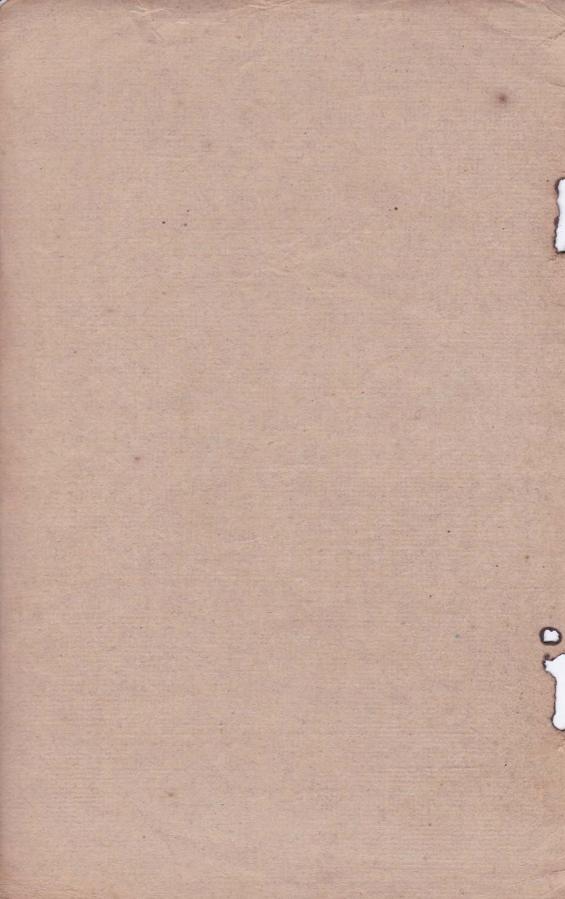


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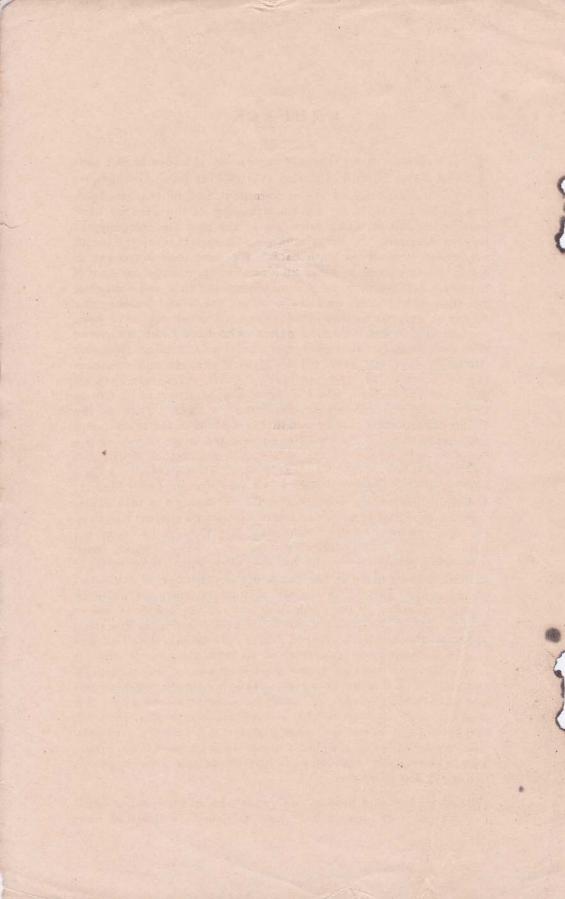
DEDICATION

TO

THE TRIBUNAL OF THE BRITISH CONSCIENCE.

THE susceptibility of the individual conscience to a sense of right and wrong is the test of a person's character. A nation's conscience is the corporate sense of right and wrong; being the cumulative effect of an aggregation of human souls living under one common civilization. The test of that civilization and the character of that nation will depend largely on the extent to which that corporate conscience is able to accommodate itself to universally accepted doctrines of right conduct. We believe the British Nation to be sound at heart, and the bulwark of her power and majesty to be her sense of Justice. Despite her failings, we feel that she strives to live up to the best she knows. Therefore it is, that the bitterness of the memory of the past is gone and the sting lost. We place our case before the British public with hope and in confidence, for a fair hearing and just reparations.

THE KANDYAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.



PREFACE.

TT is no joy to us to rake up unpleasant episodes of the past and revive bitter memories. It is also far from our thoughts to say unkind things of the Government and of the strangers now settled in our land. By the necessity of the case we have been compelled to make reference to the past and the policy of the Government. In the discharge of a certain duty, it would not be fair to keep the truth back. We have been outspoken to the extent of giving as clear an idea of our position as far as it is necessary for the purpose of vindicating our title and obtaining our due. If anything, we have erred on the side of leniency, for where several authorities could have been cited, we have been content to give one. English writers who have lived and moved with us and have had ample opportunities of forming clear and unbiassed opinions, have not hesitated to censure and condemn the Government in language more explicit and severe than we dare. Justice Lawrie who had spent the best part of his life in Cevlon and was thoroughly conversant with the ways of the Kandyans and their history said that it is a blot on the fair name of England to think of the cruelties perpetrated in putting down the rebellion of 1818, and of the subsequent conduct of the British Government towards the Kandyan people. Herbert White, a Civil Servant of long standing with meritorius service, in his Manual of Uva in 1893 says "The details of the Campaign of 1817-1818, if it can be dignified by such a name, are related at great length in the Government Gazette of the day, but it must be confessed that they are not interesting reading. They consist, with unvarying regularity, of the burning of villages, the surprise of parties of rebels in caves, the capture and collection of cattle and grain, and so forth. This kind of warfare finds no place in military history, properly speaking, but it left indelible marks on the face of the country, for it is partly owing to the stern methods of repression employed during this period, that Uva has been, considering the character of its soil, its climate and its people, the most backward, the most stagnant, of any portion of Ceylon." " And it is doubtful even to this day the districts in question have wholly recovered." We have been content with a few relevant facts to show what the Kandyans were, what they are and what they should be. This dip into the past is a necessary step in placing before the public a concise statement of our claim. This booklet is not intended as a history, though historical facts and comments there are.

Other races and peoples in Ceylon who had not lost a single life or an inch of land or had their national life disturbed have been too ready to condemn the Kandyan people for a supposed backwardness. Had such races and peoples to contend against similar conditions, it is doubtful whether they would have shown the same vitality and recovered as fast as we have done. A little imagination on their part would have helped to make good an experience they had missed and would have made them think if not sympathetically, at least, more respectfully of our people.

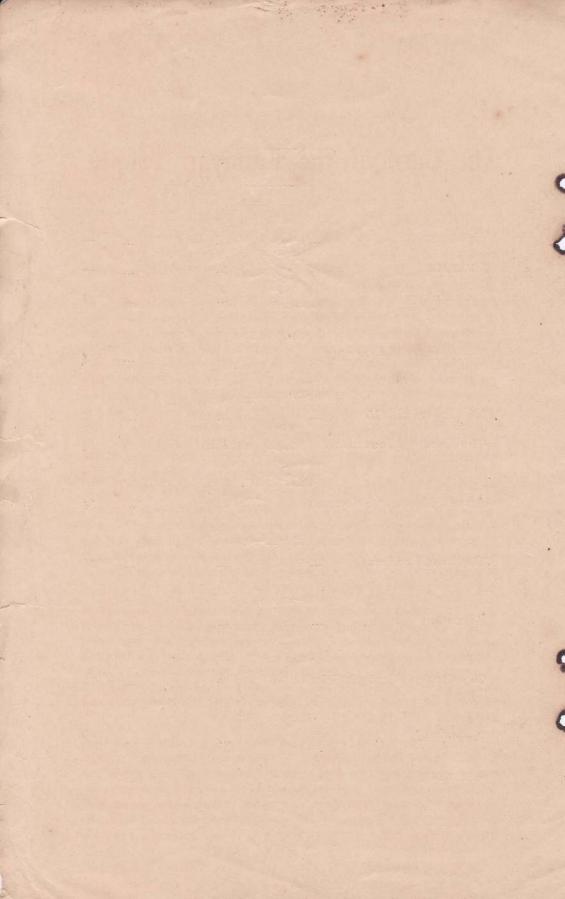
As was said before, the Kandyan case cannot be whittled down. Necessarily, therefore, relevant truths, however unpalatable, had to be stated. We dare not curtail our case from a false sense of propriety by not stating facts as we find them. In doing this we have had no intention of offending any person or people. It is our business to point out mistakes although we pride ourselves in our British connection as much as any Englishman. Our loyalty cannot be questioned.

The establishment of law and order should be one of the chief considerations of a Government. The British have nowhere failed in carrying this out and in their exbuberance for this particular side of rule, perhaps, they overlooked other aspects of equal importance. A virile and young race is impatient of delay and goes straight for its object when its mind is made up. In the nature of things the British could not help behaving in the manner they did. With mature judgment and wider experience, they have never been known to be above correction and too proud to own a fault. Their best men have always condemned injustice wherever and whenever found and more severely their own. This is a quality that endears a man to his fellows. And we cannot help looking up to them for their manly qualities, and being grateful for many blessings in other ways bestowed on our people. We hope that what is said here will be taken in the spirit it is written; namely, the vindication of a right and the redress of a wrong.



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The Case of the Kandyan People.

INTRODUCTION.

N 1926 Sir Hugh Clifford, as Governor of the Colony, requested the Home Government to send to Ceylon a Royal Commission to enquire into the working of the present constitution and in the light of evidence placed before it, to recommend a revision of the constitution, both in respect of the constitutional arrangement of the Government, and the equitable representation of the peoples of this country. Within the short period of Sir Hugh's regime, he discovered the dissatisfaction in the country with representation on a territorial basis offered to the various communities inhabiting this Island. He also discovered the constitutional defects of the Legislature functioning with an unofficial majority independent of the Executive, and capable of running counter to the Government but sharing none of its responsibilities. His Majesty's Government, in response to this invitation, has appointed the Commission which very shortly will be in our midst.

It has become necessary to issue an intelligent and comprehensive statement of the Kandyan view-point not only for the benefit of the Commission, but also for the purpose of enlightening the public who have been victims of misrepresentation from quarters hostile to Kandyan interests.

The fundamental error of British statemanship has been to treat the subject of political advancement of the peoples of Ceylon as of one homogeneous Ceylonese race keeping the European element distinct and apart from the rest, all the time ignoring the fact that there exist between the various communities constituting the permanent population of the Island, prejudices and conflicting interests as great as those existing between the Europeans and the rest.

It is a historical truth that mankind marches in groups. Political emancipation of the individuals composing such groups can be effected with success only by recognising such groups as units in themselves. But, these several units are not always equal in point of numbers and claims; while to some certain portions of the country have remained indisputably their national home, to others it is merely a temporary abode. The former must remain

as a group for all times, under all conditions, with no alternative; while the latter, wherever domiciled, have always the choice of falling back at will on the original stock group. It will be seen, therefore, that entire national groups whose only home is in the Island can be placed in a position of inferiority, and their entire national life disturbed for the benefit of minority groups, whose national life can never be interfered with to their detriment.

Coming to practical politics and applying the above principle to the prevailing conditions in the Island, the Kandyans as a group have existed for over 2,400 years. The Kandyan land is their home, and they have none other. Any other bodies, individuals, or groups, making the Kandyan country their home either temporarily or permanently, must do so with a perfect understanding that their interests are not only less, but that they in no way should arrest the progress of the Kandyan people. This is a claim on the part of the Kandyans, reasonable as well as just. And what they claim for themselves, they are prepared at all times to concede to all other groups in their respective homes.

The justice of this demand is self-evident. Nothing said or done outside England to Englishmen can affect English life or culture. Those claiming European descent are similarly placed. All they need, in the country of their sojourn, is the freedom to live their life and make their fortunes as individuals. This applies to other groups in larger or smaller numbers, who come to our territory from outside or abroad. The protection of the group that has a superior claim, by virtue of its territoriality, must be the prime consideration in any measure intended for the political emancipation of the people. The group comes before the individual.

The Kandyans in this instance not only claim all the rights appertaining to a group from other groups within their territory, but they can lay their hand on a mcre direct and especial claim from a particular group. We are asking His Majesty's Government to fulfil a certain obligation, accepted and sealed unequivocally to guarantee our national integrity.

In this demand the Kandyans depend wholly on the British sense of righteous conduct and honourable dealing with those who have placed their entire trust on their plighted word and on the strength of which, they have placed themselves utterly at their mercy. It may be argued whether this moral weapon is of sufficient force to compel the British conscience to deal justly by a people, who had the good fortune or otherwise to enter into a contractual relationship, with all the solemnity and sincerity that human device had evolved. The answer to this cannot be doubted. England, above all others, believes in the power of

moral law guiding the destinies of nations and men alike. The Earl of Oxford (then Mr. Asquith) appealed to the world for, at least, moral support against German arms when things looked black for the Allies. There, he made clear that Western culture, as opposed to German "Kultur," stood for the defence of weak and small nationalities and for the sanctity of treaties. The response from all quarters of the globe was instantaneous. Men of all shades of colour, of diverse tongues, of all forms and phases of belief, flocked to the standard of the Allies. Men poured their treasures in blood, in gold and in service, freely, that a culture that breathed of freedom and humanity should be upheld at all costs. The moral sense clearly dominated the larger portion of mankind, and established its claim for recognition in all human transactions both individual and national. Can we doubt, then, that England will extend to a people committed to her charge under a solemn treaty, that moral right to have a just claim enforced, when she herself realised its potency in the hour of her travail? We appeal to the British conscience as fellow humans, with like passions, made in the same image and aspiring, in our own way, towards the realisation of our appointed destiny.



CHAPTER I.

BEFORE THE TREATY OF 1815.

THE Kandyan people whose traditions, instincts and efforts had always a pacific and cultural aim, and whose occupation was largely agricultural, were disturbed and harassed for a continuous period of three hundred and ten years (1505-1815) by European nations. They successfully repelled, ill-equipped and unorganised as they were, alone and unaided, the invasions into their country. The steady toll of lives and the ravages caused by the enemy began to tell on the people, and in their wake. internal dissension fomented by intrigue from outside greatly disturbed the land. At this critical stage the King who, "having violated the chief and most sacred duties of a sovereign, had forfeited all claims to the throne," was deposed by them in 1815 in the exercise of their constitutional rights; and in order that they might have a stable Government, they exercised their inalienable right to elect their King. It so happened, that they had not agreed upon any person from their own people to be elevated to the regal position; and it also coincided with an effort on the part of the British to assist them to have a suitable person of Royal blood to be their King. With always the possibility of a conflict with the British confronting them, the happy thought came to their leaders at the time, to invite His Britannic Majesty to assume Kingship in their state, reserving to the Chiefs and people, the same constitutional rights that they had enjoyed under previous Kings. Clearly keeping in mind that the Kandyan State was to consist of the King whomsoever or wheresoever chosen, and the Kandyan people exercising jurisdiction over their territory, the Chiefs invited His Majesty George the Third to ascend their Throne. This not being literally possible, though constitutionally correct, the Representative of His Majesty was to function in his place. Who could do this better than his accredited Agent, the Governor of the British Possessions in Ceylon? This act not only settled their internal troubles, but also put beyond all possibility any further outside aggression. It was an inspiration and a stroke of genius to have made use of forces that looked so menacing at the time to bring about such a happy ending. Had the British kept faith and not over-stepped the limits of constitutional authority, succeeding generations of Kandyans would have blessed their fore-fathers and the British, for the far-sighted statesmanship of the one, and the open and fair dealing of the other.

The arrangement referred to was arrived at after many consultations and lengthy discussions between the British and the Kandyans. It was embodied in a written document (one in the English language, and the other in Sinhalese) signed by the

Governor on behalf of His Majesty and in his name on the one part, and by the Kandyan Chiefs on behalf of the nation on the other part, in the presence of each other with all the solemnities attached to such proceedings. This is the Kandyan Convention or Treaty of 1815. If this does not bear the impress of a sacred contract even without any written word, but is a bare token of what was promised and undertaken on both sides, it is difficult to conceive of any agreement or contract in the history of mankind. Words have only put into permanent form what was promised and undertaken, because the promise and undertaking was there. So far never a word has been said by a son of Britain repudiating or denying the validity of this Convention. The inability to live up to one's promise is incomparably less banal than a bare-faced denial of a promise. Sometimes, it is possible for human weakness to get the better of one's feeling and understanding, and fail to live up to expectations. The British as a nation have undoubtedly failed to carry out the obligations undertaken by them, but they have the virtue of not having denied or repudiated the obligations imposed on them by the Convention.

The culmination of this event brought about at a later stage a new era in our history, which perhaps was not in the minds of either contracting party. The Governor as the British King's Representative and the leaders of our people steered the ship of state immediately following the new arrangement, and thus continued to rule our land up to 1833. Our body politic remained up to this point intact; the actual administration of the country was entirely in our hands whilst the Governor remained content merely to direct and to advise our administrative authorities. This was not done as a mere convenience but in obedience to the mandate as settled by the Convention of 1815, then so fresh in their minds. This is amply borne out by a semi-official letter preserved by Dayy, * dated 2nd March, 1815, which records how the preservation and maintenance of the religion and the continuation of Kandyan administration and judicial organisations with Kandyans at their head, were to be a sine qua non of the Treaty; thereby implying, that the sovereignty of the Kandyan Nation was to remain with the Kandyan people. This brings us to the close of one chapter in our history and to the beginning of another.

^{*}Interior of Ceylon by Dr. Davy.

CHAPTER II.

THE TREATY OF 1815.

THIS is a document between two sovereign states. The parties were free agents and were of equal status. The consideration, offered and accepted, was the guarantee and continuance of the national integrity of the Kandyan people; and as regards the British, the assumption of the position of sovereign by their King in our State. The parties entering into the contract, observed all the solemnity and ceremony befitting so weighty an occasion. It was finally signed and sealed by both parties. Here we have in a nutshell all the essential elements of a valid contract.

THE KANDYAN CONVENTION OF 2nd MARCH, 1815.

The Proclamation of 2nd March, 1815.

The text of the Treaty ran as follows:-

At a Convention held on the Second day of March, in the year of Christ 1815, and the Cingalese year 1736, at the Palace in the city of Kandy, between His Excellency Lieut.-General Robert Brownrigg, Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the British settlements and territories in the Island of Ceylon, acting in the name and on behalf of His Majesty George the Third, King, and His Royal Highness George, Prince of Wales, Regent of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, on the one part, and the Adigars, Dissaves, and other principal chiefs of the Kandyan provinces on behalf of the inhabitants, and in presence of the Mohottales, Coraals, Vidanes, and other subordinate headmen from the several provinces, and of the people then and there assembled on the other part, it is agreed and established as follows:

I.—That the cruelties and oppressions of the Malabar ruler, in the arbitrary and unjust infliction of bodily tortures and the pains of death without trial, and sometimes without an accusation or the possibility of a crime, and in the general contempt and contravention of all civil rights, have become flagrant, enormous, and intolerable, the acts and maxims of his government being equally and entirely devoid of that justice which should secure the safety of his subjects, and of that good faith which might obtain a beneficial intercourse with the neighbouring settlements.

II.—That the Rajah Sri Wickreme Rajah Sinha, by the habitual violation of the chief and most sacred duties of a Sovereign, has forfeited all claims to that title or the powers annexed to the same,

and is declared fallen and deposed from the office of king; his family and relatives, whether in the ascending, descending, or collateral line, and whether by affinity or blood, are also for ever excluded from the throne, and all claim and title of the Malabar race to the dominion of the Kandyan provinces is abolished and extinguished.

III.—That all male persons being or pretending to be relations of the late Rajah Sri Wickeme Raja Sinha, either by affinity or blood, and whether in the ascending, descending, or collateral line, are hereby declared enemies to the government of the Kandyan provinces, and excluded and prohibited from entering those provinces on any pretence whatever, without a written permission for that purpose by the authority of the British Government, under the pains and penalties of martial law, which is hereby declared to be in force for that purpose; and all male persons of the Malabar caste now expelled from the said provinces are, under the same penalties prohibited from returning, except with the permission before mentioned.

IV.—The dominion of the Kandyan provinces is vested in the Sovereign of the British Empire, and to be exercised through the Governors or Lieutenant-Governors of Ceylon for the time being, and their accredited Agents, saving to the Adigars, Dessaves, Mohottales, Coraals, Vidaans, and all other chiefs and subordinate native headman, lawfully appointed by authority of the British Government, the rights, privileges, and powers of their respective offices, and to all classes of the people the safety of their persons and property, with their civil rights and immunities, according to the laws, institutions, and customs established and in force amongst them.

V.—The religion of Boodhoo as professed by the chiefs and inhabitants of these provinces, is declared inviolable, and its rites, ministers, and places of worship are to be maintained and protected.

VI.—Every species of bodily torture, and all mutilation of limb, member, or organ, are prohibited and abolished.

VII.—No sentence of death can be carried into execution against any inhabitant except by the written warrant of the British Governor or Lieutenant-Governor for the time being, founded on a report of the case made to him through the accredited agent or agents of the Government resident in the interior, in whose presence all trials for capital offences are to take place.

VIII.—Subject to these conditions, the administration of civil and criminal justice and police over the Kandyan inhabitants of the said provinces is to be exercised according to established forms, and by the ordinary authorities, saving always the inherent

right of Government to redress grievances and reform abuses in all instances whatever particular or general where such interposition shall become necessary.

IX.—Over all other persons civil or military residing in or resorting to these provinces, not being Kandyans, civil and criminal justice together with police shall until the pleasure of His Majesty's Government in England may be otherwise declared, be administrated in the manner following:—

X.—Provided always that the operation of the several preceding clauses should not be contravened by the provisions of any temporary or partial proclamation published during the advance of the army; which provisions, in so far as incompatible with the said preceding articles are hereby repealed.

XI.—The royal dues and revenues of the Kandyan provinces are to be managed and collected for His Majesty's use and the support of the provincial establishment, according to lawful custom, and under the direction and superintendence of the accredited Agent or Agents of the British Government.

XII.—His Excellency the Governor will adopt provisionally, and recommend to the confirmation of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, in the name and on behalf of His Majesty, such dispositions in favour of the trade of these provinces as may facilitate the export of their products, and improve the returns, whether in money or in salt, cloths, or other commodities useful and desirable to the inhabitants of the Kandyan country.

The signatories to the Convention were:

Sir Robert Brownrigg James Sutherland J. Doyle

Ehelepola Adigar
Pilame Talawwe 2nd Adigar
Pilame Talawwe Dissawe
Ratwatte Dissawa
Molligoda Dissawa
Dullewe Dissawa
Millewe Dissawa
Galagama Dissawa
Galagoda Dissawa

Examining the document itself, there is an abundance of internal evidence that can leave no doubt as to its character and the intention of the parties thereto. After recounting the incidents of maladministration and the misdeeds on the part of the deposed

King, in relation to the internal and external affairs of the State, the dethronement of the King and the exclusion of his heirs from the throne for ever, are made in unmistakable language in the first three clauses of the Treaty.

The fourth clause naturally brings the British Sovereign to the vacant Throne; and lest His Britannic Majesty should usurn more of our rights than were exercised by previous Kings in accordance with the constitution of the Kandyan State, and be in a position to place Kandyan National interests on a basis prejudicial to their future advancement, the clause further provided "to the Adigars, Dissawas, Koralas, Mohottallas and all other Chief and subordinate headmen, lawfully appointed by the authority of the British Government the rights, privileges, and the powers of their respective offices and to all classes of people the safety of their persons and property with their civil rights and immunities according to the laws, institutions and customs established and inforce, amongst them." This saving clause is rightly meant to limit the exercise of authority by the King. either in an arbitrary manner, or in a way inimical to national interests. The whole civic code of Government is included within the compass of this clause. The Kandyan State was to form at all times a self-governing portion of the Empire. No other interpretation can give meaning or point acceptable to normal intelligence.

The fifth clause refers to the national religion which is Buddhism. The centre of a nation's life as that of an individual is its religion. Apart from a sense of devotion on the part of the adherents, our leaders, fully realising the bearing religion has on national life, placed this next in importance only to the direct assertion of natonality. The cohesion of the individuals on a common basis of nationality is powerfully influenced in the East as in the West by the religion they profess. The language in the document is clearer and more emphatic on this point than any comments that could be made. It is as follows:—

"The religion of the Boodhoo as professed by the Chiefs and people of the Kandyan Kingdom is declared inviolate and its rites, ministers and places of worship are to be maintained and protected."

The words "as professed by" make it abundantly clear that the national character of the religion of the Kandyans was prominently before the contracting parties: Here also the main thought was the solidarity of the Kandyan people.

The sixth is the clause which deals with the Civil and Criminal Justice of those to be governed. It was inserted so as to avoid a possible recurrence of the painful and bitter period of their suffering under the late King.

The seventh clause definitely limits the extent to which punitive measures could be carried out by the authorities and lays down the broad principles of procedure.

The eighth for the first time contemplates the actual working of the Kandyan constitution, after demarcating in the previous clauses the respective rights of Sovereign and people. Here the right of administrative authority of the Kandyan people over their territory is clearly defined. The prerogative of the King to interfere in cases of abuse, to alter and to direct, as necessity might arise, the administrative machinery is re-affirmed; subject, of course, to the paramount consideration of the interests of the Kandyan people.

The ninth clause invests the British King, as King of the Kandyan Nation, with extra-territorial powers to deal with people of other nationalities coming into Kandyan territory to settle down either temporarily or permanently. But in doing so it lays down the rules of procedure, so that those seeking the hospitality of the Kandyan country cannot be placed on a higher plane socially, economically, or politically or in opposition to inherent national rights.

The tenth clause throws a flood of light on the mental attitude of the contracting parties in relation to a vital point in the interpretation of the whole document, and on the evidence of its national character. When the British armies in their advance, acceding to the wishes of our people, and assisted by them against the King, entered into our Kingdom, proclamations were issued by them consecutively annexing the sections of the country through which they marched. When after their arrival at the Kandyan capital, the Convention was being prepared for signature by the parties concerned, the Kandyan Chiefs insisted, that all those proclamations of annexation be declared null and void, in view of the fact, that otherwise the country would cease to be an integral entity. This demand on the part of the Kandyan Chiefs was agreed to by the English, seeing that, such annexations of portions of Kandyan territory would be incompitible with those articles of the Convention guaranteeing Kandyan national unity, both in respect of men and territory. The tenth clause therefore fully proves that the Kandyan Kingdom was regarded unequivocally as a national unit that could not be divided, disintegrated or even tampered with, under any future circumstances or conditions.

The eleventh clause refers to revenue and its disbursement. It provides for all revenue collected within our territory, to be expended for that territory and that territory alone, making it

always obvious that the parties had in view, all the time the distinct political entity of the Kandyan people.

The last and by no means the least clause contains a volume of matter. The Governor undertakes there to recommend to His Majesty the granting of trade facilities with the outside world. If there was at the time any intention on the part of either of the contracting parties to merge the government of the Kandyans with that of peoples in adjacent territories, special provision for foreign trade facilities to be granted to the Kandyans would have been utterly out of place and devoid of common sense. Can there be, then, any doubt whatsoever in the mind of any sensible person that the Kandyan Kingdom was intended to remain a distinct. separate and integral entity? No one ever entertained the slightest doubt of the honesty of either of the two contracting parties. The events of history often tend to wrap the vision of its students but the basic facts stand; and in our case the basic fact is the continuation of the Kandyan State and the Kandyan Nation with a King elected in the person of His Britannic Majesty. This was the sole motive and impelling force underlying the solemn contract between the Kandyans and the British, known as the Convention of 1815.

Doubts have been raised recently in certain interested quarters, as to the validity of the Convention. And it is well here that we should effectively controvert these arguments to establish beyond any manner of doubt the binding nature of the Treaty.

We must remember that the Convention, entered into as it was by two Sovereign States, is an international document, whose interpretation should be governed by well recognised principles of international law. A treaty is a contract binding on nations exactly as an ordinary contract imposes a binding obligation on the parties to it. It is almost an axiom in law that no person can break a contract, and simply because it was broken, maintain that he is no longer bound by it. It is the same as regards nations. One nation cannot break a treaty, and call it a nullity, simply because it was broken. England cannot do otherwise. She cannot abrogate the compact by a subsequent unilateral act retaining at the same time all the advantages she gained under it. It is difficult to believe that she who fought Germany to vindicate this very principle, the sanctity of treaties and the inviolability of pledges, will disregard her contractural obligations as regards us, without doing violence to her much advertised sense of right. We here see that Great Britain legally cannot abrogate the Convention without surrendering all the benefits she now enjoys under it.

Did any subsequent enactment attempt to abrogate the Convention? We have already seen that one party to a treaty cannot by a unilateral act abrogate it. No sane statesman jealous of the prestige of Great Britain for righteous dealing, would justify such a procedure. But yet it has been put forward recently by a Catholic Priest that the Proclamation of 1818 repealed the Convention. It is common knowledge that when a legislative measure is repealed, it is expressly done so in the repealing enactment. Nowhere in the Proclamation of 1818 is it stated that it is meant to annul or modify the Convention or any part of it. Furthermore, Ordinance No. 5 of 1835, which was enacted specially to repeal a number of Proclamations and Regulations extending from 1799 to 1821, which by reason of the many fundamental alterations effected by the Charter of 1833, and on other accounts had become obsolete or inexpedient does not include the Convention in the list of measures annulled by it.

One glance at the Proclamation of 1818 convinces any unprejudiced reader that it rather confirmed the Convention. That it is much stronger, that it goes to greater lengths, is the view of a prominent Englishmen, whose evidence was accepted and approved of by Gladstone, Peel, Disraeli and Hume in a committee of the House of Commons which inquired into Ceylon affairs in 1850. The principal provision of clause 4 of the Convention was the securing "to all classes of people their civil rights according to the Laws, institutions and customs established and in force amongst the Kandyans." The same guarantee is repeated in section 7 of the Proclamation, where it is stated that every Kandyan is subject only to the laws which will be administered according to the ancient and established usages of the country. Section 5 of the Convention provides that "the religion of the Boodhoo as professed by the Chiefs and inhabitants of these provinces is declared inviolable and its rites, ministers and places of worship are to be maintained and protected." This protection is elaborated by section 16 of the Proclamation "to all ceremonies and processions of the Buddhists." We fail to see in these where the repeal lies. Moreover when the Kandyan Marriage Ordinance was passed, the intention of Government was to give effect to the Convention. And, above all, it yet remains in the Statute Book. How and where the Convention was repealed, and, if repealed, why it is retained in the Statute Book, are questions therefore, which can safely be left to be answered by the extravagant imagination of poor historians. The truth is that stated by Mr. Buller, Queen's Advocate, who in 1846 stated "That the Treaty into which we entered on the conquest of Kandy, constitutes a law binding and unalterable in all following

times, however urgent might be the motives and however extreme the exigency demanding the alternation of it."

Did the rising of 1818 invalidate the Convention? There are, it must be borne in mind, a great variety of Treaties, and one well recognised type are treaties meant by the contracting parties to establish a permanent condition of things. Such is the Scotch Convention; the treaty of guarantee given to Belgium before the War, and the similar one given to Switzerland, and the Kandyan Convention too is obviously one such. It is the well considered and weighty opinion of great jurists like Oppenheim and Hall, that such treaties are not made invalid, even by a war between the parties, and how a mere rising, confined to a dissatisfied portion of the country, and supported by a very few, could make the Convention a nullity is a matter beyond all bonest understanding.

Such is the common sense view of the Convention. That it is the correct one, is amply supported by the verdict of great Statesmen as Gladstone, Disraeli, and Peel, who held it to be perfectly binding, and by well known facts of history as well. The Scotch Convention was entered into in 1707. There were two rebellions of the whole Scotch people subsequent to it, one, the first Jacobite Rebellion in 1715, and the other, the second Jacobite Rebellion of 1745. Yet the Scotch Convention is a reality to this day. The Irish Convention was entered into in 1801. There were innumerable risings after it. It yet remained legally operative until the forming of the Irish Free State. If rebellions did not invalidate those Conventions, surely a mere rising cannot make ours a nullity. What is right there must be a right here, and, unless laws of right have a special domesticated brand of comfortable concessions to the party in power, England cannot with a clean record and a clear conscience reduce a solemn Treaty to a mere scrap of paper and vindicate her act, as the Earl of Oxford put it, "before the Tribunal of her national conscience."

N.B.—For further evidence of the nature of the Trusty see Appendix.

CHAPTER III.

AFTER 1815: OUR GRIEVANCES.

THE country had settled down, it was hoped, after years of incessant strife and internal turmoil, on an era of peace and prosperity. The terms of the Treaty had not affected the life of the people or the actual working of Government. There was not a semblance of foreign interference. There was no break in our traditions beyond the Royal line of succession to the Throne. The normal life of the people was resumed. But the security and peace so lately established was a short-lived one. Within three years from the date of the Treaty there was such slaughter of Kandyans as was never experienced in the darkest days of our history.

There are hardly any authentic records of the causes of the rising of 1818. The most reliable record is that of Dr. John Davy, M.D., F.R.C.S., who was on the Medical Staff of the Army from 1816 to 1820. He was more or less an eyewitness to most of the facts stated in his book which is dedicated to Sir Robert Brownrigg, the first Governor of the whole Island, under whose direction it appears to have been written. This is what he says of the Rebellion:—

"There was no sympathy between us and them; no one circumstance to draw us or bring us together, and innumerable ones of a repulsive nature. The Chiefs were less controlled than under their King and exercising more power in their districts than they ever before ventured to exert, were far from satisfied. Before, no one but the King was above them. Now they were inferior to every civilian in our service, to every officer in our army. Though officially treated with respect—it was only officially; a common soldier passed a proud Kandyan Chief with as little attention as he would a fellow of the lowest caste. Thus they considered themselves degraded and shorn of their splendour. The people in general had similar feelings on this score, specially the respectable and most considerable portion of the population."

Referring to the same period, Sir Emerson Tennant says that "the people looked on with uneasy surprise" at the continued military occupation of the country, contrary to the terms of the Treaty. This was a wholly unlooked for eventuality, and naturally just resentment was shown by the more manly leaders. This trivial disagreement was magnified out of all proportion and construed as treasonable conduct and an unarmed people were treated

as insurgents. The incidents of that period and the havoc caused by the British soldiery are best described in the words of the same British Chronicler:

"It would be difficult to give the English reader an accurate idea of the manner in which during the rebellion hostilities were carried on on either side. It was partisan warfare which from its very nature and circumtances was severe and irregular, particularly, when at its highest and after lenient measures had been tried in vain. When a district rose in rebellion, one or more military posts were established in it; Martial law was proclaimed; the dwellings of the resisting inhabitants were burnt; their fruit trees were often cut down and the country was scoured in every direction by small detachments who were authorised to put to death all who made opposition or were found with arms in their hands.....

The sufferings of the native were of a severe kind and complicated nature. In addition to the horrors of war in its most appalling shape they had to encounter those of disease and want and famine without chance of relief. Our loss from disease alone amounted to nearly 1/5th of the whole force employed. The loss of the natives killed in the field or executed or that died of disease and famine can hardly be calculated."

The oral testimony handed down to us by our fathers not only corroborates every bit of what is recorded by English authors but also goes to show a far more gruesome tale of horrors. The flower of our manhood was destroyed, not in battle—for arms they had none—but in cold blood. Orders were issued to shoot all persons over fourteen years at sight. The whole country was terrorised. Martial Law continued for three years on end. Neither life nor property was safe. Those who escaped death had almost in every case lost all their wordly possessions. The districts of the Central Province and Uva suffered most.

The people in their excitement and fear came together for greater protection and to take counsel among themselves to represent matters to the newly chosen King's Representative, and to lay before him their grievances. While they were so engaged a squad of Troops would appear on the scene and put to death every person whom they could lay hands on, or who came within the range of their guns. Carnage of this description continued for three years, in every village almost. The loss of life can indeed be hardly calculated. One can imagine, with the events of

1915 so fresh in one's mind, how hard the lot of our people must have been without even the semblance of public opinion to deter the soldiery from running into excesses.

The injustice of this can be seen when it is realised that the Kandyans had never in their history a standing army. After the honourable conclusion of the Treaty, so satisfactory to the Kandyan people, with the solidarity of the nation unaffected and intact, the citizen-soldiers returned to their ploughs. The Kandyans were therefore never in a position to make war, with the control of the Central Government in British hands. The continued military occupation was a glaring violation of the terms of the Treaty. Just resentment is no declaration of war. Where in open warfare, the Kandyans had succeeded in maintaining their independence, a security-pact had brought them to the verge of annihilation. We are forced to the conclusion that the British, worsted in Council, put it beyond the power of the Kandyan people to enjoy the benefits of their success and thus attempted to reduce the Treaty to one of non-effect. Be that as it may, what of those left stricken? Houses and property destroyed; the country ravaged; the able-bodied slain; families broken up; poverty, sickness and famine in every home and village; property of the more powerful families confiscated and the Kandyan Capital deserted. What relief or reparations had these people? None. Victorious France, with the aid of the whole State, has not been able yet these ten years past to repair the damage done in the last War. Is it possible, then, for the Kandyans to have recovered by their unaided efforts what they had lost during these years of agony, fear and death? The British had now taken full possession of the Central Government, and remained, not merely passive spectators of the results of the havoc caused, but were actively consolidating their position by putting every obstacle in the way of the Kandyans.

The country, though denuded of Kandyan manhood, was yet free from foreign intrusion. But the way was being paved for them. Innovations and impositions, alien settlers and foreign institutions, economic changes and altered values were gradually introduced without a word of protest from us. The spirit of our people was killed; all our brave leaders had perished in a rebellion in which they were hardly participators. But up to 1833 the change was hardly noticeable although the conditions were oppressive.

The events of this period from 1818 to 1833 had effectively rendered the collective voice powerless. There was no attempt thereafter, to speak as a people. The whole national organisation was destroyed root and branch, and a nation ceased to function. Only as individuals were we allowed to speak, and that too through the medium of British Officials. We were as a people

bound and gagged at this stage. Having reduced us to this, an inventory of all the wealth of our country was made. Our laws were scrutinised and interpreted for the benefit of a Government in which we formed no part, and private titles to land were taken over. All the knowledge of a people's concerns had been gathered, which would enable the Government either to make or mar the Kandyan people. Subsequent events will show which course the Government pursued.

John Ferguson commenting on this period of British occupation says:-

"There can be no doubt that the permanent conquest of the Kandyan Country was effected by Sir Edward Barnes military roads," completed in the year 1831."

Two years later, the Board of Commissioners was put an end to, with all its accompanying subordinate institutions, which were wholly manned by Kandyans. The Kandyan Government was merged in the Government of the Maritime Provinces. Everything was prepared now to throw wide open the doors of the Kandyan Country to foreigners. There was no one in the Kandyan ranks to oppose this breach of treaty rights. Three years of Martial Law had done its work too well. But discontent there was, silent, albeit eloquently written in the demeanour of our people. Mr. Buller, Government Agent, in a report submitted to Government by him says:—

"Another source of discontent is the impossibility of obtaining justice in the District Courts without the all but certainty of utter ruin. The successful party, it is true, obtains possession of the land, but in all possibility it will have been mortgaged to its full value to pay his lawyer's fees."

Mr. Buller sees only that aspect of the discontent. It was much deeper than he suspected, and for far more profound reasons. The Office of Assessors so long held by the Kandyans had also been abolished. And the administration of justice in the Kandyan country exercised by them throughout their history was taken away from them and passed over to alien hands.

By the Royal Charter of 1833 the entire Island was brought under one Government. An Executive and Legislative Council, with the Governor at their head, wielded all the political authority. The Kandyan State by stages imperceptibly disappeared. The secret conquest of the Kandyan country was truly complete. All the acts of the Government were directed towards that end. The crippling conditions, which the past fifteen years had imposed on our people from 1818—1833, were so great that no protest

of any kind could have been made, conscious as they were of the oppressive nature of these conditions. They found that the administration of the country was passing into foreign hands, in a foreign language under foreign conditions, and that this was being done for the purpose of exploitation. It is on record that a few Chiefs ventured to protest, but only to find the iron hand of terror descending on their heads. They were tried for high treason, and acquitted. In the course of that trial it transpired that one of the grievances against the British was their failure to send five Kandyan young men to England every year to qualify themselves for higher responsible government work in the Kandyan Country, according to a promise made by a British Governor; showing clearly how alive they were to the necessity of equipping themselves to meet the altered conditions. Once more the people were terrorised by the proclamation of Martial Law which though short in duration was, by no means, less frightful in its operation. The back of all resistance was broken, in that the spirit of independence of these people was crushed.

A God-fearing English clergyman writing of the Kandyans of that time says:—

"We cannot look upon a Kandyan without veneration when we remember the prowess and perseverance of the race whence he has sprung and the warfare he has so long waged that their land might be free from the yoke of the foreign oppressor."

And John Davy, who was more truthful than most writers of that period refers to the plight the Kandyans were forced into and warns his countrymen in these words:—

"We shall have much to answer for both politically and morally if we do not exert ourselves, and availing ourselves of the capacity, ameliorate the condition of the people and improve the state of the Country. If these sanguine anticipations be in nowise realised the natives may well rue the day we crossed their mountains and deplore the time their old system of Government was overturned."

From this point the Kandyans as a live force disappeared from the scene. The British Government alone was in the field and worked its will at leisure.

About this period coffee had passed its experimental stages, and was firmly established as an economic product. Its fame spread far and wide; people from outside flocked hither; cheap labour from India flooded the land. The anomaly of a foreign language and foreign interests dominated every thought and act of the Government which yet continued to maintain to the people of

the country that it was so acting for their good, and on their behalf. How far this was true may be gauged from the following extract from a Despatch from Earl Grey to Viscount Torrington instructing him—

Despatch (13-7-48). "To render land costly to those who do not intend to make use of it, but to render it as cheap as possible to bona fide settlers.............. Since in return for the price paid for the land they should obtain advantages, the buyers are to be provided with means of occupying it with advantage as a civilised society. All monies accruing from land sales," Earl Grey explains, "should be expended not as ordinary revenue but in the construction of roads and other public works calculated to enhance the value of land sold."

The price fixed upon was five shillings per acre. How solicitous of the settlers' welfare, and how niggardly of the trust accepted on a solemn undertaking! Sir Emerson Tennent in his work on "Ceylon" referring to this period of British activity remarks:—

"Any project, to be satisfactory as well as successful, should contemplate the benefit of the natives and not that of the strangers in Ceylon."

The difference between profession and practice could not be better exemplified. Every acre of land wrested from Kandyans, and the addition of every stranger to our land, meant a definite set back to our people.

Mean while, Coffee plantations were extended to every province, and the Government was laying its hands on private and temple property to assist the foreign capitalist further to extend his activities. The cost of opening up chena land being very much less and the process quicker, the Government laid violent hands on the defenceless Kandyan proprietor, presumed all chena land to belong to the Crown and thus expropriated thousands of Kandyans of their hereditary holdings. There was discontent everywhere, fear alone suppressing any expression of dissatisfaction, for the memory of the days of Martial Law still lingered in their minds. It, however, reached a climax when in 1848 people no longer able to endure this oppression, openly showed defiance. This was considered sufficient cause for another burst of violence and Martial Lawwas speedily proclaimed. Death, famine and pestilence, the inevitable consequences of these operations, carried away most of the population. How far the claim to Chena land was well or

ill-founded will be shown in a separate chapter. The result of all these measures on the part of the Government was that opposition came to an end. The Kandyan people bowed to the inevitable in despair. The Government and capitalists went full steam ahead. The lot of the Kandyans thereafter was pitiful. The Government's real concern became Kandyan land and Indian labour.

In the scramble for land Government Civil Servants were not altogether disinterested; they were acquiring large tracts themselves at 5s. an acre. Henry Charles Sirr comments on the situation as follows:

"Valuable land was sold at 5s, an acre and government servants enriched themselves at the expense of the country by purchasing these lands and turning them to coffee estates and neglecting their official duties to discharge which they were paid by the country. They devoted their time to the cultivation and improvement of their estates. Governor Sir Collin Campbell prohibited by a government minute the sale of land under the sum of 20s, an acre and at this advanced price found numerous and ready purchasers and frequently a much higher sum was realised.

By the unbiassed representations of the Governor to the Home Government, Civil Servants were forbidden to purchase or retain lands for agricultural purposes, and were required to devote their time and attention to the duties of the respective offices which they held under Government."

These selfsame officers were not infrequently the judges of what was private land and what was Crown. Kandyan land, and the best of it, was fast being swallowed up by the capitalists. The now unresisting Kandyan was being driven further and further back. The situation was not only humiliating but also intolerable.

The coffee blight came like a bolt from the blue and arrested further inroads. Coffee plantations failed and the settlers shook the dust off their feet from our land. We were not slow to avail ourselves of the little respite Providence had thrown in our way. A few individuals had mastered the intricacies of English grammar; a few by dint of sheer private economy had saved a few stray rupees, and yet a few more had returned to Kandy to win back a little of their lost ground, that they might as a people be able to voice their grievances and approach the Government authorities direct and not through official interpreters.

The salubrity of the climate and the fertility of the soil were too great an attraction for foreigners to abandon the plantations altogether. Other products of equal commercial importance in the European market were introduced. Tea was found not only to thrive in the Kandyan highlands, but as a beverage it could rival, if not surpass coffee. Once more people from outside made a rush for land, and the old story of expropriation was repeated. All available land for the cultivation of tea had fallen into alien hands. There were however lands still in the lowlands. But with the advent of rubber, these too were indiscriminately sold by the Crown. With every boom fresh onslaughts were made, and the fate of our people was being sealed with the supposed enrichment of our country in the opening up of plantations of this kind. This period marks an economic disaster as complete as could ever befall the people.

It is now many decades since the Government changed hands. The memory of the past has grown dim. The Kandyans have resigned themselves to their fate. The persecutions and the sufferings of previous generations are all but forgotten. And the question of the fallen state, though never in doubt in their own minds, is being given an interpretation by the alien settlers and their descendants, which does neither the Kandyans nor themselves any credit. It is suggested in writings, in Courts of Law and in the Press, at all convenient moments, that we have brought ourselves to this pass through an inherent weakness of character unable to adapt itself to the superior culture of the West. And official authority secretly nods assent to the most convenient excuse for its own culpable and callous disregard of a certain duty. We only know what an up-hill fight it has been for us to save ourselves from being utterly crushed by such heavy odds.

The ordinary mind looking at the surface of things can form no true conception of a nation's struggle in the grip of an unrelenting and ruthless system of Government, which administers and directs the country from afar through the medium of servants, whose qualification lies in intellectual competence, and whose highest motive often is to work for the payment received. It is therefore proposed to dwell briefly on a few vital questions relating to governments.

The first consideration of a government is the personnel of the governing body. Any person unrelated to the governed can hardly be expected to bring himself into that sympathetic attitude of mind that makes him one with the people. When the whole governing body consists of such a class, how hard must be the fate of those who have the misfortune to come under their yoke? The Kandyan State managed entirely by the Kandyans a century ago, has today not one Kandyan in a controlling position. Is it any wonder then, that the Government should cease to feel for them?

Next in importance is the question of currency. Money has passed from the stage of a mere means of exchange to a position of a valuable commodity, and, therefore, money assumes a claim utterly disproportionate to its intrinsic utility. When money is not wholly developed in the country itself but is imported from outside, it becomes a burden. When this same capital is also in the hands of the outsider, the burden is doubled. When above all. a form of capital is introduced in place of a currency already existing without making adequate compensation, or affording any facilities to the people of the country to have access to this new mode of exchange, the people so placed are instantaneously and permanently reduced to a state of bankruptcy. This is exactly our position. And, in the field of open competition what chance can we have, whilst the Britisher and other outside capitalists linked to their accumulated capital of generations in their mother countries command the whole financial situation here?

The lands of a people forming a political unit are as important in their economic development as capital. By its very nature it is a stable economic resource, where capital is a variable and floating quantity. The one is meant to be permanently held, the other to be employed as expediency arises. Money can come and go, but land must remain always in the hands of the people whose country it is. With land go all permanent claims for the exercise of political rights, because the owner is supposed to be a son of the soil. and his interest permanently bound to the country. For, all lands belong in all the States of the civilised world to the people whose national homes they have become. The admission of alien nationals to proprietary rights of the lands of a country is the beginning of complications and the downfall of those who have permitted foreign intrusion. So a Government has no inherent right to pass the national title to any outsider, who cannot come within the fold of those who claim it on national grounds. Our position here is an uneviable one. Although the country is our national home we have no political power to pass laws prohibiting the alienation of land to foreigners, nor are we in a position to outbid them in the open market. On the contrary, it is the stranger who passes laws for us and commands the capital; and the normal conditions obtaining in other countries have been reversed in our case. We have to yield to the conditions imposed from outside.

Labour is a necessary condition to the economic progress of a people. This principle holds good where such labour is part and parcel of the community of interests that should exist between all classes of persons within the State. It is a different proposition when it is imported, and that by outside capitalists. The harm to the permanent population is in excess of all benefits.

derived by such employment. It is possible under such conditions as exist in our midst, for an outside capitalist to acquire the national lands of a people, and by employing foreign labour, to deprive the people of that country of any benefits whatsoever. In our territory the practice prevails of handing over our lands to foreign investors, who employ imported labour and carry away between them all the wealth derived from such lands, leaving nothing behind. All these foregoing factors of economic prosperity when controlled by foreign rulers, and put into operation simultaneously, must break the back of any people; and we who are invaded on all sides by strangers to our land have felt the full force of this irresistible attack. Have we no grievance then? Are we not justified in the position we have assumed?



· CHAPTER IV.

THE LAND PROBLEM.

No subject can be properly discussed unless we probe deep enough and get at the fundamental principles relating to it. Therefore, this important question, affecting the permanent well-being not only of the individual but also of the whole race and its future, should be studied closely. The danger lies in approaching this subject in a haphazard way, and taking for granted certain assertions and in leaving room to shift one's ground and to argue in a vicious circle, on commonplace expressions without any reference to their aptness. In any attempt to understand the Kandyan land problem, our first business must be to disentangle it from the growth of years of misconceptions, errors and false presumptions.

There is nothing more satisfactory than falling back on first principles for a clear insight into the true nature of any problem. If the foundations are sound, then the superstructure cannot go very much wrong, even though the details may not be exactly accurate.

Our first duty, then, becomes to define the expression "the Government" in relation to the Kandyan people. It is true enough, it is the Government of the Kandyans; but it is neither by them nor for them. Normally a Government of a people would be by the people or by some section, at least, of them, and for the people. A departure from these principles of government creates at once an abnormality, an unnatural position. The normal and usual terms of expression, when applied to abnormal conditions mislead the ordinary mind. The term "the Ceylon Government" with reference to Kandyans and their individual and national claim to land within their territory suggests, at first sight, that it is a Government by them and for them. That is not so in reality: it is British in all but name. That is the first point that must be remembered throughout the discussion of this problem.

The second point worth remembering is, that, if a people exercised political sovereign rights over a defined portion of territory, all the land within that area vests in the State, and all individual title to portions is derived from that source. And, among ancient nations, the King as head of the state dealt with it in his capacity as the head of that nation, and not as a person distinct and apart from the nation which included both the people and King in its composition, which together went to make a whole. When the British Government calling itself here the "Ceylon Government" functions in the place of the Kandyan Government, and deals with Kandyan land, the fact that this Government is not by the Kandyans is established. The first cardinal principle of a

Government, therefore, is wanting, in every such instance. The question whether it is governing for the benefit of the Kandyans will depend on the character of the particular acts it is engaged in.

This Government claims all Kandyan land, basing this claim on the Kandyan King who it asserts owned in his private character all Kandyan land. This means that the Kandyan State or Kingdom, which included both King and people as the two essential elements in its nationhood, existed independently of each other, and that a King might exercise authority, a people were created. If this theory holds good, the whole idea of a nation is turned upside down. Applying this view to their own case, the King was there before any people existed and the English people came in merely for him to rule; that is to say, the King was in existence without any people at all. On this theory it follows, that the English King existed before the English nation was boin. To such an absurdity has the theory of a state and nation been reduced to get the ownership of all Kandyan land into the hands of the Kandyan King, and to the British King as his lawful successor, to exercise proprietary rights. It is the people, conscious of political unity, who call into being a King or Head of a state and invest him with authority to act for them and on their behalf, as Lord Paramount or as a mere figure head. The King nowhere has claimed in our constitution a divine right; the whole idea being foreign to us. The real owners ultimately are the people, the King merely dealing with the land in his capacity as head of the state and in trust for the people of that state. So that land in the Kandyan Kingdom is the national property of the Kandyan people. Is there any need to labour this point any more? This settles the point of ownership, at least, theoretically and constitutionally. Now is this Government, which is clearly not by the Kandyan people, acting for the benefit of Kandyans in divesting them of title both national and individual, selling them to outsiders and applying the entire proceeds of the sales for the betterment of foreign investors solely. "The Ceylon Government," then, turns out in fact not to be by or for the Kandyan people as far as the question of Kandyan land goes, at least. With these facts and principles before us, we can obtain a clear view as to the true inwardness of the whole problem of Kandyan land, and with unerring accuracy point out when and where the Ceylon Government has gone wrong in handling this subject.

What are the historical facts with reference to Kandyan Kings? Armour, in discussing the Kandyan system of land tenure, makes the pertinent reference, to the origin of King and his rights over the Kandyan people and land. "It is not in our power to repress these disorders, let us therefore elect a ruler to have

dominion over all, and we shall all yield unto him a tenth part of the produce of our corn fields." "All men approved of that resolution and having unanimously elected the man, who excelled all other men in wisdom and stature, they installed him 'King'; saying, "henceforth shall thou rule over us and take cognisance of delinquencies and award penalties." As Kingship was introduced to the state by election on the part of the people, the office of King was called "Maha Sammata Raja" (King of the Great Convention). All the wild talk of the King being independent of the people, and owning all the land in his private capacity, goes by the board as being incompatible with truth. This is the evidence produced by an Englishman. About 1,600 years anterior to this, Buddhaghosha made identical references to the origin of King and his position in the state. The "Mahawansa" makes similar references on the point. Historically the King is a creation of the people in whom rightly Sovereignty lies. The Crown claim for Kandyan land, at least, can only be in the nature of a trust for and on behalf of the Kandyan people. The untenable nature of the argument of the ownership of the land by the King became evident to "the Crown," or, what is the same thing in different words, "the Ceylon Government," and in introducing the Waste Lands Ordinance, 1896, the Hon'ble the Attorney-General said "There are cases, and cases may arise in which it would be the duty of Government not for personal reasons but in discharge of its trust to the public to interfere; for, after all, Crown lands in this Colony are the property of the public."

Sir West Ridgeway, the Governor at the time, allayed the feelings of the people by openly declaring that it was held in trust for the people. These are his words: "I and the Government have no personal interest in these settlements, the land is held for you and the general public." There has been a steady climb down in the arguments used, but the policy has remained the same. Going on these very arguments, we aver that "the public" can only rightly refer to the Kandyans as regards land in the Kandyan Country. The wide discretionary powers allowed in law to the Settlement Officers, without defining the term "the public," give such Officers the freedom to deal with the land just as they please and settle on or sell to any person, and thus produce the same result The Government circumvents and makes the term "public" elastic enough to pass title to anybody and everybody irrespective of nationality. We have by now arrived at a stage, when on these false premises laws have already been passed and great damage done. What of the interpretation of the law as it is worded and recognised in the Courts of Law?

In the early period, the Ordinance 12 of 1840 was passed. It was meant to define Crown land as distinct from private land.

In this apparently innocent effort, the foundation was laid to bring in land cleared for dry grain and vegetables as the property of the Crown. That being the only purpose for opening up high land, and the only known use to which it could be put at that time, all private land was periodically and in rotation cleared. These lands were called chenas. When the Government introduced this law unknown to the Kandyan people and attempted to put it into operation, the people protested. This ultimately resulted in the Matale rebellion of 1848 and the proclamation of Martial Law. The Crown later brought cases against those who resisted the Government claim for chena land. One of these went in appeal and a full Court Bench held that, in proceedings under Ordinance 12 of 1840, the onus was on the Crown to show that:—

- (1) The party had entered or taken possession without any probable claim or pretence of title and that the defendants had not cultivated, planted or otherwise improved and held uninterrupted possession of such land for five years.
- (2) It was also held that probable claim or pretence to title amounted closely to the English term colourable title and that is a reasonable ground of title.

Sir John Budd Phear, Chief Justice, in another case, held that Section 6 of 12 of 1840 should be interpreted as follows:—.

"Now it has been held more than once by this Court, that the words 'unoccupied and uncultivated' as used in the clause are intended to designate land which has never been occupied or used for the purpose of cultivation within the reasonable limits of time to which ordinary evidence from the knowledge of persons who can speak to the matter extend. That is to say, that the mere fact that land which had been formerly occupied or formerly cultivated was at the time when the question as to its ownership arose, unoccupied or uncultivated would not by itself have the effect under this clause of giving rise to the statutory presumption in favour of the Crown which is prescribed in that clause, otherwise the enactments would have the effect of transferring a considerable amount of private property in this Island from the true owners to the Crown."

Later the whole law was reversed by subsequent decisions. To make a long story short, every inch of land in the Kandyan Country is now presumed Crown and no prescription can run against the Crown. The character, too, of land could not be changed according to a later Supreme Court decision. "Once a chena, always a chena." All these enactments and decisions have virtually meant, that cultivation for purposes of title can only be tea and rubber and in the Lowlands, perhaps, cocoanut; that only title

derived from the British Government is valid; that all Kandyan land is British property. Allanson Bailey, Government Agent, C. P., in his Administration Report for 1895 laments the fact that the Ordinance 12 of 1840 as interpreted by Sir Budd Phear and other impartial judges has been rendered inoperative to all intents and purposes by subsequent judgments of the Supreme Court. The following illuminating passage from a judgment of the Supreme Court will illustrate the point in respect of Crown claim to chena land:—

"They (defendants) further plead to have acquired a prescriptive right by uninterrupted possession for more than third of a century. In my opinion the defendants have proved that they and their ancestors have uninterruptedly possessed the lands. No one else. No one on behalf of the Crown have ever exercised any act of ownership. The defendants and their ancestors have cultivated the land at intervals from time immemorial. On that ground they are entitled to judgment."

The Crown failed here; but the established law is that the plea of prescription even for 1,000 years is of little avail, for no prescription can run against the Crown for land in the Kandyan Country now. Here you have the result derived from voluminous literature on the subject. All Kandyan land is Crown, the only valid title is British and that land is held in trust for a "public," which consists of all peoples of the earth except the Kandyan, and that the trust is administered by British officials with the widest discretionary powers of disposal and that it is proof against prescription in respect of possession by the Kandyans against Crown ownership.

So far the historical aspect, the substantive British law and its interpretation in this respect have been briefly surveyed.

Any Government must act constitutionally and justly. It is possible to be constitutional and yet unjust. A Government such as ours, with all the powers of making laws in the hands of a particular class of people and of a different race to those governed, can make laws unjust to some and beneficial to others, if they wish to. And, to keep up the reputation for justice in the interest of the Government, it is careful to convey the idea that it is actuated by the highest motives, in the best interest of all concerned. Public opinion is the only check for abuses of this kind. How far the Ceylon Government is acting justly and how far it is attempting to save its face from the ignominy of treating unjustly an isolated and defenceless people in divesting them of their individual and national title to land in their own country, are matters which the history of the Kandyan land problem must reveal on facts based on authentic records?

About the year 1821 a proclamation was issued of which the Kandyan people were not any the wiser, as it was in English, making the right for the retransfer of land to Kandyans null and void. Here the thin end of the wedge is introduced. Government had come into possession of all state documents among which were two important Registers, with entries of all the names of villages and the owners of lands in those villages. One was called Maha Lekam Mitiya-the Great Register, and the other Heen Lekam Mitiya-the Minor Register. The description of villages included very exact boundaries and in most cases ownership extended to entire villages-Nindagamas. All the land of whatever description whether forest, chena, waste, cultivated or uncultivated were the property of the overlord of the Nindagama. This valuable source of information is not available for public inspection or for reference as evidence in courts of law when the Crown with this evidence in its possession challenges the rights of private individuals.

Later, about 1822 and also in 1846 two commissions sat and investigated into the question of title, both documentary and paraveni (inheritance by possession for generations); and on the evidence thus obtained lists and registers of such owners were made, and the title deeds in most cases were left behind in the hands of the Government. The succeeding generations have been challenged in their right of ownership to these very lands, but they are denied the right to have access to any one of these lists or documents. The Crown also claims, when cited to produce them in Court, privilege. While title is attacked at leisure, there is ceaseless activity to prevent possession. The ignorant villagers are charged in Police Courts, convicted and fined heavily as a crime for clearing their prima facie private land, on the charge of illicit clearing. In some cases, orders have been issued by Government Agents to destroy the crops by fire and this in areas where there is no other form of cultivation and where the people live on one meal a day. Are any comments needed to show whether this is in the best interest of the Kandyans and whether the trust professed extends to Kandyans?

With restraint and in a dispassionate way, we have endeavoured to place facts before the unbiassed reader. We have quoted just a few instances to show the methods, motives and effect where thousands are ready to hand. Have Kandyans suffered, do they continue to suffer and is their cause just? are questions which

we are content to leave to the sympathetic public, without attempting to obtrude our convictions on them. The most important asset of a people is their land. This asset has been attacked. No defence is possible where all the power lies in the hands of the aggressive party. It is a losing game from the very start. The knowledge that we are overpowered not on account of any inherent weakness of our manhood is both a solace and also an incentive to go on fighting to the last ditch and to the last man.



CHAPTER V.

EDUCATION.

DUCATION is the prime necessity of man," so said Carlyle, a man of noble instincts, and one who had transcended the prejudices of race and nationality, and looked only to the grandeur of manhood liberated from the thraldom of ignorance. It is the mind that makes man superior to all other animals, and kindred to his kind, and creates, strengthens, and fosters the tie of fellowship. To deny him that opportunity is to shut him out of the pale of humanity; and in the case of a whole people, such a neglect means that they are cut off from the inheritance of ages, separated from the progressive elements of the human race, and thrown back to primitive days. Apart from any political consideration, the neglect of the education of the Kandyan masses is a crime, even though no political motive existed for so acting. The reproach for our backwardness must be laid at the door of the Government, and not of the people. Education is a governmental duty, for it is too important and vast a subject to be left to individual effort and fancies. Generally speaking that should be the attitude of a government which means well by its subjects in any State.

Intellectually, the Kandyan is capable of drinking deep from the level modern thought has reached. Buddhist philosophy so full of abstract ideas, is a magnificent intellectual training ground. Those so trained, could easily and naturally link up and go on developing on modern lines without any extra effort. The British Government brought our own system to an abrupt end, and provided nothing in its place equal to it, either in the extensiveness of its operation or in its quality. We venture the opinion that with adequate facilities, the Kandyans can be brought into line within a generation with the most progressive race.

To form any approximate idea of the enormity of this neglect, one has to bear in mind several facts. English was introduced as the official language of the State and for all commercial purposes. It was also made the medium of education. This meant a whole people being put out of action in their own home. To have to abandon one's mother-tongue, when long past the age of acquiring any appreciable facility of expression in a new language, is as bad as being stricken dumb. With no schools of any kind to instruct the rising generations for thirty-eight years (1818-1856) greater disaster awaited us. Every official position in the Government of our country requiring a knowledge of English went to alien hands. Still no provision was made to meet this urgent

demand. However, Governor Sir Robert Brownrigg, understanding the situation, and realising the significance of this change, and the British responsibility for it, wrote in a despatch, that special means should be taken for educating the Kandyans in English, and thus obviating the necessity of employing outsiders who might, if encouraged, swamp the Kandyan in his country. Just as the introduction of British currency in place of ours had made us bankrupt at a stroke, so had this change of state language made us tongue-tied in an instant for many decades. Our language and our money ceased to be current in our own land. Our political authority wrested from us, and our organisations broken up, united action for protection or even protest was impossible. The loss of the guidance of the leaders whose lives were held forfeit for claiming what they held to be just and right. had contributed much to make us endure all these hardships in fear and silence. Can anything worse befall a people?

A few schools were established in 1856 to educate the children of the subordinate officials, who were imported to our country. For two or three generations this class monopolised all the education and the offices of Government, and our hold on our country steadily weakened in consequence. Here and there a few individual Kandyans were admitted to these schools. The mischief had been done. The strangers had taken root and now claimed a right to these offices and do all they can to retain in their hands this unfair advantage. Towards the close of the nineteenth century, through missionary enterprise and rivalry, facilities hardly sufficient for our needs in the way of schools were established but the cost of education was prohibitive and beyond the means of Kandyans. Besides, the disproportion in the number of good schools was so marked and unfair in the various centres, that the money voted for education was spent almost entirely outside the Kandyan Provinces. The warning of Sir Robert Brownrigg was not heeded, and the Kandyan was swamped in his country. Mr. Buller, Government Agent, in a report of his about the fifties says: "with the exception of a school at Kandy, one at Badulla and one at Gampola a population of 210,000 souls are without any instruction." These were the very schools that served the settlers, who had 99% of the numbers admitted to them, leaving just 1% for Kandyans. Sir Emerson Tennent writing of this period in a report says: "it is a reasonable proof that the neglect I complain of, that in the Central Province the education and the establishment of schools has been totally overlooked, that only 5 Government schools are found in the Kandyan Kingdom, and two of these are within the Kandy town itself: and out of £12,354 voted for general purposes of education only £793 are expended on the entire Central Province, and but £252 on the North-Western, including the Seven Korales and Kurunegala." And in later years the interests of strangers and settlers dominated to such an extent, that Kandyan interests were totally forgotten by British administrators and hardly any mention is made of these. To-day, we would be helpless even to voice our grievances, but for the self-sacrificing work and generosity of missionary bodies, who have established all the schools of any consequence in our midst.

A great statesman speaking on this subject said: "the Capital of a Country does not consist in cash or paper, but in the brains and bodies of the people. The human capital of a country is its most precious possession," and this our Government has suffered to run to waste. It is one of the most remarkable facts of history that we, as a people, have survived all these death-dealing blows and are sufficiently alive to voice our grievances and display such vitality. No other people, here or elsewhere, in the past or present, have been made to suffer to such an extent as we have been, and that, without exciting the sympathy or rousing the suspicion of the outside world. The manner of doing this was subtle and secret. Good and honest Englishmen looked on as admiring spectators of British enterprise, little suspecting at whose expense this was being achieved. There is just a sprinkling of current human capital growing up in our ranks, but the primordial mass is still in a bad way. The remedy is education and more education, and this we humbly but firmly demand as our birthright to enable us to cope with the disabilities placed in our way. This is the least that a just Government can do for the people it governs.



CHAPTER VI.

CONSTITUTIONAL IRREGULARITIES AND REMEDIES.

OST of the grievances under which we labour at the present day are directly due to the amalgamation of Governments in 1833 which was a fundamental violation of the Convention. The Convention always contemplated a separate Kandyan Nation having paramount rule over a definite portion of territory. In the merging of our Government in the Central one, the Government permitted considerations of expediency to outweigh the moral obligation it bore to us and was indifferent to the fact that our rights were infringed, our interests prejudiced and our progress and advancement as a people immensely retarded. The destruction of our peasantry, the closing of "pansal" schools, the lack of educational facilities are to-day not only a check on our national growth but a serious and ever increasing menace to our very existence as a people.

From 1833 onwards with the formation of a Legislative Council with an Official majority, but without any Kandyan representation, our interests began to be more and more at stake. Though occasionally we were consulted before a legislative measure was introduced, giving us the semblance of a right, yet in matters of vital importance to us and our national life, we were never consulted, and laws were introduced whose weight fell mostly on us, and which were in direct contravention of the very rights, privileges and immunities which the British in 1815 undertook to guarantee. How little regard the new Council had for Kandyan interests is amply shown by a move in 1848 which was intended to impose a Poll Tax, or in the alternative six days work on the public road, on our very Buddhist priests.

If, when the Council was a merely advisory body—as it was up to 1921—our position was precarious enough, to-day with a Council which is a law—making body and in which we are hardly represented, it is doubly so. The Legislative Council is now composed of elements in no way friendly to us, and in some cases actually hostile. It may be that there are four Kandyans in the Legislative Council to-day. It may also be that in the future we shall have none. We are thus placed entirely at the mercy of others who do not think and feel as we do; who are completely out of touch with the wishes, the opinions and wants of the Kandyans; and who would think nothing of over-riding the Convention itself and depriving us of what little a hundred years of misrule have left to us. The continuance of a people in such a predicament where it is possible for hostile elements to legislate for them and where the very rights which the British have solemnly

pledged themselves to maintain are liable to be infringed is, we submit, not only dangerous to ourselves but a slur on the good name of England.

The difficulties which the situation presents are not insurmountable. If faced with courage and a real desire to do right they can be entirely overcome. Ours is not a communal claim or a claim for the aggrandisement of a few: it is a claim of a nation to have the right to live its own life and realise its own destiny. The solution that the Kandyan National Assembly submits will, we believe, be both equitable to all and just to us. We suggest the creation of a Federal State as in the United States of America. the two provinces inhabited by the Low-country Sinhalese forming one unit; the Tamil provinces another, and the five Kandyan provinces a third, with a central Government uniting all these. The governments of the Federated States will have large control of the revenue of those States, make local laws, impose taxes and will have in their charge the more essential things to a people's growth like Education, Agriculture, Provincial Administration, Land, Medical Services and the Minor Judiciary; while the Central or Federal Government will have charge of matters that concern the whole Island (and the more essential things to the whole Island) like the Military, Public Works, Railway, Electrical matters, etc. It is possible for the Federated Governments to meet the expenditure from the revenue gathered locally and the income from Custom Duties, Railway, Postal Services, etc., is more than sufficient for the maintenance for the Federal Government.

Every Federated State will have its own Legislature and Executive, and the Federal Government will be composed of a Council consisting of representatives from the Federated States and an Executive of its own.

Such a scheme, we submit, would at one stroke eliminate all the evils of the present form of administration. It will effect that decentralisation of control which the Government is aiming at to relieve the burden of the Secretariat; it will give the permanent inhabitants of the different States paramount control over their own respective territories and will leave them free to develop in their own way without outside hindrance or interference; and lastly, as regards us, it will go a long way towards enabling England to fulfil the solemn obligations she undertook in 1815.



CHAPTER VII.

CONCLUSION.

TF it is an honest desire on the part of Great Britain to give that freedom and opportunity to develop on the lines of tradition and genius of the several peoples brought under British rule in their respective national homes, she cannot depart from principles applicable to the development of national groups. Other minor groups which have settled down as migratory bodies or with the intention of permanent settlement should be placed in a position of secondary importance to those groups whose home the country has been from time immemorial. Priority of claim must always rest with the nationals. If Great Britain were confronted with a similar problem to ours would she not place British claims first? Who can question the justice of such an act? We would appeal to the Royal Commission to consider our claim as they would that of the British if so circumstanced as we are. Besides, Great Britain herself has been largely responsible for the complicated 'nature of our problem and it would not be fair to penalise the innocent party. Any other form of adjustment would not only fail but would be evidence of a mere make-believe effort to satisfy the consciences of the sons of Britain for the misrule of and damage done to weak and small nationalities.

We have placed incontrovertible facts from documents taken from reliable sources to prove and support the nature of our national claim. In every such instance such evidence has come from the mouth of a Briton, a reluctant witness, The inferences drawn from such facts in the light of our experience are legitimate and just. The facts themselves are an eloquent commentary: the unconstitutional and cruel conduct of our King, his dethronement and the substitution of His Britannic Majesty in his place . the Treaty and its formal acceptance by the contracting parties; three years immediately following the Treaty the Government being wholly in the hands of the Kandyans, indicative of the intention of the parties and purport of the terms; the continued Military occupation by the British in violation of the terms of the Treaty and the just resentment of Kandyan leaders; the unfortunate misunderstanding leading to heavy loss of Kandyan life and attendant horrors of Martial Law; the gradual encroachment of Kandvan national rights and the invasion of the Kandvan Country by strangers as government employees, settlers and temporary sojourners for purposes of commercial enterprise; the alienation of Kandyan land and the Government's part in the expropriation of the lands of the Kandyan gentry and peasantry: the steady decline of Kandyan influence, wealth and prestige under

the combined attack of the Government and Settlers; the niggardly conduct of Government towards Kandyans and the neglect of their education; and in the later stages the attempt to wipe out the national character of the Kandyans both politically and economically. For every such act we have quoted chapter and verse. At the time we entered into the Treaty of 1815 we were in every sense a people enjoying full and complete national sovereignty. We contracted to continue as such and for nothing less, within the British Empire. To-day we are subjected to the domination of any and every race through British indulgence. We humbly protest and aver that it is not only an oppression on us but a blot on the British escutcheon that a nation for economic gain should compromise her honour and be turned aside from the path of rectitude. We do not intend any injury to any individual or community in seeking our protection and improvement. We owe it as a duty to ourselves; to our forefathers who had so long waged on unequal warfare, making superhuman sacrifices, and to future generations to press our claims for recognition, and continue to do' so before the Royal Commission, the British public and the wider world till redress is granted.

The concrete proposal of the Kandyan National Assembly of a Federal System, while ensuring to the settlers the full possession and enjoyment of all the rights of ownership heretofore possessed and enjoyed, will enable the respective nationals of the several States to prevent further inroads into their territories and to build up their own nationality. On such a basis alone the successs of any scheme of Reforms depends. The British authority and tie will be the stronger for it. The respective nationals will be free to develop on their particular national lines. A better understanding between them and respect for each other will assuredly result. If Great Britain desires such a consummation of her rule she cannot act otherwise. And, when history comes to be written, her place must stand high among nations for the good she has done and the great task she has accomplished.

If History has taught mankind anything, it has shown clearly that the guiding hand of destiny has led mankind by stages to a higher and higher conception of the purpose and meaning of life. And the only enduring signs of man's achievements have been his steady ascent in the realisation of the ideal the men of vision had set out to reach.

Men and nations engaged in furthering this ideal are gratefully remembered by succeeding generations of mankind. The mission of the Royal Commission, in its way, promises much in things that matter. Our sincere hope is, that it will prove worthy and its efforts be crowned with success both to the glory of Britain and to the lasting benefit of those entrusted to her care,

APPENDIX.

Extract from the Government Bulletin of 3rd March, 1815, on the Convention.

In addition to the official document which we have this day to make public, from the head-quarters in Kandy, we persuade ourselves that a few particulars, with which we have been favoured from good authority, will not be unacceptable to our readers. We shall present the communication in its own word:

"The political and civil arrangements consequent on the great change which has been effected here, were interrupted for eight days by the absence of Mr. D'Oyley, in attendance on the King, during which period no conference of any moment took place. On his return the communications with the Chiefs were renewed, and yesterday was appointed for a Convention of the contracting parties.

"Of the Treaty you will be enabled to judge, as it will be published. It comprises, though in a very summary way, the heads of a constitution carefully adapted to the wishes of the Chiefs and people, and with a more particular degree of attention to some prejudices, the indulgence of which was plainly understood to be a sine qua non of their voluntary submission to an European Power.

"The preservation of the religion of Boodhoo was the first; the other (hardly inferior in their estimation) was the recognition and continuance of their local institutions. I say nothing of their laws, because I should find hard to say what they are. Customs, however they have, and established gradations of authority, and even known forms of justice; though the latter, for a long period, have been out of use. A general re-establishment of all these is the basis of the civil and judicial articles of the Treaty.

"Early in the afternoon preparations were made for holding the conference in the great Audience Hall in the palace; but the Governor declined using the adjoining room, where the King usually sat on occasions of ceremony, and chose to be placed within the hall, at the upper end, with his back to the door of that room, which is divided off by a screen.

"The troops composing the garrison of Kandy, with the corps of Ceylon Light Dragoons, and the addition of Major Kelly's division, now here on his march to Colombo, returning to Point de Galle, were drawn up at three o'clock in the great square before the palace, where they remained while the Adigars and principal Chiefs passed, and a part formed a lane to the door of the hall."

"Ehelepola, late Adigar, who has declined official employ, preferring to remain in retirement, and soliciting only the title of "The Friend of the British Government," entered first and alone. He was received with particular marks of favour and kindness by His Excellency and seated in a chair on his right hand.

"Molligodde, acting on the occasion as first Adigar, then came forward, leading in the Dissaves of Provinces and other principal Chiefs, about 20 in number. The Governor rose up to receive them, and (with Eheylepola) continued standing throughout the conference.

"A scene not less novel than interesting was here presented in the state and costume of the Kandyan court, with an English Governor presiding, and the hall lined on both sides with British Officers.

"The Conference began with complimentary enquiries on the part of the Chiefs, which were graciously answered by the Governor, and mutual enquiries made. His Excellency then thanked the Dissaves for attention shown to the troops in their various routes through the country towards the capital; which gave occasion to the Chiefs to observe, that they considered them as protectors, and that, by the arrival of His Excellency and the army, they had been rescued from tyranny and oppression.

"The Governor observed, he was gratified with having been the means of their deliverance; he assured them of full protection, in their persons, their property, and all their rights; and added that while he had the honour of holding the administration of the Island, it would be his study to make them experience the blessing of His Majesty's benign government.

"It was then intimated to the Chiefs, that a paper had been prepared, expressive of the principles on which the participation of His Majesty's government was offered to their acceptance, and that it was about to be read, which they requested might be done.

"The Treaty was then read in English by Mr. Sutherland, Deputy Secretary to Government and afterwards in Cingalese by Modeliar of His Excellency's gate, Abraham De Saram. This important document was listened to with profound and respectful attention by the Chiefs; and it was pleasing to observe in their looks a marked expression of cordial assent, which was immediately declared with great earnestness.

"His Excellency's part of their conference was communicated to Mr. D'Oyley and by him to Molligodde Adigar, who declared it aloud to the audience. A chief of venerable and commanding

aspect was the organ of the assembly, whose person and countenance was equally striking. His figure, the tallest present, was erect and portly; a high and prominent forehead, a full eye, and a strong expression of natural vivacity, tempered with the gravity of advance age, marked by a long, full, and graceful white beard; and the whole, combined with his rich state dress, formed a subject for a portrait truly worthy of an able hand. His name was Millaawa, Dessave of Godapola. He was a great favourite of the King, and remained with him till a late period. This Chief collected the sentiments of the assembly generally in silence, but with occasional explanations, and delivered them to the Adigar with the concurrence of the rest.

"Eheylepola, though not ostensibly engaged in the conference, took a marked interest in every part of it. His carriage was distinguished by a courtly address, politeness, grace, and ease; and he was evidently regarded by the assembled Chiefs with a high degree of deference and respect.

"After the Treaty was read in Cingalese, the Adigar Molligoda, and the other Chiefs proceeded to the great hall where the Mohottales, Coraals, Vidaans, and other subordinate headmen from the different Provinces were attending, with a great concourse of the inhabitants; and the headmen being called on by the Adigar to range themselves in order according to their respective districts, the Treaty was again read by the Modeliar in Cingalese; at the conclusion of which the British Flag was hoisted for the first time and a Royal Salute from the cannon-of the city announced His Majesty George the Third Sovereign of the whole Island of Ceylon."

"Dated Kandy, 3rd March, 1815."





