

CEYLON *Today*

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DECEMBER, 1955

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CEYLON TODAY

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The Port of Colombo

ESME RANKINE

"THE History of Colombo", wrote E. B. Denham in his CENSUS REPORT OF 1911, "has been the history of the port. Its development has been due to the foresight of those who saw its enormous value as a port of call and as a trading centre . . . one must realize that the Sinhalese were never a maritime people. Colombo is one of the offsprings of sea power, and it has accordingly been captured in turn by the different races who have acquired through the empire of the sea the predominance of the East."

Colombo's recorded history begins in 1505. Vasco da Gama had introduced Portuguese trading acumen to India. Portuguese settlements in Goa had taken supremacy of the Asian sea routes from the Arabs, and Portuguese attention was turning to the "rich and populous port" of which they had heard, in a little island lying at the tip of India. Indeed, King Manuel of Portugal was so impressed with its situation that he had thoughts of making it his headquarters in the East, and had already instructed his Viceroy in India to look into the matter. When the "discovery" was actually made, however, it was not by intention.

A punitive expedition sent under the command of the Viceroy's son, Dom Lourenco de Almeida, to intercept Arab traders who were now reported as sailing farther south to avoid capture, met a storm and put in at Colombo. In the harbour they found "several ships from Bengal, Persia, the Red Sea and other places, which had come there to barter cinnamon and elephants". Dom Lourenco instructed his men to cut the Portuguese *padrao* on a rock at the point of the bay* and asked to see the king. An embassy was conducted to the royal palace at Kotte, in the manner that gave rise to the saying: "As the Portuguese went to Kotte". Sinhalese permission to trade was courteously given: tolerant, themselves with no sea-faring ambitions, they remained the "interested spectators" of Tennant's description, "of this busy traffic in which they could hardly be said to have taken any share". But to dispossess the crowding merchants of "other nations both of the East and West of Ceylon who made the island their halting place and the Chinese who brought thither the wares destined for the countries beyond the Euphrates and the Arabians and the

*It was found, however, that the date and the *padrao* was 1501; and it is now surmised that there was an earlier, isolated, landing.

Persians who met them with their products in exchange", that was another matter. Thus the peaceful trading settlement of one foreigner became the armed stronghold of another.

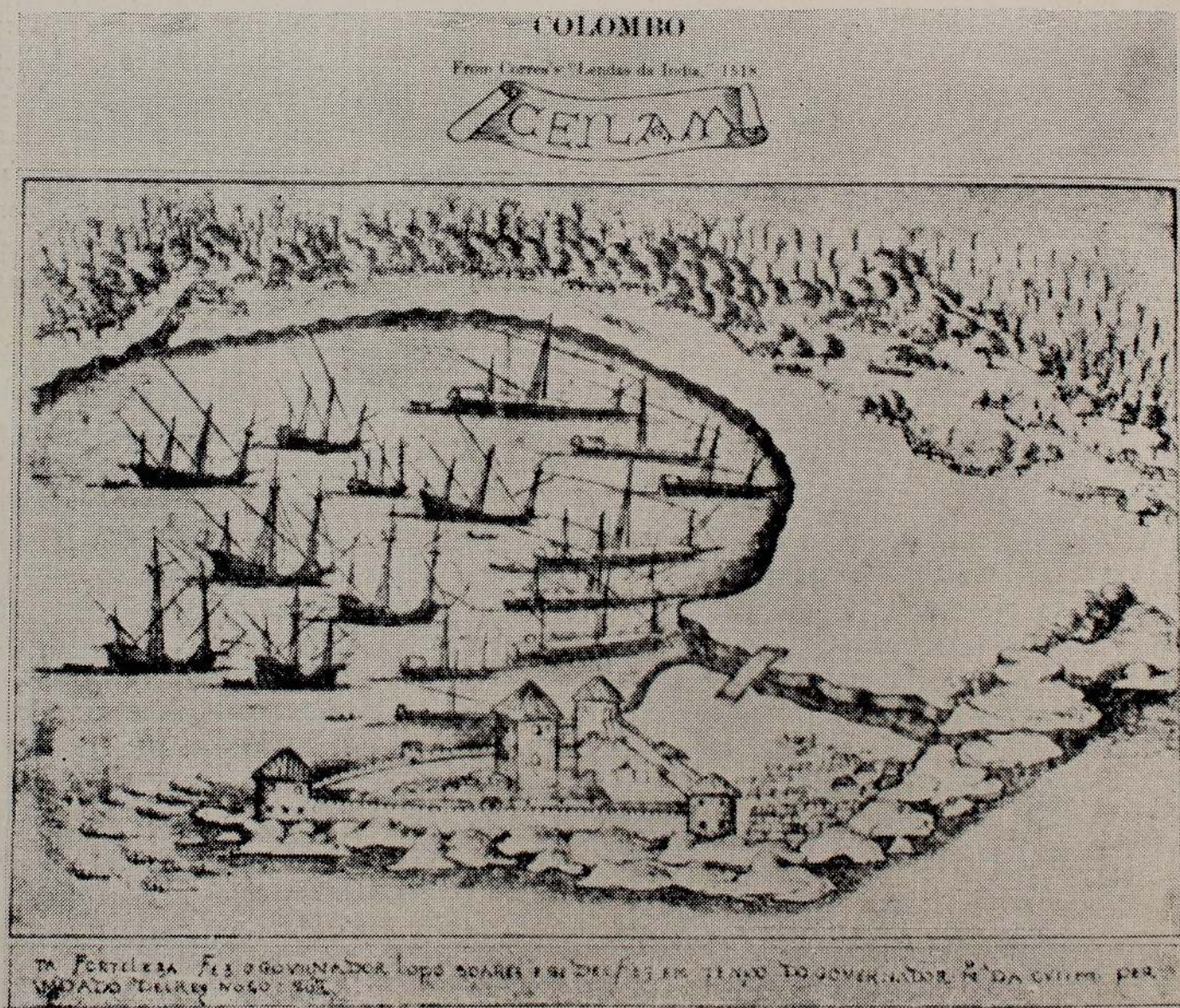
Ribiero

RIBIERO says : "Colombo from being a small stockade of wood grew to be a gallant city fortified with a dozen bastions ; it is true they were six-sided after the ancient fashion, and of small size, but they were conveniently situated. The ramparts were a single line of *taipa* (timber and mud apparently), a sufficient defence against the natives, with a ditch and moat on either side

ending in a lake which skirted a third of the city on the land side. Its artillery consisted of 237 pieces, from 10 up to 38 pounds. It was situated on a bay capable of holding a large number of small ships, but exposed on the northern side, and its line of circumvallation stretched 1,300 paces". The men who built the fort came in seventeen Portuguese ships, commanded by Lopo Suarez de Albergaria. Two years later the fort was rebuilt, in stone, to fall to the Dutch in 1656, after the famous siege that has passed into history for the gallantry of its defence.

The discovery of the value of Colombo as a port was not made by the Portuguese. It was undoubtedly known in Asia long before Vasco

A Portuguese map of Ceylon





General View of Colombo Harbour

da Gama sailed east. By the 14th century it had become an important city ; there are many references by historians to the prosperity of the port. It was the period of Arab ascendancy in the Indian Ocean. According to their own tradition the Muslims settled in Ceylon in the 8th century and Colombo was one of their first six settlements on the west coast of Ceylon. About a hundred years ago a tombstone was discovered in Colombo bearing a Cufic inscription dated 337 of the *Hegira* (A.D. 959), bearing out the tradition among the " Moors " of Ceylon that the Khalif of Bagdad, in the beginning of the 10th century, fearing for the orthodoxy of the " Moorish traders settled in Colombo " sent

a learned priest to instruct them, who built a mosque, and whose tomb, " erected to commemorate his virtues ", remained there for 800 years, when it was removed by the Dutch. The tradition of " Baba Adam " (Adam's Peak) as a place of Muslim worship was known when Fa Tsien visited Ceylon in the 5th century. In 1330 another Chinese traveller, Wang-Ta-Yuang visited Ceylon and wrote of the town of *Kua-Lang-Pu* ; although he gives no indication of " prosperity ", describing the country as " damp, low-lying land, the soil poor, rice and corn very dear, and the climate hot ". Ibn Batuta, however, writing in 1314, described *Kalambu* as " the finest town in Serendib ", and the abode



The Delft Quay from the air

of a Vizier of the sea named Jalesti, “who had a guard of 500 Abyssinians”.

Sinhalese Records

SINHALESE historical literature first mentions Colombo in connection with the movement of the capital to Kotte at the end of the 14th century. The Minister Alekeswara selected for the capital a site “not far from the port of Kolamba”. It was at Kolamba—or Kalantota, the literary Sinhalese rendering—that Arya Chakravati of Jaffna landed to do battle with the Sinhalese king ; here that a Sinhalese sovereign was shipped

prisoner to China. The “port of Kolamba” figured in a prophetic dream recorded in the *Mahawansa* as dreamed by the “leader of the enemy’s army” (the Parangis) on the night King Senerat’s son was born. “From the western side of that city there issued a spark which was at first only the size of a firefly ; but it increased in size . . . till, when it reached the middle of the port of Kolamba, it waxed great and set every thing on fire in a moment.” The prince who was born that night was Rajasingha II, in whose reign (and possibly with his assistance) the siege that began in October, 1655, ended on May 7, 1656, with the cession of the city to the

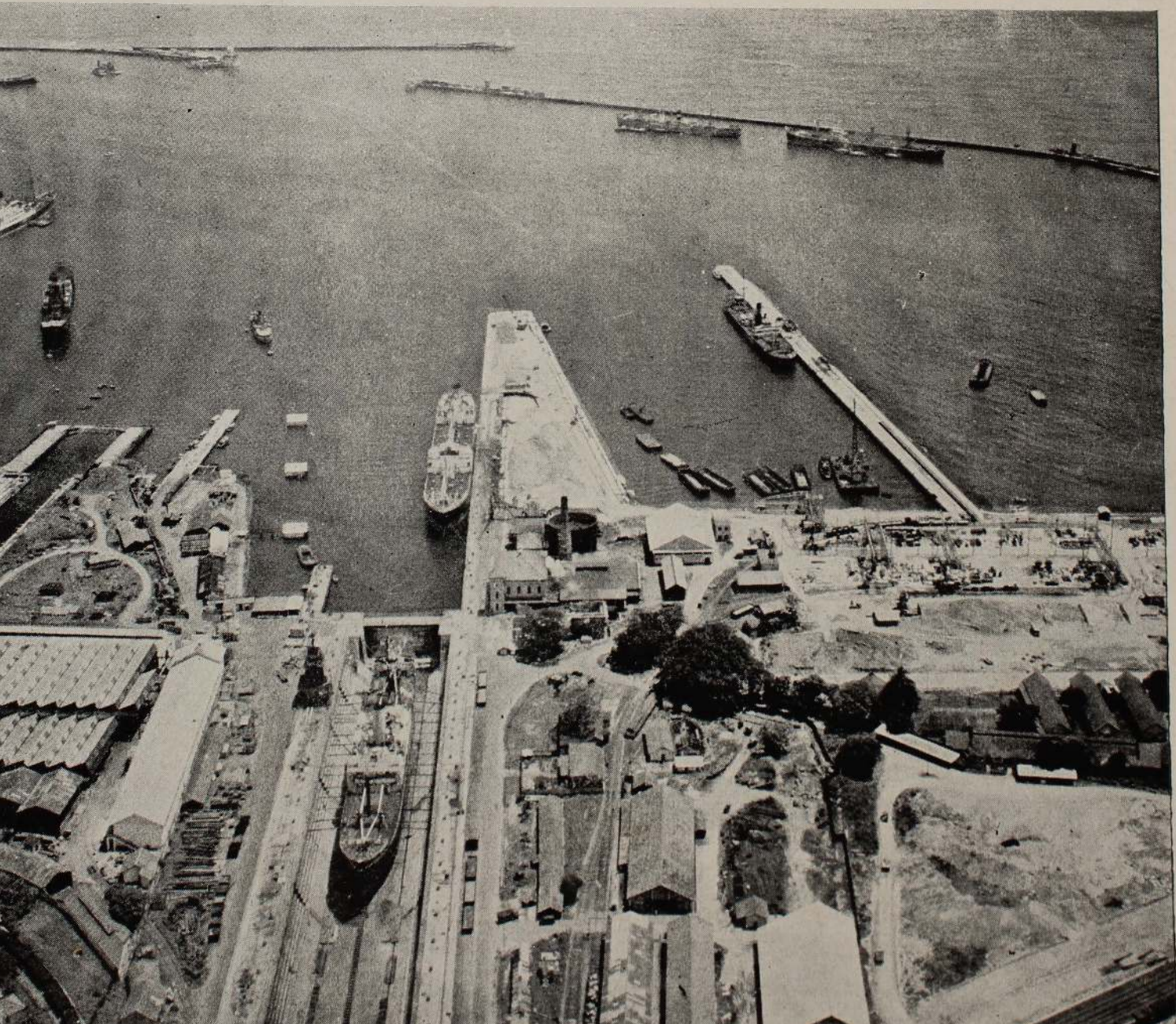
Dutch. The cost to the Portuguese in men may be found in Ribeiro's account of the final surrender : "8,350 men, all Europeans, had taken part in that siege, and of these there remained 1,200 fit to carry arms, and 700 wounded and burnt, all the rest were dead". It is interesting to remember the discovery of a heaped mass of human bones, approximating forty skeletons, that marked the earliest excavations that began the new extensions to the port.

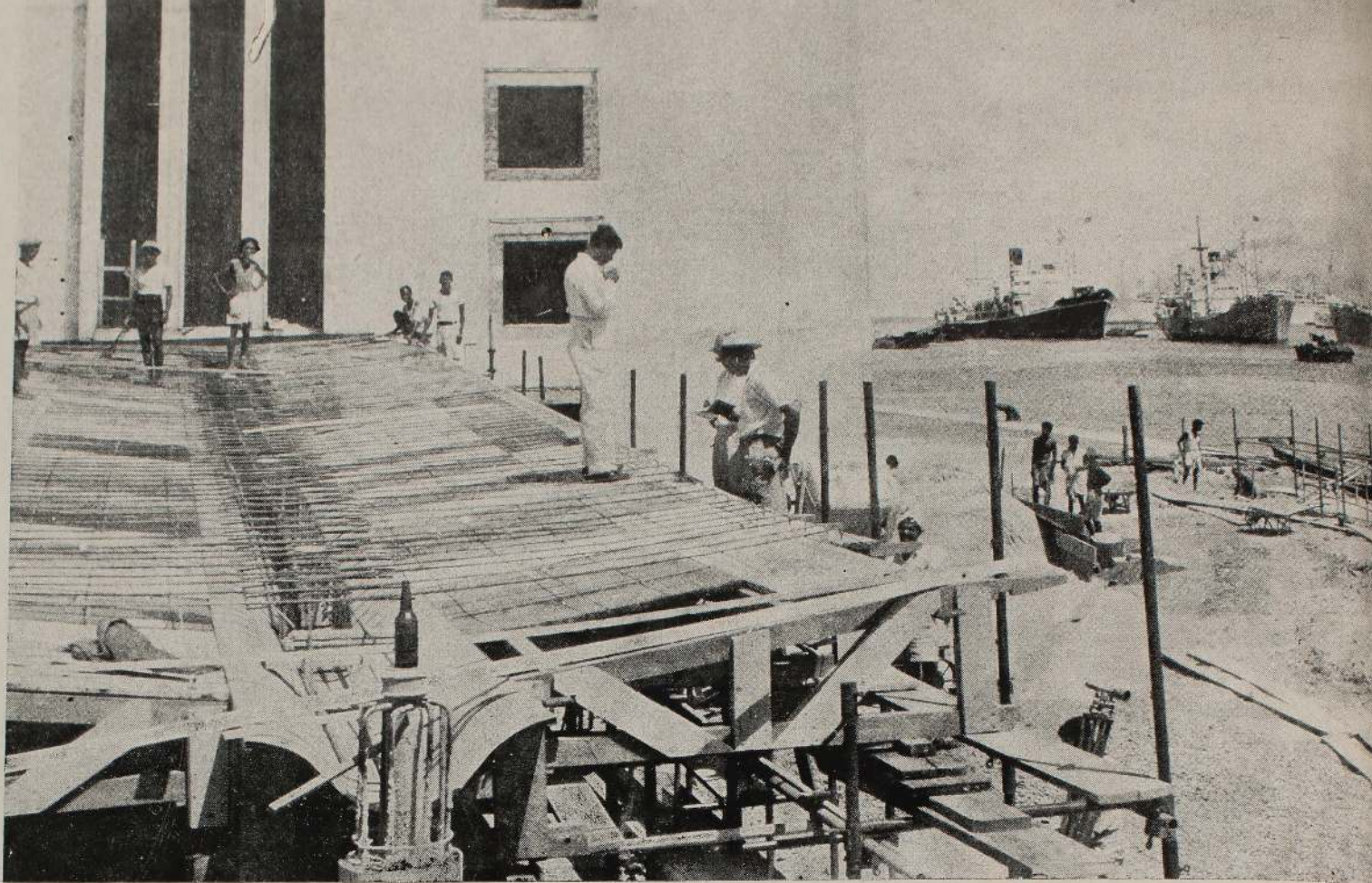
The old township of Colombo stood at the mouth of a flood outlet of the Kelani river, since dammed to make the Beira Lake. Over the river was a bridge and at the mouth of the river the port. Beira Lake in Portuguese times

was an extensive sheet of water covering all the lowland around the city, with "fifteen Chinese champas" to guard it. It had one outlet canal passing through the midst of the city along the road parallel to what is now York Street. The lake also supplied water to the two moats, one at the south-west end of the city called by the Portuguese Mapana (now Galle Face), and the other at the north-east extremity, the modern Kayman's Gate. Most of the fighting was in the region of what is now 5th Cross Street, Gasworks Street, the old Town Hall, and St. Paul's, then a low-lying plain.

The city was long and straggling, dotted with churches and bastions. Old memories survive

The Oil Dock





Work in progress at the Port

in the place-names of today. St. John's Street commemorates the approach, and St. John's Canal the moat, of the bastion of St. Joao, that commanded the road from Colombo to Negombo through Pass Betel, where toll was collected, and Grandpass, named from a dam erected across the river by the Dutch ; Milagiriya, Our Lady of Miracles ; Galle Buck, Calhio Boca ; Liveramentu, the Virgin of Good Deliverance ; Bankshall Street, from *bangasala* (storehouses) ; Wolvendaal, "the wolves' dale", built over the Portuguese monastery known as Agoa de lupo, "the wolf's pond", and still called by the locals *Adirippu Palliya*. The present Passenger Jetty stands on Leiden, one of the five Portuguese bastions that commanded the harbour. There were three more on the land side, three on the lake, two towards the open sea, and one on Mapana, the "Great Plain" which stretched to

Lihini Kanda, "Sea-gulls' Cliff", now anglicised to Mount Lavinia.

Gloomy Views

IN spite of Dutch efforts to link up the hinterland with the roadstead of Colombo, and the ships of the Dutch East India Company arriving from Holland twice a year to return with cinnamon and, less importantly, "elephants, arecanuts, pepper, cardamoms, and arrack"; and the "harshest means" they employed to suppress their trading rivals the Moors, who could not however be discouraged ; in spite of the new Customs House with storerooms or *pakhuizen* added to the waterfront buildings, the introduction of duties (by Governor Falck in 1736) and the vigour with which they pursued their trade :

we find Percival adducing gloomily in 1803 : "The harbour of Colombo, which lies on the west side, is nothing more than an open road, affording good and safe anchorage to ships for only four months of the year, from December to April. During this period . . . ships from many parts put in here to trade. But about May, when the monsoon sets in on the Malabar Coast and extends its ravages to the west coast of Ceylon, the roads of Colombo no longer afford any protection . . . As this is the chief place for the staple trade of Ceylon, the disadvantages arising from these circumstances are very considerable ; but such is the fury of the monsoon hurricanes here, that they can only be obviated by improving the communications by land between

Colombo and the more secure harbours on the east coast of the island". Cordiner, writing his DESCRIPTION OF THE ISLAND in 1807, was equally dubious : "Strictly speaking, there is no harbour at Colombo, for the little bay which affords occasional shelter to small craft does not deserve that name".

But Colombo was on the sea routes of the Orient leading to the neighbouring sub-Continent and the Far East. The same reasons impelled, that had tempted the Portuguese, and then the Dutch, and after them the British, to get possession of the "little bay with its odd-looking craft" whose crews spoke so many different languages. True, shipping was difficult. Ships of any size were compelled to remain one or two miles

Another general view of the harbour with the Queen Elizabeth Quay on the left



off shore, and sunken rocks, sand banks, and hidden reefs required extreme caution to pilot them into the anchorage. The handling of cargo was a perilous and protracted undertaking requiring steady nerves and a cheerful disposition in the consignee, since barrels of coffee and bales of cinnamon had to be hoisted and lowered by hand. Nevertheless, during the year 1830 an aggregate of 20,000 tons of shipping had passed through the port. Two decades later that tonnage had increased thirteen fold. The Suez Canal opened to traffic in 1869. The first ship to come through it, the WILLIAM MILIER, arrived in Colombo on February 10, 1870. A note of interest is that since 1870 the depth of water in the Colombo port has been regulated to that available in the Suez Canal.

The South-West Breakwater

ON December 8, 1875, the foundation stone of the South-West Breakwater was laid by King Edward VII, then Prince of Wales, during his visit to Ceylon.

"This breakwater," says the official report preserved in the archives of the Port Commission, "projected from the slight promontory known as Galle Buck and was 4,212 feet long, composed of 30-ton concrete blocks laid in sloping bond, upon a berm of rubble previously laid on the sea bed. Its completion in 1885 changed the former open roadstead into a harbour perfectly sheltered on the most exposed side, viz., the south-west." But hardly had the stones been laid when it became apparent that extensions would be necessary. In 1877 the tonnage that called at the port had risen to 606,200. The construction of the North-East Breakwater, and later the North-West (known as the Island Breakwater) was completed by 1906. In 1912 an extension arm was added to the south-west breakwater. Six hundred and forty acres of completely sheltered water was now made available for shipping. In 1949 the nett tonnage of shipping had reached approximately $11\frac{3}{4}$ million tons.

"It is essential", E. B. Denham had foreseen in 1911, "that every scheme connected with Colombo should be based on an appreciation of its true position. It is not merely a particular town in Ceylon—it has five times the population of any other town in the Island, and it is immeasurably more important; it is known to millions of travellers to the East and to the Pacific: its value as a port of call and as a coaling base is patent, not only to the millions who pass through the port yearly but to any person who has even glanced at a map of the world The history of Colombo is of Imperial importance."

And so indeed it has proved: and extensions originally mooted as far back as 1902, modified in 1908, re-considered in 1917, began to take shape in 1926. Another decade elapsed before the plans were ready. The outbreak of war in 1939 put them wholly aside.

The biggest artificial harbour in the East, and seventh in traffic in the Commonwealth, it is the only harbour of its size that still operates through the lighterage link. Pilotage is compulsory and ships are berthed at buoys sufficient to accommodate 5 vessels in the north-east monsoon and 38 in the south-west. Extensive warehouse accommodation encircles the waterfront; heavy-lift floating, portal, and mobile cranes serve the quayside. Graving Docks and marine repair workshops are available to serve larger vessels, with slipways for smaller craft. All lighterage is privately handled, but a labour "pool" of 8,000 men—paid a standby wage by the Government to avoid "casualization"—is available for employment by lighterage companies. All internal equipment, maintenance, and necessary building, are handled internally. A Government housing scheme for employees has recently been instituted.

New Extensions

IN 1946 an entirely new extension scheme was prepared to meet the rapidly increasing traffic,

designed to cover the discharge of imported foodstuffs and general cargo, the loading of the Island's products, the discharge of oil tankers, oil bunkering, the handling of railway coal and phosphate cargoes and, finally, the requirements of passenger traffic. The cost as originally estimated was 80 million rupees. On June 28, 1950, the contract for the New Port Development Scheme was signed.

The enormous structural activity that has been going on in the harbour region through the past four and half years is now assuming concrete reality and the layout of the new port can be recognized. The Mutwal Quay, the most nearly completed, has been in operation for the past six months. Food ships have been berthed alongside and their cargoes unloaded into the transit sheds or directly into lorries. With the installation of electricity, and water from a new underground tank made available to shipping using this berth, the quay will be ready for full commercial using. On the Queen Elizabeth Quay all four transit sheds are ready for use. The Passenger Terminal Building is up, and interior decorating and furnishing should be completed by April, 1956. On the Delft Quay two of the four transit sheds have been completed and the framework of the remaining two nearly finished. The Northern Arm of the Oil Dock—the proudest achievement of the new port—has been completed and is already in partial use. The Southern Arm will be ready by next year. The floating boom across the mouth of this dock and the modern machinery with which it is being equipped will be an efficient guard against the risks now constantly being run by tankers having to discharge their oils in proximity to ordinary shipping. A recent disaster in Bombay when a tanker exploded and hundreds of people burned to death is an example.

A Modern Port

IT is expected that the modernized port will be completely operative by April next year. It will

provide Colombo with seventeen deep-water and coastal berths, a safe oil dock, extensive transit sheds and terminal facilities equipped to compare with the other important ports in the world. Alongside berths will result in a three times as rapid turn-round of ships, reducing costs both in labour and in freight rates. Mechanized handling of cargo will provide a further saving to ship-owners.

It is fitting that the south-west breakwater which began the first protection of the "little bay filled with odd-looking craft" eighty years ago, whose foundation stone was laid by the heir apparent to the British throne, should have received his great-grand-daughter as the first visitor to step from ship to shore in the Colombo harbour; that she should have officially "opened" the quay just before her departure and that she should have given it her name; and that the first reigning monarch to visit Ceylon, so courteous to foreigners, within historical times should have been a lady. It is fitting that the first alongside berth to come into operation under the new scheme should have been used for the first time by the oldest ship of the oldest shipping line in the world—the 8,500-ton freighter MAHSUD of the Brocklebank Line—on November 22, 1952. And it is fitting also that the new navigational light, which threw its first beam seawards on June 22, 1952, replacing the Clock Tower Light which was established in 1867, should have been built on the ancient Point of St. Lawrence, the oldest and most battled part of the Portuguese city; which had held the first Christian church to be built in this Island, and the most important stronghold of the Portuguese, the Bastion of Santa Cruz, the first to be built and the last to fall.

Another year, and the lines of lights outside the harbour of ships waiting till the port is built, a nightly feature of the sky-line and a daily disturbance to the less of faith, will again give way to the bobbing solitary torches of the fishing boats that were there before the Arabs and will doubtless be there still when man's history is re-written . . .



Mr. H .C. P. Bell at the foot of the statue near the Potgul Vehera, Polonnaruwa

The Pioneer Archæologist of Ceylon

W. S. KARUNARATNE

THE Archæological Department was established in 1890 with Mr. H. C. P. Bell as its Head. As it was he who started systematic archæological work in Ceylon, people of remote areas acquired the habit of linking everything concerning archæology with his name. He was so widely known in Ceylon that even to the present day the field staff of the Archæological Department is referred to as "the Bell-party". Before he was appointed Archæological Commissioner, Mr. Bell was the District Judge of Kegalla and a member of the Ceylon Civil Service. His Kegalla Report is a fitting corner-stone to the edifice of antiquarian research which has since been built in this Island. In the preface to this Report, Mr. Bell ably traces the history of the Archæological Survey.

IN 1861 the Archæological Survey of India was initiated under the authority of the Indian Government and has amply fulfilled expectations by continuing to bear rich fruit from year to year. Nearly thirty years elapsed before the Ceylon Government took steps to follow systematically the lead thus set, though spasmodic efforts seem to have been made from time to time in the right direction. As late as 1876 the late Sir James Fergusson could write :— 'The stars in their courses have warred against Archæology in Ceylon. . . . And yet it alone, of all known countries contains a complete series of Buddhist monuments, extending from the time of Asoka to the present day, and in the Mahawansa it alone possesses a history so detailed and so authentic, that the dates and purposes of earlier buildings can be ascertained with very tolerable precision. Besides its own intrinsic interest, if it were possible to compare this unbroken series with its ascertained dates with the fragmentary groups on the continent of India, its parallelism might throw much light on many questions that are obscure and uncertain, and the whole acquire a consistency that is now only too evidently wanting.'

Towards the close of the Administration of Sir Hercules Robinson, in 1871, an excellent series of photographs of the principal structures in Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa was taken by Mr. Lawton. In 1873 under directions from Sir W. H. Gregory a complete survey of all that was then known of ancient Anuradhapura was made by Mr. Capper, and heights and measurements of the larger dagabas determined. By 1877 detailed plans and drawings to scale of the more important ruins at Anuradhapura had been completed by Mr. Smither, in accordance with the recommendations of Sir J. Fergusson. Between 1875-9 a partial search for, and collection of ancient inscriptions and native records was carried on under Government authority by Professors P. Goldschmidt and E. Muller and L. de Zoysa Maha Mudaliar. Finally in 1884-5 Mr. S. M. Burrows, when Office Assistant to the Government Agent, conducted at Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa by order of Sir A. H. Gordon some useful, though limited exploration and some slight excavations. A regular vote for Archæological purposes was for the first time inserted in the Supply Bill for 1890, and introduced to Council by the Governor (Sir A. H. Gordon) in His Excellency's Message of November 20, 1889 :— It is proposed to make some systematic examination of the interesting remains at Sigiri, and to commence on a modest scale, before the rapidly disappearing monuments of the past have altogether perished, a species of Archæological Survey resembling that carried on in India. The scope of that Survey as succinctly defined by Lord Canning, Governor-General of India, contemplated—An accurate description—illustrated by plans, measurements, drawings or photographs and by copies of inscriptions—of such remains as most deserve notice, with the history of them so far as it may be traceable and a record of the traditions that are retained regarding them.

The commencement of the Archæological Survey of Ceylon was entrusted to Mr. Bell in



Medirigiriya before conservation

February, 1890. As he was stationed at Kegalla at the time it was deemed convenient to select the Four and Three Korales and Lower Bulatgama as the first scene of work. These divisions, jointly known as the Kegalla District, formerly belonged to the Western Province, but since January, 1890, have been attached to the Province of Sabaragamuwa. Virtually an unworked field of antiquarian research, the Kegalla District was not without reason believed to contain several sites of considerable historical interest, with not a few temples originally founded at an early period and embellished both during and since "the middle ages" of Ceylon history.

The Kegalla District

AS Kegalla District came into prominence only after about the fifteenth century its Archæological importance is comparatively small. There are, however, a few pre-Christian, Brahmi inscriptions scattered here and there in the District. As for monuments, there are remains of shrines and temples built after the mediaeval times. These have been constructed either on existing

cave temples or as separate buildings. Dana-girigala, Lenagala, Hakurugala and Maniamgama, have temples belonging to the first category. The Viharas and Devalas of the Kegalla District are mentioned in the "Vihara Asna". Dagabas of considerable size are found at Dedigama, Deliwala and Kappagoda. The most celebrated of the Devalas is the Alutnuwara Devala, which is dedicated to the Dadimunda and the Malwatta Bandara Gods. This Devala, which is situated about four miles from Mawanella, dates from the time of Parakramabahu II of the thirteenth century. The other Devalas of renown in the Kegalla District are the Natha Devala of Dorawaka, the Saman Devala of Deraniyagala, and the Pattini Devalas of Medagoda and Kabalamulla. All these Devalas conform to one standard pattern in regard to their construction. A distinguished work of the Kegalla District is the Barandi Kovil, the construction of which was begun by Rajasingha I of the sixteenth century after he embraced Hinduism. He was unable to complete it. And even as an unfinished work it stands out as a brilliant piece of stone architecture. Bell's Kegalla Report contains descriptions of all these

shrines. Mr. Bell has also included the historical geography of the Kegalla District, its history as he had been able to glean from records chiefly from the fifteenth century onwards and a discussion of all stone inscriptions and copper plate or palm leaf grants discovered in the course of research.

Annual Reports

BESIDES the Kegalla Report, Mr. Bell has written Annual Reports from 1890 to 1912 and also Progress Reports from time to time. It was on July 7, 1890, that he went to Anuradhapura on the orders of Sir A. H. Gordon to commence Archæological work there. At first the Archæological Department consisted of a Commissioner, an European Assistant Commissioner, a Native Assistant, a clerk and three draughtsmen. The first work undertaken was to clear up the monuments, preparation of their plans, excavation, and conservation. The collection and decipherment of inscriptions was also pursued. Among the places first excavated at Anuradhapura were Vijayarama, Jetavanarama, Pankuliya, Kiribatvehera, Abhayagiri, Toluville, Thuparama, Ruvanvelisaya, &c. In 1895 work was undertaken

in the ancient rock fortress and palace of Sigiri. Mr. Bell paid special attention to the paintings and out-lying remains of Sigiri. In 1896 Mr. Bell went on circuit to the Wilpattu which was perhaps hitherto not visited by any European. He was so struck by the enthralling beauty of nature of the Wilpattu Lakes that he wrote in his Report thus :—

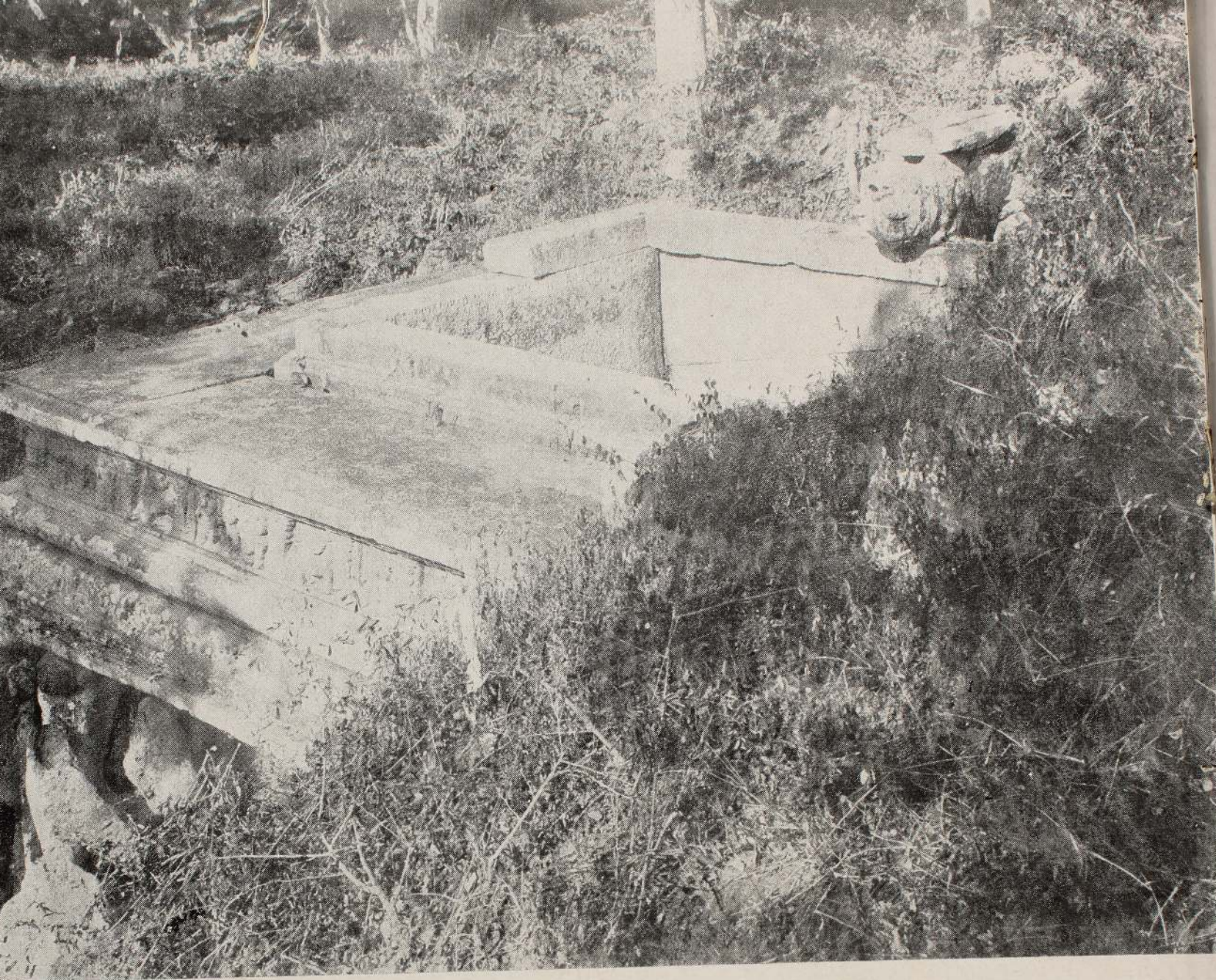
The calm beauty of these inland lakes is indescribable. The bright blue of the still water, ring of white sand fringed with grass and forest, mingled greens, and browns, the varied bird and animal life—and withal that wondrous hush which pervades and sanctifies nature uninvaded by man's encroachment—

*“Oh, if there be an Elysium on earth
It is this, it is this.”*

In May, 1900, Mr. Bell commenced work at Polonnaruwa—Ceylon's greatest city of mediaeval times. The extensive remains of this city which were covered by jungle were cleared by him. The other important places which received his attention were Yapahuva and Nalanda. Mr. John Still, the author of the *Jungle Tide*, served for five years as Assistant Archæological Commissioner from 1902 to 1907. The following

Medirigiriya after conservation





Sinha Pokuna, Mihintale, at the time of Mr. Bell

extracts from his diary may prove interesting reading specially to those who have read his book :—

April 23, 1907. Heard of another inscription two miles from Palampatti. This too had to be hunted for, as the villager who knew of it had only seen it once several years ago. We found it and I copied it.

April 24.—Moved on to Pokkara-wanni. About $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the village I was shown some ruins. A small ruined dagaba and several rough stone foundations on a broad stretch of slab rock. There seems to be an ancient road leading north-west from the place.

April 25.—Visited a ruined site some $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile south of the village. There is nothing to see above ground but a small dagaba and a few large stones in which socket holes for wooden pillars have been cut. The dagaba has at some time being dug into. But the villagers assert that the attempt to extract treasure was foiled by the sudden mysterious appearance of black hornets, which drove the excavators away. There is nearly always some such tradition regarding the miraculous preservation of supposed treasure in dagabas.

So wrote Mr. John Still. And the conditions under which our early Archæologists worked are further illustrated in an extract from the

diary of Muhandiram D. A. L. Perera, then Chief Draughtsman of the department.

October 17, 1907.—Started for Medirigiriya with a half dozen Moors and Sinhalese for axe and katty work, and six other coolies (Tamils and Moors) with pick-axes, mamoties, &c. for excavating. All necessary plant, camera, paulins, cooking utensils and provisions for about five days were taken in a cart. The minor road from Topawewa to Divulankadawala (17 miles) is very bad. Near Hatamune the cart upset, while going down the bank of the Oya. Most of the chatties, &c. were broken to pieces. The cart had to be unloaded before it could be raised.

We reached Divulankadawala about 8 p.m. I at once inquired for the Arachchi of the village ;

but he had gone to Nikgaha Rambewa two days before with a sick child. The order to the Arachchi was then handed to the Vel-Vidane, a sickly person. He said that it was a very poor village (which is true), and that no provisions could be bought. I told him that we were not in need of provisions, and only wanted half a dozen men (who would be paid) to show us the way to Medirigiriya and help our work. He promised to supply men on the following morning.

Next morning people were not forthcoming. I sent for the Vel-Vidane, who said that they would be coming "just now". I waited sometime more ; but as no one made his appearance, I went into the village with the Vel-Vidane and hunted for the men who had been selected to go to Medirigiriya

Sinha Pokuna, Mihintale, after restoration



with us. I even promised to pay them at Medirigiriya itself, but one by one they disappeared and hid. This Vidane had no influence over the villagers. It was getting late, with the greatest trouble I at last got a man, not of that village, but who happened to be there by chance to at least show us the way to Medirigiriya six miles through forest.

October 19, 1907 at Medirigiriya.—In the morning inspected the Wata-da-ge. Some attempt had been made at clearing last year by the villagers employed through the Revenue Officer, but the cut undergrowth was in a mess, having been carelessly thrown about the ruin. I got all this burnt first of all, and in the afternoon put the coolies on further clearing.

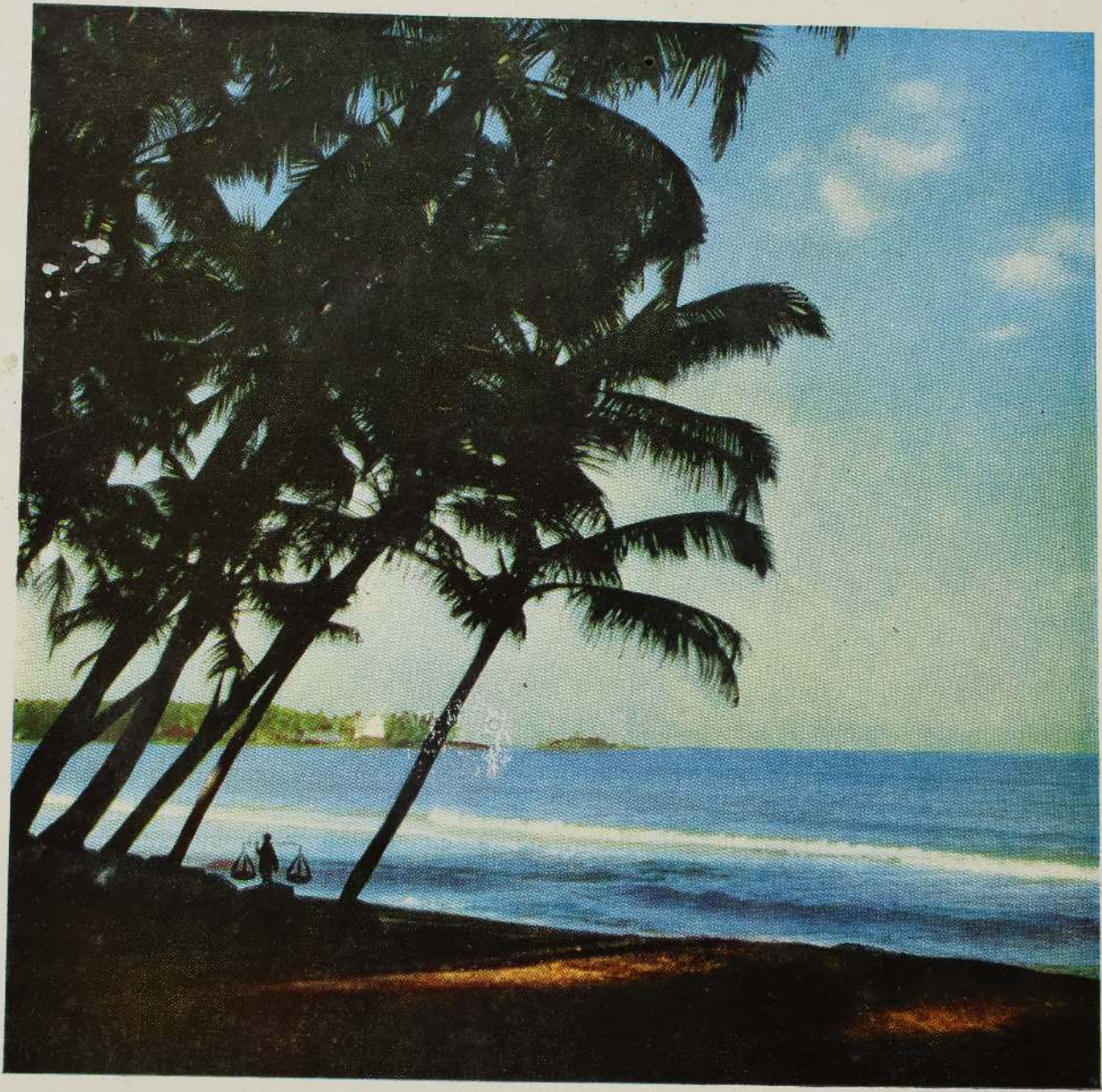
These extracts give one an insight into the difficulties which these men had to face in their attempt to clear and survey the ancient monuments of the Island. Very often they had to traverse on foot sometimes even in almost inaccessible places, but their insatiable thirst for discovery drove them on and on, and thus they

contributed largely to a proper study of the cultural heritage of the country.

From 1890 to 1912—for 23 years—Mr. Bell worked unceasingly exposing himself to the rigours of a tropical climate. Even after his retirement the Government continued to obtain his expert evidence in matters such as the interpretation of ancient documents. In 1920, Mr. Bell joined a mission to the Maldive Islands under the auspices of the Government. He examined the ancient sites there and wrote a valuable monograph on the Islands' History and Antiquities. While Mr. Bell was still in office Mr. E. R. Ayrton was appointed his assistant. He had experience in Archæological work in England, Germany, and India, and had worked with Professor Petrie for six years in Egypt. On December 8, 1912, Mr. Ayrton was appointed to the post of Archæological Commissioner, which before him had been so ably filled by that eminent pioneer Archæologist of Ceylon—Mr. H. C. P. Bell.

Tablets at Mihintale in Mr. Bell's time





Palm Beach



Mr. A. Ratnayake, the Minister of Home Affairs, at the F. A. O. Conference at Rome

Ceylon at F. A. O. Conference

THE seventy-one-member Conference, which assesses the achievements of the Food and Agricultural Organization (F. A. O.), opened its eighth session on Friday, November 4, which was also the tenth anniversary of the organization. The Ceylon Delegation to the Conference was headed by the Hon. A. Ratnayake, Minister of Home Affairs, and included Mr. H. A. J. Hulugalle, Minister for Ceylon in Italy, and Mr. K. Alvapillai, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

The Hon. Ratnayake was elected a Vice-Chairman of the Conference (Commission of the Whole) and Ceylon found a place in one of the two Standing Committees, namely, the Credentials Committee.

The Italian Minister of Agriculture, among others, addressed the inaugural session, and Signor Segni, Prime Minister of Italy, was present.

On Monday, November 7, Mr. Ratnayake, the leader of the Ceylon Delegation, addressed the Conference.

The following is the text of Mr. Ratnayake's speech :—

May I at the outset congratulate the F. A. O. on the useful services it has rendered to many nations during the last ten years and express the hope that its work in the future will be crowned with still greater success.

As a result of the assessment of the situation as to production of food and raw materials made at the Seventh Session of this Conference, the conclusion was drawn that world production on a global basis had caught up with the growth of world population. But most, if not all, of this increase in production had been in the dollar areas. The production in Asia was only a little above pre-war level. It was a significant fact

that Asia, with half the world's population, produced as at 1953 only 25 per cent. of the world agricultural output. Rice production in Asia has since made considerable headway, although in countries like Burma and Vietnam production has yet to come up to pre-war level. Taking food production as a whole, the grave disparity in the production of Asia on the one hand, and the countries of the West—particularly North America—on the other, still continues.

The result has been the appearance of large surpluses in North America and the insufficiency of Asian production to meet the full consumption needs of Asian peoples. The continuing imbalance in the productivity of Asia, as compared with the rest of the world, is therefore a very grave problem. Asiatic countries have therefore to persevere in their efforts to remedy this imbalance—at least to regain the pre-war position. The surpluses which appeared in North America of cereals, sugar and milk products in the last two years have induced some of these countries to restrict production. It is unfortunate that restrictive policies should be applied in one part of the world when consumption demands in another part of the world have not yet been fully met.

The situation is made worse today by the slackening in the effective demand for rice in Asia and the emergence of an apparent surplus which threatens to dislocate the economy of Asiatic countries which have traditionally depended on rice production. We fully agree with the F. A. O. view, clearly stated time and again, that there can be no over-production of food in the world and the solution to surpluses should not be found in policies of restriction of production. The solution should rather be found in what has been called a selective expansion of production and what is still more important in expanding consumption.

The international agreements for the marketing of wheat and sugar are good expedients only in so far as they aim at stabilizing prices to producers and consumers, but not such good expedients if they encourage restrictive practices. What we

wish to uphold is that what nature, allied to man's scientific ingenuity, is prepared to bestow must be availed of in full measure for the benefit of the entire human family. We know that the factors standing in the way of fairer distribution of food throughout the world are mainly economic, such as currency difficulties and inadequate purchasing power in vast areas of the world. These are, however, surmountable if only the world will rise above purely commercial considerations. That mankind can rise above these considerations has been amply demonstrated by the co-operative efforts made so far at international level to bring succour to needy countries through the medium of Aid and Assistance Programmes. I would, therefore, like to submit the following proposal for consideration in relation to surpluses of food :—

“ All surpluses of food should be distributed by way of gift among needy territories whose nutritional level is low, in order ~~to~~ raise the standard of consumption of the people concerned, whose standard of consumption cannot otherwise be raised because of the economic condition of their country ”.

Stability of the Rice Market

THE next important matter, which I would submit for the careful consideration of this Conference, is the need for measures, both national and international, to stabilize the market in rice. The rice economy is of vital importance to all of us who are large consumers of rice, namely, the populations of South-East Asia and the Far East. There was a marked improvement in rice production in the Far East during the three years commencing 1951–52. There was a setback in 1954–55 due to unfavourable weather. In spite of this setback, a surplus to import demand had developed in 1955 in this region creating marketing difficulties for exporting countries. This position is likely to get worse unless timely measures are taken. During pre-war, countries of the Far East exported 8,922,000 tons of rice and



The Ceylon delegates at the F. A. O. Conference in Rome. On the left is Mr. K. Alvapillai, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

imported 6,127,000 tons, whereas in 1954 the figures were exports 3,000,000 tons and imports 3,200,000 tons. The causes that would appear to have brought about this situation are :—

(a) increased production of rice in traditionally importing countries ;

(b) the effective consumption demand remaining static at a level much below actual demand due to high consumer prices ;

(c) the displacement of rice by other cereals mainly wheat, imported from outside the region ;

- (d) a marked decrease in the imports of rice into Western Europe ;
- (e) an appreciable increase in exports of rice by the United States.

Rice production in the Far East has such an important bearing on the national output, foreign exchange earnings and agricultural employment in the region, that a policy of expanding production is inevitable. This is possible only if there is expanding consumption in the region and a restoration of the pre-war markets outside the region. The remedy, I would submit, which calls for immediate implementation is to push consumption. The only realistic approach in this connection is lower consumer prices. Ceylon has made sustained efforts in the past to keep consumer prices lower than cost of import, by resorting to consumer subsidy. But such a policy has resulted in the diversion of funds urgently needed for investment. We are, therefore, left with the only alternative of lower export prices, and this would benefit the exporting countries in the long run by maximizing sales. We must, however, not be unmindful of the interest of rice producers. It would hit the economies of most countries of the Far East hard if rice prices decline below a minimum level. Serious hardship will be caused to all sectors of the economy if farm incomes are left solely to the free play of market forces. It would, therefore, be in the interest of both producers and consumers to come to an arrangement which would sustain the market price of rice in international trade above a floor price. Ceylon would support a proposal to ensure that the export price is not allowed to fall below a certain minimum level. A multilateral arrangement in regard to the marketing of rice may leave out North and South America. I would accordingly submit, for exploration by this Conference, the following proposal :—

“ A multilateral agreement in relation to the marketing of rice shall be negotiated among all exporting and importing countries which will guarantee the disposal of the entire

exportable surpluses and provide for a maximum and minimum price and cover a period of three years ”.

Capital Aid

I would also like to raise at this Conference the question of capital aid which countries of the Far East are in dire need of to develop their agricultural and food resources. The programmes of the F. A. O. have so far been confined to the provision of technical, informational and educational services. These services have no doubt been effective both by way of bringing new knowledge to these countries and by stimulating an awareness of the value of science in promoting productivity. It must, however, not be forgotten that many schemes for the expansion of production in some countries, drawn up in the light of the technical assistance provided, still remain on paper for want of funds required for executing the schemes. If, today, production in this region still lags behind, on a per capita basis, the pre-war level, it is due to lack of investment funds ; and, if the countries concerned are to find these funds from their own resources, it can be done only by drastically cutting consumption and spreading out investment programmes over a long period. Other schemes of capital aid, like the Colombo Plan, can be said to have touched only the fringe of this problem, and these cover fields other than agricultural development also. In Ceylon, for example, a programme of increased agricultural and food production has been formulated on a six-year basis and is estimated to require £70,000,000 for investment. Only a small fraction of this sum can be found from her national resources. The three most important factors of increased production in Ceylon are :—

- (i) provision of adequate water for cultivation ;
- (ii) use of artificial fertilizers, and
- (iii) improved seed and seedlings.

Paddy Research

WITH regard to improved seed, a Paddy Research Institute is contemplated, which requires

equipment to the value of £150,000. The use of artificial fertilizers in paddy culture was introduced only three years ago, and because of the high cost of fertilizers Government is subsidizing the cultivators to the extent of one-third of the cost. Even with this subsidy, only a tenth of the acreage under paddy is at present fertilized. With regard to irrigation facilities, it is possible to provide such facilities for only 20,000 acres per annum with our limited financial resources. I have no doubt that other countries in this region have similar difficulties. I would, therefore, submit that if the technical services which F. A. O. is able to provide are to produce the maximum results, F. A. O. should also launch upon a programme of capital aid to needy countries. Such aid should be forthcoming for purposes like provision of agricultural implements, scientific equipment, and even assistance towards manufacture of fertilizers. To fulfil these purposes, F. A. O. would have to establish a separate fund to which its more prosperous members should make voluntary contributions. Consideration may also be given to the question of establishing another fund from which loans may be issued to member nations to assist in agricultural development on easy terms of interest and repayment. The objectives, for the pursuit of which the F. A. O. was formed 10 years ago, were very broad, and I have no doubt that we can justly claim a fair measure of success in the attainment of these objectives. We must, however, admit that the greater part of the world has a good deal to go before nutritional standards and the conditions of life of rural communities are raised to satisfactory levels. I think that we have now come to a stage when the continued existence of this organization can be justified only if its programme of assistance to needy countries is expanded to cover assistance of every kind that is necessary to promote expansion of production and consumption of agricultural products and the

attainment of a uniformly satisfactory standard of nutrition throughout the world.

There is another matter that relates to the functions of the F. A. O. on which I would like to comment. The F. A. O. has been left out in the past in the negotiation of international commodity agreements. Both in regard to the Wheat Agreement and the Sugar Agreement, the F. A. O. played very little part. The tendency has been apparent for giving greater weight to the interests of producers as against those of consumers in the conclusion of such agreements. We think that the F. A. O. is the proper authority to hold the scales even between producers and consumers, and that all multilateral agreements for trade in agricultural products should be negotiated under the auspices of the F. A. O., although other international organizations should be brought in for consultation.

We are now entering into a new era of international understanding in which the dignity of man, irrespective of race, creed and ideology, is becoming universally recognized, and the competitive spirit is giving way to the co-operative spirit. The achievements of the F. A. O. during the last ten years are a reminder of what co-operation among nations can produce. The world is still agitated over the question of peace and, in the name of peace, vast sums of money are expended by nations, big and small. The F. A. O.'s work in the past brings home to all of us the fact that peace can lie only in plenty—plenty of food, of clothing, nay, of everything that goes to satisfy human wants. If only this state of plenty can descend upon all the peoples of the world, then the entire human race would become one united family. Herein lies the importance of the mission in which the F. A. O. is engaged and it is up to the nations of the world to support the F. A. O. in still greater measure to enable it to expand its services for the greater benefit of mankind.

The Sinhalese and their Contribution to the Art and Culture of the World—II

JOHN M. SENAVERATNA

IN Sculpture and Statuary, the contributions of the ancient Sinhalese were no less notable and striking. Their works were renowned for their beauty throughout all the Buddhist countries of Asia, especially in the 4th and 5th centuries, and were eagerly sought for by the neighbouring nations.

No reference to the sculptural work of the ancient Sinhalese can be complete without mention of Nante, the genius who produced some of the greatest works of Sinhalese art, and who won international fame in his day. And Nante's name is associated with certain intimate and far-reaching relations which the Sinhalese had with the Chinese in those far-off days of the 5th century.

In A.D. 425, that is, fourteen years after the arrival in Ceylon of the celebrated Chinese pilgrim, Fa-Hien, and during the reign of the Sinhalese King Maha Nama, there occurred an event of first-class importance which was destined profoundly to influence the life of the Chinese nation. In that year eight Sinhalese nuns arrived at Nanking, which was then the capital of the Soung dynasty of China. The presence of these Sinhalese nuns inspired Chinese women, for the first time, to seek to enter "Holy Orders". But as the usual vows could not be administered to them except by an assembly of ten nuns headed by a President, the ceremony was deferred and an Embassy despatched to Ceylon immediately to bring more nuns, in order to complete the Chapter necessary for the ceremony of ordination.

But it was not till eight years later, viz., A. D. 434, that the full Chapter of ten Sinhalese nuns, headed by a nun named "T'ie-so-lo" as President, carried out the long-deferred ceremony of ordination.

It was the very first ordination of Chinese women that ever took place. And it was made possible only by the courage and fervour of the Sinhalese nuns who braved the dangers of the vasty deep in order to implant Buddhism in China.

Imperishable Memorials

BUT it was not only in the smaller works of sculptural art that the ancient Sinhalese distinguished themselves. In the bigger works they left imperishable memorials which still today do, and will for all time, inspire the beholder with awe on the one hand and profound admiration on the other.

"The rock-carved Kapila in Ceylon is a tremendous work impossible to forget when once seen", said Laurence Binyon the other day. And only a few days ago this is what another well-informed critic and competent judge, Ananda Tissa, wrote of one of the greatest, the most enduring and most majestic works of Sinhalese art of the 5th century—the huge, towering, assertive and awe-inspiring 40-ft. image of the Buddha at Avukana. He says :

"People who are deeply impressed by the massive proportions of the modern statues by Jacob Epstein have not probably seen the colossal works of the ancient Sinhalese sculptors. The mighty statue of the Buddha at Avukana is a spectacle of beauty beside which the modern work of a few tons in weight seem pebbles by the rock of Sigiriya. It towers over forty feet above the ground, and is so remarkably executed that the proportions of the figure conform to every standard of balance and design with which the modern critic is so well acquainted."

Among the other outstanding masterpieces of Sinhalese sculpture may be mentioned (a) the 4th century Buddha image at the Outer Circular Road, Anuradhapura, (b) the Isurumuniya relief of man and horse in Pallava style of the 7th century, and (c) the so-called Parakrama Bahu image at Polonnaruwa.

A Master's Hand

IF there is one direction more than any other in which the Sinhalese of old may be said to have made their greatest and most enduring contribution to Asiatic and even World Art and Culture, it is in Painting, with the work at Sigiriya as their most glorious achievement.

Sigiriya is our great National Gallery. Havell credited the figures of the women painted on the rock with a "Botticellian grace". And Vincent Smith, though somewhat reluctant to accept this appraisal, grudgingly admits that these paintings are "extremely remarkable productions of their age and well deserving of careful study and serious criticism".

"Havell observes that the best of the Sigiriya figures are drawn with a master's hand, swift and sure, but swayed by the impulse of the moment as one can see by the rapid alteration of the pose of an arm or hand visible in some of the paintings. These 'exhibit the best qualities of the Ajanta paintings and of the great masters of China and Japan'.

"The Sinhalese painter was impelled by the passion to create beauty, and, with the confidence of one who had command of his medium, he translated into the lines upon the walls the feeling which surged within him and moved his hand.

Sinhalese Culture

"THAT the Sinhalese people of the 5th century B.C. were able to produce these works is of the greatest importance. Those who regard with such passion the works of Michael Angelo during the Renaissance in Europe attribute a high level

of culture to the Italian people by reason of the work that Angelo produced. The same process of deductive reasoning must be applied to Ceylon, and we must assume that the general level of the culture of the Sinhalese people must of necessity have been very high indeed in the fifth century."

It was still high in the 6th and 7th centuries, when you consider the merit of the paintings at Hindagala and Dimbulagala, and not much deterioration, if any, had set in even in the 12th century, when you assess the work of the Sinhalese painters, whether at the Tivanka Image House or Gal Vihare or Lankatilaka at Polonnaruwa.

And the 12th century paintings at Polonnaruwa are remarkable for the indication they give that the artistic tradition in Ceylon had been preserved to a much later date than it did in India, since it is a fact that no pictorial remains of the same quality are found anywhere in India dating from the same period, and that, after Ajanta and Bagh, no pictorial remains of any great merit have been preserved in India itself.

I shall conclude with a brief reference to one fact which guarantees, or rather entitles, the Sinhalese to undying fame in the world of Art, to the unique distinction they enjoy of having been *the first to invent oil painting*. The circumstance is so noteworthy and so creditable to the prestige of the nation, that we might well take to heart the few words on the subject in which an eminent Englishman attributes the discovery to the Sinhalese nation.

Van Eyck's Untenable Claim

"Externally", says Sir Emerson Tennent, "painting was applied to the dagabas alone, as, in the Climate of Ceylon, exposure to the rains would have been fatal to the duration of the colours, if only mixed in tempera. But the Sinhalese, at a very early period, were aware of the higher qualities possessed by some of the vegetable oils.

(Continued on page 30)



The Prime Minister of Ceylon, the Rt. Hon. Sir John Kotelawala, with the Rt. Hon. S. G. Holland, Prime Minister of New Zealand. Sir John, who paid a visit to New Zealand from November 9 to 14, has just signed Mr. Holland's visitors' book at Parliament Buildings, Wellington.

Foreign Affairs

THE Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Sir John Kotelawala, returned to the Island on November 25, after completing his goodwill tour of Australia, New Zealand and Thailand.

Earlier on November 7, speaking as the guest at a State Luncheon accorded him at Sydney, Sir John said that he thought that Australian representation at the next Afro-Asian Conference would be an excellent idea.

Geographically, he said, Australia belonged to the East and its best defence was the well-being of the peoples of the East. He hoped friendship between Australia and Ceylon would continue as the two countries had much in common.

Later at a press conference, the Prime Minister said that Communism could not be fought by arms. The best defence was to raise living standards in countries threatened by Communism.

Referring to the despatch of Australian troops to Malaya, Sir John said: "Each Government has its own responsibility, its own approach to problems. My government has handled the Communist problem in a different manner".

In New Zealand

ON November 8, the Prime Minister and his party left for New Zealand. On arrival at Auckland, Sir John told pressmen that he hoped that the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret would visit Ceylon to open the Colombo Plan Exhibition in early 1957. He further said that the Prime Ministers of the Commonwealth Nations were being invited to the exhibition.

The Prime Minister arrived in Wellington on the following day and attended a Cabinet Meeting of the New Zealand Government, at which far eastern matters were discussed.

Later, Sir John speaking at a State Luncheon in his honour, said that both Australia and New Zealand had given eastern countries their "full friendship disinterestedly" and for that could be assured of the peoples' goodwill.

New Zealand had done much for Ceylon under Colombo Plan assistance and could be assured of the continued goodwill of Ceylon and Asia.

Sir John further said that the object of the Colombo Powers' Conference 18 months ago and of the Afro-Asian Conference at Bandung last April was the peace of the World. He added that as convener of the former conference these powers would be only too happy to co-operate with New Zealand in working towards that goal.

P. M. over Radio Australia

THE Prime Minister arrived at Sydney on November 15, on his way back from New Zealand. Speaking over Radio Australia, Sir John said that Australia and New Zealand had realized that their best defence was in the well-being and prosperity of the peoples of Asia. He

added that that was evident in the friendship the two countries had shown towards Asia and in the interest they were taking in the well-being of Asian countries.

Describing Australia and New Zealand as "the two sentinels of democracy along Asia's flanks", he said that one of the last impressions he had received during his tour was the extent of development taking place in both countries.

Later at a reception accorded him at Sydney, on the eve of his departure from the Australian mainland, Sir John said that he had received "nothing but kindness" in Australia. He added that the people of Australia and New Zealand were the kindest in the World.

He further said that Ceylon had bought Australian wheat but wanted Australia to buy more goods from Ceylon.

He also announced that the direct air service between Colombo and Sydney would probably be resumed soon as a result of the K. L. M.—Air Ceylon agreement.

Arrival in Thailand

ON November 18, the Ceylon Premier arrived in Bangkok on a five-day visit to Thailand. He was met on arrival at the air-port by the Thai Premier, Field Marshal Pibul Songgram. An army, navy and air force guard-of-honour presented arms, while a salute was fired.

In a speech Sir John stressed the common Buddhist heritage enjoyed by Ceylon and Thailand. Sir John's programme in Thailand included visits to Angkor Vat and other well-known Buddhist shrines.

The Ceylon Premier and his party resided at the royal palace and the Thai King and Thai Premier accorded receptions to Sir John. Bangkok University held a special convocation and conferred on Sir John the degree of Doctor of Political Science in appreciation of his contribution to the Afro-Asian Conference held in Bandung earlier this year.

Policy Sessions of the C-Plan Council for Technical Co-operation

THE Policy Sessions of the Colombo Plan Council for Technical Co-operation were held in Colombo on November 16 and 17.

At the commencement of the sessions on November 16, the retiring president, Mr. Haji Abdus Sattar Saith (Pakistan's High Commissioner in Ceylon), referred to the offers made by the U. S. and Canada to establish atomic research centres in this region.

He said it was a matter of great satisfaction and of significant import to the future of economic development in South and South-East Asia that the participating countries had decided to continue the Colombo Plan beyond 1957.

Referring to the announcements made by donor countries regarding increased assistance, Mr. Sattar Saith said that those decisions were an eloquent testimony to the mutual faith and friendship of member countries, and indeed of the realization of the vital link between peace and prosperity in their region.

Mr. J. D. de Fretes, Charge d'Affaires of the Indonesian Legation in Ceylon, was unanimously elected as the new president of the Council. His name was proposed by Pakistan and seconded by Australia.

Thanking the council for electing him, Mr. De Fretes said that the Council's policy sessions were taking place at a time when the world political situation was disturbed by uneasy news of tension. He said he was confident that the Council would continue to make its contribution to the economic development of South and South-East Asia in terms of greater national income and higher living standards.

The policy sessions were continued on the following day. Participants at the two-day sessions were Australia, Burma, Canada, Ceylon, Pakistan, United Kingdom, Vietnam, India, Indonesia, Japan, the United States, and the United Nations,

Ceylon at F.A.O. Conference

THE Minister of Home Affairs, the Hon. A. Ratnayake, who led Ceylon's delegation to the biennial conference of the F.A.O. in Rome, returned to the Island on November 10.

He told the conference at its meeting on November 7 that they should promote a multi-lateral agreement to stabilize the world rice market. He also suggested that food surpluses in the U. S. and other countries should be distributed free to needy nations.

He said that the rice surplus imbalance in South-East Asia and the Far East was still bad. "The situation is likely to get worse unless timely measures are taken," he declared.

Mr. Ratnayake further said that the F.A.O. should launch a programme of capital investment aid to under-developed countries, as the C-Plan and other aid schemes had "only touched the fringes of the food and agricultural problem".

The other members of the Ceylon delegation were His Excellency Mr. H. A. J. Hulugalle, Ceylon's Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary in Italy, and Mr. K. Alvapillai, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

Delegation Leaves for Amsterdam to complete K. L. M.—Air Ceylon Agreement

AN eight-member delegation, led by the Minister of Transport and Works, the Hon. Major Montague Jayewickrema, left for Amsterdam on November 13 to complete the K. L. M.—Air Ceylon agreement to operate a new international air service. The other members of the delegation were the Minister of Justice, the Hon. E. B. Wikremanayake; the General Manager of Air Ceylon, Mr. J. L. M. Fernando; the Acting Director of Civil Aviation, Mr. Dixon Kotelawala; the Assistant Secretary to the Ministry of Transport and Works, Mr. E. M. Wijenaike; the Assistant Secretary to the Ministry of Finance, Mr. Raju Coomaraswamy; Mr. Britto Muthunayagam of the Legal Draftsman's Department;

and Mr. S. Tiruchelvam of the Attorney-General's Department.

The Ceylon delegation discussed with K. L. M. the contributions of capital by the participants to the agreement and the arrangements for handling of traffic services. They also discussed the establishment by Air Ceylon of its own sales organization, employment of Ceylonese personnel by K. L. M., and the setting up of a training scheme of Ceylonese by K. L. M.

Ceylon's New Legation in Germany

THE Government of Ceylon has, with the concurrence of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, decided to establish a diplomatic mission in Bonn at Legation level. The Legation will be headed by a Charge d'Affaires on pied. It has also been decided to appoint Mr. S. P. Wickramasinha as Ceylon's first Charge d'Affaires on pied at Bonn.

Diplomatic Relations between Ceylon and Thailand

THE Government of Ceylon and the Government of Thailand have agreed, in view of the traditional friendship and understanding that have always existed between the peoples of the two countries, to establish diplomatic relations between Ceylon and Thailand. The agreement was concluded in an Exchange of Notes which took place in New Delhi on November 20.

New Dutch Envoy presents his Credentials

Dr. K. E. VAN DER MANDELE, the new Charge d'Affaires of the Netherlands Government, presented his credentials to the Hon. J. R. Jayewardene, acting Chairman of the Cabinet, on November 10.

Dr. Van der Mandele said that during his term of office he would do his best to maintain and improve the good relations between Holland and Ceylon.

Mr. Jayewardene said that he would convey Dr. Van der Mandele's sentiments to the Prime Minister on his return from Australia.

Dr. Van der Mandele, who is 48, was educated at the Universities of Lausanne and Leyder and at the Rotterdam School of Economics. He joined his country's diplomatic service in 1938, and has held appointments in Sydney, Pretoria, Washington, Copenhagen, and Hong Kong.

Ceylon Felicitates Sweden

THE Government of Ceylon has sent a message of felicitation to the Prime Minister of Sweden on the occasion of the Swedish National Day, on November 11.

Polish Trade Delegation Here

A FOUR-MAN trade delegation from Poland, led by Mr. Kruczkowski of the Polish External Affairs Trade Ministry, arrived by air on November 2 to negotiate a trade pact with the Ceylon Government.

Mr. Kruczkowski told pressmen that they were prepared to supply Ceylon agricultural machinery, glassware, &c., in exchange for some of Ceylon's exports like rubber and coconut.

The delegation's other members were Messrs. Szymanski, Minkiewicz, and Kroskowski. They met the Minister of Commerce, Trade and Fisheries, the Hon. S. C. Shirley Corea, and had discussions regarding the trade agreement.

Trade Mission from Czechoslovakia

AN eleven-member trade mission from Czechoslovakia arrived in Ceylon by air on November 20 to investigate the possibilities of increasing the volume of bilateral trade between the two countries.

The team consisted of three government delegates and eight representatives from the trade. It was led by Mr. Ladislav Maly, Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Trade. The other official delegates were Mr. Rudoly Stolav, Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Trade, and Mr. Frantisch Opit, Section Chief of the Ministry of Foreign Trade.

Interviewed by pressmen, Mr. Maly said that Czechoslovakia had entered into bilateral trade



Sir John Kotelawala, holds a press conference on his arrival in Wellington, New Zealand

agreements with almost every country in the world. They had discussed such a proposal with Ceylon's Minister of Commerce, Trade and Fisheries, the Hon. S. C. Shirley Corea, when he visited their country earlier this year, and their present visit was a sequel to those discussions.

They hoped to conclude such an agreement during their visit and were confident that it would greatly assist in increasing the extent of trade between the two countries.

Mr. Maly further said that Czechoslovakia was interested in all Ceylon's primary exports, particularly rubber, while she had a very wide range of products to offer Ceylon.

The team was in Ceylon for several weeks and met government officials here as well as trade organizations.

U. S. Congressmen Visit Ceylon

SEVEN members of the United States Congress arrived in Ceylon by air on November 17, in the course of a round-the-world tour. They called on the Acting Chairman of the Cabinet, the Hon. J. R. Jayewardene, the same afternoon.

The leader of the mission, Mr. Clement J. Zablocki, told pressmen in Colombo that if Ceylon could successfully sweep out the rival claims of those other South-East Asian countries which were each seeking selection to provide the site for the American project under the Colombo Plan to establish a regional atomic research and training centre, the Battle Act was not likely to prove a stumbling-block. Ceylon, he said, was among the South-East Asian countries which were being considered in connection with the United States' offer.

The seven-member team, which included a woman, was a Study Mission of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the American House of Representatives.

Exhibition of American Handicraft Arts

THE Governor-General, His Excellency Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, declared open on November 1 an Exhibition of American Handicraft Arts at the Art Gallery in Colombo.

His Excellency prefaced his speech saying that it was a great privilege to declare open that outstanding exhibition, which included fabrics, model works, jewellery, pottery, and woven articles. He said that they would not fail to observe in the exhibits a close relationship with the work of Ceylon craftsmen. There was some common inspiration and some common direction.

He continued that, in the numerous and remote villages of Ceylon, the colourful strands of tradition and culture were woven into objects such as those they saw there. Cottage crafts had thrived throughout the ages in all countries despite the changes of political and historical fortune. Here in Ceylon they had the same problems in restoring an almost lost heritage as other countries had experienced.

His Excellency said: "In an agricultural country like Ceylon, so widely under-employed, the development of cottage craft is a matter of vital importance for the very existence of the nation. I sincerely hope, therefore, that the Ceylon Arts Council, the Government departments concerned with this problem, and all the voluntary organizations interested in this subject will learn fresh lessons from this Exhibition."

Co-ordination of Jayanti Activities between India and Ceylon

THE Secretary of the Lanka Bauddha Mandalaya, Dr. Ananda Guruge, left for India by air on November 11 to study and co-ordinate the Buddha Jayanti activities of the Indian Jayanti Committee with the Mandalaya's programme.

The chairman of the Indian Jayanti Committee is Dr. S. Radhakrishnan.

Dr. Guruge took the opportunity of ordering life-size statues of five eminent Buddhists of the past. The Memorials Committee of the Lanka Bauddha Mandalaya recently decided to have these statues put up on chosen sites. Statues will be erected in memory of Sir Baron Jayatilaka, Migutuwatte Gunananda Thero, W. A. de Silva, Harischandra Walisinha and the Anagarika Dharmapala.

Dr. Guruge also discussed plans for the proposed World Buddhist Pageant to be held in 1957 and dates for the Seminar on Buddhism to be held in India.

The Lanka Bauddha Mandalaya will make every effort to avoid clash of dates in the programmes of the two countries to enable Buddhists of both countries to participate in the celebrations.

Ilmenite Deposits to be Exploited

Mr. I. H. DE SAFFRIN, an international financier and mining magnate, arrived in Ceylon on November 9 to discuss plans for the exploitation of ilmenite deposits here with a local group, which has tendered for exploitation rights.

Mr. Saffrin was accompanied by Mr. J. S. Francisco, a member of the Saurashtra Mining Board. Mr. Saffrin, who has mining interests in India, has estimated the cost of the refining and dressing plant at Rs. 7 million. The project will come up at Pulomoddai, the centre of the ilmenite deposits.

Messrs. Saffrin and Francisco were met on arrival by Messrs. V. Singham and Rajah Perera, representatives of a group of Ceylon investors who have asked for the ilmenite concession.

Aerial Survey of Ceylon

AN aerial survey of Ceylon will shortly be conducted by a team of Canadian experts as a part of Canada's contribution under the Colombo Plan.

The survey, which is to be carried out by the Photographic Survey Corporation of Toronto,

will cover the entire Island. The project was originally launched in Canada on October 21, when Mr. Nik Cavell, the Administrator of the Colombo Plan in Canada, briefed the aerial team on their assignment in Ceylon.

The project manager of the Photographic Survey Corporation, Mr. John M. Henderson, arrived in Ceylon by air on November 9 to start the survey. The survey will cost the Canadian Government nearly 500,000 dollars.

Mechanized Fishing Trials off Colombo

TWO experimental fishing boats, the *Canadian* and *North Star* which had been gifted to Ceylon by Canada under the C-Plan, carried out fishing trials off Colombo during the second week of November.

Fishermen of the locality were invited to accompany the boats on these operations to observe the method of fishing. Where possible,

they were permitted to bring their own gear and bait for comparison with the types being used on the boats in the trials.

Each of these boats is manned by a Ceylonese crew under a Canadian fishing skipper. The skippers have trained the local crews in various types of mechanized fishing operations. The operations are providing data on the relative efficiency of mechanized fishing operations in our coastal waters.

I. L. O's Assistant Director Visits Ceylon

Mr. W. YALDEN-THOMPSON, Assistant Director of the International Labour Organization, arrived in Ceylon in early November to discuss the position of labour in the Island with the Government and employers' and employees' associations. Mr. Yalden-Thompson was on his way to Tokyo to establish a branch I.L.O. office there.

THE SINHALESE AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE ART AND CULTURE OF THE WORLD—II

(Continued from page 23)

"The claim of Van Eyck to the invention of oil painting in the 15th century has been shown to be untenable. Sir Charles L. Eastlake (in his work entitled *Materials for a History of Oil Painting*) has adduced the evidence of Diarbekir, to prove that the use of oil in connection with art was known before the 6th century. And Dioscorides, who wrote in the age of Augustus, has been hitherto regarded as the most ancient authority on the drying properties of walnut, sesamum and poppy.

"But the *Mahavansa* of the Sinhalese affords evidence of an earlier knowledge, and records that in the 2nd century before Christ, 'vermilion paint mixed with tila oil' was employed in the building of the Ruvanveli Dagaba. This is, therefore, the earliest testimony extant of the use of oil as a medium for painting, and, till a higher claimant appears, the distinction of the discovery may be permitted to rest with the Sinhalese."

Mr. Rajagopalachariar, a former Governor-General of India, defined culture as being the

pattern of life of a people, moulded in their own ways of thought and activity. I have in this sketch given an outline of the pattern of life of the Sinhalese, in the things that matter and count, from the time they left their original homeland in Bengal 2,500 years ago—the pattern of their life and activity which constitutes their own peculiar or special contribution to the Art and Culture of Asia and of the World.

As for the further contribution in this respect which they can and will make in the years and centuries to come, all the signs today are significant and pregnant with vast possibilities.

After more than four centuries of foreign domination and subservience to alien rule, they have come back into their own and are once again a free nation—free in all senses and ways to give full expression to the inherent genius of the race which made their country and their forefathers great and respected in the ancient world.

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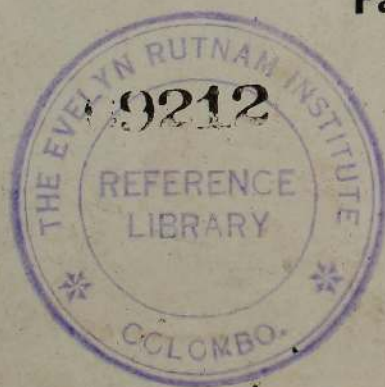
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