of £700,000, he has reduced expenses to the level of the revenue, and with his small army of four thousand he has twice in the same year given effective aid to the great Government of Madras which has an army of seventy thousand.

Not only did Maitland send help to the army in Madras, but he proposed a scheme for the reorganization of the East India Company's army, after the mutiny of the Madras officers in 1807, which Arthur Wellesley (later Duke of Wellington) inserted in his despatches.

In 1810 Maitland's health broke down, and he was obliged to return home. He was appointed Governor of Malta in 1813, and in 1815 became Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands and Commander-in-chief of the Mediterranean with the exception of Gibraltar. He secured a constitutional charter for the Ionian

Greeks and restored the Islands to a high state of commercial prosperity without imposing extra taxes on the people.

He died in Malta on January 17th, 1824, of apoplexy and was buried with great pomp in the bastion containing the tomb of Sir Ralph Abercromby, and an oration was pronounced over the grave by Count Spiridion Bulgaris, the representative of one of the first Carfiote families.



## III

## SIR ROBERT BROWNRIGG

(1812-1820)

*Conqueror of Kandy*

SIR ROBERT BROWNRIGG was the Governor under whose personal command the Kandyan kingdom, which had lasted for over two thousand years, was reduced by British forces and its territory annexed to the coastal area of Ceylon which was already ruled from London. He succeeded where North had failed, benefiting by the patient work of reorganization and consolidation carried out by his predecessor, Sir Thomas Maitland. In England Brownrigg was hailed as "the conqueror of the kingdom of Kandy", and the King (George III) allowed him to bear the crown, sceptre and banner of the King of Kandy in his arms.

He was a stubborn, if unimaginative, soldier, and when he had to deal with a civil uprising in the newly-conquered territory, he was guilty of errors which caused unnecessary bloodshed. His Chief Justice, Sir Harding Giffard, wrote sarcastically during the troubles of 1818: "Our Agamemnon is busy in Kandy collecting his new forces about him with which he proposes to perform many things. The old gentleman, I hear, is quite bewildered—he will see no one, but being lifted in the morning from his bed to his chair, he continues fixed for the rest of the day writing himself to death about every trifle and nonsense that come to his brain." He was fifty-three when he was appointed Governor of Ceylon and sixty-one when he retired.

Robert Brownrigg was born in 1759, the second son of Henry Brownrigg of Rockingham, in County Wicklow, Ireland. He was gazetted an ensign in the 14th Regiment in 1775 and joined it in America. In 1780-81 he served as a marine on board the fleet and from 1782 to 1784 was stationed in Jamaica. His family was not rich and he had only himself to depend on in his profession.

At the age of twenty-five he was promoted Captain in the 100th Regiment and nine years later he was promoted Lieutenant-Colonel of the 88th Regiment, joining the army in the Netherlands as Deputy Quartermaster-General. He served through the campaign of 1794 and in the disastrous retreat to Bremen.

Brownrigg was a protege of the Duke of York and became his Military Secretary when the Duke was appointed Commander-in-chief in February 1795. He accompanied him in the expedition to the Helder in 1799 and in the same year was appointed Colonel Commandant of the 60th Regiment. He was promoted Major-General in 1802, and in 1803 exchanged the appointment of Military Secretary at the Horse Guards for that of Quartermaster-General. His conduct of the latter office received the approbation of the Duke of Wellington and in 1808 Brownrigg was promoted Lieutenant-General and served as Quartermaster-General of the Walcheren expedition in 1809.

In October 1811, Brownrigg was appointed Governor of Ceylon. He had not had any experience of civil administration and no previous contact with an oriental people. His appointment as Governor in a colony where recently His Majesty's forces had been engaged in warfare against the levies of the local ruler had clear implications. When he arrived in Ceylon in 1812, the stage was indeed set for another embroilment with the Kandyan kingdom. It remained for a fighting General like Brownrigg to bring the whole island under British influence if not British control. It does not seem to have been the intention of the British to annex the Kandyan kingdom though their policy inevitably led to it.

During the peaceful tenure of Maitland, the King of Kandy had strengthened his hold on his subjects. The once powerful Prime Minister, Pilame Talavve, who had led Governor North such a merry dance, had fallen from grace. Suspected of designs on the throne, charges of maladministration were brought against him and he was deprived of office and dignity. In his frustration Pilame Talavve conspired to assassinate the king. The plot failed and he and his accomplices were summarily executed. He was succeeded by Ehelepola, his nephew.

The British Government in Colombo took pains to keep itself informed of what went on in the Kandyan kingdom. One of its



brightest officers, John D'Oyly, who had mastered the Sinhalese language to become a scholar, was in correspondence with certain Kandyan chiefs, receiving their letters which were inscribed on dried palm leaves. He was one of six who were appointed by Dundas in 1802 to the Ceylon Civil Service, with salaries of £1,000 and upwards. D'Oyly had been educated at Westminster school and Corpus Christi, Cambridge, where he took his degree as Senior Optime in 1796, and was second for the Chancellor's medal.

So rapid was D'Oyly's progress in acquiring a knowledge of the Sinhalese language that three years after his arrival in Ceylon he was appointed Chief Translator to the Government. In this capacity he was entrusted with all the negotiations with the court of Kandy. A valuable record of his work is to be found in his Diary, which was discovered in the Kandy kachcheri and published in 1917 with an introduction by Mr. H. W. Codrington, the author of the well known history of Ceylon.

It was soon apparent that Pilame Talavve's nephew and successor too had fallen out of favour with the king. The king's distrust of Ehelepola derived from a suspicion that he was party to Pilame Talavve's conspiracy. When the Minister was discourteously treated by the king, and charges brought against him, Ehelepola sent an emissary to D'Oyly proposing that the British should occupy Kandy. He said in a letter: "If you have a desire for our country, it is good that anything which is done be done without delay." Although D'Oyly declined to commit the British, "he intentionally couched his reply in terms that might not altogether discourage". After an abortive attempt at rebellion, Ehelepola fled to British territory. Fear and suspicion led the king to take extreme steps and brought out the savage in him. Ehelepola's wife and children, his brother and family, were put to death in the most revolting circumstances.

Stricken by grief and despair, the errant and wayward Minister was received by Sir Robert and Lady Brownrigg at their country house at Mount Lavinia. The king gradually forfeited all popular support in his kingdom, and blinded by wrath he groped from one blunder to another. Ten villagers from Mahara, in British territory not far from Colombo, who were trading in Kandy, were falsely accused of being British spies. They were mutilated, the nose,

right ear and right arm of each being cut off. The victims were sent back to Colombo with the severed members tied round their necks, seven dying on the road.

Brownrigg regarded this "wanton, arbitrary and barbarous piece of cruelty" inflicted on British subjects as sufficient justification for war. By the end of 1814 all preparations were completed for an invasion. On January 10th, 1815, he incurred the sole responsibility for commencing hostilities in opposition to the advice of his Council. The invasion began under the personal command of the Governor. Apart from a few skirmishes there was no fighting. Indeed, the campaign was in the nature of a triumphal procession, chief after chief joining the British as they advanced.

Kandy was occupied on February 14th, 1815, and the king himself was taken prisoner on February 18th, at Gallehewatte, in Dumbara. The total strength of the British army was 3,744, of whom none was killed in action. The Act of Settlement, read at the Convention of March 2nd, expressed the principles on which the future government under the British Crown was to be based. It was prepared by D'Oyly and had a preamble which sought to justify the seizure of the Kandyan kingdom. "Led by the invitation of the chiefs, and welcomed by the acclamations of the people", it said, "the forces of His Britannic Majesty have entered the Kandyan territory and penetrated to the capital. Divine Providence has blessed their efforts with uniform and complete success. The ruler of the interior provinces has fallen into their hands, and the government remains at the disposal of His Majesty's representative."

Thus ended Sinhalese independence after 2,357 years. General Brownrigg was made a G.C.B. in January 1815 and given a Baronetcy in the following year. D'Oyly was appointed Resident of Kandy with two assistants. To this board was entrusted the government of the Kandyan provinces. They were administered as of old through the *dissavas* and *ratemahatmayas*. The king, Sri Vikrama Rajasinha, was meanwhile removed to Colombo and thence to Vellore in South India with his mother, four wives, mother-in-law, and his retinue. The ex-king died in 1832 and his only son, born to him in exile, died in 1843. Sri Vikrama is supposed to have said to the British: "Beware of Ehelepola and Molligoda. They deceived me and they will deceive you."

On August 1st, 1815 there were great doings in Colombo. A ball was given by the officers and staff to the Governor and his wife to celebrate the success of the operations against Kandy. The decorations were elaborate and appropriate to the occasion. Landscapes in colour of Kandy and its environs from sketches made on the spot by Captain Stace were the main theme. There was a picture of the lake constructed by the last king and of the pavilion in its centre where his refractory wives had been kept in retreat. The ball was opened by Colonel Kerr with Lady Brownrigg.

The annexation of Kandy was followed by three years of peace. But an undercurrent of uneasiness ran through the Governor's despatches to London. He knew that, despite a genuine effort by D'Oyly to conciliate the chiefs and the Buddhist priesthood, British rule was neither popular nor understood. There was a revolt in 1818 which assumed somewhat serious proportions. News of trouble in Uva, the Kandyan province in the south-east of the island, reached Brownrigg one day after he had with Lady Brownrigg set out for Kandy from Trincomalee, whither he had gone on tour. Five days later he reached Kandy and took charge of the direction of operations. Travelling in Ceylon in those days was not without its perils.

"Brownrigg's procession", says a writer, "was led by tusked elephants with swinging bells and an escort of mounted dragoons; he and his wife were borne on tom-johns—comfortable arm chairs with hoods, each with four bearers; these were much cooler than the heavy palanquins, which were impossible on the track, with the further advantage that the passenger could observe the surrounding country by drawing back the front and side curtains."

Brownrigg was now seriously worried by the "rebellion". He learned that there was a Pretender about, a Tamil stranger by the name of Duraiswamy, a brother-in-law of king Rajadhi Rajasinha. On October 1817, Sylvester Douglas Wilson, Assistant Resident at Badulla, had received information about him. The Muslim headman whom Wilson had despatched to investigate what went on, had been captured by a band of men armed with bows and arrows. Wilson himself was shot down as he was returning to Badulla from a tour of inspection. Meanwhile Brownrigg had been misled by

Ehelepola about the activities of his fellow chiefs. Keppitipola, his brother-in-law, had already thrown in his lot with the rebels.

The Governor was now convinced that the chiefs were "without exception treacherous". He also knew that they were jealous of each other and would betray one another when it suited their ends. "But these faithless politicians", he wrote, "are influenced by discordant motives, and however they may agree in their ambitions and desire for power and honours, they widely differ in their view of the means to acquire, and the manner to divide, the prize. They are broken into parties which will never unite to resist a government of any energy or strength."

Every chief of importance, with the exception of Molligoda, had either joined the rebellion or was in custody. At the start Brownrigg was not able to move his forces due to bad weather and the guerilla tactics of the rebels. "The rebels are not get-at-able," he wrote, "so we are reduced to burning and laying waste the property of the headmen and leaders." Ehelepola was suddenly arrested at the Audience Hall on March 2nd, 1818, and sent to Colombo. The rebels had claimed that he was their secret supporter. He had refused to accept office under the British and his aloofness had caused suspicion. He was kept in easy confinement first in Colombo and later in the island of Mauritius where he died of dysentery in 1829.

With the arrival of reinforcements from India, the back of the rebellion was broken. The Kandyans were ill provisioned and armed with only primitive weapons. Davy estimates their losses at not less than ten thousand.

The rapid collapse of the rebellion was as much the outcome of disunity among the leaders as of military operations. It emerged that the Pretender was but a puppet of Keppitipola and no relation of the deposed king. He was in fact an ex-Buddhist priest named Vilbava. Keppitipola along with Madugalle was tried by court martial and beheaded. A man of courage and fine presence he went to his death bravely.

The reinforcements from India began to return in December. But it was not until 1820 that the entire auxiliary force left the shores of Ceylon. They had cost the Ceylon Treasury £232,675. D'Oyly's influence was of great value during and after the disturbances. The

swing back of the villagers was hastened by the Proclamation of August 1st, drawn up by him which promised a pension to all who submitted before September 21st. D'Oyly was rewarded for his services with a Baronetcy. He died in Kandy in 1824 of a fever. He had lived an austere life—all work and no play. Sir James Mackintosh after a visit to Kandy wrote that "D'Oyly had almost become a native in his habits of life. He lives on a plantain, invites nobody to his house, and does not dine abroad, and seems an amiable though uncouth recluse. When I saw him come into dinner at Mr. Wood's I was struck with the change of a Cambridge boy into a Cingalese hermit."

Lady Brownrigg, who often accompanied her husband on his official journeys, was a woman of courage and good sense. There are many stories told of her kindness and consideration to others. Lieutenant Skinner, who joined the Ceylon Rifles at the age of fourteen, and later became Ceylon's greatest road-maker, was invited to dinner at Queen's House soon after his arrival in the Island. In his autobiography he writes: "My sword, an ordinary regulation one, was a serious inconvenience, being out of all proportion, in point of size and weight to the wearer. I had had a heavy day's drill and felt knocked up. Lady Brownrigg had most kindly reserved a seat for me next to her at dinner but, directly it was over, my head dropped, and I fell asleep at the table! When the ladies retired, she most kindly took me to her room, disencumbered me of my military paraphernalia, and laid me on her bed, where I slept until my commanding officer was ready to take me home again. This is a sad story to the prejudice of my fitness for the service, but an instance of her motherly kindheartedness which I can never forget. I never went to sleep at the Governor's table again although frequently invited to it."

At her own expense Lady Brownrigg constructed a rest house for weary travellers who climbed Adam's Peak, the sacred mountain of the Island. Dr. Hoffmeister, who accompanied the Prince Walde-mar of Prussia during a visit to Ceylon, writes: "I regard her in her pedestrian activity with far higher esteem than Countess X who was dragged up the Pyramids by her arms: the ascent here is in many parts no less steep and far more slippery."

Lady Brownrigg's brother, the Rev. George Bisset, was the Governor's private secretary. An ex-Buddhist priest who was employed by the British as "a zealous agent" against the Kandians, was converted to Christianity by him and given the name of George Nadoris. In his letters to Bisset, George Nadoris "frequently expressed his anxiety that their contents should be communicated to Lady Brownrigg, who treated his sycophancy with amused condescension."

Lady Brownrigg entertained lavishly. It is recorded that she gave a 'Rout' at Government House on January 18th, 1813. She took a keen interest in the Government Botanical Gardens at Slave Island, Colombo, and attended an al fresco ball and supper given by "the bachelors of the 4th Ceylon Regiment".

On February 1st, 1820, Sir Robert Brownrigg left Ceylon after an eventful period of office. The journey back is described by James Steuart, the captain of the ship who later founded the well known Colombo business of George Steuart & Co. In his interesting account of how Governors and elephants travelled in those days, he writes:

"We sailed from Madras on the 24th and anchored in the harbour of Trincomalee on the 27th where we embarked the headquarters of H. M. 45th Regiment, commanded by Colonel Stackpoole, for conveyance to Colombo, and landed them at the port on the 10th December.

"From this time to the end of January 1820, we were employed receiving cargo for Colombo. In this somewhat protracted interval, I was present at all the public functions given to Sir Robert and Lady Brownrigg previous to their departure for England. For this purpose, spacious temporary bungalows were erected on the Parade Ground in the Fort, and splendidly decorated with appropriate emblems also beautifully adorned with palm leaves and flowers in the simple yet elegant style peculiar to the Sinhalese. It was at this time I became acquainted with Sir Edward Barnes who, as Lieutenant-Governor, succeeded Sir Robert Brownrigg in the Government of Ceylon, and the command of the army.

"On Tuesday the 1st of February, 1820, we sailed from Colombo having on board General Sir Robert Brownrigg, Lady Brownrigg, Colonel Hardy, Captain King, Dr. Davy and Captain Page in com-

mand of thirty invalid soldiers from the Regiment serving in Ceylon. "On the 21st when we reached 13° South latitude, the sea became so rough as to indicate the existence of stormy weather... that the ship could bear very little sail, and notwithstanding the top gallant masts were struck and everything that could be removed brought on deck, she laboured heavily and leaked considerably. This tempestuous weather continued for nearly two whole days, during which the larger of the two young elephants we had on board kept on its feet. From its collar a chain was fastened to a ring in the gangway stanchion sufficiently long to allow the animal to stand athwart ship with its haunches against the bulwark, so that as the ship-rolled one way its haunches were supported by the bulwark, and when she rolled the other way the animal placed its feet against the deck battens, and assisted by its collar being attached by its chain to the ring in the gangway stanchion, it kept its feet through the gale, and when fine weather returned its hide was quite white with the salt that dried on it.

"This half grown animal was so tame that young children were pleased to play with it. On one occasion when we were at dinner, a little fellow, the son of an officer, was heard to call out lustily for help. I reached the deck in time to see the old corporal who had charge of the elephant running to take the child from between its legs. The animal had in play caught up the child with its trunk and laid him on the deck. One stamp with its foot and the boy might have been killed, but he was only frightened and made more cautious for the future in playing with the animal in the absence of its keeper.

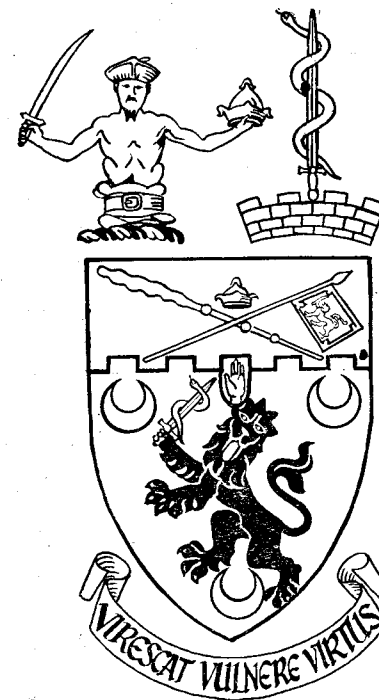
"...On the 5th May as we were anchoring at St. Helena, the Governor, Sir Hudson Lowe, accompanied by Sir Thomas Read, came on board to pay his respects to Sir Robert Brownrigg. From them we heard of the decease of George III, and of the Duke of Kent, the assassination of the Duc de Berri, and the capture of Thistlewood. While we were refilling our empty water casks and receiving fresh vegetables, three of the passengers rode out to Longwood, the residence of the great Napoleon Buonaparte, who, they were told, refused to receive visitors, but amused himself in his flower garden, and gave his guards no trouble...

"Soon after our arrival in London the ship was advertised to proceed to the Mauritius and Ceylon, and the Hon. Sir Edward

Paget, on the recommendation of Sir Robert Brownrigg, applied for the *Eclipse* to convey himself, his family and suite to Colombo to assume the Government of Ceylon."

It is interesting to recall that in the years 1825-30 Sir Hudson Lowe commanded the forces in Ceylon.

Sir Robert Brownrigg was Governor of Landguard Fort from 1823 till his death at Helston, near Monmouth, on May 27th, 1833.



Sir Robert Brownrigg, Baronet, was permitted by King George III, after the conquest of Kandy, to include in his coat of arms representations of the crown, sceptre and banner of the King of Kandy.



## IV

## SIR EDWARD PAGET

(1822)

*Brief Interlude*

LIEUTENANT-General Sir Edward Paget was Governor of Ceylon from February 2nd, 1822 to November 6th of the same year—the shortest period of office of any British Governor of the Island. He came to Ceylon to relieve Sir Edward Barnes, who was to take up the army command in India, but took the latter's place in India because Barnes had fallen out with the civil authorities and returned to England.

Sir Edward Barnes, who is the subject of a later chapter of this book, took over from Sir Robert Brownrigg and as Lieutenant-Governor started a vigorous policy of road development and agricultural enterprise. He acted as Governor for nearly two years until the arrival of Sir Edward Paget. Both Paget and Barnes had fought under the Duke of Wellington.

Starting with Maitland, Ceylon was governed by Generals for a time. The experiment was probably deemed successful until stirrings of the demand for a more representative form of government began to make themselves felt. Paget himself had no experience of colonial administration. He had a good record as a fighting soldier and a capable commander and came from one of the leading families in England. According to James Stuart, "to know him was to admire".

Edward Paget was born on November 3rd, 1775, the fourth son of Henry Paget, the Earl of Uxbridge. He entered the army on March 23rd, 1792 as a cornet in the 54th Foot and served in Flanders and Holland, and was present at the action off Cape St. Vincent on February 14th, 1797. On January 1st, 1798 he was promoted Colonel and A.D.C. to the king. In the same year he was appointed Captain of Minorca. He went through the Egyptian campaign

under Sir John Moore and was present at the investing of Cairo and Alexandria. He received quick promotion and was Major General at the age of thirty. He commanded in Sicily in 1806 and was with Sir John Moore in Spain. He commanded the reserve at Corunna and on January 16th, 1809, was responsible for the victorious issue of the battle.

Paget was appointed to the Staff of the Peninsular Army under Wellesley, with the local rank of Lieutenant-General and conducted the advance from Coimbra to Oporto. In the action of May 12th before Oporto he lost his right arm. He was second in command to Wellesley within a few months, but while reconnoitring alone, he fell into an ambush and was taken prisoner.

After the wars Paget became Captain of Cowes Castle and was in command of His Majesty's yacht when he was appointed Governor of Ceylon on November 4th, 1820. He was however not able to take up the post until February 1822. Although Paget had arranged to leave for Colombo on the *Eclipse*, as mentioned in the last chapter, His Majesty the King ordered that he should proceed to his new charge on a frigate.

During the ten months he was Governor of Ceylon little of importance seems to have happened in the Island. His term of office in Ceylon was a short lull between the regimes of two other energetic Generals, Brownrigg and Barnes. Paget reorganized the Cinnamon Department and on instructions from the Secretary of State reduced by half the import duties on several commodities from England. He raised the duty on imported grain "for the encouragement of agriculture". He also instituted a pension fund for officers in the lower grades of the public service.

Sir Edward Paget's Colonial Secretary was the Hon. John Rodney, the third son of Admiral Lord Rodney who defeated Count de Grasse. He was appointed President of the Board of Revenue at Colombo on August 1st, 1804. He succeeded Robert Arbuthnot as Chief Secretary in 1806 and held this post until his retirement in 1832. Rodney was three times married: first to Lady Catherine Nugent, only daughter of the Earl of Meath. On her death he married Lady Louisa Stratford, daughter of the Earl of Alborough. She died on December 2nd, 1814 leaving eight children. The Government Gazette described the funeral as follows: "The funeral



which took place on Saturday, was attended by an immense concourse of persons of every description in the neighbourhood of Colombo. His Excellency the Governor, the Chief Justice, the Members of Council, all His Majesty's Civil Servants, and all the officers of the garrison formed the procession; and as a solemn though unusual mark of respect for departed worth, Mrs. Brownrigg, Lady Johnston, and all the ladies of the Settlement were present on this melancholy occasion. Never was witnessed a scene of sincerer grief than the Church of Colombo exhibited while the funeral service proceeded; tears poured from every eye; frequent and audible were the expressions of that sorrow which could not be restrained, and when the mortal remains of this beloved woman were committed to the earth, it seemed as if everyone felt that their dearest sister was deposited in the tomb."

Six months later the Chief Secretary contracted his third marriage, the lady of his choice this time being barely sixteen years of age. By his three marriages John Rodney had eighteen children. His sons-in-law included Lord Blantyre and General Sir Patrick Stuart K.C.M.G. Rodney died at Boulogne on May 18th, 1847, at the age of 82.

Paget and Barnes were of about the same age and had similar military experience in the wars of the time. When Barnes did not hit it off with the civil authorities in India the exchange of jobs between the two did not present any difficulties to the Government. Barnes had already made his mark as acting Governor of Ceylon.

During his command in India Sir Edward Paget was responsible for the conduct of the Burmese campaigns (1824-25). He was severely criticized over the Barrackpore Mutiny but the Duke of Wellington intervened in his favour. Paget was described as "handsome, courteous in manner, firm in demeanour and personally very brave." He married first the Hon. Frances Bagot, daughter of the first Lord Bagot, and after her death, Lady Harriet Legge, 4th daughter of the Earl of Dartmouth. He died on May 13th, 1849 and was buried in the cemetery of Chelsea House of which he was a Governor.

## V

## SIR EDWARD BARNES

(1824—1831)

*The Great Roadmaker*

SIR EDWARD BARNES was Governor of Ceylon for a longer period of time, in two spells, than any other to hold the office. He was one of the adjutants of the Duke of Wellington at the battle of Waterloo. Although he was a soldier by training, within a year of his arrival as Officer Commanding the Troops he had acquired a sound grasp of the administrative and economic problems of Ceylon. When he became Governor he gave full rein to his energies and initiative. He was the pioneer of the Island's planting industry and a great road builder. There was no aspect of the administration in which his energizing influence was not felt. Indeed, his contribution to the prosperity of Ceylon is not surpassed by that of any other Governor of the Colony.

Barnes was born in 1776 and began his career as an ensign in the 47th Regiment on November 8th, 1792. The British army in those days engaged in major and minor wars in many parts of the world, and Barnes received steady promotion. He was a Major-General at the age of 37 and was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Antigua in the same year. He served on the Staff in the Peninsular War and commanded a brigade at the battles of Vittoria, Pyrenees, Nivelle, Nive and Orthes. He served in the Netherlands and in France in 1818 and was severely wounded at Waterloo.

Major Skinner, who was Barnes's handy-man in many important construction tasks in Ceylon, writes: "He was a commander for whom any soldier would have considered it the highest privilege to have served even unto death. It was impossible to ride in his cortege without being inspired with the most devoted enthusiasm. How well any man who ever served under that perfect soldier can realize the description the late Sir Robert Arbuthnot gave of a desperate

attack which he once saw Sir Edward make on a French position. The scene of the attack was an orchard, walled all round, to which he took his brigade up in open columns of companies; when at the proper distance he wheeled them into line, and then, having fired his men with his own enthusiasm, he rode his charger at the wall, and, cocked hat in hand, cleared it in the most splendid style. Sir Robert Arbuthnot said it was the finest sight and most effective attack he had ever witnessed. Sir Edward was, at the time, an exceedingly fine, handsome man."

Barnes arrived in Ceylon on July 19th, 1819 on the *Dauntless* and assumed duties as Commander-in-chief of the Forces. On the departure of Sir Robert Brownrigg on February 1st, 1820, he took over the government of the Colony as Lieutenant-Governor. He had already made a tour of the Island and come to the conclusion that what Ceylon needed was, "first roads; second roads; and third roads".

The Kandyan kings had deliberately made their realm inaccessible to foreigners by letting the frontiers remain in a state of wild jungle. Every invading army had been beaten by the jungle and malaria. Men usually travelled on foot or on the backs of elephants. In 1820 Barnes ceased all works on the forts and diverted the available labour and revenue to road building. He considered forts less useful than roads since without them "we can never be said to have secure possession of the country nor can it commercially improve".

Brownrigg left to his successor an empty exchequer but Barnes was not deterred by this from carrying out his plans. Having acted as Governor for two years, he handed over to the permanent incumbent, Sir Edward Paget, on the latter's belated arrival. Barnes was appointed Commander-in-chief of India and left Ceylon on February 2nd, 1822. Within ten months he was obliged to give up his post owing to disagreements with his colleagues in the Government of India and returned to England. His record in Ceylon had been so good that the British Government transferred Sir Edward Paget to Calcutta as Commander-in-chief and sent Barnes to replace him in Colombo.

Barnes arrived for his second innings as Governor on the *Hercules* on January 18th, 1824, and promptly resumed his programme of

public work among which the foremost was again the building of roads. The military road to Kandy which he had started in 1820 was opened to traffic even before it was gravelled or metalled. The Chief Justice, Sir Harding Giffard, wrote:

Marshes and quagmires, puddles, pools and swamps,  
Dark matted jungles and long plushy plains,  
Exhaling foetid airs and mortal damps,  
By Kandyan perfidy miscalled a road,  
Through which the luckless traveller must wade,  
Uncheered by sight of man or man's abode.

Barnes connected Colombo with every town in the Island and linked Kandy with every coastal town, without any call on the revenue. The greater part of his roads was built by exhausting a fortnight's compulsory labour from peasants who held their land by service tenure. He also utilized the Ceylon Pioneer Lascars, a corps which had been formed early in the Nineteenth Century for the construction of public works. This body was composed of Indians, many of them trained artisans, and was commanded by English officers. The military engineers and troops employed in the work were already maintained on the military establishment of the Island. The bridges were built by these engineers. The Kelani river was spanned by a bridge of boats, the Maha Oya by an elegant bridge at Mawanella and the Mahaweliganga by the satin wood bridge at Peradeniya. This last had a single arch 205 feet long without a bolt or nail. By the time the two last-named bridges had been completed, Barnes had left Ceylon.

Having built the roads, Barnes decided to develop the country to which they give access. Under the Dutch coffee was a monopoly of the Company but no organized effort was made to develop its cultivation. In 1810 Governor Maitland persuaded the Secretary of State to abolish Dundas's Regulation of 1801 which forbade Europeans to acquire land except within the district of Colombo. He said that this prohibition was "striking at the only chance we have of making this either a very rich or a very valuable colony".

The establishment of coffee plantations in the hill country was largely due to the efforts of Sir Edward Barnes. In 1823 his friend George Bird, a former cavalry officer, started the first European

coffee plantation in Ceylon. According to a Government advertisement of 1812, Europeans were allowed to receive grants of land not exceeding 4,000 acres free from tax for five years, though by a regulation of May 1800 not more than 100 acres could be granted to a member of the indigenous population.

Sir Edward Barnes himself set an example in 1825 by opening up Gannoruwa estate, now part of the Botanical Gardens at Peradeniya. The Colonial Office was not, however, too pleased with the activities of the Governor as a planter on his own account.

Skinner, who was deeply involved in Barnes's development schemes, writes: "Sir Edward Barnes often came to inspect the work and to encourage his men. He kept the best table I have ever seen, and always insisted on living better when travelling than when at home in Colombo; in either case he invariably dined off an entire service of plate. We were always his guests on these occasions, and naturally looked forward to the luxury of a good dinner served in a first rate manner."

Another writer says of Barnes that "he lived more luxuriously than a Park Lane millionaire. He furnished himself with residences all over the Island. He built, for the use of the Governor, Barnes Hall in Nuwara Eliya, the Pavilion at Kandy, what is now the Mount Lavinia Hotel and the Ambepussa and Ragama rest houses." The Governor was indeed a tycoon before his time, a far-seeing planner and an able administrator. There was no department of government in which he did not take a close interest and every industry in the Island was stimulated by his efforts.

There was a cholera epidemic in 1820 when nearly one-sixth of the population in the 500 square miles of the Mannar district died. Barnes demanded a more efficient medical establishment from the Secretary of State but the finances of the Colony did not permit of one. Nor did he have much success with his educational reforms. He was opposed to missionary schools which sought to proselytize. "One of the greatest defects of our schools system in my opinion", he observed, "is that it has got into the hands of the clergy. It has been considered more as an instrument for the conversion of the people to Christianity than of general improvement in civilisation."

In 1822 he introduced a regulation which said that no Civil Servants would be promoted to a higher rank than that of Assistant

until they had attained a tolerable proficiency in Sinhalese or Tamil. As a financial administrator Barnes was quite successful. He put an end to the deficit Budgets of Brownrigg and every year he was able to produce a surplus without onerous taxation. This he did by reducing expenditure on the military establishment and getting the British Government to bear a larger share.

His tax innovations were designed to promote local industry and increase exports. He paid special attention to coffee but did not neglect copra, coconut oil, fibre, tobacco and pepper. He initiated a licence system for the sale of arrack. When he left Ceylon there was a surplus of £73,615 in the Government till.

Major Skinner gives several examples of his generosity. In his "Memorandum to the Secretary of State," referred to in his evidence before a Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Ceylon riots of 1848, Skinner writes: "The native population, sensible of the benefits he had conferred on their country, hailed with joy Sir Edward Barnes's return to resume the government; he continued to perfect the several works which in 1820 (when Lieutenant-Governor) he had commenced... His personal intercourse with the official headmen and chiefs, and their families, was frequent; his conduct towards them was kind and encouraging, evincing an interest even in their private and domestic affairs, all tending to uphold their respectability and influence, while his knowledge of every district, and his frequent progress in them, induced every member of his government, whether in the metropolitan or rural districts, to exercise the same line of conduct towards the natives, and compelled them to acquire the most intimate knowledge of the country, to prevent their appearing less informed than he himself; he had no fears that the authority and influence of the native chiefs would be exercised prejudicially, and by protecting and upholding it, strengthened his own government and preserved order in all classes of society. His government was characterized by its decision and great energy; during the early part of it, he was compelled to exact much gratuitous service from the people, still he won the affection of all classes to his person, and their attachment to his government; his name is honoured throughout the land, as well by peasant as by chief.

"A handsome statue has been erected at Colombo to his memory, although owing to delays in England it was not sent out until seventeen years after he had ceased to exercise authority in the country. On its erection natives from all districts flocked to it; during the night offerings were so frequently left at its base that we were obliged to enclose it with a railing to prevent it being converted to an idol. I mention this fact as evidence that there is not that deficiency of gratitude and want of feeling, on the part of the natives, of which they are sometimes accused."

In his forty-eighth year Sir Edward Barnes married, on July 23rd, 1823, Maria, eldest daughter of Walter Fawkes, of Fernley Hall, Yorkshire. Sir John D'Oyly in Kandy received the news from his brother Henry D'Oyly: "Sir E. Barnes I have seen frequently," wrote Henry D'Oyly. "He engaged the *Hercules* to take him to Ceylon; she, in going round to Plymouth, got on shore and was damaged. It became necessary to land all the cargo, and this caused a delay of six weeks. In the meantime Sir Edward met at dinner a Miss Fawkes, daughter to a Yorkshire country gentleman of large fortune, and it was settled in a few days that he was to marry her. About a week ago he left London for Yorkshire in order to be married, & was to cross over from thence with his wife to Plymouth and to embark immediately. The ship was about to sail about this time. I think Sir Edward is now likely to continue your Governor for a long time, and he is a most excellent person." Henry D'Oyly, like Barnes, was wounded at Waterloo.

Thomas D'Oyly, writing a few days later to Sir John, said: "Sir E. Barnes will carry a bride with him to Ceylon for he is very shortly to be married to one of the Miss Fawkes's, one of the daughters of Mr. F. of Yorkshire, well known for his strong Opposition principles."

The after-dinner proceedings during Sir Edward Barnes's regime shocked a visitor, a Mrs. Smith of Baltiboy, author of a book called "The Memoirs of a Highland Lady during her three weeks' stay at Colombo". She dined at the Governor's house every evening except two. She writes: "The Governor was an old General, very fond of his bottle, who had married a young wife, very young and very handsome, whom he idolized. It was evident that the aim and end, and the business of all the merry party at Government

House was pleasure, and of a queer kind, a sort of child's play—excepting the wine part, which indeed required all the strength of manly brains to bear up under the Governor, who had made his head during a long course of campaigns not comprehending how difficult some people found it to keep up to his mark.

"The doings of Government House were certainly extraordinary. One night there was a ball and making speeches, then more dancing, or rather romping, from which we were glad to get away. Next night it was a play in the pretty private theatre, 'The Honeymoon'. Supper, of course, in the same style as before. We then had a fancy ball, very well done, a few groups very good. Colonel Churchill was a perfect Henry IV, his wife such a pretty, impudent Rosalind, with a stupid Celia, but such a Touchstone! some clever young officer. The rooms were large, numerous and well-lighted; a grand supper and great noise towards the end. These were all grand affairs; the ladies and gentlemen romped about, playing *petit jeux* with strange forfeits, hunt the whistle etc. It was all a whirl of riotous folly, very unlike the propriety of a Government House."

The fancy dress ball was doubtless the Shakespearian Fete chronicled in the Government Gazette which was given at Queen's House in 1829 "in commemoration of the birth of His Excellency the Governor's daughter".

During their long stay in Ceylon, the Barnes's had many well-known visitors, including Bishop Heber of Calcutta and his wife who published her journals in two volumes. The Hebers arrived in Ceylon on August 25th, disembarking at Galle. The Fort fired a salute which their ship the *Discovery* returned. They were met on the pier "by the principal inhabitants of the place, the regiment stationed there, and a band of spearmen and lascarins". At Kalutara, after crossing the fourth river, they were met by "Sir Edward Barnes's carriage, drawn by four beautiful English horses, which took us with a fresh relay through the Fort, at Colombo where the usual salute was fired at St. Sebastian".

In the evening they dined at "King's House, that being the name given to the residence of the Governor of the Colony. We were most kindly received by Sir Edward and Lady Barnes, and met a small and agreeable party, but I was much tired, and glad to go



home early. The house is a bad one, in the centre of the fort, but everything is conducted on a handsome and liberal scale by the Governor."

Sir Edward was a fine horseman and usually rode a bay arab charger whose coat shone like satin. It had been presented to him by Lady Barnes and had cost £500 and was thought cheap at the price. For a staff officer to appear badly mounted was considered almost a military offence by the Governor.

A gallant soldier and able administrator he could not foresee the day when the people of Ceylon would govern themselves. But it was during his term of office that the first important step was taken in the direction of self-government. By Royal Commission of January 18th, 1823, Lieutenant-Colonel William Macbean Colebrooke and two others were appointed Commissioners to enquire into the state of the colonies of the Cape of Good Hope, Mauritius and Ceylon. Colebrooke, who had served earlier in Ceylon as a Major in the army, arrived in the Island on April 11th, 1829. He was to report mainly on finance and administration. In the following year he was joined by Charles Hay Cameron from the Scottish Bar. The Commission strongly condemned the administration as costly and "unfavourable to the improvement of the country" and recommended a series of reforms including the abolition of the land tenure by personal service, the establishment of a Legislative Council and an independent judiciary and the throwing open of the public service to all classes according to their qualifications.

Sir Edward Barnes on the whole strongly condemned the Colebrooke Report. He said that to admit natives to the Civil Service was "ludicrous in view of their lack of Western education". Indignant at the charge that his Government had retarded the development of Ceylon, Barnes wrote that if only he could obtain the revenue he "could prepare such an appalling list (of essential public works) as, from the amount of expense, would startle the most zealous advocate for improvement".

In a letter to the Commissioners, who had provided him with a draft of their intended report, he wrote: "A popular government or one wherein the people have a share appears to me quite out of the question... I am decidedly of the opinion that the people cannot or ought not to have under existing circumstances any

greater share in the Government than at present." Secretary of State Goderich did not agree, and reforms based on the Colebrooke Report were put into effect under Barnes's successor.

In 1831 Barnes was appointed Commander-in-chief in India for the second time. He did not, however, remain long there. He could not see eye to eye with Lord William Bentinck, the Viceroy, on the organization and discipline of the Indian Army and gave up his command after holding it for a little over two years.

Barnes still had large interests in Ceylon and paid a visit to the Island on his way back to England. He wrote to James Steuart, of the firm of George Steuart & Co., from Calcutta, on February 10th, 1834:

My dear Sir,

I shall bring down with me 50,000 rupees (siccas) and 35,000 more in bills amounting to £3,791 and will thank you to buy coffee for me to these amounts, and I think it will be the best remittance, but if you cannot get coffee for rupees I should be obliged to take cinnamon, but I apprehend coffee will be the best, which by your letter was selling at 9s. the parrah, but by a subsequent one from Anstruther it was falling, so that I am sanguine enough to expect that I may get it at three sicca rupees per parrah, but I do not limit you to that.

Let also the £3,000 bills be appropriated in the purchase of coffee or rather as much of it as is not required to pay other demands. If smaller bills are required when I get down they can be made out, but you can engage the coffee.

I shall have room for about 15 tons in the D. of Argyll, as Mr Williams, the coachman, has since resigned and will not go home in the accommodation provided for him.

We shall leave Calcutta in tow of a steamer on Wednesday morning, the 12th at daylight, but I am sorry to say that we had for some days past southerly winds which looks as the North-east Monsoon had ceased.

Believe me to remain,

Yours very truly,

EDWARD BARNES



Barnes Hall, which Sir Edward Barnes built at Nuwara Eliya, the hill station which he did so much to popularize, was rented to his successor as Governor, Sir Robert Wilmot Horton. The latter frequently complained about the high rent charged and the leaky roof. Barnes's agent in Ceylon, Barlow, wrote "...the terms (of the lease) which are so favourable that I cannot think, he will refuse them; however, if he does, the same terms have been proposed by Mr. Rough (who we hear is looking out for a house there) on the supposition that the Right Honourable will give up the lease; but Sir Edward desires me to say that he will not stand any of his dirty shabby work and had rather burn the house and let it go to rack and ruin than submit to it—such nonsense, as if tubs in the upper rooms prevent the water coming through, but he wishes to depreciate the house in order to get it for a mere song. He has played the same shabby game so far as we are concerned from the time he came to the island."

A letter from James Steuart to the Hon. George Turnour, both of whom were helping to look after Barnes's properties in Ceylon, dated September 14th, 1836 states:

"I am very sorry to hear such accounts of Sir Edward's affairs. The house I am not surprised at—but the bad prospects of a return in coffee is a serious affair.

"I have one or two things to mention to you respecting the concerns of Sir Edward Barnes. I have sent home the beautiful almirah in the *Iris*. Sir Edward left instructions for a pair of Globe Stands like those in the Colombo Library to be made. I have the ebony partly prepared, but the cabinet-maker says they will cost £50 to finish. Now this appears to be an expense which might be saved to him.

"He ordered Vencatty Samy to have a splendid silver pagoda set with precious stones made, and it was commenced before he left Ceylon for Calcutta. I have since advanced Vencatty Samy money to pay for gold and all sorts of things but no pagoda makes its appearance, and I am now told by Vencatty Samy that he has written to Sir Edward Barnes on the subject of the pagoda, and in the meantime has suspended its completion. I must get you to have some conversation with Vencatty Samy on this subject.

"Sir Edward directed me to buy a garden for the Ayah that went to England with them. The Ayah has returned and has got possession of her garden, and will not support her son. Mr. Schneider has spoken to me on the subject, and told me plainly that I ought to send the boy home to Sir Edward; he is so like him. I have seen the boy and he is a remarkably fine child. Mrs. Rose-malecocq, with whom the child resides, has written to Lady Barnes on the subject."

Sir Edward Barnes returned to England in October 1831. In July 1834, on the death of Rt. Hon. Michael Angelo Taylor, he contested the Sudbury seat in the House of Commons as a Conservative. The number of votes for the opposing candidates being equal, the mayor or returning officer claimed the privilege of electing Sir Edward. An election petition was in progress when the General Election of 1835 ensued and he failed to secure the seat. At the next election (1837) he was returned at the head of the poll. He died in Piccadilly on March 19th, 1838, at the age of 62.

## VI

## SIR ROBERT WILMOT HORTON

(1831-1837)

*First Legislative Council*

WHEN Sir Robert Wilmot Horton succeeded Sir Edward Barnes as Governor in 1831, the tradition of military Governors was broken. He came to Ceylon with a reputation as a man of cultivated tastes and experience of public life.

His first important duty was to put into effect the reforms proposed by the Colebrooke Commission one of which was the establishment of a Legislative Council. He was aware of conditions in the Island, for he had been Under Secretary for War and the Colonies in the Government of Lord Liverpool, and on July 5th, 1822, he had moved in the House of Commons the address humbly praying the King to appoint a Commission to enquire into the state of the Colonies of the Cape of Good Hope, Mauritius and Ceylon. He was specially chosen to carry out the reforms recommended by the Commission for the Island although at the beginning, through a misapprehension of the intentions of Lord Goderich, the Secretary of State, he was opposed to them.

Among those who had kept Horton informed of conditions in India and Ceylon was his friend Reginald Heber, Bishop of Calcutta. We have a series of epistles from the Bishop to the Under Secretary. In a letter dated Trichinopoly, April 1st, 1826, he writes: "You will have heard, perhaps from your brother, that I had the pleasure of meeting him in Ceylon. That country might be one of the happiest, as it is one of the loveliest spots in the universe, if some of the old Dutch laws were done away, among which, in my judgment, the chief are the monopoly of cinnamon, and the compulsory labour of the peasants on the high roads, and in other species of corvees. The Candian provinces, where neither of these exist, seemed to me the most prosperous parts of the country." The good Bishop's letters show that he allowed himself at times to be

carried away by his emotions. He was the author of the well known hymn which begins with the line *From Greenland's Icy Mountains* and goes on to say :

What though the spicy breezes  
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle,  
Though every prospect pleases,  
And only man is vile.

Governor Horton's brother, M. Wilmot, was in the Ceylon Civil Service when Sir Robert arrived to take charge of the affairs of the Colony. Among the posts held by the Governor's brother was that of Government Agent of the Southern Province. E. P. Wilmot, another relation of the Governor, was a District Judge. He married a Ceylonese lady of Dutch descent, Miss Arnoldina Dulcima Kriekenbeek. It is said that the Governor and Lady Horton regarded the union with much approval and stood sponsors to one of their children at baptism. Mrs. Wilmot died in 1905 at the age of 97.

Sir Robert Wilmot Horton was the only son of Sir Robert Wilmot, baronet, of Osmaston, Derbyshire, by his first wife, Juliana Elizabeth, second daughter of the Hon. James Byron. He was born on December 21st, 1784, and was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, where he took his B.A. in 1806. In July 1815 he unsuccessfully contested the borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme against Sir John Chetwode. He was returned to Parliament at the General Election of 1818 and continued in the House of Commons till the dissolution of 1830. His first reported speech was in defence of the Windsor establishment in February 1819. In 1821 Lord Liverpool gave him the post of Under Secretary for War and the Colonies.

On September 1st, 1806, he married Anne Beatrix, the eldest daughter of Eusebius Horton, of Catton, Derbyshire. He assumed the name of Horton by royal licence on May 8th, in compliance with the will of his father-in-law. It was of his wife that Byron wrote the well known lines:

She walks in beauty, like the night  
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;  
And all that's best of dark and light  
Meet in her aspect and her eyes.

Some letters written by Horton to Mrs. Leigh relating to the destruction of Byron's scandalous "Memoirs" and the proposed repayment to Tom Moore of £2,000 by her and Lady Byron, are preserved among the Additional MSS. in the British Museum. The "Memoirs", on which Byron's publisher John Murray had a lien, were destroyed by Horton and Doyle, acting as representatives of Mrs. Leigh to whom the poet had left them.

Horton was a Liberal in politics and took a great interest in social reform. Greville, the diarist, in recording his attendance at one of Horton's lectures, writes: "He deserves great credit for his exertions, the object of which is to explain to the labouring classes some of the truths of political economy, the folly of thinking that the breaking of machines will better their conditions, and of course of the efficacy of his own plan of emigration. He is full of zeal and animation, but so totally without method and arrangement that he is hardly intelligible. The conclusion, which was an attack on Cobbett, was well done, and even eloquent."

The commission of instructions issued to him on his appointment directed the setting up of an Executive Council of five and a Legislative Council of fifteen according to the recommendations of the Colebrooke Commission. The Executive Council was very much the same as the former Governor's Council. It had the right to debate and vote on all matters brought before it by the Governor but could meet only if summoned by him. The members had no power to originate measures, though they had the right to record dissenting minutes.

The Legislative Council was to have nine officials and six unofficials. The unofficial members were to be nominated by the Governor from Ceylonese and Europeans. Horton's fears that the Governor's powers would be reduced to make him a "puppet" or a "splendid sinecurist" were unfounded. He was not in principle opposed to the introduction of the Ceylonese element to the legislature and to the higher public service; but he claimed that there were none fit to hold such responsibility. He wrote in language echoed by some of his successors: "I know not a single high situation held by a member of the Civil Service, which is an object of ambition to any native, nor do I know any native calculated to execute the

duties of such a situation, or whose appointment would give confidence to his fellow countrymen."

Horton had objections even to Europeans in the Legislative Council. "With reference to merchants so-called", he wrote, "allow me to explain that they are not merchants in the due sense of that word. They have no local interest in the Colony, they have no property in it, they are mere agents for foreign houses, all their business is carried on on commission... it would be more prudent to wait to see whether the changes in the commercial system of Ceylon may not bring persons here whose interests will be more identified with those of the Colony."

Although the Royal Instructions to set up a Legislative Council were issued in 1833, some time elapsed before it was properly constituted. The first meeting of the new Council was held on October 1st, 1833 and only officials took part in the proceedings. When the Council met again in February 1834, Sir Robert Wilmot Horton devoted nearly the whole of his speech to a justification of his conduct in not having appointed any unofficial members by reference to the theory that no Ceylonese at the time was fit to be a member of the Council and that European planters and merchants were not interested.

"So little did the Ceylonese appreciate the honour of a seat in the Legislative Council", writes James Steuart, "that they could not be induced to accept it without payment."

"The leading English resident merchants of that day had previously given their opinion, that their presence in the Legislative Council was not necessary; that it would always be to their interest to furnish the Government with the best commercial information in their power, and that Government possessed, and always would possess, the best means of obtaining correct information relative to the state and the wants of the country from respectable natives, as well as from its own officers, both European and native. Some English gentlemen were of opinion that unofficial members, appointed by the Governor, would not be responsible to anyone for their legislative acts; while their assent to the Governor's measures would shield His Excellency and his official councillors from that complete responsibility to the Imperial Government, to which rulers of conquered Indians should always be subject."

"As there were no native gentlemen sufficiently acquainted with the English language, belonging to the agricultural and commercial classes, who were willing to accept the honorary office of Legislator, the Governor, availing himself of the opinion expressed by the leading English merchants—that their presence in Council was not necessary—refrained from acting, and from publishing, the instructions which directed him to introduce six unofficial members into the Legislative Council. At length the change which had been directed to take place in the form of the Government of Ceylon, was alluded to by the Secretary of State in the British Parliament; and on this fact becoming known in Ceylon, those leading English merchants who had deemed their presence in Council unnecessary, were the first to demand admittance as a right withheld from their class by the Governor. Being thus pressed, His Excellency resorted to the expedient of pensioning his two most useful interpreters on their full salaries, in order that they might become independent members of the Legislative Council in company with those selected from the English merchants."

After the unofficial members were nominated, another hitch occurred. The three British merchants appointed objected to being placed, firstly, below all the official members, and secondly below some of the Ceylonese members. Recriminations were freely exchanged. The Governor was unfortunate in his correspondence. He wrote two letters from Nuwara Eliya, one to his Colonial Secretary and the other to a leading merchant. The communication to the latter was a short polite note, but in the one intended for the Colonial Secretary, the Governor spoke freely of the arrogant pretensions of the merchants—"who the deuce they think they are"?—and so on. By a mistake, the letters were mis-addressed and the merchant received the letter intended for the Colonial Secretary.

Other reforms suggested by the Colebrooke Commission and carried out by Horton on instructions from the Secretary of State included the abolition of forced labour. An order-in-council was issued by the King on April 12th, 1832, declaring that "none of His Majesty's native or Indian subjects in the island of Ceylon shall be liable to render any service in respect of the tenure of land or in respect of his caste or otherwise, to which His Majesty's other

subjects of European birth and descent are not liable, any law or custom or regulation to the contrary notwithstanding."

In May 1832 the Governor repealed the law against Moors and Chettiars owning land in Colombo. The Government's cinnamon monopoly was abolished. The administration of justice was vested in the Supreme Court and in district courts, and trial by jury was extended to the whole island. In accordance with another recommendation of the Colebrooke Commission the Government in 1834 appointed a board of education. The Colombo Academy (now Royal College) was started in 1836 and the Catholics started an English school with Government aid.

The era of newspapers independent of the Government began with the arrival of Sir Robert Wilmot Horton. What may be described as the first newspaper in Ceylon was the Government 'Gazette', a page or two of which doled out weekly a few extracts from the Indian journals and some local items and occasionally verses by a local poet. The *Colombo Journal* was started in 1832 under Government auspices and with the encouragement of the Governor who, it was said, was never happy unless he had a newspaper controversy on his hands. It was printed at the Government Press and edited by George Lee, its superintendent. Sir Robert himself was a frequent contributor and signed his articles "Timon", "Liber" and "Pro Bono Publico". Another contributor was George Turnour, the gifted translator of the Ceylon Pali chronicle, the *Mahavamsa*. The paper was discontinued from the end of 1833 on the orders of the Government in London. The reason given was that the field should be left to private enterprise, but it can scarcely be doubted that the *Journal's* severe criticism of the authorities in England had more to do with the decision. The merchants of Colombo started *The Observer & Commercial Advertiser*, which made its appearance on February 4th, 1834. With the new paper attacking the Governor, it was felt in some quarters that there should be an organ of public opinion which could defend the Administration. On May 3rd, 1837, the *Ceylon Chronicle* made its first appearance. The Governor and members of the public service contributed articles under various pen-names.

Owing to the unparalleled successes of the pearl fisheries Horton's period of rule was noteworthy for large Budget surpluses—in one



year £105,791. He was able to undertake a considerable amount of road construction. In the last year of his regime he introduced legislation for the registration of slaves in the Kandyan provinces with a view to their emancipation at a certain date.

In a letter published in the *Calcutta Englishman* in February 1837, a correspondent said: "I have had every reason to be much pleased with the society of Colombo, which though more approaching to the English in style than that of Calcutta, yet possesses much of the hospitality of the latter. Sir Robert Horton is a fine portly-looking man of, I should say, about five and forty years of age, and Lady Horton of about five less, with very fine remains; and in a small society of varied composition like that of Colombo, they deserve great credit, he for his urbanity and conciliatory endeavours, and she from her wish to unite all parties in a social bond and strictly abstaining from any party interferences. She goes home in the *Tigris*, now in the roads, in about a fortnight, much regretted by society. Sir R. goes in October next, a year before the usual time, on his own resignation."

Horton sometimes replied to invitations in verse. Invited by the Chief Justice, Sir Charles Marshall, to dinner after a meeting of the Friend-in-need Society, he replied

My dear Sir Charles, I much lament,  
Considering your kind intent,  
That deep reflection bids me say,  
With much regret, Alas and Nay.  
You quite forget I have the chair.  
(The poor are my especial care)  
Doomed to retain it until all  
Have said their sayings, great and small;  
Each greasy, prosy, prating sinner,  
Too redolent of early dinner,  
In vain the hour of eight may come,  
I can't accompany you home;  
Not *vis-à-vis* attentive sit,  
And taste your claret and your wit.  
Just let me add we really tiffin  
Tomorrow half-past three, and if in  
The Council you can give advice

And make distinctions shrewd and nice,  
Though dined—(our meal must be a short one)  
Pray come and join us; yours, R. Horton.

Reference to events in Colombo during the Horton regime would perhaps be incomplete without mention of a famous duel fought in the Cinnamon Gardens. The duellists were no less than the Chief Justice and the General commanding the troops. Sir Charles Marshall, the Chief Justice, was the legal member of the Governor's Council in 1835 and many of the ordinances of the day bear evidence of his master-hand. When a certain ordinance was passing through the Legislature, General Sir John Wilson moved an amendment and was supported by H. A. Marshall, the Auditor-General. Not only did the General move the amendment but he commented on a judgment of the Supreme Court. At the next meeting, on December 29th, the Chief Justice was present but not the General. Sir Charles Marshall accused the latter of making false statements. On January 7th a letter was published in the *Colombo Observer* from Captain Macready of the 30th Regiment (Sir John Wilson's Military Secretary and friend) stating for general information that Sir John "had received full satisfaction from Sir Charles Marshall for the expressions, personally offensive, delivered in the Legislative Council on the 29th ultimo, and published in your number 48 of the 5th instant". It is said that the Chief Justice received the adversary's fire, himself firing in the air, and that, after doing so, he apologized for the words used by him. He left Ceylon shortly after and was bowed out of the Colonial Office when he went to apply for his pension.

Sir Robert Wilmot Horton succeeded to the baronetcy on the death of his father. He himself died at Sudbrooke Park on May 31st, 1841, in his 57th year.



## VII

## J. A. STEWART MACKENZIE

(1837-1841)

*Stampede for Coffee*

THE Rt. Hon. James Alexander Stewart Mackenzie became Governor of Ceylon when the country's revenues were at a low ebb and on the eve of the great stampede for land for planting coffee. He was not able to serve the normal term of office of a Governor as he was frequently laid low with malaria and was obliged to seek a more hospitable climate to recoup his health. He was Governor of Ceylon from November 7th, 1837 to April 5th, 1841.

James Alexander Stewart was the elder son of Admiral the Hon. Keith Stewart, who was the third son of the sixth Earl of Galloway. He was born on September 23rd, 1784. On his marriage to Maria Elizabeth, daughter of Francis Mackenzie, Earl of Seaforth, on May 21st, 1817, he added the name of Mackenzie to that of Stewart. She became chieftainess of the clan Mackenzie on her father's death. When she married the future Governor of Ceylon, she was the widow of Vice-Admiral Sir Samuel Hood K. C. B. She was the proprietor of the island of Lewis and the novelist Walter Scott described her as "a chieftainess in every drop of her blood".

In 1831 Stewart Mackenzie was elected Member of Parliament for Ross and Cromarty. He was Commissioner of the Indian Board from 1832 to 1834 along with Macaulay, for which he had to be made a Privy Councillor. He was a polished scholar and a capable politician but to one who did not represent a pocket borough or hold office, a career in public life was a costly luxury. Three Governors (Mackenzie, Gregory and Ward) who had sat in Parliament took the Ceylon post to restore their fortunes.

The new Governor arrived in Ceylon on November 7th, 1837. He commenced his regime with an insufficient public revenue to finance the various schemes started by his two predeces-

sors. The pearl fishery, so successful in the time of Sir Robert Wilmot Horton, became barren for a number of years. The revenue from the cinnamon monopoly was lost and the fish-tax had been repealed. The Governor had no power to obtain a credit from the Imperial Treasury. He was thus obliged to stint on road construction and other public works, thus incurring the enmity of planters and merchants who were clamouring for means of communication to the coffee estates.

The *Colombo Observer* of January 20th, 1842, remarks: "Ceylon in 1825 contained four Regiments of European soldiers and two of native troops and an exclusive and highly paid Civil Service. The merchants were few... the European planter and landowner was unknown." With the success of coffee they came in droves. The improvement was largely due to the work of R. B. Tytler (1819-82), a trained agriculturist who studied the Jamaican methods of planting coffee from 1834 to 1837 and introduced them on his plantation in Ceylon. The increasing demand for coffee in Europe synchronized with a decline in West Indian production, which gave Ceylon her chance.

Coffee planting was the certain road to wealth in Ceylon in those days and an unprecedented land boom ensued. The sale of Crown land in the Kandyan provinces, a reliable index of the growing interest in coffee, increased from 49 acres in 1834 to an average of 6,412 acres between 1835 and 1838. From 1840 to 1845 the average annual sale was 42,880 acres. "The East India Company's officers crowded to Ceylon to invest their savings, and capitalists from England arrived by every packet," writes Sir Emerson Tennent. "So dazzling was the prospect that expenditure was unlimited; and its profusion was only equalled by the ignorance and inexperience of those to whom it was entrusted."

The Governor himself, members of his Council, army officers, members of the clergy and numbers of Civil Servants were among the buyers of land. The following is a short list of the sales between 1836 and 1841:

J. A. Stewart Mackenzie, Governor, 2,264 acres; Sir John Wilson, Officer-commanding the Troops, 2,391 acres; Sir R. Arbuthnot, Colonial Secretary, 855 acres; the Hon. George Turnour, Assistant Colonial Secretary, and Colonel Lindsay 1,583 acres; Messrs.

Acland & Boyd 1,097 acres; E.R. Power, Assistant Government Agent, 558 acres; the Rev. J. H. S. Glennie, Archdeacon, 1,970 acres; Captain Murray 575 acres; Messrs. Henley & Dowson 2,000 acres; C. D. Parlett & Co. 1,500 acres; W. A. Atchison & R. Jeaffreson 919 acres; Capt. G. T. Parke & J. W. Dalgetty 749 acres; A. R. Crowe & Co. 16,552 acres; A. Vallance 698 acres; W. Tindall 2,780 acres; R. B. Tytler 6,169 acres; Ritchie & Co. 3,123 acres; G. Bird 1,752 acres.

Sir Edward Barnes when Governor was ready to give free grants of land to intending planters but in 1836 a price of 5 shillings an acre was charged.

"In 1840, the officers of the public service ran wild *in re* coffee planting," writes Skinner. "As pioneers they were encouraged, to the ruin of many; for though one or two had been very successful others lost heavily by embarking on an enterprise of which they were perfectly ignorant. Sir W. O. Carr, the Chief Justice, and myself went into partnership. Our estate had only just come into bearing when the protective duties in Ceylon were removed, and the price our produce realized fell from upwards of 100s. to 45s., the latter being the cost of production on the estate."

Stewart Mackenzie was an ardent churchman and it was not unusual for him to preside over the annual meetings of missionary societies. It troubled his conscience that he should have a hand in the appointment of Buddhist high priests. By the Convention of March 2nd, 1815, "the religion of Budhoo... is declared inviolable, and its rites, ministers and places of worship are to be maintained and protected." The British sovereign thus succeeded to all the rights and obligations of the Kandyan king. The custody of the Sacred Tooth Relic, the appointment and dismissal of priests and the control of other domestic matters connected with Buddhist temples were vested in the Governor. The Proclamation of November 21st, 1818, after the revolt of that year, modified the obligations of the Government. It stated that the priests and "all the ceremonies and processions of the Budhoo religion" shall have the respect which in former times was shown them. The British also undertook to protect "the peaceful exercise of all other religions and the erection of places of worship". Proclamations in 1819 and 1822 prohibited grants of lands to temples without the sanction of the Government.

Missionaries in Ceylon and their friends in England objected to the appointment of Buddhist priests by the Governor and demanded a complete severance of the ties between Church and State. Carried away by religious scruples, Stewart Mackenzie refused to sign the warrants appointing priests to the chief temples because to do so was "a direct encouragement to Buddhism". This led to legal complications, as the temple tenants refused to pay their rents and the courts refused redress since a chief priest could be legally appointed only by the warrant of the Governor. A permanent solution of the problem was not found till 1852. It was then decided that the Government should take no part in the election of a priest beyond granting a certificate recognizing the title of the party elected.

Stewart Mackenzie was one of the few Governors of Ceylon who were familiar with the works of the Latin poets. He quoted from Ovid in the Legislative Council to drive the point home that people have to be rescued from their poverty and ignorance :

*Os homini sublime dedit, coelumque tueri  
Jussit, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus*

Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie already knew the East and had visited Ceylon before her marriage to the Governor. She was the widow of Admiral Samuel Hood, the former Commander of the East Indies Squadron. She was on board the *Windsor* in the harbour in Galle when she received the news of Sir Samuel's death, after three days' fever at Madras. Lady Nugent, who had also arrived in Galle on her way home to England writes: "I went to her as soon as possible, and remained until 8 o'clock in the evening when I found a little despatch from Mrs. Brownrigg to say that she was on her way to Point de Galle, and would be with me early in the morning. She came and we went ashore to Government House there. General Brownrigg remains in Colombo; so we shall not see him".

In her journal Lady Nugent also refers to a day spent with Lady Hood in Calcutta. Lady Hood "smoked her hookah almost the whole morning, to my great astonishment", she writes. She adds that "hookahs are not admitted at Government House now, but, as the late Commander-in-chief and his wife admitted them and neither Sir George (her husband) nor myself find the smell very disagreeable, or insupportable, and as it would be depriving half

of the community of one of their greatest comforts to object to them, we have agreed to receive them, and a most ridiculous sight it is—imagine half of the men of a large company, puffing and blowing, and the hookahs making a most extraordinary noise—some a deep bass, others a bubbling treble—the variety of cadence depends, I believe, on the length of the snake, and the quantity of rose water poured into the receptacle for it. I have generally one on each side of me, as my place is always between two of the oldest gentlemen in society. I have, however, set my face against young men smoking, as it is really an odious custom.”

There is another entry made at Galle which also refers to Lady Hood, the future Mrs. Mackenzie. “Lady Hood... came on board the *Astell* twice to spend the day, or rather some hours of it with me. At her first visit, she was still lamenting that no will of Sir Samuel’s could be found, but at her next visit she said that it had been discovered among his papers, and she does not consider it a kind one.”

Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie was, however, a kind-hearted woman herself and there is evidence of it. In his autobiography, James D’Alwis, one of the leading lawyers and oriental scholars of his day, records an example of the kindness shown by Mr. and Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie to a struggling student. Alwis’s parents had been rich once but had been reduced to straitened circumstances at the time when their son needed their financial assistance. The father had been interpreter to the Governor and on his death the boy received a letter from the Governor’s A. D. C. Unable to pay his school fees, young James sent a certificate from the principal of the school to the Governor’s wife and her son Lieutenant Keith Mackenzie. The Mackenzies paid the boy’s fees and took an interest in his studies. The Governor’s wife made him call at Queen’s House every Saturday and report progress.

James D’ Alwis writes: “A few words may suffice to depict the true character of the Hon. Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie, a lady of world-wide renown. No one who has had the honour or good fortune of her acquaintance has failed to perceive that she belonged to a ‘superior class’ of beings, whose like we do not see in the colonies. She was notably one of nature’s aristocracy, as she was undoubtedly from one of the highest noble families of Scotland.

“Mrs. Mackenzie was benevolence itself. Who that has ever seen her maternal countenance and that calm benignity and cheerful smile which loves to linger there, but has marked her as a friend to the poor. Her beauty was, even in her old age, clearly seen through those lineaments which added grace and dignity to the person, and to a visage on which ever lingered goodness and benevolence. I heard my father speak of her as Lady Hood, in the highest terms of praise. I can endorse every word that he said as to her goodness, for to me she was quite a mother. I never called at Queen’s House without getting my tiffin, which she served me with her own hands in her study. ‘Oh how tired, my dear, you look from walking down so far! Sit down and rest’ was her first exclamation. ‘Take some refreshments, and I shall then take you to the Governor’ (which she did). ‘He would like (she continued) to see your maps and books. Mr. Marsh (or Mr. Bailey as the case may be) has spoken well of you; and I hope you will try to improve and become a great man.’

“‘James’, she said once to me, ‘do you pray?’ I confessed I did not. There was a visible change in her countenance at this announcement. She was sad and silent and I left her soon after. I am sure she sought an early opportunity afterwards to talk to Mr. Marsh on the subject...”

James grew up to be one of the leading Ceylonese of his time.

When Mr. Stewart Mackenzie came to Ceylon he brought with him as his private Secretary a fellow Scot of the name of A. M. Ferguson who not long after joined the *Colombo Observer* and in due course became its editor and proprietor. Its rival the *Ceylon Herald* attacked the Governor violently and its editor, Mackenzie Ross, was charged with libelling Mr. Stewart Mackenzie. He was, however, acquitted by a British jury before Sir Anthony Oliphant, the Chief Justice.

The Stewart Mackenzies had seven sons and four daughters. One of the daughters, May Frances, lived to be 94 and died on December 31st, 1913. She had lived in the reigns of five monarchs and, as a debutante, was presented to Queen Victoria at her first court. In 1873 she became a convert to Roman Catholicism and was received into the Church by Cardinal Newman. She was a

friend of Walter Scott and remembered sitting on the famous novelist's knee as a child.

While on a visit to the Veddah country, Stewart Mackenzie contracted a severe fever which so alarmed his friends that the Secretary of State was induced to remove him to the more congenial climate of the Mediterranean.

Major Skinner describes an experience with the Governor: "In August 1838 I was directed to accompany the Governor, the Right Honourable Stewart Mackenzie, on a tour to the Eastern Province, and, to my surprise, found I was to be His Excellency's only attendant. We drove the first stage to Matella (Matale), and next morning, the 5th August, we started in our saddles for Nalanda; breakfasted there, and in the afternoon, or about midday, left that station for Dambool. The heat was something terrible; had we galloped through it, it would have been much less overpowering than the walk to which the Governor chose to confine his pace. I do not know that I ever experienced a much more trying day. At about two o'clock, when nearly midway between the two stations, the Governor half fell, half slid from his horse on to the road, where he lay in the burning heat of the sun. There was no shade to which I could remove him, but there was, fortunately, a little rivulet crossing our path, beside which I placed him, bathed his head and kept him quiet for an hour or two; but how I was to get him over the other seven miles of our journey, or what was to happen when we reached Dambool, were matters of painful uncertainty. It seemed even doubtful if I should be able to get him into the saddle again. It was rather a 'fix', for the country was most desolate, the road being practically only a bridle path, and the nearest European resident nearly twenty-one miles off!

"To sleep out at night in our condition would to a certainty have given us both fever, and it was evident Mr. Stewart Mackenzie was suffering from a *coup de soleil*, the effect of which who could foretell! I kept him quiet as long as I thought it safe; but, at length, when I proposed to start for Dambool, the question arose as to how far he was capable of riding. We got him on his horse with some difficulty, and our two horse-keepers walked one on either side supporting him. We reached Dambool in the cool of the evening a little after dark, and, as the sun set and the temperature

fell, His Excellency seemed to rally. I got him at once to bed, and administered a cooling draft. He slept very fairly during the night, and, when I awoke between three and four in the morning, being anxious to proceed on our journey before the sun was very high and the heat oppressive, he seemed much better, and was bent on pushing to Galle Oya, which was  $23\frac{1}{2}$  miles further.

"I was rejoiced to find the Governor capable of accelerating his pace a little; but unfortunately it was too apparent that his brain was affected by the sunstroke, for he talked occasionally very incoherently. In three days after this event we reached Trincomalee where I was glad to find my father-in-law, Colonel Burrell, commanding the 18th Royal Irish, and a relative, Sir Frederick Maitland, who was stationed there with his flagship, H. M. S. *Wellesley*.

"I dreaded my return journey with His Excellency to Kandy, but knowing that he was tied to time, having to attend an important meeting of the Council within a few days, I managed to get home on the fifth day, glad enough to be relieved of the responsibility."

Mr. Stewart Mackenzie continued in office for more than a year thereafter. He did not fully overcome the setback to his health or become more popular with the European planters and merchants. They criticized him for neglecting their special interests and did not leave him in peace.

Richard Morgan, then a rising lawyer and politician, writes in his diary for March 27th, 1841: "Last night I attended a meeting of the Burghers to consider the propriety of presenting an address to the Right Honourable J. Stewart Mackenzie prior to his resigning the Governorship of this island. I did so on principle. In the early part of Mr. M's career, I owed no debt of gratitude to him; on the contrary his conduct to me personally was by no means what it ought to have been. But I cannot on mature and impartial deliberation deny that the island owes much to him. He has invariably had the public good for his object and in the pursuit of it displayed a liberality of mind and determination of purpose which cannot but elicit unmixed admiration. Considering, however, the brief period he has resided amongst us, an address would not have been imperatively called for had it not been for the great clamour which his enemies inhumanly raised against him at this period, and the attempts that were made to make the people of this and other



countries believe that he carries away with him the hearty curses of the generality of those amongst whom he resided. The meeting was respectably attended, and in the carrying of the address more unanimity displayed than I had expected. The older members of community, however, studiously kept themselves away."

Mackenzie was appointed Lord Commissioner of the Ionian Islands, holding office until 1843. He died at Southampton on September 24th in that year. His widow died at Braham Castle on November 28th, 1862.

## VIII

## SIR COLIN CAMPBELL

(1841-1847)

*Wellington's Crony*

SIR Colin Campbell was the fourth of the Duke of Wellington's men to become Governor of Ceylon. He was the Duke's A. D. C. and friend during campaigns in India, Spain and the Low Countries. In a letter to the Earl of Mornington from the camp at Vimeiro, the future victor of Waterloo wrote: "I have desired Campbell, who is going home, to tell you that I am by no means satisfied with the way in which I see things go on here; and I should be glad to be called home to my Office, or anything else in which I could be useful."

Campbell took to England news of the battles of Rolica and Vimeiro. In a letter to Colonel Torrens about promotion in the Army, Wellington wrote: "The only person, respecting whose promotion I ever interested myself personally, was that of Colin Campbell, which the Duke of York had promised him, in consequence of his having brought home the accounts of two victories at the same time; and the difficulty which I experienced in obtaining his promotion, notwithstanding that promise, is a strong practical proof of the effects of the system to which I have adverted."

Nearly forty years later, Wellington wrote to Campbell, "We are both growing old; God knows if we shall ever meet again. Happen what may, I shall never forget our first meeting under the walls of Ahmednuggar."

Campbell was already sixty-four years of age when he was appointed Governor of Ceylon. He arrived in the Island in November 1840. There are descriptions of the Governor by contemporary writers. George Siddons, who visited Ceylon from India, records that, on his courtesy visit to Government House, Sir John Colin Campbell treated him with condescending hospitality.



He is "a fine old man, energetic in the performance of his duties, and very like 'Punch'".

Hoffmeister, who met him in 1844, writes: "The Governor and Commander-in-chief, Sir Colin Campbell, a venerable old man, with a hoary head, gave us a most kind reception; and Captain Maclean (Sir Colin's son-in-law and Aide-de-camp) conducted us to our respective apartments, in a wing of the Palace opening into the garden."

Colin Campbell, who was born in 1776, was the fifth son of John Campbell of Melfort, by Colina, daughter of John Campbell of Auchalader. In 1792, at the age of 16, he ran away from Perth Academy and entered for a ship bound for the West Indies. He was met in the fruit market of Kingston, Jamaica, by his brother (afterwards Admiral Sir) Patrick Campbell then serving on *H. M. S. Blonde* who brought him home. In 1793 he was a midshipman on board an East Indiaman and made one or two voyages before he began Army service in the West Indies and India.

In India he served under Arthur Wellesley, afterwards Duke of Wellington. With his regiment at Poona he accompanied Wellesley's advance against the Maharajah of Scindia and the Rajah of Nagpur. In 1806 Wellesley invited Campbell to become brigade major to his brigade then at Hastings, and as such Campbell accompanied Wellesley to Hanover and Denmark. He was appointed senior A. D. C. to Wellesley when the latter took command of the expeditionary force to Portugal. He was assistant quartermaster-general at the headquarters of the army in the Peninsula and, at the special request of Wellesley, was present at the storming of Badajoz. Campbell was made a K. C. B. in 1814, and next year was attached to Wellesley as commandant at headquarters and was present at the battle of Waterloo which sealed Napoleon's fate. He held the post throughout Wellington's residence in Paris (1815-18). In 1828 Campbell was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Tobago. Twelve years later he was appointed Governor of Ceylon, after a short period in Nova Scotia.

Sir John Colin Campbell began his term of office as Governor of Ceylon on January 15th, 1841. The rush for opening new lands in coffee was still on. In his first year as Governor, no less than 78,685 acres of Crown land were sold. The Government had, as

already mentioned, encouraged Civil Servants to establish coffee plantations in order that they might supplement their inadequate salaries and also with a view to fostering the industry until banks were opened. They were the nearest approach to financiers the Island could provide. For the rest, Colombo merchants procured their money through agents of Indian business houses.

In 1840 a bank named the Bank of Ceylon (no connection with the present bank of that name) was started by London interests and was incorporated by Royal Charter with a capital of £125,000. In the notice announcing its constitution, the bank said that: "The Corporation has had a charter granted to it by the Crown for the purpose of introducing capital in aid of commercial agricultural enterprise into the island of Ceylon". A second bank, the Western Bank of India, started business in 1843.

Up to this time the only notes in circulation were Government notes expressed in sterling, which had taken the place of the Dutch rix-dollar since 1826. The new issue was for notes to the value of £87,400. In December 1841, Campbell applied to the Secretary of State for permission to increase the issue to £100,000, but this was refused. In 1844 the Governor had a bill passed extending to private bankers in Ceylon the privilege of issuing paper money on terms which were not altogether favourable to the Government.

Lord Stanley, the Secretary of State, had been somewhat disquieted by the large number of Civil Servants who had engaged in coffee planting. "The coffee mania was at its climax", writes Sir Emerson Tennent. "The Governor and the Council, the Military, the Judges, the Clergy, and one half the Civil Servants penetrated the hills, and became purchasers of Crown lands... The first ardent adventurers pioneered the way through pathless woods, and lived for months in log-huts, whilst felling the forest and making their preliminary nurseries preparatory to planting; but within a few years the tracks by which they came were converted into highways, and their cabins replaced by bungalows, which, though rough, were picturesque and replete with European comforts. The new life in the jungle was full of excitement and romance, the wild elephants and leopards retreated before the axe of the forester; the elk supplied their table with venison, and jungle fowl and game were within call and abundant."

The Secretary of State ordered that "no Civil Servant will hereafter be permitted to engage in any agricultural or commercial pursuit for the sake of profit, and that all who may have done so must within a reasonable time dispose of their property or retire from the public service". The Governor thought that this prohibition was too harsh and in response to his request the Secretary of State modified the regulation. He ruled that a Civil Servant might retain estates bought prior to February 1st, 1845, provided that he did not himself cultivate or superintend the cultivation, and that in the Governor's opinion "the possession of land shall in no degree interfere with the due and impartial performance of his public duties". It was also laid down that "in all questions of promotion a preference should be given, other things being equal, to an officer who does not hold land, over one who does".

It was clear that the public service was demoralized and that drastic reform was necessary. The Governor sent a series of pessimistic despatches on the subject to the Secretary of State. He reported that few officials had a satisfactory knowledge of the native languages. The Secretary of State wrote to Sir Colin that the British Government was "resolved no longer to tolerate the inefficiency which for several years past has disgraced the civil servants at Ceylon". The majority of despatches between 1841 and 1845 deal with the defects of the public service and possible remedies.

There were a few able men in the Civil Service but the majority had been recruited for reasons other than efficiency. It was not difficult for a young man of good family in England to obtain a post. Members of the Service bore names such as Talbot, Henry St. John, Turnour, Rodney and Fitzroy Somerset. One of the judges of the District Court with a salary of £1,000 had been trained for the profession of a seaman. Military officers, private secretaries to Governors, sons of men who were distinguished in the Dutch service, all found their way into the Service. That the Service was not restricted to British nationals may be judged from some of the names such as Mooyart, Jumueaux, Lavalliere and Roosmalecocq.

There were also several eccentric characters. Robert Langslow, who was married to an aunt of William Makepeace Thackeray,

received the appointment of District Judge of Colombo South. In 1842 friction arose between Langslow and the local Government and Langslow was suspended from office by Sir Colin Campbell in 1843 and dismissed in 1844 on charges of "dilatatory justice, insubordination, and contempt towards the Governor". He secured employment in Malta but was again in trouble, the Governor of Malta regarding him as "an enemy to all persons in authority". In January 1842 he had inserted an advertisement in the *Colombo Journal* intimating that his law books would be sold by auction "solely because the owner had now ascertained that he cannot any longer afford, out of the small salary paid to him as a Judge, to keep up a law library for the service in effect of the Government and the public".

Edward Lewich Osbaldeston Mitford came out to Ceylon having heard of the possibility of obtaining employment in the Island. He decided to travel overland and did so up to Persia in company with Henry Layard who later discovered Nineveh. Mitford's journey occupied two years; he traversed 10,000 miles by land, 7,000 of which was performed on horseback. On reaching his destination he was welcomed by the Governor, Sir Colin Campbell, who informed him that he had received notification of his appointment to the Civil Service. When Mitford was Chief Revenue Officer at Trincomalee, it was his duty to welcome the Judge of the Supreme Court on circuit. This he did not do, and fixed the odd hour of seven o'clock in the morning for Jail delivery. The Judge then appointed 4 o'clock and informed Mitford that if he did not attend he would be fined 50 guineas. This threat had the desired effect. Mitford lived to be a hundred and drew £22,000 in pension.

Although the Colebrooke reforms threw open the Civil Service to Ceylonese none was taken on till the appointment of Frederick de Livera in 1844 to the post of District Judge of Matara. The Secretary of State asked for a confidential report from Philip Anstruther and Percival Acland Dyke, the two senior members of the Civil Service. Anstruther retired from the post of Colonial Secretary in 1845. He would have been succeeded by Dyke but the latter refused the post. Dyke's career had begun in the Navy, and he was a midshipman when he was appointed to the Ceylon Civil Service at the age of seventeen. "Notwithstanding his

austerity", says a contemporary writer, "the natives always felt that Mr. Dyke was a friend, because he took such an absorbing interest in native affairs, and because he defended their claims against all other classes." He was a man of great ability and force of character.

Lord Stanley's reforms reclassified and enlarged the Civil Service, increased salaries, restored pensions, required a knowledge of the language of the district in which an officer served and encouraged promotion on grounds of efficiency. Before he finished, Lord Stanley had left very few of the Colebrooke reforms relating to the public service intact. At a time when the revenue was buoyant he raised the cost of the Civil Service by £40,000, thereby adding to the problems of the Governors who came after Sir Colin Campbell.

The country's economy remained in good shape and Ceylon continued to attract capital from abroad. In 1841, Maurice Worms, son of Benedict Worms of Frankfort-on-Main, and Janette, his wife, the elder sister of Baron Rothschild, decided to settle in Ceylon and take up coffee planting as an occupation. He had gone to England and become a very successful member of the London Stock Exchange. But the English climate did not suit him and he made an extensive tour of the world looking for a place in which to spend the rest of his active life. He came to Ceylon, bought a large extent of land in Pussellawa and gradually established what came to be known as Rothschild estate. He was joined by his brother Gabriel Worms who managed the Grandpass mills in Colombo which prepared the coffee for export. The planting enterprise of the Worms' brothers prospered and they owned 7,318 acres in coffee when they retired and returned to England after 24 years of residence in Ceylon.

Several British agency businesses were started in Colombo during Sir Colin Campbell's regime and some of them are still in existence. Among those who came to Ceylon at the time was George Wall. He arrived in 1846 as acting Manager of the Ceylon Plantation Co., and during the next two decades was prominent in the planting, commercial and political life of the Island. In the 'fifties and 'sixties he was a member of the Legislative Council, he founded the Planters' Association of Ceylon and was a leading spirit in the successful agitation against the paddy-tax. He went through the

collapse of the coffee industry and survived it. An extremely gifted man, astronomer, botanist and musician, he was also a vigorous writer and debater. A colleague of Wall in many of his campaigns was Dr. Christopher Elliott, editor of the *Colombo Observer*, who later became the Principal Civil Medical Officer of the Island.

Also coming to the forefront as a leader was Richard Morgan, a young Ceylonese lawyer of Welsh descent, who was to play an important role in later years in the government of the country. Sir Emerson Tennent, the writer of the well known book on Ceylon, was Colonial Secretary from August 12th, 1845, to December 1850.

The attempts made by Mr. Stewart Mackenzie to detach the Buddhist establishment from the Government were carried a step further during the regime of Sir Colin Campbell. Under the urging of Christian missionaries, the Secretary of State condemned the annual grant of £300 for "devil dances and other idolatrous festivals". He ordered the sacred Tooth Relic to be made over to the custody of the priests and the British sentry to be withdrawn from the temple since his presence there might tend to increase "idolatrous veneration" of the Relic.

By letters patent under the Great Seal, Ceylon was constituted an Episcopal See on April 26th, 1845, and the Rt. Rev. Dr. James Chapman was appointed the first Bishop. Shortly after his arrival he purchased a house for his private residence in Mutwal, Colombo. Subsequently on the same site he founded St. Thomas' College and erected a substantial building to serve as chapel for the College and also as his Cathedral.

In 1841 the Ceylon Agricultural Society applied to the Government to have mechanics and labourers imported from England at the public expense. The reason for the failure of these attempts is set out thus by James Steuart who spent the greater part of his life in Ceylon:

"The rich verdure produced by frequent showers, so common in the southern and western provinces, delights the eyes of the travellers, especially of those who have recently left the parched plains of other parts of India, and raises in their minds corresponding anticipations with regard to the general fertility of the soil. Such favourable anticipations are apt to be increased by visits to the mountain zone, particularly if extended to the sanitarium at

Nuwara Eliya, which is 6,200 feet above the level of the sea. Persons while under such favourable impressions, have been heard to express their regret that the peasantry of Britain could not be induced to come to Ceylon to cultivate its uplands with English corn, and to convert jungles into orchards of fruit-bearing trees to rival those of Europe. But the production of English cereals and English fruit, like the preservation of the Englishman's health, requires the changes of season with which England is blessed. It is the change of temperature in the climate of England which enables its people to endure the extremes of heat and cold in all climes with great success...

"European fruit trees have been reared at Nuwara Eliya, but they do not lose their leaves as in England. The peach does indeed give a poor crop of fruit of very inferior quality; and the cherry blossoms, but its fruit never comes to perfection... Any attempt to colonize the mountain region of Ceylon would be attended with considerable sacrifice of life; and the race which might descend from such colonists would soon degenerate and become unworthy of their progenitors."

Sir Colin Campbell embarked for England on April 19th, 1847, and the Colonial Secretary, Sir Emerson Tennent, acted as Governor until the arrival of Lord Torrington, Sir Colin's successor. Sir Colin Campbell died on June 13th, 1847 and was buried at St. James's, Piccadilly.

## IX

## LORD TORRINGTON

(1847-1850)

*Open Revolt*

THE seventh Viscount Torrington was appointed Governor of Ceylon at the early age of 35, succeeding Sir Colin Campbell, a man about twice his age. He was the son of George Byng, Vice-Admiral, and was born in 1812. He came from the same family as the Admiral Byng who was court-martialled and shot in 1757 for his failure to relieve Minorca then under attack by the French.

When Torrington arrived in Ceylon and assumed the government of the island on May 29th, 1847, he had no experience of administration or of public affairs other than what he may have gained as a lord of the royal bed chamber. He owed his appointment as Governor to his cousin Lord John Russell, who was Prime Minister of England from July 1846 to February 1852. But he was hardly the man to deal with the many difficult problems which came up for solution in a colony in which the population was discontented, the finances shaky, speculation in land rampant, and the Civil Service demoralized and divided.

A year before Torrington's arrival in Ceylon, Sir Colin Campbell, his predecessor, had a law passed relating to 'verandahs' which obstructed public streets. The word 'verandah' which occurs in many Indian languages denotes "an open portico or roofed gallery extending along the front (and occasionally other sides) of a dwelling or other building erected chiefly as a protection or shelter from the sun or rain".

The Ceylonese inhabitants of Colombo had built verandahs on the fronts of their houses which encroached from six to ten feet on the streets, and which were converted into shops. Some of the verandahs were old but many had been constructed within the preceding thirty years. It was not possible to widen the streets in



the town because of the obstruction caused by the verandahs. In February 1846 Sir Colin Campbell enacted an ordinance that all verandahs adjudged by the Government to obstruct the streets should be removed without compensation. When the verandah did not form an obstruction the owner might obtain a legal title by buying the land at a price from threepence to ninepence a square foot. The law was exceedingly unpopular and led to an agitation for its repeal and many lawsuits. The principal organizers of the opposition were Doctor Christopher Elliott, the editor of the *Colombo Observer*, and Mr. Richard Morgan, a young Burgher lawyer.

Lord Grey, the Secretary of State, while approving the ordinance, advised the new Governor, Lord Torrington, to pay moderate compensation where the verandahs removed had stood for twenty or thirty years. But Torrington chose to enforce a rather harsh policy by tactless methods. He refused to accept oral testimony as to the age of verandahs and insisted on the production of title deeds—a difficult matter, since both the originals and the Government copies had disappeared. He dismissed the claims of the occupiers as “the most consummate effrontery”. William Digby writes, in his biography of Sir Richard Morgan: “On the 24th January (1847) he formed one of a deputation of four gentlemen—Dr. Elliott, R. F. Morgan, James Alvis and J. B. Misso—who waited upon the Governor, Lord Torrington, in respect of the verandah question. At the expense of some mortification to themselves, by the boorish and insulting manner in which the deputation was treated by Lord Torrington, Mr. Morgan and his friends achieved a great triumph.”

Torrington also became involved in a dispute with the British planters and merchants who had welcomed him with a banquet a fortnight after his arrival in the Island. They had many problems of their own. The sudden news of a monetary crisis in England brought distress and ruin to several of the most enterprising planters and merchants. They were not always reasonable in their demands on the Government or restrained in their criticisms. The Governor, for his part, was unaccommodating. “Lord Torrington seems to have been tactless, arrogant and hot-tempered, and he soon alienated the Europeans and Burghers by the scarcely veiled contempt with

which he treated their opposition”, writes Professor Mills in his book *Ceylon under British Rule*.

Much was expected of Sir Emerson Tennent, the new Colonial Secretary. He had been a Member of Parliament and was a man of acknowledged talent. But, like many another scholar suddenly thrust into public affairs, he antagonized his colleagues and lost control of the situation. Morgan notes, in his diary on January 5th, 1847: “I am afraid he is not a very good man. He has talents, and he knows it: he seems to us to prostitute them to unworthy ends. Scheming and intriguing seem with him the order of the day.” In later years Sir Richard Morgan came to appreciate Tennent’s qualities better, and they corresponded with each other. Tennent’s claim to fame rests on his great two-volume work on Ceylon published in 1859, which ran into five editions in eight months. It is still the standard work on the Island.

Misfortune dogged Torrington’s administration from the beginning. The three Budgets before his arrival had produced a total surplus of £133,000, which was derived from the export duty on coffee and the sale of Crown lands for plantations. The authorities in England seem to have decided that financial stability had been reached and they sought the views of the senior officials in Ceylon respecting a reform of the system of taxation. Sir Emerson Tennent, the Colonial Secretary, sent a comprehensive report making suggestions for the reduction of taxation as well as for certain economies in the administration. A committee of the Treasury and the Colonial Office in England considered the reports and recommended the abolition of all export duties and the introduction of a uniform import duty of 5 per cent. on all imports. The Secretary of State had based his recommendations on the assumption that good times would continue in spite of the fact that in 1846 there was a severe coffee slump and the Budget of that year had produced a deficit which swallowed up a third of the accumulated surplus of £200,000.

To make up the deficit Lord Grey ordered the imposition of new taxes. The owners of shops, boats, carriages, and bullock carts had to pay an annual license of £ 1. Two taxes which aroused very strong opposition were the imposition of an annual license of 2s. 6d. on each firearm and 1s. on each dog. Another imposition required every inhabitant of Ceylon to work six days annually on

the repair or construction of roads or else pay a commutation-tax of 3s. This aroused strong opposition as a revival of forced labour which existed under the Kandyan kings. The villagers, who were quite content with jungle paths, regarded the new regulation as intended solely for the benefit of the European coffee planters who needed good roads for the transport of their produce. How far these taxes contributed to the unrest which led to the rebellion of 1848, it is not easy to say. The inefficiency of the Civil Service, the declining influence of the chiefs and lawlessness in the country were at least equally responsible.

The riots of 1848 are described in most accounts of British rule in Ceylon. The background to them is set out by Major Skinner in the memorandum he submitted to the parliamentary commission of enquiry. He said: "Society in its various, but especially in the lower grades has been (for the last ten or eleven years) becoming demoralized, and so palpably so of late that it required no great power of discrimination to predict, twelve months before it manifested itself in open revolt, the anarchy to which some of the districts were approaching. In brief capitulation it may be said of the last thirty-one years, that the first six were to the native population a period of trial and depression; the next fourteen of contentment and prosperity; the last eleven of fictitious prosperity, as transient as it was locally partial, of eventual bankruptcy to European capitalists, and as regards the natives, of demoralization more or less in most, ending in anarchy in some districts."

The steps taken to break the connection of the Government with the Buddhist religion annoyed the monks and the chiefs, and the taxes already referred to irritated all sections of the community. In July 1848, a large crowd of villagers appeared before the Government Agent of Kandy to protest against the gun-tax. Sir Emerson Tennent addressed a meeting of chiefs and minor headmen on the subject of the taxes, after which the people dispersed. In Colombo, Dr. Christopher Elliott appealed to the demonstrators to disperse promising to make representations to the Government in the proper form. At Matale, in the Central Province, the crowds became unruly and burnt and sacked some houses and proclaimed a low country adventurer by the name of Purang Appu as 'King of Kandy'. Another pretender named Gongallagoda Banda appeared at Dambulla and was likewise acclaimed.

The Governor regarded Dr. Elliott and A. M. Ferguson, Elliott's colleague on the *Colombo Observer*, as the chief instigators of the unrest. Several residents of the Central Province, including one of the missionaries, decided to withdraw their subscriptions from the *Observer* and, by a notice in the library in Kandy, called upon subscribers to do likewise. A meeting of the 'Friends of Ceylon', held in Kandy with Richard Morgan in the chair, backed up the *Observer* and stated in a resolution that: "This meeting also feels itself called upon to assert that the charges brought against the *Observer* to the effect that it has incited the people to rebellion, are entirely unfounded. On the contrary, we are firmly persuaded that some of the causes which have given rise to it and to the dissatisfaction prevailing universally would have been averted, had the Government acted consistently with the views and sentiment of that paper."

Listening to panicky stories, the Governor continued martial law for a longer period than the circumstances demanded. The troops marching from Kandy to Matale, encountering some armed men at Wariapola, shot forty of them down without suffering any loss themselves. One or two planters' bungalows were robbed but not a single European life was lost. About two hundred alleged rebels were shot or hanged, while others were publicly flogged or imprisoned. Both the pretenders, Purang Appu and Gongallagoda Banda, were taken and shot and a monk named Kuddapola Unnanse was arraigned and shot after a court-martial for failing to give information which might lead to the arrest of a rebel. The Governor disregarded the advice of the Chief Justice and Attorney-General, and it was reported that the former, Sir Anthony Oliphant, threatened to resign if one more man were shot.

Agitation for an inquiry into the actions of the Governor and the military was carried to the House of Commons. Lord John Russell supported his protege and kinsman, and at first refused an inquiry, but on February 20th, 1849 Sir Robert Peel and the radical supporters of the Government forced the hands of the Prime Minister. A committee of the House of Commons was appointed including in its membership Sir Robert Peel, Gladstone, Disraeli and Henry Baillie. Among those who gave evidence were the Chief Justice, Mr. (later Sir Philip) Anstruther, who was Tennent's predecessor

as Colonial Secretary, Major Skinner and Mr. (later Sir Philip) Wodehouse, Government Agent of the Western Province.

The civilians, led by Sir Anthony Oliphant, were on the whole inclined to condemn the Governor for his handling of the disturbances. The Chief Justice said that when the revolt broke out "the general impression left upon my mind...was that nobody knew anything about it". They were "frightened out of their wits" and greatly exaggerated "a futile and contemptible attempt at rebellion". Lord Torrington, he said, was inexperienced and "of a timid and nervous temperament". The proclamation of martial law was unnecessary, since the civil power could have subdued the outbreak with the assistance of the troops.

Mr. Anstruther, who spoke Sinhalese fluently and was in Kandy during the disturbances, believed that they started "without any previous preparation on the part of the priests or any great chiefs". He said that "there is a complete curtain drawn in Ceylon between the Government and the governed; no person concerned with government understands the language; very few of them have the remotest idea of the customs of the natives. They are working in the dark, and that, in my opinion, is the reason why so many people were frightened." Mr. Wodehouse was guarded in his evidence but conveyed the impression that Torrington and Tennent had seriously mishandled the situation.

Tennent returned to England in 1850 to conduct his own and the Governor's defence before the parliamentary commission. His attacks on Wodehouse's evidence were met by counter-attacks, and the hostility which had existed between the two for several years became more and more embittered. Tennent declared that since his arrival in Ceylon he had had to struggle against the hostility of Wodehouse and a *cabal* of the principal Civil Servants who resented his appointment to the Colonial Secretaryship. Torrington warmly supported Tennent. Wodehouse, supported by Anstruther and other Civil Servants, denied the existence of a *cabal* or resentment over Tennent's appointment. He said that on Tennent's arrival the Civil Servants tried to support him but soon became estranged by his lack of versatility and other personal faults. Finally, to substantiate his charges, he produced a private letter from Torrington in which the Governor had accused Tennent of "lies, slander

and treachery". Tennent retaliated by producing private letters himself. The matter was debated in Parliament with the result that the Governor, the Colonial Secretary and Mr. Wodehouse were recalled from Ceylon. Sir Emerson Tennent was gazetted Governor of St. Helena on 31st December 1850 but he never took up the appointment. He was Secretary to the Board of Trade from November 1852 until his retirement in February 1867 when he was created a baronet. Philip Wodehouse ended his career as Governor of the Cape of Good Hope after having been Governor of Bombay.

Viscount Torrington went back to an environment in which he was more at home. He became Lord-in-Waiting to H.R.H. the Prince Consort (1853-59) and to the Queen (1859-64). He died on April 26th, 1884 at the age of 72.

## X

## SIR GEORGE ANDERSON

(1850-1855)

*Ceylonese Admitted*

SIR George Anderson, an experienced administrator who had made rapid progress in the Indian public service and retired at the age of 53, succeeded Viscount Torrington, the ill-starred amateur. He was born in 1791, the son of Robert Anderson, a London merchant, and was only seventeen when he entered the service of the Bombay Government.

During his Indian career, Anderson seems to have specialized in legal subjects and was employed by Mr. Mounstuart Elphinstone, Lieutenant-Governor of Bombay, in framing the first systematic code of laws attempted in British India, known as the Bombay Code or Elphinstone Code of 1827. In 1835 he was selected by the Court of Directors of the East India Company as the Bombay member of the newly-constituted Indian Law Commission of which Macaulay was President. In 1837 he was in administrative and political charge of the southern Mahratta districts and received the commendation of successive governments for the skill and sagacity with which he carried out his duties.

In March 1838 Anderson was appointed a member of the Council of the Governor of Bombay and three years later, as senior member of the Council he officiated as Governor of Bombay for some months. Lord Auckland, the Governor-General, cordially acknowledged his valuable services. Anderson returned to England in February 1844 and Sir George Arthur, Governor of Bombay, wrote a Minute on his "zeal, judgment and ability, combined with the most conscientious integrity and strict impartiality".

Although still in the prime of life, Anderson had served 36 years in India and it was obvious that a man of his diligence and capacity would not allow himself to be shelved. In 1849 he was knighted

and appointed Governor of Mauritius. He held that office for only sixteen months when he was offered and accepted the Governorship of Ceylon. The Imperial Government was no doubt anxious to send to Ceylon an experienced and cautious administrator after the Torrington experiment.

When Sir George Anderson received the notification of his appointment it was near to the time of the year when hurricanes are expected to prevail in the vicinity of Mauritius. Accordingly he availed himself of the departure of the ship *Buckinghamshire* from Port Louis to proceed in her to Colombo and arrived with his family on November 7th, 1850, three weeks before his Commission reached Ceylon. He was thus precluded from assuming the Government until the 27th.

Sir Charles MacCarthy, the Colonial Secretary,\* who had been acting as Governor, vacated Queen's House for the reception of the new Governor and his family, and ordered all honours due to the Governor to be paid to Sir George. However, in the absence of the Royal Commission, he felt bound to decline compliance with the request of Sir George Anderson that he should be installed. Although Sir Charles was manifestly right, Sir George seems to have taken offence at a strict adherence to protocol. The new Governor was aging and irritable, and the relations between him and his Colonial Secretary became such that at one time he transacted a large part of the business of the Island through Mr. Rawdon Power, the Assistant Colonial Secretary. Mr. Power had come out to Ceylon as Private Secretary to Sir Robert Wilmot Horton and was the first to introduce Shorthand to the Island, writing Lewis's system.

In another connection Sir Charles MacCarthy was declared in the right in a question which Sir George Anderson insisted on referring to the Secretary of State. The rule in the Colonies was that all official correspondence and reports, except despatches from the Secretary of State, should be addressed to the Colonial Secretary. They were opened by him, read, abridged in his office, and submitted to the Governor with all the necessary information and with such draft reply or disposal of the case as the Colonial Secretary thought was demanded. The majority of cases were

\*He was subsequently (1860-63) Governor.



decided on precedents, and the Governor's sanction was given as a matter of course. In important cases, the Governor sometimes modified and re-wrote the terms of reply or decision.

Sir George took the view that Sir Charles MacCarthy, in offering an opinion beforehand, was entrenching on the prerogative of the Governor. Earl Grey, the Secretary of State, entirely sustained the position taken by Sir Charles MacCarthy, his lordship remarking that he would consider himself ill-served if the Under Secretaries did not bring most questions before him in a perfectly matured shape.

The new Governor had other worries. By 1848, the London price of coffee had declined from 100 shillings per hundredweight to 45 shillings, an amount which barely covered cost of production. Some shipments fetched as little as 28 shillings, and in 1849 the price reached its lowest level at 27 shillings. At the same time a plague of rats gnawed the young shoots of the coffee plants and a blight ruined large areas killing the trees. Before the price of coffee picked up again, many of the old owners had sold out and the new proprietors started without the crippling burden of their predecessors' debts.

Meanwhile, Sir George had orders from England to practise the strictest economy. The payment of the temporary debt incurred in connection with the 1848 rebellion during Torrington's regime, and the depression in the coffee industry, left no other course. The Governor's prudent retrenchments on public works, however, disappointed the expectations of the planters and merchants; and as the revenue was insufficient to meet their requirements, some of them called for reductions in official salaries and for the abolition of certain offices, and proposed that the public cash in the Treasury vaults should be handed over to the custody of the Bank.

Sir George Anderson claimed that the roads were "in tolerably good order" but the planters did not agree. He was remembered among them as the Governor during whose regime "men with long poles were sent in advance of carts and carriages to sound the holes, anything more than three feet being deemed dangerous".

The Governor frequently complained that he could not rely on the support of the official members of the Legislative Council—all of them of course, Government servants—in resisting the demands

of the planters and merchants. Officials frequently refused to stand by policy "previously determined in the Executive Council". "In theory they are bound to support the Government", he said, "but...they can always offer...the tacit resistance of not voting, and the Governor must then be in a minority, and the measures of Government be lost."

The trouble here was that many of the officials had common interests with the European planters and merchants. This led to legislation and governmental measures which, as James Steuart, a merchant himself, says, were only suited to the 'white Colonies'. "If the name of Ceylon should accidentally be mentioned, it will be found that the subject relates to the prosperity of the sojourners, or to the increase of revenue and its applicability to commercial facilities; but as regards the welfare and happiness of the Ceylonese all are silent as midnight on Pedrotallagalle. Even the rulers of the land estimate the importance of a district by the amount of its revenue rather than by the number of its inhabitants; and the ability of the officer in charge is estimated by the amount of his collections rather than by the happiness of the people entrusted to his care. In fact, the proceedings of the Government have appeared to resemble those of landlords of the soil rather than of rulers of people."

Despite the clamour of the planters, Anderson pursued a conservative policy and when it came to the turn of his successor, Sir Henry Ward, to look into the question of road construction, he was obliged to say: "It is to the firmness with which this duty was fulfilled (by his two predecessors)...that I am indebted for the very different state of things which I have had the good fortune to find here."

It was during Sir George Anderson's term of office as Governor that the Government of Ceylon finally abandoned the policy of intervention in the affairs of the Buddhist "establishment". During the regime of his predecessor, the sacred Tooth Relic was resigned to the custody of the priests and the annual grant of £200 towards the cost of temple rites discontinued. In 1852, the Secretary of State for the Colonies decreed that henceforth each of the Kandyan chief priests was to be elected by the priests of his temple. The Government was to take no part in the election beyond granting to each appointee a certificate "which while avoiding altogether

the form of an appointment... should simply profess to be a certificate or recognition by the Government of the title of the party elected”.

Sir George Anderson, with his Indian experience, was anxious to associate capable Ceylonese in the government of the Island. An entry in the diary of Richard Morgan during 1853 states: “The Governor expressed much sympathy during my illness and made frequent inquiries. I waited upon him therefore this day (26th August) and had rather an interesting conversation with him. His Excellency mentioned that Mr. Stark had sent his application the day before, praying to be allowed to retire on the score of ill-health. I mentioned that it would give an opening to Mr. Temple, in which he concurred. He said other vacancies would also take place shortly in the Supreme Court. His Excellency added that when this took place he would be very glad to see me appointed Queen’s Advocate, and would gladly do what he could to obtain this object. I expressed my thanks, of course, but added that if such were His Excellency’s intention he would not have an opportunity of serving me. He wanted to know why. I explained to him that the office of Queen’s Advocate was always conferred on English barristers, and that the discussion which took place owing to Mr. Selby’s appointment in the course of the parliamentary investigation on Ceylon affairs was calculated to induce greater jealousy on the part of the Ministry in seeing that it might not perhaps be deemed expedient to confer an office so eminently confidential on a Colonial man. His Excellency replied that he could not quite go that length with me, and that as respects the objection against Colonial men, it was unfounded... He added that he unfortunately thought ill of our Bar, from all he had heard and seen of its members, but for that very reason he would feel it his duty to advance my interests, entertaining the opinion of me he did.”

Towards the end of his term of office in Ceylon, Sir George Anderson was a very sick man. He retired in 1855 at his own request. C. A. Lorenz, the brilliant Ceylonese lawyer and journalist, wrote from England to Morgan: “The old Governor has not arrived in London as yet. They say he is all wrong in mind and body, cut up at his own bad management in Ceylon and desirous of drowning his sorrow in the cheap wines of the Continent. I

don’t believe it. I think a Bengal Civil Servant ought to be proof against such maudlin sentiment.”

Sir George Anderson died on March 17th, 1857, in his 67th year. He had married three times and left a widow and fifteen children.

## XI

## SIR HENRY WARD

(1855-1860)

*A Liberal in Action*

**S**IR HENRY GEORGE WARD, who was Governor of Ceylon from 1855 to 1860, was one of the small number of rulers of the Island who had had experience of public life in England. John Ferguson, who was a journalist and newspaper proprietor in Ceylon for fifty years, wrote: "Statesmen bred in the free air of the House of Commons, as a rule, make the best Governors of Crown Colonies; at least three or four in the Ceylon list—Wilmot Horton, Stewart Mackenzie, Sir Henry Ward and Sir William Gregory—had such a training, and stand out pre-eminently as among her best administrators, although equally able and useful were two others—Governors Sir Edward Barnes and Sir Hercules Robinson—who had not home parliamentary experience."

This is a generalization which has some substance. But it can be argued just as plausibly that the military Governors made the best rulers of Ceylon, especially those who fought with Wellington like Brownrigg, Barnes, Colin Campbell and Paget. Ward was, however, one of the most successful Governors of Ceylon by any standards.

• He was born on February 27th, 1797, the eldest son of Robert Plumer Ward, of Gilston Park, Hertfordshire, and Catherine Julia, daughter of C. J. Maling of West Herrington, Durham. The father was well known in literary circles as the author of *Tremaine*, a book which caused a sensation when it was published and ran into several editions. He was also something of a politician, highly esteemed by his contemporaries. It is said that Pitt mentioned his name in his dying delirium, the impression created being that Pitt regretted not having sufficiently appreciated Ward's claim on him.

Henry Ward was educated at Harrow and was barely out of his teens when he went as attache to the British Minister at Stockholm. He was transferred to the Hague in 1818. Canning chose him as the first British Ambassador to the newly-constituted Central American Republic of Mexico in October 1823. He was then only 26. He wrote what was for a long time the standard work on that country in English. Lady Ward, a Swinburne and aunt of the poet Algernon Charles Swinburne, illustrated the book with her drawings. "He also represented British Majesty at Madrid in a style of regal splendour more honourable to his country than profitable to his family, who inherited little from him beyond the reflected benefits of his fame as a successful ruler."

Ward returned to England in 1824 and retired from the diplomatic service in 1827. He made a name for himself as a Liberal politician when Liberalism was rather at a discount and founded and edited the *Weekly Chronicle*. He entered the House of Commons as Member for St. Albans and took a keen interest in railway enterprise in the early days of speculation.

In 1846, Ward was appointed Under Secretary to the Admiralty. He is described at the time as "a handsome man, expert fencer and pistol shot". He spent freely. According to the late J. R. Weinman, "Sir Henry Ward went through two fortunes... He lived and spent like a Russian Grand Duke before the Revolution or the Jubilee Plunger". He retired from politics in 1849, giving up the seat for Sheffield to which he had migrated from St. Albans, and accepted the office of High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands then under the protection of the British Crown.

In the Ionian Islands he is said to have exercised stringent rule over the Greek inhabitants. In consequence of a proclamation which he issued regarding the leader of a political rising he earned the nickname of "Dead or Alive Ward".

From the office of "protector" of the Ionian Islands, he was, appointed Governor of Ceylon in May 1855. His term of office was a notable one in the development of the Colony and can perhaps be best described in the mid-Victorian prose of his friend and contemporary, A. M. Ferguson, the forceful editor of the *Colombo Observer*:

“He relieved the cares of a protective government, however, by varying them with a good deal of devotion to out-of-door exercise in the pursuit of sport. The result was that he brought to Ceylon a physical frame, the very type of that we are accustomed to associate with the British farmer. Undeterred by the greater fervour of a tropical climate, or the malaria which haunted such scenes of ancient but abandoned industry as Tissamaharama, the Giant’s Tank, and other great works, Sir Henry Ward continued his out-door habits in Ceylon, fulfilling in the first year of his rule his promise, that whereas when he first met those associated with him in the Government and the Legislature he knew less than any of them by personal inspection of Ceylon, the case would be reversed when he next formally met them... and well did he fulfil his pledge.

“The collected volumes of Sir Henry Ward’s Minutes are a monument of industrious, persevering research, such as not one of his predecessors left behind. These Minutes would be valuable if but for the stores of topographical knowledge they embody... He did not confine his tours to the beaten tracks of the high roads or rest in the centres of civilisation. He bivouacked on the grassy glades and amidst the jungle bushes, which distinguish the once teeming but now desolate region of the north and east of the Island, braving in his exploration the attacks of the fever-demon who haunts those scenes of silent beauty—scenes once of rich fertility; and it was but a natural and a noble wish to be the means of restoring to them fruitfulness and population. But Sir Henry’s mind was too practical to allow of his being seduced into attempting impossibilities. He gave up the idea of crowding the work of generations into a few brief years—devoting himself instead to the really useful tasks within his reach, of restoring or creating irrigation works where population was ready to enter on the possession of the gifts of soil and water—and give a legislative sanction to such local regulations as the people themselves might propose as necessary in their various localities for the protection and encouragement of the culture of the great native staple—rice. In this direction Sir Henry Ward did much for native interests, and when every allowance is made for the difference of opinion, as to the cost and ultimate benefit of some of the work projected and in progress, we feel that on the gratitude of the natives Sir

Henry Ward has a strong claim... Who shall say that Sir Henry Ward has not well earned the gratitude of the European community?

“Sir Henry Ward, by judicious and conciliatory measures, has been very successful in procuring the settlement of questions such as that of the ‘military reserves’, which had embarrassed his predecessors, and kindred Municipal and other improvements. Nor can we characterise otherwise than as a ‘wise liberality’ the large increase Sir Henry Ward was instrumental in procuring to the allowances of those to whom the civil administration of the Island is committed. While working hard himself, Sir Henry Ward showed a true appreciation of the merits of hard workers, whom he had generally encouraged and advanced. He proposed and carried through Council a graduated scale of remuneration, which leaves no room for the old apologies for inertness and incapacity.

“While noticing the improvements in the means of communication which Sir Henry Ward had originated, we ought not to have forgotten that he restored to usefulness the fine canal system which came down to us from our aquatic predecessors, the Dutch. In the electric telegraph he gave us means and facilities of communication of which our Dutch predecessors never dreamed, any more than they imagined the possibility of letters being transmitted from Galle to Jaffna, from Colombo to Trincomalee for a penny; while the teeming issues of the free Press are carried from the capital to the extremities of the Island at half that cost.

“Nor do we know why we should omit to mention the steamer *Pearl*. She has cost some money; but she has tended to make the western and southern portions of the Island acquainted with the previously mythical regions of the north and east. And then we must not forget the *Pearl*’s services at the pearl fisheries; nor the Governor’s visits to and his descriptions of them with the efforts to obtain all possible information tending to convert a capricious into a certain source of revenue. It cannot be said that Sir Henry Ward created the revenue from the pearl fishery, any more than he created the surplus saved for him by Sir George Anderson, or the constantly increasing revenue which distinguishes his term of government. Sir Henry was ‘a lucky Governor’. Just so, but he had the merit of making the best possible use of his luck;



and whether he had to deal with the permanent salt monopoly, the varying returns from the sales of lands, or 'the accident of an accident' which gave or withheld a pearl fishery, he left no measure of improvement untried, and most of his experiments have been wonderfully successful."

A. M. Ferguson's verdict is fair and well-considered even though its manner of expression by modern standards may be a little high-flown. After the careful and even parsimonious administration of his predecessor, Ward had no financial anxieties and he embarked on a programme of development to which his sound judgment materially contributed. The coffee industry was booming again and only the shortage of surveyors impeded the opening up of new land under the crop.

Ward was convinced that what the Island most required was a liberal expenditure on irrigation works and the construction and repair of roads. At the end of his period of office, a continuous road 769 miles in length encircled the whole island and every town of importance was connected with Colombo and Kandy by roads either wholly or partly macadamized. "No portion of British India", wrote Sir Emerson Tennent, "can bear comparison with Ceylon, either in the extent or excellence of its means of communications."

In 1855, Sir Henry Ward reported that a railway was "an absolute and imperative necessity" or Ceylon would "cease to exist as a coffee producing colony" in the face of Brazilian and Javanese competition. An earlier effort to construct the railway had been abandoned owing to the Ceylon depression in 1847 and a financial crisis in England. In February 1855, a meeting of planters held in Kandy suggested the re-imposition of the export duty on coffee for a limited period to finance the proposed railway. In July 1855, the Legislative Council unanimously agreed to the Governor's proposal that the Ceylon Government should guarantee the interest on a loan of £800,000 to the Ceylon Railway Company, a private concern which had been floated in London in 1845.

In 1856, a provisional contract was made by the Colonial Office and the Company, which was ratified by the Legislative Council. In 1857, Captain Moorsom, appointed by the Secretary of State, estimated the cost of the line to Kandy at £856,557. Work was

started in 1858 and the first sod of the Colombo terminal was turned by Sir Henry Ward amidst much jubilation, the party costing something like £2,000.

The Company's engineer soon came to the conclusion that the project would cost far more than £856,557. In fact his estimate was £2,214,000. The Legislative Council thereupon resolved to cancel the contract and issue debentures to repay the whole of the paid-up capital with the interest due, the Ceylon Government assuming all the Company's "property rights and liabilities". The total cost to the Colony was £368,275. 10s. 4d, while the value of the assets salvaged from the wreck was £59,135.5s. 11d. The acting Auditor-General, commenting on Sir Henry Ward's initiative in the matter, said wryly: "An energetic Governor is indeed a happy accident and whilst we possess one,—we shall bear in mind Burke's advice: 'Rather to run the risk of falling into faults in a course which leads us to act with effect and energy than to flounder out our days without blame and without use'."

The contract was awarded in 1863 to Favielle, a London firm. The work was completed for a sum of £1,738,483. 3s. 2d. which included the loss written off in connection with the Ceylon Railway Company. From the start the new railway was profitable and proved to be an increasing source of revenue. "We could well afford to lose a quarter of a million when the very cause of our loss has given us an average of £112,979", said Morgan.

Although a Liberal in politics in his own country, Sir Henry Ward was in no hurry to introduce democratic forms of government in Ceylon. He opposed all demands for popular control of the Legislative Council and a general replacement of the system of nomination by one of election of members. He conceded a modified form of election for the three European members but continued to nominate the members who represented the Sinhalese, Tamils and Burghers. He wrote in a despatch to the Colonial Office that "in a Colony the population of which consists of seven or eight thousand European settlers, a small though intelligent class of Burghers, and two million of Sinhalese, Tamils and Moormen, wholly unaccustomed to the working of a constitutional system, you cannot introduce the principle of Representative and Responsible Government as it is applied in Canada...the Crown for

many years must hold the balance between European and native interests, if it wished to see order maintained and legislation impartially conducted."

These views did not, however, make the Governor unpopular, for he was in most things broad-minded, was an intelligent observer of the wants of the country, and worked most harmoniously with officials and representatives of the people.

Lady Ward was the daughter of Sir John Swinburne, of Capheaton. They had two daughters, both of whom married Ceylon Civil Servants. The husband of one of the Ward girls was John Bailey who rose to be Principal Assistant to the Colonial Secretary. His appointment to this office in Colombo seemed to have caused some heartburning in the Service. The matter was taken up in the *Examiner* newspaper, then edited by Charles Ambrose Lorenz, a friend of the Governor. Sir Henry Ward sent for Lorenz to Queen's House and said to him: "Lorenz, what's all this fuss about Bailey? What's the use of my being Governor if I cannot have my daughter to stay with me in Colombo"? No more was heard of the charge of favouritism. The other daughter married Alexander Young Adams. He began life as a planter, became Director of Education and acted as Auditor-General. Within twenty years of his first appointment he had filled some of the highest posts in the Civil Service. He retired at the age of 55 on a pension which he drew for over twenty-three years.

The Galle Face promenade, one of the glories of Colombo, is a permanent memorial to Sir Henry Ward. To quote from A. M. Ferguson once again, "In June 1860, Sir Henry Ward bade farewell to the scene of his administrative triumphs in Ceylon, a memorial for his retention at an enhanced salary being met with the intimation that the man who had so successfully ruled Ceylon had been transferred to a more important sphere at Madras... Sir Henry Ward, alas, had scarcely assumed the reins of government in Madras when he fell a victim to cholera, an attack to which his exposure to malarial influences in Ceylon had predisposed him."

He left Ceylon on June 30th, 1860, and died in Madras on August 2nd. A statue to commemorate his work in Ceylon was erected in Kandy by public subscription. The pedestal had an inscription from a passage of a speech made by him: "My conscience tells me that to the best of my judgment and my abilities I have tried to do my duty by you, and it is my hope that you will think of me hereafter as a man whose heart was in his work."

## XII

### SIR CHARLES MACCARTHY

(1860—1863)

*Safety First*

SIR CHARLES TUSTAN MACCARTHY was Governor of Ceylon for only three years but he was a member of the Island's public service for thirteen years before his elevation to the Governorship.

He was born in 1820, the son of Mr. Dennis MacCarthy of Cork and had a good education. At his death *The Times* (of London) said in an editorial that "he was a man of the most apprehensive intelligence and of the most varied learning. An elegant, though hardly profound, classical scholar, his command of the great instruments of modern language was singularly complete. In French, Italian and German he possessed not only the facility, but the graces of speech, not only the power of a ready writer, but the finest discrimination of a master of style, and, as he passed from one nationality to another, the delight at the charm of his diction was only exceeded by the wonder of his familiarity with every literature. These were the materials out of which he and his friends hoped and believed that, after the labours and anxieties of public life, he would be enabled to build up a name of intellectual worth to the honour of the country that had recognised his talents and employed his more active energies."

His first overseas appointment was as Superintendent of one of the smaller West Indian colonies. "In that insignificant sphere", MacCarthy "gave evidence of the rare capacity that can handle the least and gravest matters with equal accuracy and dexterity, and which, though capable of the largest inductions, is not indifferent to the lightest details. On returning home on leave of absence from his post, he attracted the attentions of the heads of his department and was soon transferred to more serious and responsible duties."

MacCarthy was sworn in as Auditor-General of Ceylon and Controller of Revenue, with a seat in the Legislative Council, on June 1st, 1847. He was promoted to the office of Colonial Secretary in succession to Sir Emerson Tennent, who left the Island on December 18th, 1849. He held that post till he was appointed Governor nine years later, the first and only Colonial Secretary to be appointed directly to be head of the Government. MacCarthy served under Torrington, Anderson and Ward and had acted as Governor twice. They were eventful years in Ceylon, starting with the "rebellion" of 1848 and ending with the dynamic regime of Sir Henry Ward.

MacCarthy thus had a wide experience of the people and the problems of the country before he assumed the highest office. Although he did not always get on well with Sir George Anderson, he was not in general a difficult man to his colleagues. He managed to keep clear of the squabbles and intrigues in the Civil Service during Torrington's regime which were exposed before the parliamentary commission on the 1848 disturbances.

In the years following the Torrington regime the Colonial Office enjoined a policy of strict economy. Sir Henry Ward spent lavishly on public works when the finances of the Colony had improved but once again the Secretary of State put a curb on expenditure. MacCarthy was requested to accumulate a surplus which could meet the expenses for the construction of the railway from Colombo to Kandy.

He had a good friend in Richard Morgan who was now going up the official ladder, holding at different times office as judge and Crown lawyer. In 1858 Morgan was in England on a holiday and to be called to the English Bar and MacCarthy was a frequent correspondent of his. In a letter dated September 29th, MacCarthy gives an interesting account of affairs in Ceylon:

"I have since heard with lively satisfaction the success of your main object in visiting England, by your rapid and flattering call to the Bar. I presume your return to Ceylon will now not be delayed beyond the time originally proposed, especially as Mr. Temple has applied for leave of absence. I hope of our meeting before you return.

"As you will probably have heard, I have determined to delay no longer my long-projected trip to Europe, and have obtained from

the Governor fifteen months' leave from the beginning of March next. I have engaged cabins in the steamer which touches at Galle about the 2nd or 3rd of that month, and we hope to be at Southampton in the first week of April. I look forward with some pleasure, as you may imagine, to seeing all my friends again, and 'taking a life bath in England' (as Montalembert has it) after an absence of nearly eleven years. My last arrival in Europe, in February 1848, was coincident with the downfall of Louis Philippe. It will be a curious, but not altogether unexpected chance, if I now come in for the upset of Louis Napoleon. I cannot think that in a country like France he will be much longer committed to play such 'fantastic tricks before high heaven'.

"Your account of Ceylon men and things in England is most curious and interesting. I can quite understand the rise and prevalence of opinions such as you describe about expenditure &c. We certainly are going rather fast, and shall have to pull up, I think, before long. But it is not, as you justly remark, the money spent on irrigation works that is to be grudged, or that is likely to be excessive in amount. The alarming thing to me is the quantity of money thrown away on roads, on which there is not, and never will be, any remunerative traffic, and the general tendency in all public departments, not sufficiently checked, to look on mere expenditure as a *bonus per se* without reference to its results—to think, in short, a virtuous thing to spend money for the mere sake of spending it.

"With regard to the railway, I find a good deal of alarm abroad here of the kind indicated in the enclosed letter which I cut out of the *Ceylon Times* of yesterday. I don't know who 'Colonist' is, though the editor, as you will see, speaks of it as a well-known signature.

"I hear the directors in England are greatly offended (and no wonder) at the enormous expense of the inauguration dinner which will not fall far short of, if it does not exceed, two thousand pounds! I pleaded in vain against it at the time, for it seemed to me that the same end might be attained by a much cheaper demonstration.

"With all this, our financial prospects are good. My estimate of revenue for the ensuing year is no less than £640,000 and, as you know, I always take care to be on the safe side in estimating. I have little doubt that the actual results will give over £650,000. If instead of letting our miscellaneous expenditure go on increasing in proportion to revenue, we had been content sternly to keep it

down for a few years of this decade, i.e., to about £400,000, we might have constructed the railway out of current revenue without incurring a farthing of debt. As it is we shall still do well enough with common care and prudence, which, however, are somewhat uncommon qualities everywhere.

"I daresay the columns of the *Observer* will have enlightened you as to the very unfair and uncandid attack made by the Bishop of Colombo on the school commission, over which I have the honour to preside, an attack which I was obliged to rebut somewhat vigorously. I don't think his lordship will take up the gauntlets again in a hurry."

"Our friend Darley has come back. Much as I always liked him, and greatly as I appreciated his sterling intellect and character, I find him much improved by his residence in Europe. It is quite refreshing to come in contact with so much vigour and honesty in this somewhat relaxed intellectual atmosphere. The Governor has just offered him a seat in the Legislative Council, but, I believe, he has decided on *not* accepting it, a step which I regret, though I quite appreciate the motives for it."

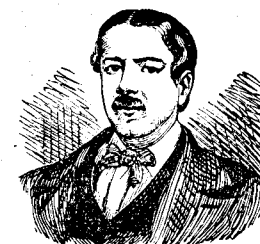
In England, Morgan came in contact with judges, well known lawyers and politicians. He breakfasted with Sir Benjamin and Lady Hawes, the parents of Lady MacCarthy. Sir Benjamin was the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies who had strongly resisted the enquiry which Morgan, through friends of Ceylon in England, had helped to secure into the 1848 troubles.

MacCarthy took his long-awaited holiday and while in England he was nominated Governor by the Duke of Newcastle, the Secretary of State. He arrived in Ceylon as Governor on October 22nd, 1860. He took up the threads where he had left them; only he was now master without the forceful Sir Henry Ward to push him around.

The letter to Morgan reveals the cautious and almost timid attitude of MacCarthy in his handling of the public finances. The European planters and merchants were incensed by the parsimonious policy he adopted in regard to road construction. He was charged with failing to build roads in the coffee districts, and with allowing existing roads to fall into disrepair. Not that the Governor did not appreciate the importance of good roads. He refused to be hustled by the planters, and was determined to produce a surplus in the revenue for the railway.



Sir Henry Ward



Sir Charles MacCarthy



Sir Hercules Robinson



Sir James Longden



Sir William Gregory



Sir Arthur Gordon



Major Skinner, the Commissioner of Public Works, enjoyed MacCarthy's confidence. He writes: "Directly the road was opened, I drove Sir Charles MacCarthy up to Balangoda. He was enchanted with the work, and I showed him that we had saved 57 per cent. of the estimate and volunteered to complete another section of equal distance for the surplus money if he would authorize the expenditure. I pointed out to him what poor encouragement it would be to the Department, if the money thus saved should go back to the Treasury. To this assertion he agreed, and I had the satisfaction of making my way up to Haputale, and of saving that district from almost total ruin."

Between 1860 and 1863 Sir Charles MacCarthy had accumulated a surplus of £525,505, of which £106,198 came from sums voted but not expended on public works. He had, however, spent £500,000 on public works during the period in question, a slightly larger amount than was spent by Sir Henry Ward who has been praised universally for his liberality in road construction.

MacCarthy was an accomplished scholar and a man of sound judgment. He delivered the inaugural lecture to the members of the Colombo Atheneum on December 21st, 1850 and presided over the public meeting for the establishment of the Colombo library. He had many friends among the Ceylonese but also some detractors. Morgan records in his diary: "In the evening dinner at L's (probably Lorenz)... Both were strong against Sir C. MacCarthy. One said Sir Henry Ward's prevailing thought was 'Ceylon' and he laboured for its good. MacCarthy's was 'MacCarthy', and he laboured for his advancement."

During the rule of Sir Charles MacCarthy, for the first time instructions were sent by the Secretary of State to the effect that votes of officials were, like their time, to be at the entire disposal of the Governor. But this did not put a complete stop to the exercise of a certain independence of judgment by some officials in their votes as well as in their comments.

Sir Charles married in 1848 Sophia Brunel, the eldest daughter of Sir Benjamin Hawes, K.C.B., Under Secretary of State for War. He returned to Europe on leave in 1863. He died at the Spa in Belgium, on August 18th, 1864.

His career may be summed up in the words of *The Times* editorial, which has already been quoted from, as follows: "Short as was his enjoyment of wealth and dignity, it is something to have

shown that the tastes and accomplishment of letters are not irreconcilable with the careful discharge of official functions and the wise management of the concerns of State, and that our institutions permit such a man as Sir Charles MacCarthy to compete successfully with the discreet mediocrities of intellect, and the superiorities of birth and fortune."

## XIII

## SIR HERCULES ROBINSON

(1865—1872)

*A Great Administrator*

**S**IR GEORGE HERCULES ROBINSON, who was Governor of Ceylon from 1865 to 1872, was one of the greatest Colonial administrators of his day. He was raised to the peerage as Baron Rosmead in 1896.

The second son of Admiral Hercules Robinson of Rosmead, in the county of Westmeath, Ireland, and Frances, daughter of H. W. Wood of Rosmead, he was born on December 19th, 1824. He passed through Sandhurst and was gazetted a second-lieutenant in the Royal Irish Fusiliers, but he retired from the Army in 1846 and accepted an appointment under the Poor Law Board. He was engaged on special service during the Irish famine of 1848 and acted as a Justice of Peace in County Kildare. In 1852 he was appointed chairman of a committee to inquire into the market fairs in Ireland.

When he was thirty years of age, he took an overseas appointment as President of Montserrat in the West Indies. He was next appointed Lieutenant-Governor of St. Christopher's, at the same time holding the dormant post of Governor-in-chief of the Leeward Islands. His chief responsibility in that post was immigration from India and arranging for the number of coolies required for the sugar plantations.

In 1859, Robinson went as Governor to Hongkong and held that office during the war with China (1860—61). He negotiated with China for the cession of Kowloon. In 1863 he was a member of the Commission which inquired into the financial position of the Straits Settlements.

He arrived in Ceylon as Governor in March 1865, landing at Galle and made immediate contact with the affairs of a flourishing Colony momentarily passing through a minor political storm.

Major Skinner writes: "In March 1865, Sir Hercules Robinson arrived as Governor, and the month after his landing gave earnest of the interest he intended taking in the welfare of the Island, by starting a tour through Haputale and Saffragam. The Colony was much to be congratulated on the advent of such a Governor, the most painstaking, the most hardworking man I have ever met in his position. An extraordinary love of justice was his most peculiar characteristic, and I have seen frequent instances of this when travelling with him; he would not decide any claim on a superficial view of the case, but would insist on receiving most minute details before giving an opinion.

"He astonished me on one occasion, when on a remote journey, he called me into his temporary office, and said: 'At last I have got to the bottom of that case of yours *in re* Modeliar Fonceka...'

"Travelling with Sir Hercules, he would often discuss subjects of the kind with me, and never would he allow the humblest person to rest under a sense of injustice; he would require to be satisfied that every real grievance should be thoroughly investigated. This is a beautiful trait in the character of a public man; but it requires a peculiar temperament to carry it to the extent Sir Hercules did."

During the interregnum between the departure of Sir Charles MacCarthy and the arrival of Sir Hercules, the Government of Ceylon was administered by Major General O'Brien, who is described as "a mild and inoffensive, old gentleman". Public opinion was at the time excited on several matters. One of these was the decision by the Secretary of State that the military expenditure should be borne by the Colony without the Legislature having any voice in deciding the amount of the charges. Orders had come from London that surpluses of revenue in Ceylon were no longer to be spent on public works but to be retained in the Treasury.

The Legislative Council met on August 17th, 1864 and, in the usual way, the acting Governor's address was referred to a committee of the House so that it could draft a reply of thanks. When the Council came to consider the reply, a series of amendments were moved unexpectedly by the unofficial members. One of the amendments proposed by George Wall read: "That this Council desire to record their dissatisfaction and discontent that revenues have been exacted for several years so far beyond the requirements of the public service, and so much larger than could be devoted to

public purposes, and they further complain that whilst the revenues have been so abundant the efficiency of nearly every public department has been seriously impaired by the parsimonious policy of the Government."

The official members were taken unawares, and this particular amendment was passed by a single vote. A vote against the Government in a Crown Colony was unheard of. As a rule, the reply to the address was passed in fifteen minutes, but the Council had been wrangling for four hours. Meanwhile the acting Governor was waiting in Queen's House in full uniform with his heavy load of medals on his breast. When at length a letter was brought to him, it was not a summons; it contained bad news.

The Government's defeat had no effect on its policy. At a subsequent meeting of the Council, an Ordinance embodying the Secretary of State's instructions was passed by the official majority of the Council. On November 15th, 1864, the six unofficial members resigned in protest. They were C. A. Lorenz, George Wall, W. Thompson, J. Capper, James D'Alwis and John Eaton—three Englishmen and three Ceylonese. Richard Morgan, who was now Queen's Advocate, with a seat in the Governor's Executive Council, advised Major General O'Brien that he need not accept the resignations and the Council could conduct its business in the absence of the unofficial members if it so wished. For this, he was attacked in the Press and became unpopular among his former friends and supporters.

The unofficial members sent a strong protest to the Secretary of State and founded the Ceylon League, which carried on the agitation for popular control of the Budget and espoused other causes. The Colonial Office, under Cardwell, in a curt reply, refused to give way but appointed a Commission of Inquiry composed of three Civil Servants, three military officers and three Colonists. The Committee unanimously reported that the annual cost of the garrison could be reduced from £200,000 to about £160,000. In 1867 a permanent Ordinance was passed to this effect by the Legislative Council and the Colonial Office surrendered its control of the Budget.

The vacant seats in the Legislative Council were filled with non-entities. Sir Richard Morgan's diary at this period contains references to the inner working of the Government and the day to day problems of the Governor. There was an acute rice shortage

and shops were looted. The Queen's Advocate was the Governor's closest adviser and often roused the jealousy of the Colonial Secretary, Mr Gibson.

On October 3rd, 1866, Sir Hercules Robinson opened his second session of the Legislative Council, and in the course of his address, made some comments which gave offence to a large section of the public. He concluded his remarks on the food shortage with the following words:

"The wants of the native population of the Island are few, are easily supplied by a day's work in their own gardens or paddy fields. Their philosophy, their love of ease and indolence, or their limited ideas, whichever may be the real cause, render them perfectly content with what they already possess, and it is therefore futile, I think, to expect that they could, by any mere outlay of Government money, be ever brought to supply with food an immigrant population, whose presence in the Island is mainly rendered necessary through their own apathy."

The Sinhalese and Tamil members made pointed reference in Council to this adverse verdict, and resented the reproach of "apathy" though there was not a little justification for the Governor's remarks. No better account can be given of what was happening at this time in official circles than the entries in Morgan's diary. The following are typical:

- 2nd Oct. Executive Council to hear the "Royal speech". Colonial Secretary quite tame, and said not a word.
- 3rd Oct. Opening of Council and went through the usual absurd ceremony. Speech excellent and everyone admired it. In the evening a capital dinner at Queen's House. The Governor tried hard to make me play at cards, but I resisted the temptation.
- 6th Oct. Council. C. (Coomaraswamy) made a very affected and out-of-place speech. Gibson and myself replied to it.
- 10th Oct. C. meddlesome as usual, but innocuous. I obtained the first reading of the Registration of Old Deeds and Police bill.
- 12th Oct. At Mr. G's request sounded C. S. as to whether he would take the District Court of Kandy, which he very properly declined to do. Dined out in the evening. Great scarcity of rice, and prices rising.

15th Oct. Complaint as to rice continues.

16th Oct. Great anxiety as to rice.

17th Oct. I was very much vexed with G's conduct towards me. (G. was W. C. Gibson, the Colonial Secretary). I went to see him. He turned away angrily. I went again to his room, when he was uncivil to a degree. I left him. With all my anxiety to pull well with him, and to put up with slights which his insolence at times subjects me to, my sense of self-respect recoils at his conduct which I can bear no longer.

20th Oct. Executive Council. G. made a furious onslaught on me in the Executive Council. Complained of the delay in preparing the Fiscals' Ordinance and was markedly offensive. He said he wanted the opinions of men (with an unmistakable emphasis) who were competent to pronounce an opinion on the subject. He was shown to be irretrievably wrong, and was defeated. V. and C. said his manner was particularly offensive. Had to practise no little self-command to prevent an explosion.

25th Oct. Town quiet today owing to large supplies. Threats against me repeated. Saw the Governor in the afternoon and had a most satisfactory conference with him. H. E. informed me that he had told Mr. G. that he had no "conceivable justification" for his conduct towards me, and even if I was blameable for delay in preparing the Fiscals' Ordinance he had no right to act in the way he did: but that H. E. thought I was not blameable for delay. He had seen many Attorney-Generals and had done work with them, but had seen none who did their work so promptly and so correctly as I did mine. H. E. further added that he would not allow measures that had been agreed to, to be opened up or members of the Executive Council to come with written speeches against each other and ask them to be recorded in the minutes; that it was not fair to himself that, after holding his peace, as the Colonial Secretary had done when the Governor read his opening speech in the Executive Council, though H. E. called for suggestions, and said that he had read his speech in order that the members might make their suggestions, and if they did not do so they would be committed to the policy indicated therein,—he should come at the last moment and raise the question on the



principle of the bill to which the Governor had openly committed himself, &c. I expressed my acknowledgments to the Governor and left him.

9th Nov. I hoped to do a lot of work, and was indeed busily engaged when a note from Queen's House took me away. The Governor wished me to take the opportunity to correct the misapprehension which his speech on the apathy of the natives had given rise to.

10th Nov. Very animated meeting in Council. C. (Coomaraswamy) annoyed me by an attack upon the Education Committee in a very insidious manner. He "hoped the Irrigation Committee would do its work better than the Education Committee; indeed that it would work and make its report", &c.

He also, in an offensive manner took exception to the Colonial Secretary referring to the mis-apprehensions as to the charge of apathy in the Governor's opening speech. I got warm and spoke warmly. I pointed out that the Governor could not treat the question without noticing the cause which, in his opinion, forms the strongest obstacle to the successful extension of paddy cultivation; that if he believed the apathy of the natives was the great stumbling block, it would have been simply dishonest not to have said so merely from a maudlin anxiety not to give offence. Was it true or was it false?

I pointed out what previous writers had said on the subject and of the apathy of the natives, and also referred to the fact that labourers had to be brought from India for the pioneer corps for railway works, and for the estates, all of which might have been supplied by the natives if they were truly desirous to work; that they would work for a day or two, but that they did not like continuous, sustained exertion, and could not, therefore, be depended upon.

The entry in Morgan's diary on the 5th April 1867 describes a trial run on the new railway. Morgan rode on the engine with Molesworth, the engineer.

On February 13th, the *Kandy Herald*, a bi-weekly newspaper was established. An early issue contained Sir Hercules Robinson's despatch on the Ceylon League petition written in March 1866 to the Secretary of State. "The despatch reached the editor's hands with the connivance of the men in high authority, and for some

time subsequently important documents were placed at the disposal of this section of the press. A leading merchant in Kandy was the medium of communication."

The publication of the despatch came as a bolt from the blue to the public. There was a good deal of feeling against the Governor for his trenchant criticisms. Morgan's opinion was that "the despatch itself is a most satisfactory production and its reasoning in general unanswerable, but its publication at this time is most injudicious." Fiery speeches were made and strongly-worded resolutions passed at a public meeting held under the auspices of the League. A supplement of the *Observer* charged the Governor, without any foundation for its statement, with responsibility for publishing the despatch. In two letters to the newspapers, George Wall replied to the Governor's arguments.

The "unauthorized publication" caused some interest in England and questions were asked in the House of Commons. The Duke of Buckingham and Chandos had succeeded Cardwell and when the matter was referred to him, after hearing the whole story from Robinson's own lips—he had been His Grace's guest at Stowe—the Duke laughed heartily. He said the procedure was not altogether unknown in England, but statesmen were more fortunate in the men they trusted.

Soon the League dissolved and old friendships were revived. The record of legislation during Robinson's period of office as Governor is impressive. No doubt it owed much to the capacity and skill of his Queen's Advocate. The Municipalities Ordinance, giving Municipal Councils to Colombo, Kandy and Galle was passed in 1865. Other important measures included the Service Tenures Ordinance, Kandyan Marriage Ordinance and Village Communities Ordinance. The decimal currency was introduced—nearly a hundred years before India adopted it and Great Britain began thinking about it seriously. A medical college was started and a generous programme of public works was carried out.

In 1869 the coffee blight *hemileia vastatrix* made its appearance. Despite the warnings of Dr. Thwaites (from 1849 to 1880, the Superintendent of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Peradeniya) the disease was not at first regarded as a serious menace.

In 1870, Queen Victoria's second son, Prince Alfred, the Duke of Edinburgh, paid a ceremonial visit to Ceylon. The visit was considered important enough for a whole book to be published about it. The lithographed pictures in the book certainly show evidence of the fact that Sir Hercules Robinson put on a dazzling show for the benefit of the Prince and his party. They arrived in Colombo on the *Galatea* on March 30th. On the following day a levee was held at Queen's House and "proved the most brilliant and numerous attended of any that has ever been held in Ceylon. The Royal presence brought together chiefs and headmen who had not left their jungle homes for half a lifetime". On the evening of Friday, April 1st, the Governor and Lady Robinson held a reception in honour of the Prince. One of the chief entertainments organized for him in the interior of the Island was an elephant kraal. Capper, the author of the official account of the Royal tour writes:

"Amongst the many visitors present at this kraal, and favoured with the privilege of admission to the Royal Stand, was a most interesting group—an aged Kandyan woman of the better class, the wife of Iddamalgodā, a chief of the Saffragam or Ratnapoora district, and principal director of the kraal arrangements, who, with her daughter and some female attendants and punkah-bearer, came to see the kraal somewhat, and the Prince a good deal.

"Miss Iddamalgodā is a splendidly-formed classical beauty, and an heiress into the bargain; she was just entering upon the ripening development of oriental eighteen; her limbs might have formed studies for a sculptor; her features would have charmed Correggio; her rich black glossy hair, dark as midnight, falling in luxuriant clusters over her bare shoulders, and looped up here and there with threads of gold studded with jewels, might well have been the envy of any queen.

"This jungle beauty, though brought up far removed from the world and its gaieties, was as self-possessed and as much at ease, when addressed by His Royal Highness, as though accustomed to courtly society from early youth. Miss Iddamalgodā is believed to have received no instruction in the English language, but we could not help observing a quiet smile steal over her fine features.

whilst the Prince conversed by her side with one of his suite, as though she had comprehended somewhat of his remarks.

"There was, however, ordinarily a settled melancholy on her face, and we learnt afterwards the cause: the poor girl was engaged, against her will, to be married to an ugly old Kandyan chief! Have the days of chivalry passed so completely away, that there is no young knight to rescue this fair damsel from the clutches of the indigenous ogre!"

The Duke was also entertained in Colombo at the home of Charles de Soysa, then the richest man in Ceylon. The palatial de Soysa mansion on the Galle Road, Colombo, and the model farm, gifted by Mr. de Soysa, were both named after Alfred Duke of Edinburgh.

Sir Hercules Robinson relinquished the Governorship of Ceylon in January 1872 and was gazetted Governor of New South Wales. He arrived in Sydney in June of that year and found himself for the first time a Governor in one of the self-governing Colonies. In September 1874 he negotiated the cession of the Fiji Islands. He stayed at Suva and administered the Islands until the arrival of Sir Arthur Gordon. Robinson was Governor of New South Wales for seven years. He often referred to this period of office as the happiest of his life. In December 1878 he was appointed Governor of New Zealand but remained in that country for only eighteen months, for in August 1880 he was appointed Governor of the Cape Colony and High Commissioner of South Africa, in succession to Sir Bartle Frere.

Robinson arrived in South Africa shortly before the disaster of Majuba, and was one of the commissioners for negotiating a peace which was personally distasteful to him. He returned to England in 1883 to advise the Government on the terms of the new convention concluded with the Transvaal Boers. He won Kruger's confidence, and supported the efforts of Cecil Rhodes to unite the British and the Dutch in Cape Colony.

In 1891 when he was 71, he was persuaded by Lord Rosebery to return to South Africa. The Jameson Raid led to an estrangement between him and Rhodes, and he was out of sympathy with the policy of the new Secretary of State, Joseph Chamberlain. Ill health caused him to resign his post and return to England. He

was succeeded by Sir Alfred (later Lord) Milner. In 1896 he was raised to the peerage as Baron Rosmead. He had done much for establishing peace, promoting good feeling, improving international communications and opening up new territories to British enterprise. He died, after a long illness, on October 28th, 1897, at 42 Princes Gate, London. His wife was a daughter of the 10th Viscount Valentia. They had a son and daughter. Robinson has been described as "prudent, cautious, and business-like, genial, kindly and free from pomposity; above middle height and of a dignified presence".

## XIV

## SIR WILLIAM GREGORY

(1872—1877)

*Sunlight and Shadows*

THE *Encyclopaedia Britannica* does not have an article on Sir William Gregory. In the article on his second wife, the Irish playwright, it merely says: "In 1881 she married Sir William Gregory, a well-known Irish M.P".

Yet Sir William Gregory, who was Governor of Ceylon from 1872 to 1877, was one of the ablest and most enlightened men to hold the office. He was born on July 12th, 1817, the only son of Robert Gregory of Coole Park, County Galway, Ireland, and Elizabeth O'Hara of Raheen in the same county, at the residence of his grandfather, the Under Secretary's Lodge in Phoenix Park, Dublin. He came of an old Irish family in which was dormant the ancient peerage of Marmion.

In 1813 his grandfather, William Gregory, was promoted to the position of Under Secretary and held it for eighteen years. For all practical purposes he was the ruler of the country under several changes of Lord-Lieutenant and Chief Secretary, and all were guided by his experience. His wife was Anne Trench, daughter of the Earl of Clancarty. The Under Secretary's Lodge in Phoenix Park was a delightful home. It is now the Papal Nunciature.

Even as a very small boy, William Gregory came in contact with famous men of the time who visited his grandfather at the Lodge. The following story was told by Gregory to Gladstone, the Liberal statesman, when they were dining at Grillions on January 31st, 1891. Lord Melbourne asked Gregory, when he was introduced to him as a little boy: "Now, my boy, is there anything you would like?" "Yes", I said, pointing to a very large stick of sealing wax. "That's right", said Lord Melbourne, pressing on me a bundle of pens, "begin life early. All these things belong to the

public, and your business must always be to get out of the public as much as you can." No one was less ready to practise the doctrine than Melbourne.

Gregory's father, a retiring and diffident man, took no part in public life. He was fond of hunting and was the fastest runner of his day at Oxford. His mother was said to have been a very beautiful woman. He himself was by temperament and ability the son of his grandfather rather than of his shadowy father.

One of the men who took an interest in young Gregory was the Marquis Wellesley, brother of the Duke of Wellington. When Wellesley, who was then Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, visited Phoenix Park one day, he saw the boy busily engaged in landing a large roach which he had hooked in the pond. The old man took a liking to the Under Secretary's grandson and sent him "a remarkably fine edition of Walton's 'Compleat Angler' with the inscription: To the compleat angler from his obedient servant Wellesley".

Educated first at Ward's school at Iver, Buckinghamshire, Gregory entered Harrow in 1831. He wrote: "I had been head of the school for a year and had gained every prize which was to be obtained except one—Greek iambics—and for that I ran second." C. T. Langley, one of the masters, considered him the cleverest boy he had had under him. He was Peel scholar and had Trollope as a contemporary.

Gregory went up to Christ Church, Oxford, at the beginning of the year 1835. He was second for the Craven, but his Oxford career fell short of promise. He got into a fast set and developed his fatal love of the turf as an undergraduate. He saw Bloomsbury win the Derby and himself made £300 on her. He broke down on the night before his final examination and left without a degree. He won £5,000 on Coronation in the Derby of 1841, quite an achievement for a young man of 24. Down from Oxford he spent the winter in Rome with his parents, the party making the journey through Italy in two carriages and a courier.

In the spring of 1842, at the age of 25, he contested and won the seat for Dublin in the British House of Commons, defeating Viscount Morpeth by 390 votes despite the great Daniel O'Connell supporting his opponent. The election cost Gregory £9,000, of which the chief item was "a gratification for 1,500 freemen at £3 a head".

After Gregory had taken his oaths as a Peelite back-bencher, O'Connell used to beckon him across the House for a chat, saying "if you could only see yourself in a glass, my dear boy, how much better you look than over the way, you would never go back to those fellows". From the day he entered Parliament he was treated almost as one of the family of Sir Robert Peel. He lived at No. 14 Park Street, Grosvenor Square, not far from Disraeli's house in Park Lane, and used constantly to walk home with 'Dizzy' from the House of Commons. "Hardly a week passed in which I did not dine with Mrs. Disraeli", he said. "Her dinners were small, not over good, but always gay and amusing."

Of Disraeli himself, Gregory wrote: "Disraeli was eminently Bohemian, imaginative without a particle of belief in anything, totally unprincipled—I do not use the word in an offensive sense, but as being devoid of all principles of policy."

Gregory refused an offer by Peel in 1846 of an Irish Lordship of the Treasury, with the conduct of Irish business in the House of Commons, in the temporary absence of Lord Lincoln, then Chief Secretary for Ireland. His father advised him to decline, considering him to be immature. But it was a mistake, because Peel lost interest in him thereafter.

Gregory failed to secure re-election to the Dublin seat in the election of August 1847. He was then nominated for his native county of Galway but withdrew and was for ten years out of Parliament. In 1849 he was appointed High Sheriff of Galway.

For the next six years he devoted himself exclusively to the turf for which he had a consuming passion. One year he won £10,015 and then lost heavily in the next. A quarrel over a racing matter with a Captain Vaughan resulted in a duel. It was probably the last duel fought on English soil and took place in Osterley Park, the seat of his friends, the Villiers family. He wrote: "My opponent's bullet sung close to my ear, I raised my pistol, took deliberate aim, by way of giving him a comfortable moment, then fired into the air. They said they did not require a second shot, and so went home on our way rejoicing."

Gregory's turf losses were heavy and he was obliged to sell two-thirds of his Galway estate of £7,000 a year to which he had succeeded on the death of his father. He now travelled in Egypt and



wrote a narrative of his journey. He finally quitted the turf but contributed interesting reminiscences of his career on the turf to Lawley's *Life of Lord Bentinck*.

In 1857 he was again elected to Parliament and regained some of his old influence. He declined office as a Lord of the Admiralty. In 1860 he initiated an inquiry into the British Museum and the arrangements of the South Kensington Museum. In 1867, on the recommendation of Disraeli, he was appointed a Trustee of the National Gallery.

Meanwhile his interest turned towards an overseas appointment and he chose Ceylon, probably because a cousin of his friend Layard of Nineveh was already holding a high position in the Colony. He spoke to Lady Waldegrave, a powerful political hostess of the day, who was his friend and "successfully betook herself to obtain the promise of it from Lord Granville". It was as simple as that.

In January 1872, Gregory married Elizabeth, third daughter of Sir William Clay, M.P. for Tower Hamlets, a well known public man. She was the widow of James Temple Bowdon. "She was", wrote Gregory, "a woman of many accomplishments, a good linguist, extremely fond of art, remarkably well read. I had been deeply attached to her for many years of trouble to her, and she amply rewarded the attachment by her own. Through her liberality, I was freed at once from every liability and went out to Ceylon with a comfortable private income besides my official salary. We were married by my old friend and school fellow, Hugh Pearson, at St. George's, Hanover Square, and set out for Brindisi."

The new Governor of Ceylon arrived at Galle Harbour, as was usual in those days. A brief stop at Queen's House, Galle, led him to decide to sell that house. He had his first brush with the Colonial Office in London when he sold the house without permission. He applied the proceeds to the purchase of Queen's Cottage, Nuwara Eliya, for £1,500 "with a good deal of wooded land at the back".

Gregory reached Colombo from Galle on the *Serendib* and assumed duties as Governor on March 4th, 1872. He turned, as he said, "from the West to the gloaming horizon of the East, and to Ceylon, the object of my ambition and day-dream for many a long year."

Mr. Gregory—for he was not knighted when he arrived—inaugurated his term of office by an extensive tour of the island, including the desolate and abandoned tank region of Nuwarakalawiya, which he later formed into a separate North Central Province. He proclaimed the ancient city of Anuradhapura the capital of the province, placing it under an able and experienced official, Frederick Dickson, who later became Governor of Cyprus. Gregory started restoring the irrigation reservoirs (tanks) of the ancient kings of Ceylon. "A large number of villagers", he wrote, "set to work, encouraged and stimulated by Mr. Dickson, and, as well as I recollect, work was going on at some nine hundred tanks within the first year. Never was a great social experiment more speedily and entirely successful. Crops were obtained where they had failed for years. The revenue rose immensely, sickness gradually declined, an eminently listless and lazy population being compelled to work resumed habits of industry, and on occasions of my subsequent visits to this district I was supplicated by various villagers to inspect their tanks and see what work they had done."

Among the restorations was the magnificent tank of Kalawewa, constructed by king Dhatusena in A.D. 459. "It was the great reservoir on which the whole water supply of the district depended. The river ran into it, and was dammed up, forming an inland sea, thirty-five miles in circumference. The bund was from sixty to eighty feet, and was several miles long. From it there used to run a canal, called the Yoda Ela, or Giant's Canal, to Anuradhapura, about sixty miles in length. This Canal supplied all the great store tanks en route, and supplied Anuradhapura and its bathing places."

Between 1873 and 1877 Gregory repaired a large part of the Yoda Ela. He instituted the custom of an annual gathering of the Government Agents, which he called the *darbar*, before the preparation of the annual budget estimates, to call attention to the list of public works and the needs of each of the provinces. The work on the Colombo breakwater was started in 1872, at an estimated cost of £630,000, the scheme embracing the erection of two jetties a thousand feet long and the dredging of the bar. The first stone of the new work was laid by the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) when he visited Ceylon in 1875. With

a flourishing revenue ready to hand, Sir William pressed on with the great arterial roads to Trincomalee and Jaffna and devoted considerable sums to the improvement of hospitals and prisons.

Gregory was deeply interested in the arts. In his first address to the Legislative Council in 1872, he proposed the construction of a museum in Colombo. "I propose in connection with this museum", he said, "to obtain reproductions of the inscriptions throughout the island, by means of photography, casts and hand-copying. These inscriptions, varying in character and dialect, will be of deep interest to the philologist, and throw light on the ancient usages, religious customs and early history of Ceylon. I propose to affix a limit on our collection. They should be strictly confined to the products of Ceylon."

He also did much to arouse interest in the ancient literature of Ceylon. "I am confident", he said, in his last address to the Legislative Council, "you will agree with me that it is highly expedient to make an effort to preserve the ancient literature of Ceylon. It is a duty which we owe not merely to the large and annually increasing number of students of oriental history and of oriental philology, but to the natives of the Island, many of whom have already widely distinguished themselves by antiquarian research, many of whom will devote themselves to it if facilities for study be afforded. With this object, for some time past, the Government has spent a small sum in procuring copies of all books of interest which are still in existence in the temple libraries. But, in addition to this, I have thought it advisable to take immediate steps to obtain reproductions of all other records which are to be found on rocks and detached stones, and which are gradually perishing by the action of time and weather and the ravages of men."

Like his predecessor, Sir Hercules Robinson, Gregory was able to place a great deal of new legislation on the statute book. In this he was helped by Sir Richard Morgan who was Queen's Advocate for fifteen years at a stretch. To him, Sir Richard Morgan was as his right hand. The Governor consulted him daily. Even when the latter became Chief Justice the Governor consulted him on public questions. "Not a day passes", wrote Gregory to Morgan, "that I don't trouble you, but must look to you only on

certain matters. What do you say to —'s proposal herewith annexed?"

Again: "Another letter, my dear Sir Richard, and probably tomorrow and after tomorrow will bring others from me." After a few days, "I am afraid I am a hard taskmaster not to give an overworked C. J. a moment's rest. I have half a mind to run down to Kandy (from Nuwara Eliya) to speak to you on this and other matters. It would spare your pen if I do."

One of the Governor's visitors at this time was Anthony Trollope, the novelist and an old schoolmate of his. This biographer of the second Lady Gregory has written that it is not fanciful to see in him (Gregory) the model of one of the brilliant spoiled-darling heroes, Lord Lufton, for instance. "Gregory's story had all the accoutrements of a Trollope 'political': the friendships of older statesmen for the young hero, the tug between personal and political loyalties, the great hostesses pulling wires, the costly elections, the lure of racing and gambling, the names unwisely set to bills for friends, even a duel to crown all. His faults and follies are the open and generous ones, and when he has to face their consequences, he does not whine."

The first Lady Gregory died at Kandy, on June 28th, barely ten months after their marriage. She was 43. They had gone on a trip to Anuradhapura during which she had gone out imprudently in the sun. Sir William writes in his Autobiography: "On my return from my journey I found her suffering from illness brought on by too much exposure to the heat of the sun. After a few days, first of anxious, then of hopeless, watching, she passed away, conscious to the last".

Once again he was discouraged and the loneliness became too much for him. The visit of the Prince of Wales (afterwards King Edward VII) in 1875 was a distraction. Sir William describes an incident at Kandy which can be set beside the meeting of the Prince's brother a few years earlier with the young Iddamalgodā Kumatihamy: "The wives of the chiefs were also assembled, in a blaze of jewellery. Among them was a celebrated old lady, one of the largest landowners in Ceylon. She was a woman of the highest rank and bluest blood, and had been lady-in-waiting to the Queen of Kandy. To the memory of her ancient mistress she had remained

unswervingly faithful, stubbornly refusing to pay her respects to the Governors or their wives—a good, honest, rebel at heart. She, however, had the strongest regard for Mr. Parsons, the Government Agent of the Central Province, and placed the most unhesitating confidence in him. He had persuaded her that she could not avoid paying her respects to the son of her sovereign. Mr. Parsons pointed her out to the Prince and told him the story. He at once descended from the raised *dais*, went to the lady and took her by the hand. He said “I have heard of your unshaken fidelity to your former mistress, and I admire you for it. But she is dead and gone. I ask you to show the same fidelity to my mother, your Queen, and to accept and wear this ornament (a gold brooch representing the Tudor rose) as one of the symbols of the English Crown, in remembrance of me.”

“I shall always wear it”, she said, “in memory of you and your mother, who will henceforth have no more devoted servant than myself.”

In October 1875, Gregory wrote to his friend Layard: “I am pretty nearly as anxious to get away from Ceylon as you are from Madrid. The loneliness of my life is unbearable.” So two years later he retired, before he need have.

Back in Ireland, Gregory married for the second time on March 4th, 1881, Augusta Persse, who became one of the leading figures of the Irish theatre as playwright, producer and patron of the drama. She has written: “When a woman of 28 marries a man of 63, there must always be a speculation as to whether she has done it for an establishment.” Bernard Shaw described her as the greatest Irishwoman of her time; and her death in 1932 drew from William Butler Yeats an even warmer tribute: “I have lost one who has been to me for nearly forty years my strength and my conscience”.

The waspish George Moore has left a picture of Lady Gregory in her first year of marriage: “It was pleasant to pass from her to Sir William, who was more at his ease, more natural. He wore the Lord Palmerston air”. Moore called on the Gregorys at the same time as Edwin Arnold, the author of *Light of Asia*, and Lady Gregory invited Sir Edwin to autograph a fan; she did not invite Moore though, says the latter, “at that time I had written

not only *A Modern Lover* but also *A Mummer's Wife*... Sir William came into the room just as I was leaving it, and she showed him the fan: he looked a little distressed at her want of tact, and it was some years afterwards that I heard, and not without surprise, that she had shown some literary ability in editing his memoirs”.

The difference in their ages did not affect their relationship. Sir William continued to live his life richly. He returned to Ceylon three times as a visitor; his wife accompanied him on one of these visits. In May of 1881, Robert Gregory was born, the pride of his father's old age. In autumn of 1891 his health began to fail, and his letters to Layard foreshadow the end: “I must tell you as my oldest friend, the whole truth—I am extremely ill... I have very little care for life, but I should like a few years more, to help poor Augusta and Robert, for these are critical years for them”.

He died in 1892. “A man of great natural abilities, real political talent and marked personal charm. But for a certain inherent instability, he might have easily attained to the most eminent political positions”, is the verdict of his widow's biographer. Lady Gregory herself wrote in her journal in 1930: “Yesterday, the anniversary of my marriage, half a century ago! So fresh still in my memory, the threshold of twelve such happy years! I looked younger than my age, so very slight. ‘She is a mere child’, Lady Halliburton delighted William by exclaiming!”

## XV

## SIR JAMES LONGDEN

(1877—1883)

*Festina Lente*

SIR JAMES ROBERT LONGDEN was in some ways an anticlimax after Gregory. He had worked his way up from the lowest rung of the Colonial service ladder and was a cautious bureaucrat. His lack of enterprise cannot be held against him, for he was Governor of Ceylon when the collapse of the coffee industry became inevitable.

He was born in 1827, the youngest son of John K. Longden, proctor, of Doctor's Common, London. He was only seventeen when he was appointed Government clerk in the Falkland Islands, two years after the establishment of civil government in that Colony. In 1860 he had risen to be Colonial Secretary and the next year he was promoted to be President of the Virgin Islands. He held other appointments in the area: Governor of Dominica in 1865; Governor of British Honduras in 1867; and Governor of Trinidad in 1870. In all these posts he doubtless impressed the Colonial Office as a competent administrator. The Colonial Office may have felt that it was time to moderate the pace in Ceylon set by three dynamic Governors—Henry Ward, Hercules Robinson and William Gregory—and sent Longden. Dull and safe men have their uses, and James Robert Longden did not let the Colonial Office down.

Longden's regime saw the collapse of the coffee industry. The catastrophe was caused by a fungus which attacked the leaves of the tree and ultimately destroyed it. The blight had appeared in 1869 when coffee was at the height of its prosperity and rapidly spread over hundreds of square miles of plantations where the only crop was coffee. In 1879 Longden reported that *Hemileia vastatrix* had "disastrously affected the productiveness of the coffee trees" and by 1882 that it had "spread over the whole island".

When Longden gave up the reins of office the export of coffee had fallen to 305,702 cwt., the lowest figure since 1848.

About 400 of the 1,700 European planters left Ceylon. Many of those who stayed abandoned coffee for cinchona and tea. In 1878 the area under coffee had been reduced to 100,000 acres and by the beginning of the century the industry had all but disappeared. One of the planters who went through the bitter experience wrote: "I have not seen it recorded, and so I venture to do so, that this Colony owes a vast debt of obligation to Sir James Longden for the manner in which he 'skipped' our little ship through the greatest tempest that a Colonial Governor was ever called upon to face. With a fallen revenue, a stricken staple enterprise, a community in penury all round him, Sir James had to meet all importunities, and yet 'mark time'. He had to consider the needs most pressing, and to assuage them. He had not only the planting interest to bear in mind, but he had the interests of many other communities as well. His sobriquet of 'wait-a-bit-Jim', though applied as a characteristic of the man, proved to be applicable to a policy that he was obliged, in the circumstances, to take up, but I do not think it was ever sufficiently appreciated. Sir James Longden's policy at the time, though deprived of the brilliant light of prosperous times, undoubtedly saved the Colony from grave disaster, though he never received credit for it."

Longden had his detractors. John Ferguson, the powerful editor of the *Observer*, dismissed him as too antiquated and sleepy in his ideas to promote anything beyond the bounds of red-tape official routine. He was also blamed unfairly for getting a rise in his salary, making it Rs. 80,000 per annum. "Rather a contrast", it was said, "to that of Dutch Governors, which was £30 per month (besides rations and allowances), but then they were expected to make a fortune in other secret ways."

The fact that the coffee disaster was not foreseen except by Dr. Thwaites is borne out by what Sir William Gregory wrote in his Autobiography. He said: "I much wish I had attended to his (Dr. Thwaites') wise admonitions as to the instability of coffee. Year after year he foretold its downfall, and was subjected to obloquy and ridicule for his disloyalty to the great King Coffee... He knew no remedy, and laughed to scorn the various nostrums which



were to have exterminated the disease. He implored me not to lend any money on mortgage upon coffee estates, telling me how he had called in all his investments and had transferred them to land and houses in Colombo. I should have been a much richer and less worried man had I hearkened to his advice. I well remember going through the thriving coffee districts in the spring of 1877. The blossom was out and they were as white as table cloths. I saw Mr. Thwaites on my return, and rather mocked him as a prophet of evil, since, although there had been disease for several years, the coffee had still such a vigorous appearance. 'Never mind', said he, 'what you saw. Coffee must go out, and that before long!'

Longden resembled Sir Charles MacCarthy in his bureaucratic caution. *Quieta non movere* and *festina lente* were the guiding principles of their policy. Sir James was content to trust the headmen and use them in carrying on the administration. They were, he said "gentlemen of high character and good descent... upon whom depends the administration of the Government among the native population everywhere except in the great towns. They have a wide jurisdiction by positive events. They have yet a wider one by custom."

In 1845 Ceylon had been constituted a Protestant diocese by letters patent of the King, with a bishop, archdeacon and several Colonial chaplains. The Anglican communion thus became the State church in Ceylon as it was in England and the establishment was paid out of the public revenues. As many of the European Christians did not belong to the Anglican church there was an agitation from the start against the favoured treatment enjoyed by the State church. Furthermore, it was perhaps unwise that the Government which had dissociated itself from the Buddhist religion, the religion of the overwhelming majority of the population, should pay the stipends of the Anglican clergy. Governor Gregory, in a despatch to the Secretary of State, had written: "It appears to me that every argument applied to the disendowment of the Irish Church applies with far greater force to Ceylon. State-paid religious establishments in the colonies are contrary to the tendency of public opinion. They were doing more harm than good in Ceylon from the resentment engendered by them and from

the tendency to apathy which the certainty of salary without any necessity to work, except the spurs of conscience, often produce."

A resolution in favour of disestablishment was introduced in the Legislative Council but was defeated. In 1881, however, the Earl of Kimberley terminated the practice of Government subsidies to the Anglican and Dutch Presbyterian churches in Ceylon and a legislative enactment provided for the disestablishment of the Bishop and State-paid chaplains of the Anglican church.

Despite the criticism levelled at him for inertia, Longden carried out such public works as were justified by the public revenue. One of the most important of these was the commencement of the first section of railway from Nawalapitiya to Nanu Oya, a distance of about 42 miles, financed from a loan in 1880. The extension of the seaside line to Kalutara and the opening of the extension to Hatton in 1883 were also carried out during his Governorship.

These railway extensions coincided with the conversion of coffee plantations to tea gardens. Some of the planters had the foresight to act on the advice of Thwaites and turn to new products. In the last year of Longden's rule, 1883, there came to Ceylon Arabi Pasha and his fellow Egyptians, the leaders of the revolt of 1882. The detenus were guided in their choice of their place of exile by the old Arab tradition that Ceylon was the home of man's first parents. Three of their number died during their period of detention.

Prince Albert Victor and Prince George (later King George V) paid a visit to Ceylon as midshipmen on H. M. S. *Bacchante*, in January 1882. Prince Albert invested a young headman with the sword and belt of a Muhandiram of the Governor's Gate. The Government permitted the Muhandiram to attach to his name of Bandaranaike the additional names of Rajakumar-Kadukeralu—"the Bandaranaike who was invested with a sword by a Royal Prince". Sir Solomon Dias Bandaranaike rose to be Maha Mudaliyar and Native A. D. C. to the Governor and was the father of a Prime Minister, Solomon West Ridgeway Dias Bandaranaike.

Longden was created a G. C. M. G. in 1883 and retired in December of that year. He lived at Longford, near Watford, in Hertfordshire, and took an active part in county affairs, becoming a Justice of the Peace and alderman of the county. He died on October 4th, 1891. He had married in 1864 Alice Emily, daughter of James Berridge of St. Christopher in the West Indies.

## XVI

## SIR ARTHUR HAMILTON GORDON

(1883—1890)

*To the Manner Born*

SIR ARTHUR HAMILTON GORDON, afterwards Baron Stanmore, was, like Ceylon's first Governor, the Hon. Frederick North, the son of a British Prime Minister. He was born at Argyll House, London, on November 26th, 1829, the youngest son of George Hamilton Gordon, 4th Earl of Aberdeen, by his second wife Harriet, daughter of the Hon. John Douglas, widow of James Viscount Hamilton and mother of the first Duke of Abercorn.

Arthur Gordon matriculated at Trinity College, Cambridge, at the age of eighteen. He took his M.A. in 1851 and was President of the Cambridge Union Society. He was private secretary from 1852 to 1855 to his father with whom he remained in terms of special intimacy and affection. From 1854 to 1857 he was Member of Parliament for Beverley and in 1858 accompanied Gladstone during the latter's visit to the Ionian Islands as High Commissioner Extraordinary.

Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone and their eldest daughter left England on November 8th, 1858 and returned on March 8th, 1859. The Ionian Islands were then a centre of Anglo-Greek strife, as Cyprus was to be in the 1950's. Gladstone was greeted with incessant cries for union with Greece. Arthur Gordon sent to his father vivid descriptions of the mission. "Every room and passage in the Residency", he wrote, "was already thronged... Upstairs the excitement was great, and as soon as Gladstone had taken his place, in swept Gerasimus, the bishop (followed by scores of swarthy priests in their picturesque black robes) and tendered to him a petition for union. But, before he could deliver it, Gladstone stopped him and made to the assembly a speech in excellent Italian. Never did I hear his beautiful voice ring out more clear or more

thrillingly than when he said, 'Ecco l'inganno'... It was a scene not to be forgotten. The priests, with eye and hand and gesture, expressed in lively pantomime to each other the effect produced by each sentence, in what we should think a most exaggerated way, like a chorus on the stage, but the effect was most picturesque."

Gladstone wrote a long and affectionate letter to Gordon in 1861 on the death of Lord Aberdeen which, in the words of Lord Morley, rank high among literary portraits. Gordon must have been deeply touched by Gladstone's description of his father: "He was strong in his self-respect, but his respect for others, not for this man or that but for other men as men, was much more conspicuous".

Gladstone and Gordon kept up a correspondence even when they were at opposite ends of the earth. In a letter to Gordon when the latter was Governor of Fiji, Gladstone, wrote: "Disraeli assumes his earldom amidst loud acclaims. I had better be mute about him and his influence generally, except as to a full acknowledgment of his genius and good points of character".

In 1861 Gordon went to New Brunswick as Lieutenant-Governor and from 1866 to 1870 he was Governor of Trinidad. He was host to Charles Kingsley, who described him in his book entitled *At Last*. From 1871 to 1874 Gordon was Governor of Mauritius whence he transferred to the Fiji Islands when they were ceded to the British Crown.

Although he often behaved like a patrician, which he was, Gordon always opposed the doctrine that a superior race may rightfully exploit an inferior one and had maintained the equal claims of all classes to consideration. In the Pacific, his views were often unpopular with the white settlers but his work was appreciated highly by the Imperial Government. From the post of High Commissioner of the Western Pacific he was appointed Governor-General of New Zealand where he showed firmness in difficult circumstances whether he was dealing with the Colonial Office or with local Ministers.

Sir Arthur Gordon assumed the office of Governor of Ceylon in December 1883. When he arrived, the Island was already in the throes of the coffee crisis. When he left, the crisis had been surmounted, the revenue was showing a surplus and the tea industry

established. But Ceylon passed through anxious times, and the Governor's sound judgment and courage were invaluable in meeting and solving the problems of the day. The coffee blight had spread all over the planting districts, businesses were crashing and European planters were leaving in large numbers. The biggest commercial organisation in the country, the Oriental Banking Corporation, which owned many coffee estates and held mortgages on others, shut its doors. The scene is thus described by E. H. Lawrence:

"The history of the Oriental Banking Corporation from its inception in 1845 until the lamentable demise on the 3rd of May, 1884, is interwoven, during that period, with the history of Ceylon, the commercial and agricultural development of which it promoted in a remarkable degree. Although it had keen rivals in the Bank of Madras, it remained *facile princeps*, and when its dramatic suspension occurred, the greatest distress and commercial upheaval ever known in the island was occasioned. Besides its chief office in Colombo, the Bank had branches in the principal towns and planting centres. It was essentially a Scottish concern, and its officers were almost entirely Scotsmen with such names, honoured in its annals, as Anderson, Duff, Dunlop, Moir, Morrison, Scrymgeour and Ochterlony testify.

"By an adoption of the cash credit system, it helped the Ceylon planters to open their coffee estates, and to cultivate them with success. The Bank also did an important business in India and elsewhere in the East, but it would appear that a very large proportion of their funds were always employed in financing the Ceylon coffee industry.

"They readily advanced on growing crops, and when, in 1869, owing to the appearance of leaf disease, a gradual falling-off in production took place, they endeavoured to secure themselves by mortgages over the estates. The insidious disease spread rapidly, and in a few years, the industry, which for so long had been the pride of Ceylon and the principal source of her prosperity, was irretrievably ruined. The Bank then became mortgagees in possession, and a special department was organized to superintend the working of the estates. The directors at last realized that any longer attempt to carry on cultivation could only increase the losses already sustained, and bearing in view the due consequences of the

City of Glasgow Bank failure, they resolved to suspend payment. This act caused the greatest distress, which was accentuated owing to the notes of the defaulting bank being practically the entire paper currency of the Island, the Chartered Mercantile Bank's paper in circulation being comparatively unimportant.

"The news of the suspension spread rapidly, and the Colombo office of the Bank was quickly surrounded by a mob of panic-stricken depositors and note-holders, who were only prevented from battering down the doors by the presence of an armed force. The Rupees Ten notes were sold freely in the bazaars for one or two rupees. The situation was saved by the masterly act of the Governor, Sir Arthur Gordon, afterwards Lord Stanmore, who guaranteed payment of the Bank's notes, which at the same time amounted to three million rupees. These were received at the Treasury, and the Government became preferential creditors, being eventually paid in full.

"The ordinary creditors received 19s. 9d. in the £. The expenses of the liquidation were heavy and the shareholders of the Bank lost the whole of their capital besides having to meet the uncalled liability on their shares, which amounted to a large sum.

"The failure of the Oriental Bank compelled the local administration to consider the question of providing the paper currency, and on 1st January 1885, the Ceylon Government commenced to issue their own notes. Those of the Chartered Bank still in circulation were gradually withdrawn and since 1889 the Government notes have formed the sole paper currency."

Nearly a quarter of a million acres had been cultivated in the hill country of Ceylon. When the blight began to devastate the coffee bushes, those planters who remained behind slowly turned to cinchona, from whose bark quinine was extracted, and tea. Dr. Thwaites, the Director of the Botanical Gardens, obtained and distributed tea seed from Assam, having realized that the China jat seed was not suitable for Ceylon conditions. Shortly after Sir Arthur Gordon left Ceylon, the Planters' Association presented James Taylor with a tea and coffee service, on the tray of which there was the following inscription: "To James Taylor, Loolecondra, in grateful appreciation of his successful efforts which laid the foundation of the Tea and Cinchona industries in Ceylon,

1891." But the Governor had himself played a leading part in fostering the tea industry and providing the planters with such help as was permitted by the state of the Colony's finances.

Gordon was never tired of visiting the planting districts. He was "a good horseman and did much journey on horse-back, which enabled him to see a great deal of the country and its people", writes Sir Thomas Villiers. "Such a progression was an event in the lives of the village communities and access to the Governor was made easy. Sir Arthur was a man of great dignity; in fact he inspired one with no little awe, as well as respect, but there was a great fount of kindness behind that somewhat austere look, and his hospitality to all and sundry was unbounded. There was great ceremony attached to all his gubernatorial actions and nobody could take a liberty with him without being brought quickly to book. It is of Sir Arthur Gordon that the story is told of how he turned round to a young Civil Servant (Alexander Ashmore) who happened to be standing near by, when he was leaving a function, and said: 'Would you call my carriage?' The young man somewhat brusquely replied: 'I am not your flunkey', though he called the carriage. The young man was promoted to another Colony, and returned many years afterwards to take up the post of Colonial Secretary."

Sir Arthur did not always get on well with the planters. After a disagreement over the system of the payment of wages to labour, he said: "I think that when the moment of irritation, of itself very natural, has passed, that they will admit that I have not been the planters' enemy, perhaps the planters' friend". He was partial to the headmen and was interested in safeguarding the property rights of the Buddhist temples.

In his autobiography, "Remembered Yesterdays", Sir Solomon Dias Bandaranaike relates how Sir Arthur Gordon threatened members of an exclusive club in Colombo with the withdrawal of his patronage if certain Ceylonese, whose names had been proposed for membership, were black-balled.

The Governor was an accomplished parliamentarian and the exchanges between him and adroit debaters like Mr. (later Sir) Ponnambalam Ramanathan and Mr. T. N. Christie, the European Planting Member in the Legislative Council, were often lively. He increased the size of the Council by the addition of two nominated

members to represent the Muslims and Kandyan Sinhalese, respectively. One of the questions debated and solved during his regime was that of the right of official members to express independent views. The matter had often been discussed before and on December 11th, 1889, Mr. T. N. Christie introduced a motion in the Legislative Council: "That the Council should humbly petition Her Majesty the Queen (1) To consider the desirability of allowing freedom of speech and vote to the official members of the Legislative Council, except when Her Majesty's Secretary of State intimated to the Council the orders of the Imperial Government; (2) To cause a despatch clearly defining the position of the official members to be laid before the Council."

The speeches made on both sides were of a high level of eloquence and argument, but the discussion was little more than an academic exercise. The motion was thrown out by a large majority, all the officials and certain nominated unofficial members voting against it. But it made the position of the official members clear. The Governor said in the course of his speech: "It will be felt by everyone that for a Government servant of a Colony publicly to oppose the policy of Government, and strive to incite others to prevent either the success of its policy at large, or the execution of orders which it is his duty to see carried out, would be intolerable, and that if it were persisted in could only terminate in one way. Now his position in this respect is not materially changed by the possession of a seat in Council, and I think even my Hon. friend who made this motion will perceive that the absolute liberty which he would accord to all public servants holding seats in this Council to bring any motions they like, and make any speeches they please, might lead to very serious difficulties."

Gordon had on the whole a high opinion of the Ceylon Legislative Council. In his farewell speech he made this clear. "This Council and I have worked together for a period of more than six years", he said, "and I think I may say that although, as must necessarily be the case with such a body of men representing diverse interests, different views have been taken at different times upon different subjects, yet it may be said that we have worked together with harmony... I have now some experience of Colonial Legislatures—those of Crown Colonies and those of a more popular kind, and



I can say with truth, and without the slightest flattery, that I have never presided over, and never been associated with an assembly of the kind which has conducted its deliberations with a spirit of such uniform and universal moderation, candour and good friendship."

The Governor was perhaps fortunate in his colleagues. Sir G. T. M. O'Brien, the Colonial Treasurer who acted as Colonial Secretary, was an able debater and often crossed swords with Ramanathan and Christie. In the heat of debate Ramanathan once called him "a Woolwich Infant". The Governor was about to call the Tamil member to order, when it suddenly dawned on him that the words were meant as a compliment, and it was Ramanathan's way of calling the Colonial Secretary "a big gun". Ramanathan had been received in London as the great Unofficial leader of the Ceylon Council and sported a gold-embroidered turban and magenta shawl. Gordon once asked in the Council: "Why do we not see that gorgeous turban and the sparkling diamond and the magenta shawl?"

The Governor was not always discreet in his speech. He antagonized sections of the community as when he called the members of the Agricultural Association a "grotesque clique". He does not seem to have liked lawyers with their headquarters at Hultsdorp. He sometimes disregarded the advice of his law officers, Sir Francis Fleming and C. L. Ferdinands, on legal matters. The late J. R. Weinman writes: "Sir Arthur Gordon hated Hultsdorp with a more abiding hate than Hultsdorp hated him. There was a standing feud between the two, and the vendetta was carried on for the full length of his stay in the Island. Hultsdorp was united and powerful, and was more than a match for Governor Gordon, who was defeated all along, but he held the ace of trumps up his sleeve and put it down when all else failed. He ignored Hultsdorp and Colombo altogether, and appointed a retired Colonial Surgeon (to the Legislative Council). Thus old scores were wiped out. Hultsdorp stormed and raved, but the appointment was made, and Hultsdorp had to grin and bear."

Although a Liberal in politics he was not convinced that Ceylon in the late 'eighties was fit to have any form of representative government. Nor did he think that such a form of government

would be practicable within a measurable period of time. In this view he was not singular. Twenty years after, his successors were of the same opinion, as we shall see later. Gordon said in Council: "We have been asked out-of-doors why should not the Government and the Legislature of the country be administered upon principles similar to those upon which the Government and the Legislature of the mother country are carried on. The answer seems to me a very simple one. The answer is that there is no unity of race or interest. A Government such as that which exists in England is one by which the rule of the majority is practically established. It is very easy to conceive of how the rule of a majority may be tolerable when the majority is composed of those of similar feelings, similar interests and similar race as the minority. It may then consent to be ruled by the majority. But the case becomes totally different when the establishment of the rule of the majority means the rule of one race only."

Such views were not popular even seventy-five years ago. On the eve of Sir Arthur's departure from Ceylon, a bitter attack on him was published by a London journal called *St. Stephen's Review*. It said ... "as to the Sinhalese population, words can scarcely fully describe the hatred which Governor Gordon's favouritism and disregard of native aspirations has engendered in their minds, and the advent of the new Governor is looked forward to as an intervention of providential interposition to save Ceylon from the most unpopular and mischievous official which the home Government has ever imposed upon the Colony."

The Legislative Council however, gave him an affectionate farewell. In proposing that an address be presented to the Governor, Ramanathan said: "We have had addresses adopted in various centres of the Island acknowledging the great and distinguished services rendered to the Colony by His Excellency the Governor, and it is only right that a Governor so good and great should be presented by this Council also with a fitting address." Mr. A. de A. Seneviratna, the Low Country Sinhalese member, said that "the vast majority of the Sinhalese people are extremely grateful to His Excellency for the very great good he has done to the country." The Kandyan member, Mr. T. B. Panabokke, said that "when a subject has come up, or a doubt has been expressed, his mind has always

been on the side of the natives, and his desire has been to do everything he possibly could for them."

Sir Arthur Gordon quitted the Colony after a vigorous rule of six years. His period of office saw many material improvements in the Island such as the restoration of many irrigation works, including the historical Kalawewa tank, the completion of the breakwater in the Colombo harbour, the extension of the railway, the creation of the province of Uva and the construction of 261 miles of roads. He was barely sixty when he left Ceylon and it was not to be expected that he would retire to a quiet life. He went into the City of London and became Chairman of the Bank of Mauritius and of the Pacific Phosphate Co. In 1893 he was raised to the peerage as Baron Stanmore and was an active member of committees of the House of Lords. He became more conservative in his views and voted against the Home Rule bill. He had many friends including Samuel Wilberforce, the crusader against slavery, Charles Kingsley, the novelist, and Roundell Palmer who was later Lord Chancellor as Lord Selborne.

Gordon published a short life of his father, the Earl of Aberdeen, and a memoir of Sidney Herbert. He was also the author of books about New Brunswick and the Fiji Islands where he had served. For many years he was president of the Ceylon Association in London. He married in 1865 Rachel Emily, the eldest daughter of Sir John Shaw-Lefevre, who predeceased him in 1889. They had two children, of whom the son, the Hon. George, A. M. Hamilton, succeeded him in the title. Sir Arthur died on January 30th, 1912, at 47, Cadogan Place, at the age of 83 and was buried at Ascot.

## XVII

### SIR ARTHUR HAVELOCK

(1890—1895)

*Man of Discretion*

**S**IR ARTHUR HAVELOCK, Governor of Ceylon from May 1890 to February 1896, was born on May 7th, 1844, fifth son in a family of six sons and seven daughters of Lieutenant-Colonel William Havelock and Caroline Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Major Acton Chaplin of Aylsbury.

He went to India, with the rest of his family, to join his father, then in command of the 14th Light Dragoons at Umballa, but returned to go to school at Lee, near Blackheath. In 1860 he passed into the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, and on January 14th, 1862, was gazetted as ensign in the 32nd Cornwall Light Infantry. He was stationed at Gibraltar (1866—67), Mauritius (1867—68) and at the Cape (1868—72). On August 15th 1871, he married Anne, the daughter of Sir William Norris. In August 1872, Havelock was made Paymaster in Mauritius and, in 1873, A. D. C. to Sir Arthur Gordon, then Governor of that Colony, whom he was to follow as Governor of Ceylon some years later. He was promoted Chief Commissioner of the Seychelles in February 1874, and in 1875, on the recommendation of Sir Arthur Gordon, he was selected to be Colonial Secretary and Receiver-General in Fiji.

Havelock retired from the Army in 1877 and in February 1881 he was appointed Governor of the West African Settlements. After a frontier dispute with Liberia, on March 20th, by order of the Colonial Office, he proceeded to the capital, Monrovia, with four gunboats. A treaty was signed for the British protectorate up to the river Mafa and an indemnity of £8,500 exacted. In 1883 Havelock occupied the territories between the rivers Shebro and Mano, claimed by the British Government.

Having proved his capacity as an administrator, he was given the K. C. M. G. and promotion as Governor of Trinidad in 1885 and of Natal in 1886. In May 1890 he became Governor of Ceylon.

Sir Arthur Gordon had left the finances of the Colony in good shape despite a regime of great activity. In his opening address to the Legislative Council, Sir Arthur Havelock said: "I rejoice with you over the continued growth of the prosperity of the Colony as evinced by the satisfactory condition of its revenue and by the large increase in the bulk and value of its products and trade." The revenue in 1889 was Rs. 15,299,877. "The returns for the year", said the Governor, "illustrate the continued decline of coffee, and they exhibit a decrease in the exportation of cinchona. On the other hand, they show that the plumbago industry is very flourishing, and that the cultivation of coconuts, cinnamon, cacao and tobacco is generally in a satisfactory condition. Of tea, the relatively enormous increase of 10,525,381 lbs was exported, the total export for the year being 34,345,852 lbs." It is interesting to compare these figures with tea exports in the year 1961 of 426 million pounds, and a public revenue of Rs. 1,647,100,000.

It was during the regime of Sir Arthur Havelock that the tax on food grains was abolished. It was the culmination of a long agitation started by George Wall and Dr. Christopher Elliott, backed by the Cobden Club in England. The move was resisted for a time on the ground that it was merely a rent and that it did not bear heavily on the poor. Sir Arthur Gordon had sought to justify the tax. But the time came when, of all crops grown in the Island, only rice was taxed.

The matter was raised by T. N. Christie in the Legislative Council. "Thomas North Christie was an outstanding man in Council", writes J. R. Weinman, "and he frequently bearded the masterful Sir Arthur Gordon. Calm and cool and collected, he would speak out his mind fearlessly in clear-cut sentences. He had a brain packed in ice, and nothing could upset him. The blandishments of Queen's House were showered on him in vain. He danced to no man's piping, and he got very wroth once because he was told that he was in Council to express the opinion of his constituents and must therefore suppress his views."



Sir Arthur Havelock



Sir Joseph West Ridgeway



Sir Henry Blake



Sir Robert Chalmers



Sir Graeme Thomson



Sir Edward Stubbs



Shortly after Havelock's arrival in Ceylon, Christie introduced in the Council the following motion, on which he made a statesman-like speech: "That no unnecessary delay should take place in affording such relief as the circumstances will admit to paddy growers, and that in the opinion of this Council the eventual abolition of the Paddy-Tax should be aimed at in order to establish the production of the food of the people on a satisfactory basis". Christie made out an excellent case for the abolition of the tax but did not press his motion to a division because he knew that the Governor was giving thought to the matter and had not yet come to a decision.

The news of the decision of the Imperial Government to repeal the tax was first transmitted to George Wall by the Governor, and the gold medal of the Cobden Club soon after rewarded the services of the great philanthropist and crusader. Wall, who was born in 1820, had the triple distinction for a planter of drafting the circular proposing the formation of the Planters' Association of Ceylon, of being its first Chairman and of occupying the Chair more frequently than any other man. Elected for the first time in 1856, he was re-elected nine times. He had received a crushing blow when coffee failed. "Nobody who saw him and knew the man in his old age will ever forget him", writes one who knew him. "His voice was husky and his eyes were dim. But he stood there erect like a lance, his snow-white hair coming down almost to his shoulders his broad forehead betokening intellect, and his firm lips and steady gaze indicative of strength and courage. He had 'drunk delight of battle with his peers'.

Old age hath yet his honour and his toil

Death closes all: but something ere the end,

Some work of noble note, may yet be done.

And there could have been no work of nobler note than freeing voiceless thousands from a most unequal, vexatious and iniquitous tax."

Havelock's part in securing the abolition of the paddy-tax won him popular esteem. His six years of office as Governor of Ceylon was characterized by steady if unspectacular progress. He continued the policy of his predecessor in railway extensions and road building. He extended the benefits of medical science and education to reach all classes of the population. He established the Technical



School in Colombo, saw to the building of the northern arm of the breakwater in the Colombo harbour, the Victoria Bridge over the Kelani river and the spacious General Post Office.

The Governor mixed well with the Ceylonese. He appointed Solomon Dias Bandaranaike as Maha Mudaliyar and Native A.D.C. In doing so he wrote to Mr. Bandaranaike: "Your good services in the past, your public-spirited acts, and the example you have set your countrymen in energy and enlightenment, combined with your high social position have pointed you out to me as the best man for this post. The excellent traditions of your family will, I am sure, help to stimulate you to maintain a high standard of honour and efficiency as a public servant."

Although Havelock relied on his headmen almost as much as Gordon had done, he was different in other ways. He was a man of few words and spoke little in the Legislative Council. J. R. Weinman writes: "Sir Arthur Havelock was a hard-working official. He never did or said anything original, which shows that he was a sensible sort of human being. He was the best dressed man in the Island, and made speeches which contained nothing foolish. At prize-distributions, he invariably advised the boys to stick to the three p's—promptitude, precision and punctuality. He might have extended, but did not extend his p's. He was very hard-working, fair and conscientious."

A less astringent judgment was that expressed by E. W. Perera, in his day an outspoken member of the Legislative Council: "Although men murmured at the weakness of his rule, he steered the Colony clear of the quicksands of foreign speculation and extravagant expense, and set his subordinates an example of high honour and even-handed justice. The sincerity of his profession, the purity of his court and life, and his strict impartiality in dealing with the varied races of the Island, were qualities the value of which were realised long after he had left its shores."

After leaving Ceylon, he refused the Governorship of the Straits Settlements but was Governor of Madras and Tasmania respectively. He died at Bath on June 25th, 1908.

## XVIII

## SIR JOSEPH WEST RIDGEWAY

(1895—1903)

*Versatile Soldier*

**S**IR JOSEPH WEST RIDGEWAY, one of the most versatile of Ceylon's Governors was born on May 16th, 1844, the second son of the Rev. Joseph Ridgeway, Rector of High Roothing, Essex, by his wife Elizabeth Letitia Chambers. Two of his brothers rose to episcopal office, Charles John Ridgeway becoming Bishop of Chichester and Frederick Edward Ridgeway, Bishop of Salisbury.

He was educated at St. Paul's School, London, until at the age of sixteen he received a commission in the Bengal Light Infantry. When he was entertained by the Ceylon Association in London, upon his appointment as Governor of Ceylon in 1895, he said: "Although I cannot pretend to be intimately acquainted with Ceylon, yet I am not a perfect stranger to it. It is now more than thirty years ago since, as a boy of sixteen, I landed at Galle to join my regiment in India. I remember how I was charmed with the beautiful scenery, and thought that India would resemble it, and how disappointed I was to exchange rich scenery for arid plains."

In 1869, West Ridgeway distinguished himself helping to grapple with the great Indian famine and Lord Mayo, the Viceroy, transferred him to civil employment in the Rajputana Agencies in Central India. He was Political Agent in the Eastern States in 1875, and in 1879 was appointed political secretary to General Roberts in the famous march to Kandahar. West Ridgeway was twice mentioned in despatches and received the brevet rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. In 1880 he succeeded his friend and patron Sir Mortimer Durand as foreign secretary to Roberts at Kabul.

Upon the occupation of Merv by the Russians in 1884, he was placed in command of the Indian section of a force of about a thousand with a large number of camels and horses. Ordered

to join Sir Peter Lumsden at Herat, he took it across the desert without a single casualty. By a combination of diplomacy and firmness, he made friends with the Turcomans and held the Russians back. Summing up the situation, Durand wrote: "Ridgeway, as usual, had foreseen the whole thing and warned Lumsden and the Afghans but they were confident of being able to drive the Russians back at Merv."

In April 1887 West Ridgeway was sent to St. Petersburg for negotiations. He found the military party hostile but fortunately he was received by the Czar who favoured a settlement. In July a protocol was at last signed which provided for the delimitation of the whole frontier between the Hari Rad and the Oxus. This settlement was the more to Ridgeway's credit since the Government in London gave him but little encouragement. He wrote to Durand in August: "I was positively shocked when I came home for the first time from St. Petersburg to find that Lord Salisbury and his Cabinet wished to let the whole thing slide. It was only my personal endeavours, aided by Bradford, Currie and Sanderson, that induced them to continue the negotiations... The Ameer has not lost a penny of revenue, a single subject or an acre of land which was occupied or cultivated by any Afghan subject."

Speaking many years later to a Ceylon contingent setting out for the war in South Africa, West Ridgeway said: "I remember in the Afghan campaign that after many months of hardship and privation we undertook the venturesome march to Kandahar. During the greater part of the time we could not get anything to drink but liquid mud, nothing more or less. At the moment there occurred to me—most unfortunate for my views—there occurred to me the idea of iced champagne, and that idea haunted me by day and night, and never was traveller more consumed in a dreary wilderness or more tormented by that mirage of beautiful crystal water than I was by that craving for iced champagne. Well, we reached the town of Kandahar, we fought the battle of Kandahar, we relieved Kandahar.\* There was no iced champagne at Kandahar, and, as far as I could see, there was no chance of my satisfying this insatiable craving for some weeks or months to come at that moment. Lord Roberts sent for me and told me that he wished me to ride, as hard as I could ride, to the nearest station to Simla with a message to

the Viceroy. I cordially accepted the offer, not the less cordially because I saw the prospect of iced champagne. I knew there was iced champagne at the railway station, and I telegraphed to reserve a bottle. I think I made a record ride, and in three days and three nights I reached the station, and —oh! the disappointment: the ice was melted, the champagne was corked, and the next morning had a head. However much you may drink of this excellent wine, I guarantee you will not suffer from it tomorrow.

"One more reminiscence. When I was engaged on the Russian and Afghan frontier for two or three years, living in tents, I had a great desire to get under a roof and have sheets in my bed. At last the happy day came when I found myself under a roof and between a pair of sheets; but the sheets were damp and I contracted the worst cold I ever had in my life!"

Returning to England West Ridgeway was appointed Under Secretary for Ireland and he helped in framing and putting into effect Balfour's Land Purchase Act of 1891. He was made a K.C.B. and sent by Lord Rosebery on a special mission to Morocco as Envoy Extraordinary to the Sultan. He was Governor of the Isle of Man in 1893, and after two years in this quiet post, accepted the Governorship of Ceylon. There this man of the frontier became a business Governor, full of ideas of progress.

In the interval between his appointment and arrival in Ceylon he prepared himself for his new responsibilities. He met his predecessor, Sir Arthur Havelock, in London, and paid a tribute to the "promptitude and kindness with which he has given me advice and assistance since I have been nominated to succeed him. Nothing was too small for him: he has been ready to discuss a question of policy or to advise me with regard to some sordid detail, such as the cut of my coachman's livery." He arrived in Colombo towards the end of 1895.

The new Governor travelled everywhere in the Island and met all sections of the population. He was very ready to attend public functions and speak his mind openly on the issues of the day. None of his predecessors had been more active or more courteous in his dealings with people and, on the whole, more progressive than West Ridgeway. He was singularly free from racial prejudice and crowned the work of men like Gregory and Gordon in providing

equality of opportunity in the public services to educated Ceylonese. Sir Arthur Havelock had handed to him a sound exchequer and throughout his rule of seven years West Ridgeway helped to strengthen the revenue while providing many benefits to the Colony. In this he was helped by the expansion of the tea industry but he did much to accelerate the process by building new railways and roads, reorganizing the Survey Department, improving health services and showing a keen interest in education. The administrative machine of the Island was never more efficient than during his regime. He enjoyed his job and worked hard at it. He said: "Ceylon is a very comfortable Colony to govern, and I have not regretted my choice, because, for the first time I can tell you, Ceylon was my choice. I had the preference offered me of saying what Governorship I should like to have, and in my list—it included only two or three—Ceylon stood first." The Legislative Council paid him the tribute that "at no time has its work been done so expeditiously or with so little friction, and we record with pleasure that on no single occasion under Your Excellency's administration have the official members of the Council been restricted in the freedom of their votes".

Any list of achievements of West Ridgeway's administration would have to be headed with the numerous railway extensions carried out by him. The most important of these was the construction of the northern line from Kurunegala to Anuradhapura and Jaffna. The narrow gauge railway to Ratnapura did not in the long run justify expectations but in any case competition from road transport was bound to impair its usefulness.

The Governor established a separate irrigation department and spent large sums on it. He restored several ancient reservoirs which had served the needs of a much greater population in the dry zone of the Island than that of today. He also created the research branch of the Agricultural Department and appointed a Curator of the Royal Botanical Gardens at Peradeniya and a Government mineralogist. He reorganized the Technical College and the Medical College.

West Ridgeway felt that most of the posts in the public service could be manned by properly-trained Ceylonese. He said in a speech: "I fully recognize the right of the Ceylonese to employ-

ment in their own country. And I claim to have satisfied that want so far as is consistent with efficiency and with the necessity—and I am not afraid to state it—the necessity of having a small nucleus in every Department of men who have been trained and bred in the West, for I firmly believe that the mingling of the modern experience of the West with the intellect of the East is essential to the development of the Island." He was speaking at the beginning of the century, long before such things as the Colombo Plan and United Nations Technical Aid had been dreamed of.

The Governor got the Legislative Council to adopt a scheme for the construction of a Graving Dock at Colombo, at a cost of £318,000, half the cost to be borne by the Imperial Government. On April 4th, 1898 the foundations of the north-west arm of the breakwater of the Colombo harbour was laid. An electric tramway service for Colombo was opened in January 1899. In 1900 the Governor opened the Bacteriological Institute donated by Charles de Soysa. The same year saw the first efforts to provide the City of Colombo with a drainage scheme.

The Governor gave every encouragement to the assisted schools to extend their activities. He presided at their prize-givings and made speeches at their old boys' dinners. At the prize-giving of the recently started Catholic school, St. Joseph's College, he said: "I wish to express my appreciation and recognition of the noble work which your church is doing in the cause of education, and I fully recognize the obligation under which the Government lies to the religious bodies which have undertaken the burden of educational work in this country, and I for one do not grudge the expenditure to which, I think, Father Lytton alluded. The unity and harmony which prevail among all denominations in the propagation of education in the Island is most pleasing, and must be most edifying to those who live around us." Over the next half century many good schools were established and maintained by these missions.

West Ridgeway was an early critic of the educational system of Ceylon. "I think", he said "it is rapidly becoming out of date. It is like an overgrown child who has been kept too long on milk and now requires a stronger diet." He established a Board of Education presided over by the Director of Public Instruction and

thought that the question of a Ceylon University deserved consideration.

Among other events during West Ridgeway's Governorship was the arrival of the first motor car in Ceylon, the departure of Arabi Pasha, the Egyptian leader who had been detained in the Island, the reception of 5,000 Boer prisoners after the South African war, and the purchase by the Government of "Temple Trees", the present residence of the Prime Ministers of Ceylon. He was godfather at the baptism of the future Prime Minister who was named Solomon West Ridgeway Dias Bandaranaike.

One measure introduced by him that was strongly criticized was the Waste Lands Ordinance. The Governor's motive in framing the ordinance was commendable. Attempts had been made from time to time to prevent deforestation and the unauthorized sale by villagers of large tracts of Crown land in the country to speculators. In 1840 a law had been passed which declared to be Crown property all forest, waste and unoccupied land, unless there was proof of title or possession for a period of thirty years. Under the new ordinance a special officer was appointed under whose charge the settlement of land claims was to be effected. The measure excited keen hostility and criticism; representations were made to the Secretary of State and the new law was discussed in Parliament. But West Ridgeway held his ground.

At the second reading of the bill, the Governor said in the Legislative Council: "I was certain that it was my duty to introduce this bill, and I say without hesitation that I did so as I was convinced of the growing necessity for this legislation, and the necessity in the interests of posterity of preventing the further squandering of the capital of this Island and the destruction of the rich heritage which we ought to hand down to those who come hereafter, and also the waste of that fund from which the public works can only be constructed. . . . All we ask is that claimants should come forward, should come out into the open, should come out of their hiding places and say: 'We claim this land, and this is why we claim it'. When they do that, they shall receive generous treatment."

Sir Joseph West Ridgeway was certainly the most articulate Governor Ceylon ever had. During his seven years of rule he was the public orator of the Island. He had a power of speech unusual

for one who became a soldier at the age of sixteen and had therefore no formal higher education. He was often witty, was at home with Latin tags, was always urbane, didactic when the occasion demanded, reminiscent, salty and sentimental. His speeches were carefully reported in the newspapers with the appropriate parenthetical interpolations of (applause), (laughter), (loud laughter) and (cheers) in the correct places. He sometimes made fun of the very newspapermen who so diligently reported his speeches. He said: "The fact is that the pen of an editor must resemble in vigour and delicacy of touch an elephant's trunk: it must be prepared to pick up a pin or pull down a steeple. Well, in those circumstances, everybody ought to have consideration and forbearance for a newspaper editor; and, indeed, the statesman who cannot in these days bear with unruffled demeanour criticism, is an anachronism, and the sooner he repairs to the bosom of his family, the happier he will be; but I am not sure that even in the bosom of his family, he will find immunity from criticism; indeed, that is not my experience" (laughter and applause).

A contemporary, summing up the Governor's oratorical flights, said: "He was a man of consummate tact, and though he delivered many speeches, and excellent they were, he never was guilty of a single indiscretion. Those who interviewed him got nothing out of him, and they did not know it. His speeches were generally perilously near what should not be said, and there was no man who came more successfully out of a tight corner. He could chaff a bishop into good humour as easily as a Dimbula planter or, as he called them, the wild men of the hills out for his scalp. He was popular with every community and a Boer general told him: 'We should be sorry to have you as Governor of South Africa. We don't want to quarrel with you'. But he did go, though not as Governor, and the Boers did not quarrel with him."

In 1906 West Ridgeway was appointed Chairman of the committee of enquiry into the constitutional position of Transvaal and the Orange River Colony in Africa. The committee reported in favour of self-government for both States, preparing the way for the Union of South Africa effected by the Act of 1906. He was created G.C.B. in 1910. In the same year he became President of the North Borneo Company.



Joseph West Ridgeway married, in 1881, Carolina Ellen, youngest daughter of Robert Calverley Bewicke of Coultry Manor, Middlesborough. Sir Solomon Dias Bandaranaike says in his autobiography that when he first met them: "Sir West at once gave the impression of being a strong man, and Lady Ridgeway's appealing personality charmed everyone who had the privilege of seeing her. She was a very beautiful woman."

He died on May 16th, 1930.

## XIX

### SIR HENRY BLAKE

(1903—1907)

*Irish Policeman*

SIR HENRY ARTHUR BLAKE came of an old Irish family founded by one Robert Blake who accompanied Prince John of England to Ireland in 1185. He was born at Limerick on January 18th, 1840, the son of Peter Blake, County Inspector of the Royal Irish Constabulary, of Corbally Castle, County Galway. He was educated at Dr St. John's Academy at Kilkenny, and Sentry College, and in 1859 entered his father's service, as a cadet in the Irish Constabulary, after the usual competitive examination.

In 1876 he was appointed a Resident Magistrate and held that position until 1882, when he was chosen as one of the five special magistrates selected by the Government to carry out the 'pacification' of the country. As the magistrate in executive charge of County Kildare, Queen's County, Meath, Carlow, Galway East and Galway West, he distinguished himself by his firm and tactful handling of affairs during a troublous period. The Government recognized his outstanding qualities as an administrator and in 1884 he was offered the Governorship of the Bahamas. He accepted the post and so commenced a distinguished career in the Colonial service.

In 1887 he was appointed Governor of Newfoundland and the next year he was to have gone to Queensland as Governor but his nomination was withdrawn as a result of opposition by the local Irish to a man who had been closely identified with the special measures for the enforcement of law in Ireland. In 1889 he was appointed Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of Jamaica. He held this post for eight years, his term of office having been extended in 1894 and again in 1896, at the request of the Legislature and other public bodies. In 1897 he was appointed Governor of

Hongkong. He won great popularity among the permanent population but some of the projects initiated by him did not win the approval of the local Europeans. As his period of office was approaching its close the Chinese residents of the Colony forwarded a memorial to the Secretary of State praying for an extension of his term. The appeal, however, was not successful. Blake was appointed Governor of Ceylon in 1903 and arrived in Colombo on December 3rd of that year. His record in Jamaica and Hongkong was already known to the public of Ceylon and his actions in no way belied the reputation he had gained in those two Colonies as a wise and sympathetic administrator. In Ceylon he laid special emphasis on agricultural development. The Board of Agriculture was his idea and the big Rubber Exhibition in 1906 held at Peradeniya was a great success due to the keen interest he took in it. Rubber was introduced into Ceylon from Kew Gardens in 1876, the seedlings being planted at Heneratgoda and Peradeniya. The planting of rubber as a commercial project began in the Kalutara district in 1883. The price of rubber rose from about 2s. to 4s. per lb. in 1901 and 6s. in 1904—6. At the end of Blake's period of office, the rubber acreage had risen to 150,000.

The pearl fisheries were a source of trouble to Blake at the outset of his regime: a lease of the pearl fisheries had been negotiated by the Colonial Office in England without the Legislative Council being told about it until after the agreement had been completed. When the news leaked out the Governor met the members of the Council at an informal conference but did not succeed in convincing them that the procedure which had been followed was correct. The connection of Blake's predecessor in office (Sir Joseph West Ridgeway) with the syndicate to whom the rights were leased did not make it any the more acceptable and the fact that large profits were made during the fishery of 1905 added to the discontent.

Another matter which caused some controversy in the early period of Blake's administration was a salary scheme which seemed to favour the higher Civil Service and was not so advantageous to the lower paid officers of the Government. While the controversy was raging a chance remark by Sir Alexander Ashmore, the Colonial Secretary, was deeply resented by large sections of the public. He said, referring to the employment of Ceylonese in the higher branches

of the public service, that they were ordinarily lacking in that high sense of duty and honour which the British Government expected. The speech which contained this remark was delivered at a distribution of prizes at Trinity College, Kandy. A committee of lawyers wrote to Ashmore asking him whether he had been correctly reported. He only inserted the word "ordinarily", and added "I ventured to express a good-natured hope that the trifling alteration which I found it necessary to make, may not rob a body of men, who probably do not find many occasions in their profession for public speaking, of a coveted opportunity of self-advertisement."

Ashmore was never a discreet man. Sir Arthur Gordon had him transferred out of the Island when, as a young Civil Servant, he had answered impudently to the Governor who had asked him to call his carriage. As Police Magistrate of Kandy he had had a lawyer, Ahamado Bawa, the father of B. W. Bawa, K.C., carried out of his court for not obeying a ruling by him. The lawyer charged Ashmore before a Bench of Magistrates who imposed a fine on him but the conviction was set aside in appeal. Ashmore thereupon named one of his dogs "Bow Wow", to sound like Bawa. Not to be beaten, the Kandy proctor had the town plastered next morning with placards bearing the words, "Lost, stolen or strayed, a puppy called Ashmore".

Despite statements to the contrary by Governors like West Ridgeway, Ashmore's remarks roughly represented the policy of the Government. There were certain key posts to which Ceylonese could not aspire at the time. Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam would have acted as Colonial Secretary had he been a European and Ashmore told him so frankly. Instead, they gave him the highest salary of a Civil Servant and put him into the Legislative and Executive Councils, but did not give him a provincial administrator's job.

Sir Henry Blake was a fine specimen of a man physically, and was generally popular with all sections of the people. He married in 1862 Jeannie, daughter of Andrew Irwin of County Roscommon. She died in 1866 and in 1874 he married Edith, eldest daughter of Ralph Bernal-Osborne, Member of Parliament, who had been for sometime Judge Advocate. Bernal-Osborne was once pulled up by the Speaker of the House of Commons for addressing members

as "Gentlemen". He apologized to the House and added, whether intentionally or not, "I thought they were all gentlemen".

Lady Blake's sister was the Duchess of St. Albans. The servants at Queen's House had been instructed to address her as "Your Grace". But some of them unwittingly dropped the pronoun and, according to the Maha Mudaliyar, "it was a case of Grace before and after everything". The Duchess of course noticed the omission and enjoyed the humour of the situation. Sir Solomon Dias Bandaranaike also tells the story of the lost despatch box. "On one occasion I received a State telegram, asking me to come up to Nuwara Eliya on receipt thereof, and, on arriving at Queen's Cottage, found Sir Henry very perturbed over the loss of his despatch box, containing not only official documents but also certain trinkets and curios which His Excellency valued very much.

"The box, it appeared, had been lost in the course of a railway journey, chiefly through the carelessness of the Staff peons who were in charge, and even the ever-faithful John Arachchi was for the time being in Sir Henry's black books.

"I had hardly been on the spot two hours when the lost box was recovered. It was found forced open and thrown on the side of the railway line, but practically nothing was missing except a few of the trinkets.

"I laughingly explained to His Excellency that the thief, or thieves, must have mistaken the case as belonging to a Ratamahatmaya or Kandyan headman (R. M. for short) and thought it contained untold wealth."

The legend on the outside of the case ran 'Henry A. Blake R.M.' Sir Henry, as already stated, had been many years before a Resident Magistrate (R.M.) in Ireland.

The Blakes were a very hospitable couple. Among their Royal guests were the Duke and Duchess of Connaught and the King of Cambodia. Fifty Cambodian girls of the king's party gave a display of their art at Queen's House. The ladies of Ceylon presented Lady Blake with a souvenir when she left the Island.

Sir Henry retired from the public service in 1907. During the first world war he took an active interest in the organization of Red Cross work in Ireland. He also took an interest in local affairs. He was a member of the Irish Convention summoned by the wartime

Coalition Government in England to bring about a settlement of the "Irish problem".

In his retirement Sir Henry lived at Myrtle Grove, Youghal, County Cork, the former residence of Sir Walter Raleigh. It was in its garden that Raleigh planted the first potato grown in Ireland. The poet Edmund Spenser was often there with Raleigh.

In his later years, Blake was a frequent contributor to the Press, and letters over his name appeared frequently in *The Times*. He also wrote books on China and Ireland. He died at his residence on February 23rd, 1918.



## XX

### SIR HENRY McCALLUM

(1907—1913)

*Businesslike "Blimp"*

SIR HENRY McCALLUM was a businesslike and exuberant Governor who could not foresee self-government in non-European Colonies and opposed constitutional reform. His regime coincided with the first stage of agitation for political reforms which, forty years later, gave an independent form of Government to Ceylon.

He was the eldest son of Major H. A. McCallum, R. M. L. I., and Eleanor, daughter of Major Brutton, R. M. L. I. He was born on October 28th, 1852, and educated at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich. He passed out first of 52 candidates in 1871 and was Pollock medallist and Fowke medallist. After two years' training at Chatham he was for a short time Superintendent of Telegraphy in the Southern Division at Portsmouth. He was then transferred to the office of Inspector-General of Fortifications where he continued until 1875. His next post was in the Straits Settlements as private secretary to Sir William Jervois, the Governor, who was like McCallum an officer of the Royal Engineers. While there he won the Perak medal and clasp and was mentioned in despatches.

McCallum's next assignment was as Superintendent of Admiralty Works in Hongkong (1877—78). He performed a similar function in Singapore after which he returned to Woolwich (1879—80). He went back to Malaya as Deputy Colonial Engineer, Penang, (1880—84) and was Commandant of the Singapore Volunteers for part of this time.

McCallum was one of the many Royal Engineer officers who held high appointments overseas at this time. His administrative capacity, zeal and energy marked him out for promotion, and in 1897 he was appointed Governor of Lagos. He undertook a special mission in the hinterland in connection with French aggression in



Sir Henry McCallum



Lagos in 1898, and was awarded the West African medal for it. McCallum's health suffered in the West African climate and in the same year he was appointed Governor of Newfoundland. In 1900 he was appointed an A. D. C. to His Majesty the King, and from 1901 to 1907 he was Governor of Natal. He saw the later stages of the South African War, worked well with his Ministers, and received the G. C. M. G. in 1904.

Sir Henry was appointed Governor of Ceylon in 1907, at the age of 55. Mr. Hugh Clifford, the newly-appointed Colonial Secretary, acted as Governor between his arrival in Colombo in August and the departure of Sir Henry Blake. Not many months passed before both of them were involved in stemming the tide of political agitation. Mr. James Peiris started the pressure in 1908 with a letter to the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Colonel Seely, later Lord Mottistone), following an interview he had with him at the Colonial Office. Peiris had had a brilliant career at Cambridge where he took a double first and was President of the Union Society. He was later to have a distinguished political career in Ceylon.

The Legislative Council of Ceylon had been established by Letters Patent in 1833. "During the seventy-five years the Council has been in existence", wrote Peiris, "the only change that has been made in its Constitution has been the addition of two unofficial members to represent the Kandyan Sinhalese and the Mohamedan communities... Since the Constitution was granted, the condition of the Colony has undergone a complete change. Its material, moral and intellectual progress has been phenomenal. In 1833 the population was a little over a million, it is now four millions. In 1834 the number of pupils attending school was estimated at 13,391; in 1906 it was 267,691... In 1833 the revenue from all sources was Rs. 4,375,550. In 1907 it was Rs. 36,573,824... While the Colony has been taking such vast strides in the path of progress, and almost every Government department has undergone radical changes, the Legislative Council has alone remained stationary, with the result that it is completely out of harmony with the present advanced and progressive condition of the Island. It is no wonder that there is a general feeling among the educated and thoughtful classes that the time has arrived for a liberal reform of the Constitution."

Friends of Ceylon asked questions in Parliament. Sir Henry Cotton asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Secretary of State was a peer and therefore in the House of Lords) whether his attention had been drawn to the Constitution of the Ceylon Legislative Council, which did not contain a single elected member; whether he was aware of the dissatisfaction which prevailed in the Island on account of this absence of representation; and whether His Majesty's Government would take into consideration the advisability of giving to Ceylon such an elected Legislative Council as other Crown Colonies possessed, and of appointing one or more Ceylonese to the Executive Council.

Colonel Seely replied that the Secretary of State did not propose to introduce changes in the Constitution of Ceylon which, he thought, gave as much satisfaction as could be reasonably expected of any form of government. However, Lord Crewe, the Secretary of State, forwarded to McCallum both the question and answer in the House of Commons and Mr. James Peiris's letter.

Meanwhile, various memorials had been presented to the Governor by representative bodies to be forwarded to the Secretary of State, making demands similar to those embodied in Mr. Peiris's communication. The memorandum of the Ceylon National Association, signed by two leading lawyers of the Island in their capacity of President and Secretary, respectively, asked for a Legislative Council consisting of an equal number of official and unofficial members, the latter to be elected to represent the nine provinces of the Island and special interests, such as the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce and the Planters Association of Ceylon, both predominantly European in their composition at the time. By present standards the request was modest enough, and there was no question of the Ceylonese members forming a majority of the Council.

The Governor, supported by Mr. Hugh Clifford, took a firm stand against reforms. The style in which the Governor's despatch to the Secretary of State was written was unmistakably that of Clifford who wielded the pen of a ready writer. The Governor dismissed the various bodies, which submitted memorials, as unrepresentative. "The National Association", he wrote, "most of whose members are drawn, I understand, from the professional and commercial classes in the Western Province, is a debating society

which interests itself largely in political questions. I am aware of nothing in its organisation or membership which gives it any claim to the title which it assumes."

The despatch continued: "Speaking broadly, the native population of the Island (if the small section of Ceylonese who have been educated on European lines be excepted) has undergone small change, save in material prosperity, in a more general acquaintance with reading and writing the vernacular, and with arithmetic, and occasional smattering of English, and possibly in a certain increased respect for law and order during the past seventy years. To them, now as then, the *village* is their principal conception of a political entity; the native headman and the Government Agent, with the Governor and the Executive Council in the dim background, are to them the embodiments of administrative authority. Of the Legislative Council they know little, and with its doings they have even less concern. Their desire is to be suffered to till their fields in peace and security and to be saved from exaction and oppression. They would fail, in the vast majority of instances, to understand the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's dictum that good government cannot be regarded as an adequate substitute for self-government; and those of them who could be brought to understand the proposition, would unhesitatingly reject it.

"In a word, the intellectual and political development of the peasantry of Ceylon—and the peasantry form the vast majority of the population—is not so much as to enable them, in my opinion, wisely or usefully to exercise the power to elect persons to represent them, in the Legislative Council, nor have they ever evinced any desire to possess or exercise this privilege."

Sir Henry added that the real representatives of the people were the Government Agents and other experienced Civil Servants, "the best part of whose lives have been passed in Ceylon". The only concession that the Governor was prepared to recommend was an extra seat in the Legislative Council to represent the small minority educated on European lines, to be called the Educated Ceylonese Seat. The truth is that both McCallum and Clifford had spent their youth in countries like Malaya where a paternalistic form of government under the Sultans had till then been adequate—at least from the point of view of the rulers.

The outcome of the numerous memorials, despatches and other communications which passed between Ceylon and London may best be summarized in the words of the following extract from McCallum's Review of the Administration of Ceylon, 1907 to 1913:

"In 1909 memorials from a number of the inhabitants praying for reforms in the Constitution of the Legislative Council were forwarded to the Secretary of State. These were not supported by me for the reasons laid down in my despatch on the subject. Lord Crewe himself was unable to meet all the wishes expressed in those memorials, but he decided that the Council might be enlarged, and that the member representing the communities educated on European lines should be chosen by election and not by nomination. I have therefore to the best of my ability faithfully and loyally endeavoured to carry out the instructions of His Majesty's Government.

"By Royal Instructions, dated November 24th, 1910, the constitution of the Council was remodelled. There are now eleven official and ten unofficial members. Of the latter four are elected, representing, respectively, the European urban, the European rural, the Ceylonese, and the Burgher communities. The remaining six unofficial members are still nominated by the Governor, and include one Kandyan Sinhalese, one Muhammadan, two Low Country Sinhalese and two Tamil members. Two *ex officio* members, namely, the Principal Civil Medical Officer and the Government Agent, Western Province, have been added to the official members."

McCallum was not disappointed with the result. He concluded: "The Legislative Council now stands as a harmonious and efficient instrument for giving effect to the measures necessary for the good government and progress of Ceylon."

Sir Henry McCallum's regime as Governor was a period of remarkable progress in other directions. The rubber industry was booming and the acreage under this crop more than doubled. The exports of most other products of the Island broke new records. The Colombo harbour works were completed and did not require additions for a long time thereafter. The seaside railway was duplicated and the line to connect up with the ferry to India was also completed. The sanitation of the City of Colombo and its suburbs was improved by the Mansergh drainage scheme and the Lake Development scheme. An excise scheme was put through to reduce

illicit sales of arrack and toddy. Sir Henry remodelled the Agricultural Department and appointed a strong committee to inquire into higher education in the Island of which eminent Ceylonese such as Dr. Lucian de Zilwa and B. W. Bawa K. C. were members. This committee recommended the establishment of a university college as a half-way house to a university.

The Governor was a hard worker, of somewhat boisterous temperament, and it was said that he was at his best whenever he adjourned to the bar. He married in 1874, Lily, the only daughter of Vice-Admiral Johnson. She died in 1895. In 1897 he married Maud, third daughter of Lieutenant-Colonel Fitzmaurice Creighton. They had one son and three daughters. McCallum died on the 24th November 1919.

## XXI

## SIR ROBERT CHALMERS

(1913—1916)

*Bemused Mandarin*

SIR ROBERT (later Lord) Chalmers was a distinguished British Civil Servant before he became Governor of Ceylon. He was also a Pali scholar who had made valuable contributions to the study of Buddhism.

He was born on August 18th, 1858, the only son of John Chalmers of Aberdeen, by his wife Julia, daughter of Robert Mackay. He was educated at the City of London School under the famous Edwin Abbott, being admitted as a "John Carpenter Scholar". Abbott had also been the headmaster of Asquith, the future Prime Minister, under whom Chalmers served when he was a Civil Servant.

In 1877 Chalmers entered Oriel College, Oxford, as a classical scholar. He obtained a first in classical moderations but suddenly changed to science with the intention of becoming a doctor and took a second in the biology group. However, in 1882 he sat for the Civil Service examination and gained first place. He chose the Treasury and was appointed as a Second Division Clerk and promoted a First Division Clerk in 1899 and Assistant Secretary in 1903. When he was expecting to go to the Admiralty as Accountant-General, he was offered the post of Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue in 1907. Here he was responsible for the rearrangement, under the Finance Act of 1908, of the Excise. Asquith, who gave up the Exchequer on becoming Prime Minister in that year, formed a high opinion of his ability and capacity for work.

In 1911 Chalmers was promoted Permanent Secretary to the Treasury and Auditor of the Civil List. But he did not hold the post for long. He was attracted by the more valuable and alluring post of Governor of Ceylon which fell vacant by the retirement of Sir Henry McCallum. He seemed just the kind of Governor

Ceylon needed after the bluff and hedonistic McCallum. His scholarship added lustre to the office and he was known to cultured society in Ceylon as the translator into polished English of the "Jataka (birth) Tales of the Buddha". He had a high reputation in Whitehall as a financier and administrator. He made sonorous speeches in rounded periods at school prize-givings, visited temple libraries and as an oriental scholar met the chief priests on their own ground and displayed a keen interest in higher education.

When Chalmers arrived in Ceylon, the question of establishing a university college to be enlarged later into a full-scale university, was very much in the air. An influential committee appointed by his predecessor had reached the conclusion that such a college was required. The Governor's Executive Council accepted the recommendation and correspondence on the subject passed between the Governor and the Secretary of State, who consulted the English Board of Education.

Replying to a despatch from London, Chalmers wrote on January 20th, 1914:

"On the main point—that the present state of affairs in Ceylon really calls for the establishment of such an institution (a University College)—there can be no doubt. In addition to the special reasons which have been formulated by the Education Committee, the step is necessary on purely educational grounds. For the attention of students in Ceylon has been too exclusively devoted to preparation for examination, and the value of higher studies carried on under able teachers has not been sufficiently realized. Moreover, the prospect of the early withdrawal from Ceylon of the privilege of holding locally the external examinations of the University of London, renders it necessary in any case to prepare for the position which will then be created by establishing the new institution as soon as possible. I will only add that, in my judgment, the Ceylonese—whether Sinhalese or Tamil—possess a natural aptitude for culture on university lines and that, with the provision within the Colony of local opportunities for developing more fully this natural aptitude, I look forward confidently not merely to increased efficiency in the Public Service, but also to the enrichment of the general intellectual life of the Island."



Sir Robert Chalmers wished to affiliate the Ceylon University College to Oxford, his own university, and steps were taken accordingly. The Hebdomadal Council of Oxford University appointed a committee of members of Convocation for the purpose of co-operating with the Government of Ceylon in the establishment and maintenance of a college of university rank in Colombo. The Governor's attention was shortly to be directed to other more urgent matters which are referred to later in these pages. Before he left Ceylon, however, he summoned a conference of educationists and other leading men in the Island in order to formulate more definite proposals.

The Conference, which was held at Queen's House, met on November 22nd and 23rd, 1915. The official report states that "in conclusion, the members of the Conference desire to put on record their appreciation of the warm interest displayed by Sir Robert Chalmers in the establishment of a University College for Ceylon, and of the extent to which the realization of that object had been assisted by his personal efforts in the matter. They share the regret, which it is believed that he experienced, that circumstances prevented him from inaugurating the project before his departure from the Colony. They venture at the same time to express the hope that it will be possible at an early date to carry into execution the proposals approved by the Secretary of State, and thus to realize an ideal which has been so long and so ardently desired by those interested in the educational future of the Colony."

When the World War of 1914 broke out, his great knowledge of finance enabled Chalmers to meet the demands of the situation with confidence. Both his sons, Ralph and Robert, died in action in May 1915, a staggering blow to Sir Robert and Lady Chalmers and their daughter. Later in the same month, while thus stricken with grief, the Governor received information of a religious riot in Kandy between Buddhists and Muslims which spread to other parts of the Island. Martial law was declared and the military superseded the civil authority in many departments of the administration.

It all arose from a petty incident in Gampola town. Muslim traders in the neighbouring town of Kandy decided not to allow any processions of Buddhists to disturb worship at their mosque by the noise of the traditional flutes and drums. The Buddhists,

for their part, were equally determined that the procession on Wesak, the anniversary of the birth of the Lord Buddha, should follow its accustomed route. Feelings ran high on both sides. When the procession approached the mosque, part of it was diverted by the Police, but what remained pressed through. Pandemonium broke out with stone-throwing and jeering. Damage was done to the mosque. Rumours and counter-rumours of attacks on Buddhist temples and Muslim mosques fanned the flames of communal passion and much destruction of property ensued. Hooligans seized the occasion, as they usually do in such circumstances, to loot shops and generally help themselves to what they could lay their hands on.

The Government acted when the havoc had been done, and abdicated its authority to the military. Terror was caused in the villages by troops brought over from India who did not understand the language or customs of the country. Innocent men and women suffered for the crimes of street roughs. The Governor and his Colonial Secretary, who had left desk jobs in Whitehall to occupy pivotal positions in the government of Ceylon, were stampeded into extreme courses by Brigadier-General Malcolm, the Officer-commanding the troops.

In a letter to the Secretary of State, Mr. Eardley Norton, an English barrister who had come from India to defend some of the Buddhist leaders charged with serious offences, said: "His Excellency and his advisers have been suffering from so acute an attack of treasonitis that nothing short of complete change of venue from Ceylon to England, where there is at any rate still some trifling show of independence and courage, can in any measure atone for misdeeds which it shames me as an Englishman to recall".

When the Government was moved to intervene by pressure of public opinion in Ceylon and England, Sir Robert was recalled and replaced by Sir John Anderson. Chalmers was doubtless glad to get back to the Treasury where he was appointed Joint Permanent Secretary. Mr. Asquith induced him to try his hand at the uncongenial task of Under Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant during the Irish troubles, but he gave up after six months with undisguised relief. The Treasury was his true element. There he took a "watch dog" view of his duties and was not greatly loved by the departments

which wanted to spend money. A Minute left by Austen Chamberlain, Bonar Law's successor as Chancellor of the Exchequer, said: "There cannot be many instances in the long line of his (Chalmers') distinguished predecessors where tasks of such difficulty and diversity had been heaped in quick succession on the shoulders of a single man".

Despite his rather imposing official manner and mordant wit, Chalmers was a helpful friend to his colleagues and was known for many acts of quiet generosity. He was made an Irish Privy Councillor in 1916 and on his retirement was raised to the peerage.

When the then Master of Peterhouse, Cambridge, Sir Adolphus Ward died in 1924, Chalmers was chosen to succeed him. His second son had been at the College and he himself had resided for a summer at Cambridge. He had also been a member of the Royal Commission on the Universities. One who knew him well wrote in *The Times*:

"He was extremely hospitable, and brought the College into contact with outside interests and distinguished persons. His little mannerisms, such as his dramatic handling of social functions, his ceremonious courtesy, the diplomatic emphasis of his talk, his effusive circumlocution, and his eager inquisitiveness, were indulgently regarded. He was recognized at once as a disinterested and friendly spirit, and his overflowing kindness, often secretly exercised—such as entertaining during the vacations, at his own expense and in his own house, poorer scholars who could not afford to continue in residence—earned him much goodwill. He kept himself aloof from academic intrigues, and never pursued power or influence.

"But he had a real niche at Cambridge. He 'aerated' so to speak, the previously rather circumscribed society to which he belonged, and conferred distinction on an ancient College, whose policy had long been to be sound rather than prominent. Amiable as he undoubtedly was, there was a certain sense of mystery about Lord Chalmers, for he resolutely wore a definite mask of speech and demeanour, which made it difficult to conjecture either what his real aims were, or whether, apart from diligent public service and its modest rewards, he had any very distinct programme of his own. But those who knew him recognized that he loved rather than admired his fellow men, even at the expense of his own dignity:

and that he was actuated by a sympathetic desire to help, and by affections which from a mere habit (for he could not be wholly acquitted of an amiable sort of pose) he did his best to dissimulate."

Oriel made him an honorary Fellow, and doctorates were conferred on him by the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Glasgow and St. Andrews. He was a Trustee of the British Museum, a Fellow of the British Academy and President of the Royal Asiatic Society.

He married in 1888 Maud Mary, daughter of John George Forde Pigott. She died in 1923. Their two sons were one a professional soldier and the other a barrister. As already stated, they both fell in the first world war in May 1915. His daughter married Malcolm Stevenson who was his private secretary in Ceylon and was later Governor of Cyprus. In 1935 Chalmers married Iris Florence, widow of Professor Robert Latta and elder daughter of Sir John Biles. He died on November 17th, 1938.

## XXII

### SIR JOHN ANDERSON

(1916—1918)

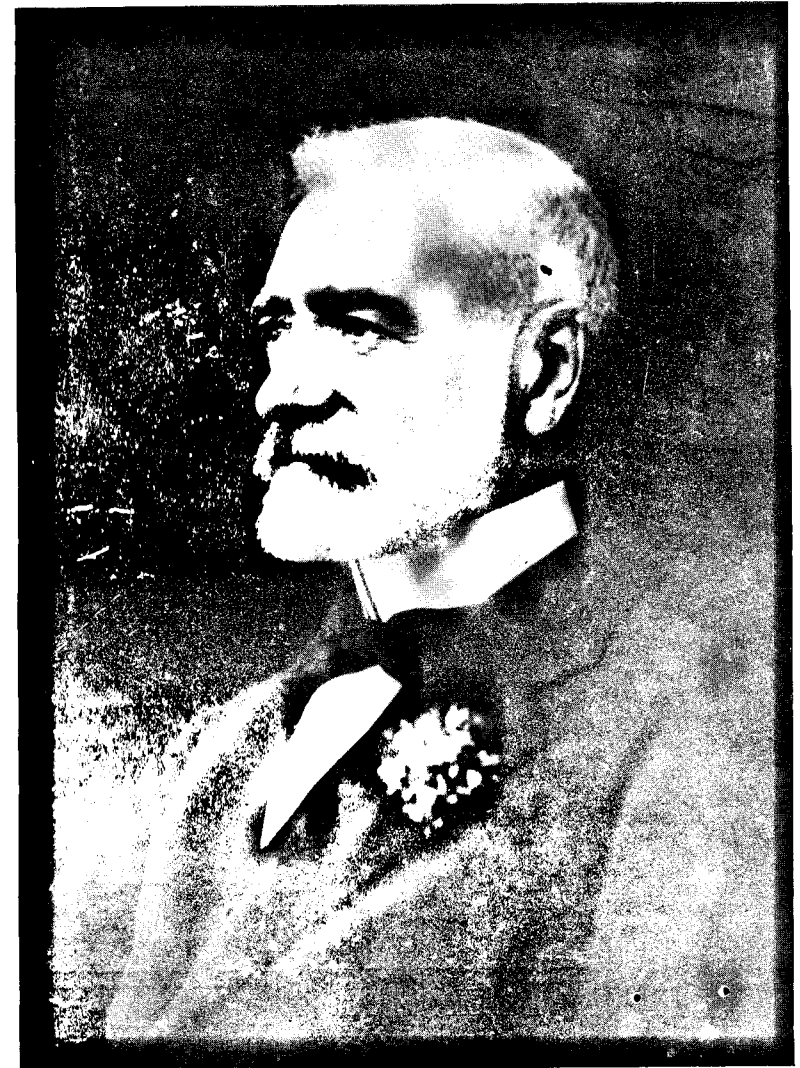
*Peacemaker*

SIR JOHN ANDERSON'S memory is treasured in Ceylon because he was the man selected by the Imperial Government to re-establish the confidence of the people in British justice and fairplay after the short period of military rule following the riots of 1915. He endeared himself by the simplicity of his ways and the conscientious manner he set about a difficult and delicate task.

He was born on 23rd June 1858 at Gartly, Aberdeenshire, the son of John Anderson, Superintendant of the Gordon mission in Aberdeen. He was educated at Aberdeen University, taking first class honours in mathematics in the M.A. degree examination and winning the gold medal for the most distinguished graduate of the year. He was awarded the LL.D. in 1907.

In 1879, John Anderson was appointed a Second Class Clerk at the Colonial Office. He enrolled at Gray's Inn and was Bacon scholar in 1887 and gained the Inns of Court Studentship in 1888. In the course of his official life it fell to his lot to travel a great deal more than the average English Civil Servant. In 1891 he was appointed Joint Commissioner, with Sir J. F. Dickson, a former Ceylon Civil Servant who rose to be Colonial Secretary of the Straits Settlements, to enquire into certain matters connected with the registry of the Supreme Court of Gibraltar. In 1892 he was attached to the staff of the British Agent for the Bering Sea arbitration in London and Paris. He was Secretary to the Conference of Colonial Prime Ministers with Mr. Joseph Chamberlain in June and July 1897 and again in 1902.

He accompanied their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York (later King George V and Queen Mary) on their Colonial tour, during which they visited Ceylon. Describing it, Sir Solomon Dias Bandaranaike writes: "Kandy's reception that evening was



Sir John Anderson

even more picturesque, and troops lined the route to the King's Pavilion, where a State banquet followed. At dinner, Sir John Anderson, who was travelling in the *Ophir* as the representative of the Colonial Office, sat next to me, and engaged me in conversation with regard to the general administration of the country. Sir John had always a dignified presence, and at that time did not have a single white hair on his head or face. Thirteen years later, when I walked into his room at Downing Street, his head and beard were totally white, and I could not easily recognise him, and still three years later, utterly broken in health, he died in Ceylon."

Sir Ralph Furse recalls those Colonial Office days in his recently published book\* "Recollections of a Recruiting Officer". In a reference to Anderson he writes: "Old John", we called him to distinguish him from 'Young John', then a junior in the Nigerian department but already giving promise of that transcendent ability which carried him to be Permanent Under Secretary at the Home Office, Home Secretary, Governor of Bengal, and Chancellor of the Exchequer; the famous Sir John Anderson—later Lord Waverley—Churchill's 'old war horse' in the Cabinet of the second world war.

"'Old John' was a 'regular' civil servant, but he had been away from the office some years governing Malaya. He came back, metaphorically trailing behind him the battleship *Malaya*. Cynics said he had 'fiddled' the cost of her out of the Malayan sultans. Actually she was their free and spontaneous gift, the most striking of many proofs of Malayan loyalty and gratitude to Britain.

"When we enter, Sir John will be standing in front of the fireplace reading *The Times*. Seen so, with head bent and eyes lowered, his grave dignified intellectual face might be that of some Scottish professor of philosophy. But when he raised his head and looks at us the simile changes. With his grizzled spade beard, his quarter-deck stance and his air of quiet command he looks like an admiral in mufti."

Anderson arrived in Ceylon as Governor on April 15th, 1916, having relinquished the post of Permanent Secretary at the Colonial Office. The Government had realized that grave mistakes had been made in Ceylon and something had to be done to vindicate

\* *Aucuparius: Recollections of a Recruiting Officer*, by Sir Ralph Furse (Oxford University Press).



British justice in a Colony in which it had prevailed for over a century. The Governor's first task was to go through the records of the cases of persons who had been convicted during and after the riots of 1915, often on flimsy or fabricated evidence. On the King's birthday he released 800 prisoners who had been sentenced to terms of a year or less.

The Colonial Office had selected the right man to soothe the outraged feelings of an embittered people. Anderson carried out the task assigned to him with courage and candour, thereby endearing himself to the permanent population but enraging those who had, doubtless in good faith, condoned or been responsible for excesses committed in the name of law and order. He appointed a Commission of Inquiry, consisting of Sir Alexander Wood Renton, Chief Justice, and Mr. G. S. Schneider, a senior member of the bar. The Commission reported that "in each of the cases that have been under investigation the act of shooting cannot be justified on the ground of the existence of martial law—in short, it had no legal justification."

In his despatch to Mr. Walter Long, the Secretary of State, Anderson made some outspoken comments on the state of affairs revealed by the Commission's report. He said:

"The primary responsibility for these deplorable incidents rests on Mr. F. N. Sudlow, a member of the Colombo Town Guard Artillery, who was selected by the military authorities to command a small body of military to patrol part of the area in which disturbances had taken place, and where there was reason to fear that further trouble might occur.

"He received from the Inspector-General of Police instructions to deal vigorously with actual disturbances, and seems to have construed them into a commission to administer lynch law throughout the area prescribed for his patrol and to have considered that their effect was to make him the leader of a *posse* of *vigilantes* sent out to deal with desperadoes in the manner depicted in cinema shows and dime novels of the Wild West." He added: "It is almost incredible that anyone, unless one who had been schooled by the Germans in Belgium, could have honestly acted on Mr. Sly's interpretation (of the Proclamation). As the Commission have

found that he acted in good faith, they were evidently satisfied that he is such a man."

The Secretary of State, Mr. Walter Long, fully concurred in the Governor's reprobation of those implicated and wrote to the Governor: "I am compelled reluctantly to share your conclusion that in the circumstances any action more drastic than you propose is impossible. It is hardly necessary for me to insist that the Ceylon Government shall not avail itself of the services of any of those concerned, in any civil or military capacity".

In March 1918 the Governor fell dangerously ill at Queen's Cottage, Nuwara Eliya, his residence in the hills. He died on March 24th. As his Maha Mudaliyar, Sir Solomon Dias Bandaranaike, who was at his bedside writes: "Sir John was the first Governor of this country to die while his term of office in Ceylon was as yet unfinished, and every circumstance combined to make his death a matter of genuine and universal grief, so that it seemed almost a personal loss."

## XXIII

### SIR WILLIAM MANNING

(1918—1925)

#### *Beginnings of Self-government*

**B**RIGADIER-GENERAL SIR WILLIAM HENRY MANNING was the first Governor of the Colony who had to meet the challenge of self-government. Although through the greater part of his regime he was endeavouring to stem the popular movement, he succeeded in retaining the goodwill and esteem of the public of the Island. He was born on July 19th, 1863, the second son of Henry Manning and was educated at Cambridge and the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. He was gazetted second-lieutenant in the second battalion of the South Wales Borderers in 1886; two years later was transferred to the 24th Foot and joined the Indian Army.

Manning served in the second Burmese war, in which he was wounded, and in the first Miranzai and the Hazara expeditions in the North West Frontier in 1891. He was in command of the Mianje and the Chirad Zulu expeditions in British Central Africa in 1893—94, and in command of the operations against the chief Mpezeni in North-East Rhodesia, being mentioned in despatches.

In 1897 Manning was appointed Deputy Commissioner and Consul-General for British Central Africa, and was acting Commissioner for nearly two years. He was promoted brevet lieutenant-colonel in 1899 and raised and commanded the Central African Regiment and was first Inspector-General of the King's African Rifles from 1901 to 1907. In 1902—3 he was in command of the Somaliland Field Force and of its first Brigade in 1903—4. His engagement with the Mad Mullah's army in April 1903 relieved Colonel Cobbe's flying column. Some 2,000 of the Mullah's horsemen and spearmen fell in the action.

Manning served for some time as Commissioner and Commander-in-Chief of the Nyasaland Protectorate. There he took a keen



Sir William Manning

interest in the cotton-growing industry. In January 1913 he was appointed Governor of Jamaica, succeeding Sir Sydney Olivier who was later a member of the Labour Cabinet in England as Lord Olivier. He served in Jamaica throughout the duration of the first world war and was regarded as a successful Governor of the Colony.

Manning was given the assignment of stabilising the government of Ceylon where the animosities created by the riots of 1915 and their aftermath were still simmering. The sense of resentment left by the harsh and unimaginative handling of the disturbances (referred to in earlier chapters) released a country wide demand for constitutional reform which was heightened by events in India. The Colonial Office had been impressed by Manning's tact, kindness and fair-mindedness in other Colonies and doubtless felt that these qualities would enable him to create a happier atmosphere in Ceylon than had recently prevailed.

He arrived in Ceylon in September 1918 and was almost immediately involved in constitutional problems. He was instructed by Lord Milner, the Secretary of State, to make soundings and report on the demands made by the Ceylon Reform League and other similar bodies for a liberalization of the Constitution. Between 1834, when the Legislative Council was established, and the first decade of the twentieth century, there had been no important changes in the direction of responsible government. In 1910 the Council was enlarged, providing for four of the ten unofficial members to be elected: the European urban, the European rural, the Ceylonese and the Burgher representatives.

Ceylon continued to be a Crown Colony which was defined as one "not possessing responsible government and in which the administration is carried out by public officers under the control of the Secretary of State". As the activities of the Secretary of State increased, the control over individual Colonies weakened. Mr. Bonar Law said in the House of Commons in 1915 that "you cannot really control the government there except on general lines... We must trust in these cases largely to the character of the men who represent the British Government."

The representations of various public bodies for a reform of the Constitution were forwarded to the Secretary of State in 1919 and there was a demand from the Ceylon Reform League for a public-



ation of the Governor's despatch to the Colonial Office and for an interview with Lord Milner—both of which were refused. Under further pressure the Secretary of State relented and Mr. (later Sir) D. B. Jayatilaka, who was in London as representative of the League, received a letter from the Colonial Office which said: "I am to inform you that Lord Milner has been in telegraphic correspondence with the Governor of Ceylon on the matter; and that, on the Governor's recommendation, he is prepared to receive the Delegation referred to in your letter of the 11th August as representatives of the Ceylon National Association, the Ceylon Reform League and the Committee of the National Conference of Ceylon."

At the end of the meeting, on October 15th, 1919, Lord Milner told the Delegation that he had been corresponding with the Governor on the Reforms, and had thought the matter of sufficient importance for personal discussion. He had asked the Governor to come to England and expected his arrival at no distant date, when he would go fully into the matter.

The newly-formed Ceylon National Congress in 1919 reiterated the demands for constitutional reform. After receiving representations from various bodies in Ceylon and the Governor's report thereon, the Secretary of State caused an Order in Council to be enacted reconstituting the Legislative Council to have 14 official and 23 unofficial members under the presidency of the Governor. In order to prevent the occurrence of a deadlock on any important issue, it was provided that the Governor might declare that the passing of any measure to be of paramount importance to the public interest; and that, in such a case, the measure might be carried by the votes of the official members. The Governor was also to have power to stop the proceedings of the Council in relation to any measure that he certified affected the safety or tranquillity of Ceylon.

A special session of the Ceylon National Congress was held immediately after, and the new Constitution was denounced. The Governor was criticized by Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, the President of the Congress and himself a former member of the bureaucracy, as being out of sympathy with the more liberal attitude towards British dependencies which prompted the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms in India. "Brigadier-General Manning has

no faith in these ideals and aims", he said. "He openly sneered at them at the dinner given him by his European friends of the Ceylon Association in London to whom he was profuse in his promise of help. Nor has he the saving grace of sympathy with our people. His Majesty the King, when he visited India as Prince of Wales, noted with his wonderful insight the lack of sympathy between the rulers and the ruled and publicly impressed on British officials the need for cultivating sympathy. These words have borne fruit in India but apparently never reached the ears of Brigadier-General Manning. He is chary of cultivating friendly relations with Ceylonese, and reactionaries and sycophants have made use of him for their own purpose."

The speaker continued: "The obstacles and disappointments we have suffered we must regard as a necessary discipline designed by Providence for our good. In time to come we shall even look on Governor Manning as a benefactor for having made us a united people."

There is irony in Sir Ponnambalam's complaint; for, not long after he uttered those words, he broke away from the Ceylon National Congress, while his brother, Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, an equally distinguished public figure, was quietly working with the Governor to upset the Congress apple cart.

The Congress rejected the new reforms on the ground that, in the guise of extending popular elections and control, they increased the powers of the Governor, restricted freedom of discussion in the Legislature, imposed humiliating disabilities on the people's representatives, introduced invidious distinctions between communities and denied even the beginning of responsible government. What the reforms, did, however, was to put a brake on the Legislature at a time when popular elections and representative government were making their first appearance.

The Congress was led by reasonable men, however, and when, they learned that the Governor would like to talk over matters with them, they readily agreed to meet him. The deputation was led by Mr. (later Sir) James Peiris, who was now President of the Congress, and included Messrs. D. B. Jayatilaka, E. J. Samerawickrame, E. W. Jayawardene and G. A. Wille. The diplomatic gifts of Sir



Henry Gollan, the Attorney-General, made the task of the Governor easy and a compromise was reached.

The representatives of the Congress agreed to offer candidates for election to the Legislative Council in the hope that from within they would be able to press their demands more effectively. In commending the agreement to the Congress, Mr. James Peiris said: "We ought to welcome the fact that the Government, as the Colonial Secretary put it the other day, has met us half-way. That is the spirit in which we ought to work. The Colonial Secretary (Sir Graeme Thomson) appreciates very highly the action we have taken in this matter and has commended it publicly and fearlessly, and you may be assured that his appreciation does not stop there. He would help us hereafter, and help us to achieve our reforms because he has a belief in our sobriety, in our inclinations and desire to co-operate and work harmoniously with the Government."

The Governor gained prestige and popularity with the public by his declared willingness to remove the more objectionable features of the new Constitution. At the next session of the Ceylon National Congress, the demand for further reforms was pressed, but there was high praise for the Governor. Mr. H. J. C. Pereira, K.C. said in his presidential address: "I think on the whole we have a man in our Governor whom we can safely trust. He is, after all is said and done, what I can honestly describe to you as an English gentleman. That is saying a great deal. Let us then give him the credit for his bona fides, for acting according to his honest convictions, and instead of trying to use wild threats, meaningless threats, and adopting a policy of meaningless opposition, let us help him in his work. Let us convince him that we will help him."

The pressure for responsible government was, however, not relaxed. In 1922 the Secretary of State for the Colonies was none other than Mr. Winston Churchill. While the agitation was kept up in Ceylon one of the leading Ceylon newspapers published the "secret" memorial submitted to the Secretary of State by the minorities with the blessing of Sir William Manning. This created some stir, but meanwhile the amended Manning Constitution had enlarged the Legislative Council. This act of "improvement" had within it the seeds of decay, for the Legislature had become

unworkable in the long run—it had an unofficial majority without responsibility for the executive government.

Manning won popular favour by his friendliness and tact. In December 1919 he married Olga Sefton-Jones. The ceremony took place in Queen's House. The Governor's Maha Mudaliyar, Sir Solomon Dias Bandaranaike, describes the event as follows:

"It was, of course, the first time a Governor of Ceylon had entered the matrimonial state here—all the others had been married before they arrived and didn't risk it again—and getting married in Queen's House was in itself an occasion. The Registrar-General performed the ceremony, and the function was very largely attended, all sections of the community being present. Both Sir William and his wife received the hearty congratulations of all Ceylon, in spite of a certain amount of political discontent at the time, and were also the recipients of a large number of presents... The new chatelaine of Queen's House charmed everybody, and there is no doubt that she contributed largely to the great success of her husband's regime."

When the Ceylon National Congress met for its general session in December 1925, the President said that Sir William Manning, before he left Ceylon, had changed his opinion about Ceylon politicians and had praised the statesmanlike attitude adopted by them. He had shown remarkable sympathy towards the goal which the Congress had in view. They also regretted, he said, that His Excellency had to leave them just at the time when he was beginning to understand them and sympathize with their aims and aspirations.

Sir William left Ceylon after a tenure of office of six and a half years, having won the goodwill of the people. The Governor and his wife were entertained at a farewell dinner by the members of the Legislative Council, presided over by Sir James Peiris, its Vice-President. After his retirement he lived the life of a country gentleman, serving as a magistrate in Kent. Sir William and Lady Manning had three daughters. He died on New Year's day in 1932, at the age of 68.

## XXIV

### SIR HUGH CLIFFORD

(1925—1927)

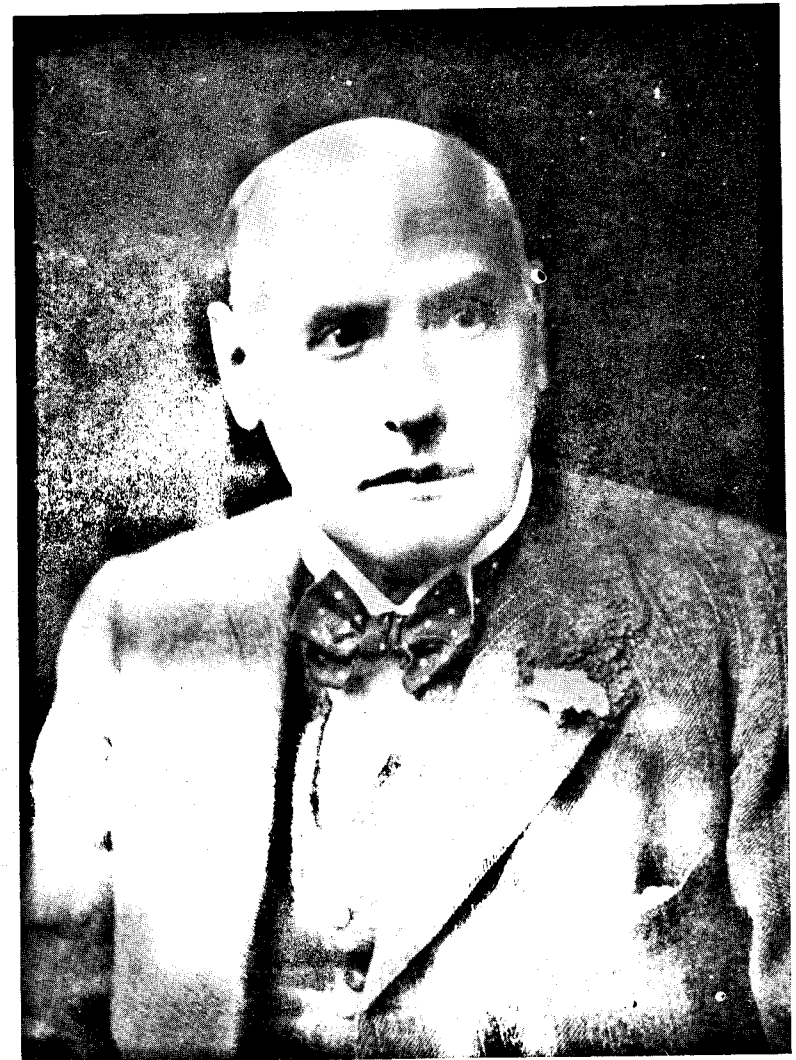
*“The White Man’s Burden”*

**S**IR HUGH CLIFFORD was one of the most gifted men to hold the office of Governor of Ceylon but he made a greater impact on the government of the Island when he was Colonial Secretary between the years 1907—1913 than during his tenure of the higher office after an interval of service in Africa and elsewhere.

He was born in London on March 5th, 1866, and came of an old English Roman Catholic family. One of his ancestors, the first Baron Clifford of Chudleigh (1630—73), was Lord Treasurer of England. Hugh Clifford was the son of Major General H. H. Clifford, V.C., K.C.M.G., and the grandson of the 7th Baron Clifford of Chudleigh.

He was educated at Woburn Park, a private school for English Roman Catholics founded and managed by the Catholic peer Lord Petre. Following the family tradition of a military career, he won a scholarship to Sandhurst. But at the age of seventeen he joined the Perak Civil Service. After filling minor posts he was sent on special service to Pahang in January 1887 and acted as Government Agent, Pahang, from April 1887 to October 1888. He was Superintendent of Ulu Pahang in 1889 and acted as British Resident for various periods in 1890 and 1891. From 1893 until July 1st, 1896, when the States of Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Pahang became the Federated Malay States, he held the substantive post of British Resident, Pahang.

During those years Clifford saw active service in the field and took a leading part in the suppression of a rebellion. In 1895 he led an armed force into the States of Trengganu and Kelantan to capture fugitive rebel leaders. In 1889 he was appointed Governor of North Borneo and Labuan, under the British North Borneo



Sir Hugh Clifford

Company but, due to a disagreement with the Company on its policy of administration, he resigned in April 1901 and was re-appointed to Pahang. Shortly after that he returned to England on medical advice. In 1903 he was sent to Trinidad and Tobago as Colonial Secretary.

His twenty years of service in Malaya made a deep impression on the young administrator of unusual capacity and wide interests. Clifford's appearance was indicative of his strength, both physical and intellectual. He mixed freely with the Malay rulers and was not above eating and dressing like a native of the country in his relaxed moments. He was keenly interested in all forms of sport and travelled up and down the country. He was already a prolific author. He translated the Penal Code into Malay and was joint author of a dictionary of the Malay language with Sir Frank Swettenham. In 1896 he married Minna, daughter of Gilbert A. Beckett, of which marriage there were a son and two daughters. His wife died in 1907 and their son was killed in action in the 1914-1918 war.

In 1907 Clifford was appointed Colonial Secretary of Ceylon. His period of office coincided with the Governorship of Henry McCallum. Some of the brilliant, if reactionary, despatches, written in the name of Governor McCallum, were as indicated earlier from the pen of Hugh Clifford. When many years later Clifford returned to Ceylon as Governor, the then President of the Ceylon National Congress said, at a meeting of that body held in December 1925: "His Excellency is not a stranger to us. Even in this land of short memories, thirteen years have not been sufficient to completely efface the memory of Sir Hugh Clifford from our minds. As our Colonial Secretary he dazzled us with his brilliance. His great intellectual gifts, his high literary attainments, his unbounded energy and capacity for work and his commanding personality won our profound admiration." But of course there was little in common between those who wanted self-government for Ceylon and the aristocratic Englishman schooled in the courts and camps of Malayan Sultans.

As the writer of a despatch for McCallum he had said of Ceylon politicians: "I would further invite your Lordship's attention to the fact that all these memorials emanate, not from 'the people of Ceylon', as is claimed by the memorialists, but from certain well-

defined classes of the native population—classes which, moreover, represent a very small minority of the whole. I refer to those of the natives of Ceylon who have assimilated an education of a purely Western, as opposed to Oriental type, and who are to be regarded, not as representative Ceylonese, but as a product of the European administration of Ceylon on lines approved by British tradition.”

It was not surprising therefore that the President of the Ceylon National Congress should have proceeded to say: “But those of us who were not altogether blinded by his extraordinary brilliance, could not but deplore his utter lack of sympathy with the people of this country, his cynical disregard of their feelings and intolerance of all views other than his own, and his reactionary and repressive policy.”

Clifford’s dominating personality was felt in every aspect of the administrative life of the Island. He shone in debate and was a match for Ponnambalam Ramanathan, the leader of the unofficial members of the Legislative Council, and did not hesitate to crush weaker men. During this period he acted as Governor more than once and enjoyed his position.

Clifford was a widower and a romantic writer. Mr Leonard Woolf, in his book dealing with his years in Ceylon\* has the following references to Clifford:

“The Governor himself had a Residence, the King’s Pavilion (Kandy), and Sir Hugh Clifford, who for sometimes was acting Governor, liked the place so much that he spent a good deal of his time there. He was a formidable man, but by a piece of luck I happened to impress him as extremely competent and this not only had a considerable effect upon my future career in Ceylon, but brought me into direct contact with him and his exalted circle in Kandy far more often than a mere Office Assistant to the Government Agent of the Central Province could have expected.

“The most exalted region into which I stepped, partly by an accident, but also partly with Clifford, was that of an Empress, a real historical Empress or ex-Empress. She was the Empress Eugenie of France... Her Majesty had heard that the Buddha’s Tooth (relic) was sometimes shown to people and she had a great

\**Growing—An Autobiography of the Years 1901-1911* by Leonard Woolf (Hogarth Press).

desire to see it; was there any possibility of my being able to arrange this? I said that I thought I might be able to arrange this for the afternoon of the day after tomorrow...

“I got hold of the Diwa Nilame and he agreed to show the Tooth to the Empress, and as Sir Hugh Clifford was in Kandy, I told him about it for he had not seen the relic and I felt sure he would like to be present. He met me outside the Maligawa and we waited in the road for the Empress to arrive. When she came, an absurd procession formed up. Clifford was a very tall man, over six foot high, with a broad, strong body and a large head and face. He and the Empress led the procession and they walked so slowly that it was like a slow motion picture, and the Empress in the black clothes, black hat, and black veil of the eternally black French widow was so short and bent that Clifford could hardly get his head down low enough to hear what she said through the thick veil... It all passed off extremely well. Nugawela, the Diwa Nilame, in full Ratamahatmaya costume, was very dignified and impressive, and the Empress was suitably impressed. I earned a good deal of unearned kudos from the Colonial Secretary...

“The next episode clinched things. Clifford was a tremendous lady’s man, and while he was acting Governor, a glamorous lady, the wife of an officer in the Indian Army, visited Kandy for a few weeks. One evening riding with Rachel in Lady Horton’s Walk, a carriage passed us in which sat Clifford and the lady, and even that brief glimpse showed me that the lady had made a conquest of the acting Governor of Ceylon.”

From Ceylon Clifford went to Africa. In 1912 he was appointed Governor of the Gold Coast. During his term of office there he concluded with the French an important agreement in regard to Togoland. The many problems which arose during the 1914—18 war he seems to have taken in his stride. In 1919 he succeeded Sir Frederick (afterwards Lord) Lugard as Governor of Nigeria. Many tributes, as this one by Sir Alan Burns, who was his private secretary in Nigeria, have been paid to his work in Africa:

“Lugard was succeeded as Governor of Nigeria by Sir Hugh Clifford, his opposite in many ways. Clifford was a large man, who loved the ceremonial and social sides of his duties just as Lugard had hated it. Instead of working from dinner-time to the



small hours of the morning, Clifford worked from the small hours till breakfast-time. He was a good office man, and he reorganized the machinery of government so that it worked efficiently. He worked hard and played hard, and his tremendous energy allowed him to do both. Lady Clifford saw to the refurnishing of Government House, which was something like a barn when she arrived, and the style of entertaining at Government House was much improved. The African public liked the more showy official ceremonies, and we all appreciated the personality and power of oratory of the new Governor."

Clifford, a Roman Catholic, insisted on being met by the priest at the door of the church and escorted to his seat. He wrote to the Bishop of Lagos reminding him of the rubrics on the subject, but the Bishop claimed that the Governor would be entitled to the official welcome to church only if he wore uniform. Thereafter the Governor always went to church in uniform.

When he returned to Ceylon as Governor in 1925, it seemed as if the African sun had taken its toll on a strong constitution and intellect. The old fire had gone and he seemed unhappy with the new form of government in which the Governor's control of the legislature had almost ceased to exist. "The most striking characteristic of the Ceylon Constitution", said the Donoughmore Commissioners, "is the divorce of power from responsibility. The unofficial members, who are not responsible for the conduct of public business, enjoy an overwhelming majority in the Legislative Council; the official members who are so responsible, are in a permanent minority. The official members owe no allegiance to the Council and are irremovable except by the Governor, in whom all the executive authority is vested. The unofficial members, though in complete control of the Council, are denied the prospect of assuming office themselves. Thus, on a counting of heads, those who have the controlling votes in the Council are not called upon to bear the responsibility for their decisions: those who have to bear the responsibility are without the controlling votes." This was just what Hugh Clifford had feared would happen when he was writing McCallum's despatches opposing self-government. "The position of the Governor", said the Commissioners, "resembles that of a Prime Minister whose duty it is to carry on the Government with

a minority in the House, but who is himself denied entrance to the Chamber and is forced to work through a deputy to whom he can only give general instructions."

Clifford lost no time in bringing these facts to the attention of the Colonial Office. In 1927 he was offered, and accepted, the post of Governor of the Straits Settlements. At a complimentary dinner given to him by the Legislative Council a few months before he left, he declined to make his speech until reporters were brought in as he had, he indicated, an important announcement to make. Meanwhile the Governor entertained his hosts with readings from a slim volume of Kipling's poems he had brought in his pocket. The announcement, when he made it, referred to the appointment of a Special Commission to report on a reform of the Ceylon Constitution, headed by the Earl of Donoughmore, Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords, Sir Geoffrey Butler M.P., Dr. T. Drummond Shields M.P., and Sir Matthew Nathan.

Sir Hugh Clifford warned the country of the rapid increase of population and the urgent need for land development with a view to improving the standard of living of the masses. He took a keen interest in the steps taken to convert the University College into a University and came in for criticism from a section of the public for his support of the move to establish the University in or near Kandy. He appointed a committee of the Legislative Council to select a site and put the responsibility for carrying out the recommendations of the Council squarely on the Council. "The controversy which has arisen on the subject of the best site", he said, "has at any rate shown that opinions on the question are divided; and as the decision is a momentous one, which will affect the whole future and character of the University, I certainly was not prepared to begin building on the Buller's Road site until the Legislative Council has had an opportunity of studying the pros and cons and registering a final decision, which will settle the matter once for all."

In 1910 Hugh Clifford married, as his second wife, "Elizabeth Lydia Rosabelle, daughter of Edward Bonham and widow of Henry de la Pasture. The latter was a son of the 4th Marquis whose grandfather was one of the noble *émigrés* who went to England from France in 1791. Lady Clifford was a well-known novelist in her

day. Her plays had long runs in the London theatres and had been produced by royal command at Sandringham.

In the later stages of his rule in Ceylon, Hugh Clifford was already a sick man. There is a diverting account of them by his doctor, Dr. Lucian de Zilwa, an intellectual and writer like the Governor:

"One day in 1925 the Private Secretary rang me up, and said that H.E. was not feeling well and wished me to call. After consultation, we talked, too long I fear, but I enjoyed the conversation with a man of his experience and culture, and the sequel showed that I had found favour in his sight. In parting, I asked him to bid his Private Secretary to let me know how he was next day.

"Having lived among the Malays from the age of seventeen, among 'brown humanity', he had no racial prejudice whatever. British Colonial Governors very naturally prefer to be treated by one of their own people, but Clifford was indifferent to such considerations. At our first meeting the talk ranged over a wide field and he appeared to be fascinated by what I said about the subconscious.

"This was the beginning of a long series of very often unprofessional visits. But there was one snag about them...

"On one occasion, the object of my visit was to be shown something that had been dictated to the P.S. at two o'clock in the morning. Clifford explained that Nigeria, of which he had been the Governor, was celebrating a centenary, and publishing a magazine, to which he was asked to send a message of a hundred words. He woke up at about 2 a.m. and saw the message in bright characters before his eyes. He called the P.S., who was sleeping in the next room, and bade him take down the words he read out. There were exactly a hundred words, as the P.S. attested, with the date and signature...

"Clifford was a big man of powerful physique, and he took plenty of physical exercise. I was told that he was up at six every morning to play singles' sets of tennis with his Private Secretaries until they were exhausted. Then he would drive to the Galle Face Hotel for the swimming bath. One morning on diving as usual there was not enough water in the bath, and he bumped his head on the bottom. Dr. Chissell, who lived at the Hotel, attended to

him and brought him back to Queen's House. There was slight concussion, but no serious damage.

"Clifford was very obstinate about one thing; he would go bare-headed in the blazing sun, although he was quite bald. At Nuwara Eliya I have seen blisters on the scalp after playing golf in the sun. Lady Clifford backed me in trying to make him wear a topee, but without success. I still feel that the tragedy of his eventual mental breakdown might have been averted if he had a little fear of the Sungod.

"One day the P.S. called me, saying that Lady Clifford was rather worried about H. E. and would like me to see her first. As Clifford invariably ended his midday talks with me by inviting me to lunch and, although I generally declined as I had patients waiting at home, it would have been discourteous not to accept sometimes.

"The first time I met Lady Clifford, I pleased her by saying that I had two of her novels in my library, *Deborah of Tod's* and *The Lonely Lady of Grosvenor Square*.

"Lady Clifford must have been very nearly of the same age as her husband, but she was very frail and delicate. She was trembling and in tears when I saw her. She was afraid that Clifford was heading for a nervous breakdown. He had had a serious breakdown in Nigeria preceded by exactly the present circumstances. She was afraid.

"When I went to Clifford's sitting room, he said 'There is really nothing the matter with me. But you must reassure my wife, who is rather worried'. I said: 'Well, sir, let us overhaul you. Please go into your room, and take off your things, and let me know when you are ready'.

I was waiting for the signal when he walked into the sitting-room wearing only his socks. I could not help laughing, I said 'Really, sir, you will catch a chill if you don't put on a shirt at once'. Like a lamb he went back and put on a shirt."

Sir Hugh Clifford assumed office as Governor of the Straits Settlements and High Commissioner of the Malay States in July 1928. When he left Colombo the roads were lined with dense crowds. The Governor insisted on shaking hands with as many people as possible assembled in the jetty. He had become a popular

man despite his eccentricities. He was now going back to his early love. It was the scene of much of his writings.

Clifford was a writer of distinction, his stories about the Malay Peninsula being among the best of his imaginative writings. Among his numerous books special mention may be made of: *Studies in Brown Humanity*, *Bush-whacking*, *Malayan Monochromes*, and *The Further Side of Silence*. He also contributed to *Blackwoods*, the *Cornhill* and *Macmillan* magazines. He was a friend of Joseph Conrad and gave a lecture about him when he was Governor of Ceylon. His versatility as a writer is shown in his essays on themes as different as Ibn Batuta, Jose Rizal of the Philippines and Fernao Lopez in St. Helena.

He did not serve long as Governor of the Straits Settlements. He retired in October 1929. His wife's health had been giving cause for anxiety; and on her being ordered to England he decided to accompany her, and asked permission to resign his office. In accepting Clifford's resignation, King George V expressed distress at hearing the reason that necessitated it, and indicated his appreciation of Clifford's long and distinguished services.

As a matter of fact, it was Clifford's own rather than his wife's health which was failing fast. After his return to London one day he was giving evidence before a Commission appointed to examine prospects of English Civil Servants in the Colonies. He was almost the first to give evidence and gave the Commission an account of the conditions prevailing in the West Indies, East Africa, West Africa, Ceylon and Malaya where he had worked. He spoke the whole day and was listened to with great attention. Clifford said he would continue his evidence on the following day. The next day, when they started at 10 a.m., he continued to give evidence but kept repeating himself and travelled outside the terms of reference of the Commission. The Chairman telephoned to Lady Clifford who came and took him away. This was the last of his public appearances. He died on December 19th, 1941.

## XXV

## SIR HERBERT STANLEY

(1927—1931)

*Prudent Proconsul*

SIR HERBERT STANLEY was able by his tact and grasp of affairs to launch the Donoughmore Constitution which introduced adult franchise, abolished communal representation in the Legislature and created Ceylonese Ministers.

He was born on July 25th, 1872 and was educated at Eton and Balliol College, Oxford. His early career was in the shadow of Liberal politics and in later life he was attracted by the climate and official and social life of South Africa and Rhodesia. He was appointed Private Secretary to His Majesty's Minister at Dresden and continued in the diplomatic service till 1902. In 1906 he was Assistant Private Secretary to the Lord President of the Council in London.

When in 1910 Lord Gladstone, the son of the great Liberal leader, was appointed first Governor-General of South Africa, Stanley accompanied him as Private Secretary. He acted in the same capacity to Lord Buxton, who succeeded Lord Gladstone, but was soon appointed Resident Commissioner of Southern and Northern Rhodesia. After three years in this office, he became Imperial Secretary in South Africa. From this, it was an easy step to the office of Governor of Northern Rhodesia in 1924. In 1927 he was appointed Governor of Ceylon, at the age of 52.

While he was Imperial Secretary in South Africa, Stanley married Miss Reniera Cloete, a member of an old Cape family, the Cloetes of "Alpen", Wynberg. She was created a Dame of the British Empire in 1941. Sir Ralph Furse, who was a guest of Sir Herbert and Lady Stanley at Queen's House, Colombo, has written in a recently published book\* that Lady Stanley was "one of the most beautiful women of the century in any country of the world".

\**Ausparius: Recollections of a Recruiting Officer* by Sir Ralph Furse (Oxford University Press).

The Constitution recommended by the Donoughmore Commission in 1928 was revolutionary in some respects. For the first time the responsibility for all but a few departments of the government was transferred to the elected representatives of the people. The State Council was to be elected by adult franchise. At its first meeting the Council was to elect seven Executive Committees. The Chairmen of the Committees, together with the Chief Secretary, the Financial Secretary and Legal Secretary, that is to say the three Officers of State appointed by the Secretary of State, were to form a Board of Ministers. The Ministers had no collective responsibility except for finance.\* The Committees, with the Chairmen at their head, were to be responsible for the subjects allocated to each, both in executive and legislative matters. Communal representation was abolished.

The report of the Donoughmore Commission was presented to the British Parliament in July 1928. When the Ceylon Legislative Council had time to study its contents it began a series of debates during which parts of the report were condemned by this or that party. The Governor, on instructions from the Secretary of State, informed the Council that the recommendations of the Commission had to be regarded as a whole, and that amendments which touched matters of principle would therefore not be entertained.

Informal discussions took place between the Governor and various sections of the Legislative Council. The recommendation of universal franchise, without income, property or literacy qualification, aroused fears in many quarters. Sir Ponnambalam Ramathan, the veteran leader of the Unofficial members of the Council, was among those who thought that it would lead to "socialistic legislation" which would overstrain the financial resources of the country. He argued that educational advance should precede general enfranchisement. The supporters of the Ceylon National Congress, on the other hand, were prepared to accept universal suffrage although they had not asked for it, but they objected to Indian immigrant labour being given the vote unless they were permanently resident and qualified to be citizens of the country. There were others who deplored the abolition of communal representation.

Sir Herbert Stanley realized at the outset that the chances of getting the new Constitution accepted depended very largely on an understanding with the Sinhalese majority on the question of the franchise for immigrant Indian labour. The Donoughmore Commission itself had suggested that a period of five years' residence was a sufficient indication of an "abiding interest" in Ceylon or of "permanent settlement in the Island". This did not satisfy the Sinhalese. The Indian labourers at the time comprised a population of 900,000 when their dependents were included. It was felt that an unrestricted extension of the franchise to these Indians would swamp the Kandyan village population in many areas. To meet the demand made by the Sinhalese politicians, that an intention to remain in Ceylon should reinforce the test of past residence, Sir Herbert Stanley proposed that domicile (either of origin or of choice) should be made the standard test. The position is well set out in the despatch of Lord Passfield (previously Sidney Webb) to the Governor in which he said:

"I cannot fail to recognize that, unless some material modification of the proposals relating to the franchise can be announced, the prospect of general acceptance of the scheme and of active co-operation in its working, if it is put into force, is remote. You have fully discussed in your despatch the main outlines of the controversy which has arisen and you submit proposals for modifications of the recommendations of the Commission, which appear to me not unfair in themselves and to be likely to command a large measure of acceptance. I propose to adopt your suggestions under which, subject to special provisions being made for British subjects to qualify for the franchise in accordance with the conditions of the present Constitution, domicile should be the standard test for inclusion in the register. The definition of 'domicile' involves legal questions of much difficulty and complexity, and the qualification would be hardly suitable if it stood by itself. The difficulty would, however, be overcome by your proposal that the applicant, provided he can furnish satisfactory evidence of five years' residence, should be qualified for the vote on the production of a certificate of permanent settlement granted by some duly appointed officer. I propose that provision should be made for this qualification in the Order in Council."



In Ceylon Stanley was a popular and successful Governor. He was simple in his ways, very human and possessed a rich store of political and administrative experience. During his period of office in Ceylon the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester visited the Island bringing with them the crown and throne of the last king of Kandy.

In 1931 Stanley returned to his beloved South Africa as High Commissioner for the United Kingdom. He was also responsible for the administration of Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland. In 1935 he was appointed Governor of Southern Rhodesia. He was due to retire at the end of 1937, but various organisations in the country petitioned the Colonial Office to extend his term of office and did not in fact retire till 1941.

He settled down in the salubrious climate of Cape Town after his retirement and took an active part in local affairs. His wife died in 1940. They had two sons and two daughters. In 1942 Stanley was appointed Chief Commissioner of the Boy Scouts in South Africa. He died at the age of 82 on June 5th, 1955.

## XXVI

## SIR GRAEME THOMSON

(1931—1933)

*Greatest since Noah*

SIR GRAEME THOMSON was a man of distinction and considerable achievement when he first came out to Ceylon in 1919 as Colonial Secretary. He returned twelve years later as Governor. "The greatest Transport Officer since Noah" was how Lloyd George, the Prime Minister, described him during the first world war.

He was born on August 9th, 1875, the son of John Thomson, of Beech Bank, Bowdon, and educated at Winchester and New College Oxford, where he took honours in classics. He was called to the Bar by the Middle Temple in 1902. Graeme Thomson had meanwhile become a clerk in the Transport Department of the Admiralty and in 1914 was Assistant Director of Transports. In 1915 he became Director of Transports and two years later Director of Transports and Shipping when the Ministry of Shipping was set up in 1917.

Graeme Thomson's duties during the first world war were of great importance and he was often in the company of the Prime Minister. Lloyd George wrote in his memoirs: "We also learned at this Cabinet meeting the disquieting tidings that the American authorities were refusing to allow shipment of any of their troops in vessels with a speed of less than  $12\frac{1}{2}$  knots. We had scraped together every vessel that could possibly be spared for troop transport, and some of these were slower ships with a speed of only  $9\frac{1}{2}$  knots. The refusal to use these would cut down by about 7,000 per month the number we could transport. There was considerable cabling and consultation about this matter. Eventually a compromise was reached allowing American troops to be sent in vessels having a speed not less than  $11\frac{1}{2}$  knots, and intensive work on the part of Graeme Thomson, whom I had sent to the States to

assist the shipping programme, resulted in tonnage becoming available which would enable us to transport up to 200,000 men per month, considerably more in fact than our original programme."

Lord Hankey, who was Secretary of the War Cabinet, writes in the second volume of this memoirs: "April 2.—Rather a quiet day dealing with a lot of office business. War Cabinet at 5.50 p.m. At 7 o'clock, the P.M., Henry Wilson, Davies, Duncannon (Wilson's A.D.C.) Graeme Thomson and self left for Folkestone where we are to sleep *en route* to Beauvais tomorrow. Arrived about 9.30 and went to bed."

Among other responsibilities borne by Graeme Thomson during those days was that of helping to maintain food supplies. When he left the Ministry of Shipping there was a presentation to him by the staff, at which Lord Maclay, the Shipping Controller, said that no man, whether in the Navy, Army or in the Cabinet, had served his country more faithfully during the war. His successor, Sir Basil Kimball-Cook, described him as a man of great courage, infinite tact, sound judgment and consideration for others. They would not think of him as a K.C.B., Governor of So-and-So, but as "G. T. best of good fellow."

In July 1919 Graeme Thomson was appointed Colonial Secretary of Ceylon. From the start he was acceptable to members of the Legislative Council and the public at large, even when he was expressing the official point of view which was opposed to the grant of responsible government. He was courteous, broad-minded and entirely free from prejudice. He looked on the Island's problem with a fresh mind and no doubt influenced his chief, Sir William Manning, towards the more liberal attitudes which he adopted in the latter part of his career in Ceylon. Graeme Thomson was Colonial Secretary of Ceylon for three years during which he acted as Governor for six months. He was appointed Governor of British Guiana in 1922. Three years later he was appointed Governor of Nigeria, succeeding Sir Hugh Clifford.

Nigeria was still largely undeveloped and without adequate communications. He followed the policies adopted by men like Lugard of developing local government and bringing about closer co-operation between all the West African Governments.

Graeme Thomson suffered from the rigours of the African climate. He suffered terribly from malaria, complicated by a gastric ulcer. His appointment as Governor of Ceylon in 1931 was welcomed because of the good impression he created as Colonial Secretary twelve years before. He arrived in Colombo when the country was in the throes of the great depression and constitutional problems were still unresolved. Physically he was a different man from what he was when he first came to Ceylon. Dr. Lucian de Zilwa, who was his physician, has written: "...his stomach was intolerant of drugs and his nervous system was affected. He could not sleep without a hypnotic drug which was habit-forming. He was a brainy man as suggested by his massive forehead, and it was excessive mental activity that kept him awake. He was a law unto himself in regard to diet. He would eat large chunks of Stilton cheese. He was horrified at the idea of giving up alcohol. He observed that a little whisky never did a Scot any harm... Sir Graeme Thomson was, like Sir Hugh Clifford, keenly interested in the political ferments of the time."

Hardly had the first State Council started to function when a demand was made by the Sinhalese Ministers for a radical change. Discussions between the Governor and the Board of Ministers led to a formal statement by Graeme Thomson that while in his opinion it was premature to make any fundamental changes in the Constitution, he was prepared to examine any specific points, such as the method of election of Ministers, the reallocation of the subjects and functions of the Executive Committees and certain proposals in regard to the Public Services Commission, the creation of which had been proposed by the Donoughmore Commission. The Ministers could not, however, agree that such minor changes would solve "the grave difficulties experienced in the working of the Constitution".

As already stated, the Governor was at this time a very sick man. He sent for the doctor when he was in pain. He told Dr. Lucian de Zilwa: "Just put on a dressing gown over your pyjamas and come in your bed room slippers. It must be tiresome dressing and undressing at night." When he asked the doctor for the bill and did not receive one, he said: "I get a good salary, damn it, and I can afford to pay my doctor. If you are obsti-

nate, I shall have to look through the catalogues of the Army and Navy Stores and order a present which you may not like at all. You must know, doctor, that I am a very determined man and you are not going through that door till you have been converted."

He was seized with his fatal illness at sea when returning to England at the request of the Secretary of State to discuss the memorandum of the Board of Ministers asking for a revision of the Constitution. He was buried in Aden. Lady Thomson, whom he married in 1914, was Beryl Marion, daughter of Mr. J. Tomlin.

## XXVII

## SIR REGINALD EDWARD STUBBS

(1933—37)

*Oxford Bureaucrat*

SIR REGINALD EDWARD STUBBS was one of four Colonial Secretaries of the Island who were later appointed Governor of the Colony. The other three were Sir Charles MacCarthy, Sir Hugh Clifford and Sir Graeme Thomson. He was born on October 12th, 1876, the youngest of the five sons of the Rt. Rev. William Stubbs, Bishop of Oxford and a renowned historian. His mother was Catherine Dellar of Navestock who had been schoolmistress of the village school. He was educated at Radley and Corpus Christi College, Oxford, where he was an exhibitioner. After taking a first in Classical Moderations and Litterae Humaniores, he passed into the English Civil Service and was appointed in 1900 to the Colonial Office. He was attached to the Eastern Department and so began his connection with Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, the Federated Malay States and Hongkong which lasted for the next three decades of his life.

He was a first class clerk in the Colonial Office when Leonard Woolf, the writer and publisher, resigned from the Ceylon Civil Service to marry the brilliant Virginia Stephen and settle down to a literary life in London. Woolf was on holiday in London and applied for an extension of his leave. He received a reply asking for information about the nature of the private business which prompted his application. He replied that he could not state the nature of his private affairs, whereupon the Secretary of State regretted he was unable to grant the extension asked for. Woolf then sent in his resignation and received the following letter signed "R. E. Stubbs":

From the Colonial Office (in handwriting)

29 April 1912

Dear Sir,

I am desired to write to you with regard to your letter of the 25th and to say that, before accepting your resignation, Mr. Harcourt would like to give you an opportunity to reconsider the question. In accordance with your wish, the Governor of Ceylon was only asked whether you could be given an extension of leave 'on the ground of service'. He has replied that this cannot be done and it is of course impossible for Mr. Harcourt to overrule him. The grant of leave on the ground of urgent private affairs is, however, another matter and is one for the decision of the Secretary of State.

If, as would appear from your letters, your private affairs make it impossible for you to return to Ceylon at present, Mr. Harcourt, on being satisfied as to their urgency and importance, would probably be prepared to grant you an extension. If, however, you are still unwilling to state the exact nature of these affairs, Mr. Harcourt will have no alternative but to accept your resignation.

It is for you to decide whether you will now state their nature. If you do so by letter, the matter will be absolutely confidential and, if an extension is granted, the Governor will only be told that the leave is granted on the ground of private affairs the nature of which has been explained to the satisfaction of the Secretary of State. Or if you are unwilling to state them in writing, do you care to come and tell me about the matter in person? Anything you tell me will go no further. It will only be necessary for me to report that I am satisfied that there is proper ground for granting an extension.

Yours faithfully,  
R. E. Stubbs

Woolf resigned in May 1912 and Stubbs became Colonial Secretary of Ceylon in 1913. Stubbs, who had been promoted to be a First Class Clerk in 1910, was sent on a special mission in that year to Malaya and Hongkong. In 1912 he was a member of the West Indies Land Committee.

He succeeded Sir Hugh Clifford as Colonial Secretary of Ceylon. In 1913 Sir Henry McCallum retired on grounds of ill health and the new Colonial Secretary was at once called upon to act as Governor. It was unusual for civil servants in the Colonial Office to be appointed to overseas posts but Stubbs was already familiar with conditions in the Colonies although he had not had direct personal experience of Colonial administration. However, he did much to improve the organisation and methods of the Secretariat. Sir Solomon Dias Bandaranaike, who worked with him, observes that "Mr. Stubbs was youthful and fresh from the Colonial Office, but his subsequent promotions are alone a proof of the high capacity he displayed. More often than almost any other Colonial Secretary he found the administration of the Government devolve on his shoulders. He may have taken the wrong attitude once or twice on important questions, and certainly many more times than once or twice vitriolic criticism made him a target. But one of his chief assailants, Ponnambalam Ramanathan, was forced to admit, and then admitted with a generosity exceeding expectations, that Sir Reginald had been efficient and sincerely devoted to his work."

When the 1914—18 war broke out the Government of Ceylon was in the hands of Chalmers and Stubbs, neither of whom had experience overseas. But they were very successful in organizing the finances and supplies of the Colony and essential exports to the United Kingdom in the face of the German submarine warfare. They were less successful in dealing with the riots of 1915 due to a lack of contact with, and closer understanding of, the people. Stubbs was a man of few words and in the Legislative Council he did not shine as Clifford had done.

In 1919 he was appointed Governor of Hongkong in which post he served with success for six years. During the next six years he was Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of Jamaica. Thereafter he was Governor of Cyprus, but only for a year, for in 1933 he was appointed Governor of Ceylon.

One of his first tasks in Ceylon was to report to the Colonial Office on the working of the Donoughmore Constitution. The Sinhalese Ministers of the Ceylon State Council had submitted their proposals for a reform of the Constitution by the withdrawal of the three Officers of State and provision for a Cabinet wholly



responsible to the Legislature. To force the pace the Congress members of the State Council introduced a Bill to give effect to the Ministerial proposal. On September 16th, 1933, the State Council passed a resolution "that a deputation of five Members of the House be sent to the Secretary of State to urge for an immediate revision of the Constitution". A few days later the Secretary of State cabled back expressing surprise that he should be asked to receive a deputation at such short notice. He said that none of the facts known to him would justify an immediate alteration of the Constitution, nor had he received a considered statement from the Governor on "the various and to some extent conflicting proposals contained in the memorandum of the Board of Ministers and the Bill before the State Council".

Stubbs submitted a report on February 21st, 1934. He had been in close touch with and possibly encouraged the minority groups which opposed the radical proposals of the Sinhalese Ministers. The Governor advised the Secretary of State to adhere to his former decision and refuse to receive a deputation as the Board of Ministers were not unanimously in favour of the proposals and as the Minority members were opposed to them. He was not convinced that the time was opportune for any amendment of the Constitution in the direction of full responsible government. On June 8th 1935, the Tamils and Muslims sent a statement to the Secretary of State in which they set out their case in considerable detail. The 'majority' community had been placed in power as an inevitable result of the abolition of communal representation and it was urged that the persistent agitation to amend the Constitution could only be regarded as designed to complete that domination.

The elections to the second State Council under the Donoughmore Constitution were completed on March 10th, 1935 and the Council proceeded to elect the seven Executive Committees and their Chairmen who formed the Board of Ministers. All the Ministers thus elected were Sinhalese. It had been arranged that they should be Sinhalese for, as Sir Baron Jayatilaka, who was re-elected Leader of the State Council, told Stubbs, the Sinhalese Ministers had resolved to give a practical demonstration of the fact that, under the Donoughmore Constitution, the minority members had no better chance of getting elected as Ministers than under a

modification of it. The discussion of the reforms entered on a new phase when Mr Ormsby-Gore (later Lord Harlech) instructed Stubbs' successor, Sir Andrew Caldecott, to examine the situation and recommend suitable changes in the Constitution.

Lady Stubbs, who was a daughter of Mr. F. Womack M.P., took a keen interest in social and charitable work and was popular with all communities in the Island. They had two sons and a daughter. Stubbs retired on pension in 1937 and settled in Kent. In 1938 he was appointed Vice-Chairman of the Royal Commission on the West Indies. In 1941 he was Chairman of the Northern Appellate Tribunal for Conscientious Objectors. He was elected an Honorary Fellow of his college at Oxford. He died on December 7th, 1947.

## XXVIII

### SIR ANDREW CALDECOTT

(1937—1944)

#### *The Common Touch*

SIR ANDREW CALDECOTT was Governor of Ceylon during the greater part of the second world war. He was sent to Ceylon to solve the political deadlock caused by the decision of the State Council, by a majority vote, to put an end to the Donoughmore Constitution as soon as possible. The minorities, led by Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam, an able Tamil lawyer-politician, for their part, insisted on 'balanced representation' in the legislature, popularly called the 'fifty-fifty' demand.

Andrew Caldecott was born on October 26th, 1884, the son of the Rev Andrew Caldecott. He was educated at Uppingham, where he was a scholar, and Exeter College, Oxford, which later elected him an honorary Fellow. He joined the Malayan civil service in which he had a successful career during twenty years. Like Hugh Clifford, Caldecott understood the Malayan character as well as any foreigner could, and he was a good mixer. He had varied interests as a writer, musician and painter.

In 1911 he was appointed District Officer of Jelebu, whose history he wrote later. He rose to be Chief Secretary of the Government of the Federated Malay States and in 1933 received promotion as High Commissioner. He was appointed Governor of Hongkong two years later and was a great success in the post. He had had much to do with the Chinese in Malaya and Singapore and by reason of his realistic attitude towards the problems of his new charge he was a very popular Governor of Hongkong. When he was appointed Governor of Ceylon in 1937, the people of Hongkong made strong representations to the Secretary of State for the Colonies begging that he be allowed to remain in Hongkong. Mr. Ormsby-Gore, however, decided that his experience, tact and skill were needed more in Ceylon than in Hongkong just then.



Sir Andrew Caldecott

He instructed Caldecott to examine the situation in Ceylon carefully and, when he had acquainted himself with the views of all sections of opinion in the Island and had time to form conclusions, to submit his recommendations on the questions at issue, namely, the special powers of the Governor, the method of selecting Ministers, the relations between the Ministers, the Executive Committees and the State Council, the representation of the minority communities, and the franchise.

After receiving a series of deputations, and considering a number of memorials and memoranda, Caldecott sent his suggestions to the Secretary of State which were presented to Parliament in December 1938. His despatch marked an important stage in the discussion of the reform of the Ceylon Constitution. It was an independent sifting of the evidence by a fresh mind and the conclusions arrived at were forcibly stated. "It was written", said the Soulbury Commissioners in their report, "with a vigour and directness unusual in official documents, and while on closer examination some inconsistency may be detected here and there, there is no ambiguity."

Caldecott rejected the 'fifty-fifty' demand. It had asked that half the number of seats in the Legislature should be allotted to the Sinhalese—the major community—and the other half to representatives of the minorities who comprised a third of the population. The Governor was in favour of placing greater individual and collective responsibility on the Ceylonese Ministers and relieving ordinary members of the Council of their work on Executive Committees. In this way he sought to demarcate clearly the respective functions of the executive and legislative branches of the Government. His terms of reference did not permit any examination of the State Council's demand for a removal or reduction of the special powers of the Governor.

"I am under no illusion that the adoption of my proposals would spell the end of the present difficulties or the avoidance of new ones; on the contrary", he wrote, "I foresee mountains of difficulty ahead for the Ministers, advisers and the Governor alike." In the event, his proposals did not receive "the general consent of all important interests in Ceylon", which the Secretary of State had defined as the desirable objective of the enquiry.



With the outbreak of war in 1939, constitutional matters had to be laid aside. The Governor had to place the country under a war footing, organize civil defence, food rationing, military camps, evacuation of school children from Colombo and a hundred and one other things. He made popular the informal costume for civilian officials—white shorts, shirt and hose—and secured the full collaboration of the Board of Ministers in the war effort. One of the major commands in the war—S. E. A. C.—was situated in the Island, with Lord Louis Mountbatten as “Supremo”. When Malaya fell, and the danger of a Japanese invasion of Ceylon became a possibility, Admiral Sir Geoffrey Layton was appointed Commander-in-Chief, Ceylon. Layton was a bluff sailor who seemed to enjoy dictatorial powers and Caldecott at once retreated to a secondary place, accepting the new situation with dignity and devotion to duty.

Admiral Layton, having witnessed reverses in the Far East, was naturally bothered about the lack of preparation to meet enemy attack in Ceylon. His brusque ways sometimes gave the impression that the Governor and His Ministers were in some way responsible for the fact that Ceylon was not armed to the teeth. Later on he said that “except for the big guns on the Galle Face, the defence of Ceylon was practically non-existent. The race course and the ladies golf club were requisitioned. The houses of the Chief Justice and the General were flattened with every elephant available. From this new landing ground, Hirohito’s pilots were genuinely surprised and alarmed to see two squadrons of Hurricanes taking to the skies. The fighters had been rushed from an aircraft-carrier in the Indian ocean to this hurriedly prepared air base.”

Remembering his experiences in Malaya, Layton arranged to send European women and children out of the Island. This panicky measure brought a rebuke from Mr. Winston Churchill who observed that he had sent Layton to Ceylon to take charge and not to cause panic and consternation. The Admiral replied: “You will be glad to hear that my activities have restored confidence and morale in the Island.”

Layton had Ceylonese Ministers running after him and frequently by-passing the Governor, which did not make matters easy for the latter. In a newspaper interview he gave to a journalist, Mr.

Sydney Reynolds and published in the *Times of Ceylon*, the Admiral, at the age of 78 and living in retirement, said:

“I had the highest regard for D. S. Senanayake, though he mistrusted me at first, thinking that it would be a repetition of 1915. Later, he gave me his fullest co-operation, Sir Oliver Goonetilleke was the most outstanding of them all. Sir John Kotelawala helped with his central labour corps. He was always amusing but his ideas were not very sound. George E. de Silva was a hell of a talker. He would go on for hours and I had to put the brakes on him at Cabinet meetings. We played tennis together. He used to stand at the base line and lob the ball in the air. Maddening, it was.

“I found the railways were in a shocking state, and made it a point that at least one of the two managers should be available for duty at any given moment. The Colombo to Trincomalee journey should have taken twelve hours was being covered in double that time. I got on the train—and so did a number of inspectors!—and it arrived on the dot.

“There was a shortage of food. I imported wheat from Australia and taught the people how to use it. Live cattle were also imported on the hoof and set to graze on the Nuwara Eliya Golf Course. A dire shortage of self-produced rice was supplemented by consignments from Egypt and America, those from Burma and Thailand having ceased. My friend Field Marshal Lord Wavell sent us condiments from India.”

Layton was well known for his salty language. Once a Minister complained to the Governor that the Admiral had called him “a wobbly old jelly”. It did not make Caldecott’s work easier to receive such complaints. He himself had the common touch. He was as popular among the Ceylonese as he had been among the Malays and Chinese during his earlier assignments. He was understanding and human, and a man of refined tastes. Whenever he made a speech he had something new and interesting to say and could produce a well-turned sonnet or witty article. In sending me a sonnet for publication in the *Ceylon Daily News*, of which paper I was then editor, he said that “the great thing about a sonnet is that it prevents one being long-winded”. He sometimes sent a piece for the press with a covering note which only said: (Name, not for publication. A. Caldecott). In his advice to hasty



reformers he translated the Latin tag *festina lente* into Sinhalese when he said in a public speech: *hemin, hemin*.

When Caldecott left Ceylon on October 17th, 1944, a tired and sick man, at the end of his labours as a Colonial administrator for 37 years, I published a review of his term of office. His Secretary, who like his chief was a man of culture, wrote to me: "I hope you will forgive my writing to you like this but having come to know that you were the author of the centre page article on Sir Andrew Caldecott which appeared on the 17th, entitled 'An English Gentleman Retires', I thought I would just write to tell you what great pleasure it gave Sir Andrew. It was wonderfully timed, appearing as it did on the very day on which he left the Island, and it did, I believe, a great deal to cheer him up. He was naturally very distressed at leaving Ceylon, as were all at his going, and I am not exaggerating at all when I say that your article put new heart into us. It really is a most discerning analysis if I may say so. I have lived with Sir Andrew for nearly five years and would claim to know him pretty well, and your appraisal of his character, abilities and personality seems exactly right. I can't tell you how much it has meant realizing that Sir Andrew really has been appreciated and that though of course people naturally hold different opinions about his course of action in certain matters the discerning ones value his sincerity and singleness of purpose."

How and where should a Colonial Governor spend his retirement? Caldecott had given some thought to the matter and expressed his views in a witty article he sent me for publication in the *Daily News* on the day on which Ceylon attained her independence. In the course of it he said:

"What will it feel when, having steered your little ship 'Personal Endeavour' through the calms and storms of an active career, you feel its keel grate at last on the beach of retirement from which there can be no refloating? Will you have found the haven where you would be? A hospitable shore? Or will you be loathe to land, sitting disconsolately at the idle helm with eyes upon the sunset; your sails flapping foolishly in the fitful gusts of recollection?"

"These are questions that Life's mariners should consider *betimes*, each for himself. The wise voyager is he who prepares the answer before he becomes stranded. But how?

"First he must guard against fallacies, especially if his course has been charted through distant seas. There are those who talk of retirement as a home-coming from exile. This is not, and can never be. The man who steps ashore is not the young fellow who boarded ship at Tilbury forty years ago with the Eastern sun in his eyes. Nor is this the England that he then watched fade into the distance from a cabin port-hole. *Tempora mutantur nos et mutamur in illis*. Scene and actor are different. Who aspires to sink back in that old arm-chair of the past soon finds himself on the hard, rough floor of disillusionment.

"Another fallacy is that man can live by golf alone. Sooner or later a sexagenarian schooling in rheumatism, arthritis or other infirmity, will teach the contrary. But, someone will say, there still remains your London Club where you can play bridge, talk sport and politics, and enjoy company. True: but talking is at the price of listening. Can you stomach daily doses of Brown's colonial career, of Smith's biggest bag, or Jones's largest fish, of the worst hand ever dealt to Robinson, of Johnson's views on the budget of how Freeman once did the hat trick at an old boys' match, of what Harris made on the 1913 Derby, of how everybody and everything is going—or has gone—to the dogs? Will you not be waiting, with as little disguise as the others, the opportunity to interpolate your own contribution to a general boredom? Or to tell the latest story fathered on the Stock Exchange? inevitably.

"Is then retirement a life sentence of futility? Not if wisdom is taken from the caterpillar.

The caterpillar on the leaf  
Repeats to thee thy mother's grief.

"A vain repetition, whatever William Blake meant by it! The caterpillar's true doctrine is far more practical. After a career of laborious voracity, he settles down, on feeling the cramps of age, to weave a silk cocoon (alternatively to vault an earthen cell) wherein to await his pupal metamorphosis. From it he will preach, silently, the dignity of decay; the comfort, calm and comeliness of coma; the beatitudes of bed. But for such retirement there has been lifelong preparation. He has fed throughout on what will yield silk for his tent or mortar for his crypt..."

“Cocoon-spinning”, he continued, “is no mere synonym for idleness. It is a process for doing things for the pleasure they bring, for the interest they afford, and not for the dollars they earn. Under present conditions of life in England, the process is subject to many necessary interruptions. No day is too long; few long enough. How are they spent? Somewhat as follows the figures standing for hours: Dressing, undressing, shaving and bath 1; breakfast, luncheon, tea and dinner 1½; reading newspapers ½; gardening 1½; correspondence 1; at piano, writing-desk or sketch-book 2½; walking, motoring, boating, bathing 1½; third programme 1½; arm-chair reading 1½; dog and (in winter) fire worship, with conversational accompaniment ½; interruptions, social and otherwise 1; bed-reading 1, or more *ad libitum*.

“So the time slips by. What, it may be asked have you to show for it? Nothing of significance: a few indifferent sketches in water-colour; half a dozen lame compositions for piano; a score of idle tales or essays. Psychologically, however, contentment; and the satisfaction of not being the creature of career; of still being a living organism and not a hat-rack for reminiscences. Such a life, of course, has its critics. ‘A man of your experience’, they object, ‘ought to be serving on boards and committees’. Wherein lies a dangerous fallacy. Experience ceases to be of value the moment that it is no longer up-to-date or first-hand. It is a common complaint that this person or that does not know the *first* thing about the subject on which he presumes to lecture or advise. It is far more perilous not to know the *last*, the most recent, thing. The solutions of yesterday provide no key to the problems of today; the past contains no text for the future. History may repeat itself but never on the same plane. Such are the reasons why this article, written from the cocoon, cannot have for its subject the future of democracy in Lanka. Cordial felicitations on her new Constitution and Commonwealth status accompanying it, but this is all that a pre-pupal philosophy permit. *Floreat!*”

Caldecott made his home in Itchenor, Sussex. He married in 1946 Evelyn May, daughter of Canon Palmer. His first wife, the daughter of J. R. Innes, C.M.G., died in Ceylon in 1940. He himself died on July 14th, 1951, at the age of 66.

## XXIX

## THE LAST PHASE

(1944—1948)

WITH Sir Henry Monck-Mason Moore we come to the last of the Colonial Governors of Ceylon, 29th in the line, and the first Governor-General of self-governing Ceylon. Like his two immediate predecessors he was the son of an Anglican clergyman. Thirty-four years earlier he had joined the Ceylon Civil Service as a young man straight from Cambridge. His career was typical of the Colonial Governors of the mid-century: war service in the 1914—18 was followed by posts of increasing responsibility under such experienced administrators as Clifford, Cameron, Graeme Thomson and Grigg.

When Moore arrived in Ceylon as Governor, the goal of self-government was already within sight of the Ceylonese. Sir Andrew Caldecott's report to the Secretary of State contained proposals which, although falling short of what the Ceylon Ministers had asked for, held out high hopes of a liberal measure of constitutional reform. The Island's strategic importance, the co-operation extended by its inhabitants and their leaders to the British authorities in the war against the Japanese in the East and the prevailing mood in governmental circles in England favourable to self-determination, helped to build a fund of goodwill and confidence sufficient to overcome long-standing fears and suspicions.

In 1941 the British Government issued a Declaration which recognized the urgency and importance of constitutional reform and promised a full examination of the subject by a Commission or Conference. This did not please the Ceylon Ministers who felt that the matter had been sufficiently examined and renewed their demand for a form of government similar to that of the white Dominions. In May 1943 the British Government made a second Declaration which said that the post-war examination of the reform of the Constitution of Ceylon would be directed towards a grant

to Ceylon by Order in Council of full responsible government under the Crown in all matters of internal civil administration. The Ministers were invited to make detailed proposals in the way of a complete constitutional scheme. It was said at the time that Lord Louis Mountbatten, Supreme Commander of the South East Asia forces, had urged the British Government that some action should be taken urgently. There was an impression that the War Council in Ceylon, with Admiral Layton as Chairman, and the Governor, Sir Andrew Caldecott, as a member, was not proving very efficient.

The Ministers of the Ceylon Government were fortunate to have had in Ceylon, as Vice-Chancellor of the University, Sir Ivor Jennings, who is now Master of Trinity Hall and Downing Professor of the Laws of England at Cambridge. At the time of writing he is also Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University. His reputation as an authority on constitutional matters is worldwide. A friendship between Jennings and D. S. Senanayake, formed during the performance of common wartime chores, produced fruitful results both in the constitutional and educational fields. "Experimental drafting of a Constitution had already begun, and in October 1943, Mr. Senanayake laid the draft before the Ministers", writes Sir Ivor, in his book entitled *The Constitution of Ceylon*.<sup>\*</sup> "Its content was determined in the main by the conditions of the Declaration. So far as the form was concerned, it had to satisfy three-quarters of the State Council; so far as the legislative power was concerned it had to satisfy His Majesty's Government."

The Ministers' scheme for a new Constitution was presented on February 2nd, 1944 to the Governor (Sir Andrew Caldecott) who forwarded it to the Secretary of State. It is possible that at this stage Caldecott reminded the latter that the minorities were clamouring for a hearing before final decisions were taken. In any case, the Colonial Office seems to have had second thoughts and announced that a Commission would be appointed not only to examine the Ministers' proposals but also to "provide for consultation to take place with various interests, including minority communities concerned with the subject of constitutional reform and with proposals which Ministers have formulated".

<sup>\*</sup>*The Constitution of Ceylon* by Sir Ivor Jennings (Oxford University Press).

Sir Andrew Caldecott, who had been Governor of Ceylon through seven difficult years, retired in 1944. An ex-official of the Colonial Office, Sir Charles Jeffries, writes in a recently published book entitled *Ceylon—the Path to Independence*<sup>\*</sup>: "The Colonial Office, in its wisdom (which was great) chose to recommend as his successor, and as the last in the long line of British Governors, Sir Henry Monck-Mason Moore. Sir Henry (affectionately known as 'Moncky') Moore was not only the last of the Governors of Ceylon but, curiously enough, the first to have been originally trained in the Ceylon Civil Service. He served as an administrative officer in the island from 1910 to 1919, when he was selected for appointment as Colonial Secretary of Bermuda. He went on to be, successively, Chief Secretary of Nigeria and of Kenya, Governor of Sierra Leone, Assistant and Deputy Under Secretary of State at the Colonial Office, and Governor of Kenya. He possessed, therefore, a very rare combination of experience. He knew and loved Ceylon and its people, understood its peculiar problems, had learned and practised the art of government in countries at different levels of political development, and had also inside knowledge of the working of the British Government and a shrewd appreciation of the pressure and influences in the light of which political decisions have to be reached. No one could have been better equipped to guide Ceylon through the dramatic events of the coming years."

Sir Henry Moore was briefed by Mr. Oliver Stanley, the Secretary of State, on the intentions of the Colonial Office in regard to constitutional reforms for Ceylon and informed of his decision to appoint a Commission under the Chairmanship of Lord Soulbury. The Commission arrived in the Island in December 1944. Besides Lord Soulbury, its membership included Sir Frederick Rees, Principal of the University College of South Wales, and Sir Frederick Burrows, President of the National Union of Railwaymen and afterwards Governor of Bengal. As Herwald Ramsbotham, Soulbury had held Cabinet office in Conservative administrations. He was later Chairman of the Assistance Board and Chairman of the Burnham Committees. The Commission was officially boycotted by the Ministers, who had opposed a further enquiry, but, as Sir Ivor Jennings wrote, "Mr. D. S. Senanayake had 'a series of most

<sup>\*</sup>*Ceylon—the Path to Independence* by Sir Charles Jeffries (Pall Mall Press).

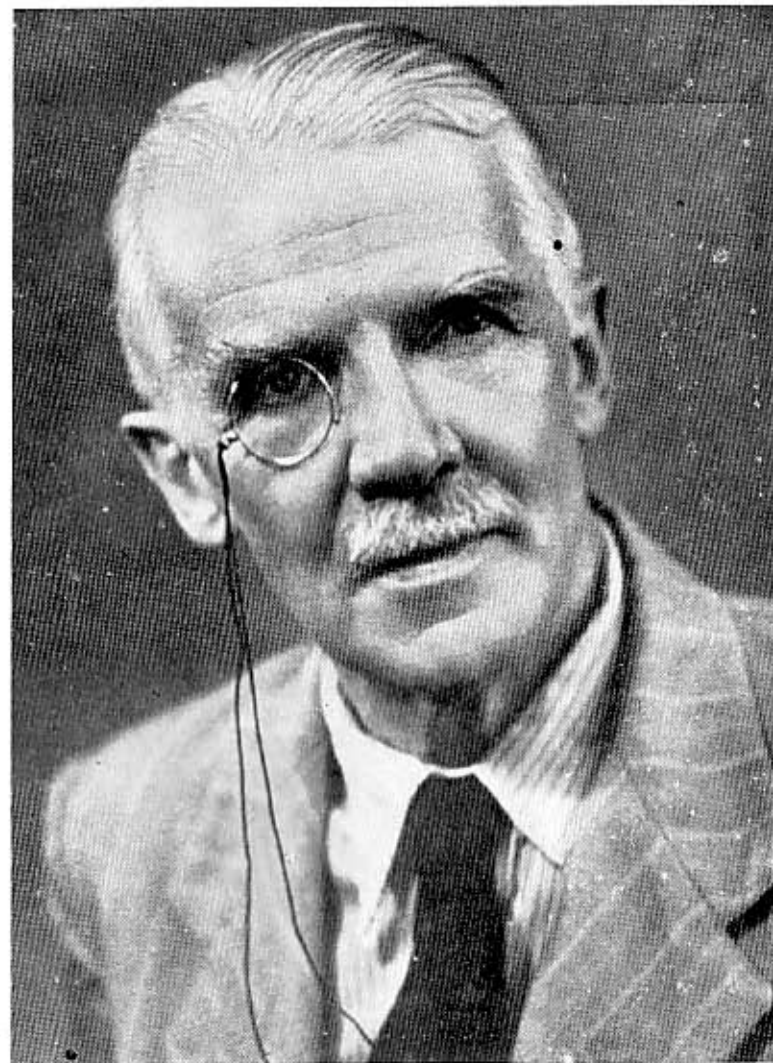


valuable discussions' with the Commissioners and most of the other Ministers met the Commissioners socially or accompanied them on their tours of inspection''.

After the Commission had finished its work in Ceylon, Senanayake was invited to England by the Secretary of State for discussions. While he was in London there was a change of government, with a Labour Secretary of State replacing Oliver Stanley. Senanayake submitted a memorandum outlining his scheme of reforms which was in effect a revised version of the Ministers' original draft with amendments to withdraw the special powers of the Governor-General. This, according to Sir Charles Jeffries, "was followed by a period of intensive consultation between the British Ministers and the Governor of Ceylon. No one was in a better position than Sir Henry Moore to gauge the state of feeling in Ceylon or to assess the importance of the Island as a focal point of stability in a region plunged in political turmoil. There can be no doubt that the Governor's influence was strongly in favour of the British authorities being as sympathetic and forthcoming as they could possibly be in their response to Mr. Senanayake's appeal."

The Soulbury Commission's report was published in September 1945 and a White Paper embodying the decisions of the British Government on October 31st, 1945. The Colonial Office no longer stipulated a three-quarters majority for acceptance of these decisions, and it offered the new Constitution "as a foundation upon which may be built a future Dominion of Ceylon". Senanayake was able to get the State Council to accept the White Paper by the convincing majority of 51 votes to 3, only two Indian members and Mr. W. Dahanayake (a future Prime Minister) voting against it. "A man should not refuse bread merely because it is not cake", said Senanayake to those who were disappointed with the British Government's offer.

The final draft of the new Constitution was prepared by the legal advisers to the Secretary of State, of whom Sir Kenneth Roberts-Wray was the chief. They were assisted by two officials from Ceylon, the Legal Secretary (Sir Barclay Nihill) and the Financial Secretary (Sir Oliver Goonetilleke). The new Constitution was approved by the King in Council on May 15, 1946.



Viscount Soulbury



In February 1947 Senanayake sent through the Governor a personal letter to the Secretary of State raising anew the question of Dominion status on the terms proposed by him in August 1945. This time he seemed to sow the seed on fertile soil. The Colonial Office was ready to be persuaded. Sir Oliver Goonetilleke too worked hard as Senanayake's emissary in London. In June 1947 an announcement was made in the House of Commons by the Secretary of State that as soon as the Ceylon Government assumed office under the new Constitution negotiations could be entered into for the making of agreements by which fully self-governing status could be conferred upon Ceylon. Sir Henry Moore, who flew to London for discussions on the agreements between the two governments, had himself come to the conclusion that Ceylon could hardly be denied what she asked for after Mr. Attlee had agreed to give Burma independence without strings, within or without the Commonwealth.

Meanwhile elections took place and Senanayake as leader of the largest party in the House of Representatives was called upon to form a Government. The agreements were signed in Colombo on November 11th, 1947, by Sir Henry Moore on behalf of the United Kingdom, and by Senanayake on behalf of Ceylon. The Independence Bill was passed by the British Parliament before the year ended. Speaking in support of it in the House of Lords on December 5th, Lord Soulbury said: "With such great interest as we have in each other's prosperity, with such kindly, good-humoured, charming and courteous people, with such natural resources and with leaders of proved experience, I feel that Ceylon can face the future under the happiest auspices. This is an historic occasion. It is a landmark in the development of the evolution of the British Empire, and it brings another step nearer what I believe to be the ultimate aim of British statesmanship—the fusion of Empire and Commonwealth."

The British Parliament presented to the Ceylon House of Representatives a Speaker's Chair and Mace. At 7.30 in the morning of February 4th, Sir Henry Moore, whose office as Governor had ceased to exist at midnight, took his oaths as Governor-General. "It had been Mr. Senanayake's special wish and recommendation that Sir Henry should be the first holder of the new office", writes

Sir Charles Jeffries who, as Deputy Under Secretary of State, participated in the arrangements for the transfer of power. "This was a greatly deserved recognition", he adds, "of the invaluable service Sir Henry had rendered to the country, the skill, tact and sympathy with which he had guided the colony through its final stages, and the warm regret and respect felt towards him by the island's people." The British Government was officially represented by the Earl of Listowel, Minister of State for Colonial Affairs, and J. H. Sidebotham of the Colonial Office.

On February 10th, the Duke of Gloucester, as representative of his brother, King George VI, formally opened Parliament, conveying the following message from the King:

"I know that my people in Ceylon are ready to make a full and rich contribution to the association of free peoples, and I am confident that you will carry your responsibilities ably to this end. My good wishes go out to you on this great day, and I pray that Ceylon may enjoy peace and prosperity in full measure. May God bless you all and guide your country through the years that lie ahead."

Lord Soulbury succeeded Sir Henry Moore as Governor-General in 1949 and saw how the young democracy of which he had been one of the architects was meeting its responsibilities. D. S. Senanayake died in 1952 and the country thereby lost a statesman of vision and determination. Soulbury himself relinquished office in 1954 and made his home at Ovington near Alresford in Hampshire. He was made a G.C.V.O. that year on the occasion of the visit of Her Majesty the Queen and Prince Philip to Ceylon and given a viscounty on his retirement. Lady Soulbury, who was an invalid, never visited Ceylon. She died in 1954. Lord Soulbury married again on November 10th, 1962, Mrs. Ursula Wakeham. He was succeeded as Governor-General by Sir Oliver Goonetilleke who had been a leading figure in the public life of Ceylon since the thirties. Sir Oliver, who was born in 1892, entered the public service in 1921 as Assistant Auditor for the Railways. In the due course he held office as Auditor-General, Civil Defence Commissioner, Financial Secretary, Home Minister, Minister of Agriculture, Minister of Finance and High Commissioner for Ceylon in London. He served as Governor-General till early 1962. He was succeeded by Mr William Gopallawa, who at the time was Ceylon's Ambassador in Washington.

### XXX

## *Postscript*

BY SIR HENRY MONCK-MASON MOORE

*Last Colonial Governor and first Governor-General of Ceylon*

### I

I was born on March 16th, 1887, the youngest of a family of seven. I hardly knew my only brother, Herbert, the eldest of the family, as I was a very small boy when he came down from Pembroke College, Cambridge, and was called to the Bar, and then went to Canada to take up a legal practice in Canada. After many vicissitudes he had become 'Crown Prosecutor' in Victoria, Vancouver, by 1914, with an American wife and two small boys, who came to stay with my parents when he himself went to France on joining the Canadian Seaforth Highlanders. We met again in London in 1918—19, when we were both on leave from the Army waiting for demobilization. He returned to Canada with his family. He and his wife are now dead, but his two sons and a daughter, all married, are doing well in Canada and in the U. S. A.

Of my sisters, the eldest, Kathleen, is now living in retirement at Oxford, after being the Headmistress of Queen Anne's School, Caversham, for many years. She was one of the original founders of Sherborne Girls' School. My next sister, Mabel, after a visit to India, where she contracted smallpox, became crippled with rheumatoid arthritis. She stayed with me for about six months in the bungalow on the ramparts of the Fort at Jaffna, when I was Office Assistant to Mr. Freeman, but had to return to England, when I was appointed itinerating police magistrate in the Western Province, and had no permanent quarters in which she could live in comfort. She died some years ago. My third sister, Evelyn, was always delicate but became very active in the International Y.W.C.A., of which my mother with the Hon'ble Emily Kinnaird was a foundation member. She visited America and Canada and

lived for a time in Geneva. During the last war she was in charge of the Y.W.C.A. Club in Tottenham Court Road which was badly bombed in the blitz. She was awarded the O.B.E. for her services. She died last year.

My next sister Sylvia (Dr. S. M. Payne) met her husband Dr. John Payne F.R.C.S. when she was finishing her own medical studies at the Royal Free Hospital, London. On their marriage they went to Torquay, where he had a good practice. In 1914 he joined the R.A.M.C. and went with the cavalry division to France. My sister took charge of the military hospital at Torquay and was, I believe, the first woman to be given the honorary rank of captain and was awarded the C.B.E. for her services. After the war she practised as a consultant psycho-analyst in Harley Street, and continued to do so after her husband's death. Though over eighty and rather deaf she is still active and lives in London. Of her three sons, one was President of Pop and Captain of the boats at Eton and President of the C.U.B.C. at Trinity, Cambridge, and rowed in the English Olympic crew at the Los Angeles, and became a lawyer; and another son became a doctor, and after doing research work for the World Health Organization in Geneva, is now doing research work at Yale University, America.

My youngest sister married a solicitor, Mr. Thomas Atkey, and is now a widow living with her daughter, who is married to Raglan Squire, an architect, the son of Sir John Squire, the poet and critic.

## II

My reason for this account of our family fortunes is to provide a background to the surroundings in which I was myself brought up. I was four years younger than my youngest sister, Ruth, and from an early age never questioned the fact that we all had to rely on our own exertions if we were to extend our interests beyond the somewhat narrow field of activity into which we had been born.

My father and my mother were both remarkable personalities in different ways. As a young man at Wadham College, Oxford, he had stroked the College Boat and won a University scholarship in Hebrew. After he had been ordained he became an enthusiastic supporter of the Low Church Evangelical Movement, which in the

middle period of the nineteenth century had a considerable and influential following. For many years he drew large congregations to his church in Portman Square to listen to his sermons which combined scholarship with an emotional and spiritual appeal. My mother, whom he had met on a reading party in France in his undergraduate days, was a Miss Monck-Mason. She came of an old Irish family, which like most old Irish families had fallen on evil days, but she had a host of Irish relations—Sir Hercules Robinson (a former Governor of Ceylon), later Lord Rosmead, was a second cousin, I believe, as was also Archbishop Crozier, the Irish Primate. She was not an intellectual, but had the sweetest possible nature combined with much horse-sense from which we could all draw comfort when we felt rebellious at our father's somewhat puritanical regime.

By the time that I was born we had moved to Wimbledon, where my father was incumbent of Emmanuel Church run by a board of trustees. I don't know why he had left Portman Square, but I suspect it was due to some doctrinal controversy as he was intolerant of episcopal control, and based his attitude on the Thirty-nine Articles and the Gorham judgment of the House of Lords.

With so large a family and modest private means the best our parents could do for us was to give us the best education they could afford to make our own way in the world. This they undoubtedly did. In my case I went to "Rokeby", a very good preparatory school, as a day-boy, where Guy and Cedric Boustead, whom I was to meet again in Ceylon, were my contemporaries. From there I sat for a scholarship at Charterhouse, which I failed to get, so instead I sat for a scholarship at King's College School, which had just moved from the Strand in London to Wimbledon. Sir Graeme Tyrrell (later Chief Secretary of Ceylon) is an old K.C.S. boy but in London before my time. In due course I became Head of the School and won a Rustat Scholarship to Jesus College, Cambridge, and also the Skinner scholarship for which only K.C.S. boys were eligible. During all this time I was a day-boy and my father was most anxious for me to take orders. So much so that, though I wanted to follow him at Oxford, he would not agree, as he distrusted the Oxford Movement and the Higher Criticism which Oxford had the reputation of fostering. Jesus was at the time more devoted to sports

than study. We were head of the river for three years in both the Lents and Mays, and also head of the Hockey League. My best friend, Shields, stroked the Varsity Boat and I was captain of the Hockey Team, so perhaps it was not surprising that I failed to get a 1st in the Classical Tripos and had to be content with a 2(1).

By this time I felt I had not the necessary vocation to go into the Church, which my father accepted with disappointment but a good grace. Instead I went to Wrens to cram for the Indian Civil Service, where I worked really hard. I missed India by 25 marks out of 5,000, but obtained an Eastern Cadetship in Ceylon instead. I have never regretted my good fortune in going to Ceylon instead of India in the light of subsequent events.

### III

On arrival in Ceylon in 1910 I was attached as a Cadet first to the Secretariat and then to the Colombo kachcheri. Sir Henry McCallum was Governor, Sir Hugh Clifford, Colonial Secretary and Mr. F. Bowes Principal Assistant Secretary. From such minute papers as came my way, it did not appear that Sir Henry and Sir Hugh were always at one in the views expressed. Later, when in 1924 I was posted to the Nigerian Secretariat, Sir Hugh Clifford was Governor and Sir Donald Cameron, Chief Secretary. They were a remarkable and highly gifted combination, both men of outstanding ability in their respective spheres. Sir Hugh was in my opinion quite the most outstanding personality under whom I have served despite his personal eccentricities of genius. It was a tragedy that they should have developed into a form of mental instability by the time he returned to Ceylon as Governor and then to Malaya. I will refer to this again later.

After my first year in Colombo I had been assured that I should remain in Jaffna for a year or more at least, and as stated above I had invited my sister to stay there with me. We were a happy party in the Jaffna Fort, which has been well described by Leonard Woolf in the second volume of his autobiography. It was much the same in my day. I also came to have a great respect and liking for the industry and sturdy independence of the Jaffna Tamil. I was, therefore, very disappointed to have to leave it so soon to become

an itinerating police magistrate up and down the Colombo-Kandy road. Before long I was back again in Colombo for a short spell as municipal magistrate, then to the Customs, finally as 4th Assistant in the Secretariat.

Colombo in the days of the Rubber Boom has in retrospect a very materialistic look. All communities were in a rush to get rich quick. Socially, wealth was the golden key to unlock the gate for the would-be social climber; and the Civil Service 'caste', as it had been described, could not compete, despite official prestige, with the Fort merchant princes. Up country, the planting industry was offering high prices for land which was disrupting the old aristocratic Kandyan feudal economy, while in Colombo the old caste distinctions in Sinhalese were becoming blurred by the wealth of a rapidly increasing middle class, which was also campaigning for a less paternal and more democratic form of government.

The Government and Assistant Government Agents in the Provinces and Districts were still left more or less undisturbed in the exercise of a paternal authority, and were genuinely interested in promoting the welfare and development of the local population with whom they were in close touch. Some viewed with reserve, not to say dismay, any attempt to bring political pressure upon them in the exercise of their duties. Such an attitude is in no way peculiar to Ceylon. It is shared by the Civil Servants the world over, and as an old Civil Servant myself I have noted with regret the dissolution of the Ceylon Civil Service with a record over the years of which it had every right to be proud.

In 1914 with little or no warning Ceylon was overtaken by the War. At that time most believed it would be of short duration and unlikely to constitute any serious threat to British possessions East of Suez, though Ceylon was full of alarms and excursions so long as *The Emden* (a German cruiser) was at large. The Ceylon contingent of volunteers was quickly despatched to Egypt and the local volunteer regiments mobilized to defend our shores and in particular the Port of Colombo, which was the main port of call for Australian and New Zealand troops in transit to the battle fronts.



## IV

At this time of crisis Sir Edward Stubbs, who had very recently arrived as Colonial Secretary, became acting Governor until such time as Chalmers (later Lord Chalmers) took over the administration. They were both men of great mental ability from the Home Civil Service, and had this in common that neither had had any previous Colonial experience. In the event they were called upon to handle the delicate situation created by the 1915 Ceylon Riots before they had much time or opportunity to be in close personal touch with the different facets of Ceylonese public opinion of which the *Morning Leader* was the most forceful exponent. Stubbs with his acid wit and somewhat gauche approach had no strong personal appeal, though his charming wife was soon deservedly popular. Chalmers seemed to be surrounded by a small circle with whom he could swap classical jokes or pursue his Sanskrit studies with scholarly members of the Buddhist priesthood. When the late Dr. Solomon Fernando died suddenly in the course of a political speech, the story, probably apochryphal, was that he remarked on receipt of the news: "I suppose the good doctor must have heard a still small voice saying to him 'Fernando Po'".

With the benefit of hind sight it is easy to be wise after the event, but I am inclined to think it was a mistake to have declared Martial Law on the outbreak of the riots. It must be remembered that there was an atmosphere of war hysteria abroad which the mutiny of the Guides at Singapore had intensified. The Attorney-General, Sir Anton Bertram, a fine lawyer and scholar, was a conscientious character, who could become jittery under pressure. He advised that as the Empire was at war, all Ceylonese could be regarded as "statutory camp followers" within the meaning of the Army Act, and as such amenable to trial by Court Martial. In effect this meant that the General Officer Commanding rather than the Governor became responsible for the maintenance of law and order, though the civil courts continued to function for less serious offences. In the last resort the General confirmed the findings of the Court Martial though they were submitted to him through the Governor. General Malcolm, though a gallant soldier, had not the experience to fit him for the exercise of such a responsible task.

After the riots I was Secretary of the Commission of Enquiry into the action of the police under the chairmanship of the Chief Justice, Sir Alexander Wood Renton. The Commission could find no positive evidence of conspiracy, though after the Singapore mutiny a few letters were found from Ceylonese in Singapore enquiring as to the local position. But in Ceylon itself the wildest rumours were circulating among the ignorant villagers suggesting that there was no longer any British Government.

The trouble started at Gampola with a Buddhist Wesak procession marching past the Mohammedan mosque, in which the Buddhists were clearly the aggressors. As this was a trouble spot of long standing, action should have been taken by the local authorities to maintain order at the outset. This was not done and the trouble spread to Kandy, where the Police Magistrate and the Government Agent again failed to deal with the situation firmly and there was more rioting and shooting. From Kandy it spread like a forest fire to Colombo and the coastal districts. A map of the affected areas showing the dates on which the riots broke out clearly indicated how it spread, and was suggestive that it was fanned, whether deliberately or not, by the rumours spread abroad. That the Buddhists, despite their non-violent creed, were the aggressors there can be no doubt.

After the sack of the Pettah I gained some notoriety in dealing with a vast crowd that was trying to cross the bridge over the Kelaniya river to reinforce their fellow Sinhalese, who were supposed to have been massacred and raped by the Moors. In fact the exact opposite was the case. After long parleys with their leaders I had no alternative but to give the officer commanding about a dozen volunteers; whom I had hastily summoned to defend the bridge, the order to fire. The first round was fired over their heads, but the crowd with cries of "*his tuakkuva*" (empty guns) rushed to within about ten yards of us when they were dispersed by a volley which left one or two killed and a few wounded in their wake. Of actual numbers I have no record.

By this time I had been appointed an additional District Judge for the Western Province and also a Special Commissioner under the Martial Law regulations with a few Punjabi soldiers to restore law and order in the area around Veyangoda, Heneratgoda and

Minuwangoda. Mr. Fraser, the Government Agent of the Western Province, had obtained approval of a plan whereby the damage done to Moorish boutiques and property should be roughly assessed and the victims compensated by the payment of a collective fine imposed upon the Sinhalese villagers concerned. Such a compulsory levy would, it was hoped, act as a deterrent to further rioting and at the same time provide speedy compensation for the losses sustained by its victims. If carried out as originally conceived the results might or might not have justified such emergency measures. But at the very last moment Fraser was told that the levy should be presented as a voluntary one, and that those reluctant to subscribe should be warned that their properties would be assessed, and that it would therefore be to their financial advantage to make an immediate voluntary payment rather than wait till the necessary legislation was enacted. I do not know who was responsible for this decision, but I suspect that Sir Anton Bertram was getting cold feet at the consequences of his Martial Law decision. The officers responsible for the collection of the levy were now presented with an almost impossible task which was a source of constant embarrassment.

It fell to my lot to prepare the dossier on which the Attorney General decided to bring a Mr. Bandaranaike for trial by Court Martial. Mr. Bandaranaike, an ardent Buddhist and temperance campaigner, became a convert to Christianity during his detention and there was much backstair missionary pressure to secure his release. Eventually, Mr Eardley Norton came over from India to defend him, and secured his acquittal by the surprise production of an Indian teamaker, who provided an alibi.

## V

By 1916 I had had some 5½ years service and was granted my first leave on condition that I got a commission in the Army on arrival in England. I had been refused permission to join the Ceylon contingent in 1914. In London I found that direct commissions were no longer given, so I enlisted as a gunner and driver in the Royal Horse Artillery. After three months in the ranks I was gazetted a Lieutenant and sent for a month's gunnery course at Shoeburyness. Eventually I joined a 60-pounder battery of the

R. G. A. and volunteered to go as an officer reinforcement to Salonika, as my own battery was not yet ready to be sent to France. I was eventually invalided from the Struma Front with malaria, and after a short spell at home was posted to a battery in France in time for the final German defeat.

After the armistice we were 24 days in the saddle taking part in the triumphal advance and formed part of the army of occupation outside Cologne. Eventually I was demobilized and returned to Ceylon in August 1919. I was posted again to the Secretariat as 4th Assistant Secretary to find Sir Graeme Thomson recently appointed as Colonial Secretary and Sir William Manning as Governor. He was an old friend of my future wife's parents. He had been Inspector-General of the East African Rifles before his appointment as Governor of Nyasaland, where his first wife had left him, so that both in Jamaica and on his first arrival in Ceylon Government House was without an official hostess. The Bensons had stayed with him in Jamaica and after the war were invited to do so again in Colombo. Mrs. Benson and her daughter stayed on at Queen's House for some time when Mr. Benson had to return to London where he was the Manager of the Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Coy. He had received a C.B.E. for his work with the Ministry of Munitions.

As a junior Secretariat officer I did not move in Queen's House circles, but one morning I was exercising my polo pony before breakfast on the Galle Face green when a runaway horse came charging down with Miss Benson in the saddle. It was a big Hackney mare which Mr. Bawa K. C. had lent her, and I soon discovered that as the saddle had slipped and both bit and stirrups were maladjusted the mare was unmanageable. So we changed mounts and I escorted her to the Garden Club for repairs. We were destined to see much of each other later, as she stayed on with Sir Graeme and Lady Thomson for some weeks when he was acting Governor and I became his Private Secretary during Sir William Manning's absence in London to discuss the Manning Constitution. This was the subject of much deliberation in which the very able Attorney-General, Sir Henry Gollan, played a leading part. As Collins, later Sir Charles Collins, was seconded for special duty over its preparation, there was little or no record of it in the current

Secretariat files, and I do not think that Sir Graeme, as a newcomer, played a very active part. He had made his name during the war as Director of Admiralty Transport, and was referred to by Lloyd George as the greatest Transport expert since Noah. His services were rewarded by the promise of a Colonial Governorship, and when British Guiana became vacant he was offered and accepted the post.

In Ceylon he was much interested in the extension of the Railway from Anuradhapura to Trincomalee, which was carried out despite much initial opposition. His foresight was amply vindicated by the part it played in the second World War. He was somewhat shy and reserved, sparing both of the spoken and written word, but deliberate in judgment and most kind and considerate. Lady Thomson had abounding energy and never spared herself in social work of all kinds in which she was deeply interested. Sir Graeme was a first class shot especially with a rifle and also a keen fisherman. His main recreation was to combine some form of shooting with his official circuits in the country side.

Sir William Manning, during his visit to London, met Miss Olga Sefton-Jones in Mr. and Mrs. Benson's house in London. The Sefton-Jones's were a Quaker family and friends of the Bensons. On the return of Sir William to Ceylon I was posted to Trincomalee as Assistant Government Agent. It was in many ways my most enjoyable post in Ceylon. I was responsible for the acquisition of all the land required for the Trincomalee railway station and the naval oil installations at China Bay. In addition there was the normal work of the Assistant Government Agent. The visits of the Admiral at Admiralty House and of the Navy when their ships came in for gunnery practice provided an agreeable interlude on return from a fortnight or more on circuit through the villages and village tanks of the countryside.

## VI

Towards the end of 1921 I went on leave when I met Miss Benson again in London and we became engaged. She was at the time a very brilliant student at the Royal Academy schools to which she had gone after working in the Slade School. Her marriage to me

in December of that year put an end to what might have been a great career as a painter. Since my retirement she had done some serious painting again.

We had to cut our honeymoon short, as I was unexpectedly offered the post of Colonial Secretary, Bermuda. It represented promotion only in status, as the salary attached was less than I was drawing in Ceylon, no official house was provided and no passage allowance. After some eighteen months I applied for a transfer, regardless of status, to an appointment in some other Colony where we could live on our pay, and in 1924 I was offered the post of Principal Assistant Secretary, Nigeria, which I accepted.

Though ruinously expensive, our time in Bermuda had its compensations. Prohibition had not been rescinded in America, and three ships a week from New York brought shiploads of its thirsty citizens to the hotels and bars of this popular tourist resort. Among them we met many charming people, though it was impossible to return their hospitality in the sort of boarding house in which we were reduced to live. The old Bermudian families lived in a select social circle of their own. Many of them let their charming old colonial type houses for the American season at highly inflated rentals on which they were able to live in great comfort for the rest of the year.

The Chief Justice, the Colonial Secretary and the Chief of Police were the only three imported officials, and it was difficult, if not impossible to get the House of Assembly to improve their conditions of service. The executive had no representation in the lower house—even the Attorney-General, a Bermudian and member of the Executive Council, had to secure a seat in some constituency, before he could sit and introduce Government bills. The Legislative Council, the upper house, consisted of the Chief Justice as President, the Colonial Secretary and Receiver-General (Treasury and Customs) as official members with two unofficial members who had won their spurs in the lower house. The Governor was always a soldier and commander of the local garrison. He presided over the Executive Council, but took no part in the debates of either house, his proposals being forwarded to the Legislature by way of "message," and had no powers, other than those of persuasion, of securing his policy being adopted. Any idea of Colonial Office control

was bitterly resented and the Assembly has succeeded in maintaining its virtual independence up to the present day.

For me it was a novel and somewhat exasperating experience to have to plunge so abruptly into the whirlpool of local politics in an island where, because of its very smallness, party feelings were easily aroused and personal rivalries were rampant. In retrospect it was no doubt a useful experience for the more controversial political crises in which I was destined to be involved in Kenya and still later in Ceylon.

In Bermuda the franchise was dependent on a property qualification which was jealously guarded by the old Bermudian families. As a result there was in my time only one coloured member of the House of Assembly, and socially the colour bar was complete. Immigration from the West Indies was closely controlled, and the Bermudian negroes, mostly descendants of emancipated slaves, were generally employed as domestic servants, carriage drivers—no motor cars were allowed in the island—and dock labourers. The growing of fresh vegetables and the Bermuda Lily was in the hands of specially imported Portuguese, who were skilled market gardeners. The colour question, therefore, in my day had not assumed serious proportions.

## VII

In 1924, I accepted the post of Principal Assistant Secretary in the Lagos Secretariat, Nigeria, having refused the appointment of Colonial Secretary, Bahamas, where I knew the conditions were much the same as in Bermuda and the cost of living equally expensive. On arrival, as I have already recorded, I found Sir Hugh Clifford was Governor and Sir Donald Cameron Chief Secretary. When Northern and Southern Nigeria were united in a single administration by Lord Lugard, Sir Donald had been responsible for much of the detailed work behind the scene. He was primarily an office man with Southern Nigerian experience and was not *persona grata* to the Lieutenant-Governors of the North. Whether for this or for reasons of economy he was not given the status or salary which his duties and responsibilities deserved. Sir Hugh Clifford on his arrival immediately set up a well-staffed and organized Central

Secretariat in Lagos, made Sir Donald Chief Secretary, and gave him equivalent status and salary with the Lieutenant-Governors of Northern and Southern Nigeria. As a result Sir Hugh and Sir Donald worked together in great harmony, and were a formidable team.

Sir Donald absorbed much of Sir Hugh's administrative experience, but at the same time brought his acid intelligence to bear on Sir Hugh's more exuberant proposals. Before long Sir Donald was promoted to the Governorship of Tanganyika, and was succeeded by Sir F. M. Baddeley from Malaya.

On the announcement that the Prince of Wales was to visit Nigeria and the West Coast Colonies *en route* to Cape Town, Sir Hugh entered enthusiastically into the preparation of somewhat grandiose plans for his reception. A reception committee was set up of which I became the secretary, while Lady Clifford, who was in London, kept in touch with the Prince's staff at St. James' Palace. In the midst of all these preparations Sir Hugh had something in the nature of a nervous breakdown and for six weeks retired up country for a rest to await the arrival of Lady Clifford. At the last moment, owing to an outbreak of smallpox in Lagos, the visit was almost abandoned altogether, but eventually this difficulty was overcome by re-arranging the itinerary so that the visit to Lagos was made after the quarantine period had expired.

As a result Sir Hugh alternated between periods of deep depression and high exaltation, and it was on the latter note that eventually he accompanied the Prince throughout his visit. A contributory factor was that he knew by this time that he was to become Governor of Ceylon, a stepping-stone to the Governorship of Malaya, which had been his life long ambition. During the last few weeks, between the departure of the Prince of Wales and Sir Hugh's own departure on leave prior to taking up the Ceylon appointment, his behaviour became suggestive of some form of mental instability, and it was reported by some of his friends to the medical authorities that they were apprehensive that he was suffering from delusions. What steps, if any, were taken to report this to the Colonial Office officially I do not know. In view of the tragic end to his brilliant career when Governor of Malaya, one is left wondering whether this could have been in any way avoided.



In 1927 I was promoted to Deputy Chief Secretary in succession to Sir Shenton Thomas, who was appointed Colonial Secretary in the Gold Coast from which he went later to Singapore as Governor and became a Japanese prisoner of war on the fall of Singapore. By that time Sir Graeme Thomson had succeeded Sir Hugh Clifford as Governor of Nigeria, and my wife and I were naturally delighted at again serving under him and Lady Thomson, whom we had known so well in Ceylon. They had had, I believe, a difficult time in British Guiana, where Sir Graeme had introduced some constitutional reforms in the teeth of much local unofficial opposition. As a result he seemed to have lost some of his early vigour, though he early initiated a new housing scheme for Government servants, which was long overdue.

He appointed two committees for Northern and Southern Nigeria and I was fortunate in being appointed Secretary to both. He also took the revolutionary step in those days of appointing a woman member to each. This was a wise move as by that time more and more wives were coming out to join their husbands during their tours of service, which had been prohibited or greatly restricted in the past. As a result my wife and I had the opportunity of making extensive tours in the two provinces and seeing something of out-station life, which was a welcome change from the somewhat suburban atmosphere of Lagos. Later Sir Graeme fell seriously ill with an internal haemorrhage, and when I left in 1929 to take up the appointment of Colonial Secretary, Kenya, he was lying in bed in Government House on the danger list. He subsequently recovered but I don't think he was ever quite the same man again.

## VIII

In 1929 we arrived in Nairobi to find the Governor, Sir Edward Grigg in London, and my predecessor, Sir Edward Denham on leave preparatory to taking up the appointment of Governor of Jamaica. So the Chief Justice, Sir Jacob Bath, was acting as Governor and continued to do so till the return of Sir Edward Grigg. Kenya was in the throes of much political agitation owing to the demand of the Indians to be put on a common roll with the Europeans instead of an Indian communal roll. At the same time the

European elected members were pressing for closer union between the territories of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika. Mr. Amery, the Secretary of State for the Colonies in the Conservative Government, was a strong advocate of such a policy, and had privately instructed Sir Edward Grigg to prepare the ground for it. With the support of Lord Delamere, the leader of the Settlers, an imposing new Government House, designed by Sir Herbert Baker, had been built on lines suitable for the accommodation of a Governor-General of the three territories.

Neither Uganda nor Tanganyika were enthusiastic over this proposal, as they were apprehensive of domination by White Settler opinion. The controversy was referred to London where an Inter-Parliamentary Committee advised against any immediate action without closing the door to its further consideration in the future. By this time the world economic depression was threatening and Lord Delamere himself realized that the scheme must be put into cold storage till economic conditions were more favourable. With the advent of Lord Passfield as Secretary for the Colonies under the Labour Government, a White Paper was issued which gave the agitation its quietus.

The Indians at first boycotted both the Municipal and Legislative Council elections but eventually accepted a communal role, which enabled them to take their part in municipal and legislative activities. It was in this super-charged atmosphere that I found myself, as Colonial Secretary, Leader of the Official majority in the Legislative Council, in which I made my first appearance with some trepidation, as neither in Bermuda nor Nigeria had I had any experience of the rough and tumble of parliamentary debate. Eventually I found my feet and was able to establish friendly relations with all sides of the House despite verbal encounters in the debating chamber. But by this time constitutional controversies were temporarily forgotten in the attempt to grapple with the serious financial position of the Colony owing to the world depression.

It was at this time that I first met General Smuts when I sat next to him at a dinner given in his honour on his way to attend the World Economic Conference. Speaking from a few notes scribbled on the back of his menu card, he adroitly side-stepped any local controversial issues and won general applause for his statesmanlike

and noncommittal appreciation of the situation. I little thought that I was later to be brought into so much closer association with him during World War II.

Owing to the collapse of world prices the European farmers were in serious straits with the banks calling in mortgages and declining to make advances to meet current expenditure. Some relief was afforded by the Government's establishment of a Land Bank, and by the discovery of alluvial gold in the Kakamega area; many farmers left their wives to run the farms and went to pan gold themselves. But no substantial gold mining materialized, and this proved only a temporary expedient.

By this time Sir Edward Grigg's term of office was expiring, and I acted as Governor till the arrival of his successor, Sir Joseph Byrne. His relations with Lord Delamere were strained from the first, and the situation was not made easier by the fact that, although a levy on salaries had been imposed on all Government officers and Government expenditure reduced to a minimum, the financial position of the Colony was still very bad. Accordingly Lord Moyne was sent out by the Secretary of State to report on the situation. His original term of reference was to review the revenue position and its allocation between European, Indian and native services. The natives paid hut and poll tax but non-natives paid no direct taxation other than certain charges for schools and hospitals. Lord Moyne was later instructed to make recommendations for balancing the Budget and recommended the introduction of income-tax for all non-natives. This gave rise to one of the most heated controversies in Kenya's history. After the Bill had passed its Second Reading by use of the Official majority, Lord Francis Scott and Col. Grogan flew to London to see the Secretary of State, Sir Philip Cunliffe Lister, to gain support to alternative proposals proposed by the European elected members. They were able to induce the Secretary of State to give their proposals a trial, and the Income-Tax Bill was dropped. In the event, as the local government had foreseen, some of their proposals proved unworkable and the remainder failed miserably to produce the revenue required. Eventually, after long delay, agreement was reached to the introduction of Income-Tax as an emergency measure. It is still on the statute book!

On Lord Delamere's death Lord Francis Scott had become leader of the European elected members. As explained above he had in London secured the last minute approval of the Secretary of State to the shelving of the Income-Tax Bill. This was hailed with delight as a defeat of the local government. At this awkward moment Sir Joseph Byrne had to go on leave for health reasons and I was left to carry the baby. It was a highly controversial period and later, after Sir Joseph's return, Cunliffe-Lister flew out himself to visit Kakamega and meet a deputation of the elected members. Unfortunately he was taken seriously ill and lay for days in Government House before he was out of danger. His visit, therefore, did little to remove the tension, particularly as he was unwilling to provide the financial aid on the lines recommended by the elected members.

By 1934 when I left to become Governor of Sierra Leone, Kenya was slowly emerging from the depression. I was first offered the Governorship of British Guiana. But this I refused on the advice once given to me by Sir Graeme Thomson. He had accepted it himself with enthusiasm as he had had high hopes of developing its largely unexplored interior. But he left it disillusioned, and as my experience in Bermuda, though not in the West Indies, had given me some insight into West Indian conditions, I remembered his advice and declined. Soon after Sierra Leone fell vacant, of which Sir Joseph Byrne had previously been Governor. He advised me to accept, which I did.

It was a difficult choice, as it involved leaving our two young daughters in England. For my wife it meant breaking up our home again, and repeating the experience in Nigeria of spending part of the time with me and part with the children. It is the hard price that the Colonial Servant has to pay, but it is the wife who has to pay the hardest price. In the event unexpected relief came in 1937 by my appointment as an Under Secretary of State in the Colonial Office. Mr. Ormsby-Gore, later Lord Harlech, initiated the idea of bringing in temporarily a junior Governor into the higher echelons of the Home Civil Service instead of bringing in junior officers—known as "Beachcombers"—to work in the lower ranks. It represented a very considerable financial loss and in our case was only rendered possible by the generosity of my wife's parents.

During my comparatively brief period in Sierra Leone I was able to lay the foundations of a closer administration of the Protectorate, which was somewhat haphazardly administered through a host of minor chiefs. I sent Mr. Fenton—a most efficient officer—to study the local native administration being set up, particularly among the Ondos in southern Nigeria. He prepared a most useful report and its recommendations were being implemented when I left.

In the past most emphasis had been laid on Freetown itself, where the educated “creoles”—descendants of the original ex-slave settlements—held a monopoly of clerical appointments and trading interests in the West Coast. With the spread of education in the Gold Coast and Nigeria local men were taking their place, while the Syrian traders were successfully ousting them. White-collared unemployment was becoming a problem in Freetown, and the interests of the Protectorate natives were of secondary importance to the unofficial members of the Legislative Council.

The development of iron ore at Marampa and the discovery of diamonds and some alluvial gold had revolutionary results, as it became clear that on the development of the mineral resources of the Protectorate depended the prosperity of Sierra Leone, rather than on the precarious export of palm kernels and palm oil. I also with the aid of the Colonial Development Fund had a circular road driven round the Peninsula which proved of great value during the war. Representatives of the Army, Navy and Air Force arrived to study sites for aerodromes, flying boat bases, and battery extensions and boom-harbour defences, but little progress had been made by the time I left. I appointed Mr. Beoku Betts, the first Creole to become a member of the local legal department. He became, I believe, a good Government servant despite his previously having graced the Opposition benches in the Legislative Council.

## IX

On assuming duty in the Colonial Office I was put in general charge of the West Indian and Far Eastern Departments and of the economic section of the Colonial Office. In addition I represented the Colonial Office on the Warren Fisher Civil Aviation Committee and the Oil Board. With African affairs I had nothing to

do. In fact most of my time was taken up with the West Indies, where the strikes in Barbados and Trinidad attracted much Parliamentary attention and culminated in the appointment of a Royal Commission under Lord Moyne.

Sir Mark Young, an old friend and colleague in Ceylon, had as Governor dealt so successfully with the Barbados situation that on my suggestion he was sent to act as Governor of Trinidad, when Sir Arthur Fletcher, the Governor, was recalled and subsequently resigned. Seymour (ex-Ceylon Civil Service) was the Colonial Secretary but he was on leave at the time, and it was essential to have a firm and experienced officer on the spot immediately.

At that period Palestine was the burning question and the recommendation of the Peel Report had aroused much controversy both in the House of Commons and between the Foreign and Colonial Offices. With Hitler's pogrom against the Jews, Mr. Malcolm MacDonald was anxious to find some place of refuge for them other than Palestine.

After exhaustive researches the interior of British Guiana was suggested, and a joint British-American Committee was sent to report upon its practicability. Despite our misgivings in the West Indian Department, a Cabinet committee adopted the proposal and a £1 million was earmarked for the construction of a road of access. In the end nothing came of this project as it was overtaken by events.

In the Gold Coast the price of cocoa had slumped owing to the cornering of the world market by an American speculator. As a result, the United Africa Company, Cadburys and other European merchant houses in Accra formed a buying ring to counter un-economic competition. The African growers reacted by a total boycott of the sale of cocoa. There were many conferences in London with which I was concerned as representing the economic department of the Colonial Office. A special mission was sent out which made far-reaching proposals involving Government control or participation. But the War intervened, and in the end I believe the total crop was burned at a heavy loss to Government. But by that time I had left the Colonial Office.

In the Eastern department, Ceylon was in charge of Mr. Cowell. He had run it for years, and few if any papers reached my desk.

Sir Edward Gent (who later became Governor of Malaya and was killed in an air-crash at Hendon Airport) was in charge of Singapore and Malaya and also of Hongkong and North Borneo. Here the activities of the Japanese and their off-shore fishing fleets were already causing some anxiety, and in view of the threatening war situation Sir Shenton Thomas, who had reached the age of retirement, was asked to remain as the Governor of Singapore when war was declared. By this time Sir Mark Young had been appointed Governor of Tanganyika and in 1941 went to Hongkong to relieve Sir Geoffrey Northcote who had to be relieved for reasons of health. Thus both Sir Mark Young and Sir Shenton Thomas had the misfortune of being forced to surrender to the Japanese as prisoners of war. In normal circumstances I should probably have succeeded Sir Shenton Thomas at Singapore and found myself in the bag with Sir Mark Young.

London at the time of the Munich crisis and the first few months of the phoney war is not a happy memory. Peace at any price seemed to be the ruling consideration and my wife and I were in a minority in hailing Chamberlain's return from Munich as a defeat rather than a political triumph. In August 1939 we were on a short holiday in Normandy, where we found the French morale at a low ebb. It was only due to a warning telegram from the Colonial Office that we were able with much difficulty to get back before the declaration of war. I had to sail alone but fortunately my wife and daughter were assured a passage with our car on the following day.

London then at long last became more war-minded. My wife had joined the Chelsea A. R. P. and at once became a volunteer driver through the blacked out streets, and Government departments worked feverishly at evacuation schemes and air raid precautions; but with the absence of bombing raids except a few raids on Scotland the general public became more apathetic as the so-called phoney war progressed. At this juncture I was suddenly told that Sir Robert Brooke-Popham had resigned from the Governorship of Kenya to return to the Air Force, and that I had been chosen to succeed him. Neither of us particularly wanted to return to Kenya for family and other reasons, but at such a time there could be no hesitation. We took our two daughters with us and flew out in the last civil seaplane to leave Southampton in January 1940.

## X

Nairobi, to our surprise, we found more war-minded than London, though woefully ill-equipped to meet any Italian invasion from Abyssinia, should Mussolini join hands with Hitler. On the Italian declaration of war I became Chairman of the East African Governors' Conference, including Uganda, Tanganyika, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and a permanent Secretariat office was set up to co-ordinate our war effort. A Northern Rhodesian battalion arrived in Nairobi, and General Smuts had already sent up a few South African fighter planes and the first South African Division was on its way. Later battalions of African troops from Nigeria and the Gold Coast arrived, and through the Governors' Conference Secretariat eventually some 250,000 askaris were recruited from the Conference territories.

After the fall of Singapore and the bombing of Colombo, Admiral Somerville and the Far Eastern fleet made their headquarters at Mombasa, and I handed over Government House, Mombasa, to him for an Admiral's mess. Later it was from Mombasa that the assault on Madagascar was launched. During all this period areas around Nairobi and Gilgil were occupied by military camps and Government House became a sort of floating hotel for the V. I. P. of every description, including Free French, Belgians and Americans in addition to British and South African commanders of the allied forces. Later after the conquest of Abyssinia the troops moved north, but as we were on the direct Cape to Cairo air route we had still a stream of visitors dropping from the skies. My wife as Chairman of the joint Red Cross and St. John Committee and President of the Kenya Women's Emergency Organization had an office at which she worked tirelessly every morning; later she made air trips to Cairo to inspect a Kenya convalescent club which she had started up there. General Smuts was a frequent visitor on his flights back and forth to Cairo and England and Mrs. Smuts and her daughter-in-law stayed with us as well as other members of the family.

In 1942 I became for a time the Chairman of an East African Supply and Defence Council. Its members were drawn from the three territories of Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda, including



both unofficial members and members of the three services to co-ordinate problems of defence, communication and supply, since under the stress of war East Africa had become increasingly one economic unit.

During the war the race relations were generally harmonious. Soon after Italy's declaration of war the activities of the Kikuyu Central Association, whose leader, Jomo Kenyatta, was in England throughout its duration, were spreading subversive propaganda. The three local leaders were arrested and evidence was produced of oath-taking, not so bestial but of a similar character to the oaths taken by the M̄u-Mau. I banned the association and kept the leaders under detention at Marsabit, and there was no more trouble. On the contrary, Africans and Indians alike loyally supported the Colony's war effort.

In 1944 I was on short sick leave in South Africa, as the doctors had ordered me a rest and General Smuts had kindly offered us hospitality. I was overtaken by a telegram from the Colonial Office asking me at short notice to relieve Sir Andrew Caldecott, who was retiring from Ceylon on grounds of ill health. I was loath to leave Kenya where I was much interested in the problems that I knew would arise after the war. I had already, with the support of European elected members, appointed the first African to represent African interests in the Legislative Council in the person of Eliud Mathu. I later heard with regret that he failed to take a courageous line at the time of Mau Mau.

## XI

Of the latest developments in Ceylon I knew nothing but I remembered that the last time I saw D.S. Senanayake was when he was arrested during the riots. Though he was soon released and I had nothing whatever to do with his case, I was doubtful as to the wisdom of my appointment. So I pointed this out in a telegram to the Secretary of State, but added that I would naturally accept if that was still his wish. It was, and I went. My wife and I were flown hurriedly to London and it was only on arrival there that I learnt that the urgency was due to the decision to send a constitutional commission to Ceylon, of which Lord Soulbury was eventually appointed Chairman.



Sir Henry and Lady Monck-Mason Moore

I only had a short talk with Sir Andrew Caldecott, primarily on the question of a successor to Admiral Layton as Chairman of the War Council. I finally secured the appointment of General Wetherall, whom I had known in Kenya, and for a year till the post was abolished we worked together without any friction. In fact as he was the official channel through which I communicated with Admiral Mountbatten and his headquarters, he proved of the greatest service to me and studiously abstained from interfering in civilian questions.

Another surprise for me in London was to attend a lunch at Claridges given by the Secretary of State, Oliver Stanley, in honour of Oliver Goonetilleke. I ascertained that during the war he was given the temporary post of Civil Defence Commissioner, in which though still a member of the Ceylon public service, he had acquired for himself a quasi-ministerial status on his visits abroad. I was destined to have to work closely with him in Ceylon. He was in many ways indispensable in keeping me informed of the gyrations of the political wheel, as he had a foot in most camps. He was, I believe, a sincere supporter of D. S. and served his interests well.

My original suspicion that my appointment would be received at best with mixed feelings was confirmed when I was sworn in as Governor in the Council Chamber. In accordance with the courtesy which has always been a delightful characteristic of the Ceylonese it had always been customary in the past to present an address to a new Governor, to which he made a suitably prepared reply. I was informed by Mr. Drayton, the acting Governor, that as it was war time there would be no address or speeches at all. I was a little surprised, but was again assured by Mr. Drayton on arrival that there would be nothing for me to do, but take the oath and then leave the Chamber. I was about to do so, when to my astonishment Mr. Senanayake got up and read me a brief address of welcome. On the spur of the moment I made the best reply I could in which I said that I relied on Mr. Senanayake and his Ministers to assist me in the difficult task that lay ahead.

Next morning I was pilloried in the *Times of Ceylon* for using the phrase *his* instead of *my* Ministers with the implication that I was ignorant of the Governor's constitutional position *vis-a-vis* the Board of Ministers! To this day I don't know what induced Mr. Senanayake to make this unexpected move, but I presume he

was told by his advisers that his failure to speak might be considered too discourteous. I mention this incident because it reflects the confused political atmosphere I found awaiting me. In due course my wife and I got to know Mr. and Mrs. Senanayake well and occasional crises did not affect the friendliness of our social relations.

We had hardly settled into Queen's House when we had to entertain the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester and their suite *en route* to Australia, as Admiral Mountbatten was unable to accommodate them in Kandy as originally arranged. Soon after Lord Soulbury and his two colleagues arrived, but it was considered politically undesirable that they should make their headquarters at Queen's House though we played our part in their entertainment. By the time their Report was reaching finality I had time to form my own appreciation of the constitutional position.

The Donoughmore Constitution had been a departure from the established form of constitutional advance from Crown Colony Government to representative Government. It had been devised to meet the special problems of Ceylon created by the conflicting interests of a population of different races, castes, and creeds. It was not intended, I believe, as a permanent solution but to pave the way to further advance. How far it was successful at first I have no means of judging as I had had no practical experience of its operation. But by 1944 it had clearly ceased to be an effective instrument of orderly government. The different Executive Committees elected their own Chairman, and as he became automatically a member of the Board of Ministers there was constant jockeying for the coveted post.

In the Board of Ministers, each Minister for reasons of personal prestige or for other more legitimate reasons competed for approval of his own policies, and as the official members of the Board had no vote the Governor's position became almost impossible. In theory he had the powers of approval or disallowance and quite trivial matters required his rubber stamp. In practice it had become increasingly difficult for him to intervene without raising an outcry out of all proportion to the importance of the points at issue. The Governor had certain powers for use only in an emergency, but apart from these he had to rely on his powers of

persuasion to secure the approval of policies sponsored by His Majesty's Government. In peace time this had not had the same significance, as Ceylon had long secured a large measure of independence in the conduct of its domestic affairs. But in war time the position was radically different, as local considerations had to be coordinated, and if necessary subordinated, to South East Asia strategy as a whole.

Apart from the equivocal position of the Governor the major weakness of the Donoughmore Constitution to my mind was its failure to foster a sense of "Cabinet responsibility" as an integral part of parliamentary government on the accepted Whitehall pattern. The Board of Ministers of course was not a Cabinet, and so perhaps cannot be blamed for often refusing to accept corporate responsibility for Government policy as a whole. It was almost entirely due to the personality of Mr. D. S. Senanayake that he was able to obtain the measure of unanimity that he did, but personal jealousies were rife behind the scenes.

The Soulbury Constitution provided a two-chamber Parliamentary Government on the Whitehall model. It provided for full internal self-government but on certain reserved subjects—such as defence, trade and safeguards for the minority communities—the Governor could exercise his discretion after consultation with the Ministers concerned. On all other matters he could only act on the advice of his Ministers. A Public Service Commission was to be set up to protect the Civil Service from political pressures, and an independent Auditor-General was to be appointed. I regarded the latter two provisions of particular importance if existing bribery and corruption was to be suppressed. Provision was also made to secure the independence of the Judiciary.

## XII

I supported the recommendations though I expressed some doubts as to whether the minority safeguards would be effective in practice. Also the Commission made no attempt to tackle the problem of the status of Indian Tamil labourers on the estates. In the end the Soulbury Commission was overtaken by events. Mr. Senanayake had shown great courage and determination in accepting the Soul-



bury Constitution and resisting the demands of his opponents for full Dominion status, and on at least one occasion he had very nearly succumbed to their onslaught. In the meantime Canada had objected to the term Dominion status as derogatory, and independence within the Commonwealth became the accepted term.

In 1946 an attempt was made by the Clerical Service to engineer a general strike in preparation for the general election to be held under the Soulbury Constitution after the re-demarcation of the constituencies which was being done by a commission under the chairmanship of Mr L. M. D. de Silva, Q.C. It illustrated the unwillingness of the Board of Ministers to face up to their responsibilities. Despite the threatening situation, they were conspicuous by their absence. I was in Kandy at the time and Mr. George de Silva urged me to take immediate action. I went to Colombo and met the Ministers, who all urged me to declare a state of emergency and exercise dictatorial powers. Somehow or other they had come to know of the existence of such an instrument, though it was highly secret. I then pointed out to them that they had full powers to pass legislation of the same character in the State Council and that if they considered the time had come to take such action it was their plain duty and responsibility to take the necessary legislative action themselves. If they did so I would of course support them in every possible way and they could base their legislation on the draft in my possession. Eventually they did so, and indeed provided more severe penalties than in the original draft. It was quite obviously an attempt to leave me holding the baby if such strong action was criticized. Actually the strikers went back to work unconditionally and the only fatal casualty was a clerical supporter struck by a ricochet bullet in a side street.

After this I went on leave for a few months, and it was in December 1946 that I heard Mr. Attlee on the B. B. C. offering Burma full independence whether within or outside the Commonwealth. Frankly I was aghast. I knew that Ceylon was much better equipped to make a success of Independence than was Burma at that time, and that it was grossly unfair on Mr. Senanayake who had accepted the Soulbury Constitution in the teeth of much local opposition. I told my wife that I was sure Mr. Senanayake would approach me

immediately on my return to ask for my support for Ceylon's claim to full independence, and that if he did so I should strongly support him.

This happened exactly as I had foretold, and Mr. Senanayake and I worked together most harmoniously. We were working against time and the quick and most obvious procedure was simply to amend those provisions of the Soulbury Constitution which gave the Governor the right to act on his discretion in the case of reserved subjects. This meant, of course, that the Prime Minister now had the sole right of nomination to the five "appointed" seats in the House of Representatives, to half the seats in the Senate, and to the membership of the Public Service Commission. It, of course, added greatly to the Prime Minister's powers, and was indeed of assistance to Mr. Senanayake whose position was by no means secure at the time. On the longer view it obviously provided cold comfort for the minorities if a Prime Minister were swept into power on a wave of religious and racial emotionalism. That is what appears to have happened after the untimely death of Mr. D. S. Senanayake.

I was asked by Mr. Senanayake to stay on as Ceylon's first Governor-General. I had originally been appointed for five years, and I said I would be happy to see my original term out, but for reasons of health—the arthritis which has since crippled me was already giving me much discomfort—I should like to retire then. So Lord Soulbury accepted the invitation to succeed me, and arrangements were made for my departure on leave. Ceylon was justifiably proud to have been the first Crown Colony to attain independence within the Commonwealth and an atmosphere of general euphoria prevailed.

These biographical notes were originally prepared somewhat hurriedly to provide some background material for the book which Mr. Hulugalle is writing on Ceylon's Colonial Governors. Since I have now agreed to their reproduction substantially in their original form they would be manifestly incomplete without a reference to the part played by my wife throughout my period of service. She sacrificed her career as a painter for the more humdrum life of the wife of a Civil Servant which to a woman of her intelligent and artistic temperament was not particularly attractive. But her



penetrating wit and personal charm won her a host of friends everywhere. Later from 1940 onwards when Government House, Nairobi, became a port of call for soldiers, sailors, airmen, and other V.I.P.P., she contrived to be the ideal hostess despite the fact that she was in her Nairobi office presiding over organizations for the comforts and medical wants of the troops. It was the same in Ceylon, and she is largely responsible for any measure of success that I have had in my career.

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 (C. A. C. = Colombo Apothecaries, Co., Ltd).  
 (A.N.C.L. = Associated Newspapers of Ceylon, Ltd.)

## NOTABLE EVENTS

1796. Colombo surrendered to the British by the Dutch (16th Feb.) The Maritime Provinces governed from Madras.  
The first Pearl Fishery under the British Government yields £60,000

### Governor: The Hon. Frederick North (1798-1805)

1798. Ceylon made a Crown Colony  
Arrival of the Hon. Frederick North as first Governor (12th Oct.)  
Employment of Indian tax collectors leads to disturbances  
Rajadhi Rajasinha having died, Sri Wikrama Rajasinha is raised to the throne by the Chief Minister, Pilame Talawwe  
The Queen's brother Muttuswamy and his adherents escape to Colombo and place themselves under the protection of the British  
A Pearl Fishery yields £140,000
1799. Importation of slaves to Ceylon prohibited (15th Jan.)  
Governor North has an interview with Pilame Talawwe (14th Feb.)  
Botanical Gardens established at Peliyagoda under Joseph Joinville as Curator  
First English seminary for Ceylonese founded in Colombo  
Death of former Dutch Governor, Van Angelbeek, in Colombo (3rd Sept.)
1800. General Macdowall sent as Ambassador to the King of Kandy (12th March)
1802. The second Adigar of the King arrives in Colombo as Ambassador (5th Feb.)  
First publication of the *Ceylon Government Gazette* (15th March)  
The Supreme Court of Judicature instituted
1803. Hostilities against the King of Kandy commences (31st Jan.)  
Two divisions, one under the command of General Macdowall and the other under the command of Colonel Barbut take possession of Kandy (21st Feb.)  
Muttuswamy, the pretender, proclaimed king, and a treaty concluded with him (8th March)  
Colonel Barbut dies of fever; General Macdowall leaves Kandy ill with fever and Major Davie, commander of the British garrison at Kandy, capitulates
1804. The Law Courts removed from the Fort of Colombo to Hulftsdorp
1805. The Kandyans invade British territory and are repulsed  
Missionaries from the London Missionary Society arrive in Ceylon  
The King of Kandy contracts smallpox  
  
Roman Catholics of Ceylon relieved of restrictions imposed upon them by the Dutch (4th June)

### Governor: Lieut. General Rt. Hon. Sir Thomas Maitland (1805-1812)

1807. Bazaar-tax introduced
1810. Death of Major Davie in captivity in Kandy

**Governor: General Robert Brownrigg (1812-1820)**

1812. Pilame Talawwe beheaded for a conspiracy against the King and is succeeded by Ehelepola

Colombo Library established

The Baptist Missionary Society establishes a mission in Colombo

1813. Bazaar-tax repealed (10th Aug.)

The remains of Dutch Governors and of their families buried in the Fort removed and deposited in the Wolvendahl Church (4th Sept.)

1814. Ehelepola rebels against the King and takes refuge in Colombo; his wife and four children are put to death by the King (May)

Ten traders from British territory tortured and mutilated at Kandy by order of the King (Nov.)

Arrival of Wesleyan missionaries

1815. Declaration of renewal of hostilities against the King of Kandy by the British (10th Jan.)

British troops enter Kandyan territory (11th Jan.)

Sir Robert Brownrigg establishes headquarters at Kandy (14th Feb.)

The King taken prisoner at Gallehewatte in Dumbura (18th Feb.)

A Convention concluded between Sir Robert Brownrigg and the Kandyan Chiefs for deposing the King and establishing the British Government in the Kandyan Provinces (2nd March.)

1816. The ex-King of Kandy and his family embark for Madras (24th Jan.)

Arrival of American missionaries in Colombo (23rd March)

The crown and sword of state of the Kandyan Government discovered

1817. Kandyan rebellion started by Chiefs of Wellasse (10th Sept.)

The British resident at Uva, Mr. Wilson, killed by the rebels (16th Sept.)

A reward of Rs. 1,000 proclaimed by Sir Robert Brownrigg for the apprehension of the Pretender

1818. Ehelepola Adigar and other Chiefs arrested and removed to Colombo (March 3)

Martial Law declared in the Kandyan provinces (21st Feb.)

Arrival of C. M. S. missionaries in Ceylon (17th July)

Keppitipola Dissawe captured by Col. Fraser (30th Oct.)

Keppitipola and Madugalle beheaded at Kandy (26th Nov.)

**Lieut.-Gen. Sir Edward Barnes, Lieut.-Governor (1820-1821)**

1820. Sir Robert Brownrigg leaves for England (1st Feb.)

Major-General Edward Barnes sworn in as Lieutenant-Governor

Mr. George Bird commences coffee planting in the Kandyan country

**Governor: Lieut.-Gen. Sir Edward Paget (1822-23)**

1822. The bridge of boats over the Kelani river near Colombo completed

1823. The Batticotta Seminary in Jaffna established

**Governor: Lieut.-Gen. Sir Edward Barnes (1824-1831)**

1824. Death of the Hon. Sir John D'Oyly, Bt., President and First Commissioner of the Kandyan provinces

1825. Ehelepola Maha Nilame removed to Mauritius

1827. First regular coffee plantation opened

1828. Nuwara Eliya established as a military convalescent station

1829. The Commissioners of Enquiry (Lieut.-Colonel Colebrooke and Mr. C. H. Cameron) who were appointed to report upon all matters relating to the administration of the Government of Ceylon arrives in Colombo

Death of Ehelepola in Mauritius (April)

Colombo Pettah Library started by the Burghers

1831. Colombo Friend-in-Need Society formed (15th March)

Sir Edward Barnes leaves for Calcutta and Major-General John Wilson assumes duties as Lieutenant-Governor

**Governor: Sir Robert Wilmot Horton (1831-1837)**

1832. The *Colombo Journal* started (1st Jan.) by the Governor but discontinued on 31st Dec. 1833 on orders from the Secretary of State

Death of the ex-King of Kandy at Vellore (31st Jan.)

The Kandy Mail Coach, the First Mail Coach in Asia, started (Feb. 1st)

Ceylon Savings Bank opened (6th August)

A Cricket Club established in Colombo (8th Sept.)

The Order of the King in Council abolishing compulsory labour proclaimed (28th Sept.)

1833. The Cinnamon Monopoly abolished (10th July)

The Island divided into five provinces

The New Charter of Justice proclaimed (31st Aug.)

The Legislative and the Executive Councils instituted

1834. School Commission constituted (19th May)

The *Ceylon Observer* newspaper started by merchants of Colombo

First meeting of the Legislative Council held at Colombo (22nd May)

1835. Duel between Sir Charles Marshall, Chief Justice, and Sir John Wilson, in the Cinnamon Gardens

The trial of Molligoda, first adigar, and several others for high treason ends with their acquittal (12th Jan.)

1836. The Colombo Academy (Royal College) established by Government. Taxes on imports and exports first imposed in Ceylon

**Governor: The Rt. Hon. J. A. Stewart Mackenzie (1837-1841)**

1837. Turnour's translation of the *Mahawamsa* published.

Unofficial members of the Legislative Council sworn in.

First sugar plantation established in Ceylon in the Dumbura valley

1838. Doloswella, Dissawe of Sabaragamuwa, manumits all his slaves, 39 in number (14th Jan.)

The Galle Mail Coach started (2nd July)

1839. A meeting of the British and Parsi merchants held in Colombo for forming a Chamber of Commerce (20th Feb.) The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce inaugurated 25th March

1840. Fish-tax abolished (4th Jan.)

**Governor: Lieut.-General Sir Collin Campbell (1841-1847)**

1841. Ceylon Bank opened (1st June)

1844. Police Courts established (13th July)  
An Ordinance passed for the total abolition of slavery (20th Dec.)

1845. Court of Requests established (1st Jan.)  
Death of Molligoda, the last of the Kandyan adigars and Dissawe of the Four Korales (26th Jan.)  
Civil Servants prohibited from agricultural and commercial pursuits (1st Feb.)  
Ceylon branch of the Royal Asiatic Society formed (7th Feb.)  
Ceylon constituted by Letters Patent under the Great Seal an Episcopal See called the Bishopric of Colombo and the Rev. J. Chapman appointed Bishop (9th April)

1846. The *Examiner* and *Ceylon Times* newspapers started (1st Jan. and 1st July).

**Governor: Viscount Torrington (1847-1850)**

1848. Excitement in Kandy over protests against the Gun-tax (6th July)  
Meeting at Borella, Colombo, followed by assaults on the Police and calling out of the military (26th July)  
Riots in Matale, rebels proclaiming David Appu king of Kandy  
A Company of the 15th Regiment and one of the Ceylon Rifles march from Kandy to Matale. They disperse a considerable body of rioters, leaving forty dead (29th July)  
Kandy and Kurunegala districts placed under martial law  
Purang Appu and Gongalgoda Banda tried by Court Martial and ordered to be shot (9th August)

1849. Death of Sir Alexander Johnston, former Chief Justice  
Merchants and planters petition the Board of Trade in England against the duty on coffee and for restrictions on the importation of chicory to Ceylon (May 10)  
Lease of Maradana Cinnamon Gardens, the last remaining in the hands of the Government, for 7 years for £5,500 (22nd May)  
Arrival of American ship *Moslem* with a cargo of ice (6th Oct.)  
Unofficial members of the Legislative Council protest against the Colony's contribution of £24,000 for military expenditure (30th Oct.)  
H. F. Muttukistna, first Tamil advocate, sworn in (4th Dec.)  
Foundation stone of St. Thomas' College laid by Bishop Chapman (21st Dec.)

1850. Messrs. Morehead and Rohde arrive as commissioners to inquire into the authenticity of certain documents laid before the Select Committee of the House of Commons to inquire into affairs in Ceylon (25th April)  
Pigeon express from Galle to Colombo successfully started by the *Ceylon Observer* (24th Sept.)  
Resignation of Lord Torrington (31st June)

**Governor: Sir George William Anderson (1850-1855)**

1853. The Sacred Tooth Relic handed over to the care of the Diyawadana Nilame, and priests left to manage their own affairs

1854. Sir George Anderson asks to be relieved of his duties from Feb. 1855 owing to ill health (Sept.)  
The surviving Kandyan prisoners who had been banished to Malacca for high treason in 1848 pardoned by Governor Anderson

**Governor: Sir Henry Ward (1855-1860)**

1858. The first telegraph line opened in Ceylon, between Colombo and Galle (1st Jan.)  
Inauguration of the Ceylon railway scheme by Sir Henry Ward (3rd Aug.)  
1859. Sir Emerson Tennent's book on Ceylon published

**Governor: Sir Charles MacCarthy (1860-1863)**

1861. Messrs. M. Coomaraswamy and H. Dias nominated to the Legislative Council (July)  
1862. Sinhalese newspaper called *The Lakminipahana* started (Sept.)  
1864. First locomotive engine imported into Ceylon (Jan.)  
Resignation of the Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council on the issue of military expenditure (Nov.)

**Governor: Sir Hercules Robinson (1865-1872)**

1865. Opening of the Railway from Colombo to Ambepussa (Oct.)  
Ceylon League formed (26th May)  
1866. First elections for the Colombo Municipality (12th Jan.)  
1867. First railway engine ascends the Kadugannawe incline, and first railway train arrives at Kandy (March)  
1868. Publication of Sir H. Robinson's despatch on Ceylon League (Feb.)  
1869. The demolition of the walls of Colombo Fort commenced by the blowing up of the Rotterdam bastion (29th Dec.)  
1870. Ceylon Medical school established in association with the Colombo General Hospital (March)  
First cargo of coffee sent from Ceylon to England via the Suez Canal (12th March)  
1871. First General Census taken  
1872. Rupees and cents currency established in Ceylon  
Colombo for the first time lighted with Gas

**Governor: Sir William Gregory (1872-1877)**

1873. Opening of the Gampola railway extension (1st Feb.)  
1875. The Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) visits Ceylon (1st Dec.)  
1877. Opening of Colombo Museum (1st Jan.)

**Governor: Sir James Longden (1877-1883)**

1879. Campaign against coffee blight started (Jan. to July)  
Mr. H. Dias, first Sinhalese to become Puisne Judge (5th July)



1880. Completion of the inner harbour wall of Colombo breakwater (April 10)
1883. First rickshaw imported into Ceylon by Whittall & Co. (May)  
First public sale of Ceylon teas in Colombo at the offices of Somerville & Co. (30th July)

**Governor: Sir Arthur Gordon (1883-1890)**

1885. Post Office Savings Bank established in Ceylon (16th April)  
Railway from Talawakelle to Nanu Oya opened (May 10)
1887. Inauguration of the Ceylon Branch of the British Medical Association. (17th Dec.)

**Governor: Sir Arthur Havelock (1890-1895)**

1894. Opening of Kurunegala railway extension (14th Feb.)  
Opening of the Galle railway extension (7th May)
1895. Opening of the Victoria Bridge over the Kelani river (24th May)

**Governor: Sir Joseph West Ridgeway (1895-1903)**

1896. Opening of the Lady Havelock Hospital for women and children. (Oct. 12)  
Appointment of a Board of Education by the Government (Sept.)
1902. First motor car imported into Ceylon by E. G. Money (Feb.)
1903. Formation of a Clerical Union by mercantile clerks  
Law Society of Ceylon formed

**Governor: Sir Henry Blake (1903-1907)**

1904. Fortification of Trincomalee Harbour completed  
Laying of pipes under the Mansergh Drainage scheme  
Formation of the Ceylon Agricultural Society with the Governor as President
1905. Victoria Memorial Eye Hospital opened by Lady Ashmore  
Engineering Association formed
1906. A Carters' strike  
Colombo Graving Dock opened
1907. *Ceylon Morning Leader* starts publication and *The Ceylon Standard* and the *Morning Times* cease publication

**Governor: Sir Henry McCallum (1907-1913)**

1908. Establishment of "Employment Bureau" by Rev. Middleton Brumwell  
Low Country Products Association formed  
Negombo railway opened
1909. Chartered Bank buys its premises and those of the Hongkong Bank for Rs. 450,000 and the Hongkong Bank buys the premises in Prince Street for Rs. 180,000
1910. Despatches on the Reform of the Constitution published (2nd Feb.)  
A quantity of No. 1 crepe rubber sells at Rs 7.35 per lb. (March)  
Appeals (Privy Council) Ordinance of 1909 comes into operation (6th May)

1911. Colombo Central Telegraphic Office opened (12th March)  
First aeroplane brought to Ceylon (6th Nov.)  
Mr. P. Ramanathan elected Ceylonese Member of the Legislative Council (18th Dec.)

1912. Mr. Ponnambalam Arunachalam appointed a member of the Executive Council (9th Jan.)  
First meeting of the reformed Legislative Council (16th Jan.)  
Colombo Wireless Telegraphy installation completed and first message sent to Bombay (22nd July)  
Ratnapura railway opened  
Sinhalese typewriter key-board devised

1913. Final linking-up of the Mannar-Madawachchi railway extension

**Governor: Sir Robert Chalmers (1913-1916)**

1914. Mr. James Fernando Sri Chandrasekera leaves nearly a million rupees in trust for educational and charitable purposes
1915. Serious riot at Kandy between Sinhalese and Moors. The disturbances spread to all provinces except the Northern and Eastern (28th May);  
Martial Law proclaimed  
Martial Law withdrawn (31st Aug.)  
Gathering of Sinhalese at the Public Hall to appeal for a Royal Commission to enquire into the causes of the riots (25th Sept.)  
Trial of eight Sinhalese editors for sedition (Sept.)  
Legislative Council votes £1,000,000 towards Britain's war expenses (30th Sept.)

**Governor: Sir John Anderson (1916-1918)**

1916. Railway to Chilaw opened (1st March)  
Commission appointed to inquire into and report on the circumstances connected with the shooting of certain persons during the riots (Oct.)
1917. Colombo Central Railway Station opened (4th March)
1918. Medical Council formed for regulation and control of medical practitioners and medical education (Jan.)  
European Association of Ceylon formed (25th Jan.)  
Death of Sir John Anderson at Nuwara Eliya (24th March)  
Syndicate formed for manufacture of safety matches (April)  
*Ceylon Daily News* started by Mr. D. R. Wijewardene

**Governor: Sir William Manning (1918-1925)**

1919. Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam elected first President of the Ceylon National Congress  
Meeting of Sinhalese urging the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the 1915 riots (1st Nov.)
1920. The Secretary of State approves the recommendation regarding the employment of Ceylonese in the higher ranks of the Public Service (April)  
Right to apply for appointment as King's Counsel granted to members of the Bar (Oct.)
1921. Laying of the foundation of the Victory Column designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens (7th Dec.)

1922. Messrs Mackinnon, Mackenzie & Co. buy the Arcade building in York Street for Rs. 1,350,000  
The Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII) visits Ceylon (24th March)  
Mr. C. E. S. Victor Corea, advocate, Chilaw goes to jail to serve a sentence of one month's hard labour for refusing to pay the Road-Tax of Rs. 2

1923. The *Ceylon Observer* is bought by Mr. D. R. Wijewardene

1924. New home of the Colombo Y.M.C.A. in the Fort opened (22nd Feb.)  
Official broadcasting inaugurated (27th June)

1925. Colombo Public Library opened (10th Aug.)

**Governor: Sir Hugh Clifford (1925-1927)**

1925. New Broadcasting Station opened by Sir Hugh Clifford (16th Dec.)

1926. Mrs. Rhys Davids presents her library to the Ceylon University College (Jan.)  
Tea Research Scheme inaugurated (April)  
Railway to Puttalam inaugurated (11th May)

1927. Legislative Council adopts motion for payment to unofficial members of the Legislative Council (27th Jan.)  
Railway to Trincomalee opened (2nd May)  
Beam Wireless service between Ceylon and Great Britain inaugurated (Sept.)  
Mahatma Gandhi visits Ceylon (12th Nov.)  
Special Commission on Reforms under the Chairmanship of the Earl of Donoughmore arrives (21st Nov.)

**Governor: Sir Herbert Stanley (1927-1931)**

1928. Legislative Council passes a motion for the establishment of the University at Kandy (9th March)  
Report of the Donoughmore Commission published (16th July)

1929. Electric power station at Kolonnawa opened by the Governor  
Rotary Club opened in Colombo (5th March)  
Lord Passfield's despatch on Ceylon reforms published (30th Oct.)

1930. Opening of new Legislative Council Chamber (29th Jan.)

**Governor: Sir Graeme Thomson (1931-1933)**

1931. Order in Council for introducing the new State Council published (15th April)  
Legislative Council dissolved (17th April)  
Elections to State Council (13th to 20th June)  
1933. Sir Graeme Thomson leaves for England (Sept. 2) and dies on board at Aden (28th Sept.)

**Governor: Sir R. E. Stubbs (1933-1937)**

1934. Centenary of the *Ceylon Observer*  
The Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore visits Ceylon (May)  
Arrival of the Duke of Gloucester bringing the Throne and Crown of Sinhalese kings which His Majesty the King presented to the people of Ceylon (20th Sept.)

1935. Telephone communication between India and Ceylon established (12th Jan.)  
Ceylon's First Trade Commissioner (Dr. Paul Pieris) in England appointed (21st Jan.)  
First aeroplane lands at the Ratmalana aerodrome (27th Nov.)

1937. M. A. Bracegirdle, an English visitor, served with a deportation order by the Governor. On an application for a writ of Habeas Corpus, the Supreme Court held that the Governor's order was illegal (18th May)

**Governor: Sir Andrew Caldecott (1937-1944)**

1938. First Diesel train runs to Galle (26th Feb.)  
Governor's proposals for reform of the Constitution published (21st Dec.)

1939. Centenary of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce (25th March)  
The Governor opens the Bank of Ceylon (1st August)

1940. Rt. Rev. Edmund Peiris, the first Sinhalese bishop, consecrated Bishop of Chilaw (25th April)  
Court of Criminal Appeal sits for the first time (3rd June)

1941. Freezing of Japanese credits in Ceylon  
Governor launches Rs. 100 million war loans (18th March)

1942. Rice Control scheme introduced  
Governor bans two political parties under the Defence Regulations  
Appointment of Sir Geoffrey Layton as Commander-in-Chief announced. War Council consisting of the Commander-in-Chief, the Governor, members of the Board of Ministers and representatives of the Army, Navy and Air Force appointed  
Air Raid on Colombo (5th April)  
University of Ceylon comes into being with Dr. Ivor Jennings as the first Vice-Chancellor  
Mr. D. S. Senanayake chosen as the Leader of the House  
Sir Baron Jayatilaka leaves for India as Ceylon's first representative in New Delhi

1943. A message from His Majesty's Government to the Board of Ministers states that the re-examination of the reform of Ceylon's Constitution will be directed towards the grant of full responsible government under the Crown in all matters of internal civil administration  
Publication of the Report of the Special Committee on Education (6th Nov.)

1944. Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, Supreme Commander, South East Asia, transfers his headquarters from New Delhi to Kandy  
Death of Sir Baron Jayatilaka on his way from India to Ceylon

**Governor: Sir Henry Monck-Mason Moore (1944-1948)**

1944. Lord Soulbury and other members of the Reforms Commission arrive (22nd Dec.)

1945. Soulbury Commission's report published (Sept.)

1946. After a two-day debate, State Council adopts white paper, embodying the Reforms recommended by the Soulbury Commission, by 51 votes to 3 (Nov.)

1947. The last link in the direct Ceylon-U.K. air route of the B.O.A.C. forged  
 Last meeting of the State Council  
 Polling for parliamentary elections  
 Mr. D. S. Senanayake becomes Ceylon's first Prime Minister  
 Ceremonial opening of Parliament  
 Prime Minister moves a motion for Independence which is passed by a majority 59 votes to 11 (3rd Dec.)  
 Ceylon Independence Act receives Royal Assent (10th Dec.)
1948. Formal announcement that February 4th would be "Appointed Day" under the Ceylon Independence Act  
 Appointed Day, birth of the new Dominion, dawns with the amnesty to 1886 prisoners  
 Ceylon's new Governor-General, Sir Henry Monck-Mason Moore, sworn in  
 Parliament opened in the Assembly Hall at Torrington Square by the Duke of Gloucester  
 Ceremonial hoisting of the Lion Flag over the *pattiripuwa* at the Dalada Maligawa, Kandy
1949. Mr. E. A. L. Wijeyewardene, K. C. takes his oaths as Chief Justice  
 Mr. D. S. Senanayake unveils the memorial pillar for the new city of Anuradhapura  
 Sir Henry Monck-Mason Moore leaves and Sir Arthur Wijeyewardene, Chief Justice, acts as Governor-General  
 Lord Soulbury, the new Governor-General, arrives and is sworn in
1950. Foreign Ministers' Conference in Colombo attended by Mr. Ernest Bevin, Mr. Nehru and others at which the Colombo Plan for the economic development of South and South East Asia is born (Jan.)  
 Lion Flag with vertical green and saffron stripes adopted as National Flag
1952. The Prime Minister, Mr. D. S. Senanayake, dies in a nursing home after a fall from his horse (22nd March)  
 Mr. Dudley Senanayake, Minister of Agriculture, is appointed Prime Minister  
 Parliament dissolved (8th April)
1953. Mr. Dudley Senanayake resigns from office of Prime Minister and is succeeded by Sir John Kotelawala (Oct.)
1954. Her Majesty Elizabeth II, Queen of Ceylon and H. R. H. the Duke of Edinburgh arrive on a ten-day tour  
 The Queen opens the third sessions of the second Parliament of Ceylon at Independence Hall (12th April)  
 Viscount Soulbury leaves Ceylon and is succeeded by Sir Oliver Goonetilleke (July)

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## ABOUT THIS BOOK

This book is of considerable value to the student of the British Period in Ceylon.

The author has drawn his material from valuable and authentic sources some of which are inaccessible to our students and possibly unknown even to the specialist. The material so drawn has been collated to give a clearly defined picture of the economic, political and social development of Ceylon from the status of a Crown Colony to her emergence as a sovereign state. The extracts from various sources are so merged with the flow of the author's narrative that there is hardly a resistant ripple. Apart from its value as a source book of history the average reader will find for the first time, not a dull record of dates and achievements but a strikingly human story of the high endeavours of some very clever men. At the end of one's reading, the proconsuls who stride across these pages become transformed from empire builders to links in a chain of modern development. In the discernible background are figures of world history like Napoleon, Wellington, Byron, Gladstone, Peel, Disraeli and Trollope.

The book is a contribution to British history too; it is an important cross-section of the history of the British Empire in the building of which Ceylon is a proud example.

Sir Henry Monck-Mason Moore, the last Colonial Governor has written the postscript for the book.