

CEYLON *Today*

**Address by the
Governor-General**

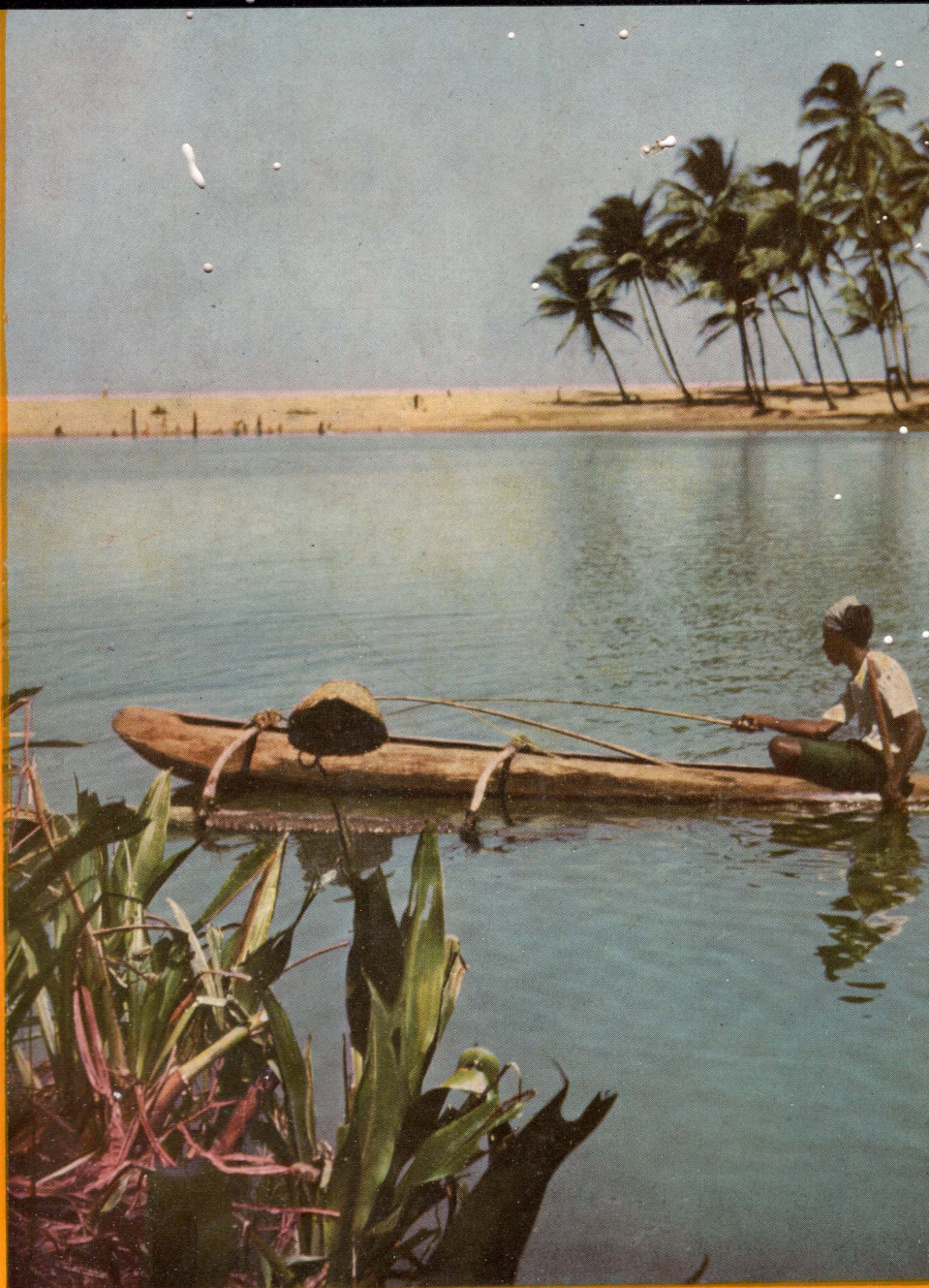
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Lagoon Fishing

JUNE, 1958

CEYLON TODAY

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Address by the Governor-General

*THE following is the full text of the Address
by His Excellency the Governor-General to
Parliament on June 24, 1958.*

MR. PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE
SENATE,

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Both Houses of Parliament had to be summoned on the fourth of June, in advance of the date previously fixed for the re-assembling of Parliament, in order that you may be informed that a State of Emergency had been declared under the Public Security Ordinance. Both your Houses have had an opportunity of discussing the subject fully. I have pleasure in stating that the position continues steadily to improve. My Government is taking all steps necessary to maintain law and order. My Government will also take the measures required to restore peace, goodwill and confidence amongst various sections of the people of the country. In accordance with its policy My Government will introduce legislation early for the reasonable use of the Tamil language.

The period of the last Session of Parliament was one of considerable achievement although, in addition to the situation created

by the Emergency, there were certain other difficulties that arose.

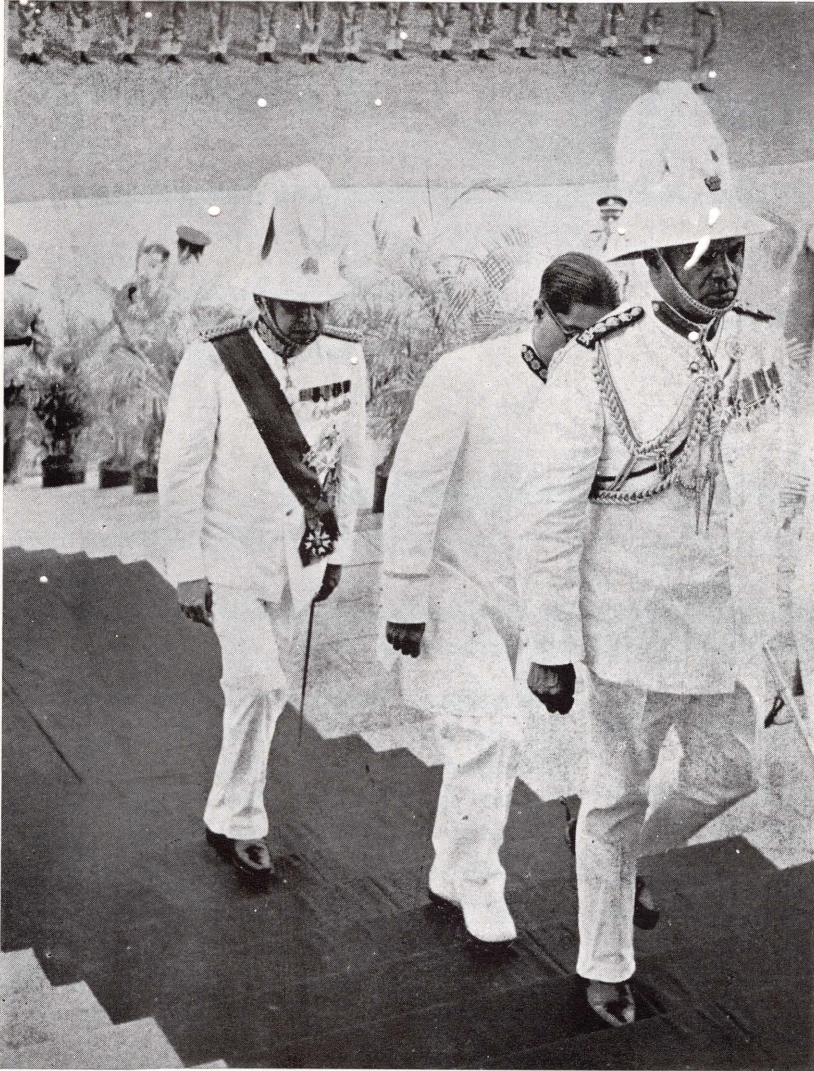
The Motor Transport Act, the Paddy Lands Act, the Port (Cargo) Corporation Act, the Employees' Provident Fund Act and the Ceylon State Plantations Corporation Act are some of the major legislative measures that were passed during the last Session.

The Naval Base at Trincomalee and the Air-Staging Post at Katunayake have been taken over by friendly arrangement with the Government of the United Kingdom.

My Government, in the pursuit of its foreign policy, secured some further trade agreements with, as well as economic aid from, certain countries.

The readiness and the generosity with which many countries came to our assistance in connexion with the floods of last December are convincing proof of the friendly relations between Ceylon and other countries of the world, resulting from the foreign policy of My Government.

Steps have been taken to reorganize the Department of External Affairs and the Foreign Service.



H. E. the Governor-General
walking up the steps of the
House of Representatives to
open the Third Session of the
Third Parliament

Revision of the Constitution

THE Joint Select Committee of the Senate and the House of Representatives which was appointed to consider the revision of the Constitution and which began its work will be re-appointed during this Session. Steps are being taken in connexion with the Report of the Select Committee on the Working of the Ceylon (Parliamentary Elections) Order in Council.

The Commission appointed to report on the establishment of a Sasana Council has

issued an interim report and its final recommendations are expected early.

In regard to the re-organization of the Public Services, My Government sent an officer to India to discuss the question with the Indian authorities. His report has been presented and is being examined.

To assist the National Planning Council in its work, a number of experts of international repute have visited Ceylon and have presented useful and valuable reports which are being pursued. Certain other experts will be visiting the Island shortly.

The Ministry of Finance is engaged in a full review of the tax structure of the country. Every effort will be made to harness legitimate sources of revenue. Steps will be taken for the stimulation of capital formation. My Government has already clarified its position regarding foreign investment.

A Bill to tax the incomes of charitable and religious institutions is ready and will be presented to you early.

A Salaries and Cadres Commission has been appointed and has started work. A Committee has been set up to report on a National Wages Structure.

The rising cost of living has been engaging the anxious attention of My Government. Certain steps have already been taken in

this connexion, such as the further reduction of the price of rationed rice by five cents a measure. Other steps are being taken with regard to certain other items which should have an appreciable effect in bringing down the cost of living.

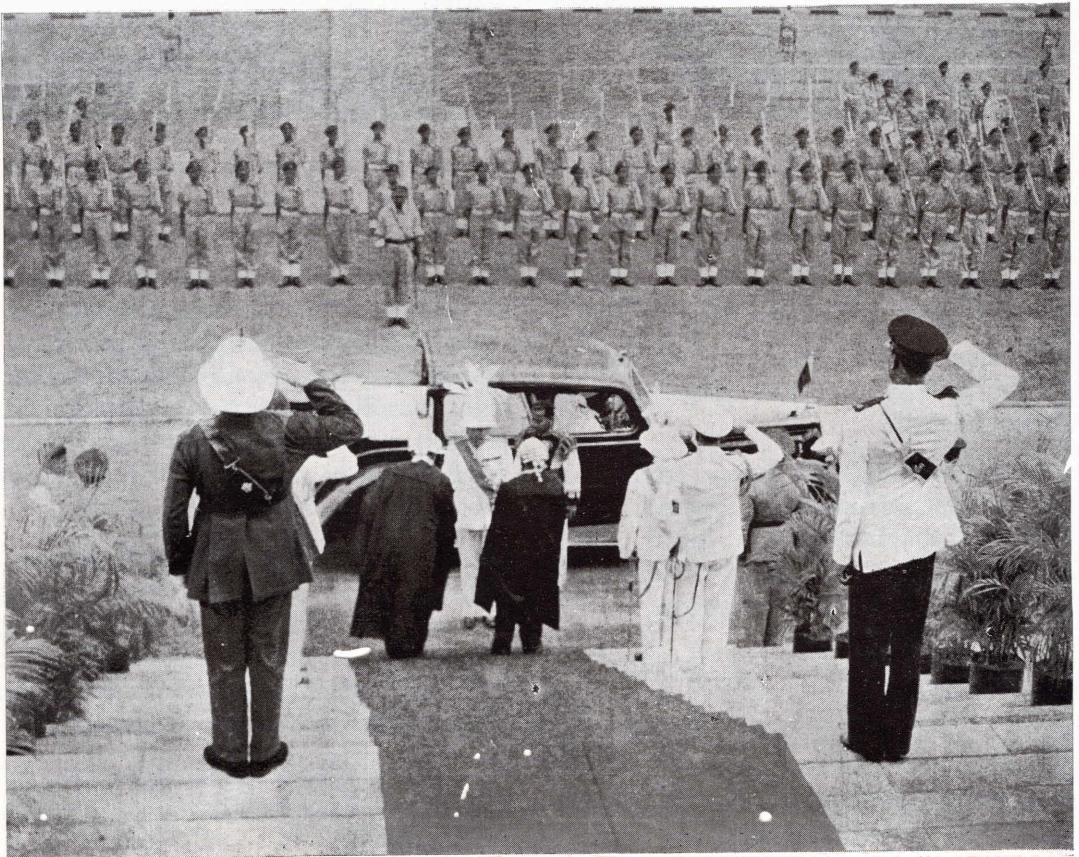
Mr. Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives

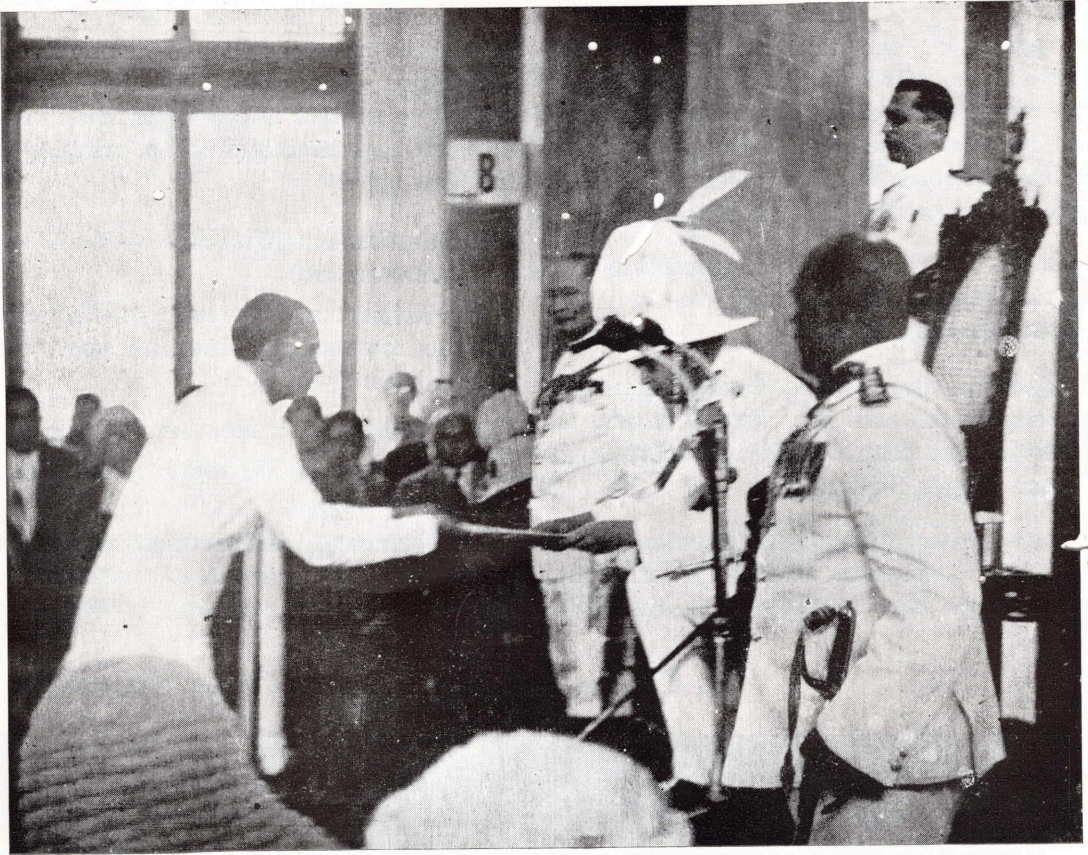
The Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the forthcoming financial year will be placed before you.

*Mr. President and Members of the Senate,
Mr. Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives,*

The Education Department will concentrate on a considerable extension and improvement of existing services, with

H. E. the Governor-General arriving at the House of Representatives





The Prime Minister, the Hon. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, handing the text of the Speech to His Excellency

emphasis on technical education, the teaching of science and the supply of trained teachers.

Legislation to raise the status of certain Pirivenas to that of Universities will be presented to you.

A number of Labour Laws have been amended to provide improved benefits to the workers and other necessary legislation is under preparation. A State Workmen's Insurance Scheme is being prepared.

Labour Unrest

LABOUR unrest resulted in a number of strikes which affected the economy of the country in the public as well as the private sector. In the case of Government servants

the implementation of the recommendations of the Anomalies Commission and the payment of increased allowances that have been granted has cost My Government more than eighty million rupees per annum. In the private sector My Government exerted its good offices to achieve just and fair settlements of the disputes that arose.

One thousand five hundred houses have been built by the Department of Housing and two thousand are under construction. One thousand houses were built privately with the aid of loans while two thousand nine hundred are under construction.

The improvement and expansion of the Postal and Telecommunication services will be continued.

Several large hospitals will be completed and occupied during the course of the year.

Before the end of this financial year it is proposed to give employment to nearly twenty-two thousand persons at the handloom weaving centres. The establishment of a second power loom project has been taken in hand. A mechanized wood-working centre, several semi-mechanized carpentry centres, coir working centres and electric kilns for pottery, bricks and tiles will be established which will provide further employment to a considerable number of persons.

Despite a disturbance in rice market prices early this year, consequent on a shortfall of production in the two largest exporting countries, namely, Burma and Thailand, My Government has been able to make satisfactory arrangements to obtain our total requirements for this year. The re-organization of food and agricultural production through

intensification of research and extension activities is beginning to show results.

It is proposed to introduce Crop Insurance on a pilot basis in a few areas of the Island and the necessary legislation will be placed before you shortly.

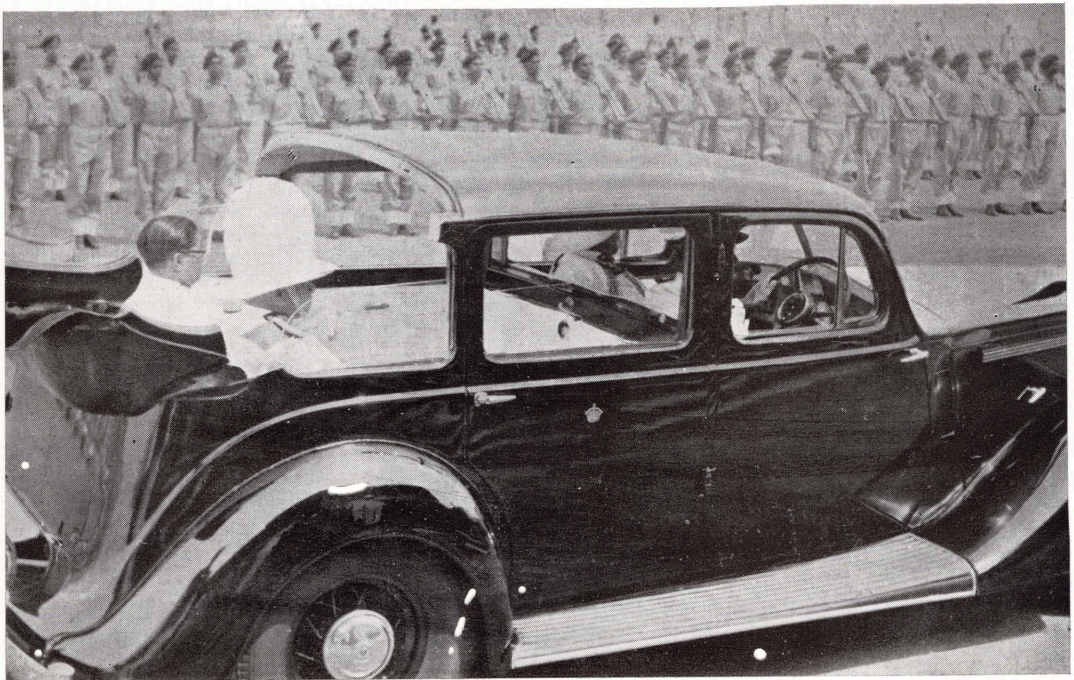
The Kantalai and Gal Oya Sugar Cane Projects are making satisfactory progress. It is proposed to start a cotton cultivation project in the Hambantota District.

You will be asked to consider a Bill to amend the existing Co-operative Law and a Bill to set up a Co-operative Development Bank.

Power Development

MY Government is paying special attention to the development of Power. Plans have been completed for commencing Stage IIB

The Governor-General leaving for Queen's House after the Ceremony



of the Laxapana Hydro-Electric Scheme and for connecting the Gal Oya supply to the main Grid. Other schemes are being investigated.

The Conciliation Boards Act was passed during the last Session and steps are being taken to implement its provisions.

The pace of Land Alienation has been accelerated. The strip acquisition of land for village expansion has been speeded up. Steps are being taken to acquire undeveloped private land in the Kandyan and other thickly populated areas for alienation to the peasantry. A separate department has been set up to deal with the Report of the Kandyan Peasantry Commission.

Work on the Walawe Scheme has commenced. Plans for the development of the Mahaweli Ganga Basin and the Kelani Ganga Basin and for the construction of the Malwatu Oya Reservoir Project are under consideration.

My Government continues to lay emphasis on industrialization as a vital aspect of the country's general economic development.

Increasing attention is being paid to industrial development in the public sector and work has already started on the manufacture of salt and by-products, the refining of ilmenite and the establishment of factories for making sugar and cotton yarn. It is hoped to commence during this Session work on the establishment of a Cement Factory, a Kaolin Refinery, a Tile Factory, a Steel Rolling Mill and a Factory for the manufacture of motor car tyres and tubes. Work is proceeding on further surveys of the mineral resources of the Island.

You will be asked to consider a Bill for the Registration and Regulation of Industries.

Schemes for the establishment of a Provident Fund for fishermen and for the granting of loans to them will be implemented.

A Bill for the establishment of a Water Resources Board will be presented for your consideration.

I commend all these matters to you for your deliberation and I trust they will receive your most careful consideration.



Officers examining sugar cane plantation at Gal Oya

Ceylon to Produce Sugar

HEMA K. DE SILVA

ABOUT a hundred years ago, sugar production was an industry of some importance in this country, and in 1859 ten factories operated in the Central, Western and Southern Provinces. During the period 1845-1859 Ceylon's exports of sugar amounted to 2,170 tons. Today a few hundred acres of sugar cane on the banks of the Gin Ganga represent the last relic of this industry.

During the last ten years, the idea of reviving its almost defunct sugar industry has received the attention of this country. The importance of achieving self-sufficiency in a commodity, the imports of which in 1957 cost the country Rs. 73 million, needs no emphasis.

It has been argued that sugar cane encroaches on the irrigation water allocated to

rice. But for the same amount of irrigation water, sugar cane produces nearly three times as much food as rice. Moreover, through its depressant effect on the pests, diseases and weeds, sugar cane would contribute to higher yields of the rice crop that rotates with it.

At the low estimate of a per capita consumption of 35 lb. per year—the United Kingdom consumes 95 lb. per capita per year—the requirements of a population of nine millions aggregate 140,000 tons of sugar. Results obtained by the Department of Agriculture indicate that yields of plant cane and ratoon crops should average 30 tons of millable cane per acre. At a rendement of 10 per cent, the annual harvested acreage

needed for immediate self-sufficiency does not exceed 47,000 acres.

At Kantalai

WORK has already begun in the Sugar Cane Project at Kantalai initiated on the directions of the Minister of Agriculture and Food, Mr. D. P. R. Gunawardena. While considerable progress has been made by the Department of Agriculture in clearing the land and planting sugar cane, the Ministry of Industries and Fisheries called for world-wide tenders for the supply and erection of the sugar factory and has now accepted the lowest tender made by Messrs. Technoexport, a Czechoslovakian Corporation. Among the other countries which submitted tenders were the U. K., West Germany, France and Holland. The construction of the factory is expected to commence early.

About 6,400 acres will be planted with sugar cane on an area of 8,000 acres, in rotation at the rate of 1,600 acres per year, to feed the factory. Paddy and other secondary crops will be grown in rotation. The first crop of paddy will be cultivated during the *Maha* season of 1961. The cane now being grown will be ready for harvesting in 1959, when the factory would be completed and be ready to go into production in May next year. By 1961, 4,800 acres of sugar cane will be under cultivation and the factory will be in full production.

The world requirements of sugar is manufactured from the processing of two crops, viz., sugar cane and sugar beet. Some sugar is manufactured from other sources, but the quantity so produced is so small that it is of negligible economic significance.

Of the two usual sources of sugar (sugar cane and sugar beet) the sugar cane is the crop more suited to local conditions.

Experiments

EXPERIMENTS in the cultivation of sugar cane has been carried out at the Sugar Cane Research Section, Polonnaruwa, since 1948.

These trials allow of three major conclusions:—

- (1) Sugar cane can be successfully cultivated in the northern dry zone of Ceylon, when the rainfall is supplemented with irrigation water.
- (2) Satisfactory yields of cane can be obtained.
- (3) The quality of the cane juice at maturity is satisfactory.

Kantalai, situated in the Eastern Province of the Island, is near a rail head and has extensive areas of soils suitable for cane. The average rainfall in the area is 65-70 inches of which 40-45 inches fall during the *Maha* season (October-January). The project is dependent for its irrigation water on the Kantalai Tank, which with its sister Tank, Venderasankulam, has a storage capacity of 90,000 acre feet subsequent on the completion of the augmentation scheme.

The topography of the area permits convenient drainage—a point of considerable importance in a crop as sensitive to wet feet as sugar cane.

The extension of the sugar acreage at Kantalai is not restricted by the capacity of the Kantalai Tank. Striking potentialities for sugar growing under lift irrigation from the Mahaveli Ganga exist.

Three Crops

UNDER the Department's programme at Kantalai cane would yield three crops, viz., plant cane and two ratoons, before it is uprooted and is succeeded by a rice season. The first planting of 1,600 acres has already commenced, and plantings of 1,600 acres in April-June will continue in successive years.

The earliest planting of 1,600 acres will, after two ratoons, give way to a rice crop in 1961; the land will be back again under cane in 1962. The system of monoculture practised in countries like Hawaii has its attractions, but for various economic and agronomic reasons, rotation with rice is preferred.

The plantation of 4,800 acres cane (viz., 1,600 acres plant cane, 1,600 acres first ratoon and 1,600 acres second ratoon) and the rice acreage of 1,600 aggregate 6,400 acres. The gross extent of 8,000 acres allocated for the first stage in sugar development at Kantalai allows a margin of 15 per cent. on 6,400 acres for roads, bunds, channels, rocks, etc., and 600 acres for nurseries and the Research Station.

Production of Sugar

THE project on completion envisages the harvesting of 4,800 acres of sugar cane annually and the processing of this crop into "plantation white" sugar using the double sulphitation process.

The Department of Agriculture is responsible for the cultivation of the cane and the supply of the crop to the factory while the Government-sponsored Sugar Corporation is responsible for the processing of the cane into sugar.

In addition to the major varieties that will form the crop at the outset, a number of varieties are being imported from other cane-growing countries with a view firstly to testing them for suitability for commercial

cultivation and secondly they will also serve as foundation stock for varietal improvement. This latter task will be one of the major functions of the Research Station that is being established in conjunction with the Project.

The planting of the cane will be done in April-June annually and the crushing season will extend from May to August each year.

The cultivation cycle that is being followed is one plant and two ratoon crops, with a short season fallow crop between the ploughing out of the second ratoon crop and the replanting of the area again in cane in April of the following year.

Initial Development

THE development of the first 2,000 acres under the aegis of the Department of Agriculture commenced in April 1957, and the stumping of this extent was completed by October 1957. After the completion of this work, the contractors were put on to stumping the following year's programme and 700 acres of this land was completed. The root ripping and terracing of the first 2,000 acres could not be undertaken during the last year

A general view of a part of the plantation



due to the heavy continuous rains that fell from mid-October onwards. This work has been undertaken during this year.

The development of the project is planned in stages following the schedule as outlined below :

Programme of Land Development in Acres

	1957	1958	1959	1960
	2,000 ..	2,000 ..	2,000 ..	2,000

Planting Programme in Acres

	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962
To be planted .. —	.. 1,600 ..	1,600 ..	1,600 ..	1,600 ..	1,600 ..	1,600
In 1st ratoon .. —	.. — ..	1,600 ..	1,600 ..	1,600 ..	1,600 ..	1,600
In 2nd ratoon .. —	.. — ..	— ..	1,600* ..	1,600* ..	1,600* ..	1,600*

Harvesting Schedule in Acres

	1957		1958		1959		1960		1961		1962	
For harvest	..	—	..	—	..	1,600	..	3,200	..	4,800	..	4,800

Anticipated Yield in Tons

	1957		1958		1959		1960		1961		1962	
Yield of cane †	..	—	..	—	..	56,000	..	104,000	..	144,000	..	192,000
Yield of sugar ‡	..	—	..	—	..	5,600	..	10,400	..	14,400	..	19,200

* To be ploughed out after the harvest of the 2nd ratoon crop.

† The anticipated yield of cane is initially 30 tons per acre increasing to 40 tons per acre in trials.

‡ The estimated recovery of sugar per cent cane is 10.

The decision to establish this sugar factory followed careful investigations on the possibilities of promoting the sugar industry in Ceylon. From 1948, extensive experiments were carried out in regard to the yield of sugar cane, which was planted in widely dispersed areas and, based on these experiments, a very up-to-date and comprehensive report on the economics of cane plantation and sugar manufacture was prepared.

Provision was made in the 1952-53 estimates for the establishment of a sugar factory with an output of 20,000 tons per year approximately, but the scheme was postponed because of the difficult financial situation which arose in 1953.

Advantages

THE development of the sugar industry has many advantages. Besides the saving of the

foreign exchange to the value of about Rs. 90 million a year, which is spent on sugar imports, the cultivation of sugar cane is important for the contribution it makes towards a better distribution of work for agricultural labour.

Usually a crop requires more labour during certain periods than during others. Sugar cane requires much labour during the dry season and practically none during the wet period. Paddy, on the other hand, requires most labour during the wet season. Obviously, therefore a combination of both crops grown in rotation would provide employment all the year round.

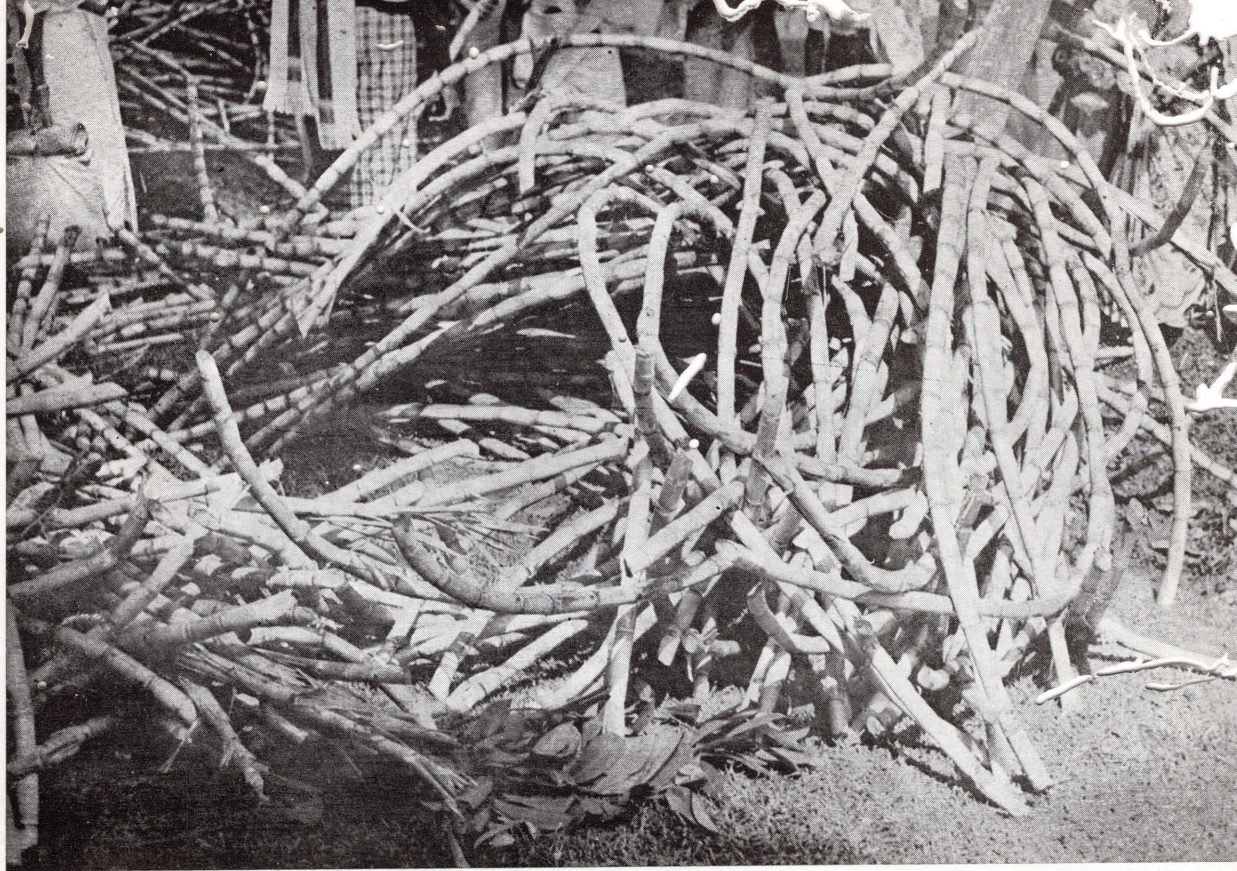
Apart from this, there are several other advantages to be obtained by growing sugar cane. Experiments in Ceylon have shown that cane tops, i.e., the top of the stem with adhering leaves, makes excellent cattle fodder, whether fed green or as ensilage.



Workmen
cutting down
sugar cane at
the plantation
at Gal Oya

An acre of cane produces about 5 to 10 tons of green tops and this during the dry season when other fodder is scarce in the dry zone. It is estimated that 1 to 2 heads of cattle can be fed from 1 acre of cane all the year round, either by fresh tops or by ensilage tops.

When sugar cane is crushed and the juice extracted, the fibre which is left called bagasse is valuable raw material for the manufacture of many products such as building and insulating board, cardboard, paper, alpha cellulose, plastics, etc.



Crop of sugar cane

Another by-product is molasses, which can be used for the production of alcohol and low-grade yeast for cattle fodder or for human consumption. Molasses can also be used to feed livestock by either adding it to drinking water or by mixing it with other foodstuffs. Nearly 5,000 tons of molasses should become available each year.

Filter press cake, (the residue obtained after the cane juice is filtered,) is an excellent manure for cane-fields, owing to its contents of valuable nutrients required for cane plantations.

First Stage

THE establishment of this factory is the first stage of a programme of industrialization to make the country self-sufficient in the production of sugar and prevent the outflow of approximately Rs. 73 million

annually, which is now spent on the import of about 135,000 tons of white sugar and about 6,000 tons of brown sugar.

The capital cost of the factory including working capital is Rs. 21,500,000. The construction of the factory alone will cost Rs. 16,200,000. The supply of machinery for the factory will be effected under the agreement for economic co-operation between Ceylon and Czechoslovakia. Payment for the machinery will be on deferred terms spread over a period of five years. The sugar factory at Kantalai is designed to produce 20,000 tons per year, which is over one-tenth of the country's annual consumption of sugar.

It will give permanent employment for about 200 persons and casual employment for about 100 persons in the factory and employment for a further 2,000 persons who will be engaged in the sugar plantations, paddy and secondary crops.

Trade Unionism in Ceylon

(Continued from previous issue)

V. SARVALOGANAYAGAM

An Important Landmark

THE first strike on Kotigala Estate in Bogawantalawa is a landmark in the history of the Plantation Labour Movement in this country. The labourers of this Estate requested permission from the Superintendent to form an Association, but this was refused on the ground that there was no necessity for an Association on the Estate and that such an Association would undermine the discipline on the Estates. The labourers persisted in their demands and struck work on April 17, 1939. The strike was settled by the intervention of the Labour Department.

Thousands of labourers began to join the Unions that were existing for the welfare of the estate labour. The membership figures of the Ceylon Estate Indian Workers' Federation and the Ceylon Indian Congress Labour Union rose to over 133,000 within a year or so.

A significant development in the industrial relations on the estates took place in 1940 when the Planters' Association and the Trade Unions entered into an agreement called "Seven point Agreement" which provided a procedure for settlement of disputes. The adoption of this agreement was responsible for the gradual reduction in the number of strikes in plantations in the years that followed. Most disputes which would generally have ended in a strike were settled at a conference. Although the seven point agreement was there the employers were still reluctant to recognise the Trade Unions, let alone co-operate with them to maintain industrial peace.

Reluctant Employers

THE reluctance on the part of employers to recognise Trade Unions and negotiate with

them was so apparent that the Controller of Labour had to make reference to it in his Administration Report, 1941. He says "at the initial stages of any movement there are likely to be disappointments and difficulties. And the short history of the Trade Union Movement in Ceylon is no exception. Some employers have failed to realise that many of the weaknesses of the movement today are ephemeral and will disappear in time. Whether the difficulty comes from one category or the other, it cannot be eliminated by direct opposition to the movement as a whole. The cardinal fact must be faced that Trade Unions have come to stay and no amount of opposition will alter the position. On the contrary the opposition may mean a protraction of the period of discomfort and trouble which can be curtailed if a genuine effort is made to guide the development on right lines". In retrospect one cannot but feel that these words were prophetic.

The year 1941 witnessed a decrease in the number of strikes on the estates and an increase in the strikes in the industrial establishments. A new workers' federation, The Ceylon Trade Union Federation, was formed during this period. This Federation and its affiliated trade unions concentrated on the Industrial establishments in the urban areas. The primary cause of the increase in the industrial disputes in the urban areas was the inadequacy of the wages to meet the increase in the cost of living occasioned by the World War II. At the same time expanding war-time activities imposed its strain on the labour market and it became imperative to provide for the prompt settlement of industrial disputes and to prevent industrial unrest from impeding war efforts.

Essential Services Order

THE Industrial Disputes (Conciliation) Ordinance, No. 3 of 1931, was the only law in force at this time to deal with industrial disputes. This Ordinance provided for settlement of disputes by conciliation boards and commissions. The recommendations of these boards and commissions, when they failed to effect a settlement, were not binding on the parties. As such it was unable to cope with the situation. As a consequence, the Essential Services (Avoidance of Strikes and Lockouts) Order of 1942 was introduced under the Defence Regulations.

Most of the important industries including the plantations were declared essential services and strikes or lockouts in any of these industries were illegal. To compensate for the loss of the right to strike or lockout, the order provided the machinery by which industrial disputes in these industries could be settled. Under the terms of this order employers and employees were given the right to apply to the Commissioner to refer disputes to a district judge or a special tribunal. The award of the district judge or the tribunal was binding not only on the parties to the dispute but on all employers of similar trades within the judicial district in which the award was made.

Although this provision was belittled by trade unions and apparently the whole order itself was detrimental to the growth of trade unions the ultimate results of this order would be seen to have been on the whole beneficial to the trade unions.

This order coupled with the Wages Boards Ordinance provided the necessary machinery to the trade unions to secure regulation of wages and settle disputes. Unions, which in this nascent stage would not have been strong enough to obtain the demands by a process of collective bargaining, were able to resort to compulsory arbitration and to

obtain substantial benefits for the members in the essential services.

Increase in Strikes

IT might be presumed that with the promulgation of the Essential Services Order, there would have been a decrease in the number of strikes, but on the contrary the years that followed the introduction of this order witnessed a large number of strikes than ever before. In 1942 itself there were 14 strikes in the industrial sector and 6 on the estates. Most of these strikes were of short duration. In 1943, there were 31 strikes in the industrial sector and 22 strikes on the estates. Most of these strikes too were short-lived and were called out perhaps with a view to drawing attention to the conditions of employment and demand redress.

Tenth Year

1944 was the tenth year of the working of the Trade Union Ordinance. It will be of interest to review the progress made during this decade. The following table gives the number of Trade Unions registered during this period :—

1935	..	.. Nil
1936	..	.. 28
1937	..	.. 10
1938	..	.. 4
1939	..	.. Nil
1940	..	.. 25
1941	..	.. 28
1942	..	.. 20
1943	..	.. 29
1944	..	.. 24

Total .. 168

Of these 168 Trade Unions only 84, exactly half the number, were functioning at the end of 1944. The others were dissolved or their registration cancelled during this period.

It will be seen that in 1936 there were 28 registrations. This was mainly due to the fact

that the General Election to the State Council was held in that year and as such feverish activities among the working class were manifest. Thereafter the number of registrations fell till 1941 when it again began to rise.

Ten years of existence of the Trade Unions Ordinance had not increased the number of Trade Unions substantially nor had it made Trade Unions acceptable to the employers. The relationship still remained strained and their attitude hostile perhaps due to the employers' confidence that in the final struggle the Colonial Government would always be behind them.

The years immediately following the war saw increase in Trade Union activity. It was reflected in the increase of the number of strikes. In 1945, there were 53 strikes in the industrial sector and 28 on the estates. The Ceylon Federation of Labour, a federation of workers' trade unions, was formed during this year.

Unrest in Public Service

THE year 1946 marked yet another landmark in the history of Trade Unions in the Island. During this year there was a record number of strikes, including the general strike, which covered both the public and private sector. There were 69 in the industrial sector and 87 on the estates. The general strike which involved Government daily-paid employees was sponsored by the Government Trade Union Federation. The strike which covered the Railway, the Harbour, the Public Works, Commerce and Industry, the Telegraph and the Electrical Departments began on October 17. It was followed by a strike of a large section of the employees in the private sector in Colombo. The strike was ultimately settled on October 22. This strike caused the reawakening of interest in Trade Unionism in the public service.

The total number of man-days lost during this year also reached a new height of 282,746 and of this 250,856 was outside the

plantation area. The all-round increase in the number of strikes could be chiefly attributed to the gradual withdrawal of the Essential Services Orders and the repudiation of the seven point agreement by the Ceylon Estates Employers' Federation—a Trade Union which was formed in 1944 to look after the interests of estate employers.

So ends the second phase of the history of Trade Unionism in Ceylon. The World War II, which occurred during this period, brought in its wake the Essential Services Orders which prohibited strikes and saw a section of the left wing political leaders who were actively interested in the growth of Trade Unions behind prison bars. This resulted in the trade union movement receiving a set-back; yet this period has its own importance in the history of Trade Unionism. The war caused a shortage of manpower and this coupled with the machinery for compulsory arbitration increased the strength of trade unions and their activities. Trade Unions tasted power during this period and this led to an increase in the demands of Trade Unions.

A significant feature of Trade Unions during this period was the concentration of Trade Union activity on one aspect of Trade Unionism only. Trade Unions were concerned only with strikes—most of which were called out in connection with dismissals. This is only one of the objectives of Trade Unionism. The other objectives like (a) promotion of social amenities and welfare among its members and (b) political education of its members were neglected.

The Third Phase

THE year 1947 was chosen as the dividing line between the 2nd and 3rd phases both for political and Trade Union causes. Politically 1947 marked the end of a century and a half of Colonial Rule. A freely elected Parliament and a Cabinet responsible to the Parliament were the important features of the new system and after a few months Ceylon took her place as a free and equal

partner in the Commonwealth. Withdrawal of the Colonial Rule and its replacement by a government of the people provided an inducement for the development of Trade Unions.

The General Election held in 1947 gave an impetus for Trade Unions as the elections in 1936, and the revival was most marked in the public sector. Demands were made by public servants for an improvement in their conditions of service and salaries. During this year 52 strikes in trade and industry outside plantations and 53 strikes on the estates were reported. The majority of these strikes occurred during the first half of the year and the decline in the number of strikes during the latter half of the year may be attributed to failure of the general strike in May-June, 1947, and the preoccupation of Trade Union leaders with the general election during August-September, 1947.

The General Strike

THE general strike in May-June, 1947, was the most important of all the strikes. This strike, mainly of the workers of Colombo city who were members of a Trade Union affiliated to the Ceylon Trade Union Federation and the Ceylon Federation of Labour, took place during the period May 19th and June 19th. The strike started at the Motor Engineering Establishments in Colombo on May 9th. On May 19th the workers in a number of Engineering firms downed tools. After submitting 13 general demands including one for a 25 per cent. increase in wages, the workers in other engineering firms also joined on the next day and were followed by the workers in the Tea and Rubber export trade on May 22nd. The workers at the Oil installations in Colombo too followed suit. On May 31, a large number of public servants mainly in the clerical service throughout the Island struck work. The immediate cause was the interdiction from service of certain officers of organizations of public servants who were convenors of a mass rally of public

servants held on May 29th in furtherance of the demand for full trade union rights to public servants at which certain political leaders were allowed to address the gathering in contravention of public regulations. Among those interdicted was Mr. T. B. Illangaratne, the present Minister of Labour, Housing and Social Services, then a member of the clerical service. The strike though widespread collapsed on June 9th as a result of the firm stand taken by the Government. The failure of the public servants' strike affected the morale of other strikers and the strike collapsed on June 20th the workers resuming work unconditionally. This was the largest strike the country ever faced.

The failure of the May-June general strike in particular had an adverse effect on Trade Unionism. The efficacy of the instrument of the Trade Unions for collective bargaining was doubted and the scepticism of the use of Trade Unions was reflected in the number of trade unions registered during this year. Only 18 Trade Unions were registered in 1947 as against 33 of the previous year. This figure was the third lowest in the history of the Trade Union Movement.

The year 1948 was one of comparative peace in the sphere of industrial relations. There were 32 strikes on the estates and 20 in the industries. This was the lowest figure for the period 1943 to 1948. The number of trade unions registered this year was 29 and the total number of membership of the registered trade unions was 158,178. The services of the Trade unions adviser, Mr. R. T. Huslon, was made use of extensively by the trade unions in the public sector.

Amendment to T. U. Ordinance

THE general strike of public servants in 1947 led to the re-examination of the Trade Union activities of the public service by the Government and this resulted in the enactment of the Trade Union (Amendment) Act of 1948. This Act, while granting public servants the right to form Trade Unions,

prohibited such trade unions from federating with each other and from having political funds. The trade unions in the public sector began to play an important part in the Trade Union movement from this period onwards.

There was a marked increase in the number of strikes and other industrial disputes during the year 1949. There was 94 strikes in this area and 695,516½ man-days were lost. The temporary withdrawal of the operation of part II of the Wages Boards Ordinance in respect of the Rubber Growing and Manufacturing Trade was by far the most important cause of unrest on the plantation areas where the majority of the strikes took place. Another fact which contributed to the increased number of strikes was the tendency on the part of some employers to refuse to meet the representatives of the various Trade Unions.

The Industrial Disputes Act

THE repeal of the Essential Services (Avoidance of Strikes and Lockouts) Order of 1942 caused considerable difficulties in the settlement of industrial disputes. The industrial Disputes (Conciliation) Ordinance of 1931 which was in force at the time was hopelessly inadequate to cope with the situation. The difficulties experienced during the post-war years in settling industrial disputes made imperative the introduction of new legislation to facilitate settlement of disputes.

The Industrial Disputes Act which provides for investigation and settlement of industrial disputes was passed in 1950 and came into operation in 1951. The Act provided for the registration of collective agreements, and established machinery for the settlement of disputes by conciliation, voluntary arbitration and compulsory arbitration where necessary.

The writer does not propose to bore the reader with dull statistics of strikes and man-days lost during every year. In the last few paragraphs it would have been noted that constant reference was made to a number of

strikes that occurred in every year and the number of man-days lost as a consequence. This became inevitable because trade union activity was mainly concentrated in this sphere and the study of trade unionism, therefore, had to include such details. The position did not improve even during the period under review.

Commissioner's Comments

SO apparent was this apathy of trade unions towards the other spheres that the Commissioner of Labour was constrained to refer to this consistently in his Administration Reports. He observed in his Administration Report of 1953 that there was a great tendency on the part of a number of trade unions to concentrate their activities on industrial disputes affecting the terms and conditions of employment of their members to the complete exclusion of welfare directed towards the improvement of the general lot of workers and that it would be advisable for trade unions to pay more attention to labour welfare work such as housing, savings group schemes on estates, temperance work, &c.

Such an interest on the part of trade unions, it was observed, would tend to promote greater friendliness on the part of the employer who will then realise that unions exist not solely for the purpose of obtaining concessions during industrial disputes, where both parties have naturally to take opposite sides, but also in promoting the welfare of the workers, where it is possible for both sides to work together for the achievement of common aims.

Another feature which militated against the healthy promotion of trade unions was the multiplicity of trade unions. Reference will be made to this in greater detail in the subsequent paragraphs, but it will suffice here to state that this multiplicity of trade unions led the employers to refuse to recognise any trade union whatsoever.

Most employers still looked upon trade unions with disfavour. Some of them even

refused to accord formal recognition to the trade unions of the employees in spite of the fact that the unions were registered under the law of the land. This reluctance on the part of the employers caused considerable friction and unrest in the industrial sector.

A number of strikes took place during the period under review. There were 103 strikes in 1951, 75 in 1952, 87 in 1953, 114 in 1954, and 107 in 1955. Most of these strikes, as stated earlier, were concerned with the dismissal of workers and to a great extent were short-lived. Among the important strikes during this period were the strike at the South Western Bus Company and the strike at Ceylon Theatres in 1955.

The following is the table of trade unions registered during the period 1945-1956 :—

1945	..	..	23
1946	..	..	33
1947	..	..	18
1948	..	..	29
1949	..	..	44
1950	..	..	52
1951	..	..	94
1952	..	..	55
1953	..	..	40
1954	..	..	70
1955	..	..	80

It will be observed that in 1951 there were 94 trade unions registered. A large number of these trade unions were in the public sector. By the end of 1955 there were 310 unions functioning. The registrations of a number of trade unions were cancelled during this period for failing to comply with the Trade Union Ordinance. Most trade unions failed to send in their annual returns and as a result quite a number had to be cancelled.

Even at the end of the third phase of trade unionism in Ceylon it cannot be said that the development of trade unionism had been satisfactory. It was still in its infancy and had a number of defects. The multiplicity of trade unions, the political affiliation of trade

union federations and the resultant acrimony, the continued preoccupation of trade unions with only the stereotype affairs of dismissals and such disputes, the indifference of workers towards trade union work, the reluctance of employers to co-operate with trade unions, all these vitiated the proper growth of trade unionism.

New Era

THE year 1956 marks the beginning of a new era in the history of trade unions in Ceylon. This year marked the beginning of the People's Government—a sobriquet used to show a subtle distinction between the Government of the people which was essentially aristocratic and the People's Government which derived its support from lower classes. The new Government was pledged to encourage trade unions and had in its fold tested Trade Union leaders. This gave an impetus to the growth of trade unionism.

Significantly enough 1956 was the 21st year of the introduction of the Trade Union Ordinance and in its maturity trade unionism began to take its proper place in the social set-up. The establishment of a Government with a definite tendency towards socialism and a soft corner for trade unionism gave a great fillip to the increasing number of trade unions.

The new Government's election manifesto had included certain promises to the trade unions. Among these were the repeal of the Stay-in Strikes Act and the repeal of the amendments to the Trade Union Ordinance which prohibited public servants from amalgamation or federation with other public service trade unions.

Increased Activity

A marked increase in trade union activity was evident during the two years of the existence of the new Government. The number of trade unions registered in 1956 were 109 and in 1957, 180. Only 6 trade unions were cancelled this year as

against 53 in 1955. The number of trade unions functioning at the end of 1957 were 537 which is the largest number ever in the history of trade unionism in Ceylon. This in itself speaks for the enormous popularity of trade unionism in Ceylon and the support the trade unions had from the Government.

Trade Unions in their awareness of the newly acquired freedom and support began to assert themselves and this naturally resulted in an increased number of strikes. 214 strikes were reported in 1956 and 297 in 1957. This, it is hoped, is only transitory and with the passage of time a greater sense of responsibility will devolve on the unions and this would naturally result in greater industrial harmony.

Trade Unions Today

THIS article will be incomplete without a few observations on the present structure and the form of trade unions in Ceylon. Four important features will strike a casual observer: firstly, the presence of the outside element, secondly, the multiplicity of trade unions, thirdly, the pre-occupation of trade unions with only such matters as dismissals and the like, and fourthly, lack of understanding of discipline during industrial disputes. The reluctance on the part of employers to recognise trade unions and to work along with them for the harmony of industrial peace is also noteworthy.

The Outsider

THE continued presence of the outsider in trade unions is an unfortunate feature of trade unions in Ceylon today. This has already been referred to in the earlier section of this article. Two important factors contribute to the presence of the outsider and his continued domination over trade unions. Firstly, trade unionism in Ceylon unlike trade unionism in England where it was a voluntary, gradual growth from below, was imposed from above on the

working classes by the politicians. In England the Labour Party was the product of Trade Union Congress; in Ceylon Trade Unionism was the product of political parties. The middle-class politicians, particularly those with Marxist leanings, have continued to dominate trade unions.

The second factor was the ignorance and illiteracy of the workers. This necessitated the presence of the outsider to guide the worker in the organisation and to promote their interest. These outsiders were politicians and they exploited trade unions to their political advantage. As a result we have witnessed in this country the unfortunate and unhealthy development of trade unions on political lines, rather than on industrial basis. Each political party sought to have its own union in an industry and this made negotiations doubly difficult with an employer who was hesitant to negotiate with them.

Multiplicity of Trade Unions

THE multiplicity of Trade Unions which was the direct result of political contamination by itself hampered the proper development of trade unionism. Unlike in England where each industry has one trade union, in Ceylon an industry has sometimes 3 or even 4, each bitterly opposed to the other in their political ideologies. In the course of time it is hoped this will be eradicated and each industry will have one trade union rather than 3 or 4.

The multiplicity of trade unions is a feature not peculiar to Ceylon. It is common to a number of Asian countries. In India there are trade unions sponsored by the Congress, the Praja Socialist Party and the Communist Party. They vie with each other for power in the industries. Even in some European countries, like Italy and Belgium, this unfortunate feature is not absent.

Mention was made earlier of the increase in the number of trade unions during the last two years. The number of trade unions

must inevitably fall with elimination or at least the partial elimination of politics from trade unions and re-organization of trade unions on the basis of one trade union for each industry. The optimum number of trade unions with maximum membership possible will certainly increase the strength of trade unions in Ceylon.

Free from Politics

THE time has come for trade unions to free themselves from the fetters of politics and to concentrate on trade union work alone. An essential ingredient to this would be the education of the workers themselves to take up the leadership of their Unions. Workers should be encouraged to participate in trade union negotiations and to run the trade unions. The need for the use of English in official correspondence, which may have deterred a working class man from playing his part in trade union matters, no longer operates. Further, the ignorance of the workers has been wiped out to a great extent by the introduction of free education and the excuse that the workers do not understand the language of the administration or are illiterate and ignorant is no longer tenable.

The Government has already started a series of radio talks in the national languages to educate the workers and to make them feel the importance of leading their own organisations. The time is not far off when trade unionism in Ceylon will be free from political contamination and be dedicated to the cause of the upliftment of the workers, the promotion and the protection of their interests.

The pre-occupation of trade unions with strikes relating to dismissals and the like does not contribute to the healthy growth of trade unionism. This pre-occupation is not unnatural, for even in England till the early twenties of this century trade unions were only concerned with direct action. During the first 30 years of this century, the rate of increase of national wealth slowed up

considerably in Britain and this combined with labour's growing strength and political ambitions caused some bitter industrial strikes. The years following the depression of the twenties witnessed a change of the industrial climate. The trade union policy became more cautious relying on organisations and arguments rather than direct action, while the attitude of employers and employers' associations became gradually more co-operative and conciliatory.

Diversify Activities

CEYLON Trade Unions should strengthen themselves by catering more to the workers' needs and their welfare. They can initiate training schemes for their members to provide technical training. They can undertake co-operative housing to ease the housing problem among their brethren. They should devote more time to educating their members in trade union leadership. More attention can also be devoted to Savings Groups Schemes and temperance work. This will convince the employer that the trade unions exist solely for the purpose of improving the conditions of the workers and not for the political aggrandisement of interested parties.

Another significant feature of trade unionism in Ceylon is that trade unions have thrived only in trades where Wages Boards have been established. It is unfortunate that other trades particularly the Shop employees have been badly neglected. Much scope exists for the organisations of the Shop employees in all parts of the Island.

Trade Unions in Public Sector

PUBLIC servants were dissatisfied with the limitations placed on their right to organise, particularly the prohibition against formation of Federations and agitated for the removal of these limitations from 1948. This has recently met with success with the present Government decision to permit federation within the public sector.

Compared with the private sector, the organisation of the workers in the public

sector has been very rapid after the Trade Unions (Amendment) Act was enacted. The change in the political climate after the last general elections has accelerated the process but this is common to both sectors.

There has been a revolution in thought and action among public servants from 1947—one now sees the spectacle of the white collar worker marching in procession hand-in-hand with the industrial worker.

The grant of trade union rights (even though limited in some respects) has had more social and political significance than could have been envisaged at this time of the enactment of the Trade Unions (Amendment) Act.

Importance of Discipline

TRADE Unions owe a duty by the public and the employers to inculcate a sense of discipline among its members, while direct action is being taken. The importance of this cannot be over emphasized, for the greater the caution and restraint employed by the workers, the greater will be public support and sympathy. At a time when the Government is about to repeal the Stay-in-Strike Act, the trade unions must prove that they are worthy of the responsibility that is devolving upon them. That such responsibility and considerate action is not lacking among the trade unions is evident from the compliments paid to trade union workers by a local motor firm and a local soap manufacturing company.

The setting up of Joint Councils in each industry will alleviate to a great extent the friction that exists among workers and employers. A frank and free discussion over the table will remove a lot of misunderstanding and this it is hoped will lead to a reduction in the number of industrial disputes. Industrial relations are nothing more and nothing less than human relations.

Duty of Employers

THE employers must realise and would have realised by now that trade unionism is

important for the industry and that for the increased output in production, industrial peace is indispensable. They should co-operate with trade unions and adopt a realistic attitude towards labour problems. They should consider trade unions as a factor of production. The greater the understanding between trade unions and the employer, the less will industrial disputes be.

Public Opinion

IT is indeed a pity that public opinion has not been vigorous enough on industrial dispute matters. A lack of sympathy and indifferent attitude characterises public reaction today towards trade unions. In England public opinion is an important factor in the settlement of industrial disputes. The awards made under voluntary arbitration in England are normally accepted by the parties as a result of pressure from public opinion. The attitude of the general public always plays a decisive role in the success of industrial disputes. Both the Press and the Government should help to foster the growth of such a public opinion in Ceylon.

Whither Trade Unionism ?

THE spate of strikes that took place during the last few months has made many people ask " Whither Trade Unionism ? " The answer is not difficult to seek. This is the age of transition in trade unionsim. Trade unions from their childhood are now becoming matured. During this adolescence period there is bound to be industrial strife, but with the passage of time they will acquire a greater sense of responsibility and coupled with a spirited public opinion and responsive co-operation of employers, industrial peace and harmony will be firmly secured. This will indeed be the golden era of trade unionism in Ceylon.

The above extract as well as the earlier one which appeared in the May issue of *Ceylon Today* are reproduced from the *Ceylon Labour Gazette*.

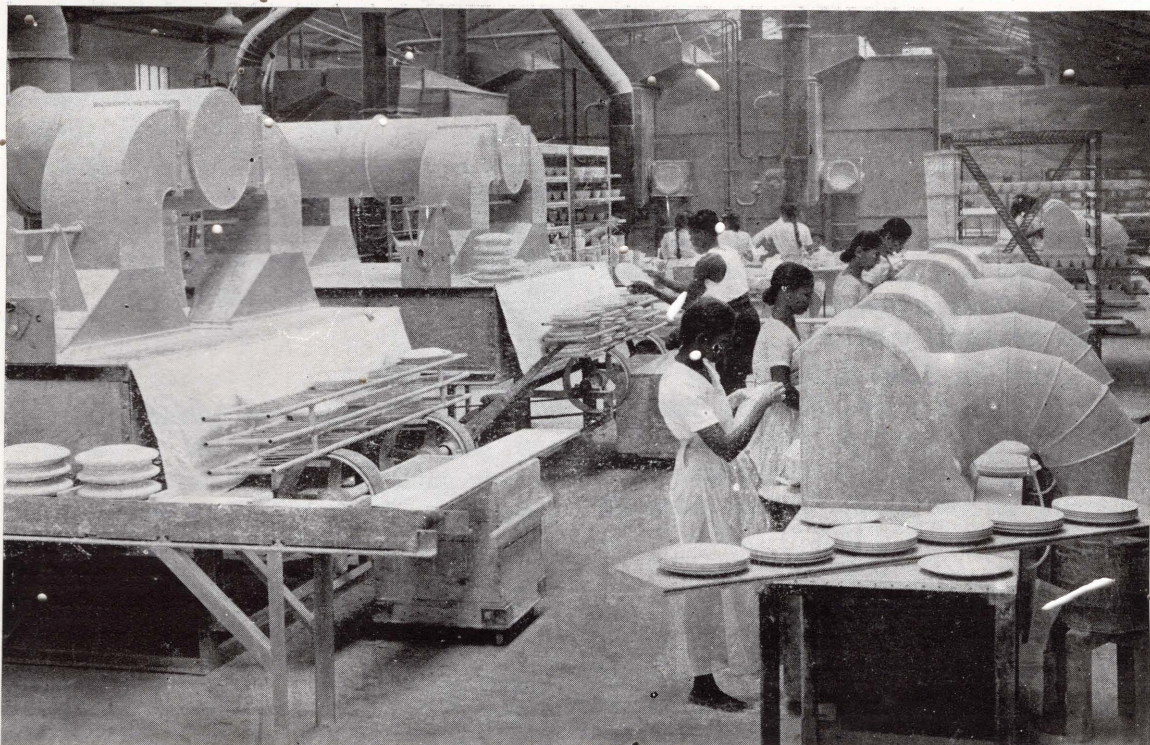


Plate dryers

Ceylon Ceramic Industry

IRVING L. MOONEMALLE

THE ceramic industry is new to Ceylon. Although the art of the potter was known in ancient Ceylon, ceramics were not developed either for utilitarian or artistic purposes.

In Ceylon, the pottery industry was confined in the old days to the brown clay. Coloured and painted articles made of clay were produced by our ancient craftsmen. From the time the Portuguese occupied Ceylon in the 16th century, the potter's art gradually declined as did all the other handicrafts of this country. By the beginning of this century Ceylon was importing all her requirements of crockery and the like. What was produced in this country was in such negligibly small quantities that the potter's art was almost a dead craft.

With the general renaissance that came upon this country, after the first World War in the wake of the great nationalist revival

in India, new interest was shown in local handicrafts. But it was not till the Donoughmore Constitution came into operation and there was a Ceylonese Minister of Industries, particularly of Cottage Industries, that any concrete measures and steps were taken to assist the pottery industry to develop.

First Surveys

IT was in the era after 1936, especially when Mr. G. C. S. Corea became Minister of Industries and Mr. D. H. Balfour became the Director of Industries, that the first serious surveys of our clay deposits were made. On the basis of these surveys measures were taken to revive the art of the potter among the traditional craftsmen of this country. It was found that communities of potters were found adjoining areas of some of our clay deposits. The Department of Industries has not only assisted these persons to rehabilitate

themselves as producers of hand-made pottery but also brought in new sections of people interested in this craft to enter into the production of articles of domestic use such as bricks, tiles, cooking vessels, flower pots, water jugs and the like. Today Ceylon is well on the way to becoming self-sufficient in regard to articles made of clay.

In the modern era, people have become accustomed to crockery of much higher quality than what the village potter or the small handicraftsman can possibly turn out. White clay or kaolin is the basis of modern domestic crockery, and it was not till the period after 1936 that a serious attempt was made in Ceylon to exploit these indigenous resources for the production of modern ceramic ware.

In the early 1940's during the war-time years, Mr. D. H. Balfour, then Director of Industries, set up a pilot ceramic factory under the Department of Industries at Periyamulla, Negombo. This factory did not have the modern machinery and equipment and the quality of production naturally was not up to standard. Heavy losses were incurred as a result by way of breakages. All the same Balfour's enterprise blazed a trail for a modern and well-equipped factory.

The Government decided in 1950 to construct a new factory to be run on modern lines and set aside about Rs. 2½ million for this project. The new ceramic factory was completed in 1955, also at Periyamulla, Negombo, at the site of the older factory. It was also in 1955 that the idea of Corporations gained currency in the country and the outlook of the Government in respect of local industries changed. In 1955, the Government sponsored the Corporation Act, No. 19 of 1955, under which Government was empowered to entrust the management of factories to Corporations. Thus the new ceramic factory which began to operate in September, 1955, started as a Corporation called "Ceylon Ceramics" with an initial capital of Rs. 3 million.

New Factory

THE new factory was designed for an output of 450 tons of "once-fired" ceramic ware per year. But in actual practice this target could not be reached with the limited equipment at the factory. Another reason which limited the output was the necessity of having to "fire" the products twice instead of once as originally anticipated. "Double firing" was considered essential for the

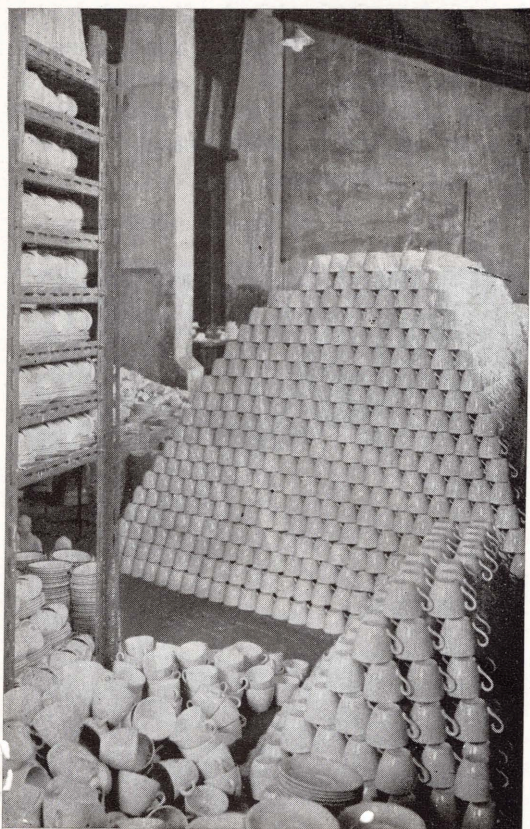
Kiln cars loaded with ware



manufacture of domestic crockery, such as cups and saucers, plates, etc. The Corporation, however, met these deficiencies and achieved considerable production targets. Technically skilled labour was an essential requisite to the ceramic industry and the machinery was only an aid to an individual's skill.

There are about 175 people employed at "Ceylon Ceramics" today. During the period of 2½ years of the existence of the new ceramic factory the Corporation has succeeded in training the personnel in craftsmanship, and has also achieved its targets of production. The requirements of domestic crockery for Ceylon at present are in the region of about two thousand tons a year. "Ceylon Ceramics" are able to meet 20 per cent. of the country's demand. The quality of the ware has improved a great deal and today it compares very favourably with similar imported

Cups in the sorting section



Hand-painting of plates

ware. So much so that directors of famous crockery manufacturers in England—Messrs. Johnsons and Messrs. Meakins—during their visit to the Negombo ceramic factory, some time ago, were highly impressed and showed surprise at the remarkable progress made during the short period of two years. This supports the view that the ceramic industry would normally take a very much longer period to establish itself.

The immediate proposal is to expand the existing factory to double its present output and to organize it on a sounder footing. There is a further proposal to set up a Kaolin refinery at Boralasgamuwa. It is believed that the Kaolin refinery will not be an economic proposition if it were to supply the needs of the present ceramic factory at Negombo alone. The output of this factory has to be

Inside view of the factory ►
with the raw ware in
shelves about to be fired
in kilns



Assorted ware on display ►



increased to at least three times its present production if the Kaolin refinery is to be fully utilized.

The Negombo ceramic factory is situated on a site of over 14 acres and its buildings occupy less than two acres. There is ample room to expand the existing factory to produce about five times its present output and meet the country's full requirements in crockery. Ceramic factories can also be established in other parts of the Island to meet the increasing demands for domestic crockery.

To symbolize the success of the Ceylon Ceramic factory in producing articles of high quality an exhibition was recently held at the Art Gallery, Colombo. The exhibits won admiration and praise from all those who saw the exhibition, including foreign visitors and diplomats attached to Embassies in Colombo. This exhibition not only helped to bring before the public the products of "Ceylon Ceramics" but also helped to break down the myth, long fostered in the Island, that only articles imported from advanced industrial countries were of good quality.

The Sacred Cave at Adam's Peak

• WILFRED M. GUNASEKARA

CEYLON'S famous Holy Mountain is the centre of attraction to devotees from all parts of the Island. SRI PADA to the Buddhists, SIVANOLIPATHAN to the Hindus, BHAVA MALAI to the Muslims, and ADAM'S PEAK to the Christians—this beautiful mountain is covered with sanctity, sublimity, veneration, legend and history.

I do not propose to touch on the historical and geographical aspects of *Sri Pada* and its environs, because they are matters of common knowledge. I, therefore, propose to write about its Holy Cave.

There is yet scope for exploration and for the unravelling of secrets hidden within the bosom of Sri Pada, and the wilderness around this "most widely revered Cathedral of Earth," which seems to "dally with the wind and scorn the Sun" the enchanted scene of ancient tales and legends old".

John Still explored this wilderness and the paths leading to the summit of "Hoar Sri Pada" in December, 1902. He spent a fortnight for this purpose. He only explored three parts one of which, Englishmen resident in the neighbourhood told him, contained "both ruins and inscriptions". Still discovered a cave 150 feet below the suspension bridge on the Hatton route. It was 20 feet above the stream and was curious, in that it ran straight into the hill for nearly 15 feet. It was circular and looked man-made with some gigantic implements. Flowering trees round its entrance testified to human occupation fifty years ago.

King Nissanka-Malla's Cave with his inscription in it, is situated 70 to 80 feet below the summit of Sri Pada and about 60 feet to the North of Hatton route. Concerning the rock inscriptions, Still says that "one was short and seemingly more modern

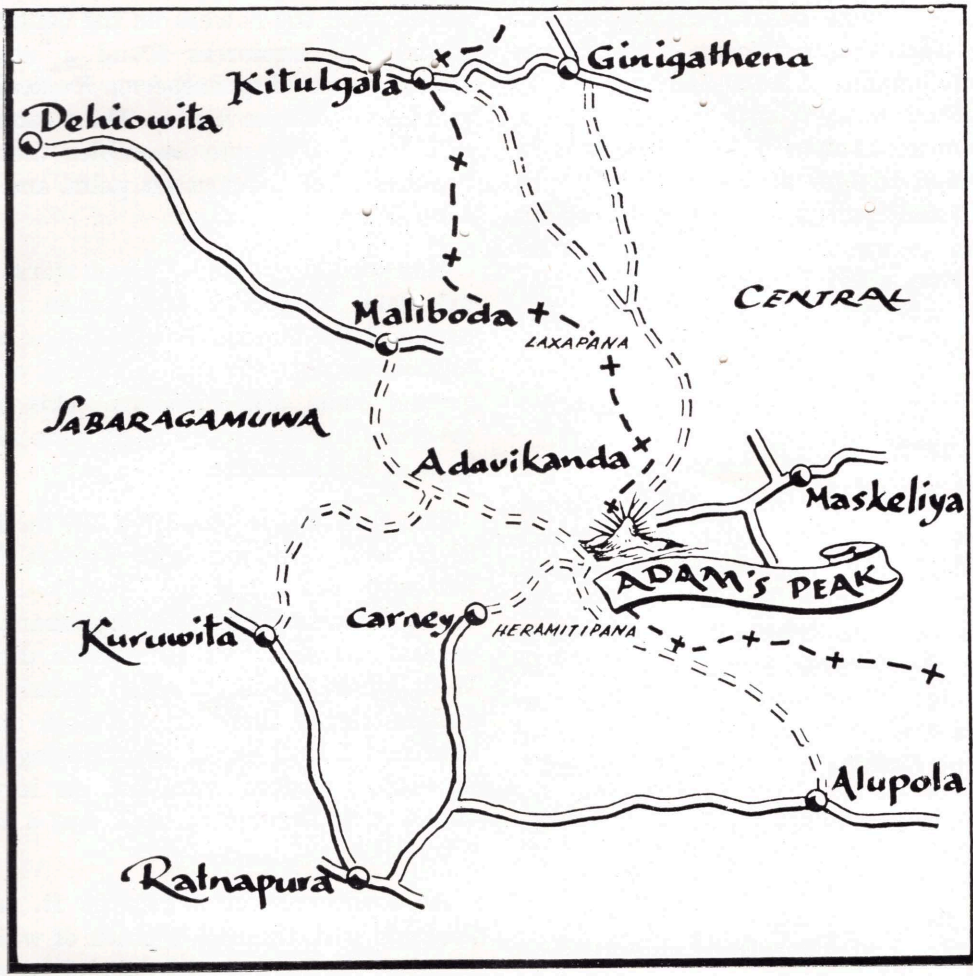
than the other. The larger is written on ruled lines: it contains 13 lines of writing, each 5 feet 2½ inches in length. The smaller is unruled and contains only 7 lines, each 8 inches long. Both are in *Sinhala* characters". Still appears to have mistaken this cave for the Holy Cave which is popularly known as *Diva Guhava* (දිව ගුහාව).

Chinese Monks

THE Chinese Buddhist monks who lived in the wilderness half a century ago, are believed to have discovered this Holy Cave and cleared a track to it. Aged pilgrims now living, who had enjoyed the hospitality of those Chinese hermits, say that they went into ecstasies, in narrating how they discovered the Holy Cave after years of search.

H. C. P. Bell, a former Commissioner of Archaeology and one of our earliest pioneers in many fields, saw Chinese characters inscribed on the wall of a cave. Nearly 50 years ago Chinese monks lived in caves in the Peak Wilderness. Of one of them, John Still (then Bell's Assistant in Archaeology) says: "He is said to have lived in the same cave for seven years as a penance". Still spent five days in the valley between Sri Pada and Bena-Samanala (Sister of False Peak) wherein, says tradition, is the sacred Holy Cave wherein the Buddha tarried awhile.

SAMANALA has two peaks, one of which bears the name False Peak. Twenty-three years ago, I understand, Mr. J. A. Will Perera sent out two expeditions to the wilderness to locate the holy Cave. Both expeditions proved failures. H. C. P. Bell, whilst approving of the quest, likened it to finding a needle in a haystack, because of the innumerable caves below Bena-Samanala, and the entire wilderness. Moreover,



Bell was of opinion that the Holy Cave (whose exact location is yet unknown), and "to which such high honour is popularly attached, would centuries ago have been definitely fixed by public opinion, and converted into the Galge Vihare *par excellence* of Ceylon". Every popular tradition is based on truth, and we still await the day when some intrepid explorer will proclaim to the Buddhist world the discovery of the Sacred Cave. In Skeen's great work on ADAM'S PEAK, is found the following story narrated by Major Forbes :—

"Once a priest, confident in his sacred character, ascended so far, that the light was observed which he had kindled at

night beneath this overhanging summit of the haunted mountain, but next day he returned a confirmed maniac unable to give an account of what he had seen."

FORBES comments that this story is possibly true, because we know "how strongly the mind of a native (nurtured in the belief of demons) would naturally be acted on, when alone in an untrodden solitude, haunted by vague terrors of superstition, and the just dread of savage animals".

In the year 1857, a band of Buddhist monks decided to scale Bena-Samanala. Terror seized some of them when they arrived at the base of the mountain, and they turned

back. The more stout-hearted climbed up, but they too were terror-stricken either on or close to the summit of Bena-Samanala. They all "swooned away", says Skeen. One of those unconscious monks "believed that he saw revealed to him a magnificent temple, adorned throughout with gold and precious gems, and in the interior, resplendent beyond all else, a Sri Pada to which that on Samanala was not in any way to be compared".

Demon-haunted

THE Sinhala work "*Samantakuta Varnanava*" mentions the sacred cave. It is said to be situated under the overhanging (cobra-hood shaped) peak of *Bena-Samanala*. The twin peaks of *Bena-Samanala* are reputed to be haunted by demons. Skeen says that "no human being has ever yet succeeded in scaling its top-most height". The name of this is *Deva Guhava* or "Cave of the God".

The explorers referred to earlier, however, brought back to civilization gold dust, gems, rare herbs and plants, pre-historic implements, tales of treasure, legends of enormous reptiles, facts concerning subterranean lakes discovered by them, tunnels traversed; messages left by early explorers; and particulars of the mysterious flower garden in the heart of the Wilderness.

The mysterious flower garden planted by the Chinese monk hermits over 48 years ago deserves a brief description here. This garden is in the western slope of False Peak and had been seen also by the late Dr. Andreas Nell. The actual dimensions (taken with a measuring tape) are 218 ft. by 196 ft. This flower garden may originally have been about an acre in extent, but the jungle has since marched in, and occupied a large portion. In 1935, practically the whole garden smiled, but an year after there were few trees and plants in bloom. Possibly the extreme wet weather in the latter year

helped shed the flowers. In the centre of this garden, the explorers found a stone slab. *Dotalu* palms (*Ptychesperma Rupicola*), provided food for the visitor. The "cabbage" is edible and the taste resembles that of the "cabbage" of the coconut palm, and is very nourishing.

Undoubtedly the best bit of work done in the Peak Wilderness was, when the party explored the famous *Stripura Cave on Batotota mountain* with its labyrinth of underground halls and corridors. This spacious cavern is 152 ft. long by 38 ft. wide and 16 ft. high at the entrance.

The hall inside measures 180 ft. long by 50 ft. wide with a height of 12 ft. The entrance to this large hall is only 3 ft. high and 6 ft. wide. From this subterranean hall, several corridors ran in various directions. With lighted tapers (*pandan*) electric torches, and hurricane lanterns, the bold explorers ventured into a few of these passages. Some of these passages were not on level with the floor of the central hall, but a few feet above it.

At a distance of nearly 60 ft. from its junction with the hall, a patch of water glistened in the light shed by the electric torches. The roof of this tunnel was very unstable, with a multitude of loose rocks that threatened to come down in an avalanche at the slightest touch. The pond had to be approached through 3 ft. gaps in the corridor. The water was crystal clear, but turned muddy when disturbed. Mica was found in abundance, also a vein or two of graphite (*plumbago*). Whether the lake was formed by a natural subsidence of the weak floor of the corridor, is doubtful.

A Letter

IN one cave was found a letter fastened to a string that lay taut across the entrance. It was in *Sinhala* characters, scribbled on a

ruled cheap notepaper. The signature and date was missing. The letter was worded thus :

" I hoisted the flag on *Be-Samanala* on the 17th February. I started 182... Since two or three years I had an idea of discovering the Holy Cave. I searched every boulder on *Be-Samanala*. Enquiries about me may be made from *M. Ulika Aramaya* or from the Chief Monk at *Allan Methiniyaramaya*. "

Under an overhanging rock is a vihara and also a devale dedicated to God Vishnu. A mound of stone was all that remained of the ancient dagoba. The late Rev. Subhuti who knew the history of the two shrines, the legends and myths woven around *stripura* restored the vihara and devale. Death carried him away before he commenced the restoration of the stupa. There is a recumbent image of Lord Buddha in this vihara, besides two other images of the Lord. The Devale had a sedent image of God Vishnu another of Saman Deviyo and a statue of a bearded King. This kingly image is clad in a *tup-potiya* (lower garment). The upper part of the body is bare save for the massive chains and *padakkams* (pendants). The head-dress is conical (*Siddha Otunna* or Crown Celestial). Old as well as recent

frescoes adorned the wall of the Devale. It is possible that the kingly figure is that of King Nissanka Malla (1187-1196 A.D.) who ascended *Sri Pada*, and bequeathed his regalia to the shrine. A dark-skinned king, he is represented sometimes in *chitra* work with a beard, wore no upper garments (as other kings of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa), is depicted wearing the conical crown and was fond of a wealth of royal jewellery.

There are a few inexplicable phenomena associated with "hoar *Sri Pada*, the Peak that is lone and tall". One such is the mysterious electric-blue light that sometimes travels round the mighty shadow thrown on the clouds high up in the sky. John Still is reported to have seen the inverted shadow from the Grand Oriental Hotel one morning, and thought *Sri Pada* had become a smoking volcano. I am in a position to accept this information as true for it was on the Full Moon Day of 3rd April, 1950, that I saw the sun rising behind *Pidurutalagala* Range and bowing repeatedly as if in obeisance to *Sri Pada*. But my view regarding this remarkable phenomenon seen by thousands annually is an optical illusion caused by the fast-fleeing mists from the valley between *Pidurutalagala* and *Sri Pada* Range.

Ceylon at World Health Assembly

THE following is the text of the speech delivered by the Hon. Vimala Wijewardene, the Minister of Health and the leader of the Ceylon Delegation to the Eleventh World Health Assembly held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, U. S. A., on May 30, this year.

MR. PRESIDENT, FELLOW DELEGATES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :

The Ceylon Delegation thanks the President of the 10th World Health Assembly for the kindness and consideration he has shown towards Ceylon in the discharge of his functions during the term of office, and at the same time offers its felicitations to you in your election to preside over the deliberations that are to be conducted in the Assembly.

Mr. President, your election to preside over this August Assembly is both an appreciation of your standing in the world of medicine today, as well as a token of appreciation of the valuable assistance that your country has given to the world towards the advancement of world health.

May I also on this occasion take this opportunity to convey to the state of Minnesota, and to the people of this beautiful city of Minneapolis, which is now celebrating its centenary, the thanks of my delegation for the courtesy and kindness extended to us during our stay here.

The Ceylon Delegation is pleased to offer congratulations to the Director-General of the W. H. O. for the most valuable report on the work of this organization during 1957, which has been submitted by him. At the same time I wish to mention with gratitude the kind co-operation and assistance which were extended to my country by your Regional Director in South-East Asia. We

are grateful to him, and the fact that his services have been further extended is indeed welcome not only to us but also to all other member-nations in our region.

Aid during Floods

I wish also to pay a very special tribute to the W. H. O. and to its member-nations for coming to our aid in a time of grave national crisis. I refer to the most disastrous floods that Ceylon suffered in December, 1957, when practically over-night about half the Island was devastated by floods, unprecedented in my country's history, causing grave damage to life and property. Grave epidemics threatened the nation as a usual aftermath of this grave disaster, but thanks to the prompt action of our public health services and ready assistance of the W. H. O. and many of its member-nations who generously and promptly sent us medical aid, vaccine, &c., we were able to avert the outbreak of an epidemic. I therefore take this opportunity to thank this Organization for its efficiency and kindness and to its many member-nations for their generosity and sympathy.

Despite the fact that my Government is spending over 10 per cent. of the Island's national revenue on our health services we are still far from achieving adequate standard of public health. We are proud of the fact that the morbidity and mortality figures for Ceylon are the lowest in any country in the South-East Asia Region, but that alone has not given my countrymen the full life which this Organization has envisaged. The freedom from disease and disability, the birthright of every individual, is still a very distant cry in the undeveloped regions of South-East Asia, and to some extent in my own country. The largest single factor that contriutes to the morbidity of my nation is the lack of

pure water for domestic purposes. Hence the large percentage of preventible bowel diseases in my country. We are grateful for the remark the Director-General has made in his report on this subject, and we are making every effort to attend to this problem. My Government is setting up a National Water Resources Board and our efforts in this direction, I hope, will assist us in the prevention of these diseases.

Malnutrition appears to be the unfortunate heritage of the people of South-East Asia and my country too is a victim of this problem. We therefore appreciate the assistance given by the W. H. O. and the F. A. O. in regard to this matter. At present, we are conducting nutritional research with a view to providing our people with a low cost nutritional diet made from locally available raw materials, chief of which is the coconut which is in plentiful supply in Ceylon. Although the coconut forms an important part of the Ceylonese diet, at present its milk and oil only are consumed and the residue is thrown away. The scientific investigations have revealed that residue which is now wasted contains such a high proportion of protein that it could be used with great advantage to give the much needed protein for the people at a very low cost.

Nutritional Research

THE other member-nations who are likewise conducting nutritional research would, I hope, make available to us the results of their efforts so that rapid progress could be made to the mutual benefit in this branch of study which is vital to the safeguarding of the health of the people.

Although Alopathic medicine has been practised in Ceylon for over a century, it still continues to be worked with a curative bias. Our efforts in preventing epidemics during the last floods and similar activities

have made it abundantly clear to us that this attitude needs re-orientation and that both the public and the profession must have a new outlook of giving public health a more important place in the health services of my country. It is therefore my present endeavour to give effect to this orientation.

As the economy of the country is closely integrated with the problems of health, it is very necessary to be able to get the maximum use from the money spent on health services. Our hospital buildings should therefore be constructed in such a way as to cut down the present high cost of construction to the minimum. Our request to the W. H. O. for an expert to advise us on this matter of low cost hospital building is an urgent need, and I have no doubt that this Organization will give us that assistance without delay.

There is yet another matter vitally important which I wish to bring to the notice of this Assembly. The under-developed regions of South-East Asia do not have sufficient medical personnel, while in certain countries there is a surplus of medical men. Just as most technical personnel are recognized and allowed to practise their profession in any country of their choice without any barriers, if medical men too are allowed to practice in any country, the problem of the shortage of medical men in under-developed countries will be greatly solved. Therefore, I urge that member-nations will make an effort to pool all available medical skill for the common good of humanity and thus prevent the waste of trained personnel. By doing so, we will be solving one of the most urgent needs of the under-developed countries who are faced with the problem of inadequate number of medical men,—a shortage which under normal circumstances will be far beyond their capacity to solve, in view of the limited training facilities and the length of time taken, especially in view of the rapidly increasing population.

In other fields of controlling disease, we, in Ceylon, have made considerable headway.

Malaria has ceased to be the public enemy No. 1, thanks to effective control measures, and our efforts are now focussed on the control of tuberculosis for which we have received generous aid through W. H. O. and the Colombo Plan.

The conquest of disease has been speeded up thanks to the co-operative efforts of this Organization which, I am glad to say, puts into practice the teaching of Buddhism, for

Buddha himself has said "*Arogya Parama Labha*"—that health is the greatest wealth that human beings could possess. We Buddhists therefore look up in admiration to the W. H. O. as a noble and charitable Organization which is bestowing on humanity this most precious possession of good health. We therefore wish this Organization the strength to carry out this noble task for the good of humanity.

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