

James E. Rulman

P
31

JUBILEE

OF THE

Planters' Association of Ceylon.

1854—1904

ILLUSTRATED SOUVENIR

OF THE

“TIMES OF CEYLON.”

GRATIS TO SUBSCRIBERS:
ADDITIONAL COPIES R1.00 EACH.

COLOMBO :

CAPPER & SONS, “TIMES BUILDINGS.”

LONDON OFFICE: 27, MINCING LANE, E. C.

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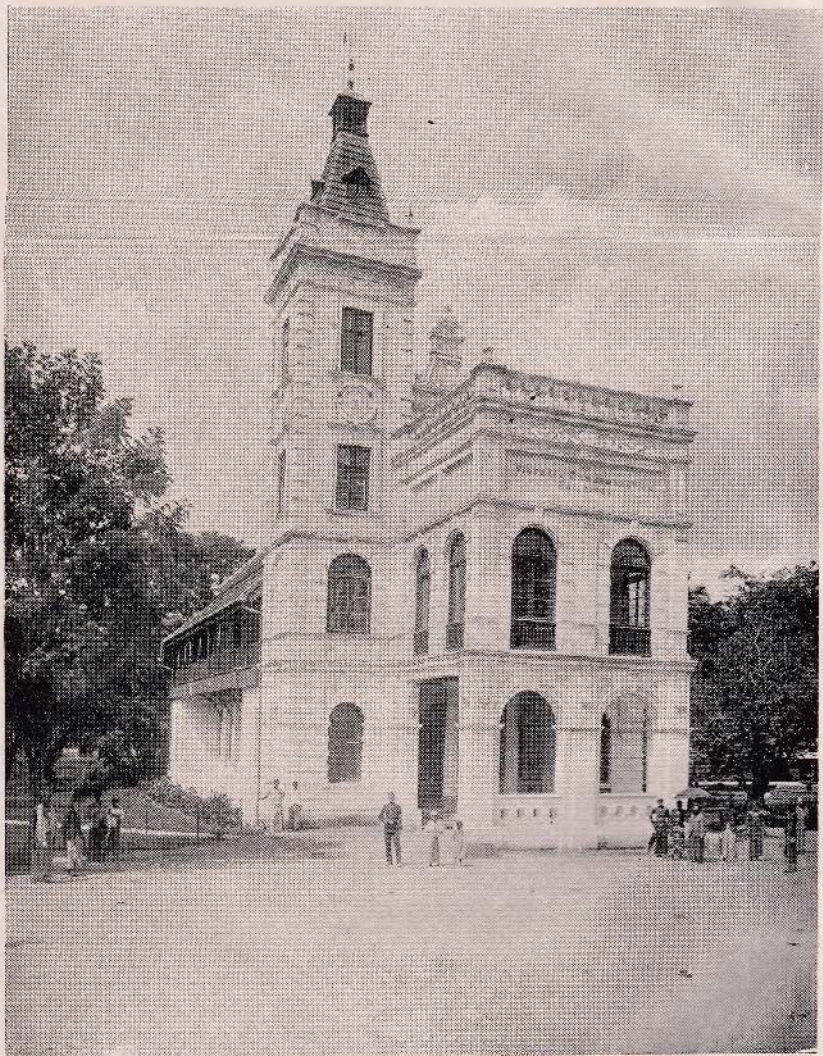


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The Planters' Victoria Commemoration Buildings
(including the Ferguson Hall and the Wall Tower.)

TESTIMONY FROM THE EX-GOVERNOR OF CEYLON.

48, Upper Grosvenor Street, London, W.,

January 13, 1904.

I have been asked to write a few lines regarding the Planters' Association of Ceylon which celebrates its Jubilee next month. I should be ungrateful if I did not seize the opportunity of acknowledging the excellent service which has been, and is being, done by the Association.

Both the Government and the Planters generally have derived much benefit from its existence. Regarding its usefulness to the Planting community generally I need not write, except to say that a central representative body gives the Ceylon Planter a great advantage over his rival, or rather his colleague, in India. His interests are carefully watched and guarded with all the power of concentrated authority.

If there were no central body to focus and crystallise the scattered, floating, and often divergent opinions and wishes of individual Planters, the Government would find it very difficult to ascertain the real wishes and requirements of the majority and still more to negotiate a compromise or settlement.

Speaking for myself I can say that I learned to regard the Association as friends and allies, none the

less so because they did not hesitate to criticise, sometimes mistakenly, but always courteously, the action and policy of the Government. The happy results of the consequent co-operation were many; but I would particularly mention the addition of a Mycologist, an Entomologist, and an Agricultural Chemist to the staff of the Royal Botanical Gardens at the initiative of the Planters' Association.

The attitude of the Association throughout my term of office has left on my mind the impression that the Ceylon Planter, when he gives himself time to think, is as reasonable as he is enterprising.

I wish the Association long life and more power. If greater and more general authority were conceded to it by the community, and if there were more ready and unquestioning obedience to its decisions, the result would, I believe, be very beneficial to the Planters of Ceylon.

WEST RIDGEWAY.



Captain John Keith Jolly, first Chairman.

The Planters' Association of Ceylon, 1854—1904.

A JUBILEE TRIBUTE TO THE ASSOCIATION AND ITS LEADERS.

The principal anniversary in the modern history of Ceylon was the Centenary of the British occupation; but the 16th February, 1896, came and went almost unnoticed. The second most important cycle is the Jubilee of the Planters' Association of Ceylon, the island's most influential and enterprising public body. The anniversary has been signalised by a memorable gathering in Kandy; and this brochure is to occupy a place amongst the permanent records of a notable event. The Association was started in Kandy on the 17th February, 1854, in the last year of the governorship of Sir George Anderson, K.C.B., and though it has suffered the ups and downs inseparable from tropical conditions of life involving the sudden and frequent changes of personnel, its healthy vitality, to-day, is universally recognised. At one time, more than a generation ago, there were nearly as many votes on the roll though there were fewer subscribing estates. The explanation is that then almost every one had his own as well as his estate qualification whereas there are very few personal votes now. It was a famous contested election for the chair which revived the Association and produced this desire for a plurality of votes. Now it enters upon its second half century with a steady membership practically of 1,000, a total that stands unrivalled and promises to gradually expand. The branch associations number 29—itsself a record—and are the best possible guarantee of the permanency and power of the central body. There are district organizations in the east and the south, and some day, with the developments which will follow the advancing Railway to the North, Jaffna and intermediate localities will have their active local P. A.s just as surely as Batticaloa possesses one. Essentially a European institution—though native owners of estates are eligible for membership, and some have availed themselves of the privilege—it has in times past come into sharp conflict with the Colonial Government, owing to the enterprise, tenacity, and persistency of the planting community

naturally influencing the Association's constant demands for improved facilities and for recognition of its varied claims, including the valuable one of being consulted by the authorities in matters affecting the welfare or convenience of the community before definite action is taken. A brief statement of the achievements of the Association appeared at the beginning of the forty-sixth Annual Report submitted in February, 1900, the occasion being the completion of the Association's own building which forms our frontispiece. The *resumé* was from the pen, we believe, of Mr. Philip, and is appended :—

As the new year will be memorable in the annals of your Association by virtue of entering into possession of Buildings henceforth to be Headquarters, and the place where meetings are to be held, when such are called in Kandy, it may be interesting and useful to recall briefly and thus give prominence to a few facts relating to the early years of your organization before proceeding with the customary review of the work of the past year.

The Planters' Association of Ceylon was established at a Public Meeting held at Kandy on the 17th February, 1854, for the furtherance of the agricultural interests of the Colony, and has since continued the beneficial work thus inaugurated with great advantage to the planting community, and for the general good of Ceylon. One of the earliest acts of the Planters' Association was to memorialize Government as to the urgent and growing necessity for railway communication with the sea coast, that is, Colombo. So vital was the question deemed that the then memorialists had no hesitation in giving an assurance "that to obtain the unspeakable advantage of a railway the planting community would consent that an export duty be imposed on coffee sufficient to meet any amount in excess of which the Government may be able to pay." It would scarcely be credited that the Railway—Colombo—Kandy, persistently agitated for nearly half-century ago—has been built, is a monument of engineering skill, and is probably the best paying railway in the world.

It may be incidentally noticed that the well-known bridge over the Mahawili Ganga at Katugastota was successfully pressed for by the Planters' Association about 1855. Another matter that early engaged, as it has continued to engage, the serious attention of the Planters' Association was the difficult question of labour supply and the line of road for immigrant coolies *via* Mannar. In this connection railway extension northwards lately sanctioned will tend to greatly improve facilities for travelling, and be the means probably of maintaining an alternative route to that *via* Tuticorin for immigrant coolies. As regards other means of communication, the Planters' Association has always taken a lively interest in roads. In 1856 application was made to Government for a Commission of Enquiry to consist of nominees of the Government and nominees of the Planters' Association to sit in Kandy and to take evidence and to report as to the best means of placing District Roads under trust management, with the result that ultimately an Ordinance was framed and the Provincial and District Road Committees constituted through which substantial benefits have accrued. Closely connected with the subject of the labour supply has been that of the Labour Laws which from 1864 onwards has from time to time occupied a share of the earnest attention of the Planters' Association. There have been occasions when the relations between the Planters' Associations and the Government have been somewhat strained, but difficulties having been overcome, on the whole the existing laws work well and have tended to maintain satisfactory relations between employer and employed. The latest step taken by the Planters' Association has been the establishment of a Labour Federation, with the

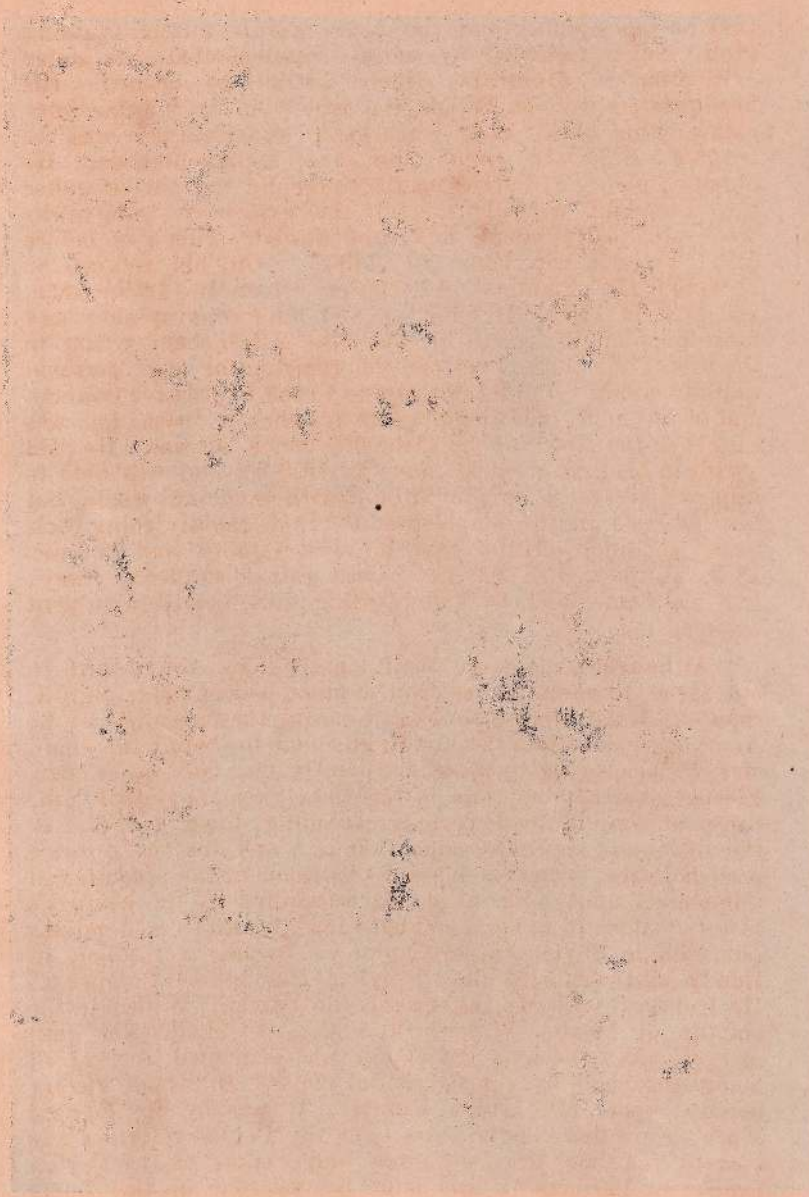
object of checking the steady increase in the amount of so called "Coast Advances," and for mutual co-operation and conference. One other matter of ancient history that may be mentioned is the privilege extended to the Planters' Association by Sir Henry Ward during his term of office as Governor, of nominating for approval a member to represent Planting Interests in the Legislative Council, and which has been continued by successive Governors of Ceylon with the best results.

The Association's first Chairman was Captain John Keith Jolly, the son of a Justice of the Peace and Deputy Lieutenant of Stirling and Dumbartonshire. Born in 1807, he served in the maritime service of the Hon. East India Company until 1843 when he and Mrs. Jolly settled in Katugastota House and on Farieland estate. This was made into a beautiful residential property; and here they were at the time of the "rebellion" of 1848. In 1853 Captain Jolly became a partner in Messrs. George Wall & Co., of Kandy and Colombo; and in the following year was elected to guide the footsteps of the sturdy infant. This he did for two years; and lived for another decade, dying at Mount Lavinia on the 27th February, 1865, aged 58 years. A grand-daughter is Mrs. Buckworth the wife of a Dimbula Planter. Captain Jolly, we read in "Pioneers of the Planting Industry"—from which series other personal facts which follow and most of the earliest dates are taken—was respected and trusted alike by the Kandyan aristocracy, the minor headmen and villagers, and the Tamil coolies on his own estates. "Captain Jolly was the soul of honour, ever generous and kind-hearted." On his arrival in the island he had replied to Lady Oliphant that he was not going into coffee expecting to make a rapid fortune—"like all the others," as Lady Oliphant expressed it—but that he hoped by industry and perseverance to achieve a modest independence in perhaps twenty years. This was what happened, though Captain Jolly's health then gave way. His portrait whom the officials of the Association were years in obtaining is here published for the first time, and naturally comes first in our little gallery.

The second Chairman, short and burly Robert Boyd Tytler, was one of the giants of those days. No less picturesque was his tall and distinguished-looking rival, George Wall, who succeeded Mr. Tytler in a few months on the latter sailing for Europe. Like many of his contemporaries and juniors Mr. Tytler was from Aberdeenshire. He was born in 1819 (as were Andrew Nicol, M.L.C. in 1861, and John Gavin, Chairman in 1862, the former hailing from Banffshire, the nearest he had been able to get, at the time, to Aberdeen 'awa), and came to Ceylon at the age of 18 years. As he had already spent three years planting in Jamaica, Mr. Tytler had cut his wisdom teeth early; and owing to his West Indian experi-

ence he was a pioneer of the most useful and enterprising kind. Sugar, followed by cacao, supplemented his coffee cultivation in Dumbara, which district he opened. His headquarters were on Pallakellie, where he built a fine bungalow. One of his most remarkable undertakings was to irrigate Rajawella estate from the Mahavelliganga. He obtained plenty of water, but the coffee did not thrive under the attendant conditions, and the expensive waterworks were practically money and time wasted. This was before Mr. Tytler's trip home in 1856-7. On his return, he occupied the Planters' Association Chair in 1858, 1859, and part of 1860. An effective and humorous speaker and most popular Chairman, he was also a trenchant writer to the press, but those days are too remote for any personal reminiscences. He did not pass on to the Legislative Council, and before many additional years his cheery disposition was caught in the gloom of the advancing coffee disease. He paid a visit to his first tropical home in 1879-80, and was able to improve his cacao by providing it with moderate shade, but his interests in the staple product, then rapidly going back were so much greater that he aged rapidly, and in June, 1882, at the age of 63 he passed rather suddenly away; but his name, held by two planting sons, is still prominent amongst us.

Although Mr. George Wall, F.L.S., F.R.A.S., comes third in our list of Planters' Association leaders, he had the triple distinction of drafting the circular proposing the formation of the Association, of being the first Englishman to occupy the chair, and of occupying it more frequently than any other man. Elected for the first time in 1856, he was re-elected nine times at four divided periods extending down to 1884. In the fifties and sixties he sat in Council; and for two separate periods in the seventies he was Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce. Such a record stands unrivalled in the century's history. Born in Lancashire about 1820, health considerations sent him to Ceylon in 1846, and he became a resident in Kandy and managed the "Ceylon Plantations Company." He had been with Mr. (afterwards Sir Edward) Watkin in the employ of Messrs. Whitworth & Co., the Manchester gun-makers, and a lifelong friendship was cemented, instead of being estranged, by a matrimonial contest in which victory perched upon Mr. Wall's banner. It was by Sir Edward Watkin's aid that twenty years later the Ceylon reformer was able to ventilate the grievances and claims of the Ceylon League in Parliament, and later he assisted in the home agitation against the Ceylon Paddy Tax. Further, when the great smash of George Wall & Co. came early in the coffee



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Mr. Robert Foyd Tytler, second Chairman.

collapse, it was Sir Edward's money which saved Anningkande estate for the benefit of the second family, for the first Mrs. Wall had died in Kandy in 1857. There were five daughters by the first marriage, and five sons and four daughters by the second. Mr. Wall was a very gifted man : an astronomer and a botanist—at one time he was understood to be possessed of the best private collection of ferns in the world—he was also a flautist. A fine writer, he not only took a constant share in local polemics until he occupied an editorial chair for several years to nearly the end of his life, but wrote two books of a philosophic nature.—“The Nature History of Thought,” a work of several hundred pages, and a smaller one entitled “Good and Evil.” These he wrote with his own hand in England when he could not see, and though afterwards he recovered sight in one eye it was only a point of vision. We have already mentioned that Mr. Wall was twice M. L. C., and both times he resigned in a sensational manner. His first resignation was on sailing for England in 1859, when he wrote a parting criticism, chiefly on the official method of spending money and asking for a vote afterwards—which caused a temporary reluctance on the part of the Association to continue to send a member to Council ; and his second was early in 1865, when the unofficials resigned in a body on the Military Contribution question. In this they were supported by public opinion, but when the Ceylon League for the “reform” of the Legislative Council was hurriedly inaugurated on the 26th May, ten days after the landing of Sir Hercules Robinson, Mr. Wall found that he could carry with him only a section of the European community. Many were against his Radical politics in a Crown Colony, and others considered that the new Governor should be supported and be given an opportunity to fight the Colony's cause in a constitutional way. The vacant seats in council were consequently filled, Mr. C. B. Smith, of the Ceylon Company, Ltd., occupying the Planting seat. We need not here further describe the six years' history of the League, including Mr. Wall's deputation to England, nor Sir Hercules' ultimate triumph. The struggle is picturesquely dealt with in Mr. Martin Leake's valuable contribution following these introductory notes. Mr. Wall's closing years were mainly devoted to the agitation for the repeal of the Paddy Tax, in which he took so prominent a part that when a telegram from the Secretary of State announced that the tax was to be repealed the information was conveyed first to Mr. Wall in a private note from Sir Arthur Havelock. He also received the Cobden Club's Gold Medal. Stricken down in 1894, the veteran of 75—and grey at 20—recovered sufficiently to be taken on board a P. & O. steamer in November

of that year and to reach St. Thomas's Home where he was nursed in his last days by his wife, who had preceded him to England a year before. Thus passed away a remarkable personality.

Mr. Alexander—"Sandy"—Brown next claims notice for was he not the Association's first Secretary and Treasurer, taking up the duties again from 1858 to 1860, filling the chair in the following year, and once more acting as Secretary for a few months before his death in 1876? In this year he was succeeded by Mr. Alexander Philip, and thus we have the interesting fact that the present Secretary succeeded the first one! Mr. Brown was born in Banff in 1820, and came to Ceylon in 1845. He was not long engaged in planting, and his ability as an accountant soon brought him to the front as a business man. He moved from Colombo to Kandy at the end of the forties at the invitation of Mr. Gerard, estate agent, and was soon his partner. This firm did not last beyond the year the Association was formed, but when Mr. Brown had served eighteen months as its Secretary he "blossomed into a full blown estate and mercantile agent on his own account." His office was in Brownrigg Street and his residence at Bellevue below Hantane. He rapidly acquired estate after estate, and in a dozen years after landing a penniless "Banff loon" he was the proprietor or lessee of 21 plantations. Some of them were fine Uva properties, but others in the low country of Kurunegala, Kadugannawa, &c., proved unprofitable, and Mr. Brown was one of the first to go under. He was in straitened circumstances when he died in Kandy in September, 1876. He was the author of the "Coffee Planters' Manual;" and he was long remembered for his zeal in Association affairs and for his eloquence and powers as an impromptu debater.

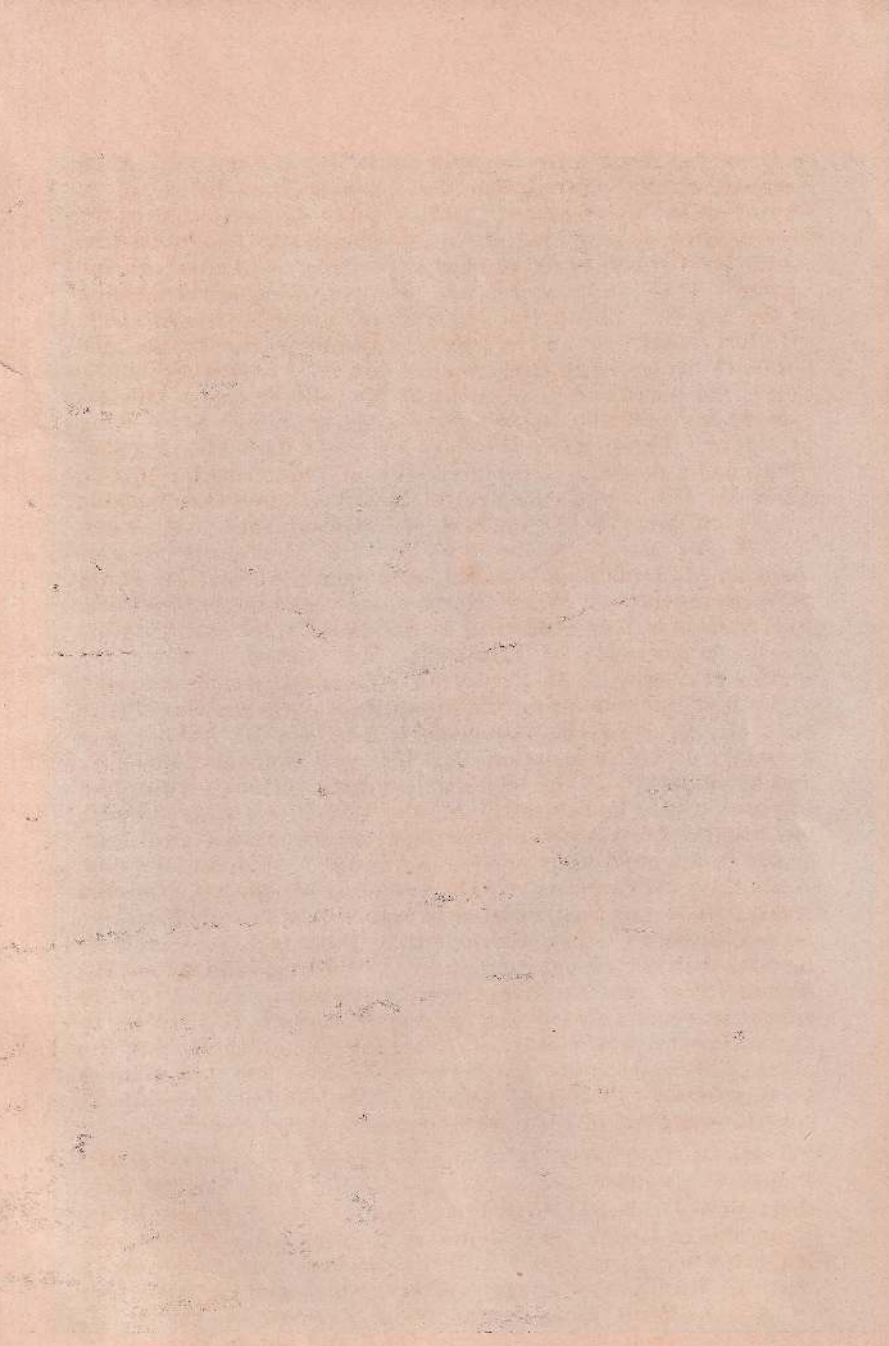
Mr. C. Pitts, the second Secretary of the Association, is but a memory as senior in the Kandy firm of Pitts & Gavin started when Messrs. Ackland, Boyd & Co., of Colombo, came to grief in that dark year 1848. Mr. Pitts died in 1858 after filling the position of Secretary for over three years. But there are yet other leading founders or early members entitled to notice. The first nominated to be to the Legislative Council as Planting representative on the privilege of recommendation being given to the Association in 1857 was Lieut.-Colonel Henry C. Byrde (then Captain Bird, and the father of Colonel Henry Byrde, still resident in Kandy). He was the second of the name, and nephew of Mr. George Bird, who, aided by the first Colonel Bird (they arrived in Ceylon together in 1823), opened Sinnapittia, the first regular coffee plantation in the island, in 1824. The nephew, who died in 1895,

claimed a pioneer distinction in that ten years before the Planters' Association was formed, he imported the first Indian coolies to work on a coffee estate, his conductor, half Tamil and half Sinhalese, proceeding from Black Forest estate to Trincomalee, whence a Tamil was sent over to the coast who recruited fourteen men. "Captain H. C. Bird"—he did not change his name until after he had retired to Wales in the sixties, after nearly 30 years in Ceylon—was again elected M. L. C. in 1860 (for part of which year Captain Gallwey was Chairman), and was succeeded in Council for short periods by Mr. Andrew Nicol, by Mr. R. J. Corbet, and by Mr. Wm. Thomson. Mr. Nicol—"the poor but industrious planter," who came from Bombay in the early forties, and besides opening up coffee in Rangala did the same in coconuts at Batticaloa—only served a year because he sailed for home in 1862, on which occasion he was shipwrecked in the P. & O. steamer "Colombo" at Minicoy. He retired in 1863, but had to come out again in 1885 to see to the transformation of his Dimbula estates from coffee into cinchona and tea. Mr. John Gavin, "honest John," had come to Ceylon at the age of 24 in 1843. From the employ of Messrs. Ackland, Boyd & Co., he shared in the establishment in 1848 of the Kandy agency firm of Pitts & Gavin; but this firm ceased in 1858, and Mr. Gavin became managing partner, and subsequently head, of the largest agency house, Messrs. Keir, Dundas & Co. He was Chairman of the Planters' Association for a few months in 1862, but he was handicapped by deafness, and after handing over a flourishing business to Messrs. G. D. B. Harrison and W. Martin Leake he went home in 1863. [Mr. Gavin returned to the Island in 1864-5 over the famous Dodangalle coffee estate suit, and died at home in 1876, leaving a son still to represent him in Ceylon.] We are already well into the period dealt with so ably by Mr. Leake in the main section of this souvenir, but before, however, attempting to "take up the parable" again from about 1876—in which year Mr. H. S. Saunders became Chairman, Mr. W. Bowden Smith was completing his three years' service as Member in Council, and Mr. A. Philip succeeded Mr. A. Brown, in the Secretaryship—it becomes a pleasant duty to particularly mention two veterans who are happily still in our midst.

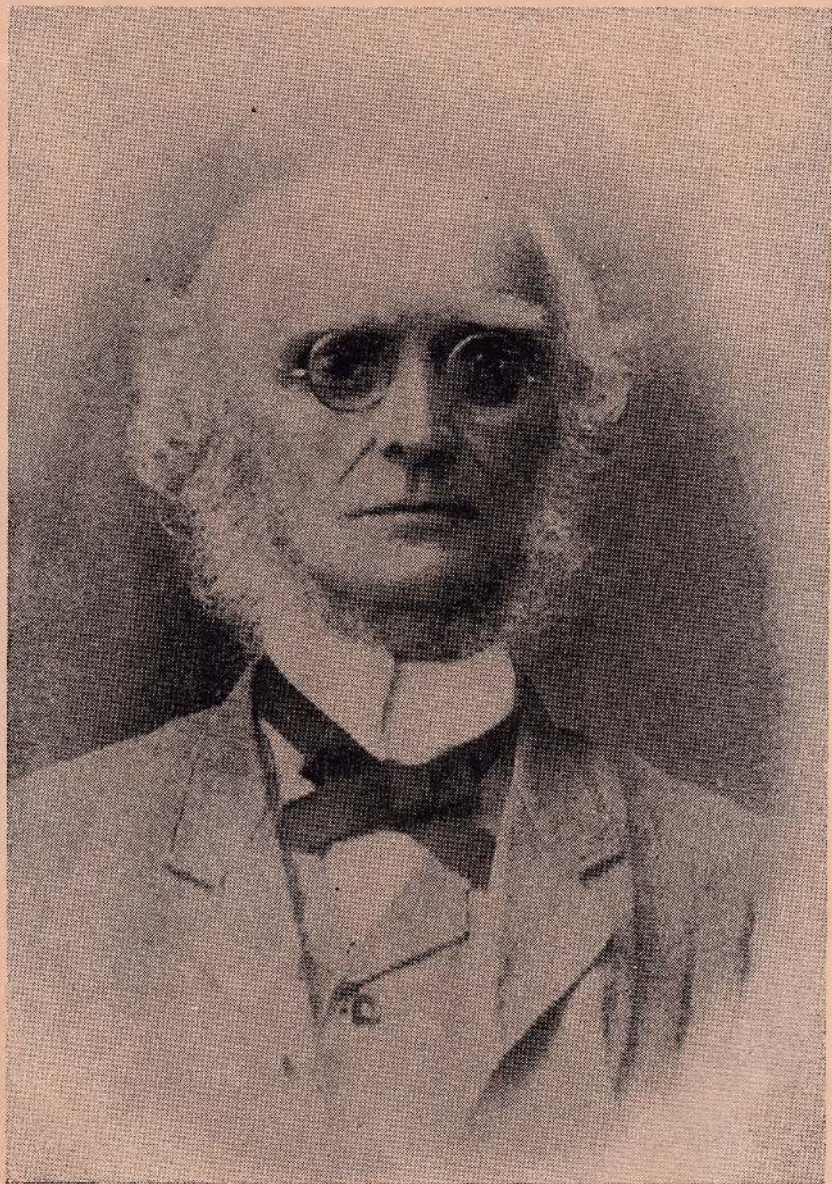
Mr. W. D. Gibbon, whose portrait is given, arrived in Ceylon towards the end of 1855 as one of a number of Scottish lads who were bent on becoming K. C. B.'s, or Knights of the Coffee Bean, all engaged by Mr. Gibbon's brother-in-law, Mr. R. B. Tytler, to work on his estates or those of his agency. Sir Frederick Saunders, K.C.M.G., was a fellow passenger, and entered the Survey Department. The day Mr. Gibbon arrived

in Colombo from Galle, he was taken by the late Mr. A. M. Ferguson, C.M.G., to see the first press worked by steam in Ceylon in the Government Printing Office by the father of the present Government Printer. Acute rheumatic fever was presently Mr. Gibbon's first and last experience of sickness during upwards of 48 years, and it was thanks to the careful nursing of the late Wm. Smith, the Patriarch of Dimbula, who had been a fellow passenger and was to be a life-long friend, that Mr. Gibbon's career in Ceylon was not abruptly closed in its first year. He began coffee planting at Madulkelle under the late Donald Stewart who was afterwards better known as the King of Coorg. Those were the days of the "Knuckles Bricks." Soon made assistant superintendent of Oononagalla, in two years Mr. Gibbon was manager of Madulkelle and Oononagalla, thanks to Mr. M. H. Thomas, who became his V. A. when Mr. Tytler gave up the agency. He afterwards became manager of Hoolankande on the understanding that he would have the agency of Mr. Tytler's estates, but the latter's farewell to Ceylon being indefinitely deferred by the heavy outlay on the waterworks at Rajawella, Mr. Gibbon entered the service of Messrs. J. M. Robertson & Co., and became manager of Oodewella, remaining there until he became this firm's chief V. A., when he removed to Kandy. Mr. Gibbon was Secretary of the Association in 1874, and Chairman in 1878; and he shared in all the vicissitudes that overtook planting in Ceylon. Since he became V. A. Mr. Gibbon estimates that he has travelled by rail and carriage, on horseback and foot, 40,000 miles, and has visited and reported upon, at one time or another, every estate in Ambegamuwa, Dickoya, Dimbula, Maskeliya, Matale East, Kalabokke and Kotmale; and one or two estates in every other district from Lunugala to Morawak-Korale, with occasional inroads on the Balangoda, Kurunegale, Kelani Valley, and Kalutara Districts. Having been obliged to refuse in years gone by any prolonged service as Member in Council he has now consented to act for six months during the absence of the Hon'ble Mr. Edward Rosling, and has already been gazetted Planting Member. Mr. Gibbon has kindly contributed some of his reminiscences to this souvenir.

Mr. M. H. Thomas, also one of the first members of the Planters' Association—and linked with still earlier days through his marriage with a daughter of Major Skinner, the Road-Maker—came out about six months after Mr. Gibbon, and after being connected with the Hudson firm, took over a part of Mr. Tytler's agency, afterwards becoming a partner in Alston, Scott & Co. Mr. Thomas served on the P. A. Committee from about 1856 to 1864, and sat in Council in 1871 and 1872. Mr. Thomas then left Ceylon, but returned



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Late Mr. George Wall, Chairman and M. L. C.

over twenty years ago. In this latter period, he has not taken an active share in the Association's proceedings; but the part he took, in conjunction with Captain Bird (now Major Bird of the Dublin Fusiliers), in suggesting the formation of the C. M. I. deserves to be recorded here. Mr. Thomas himself enlisted most of the first members, after his proposal had been sanctioned by Government, and he made his last appearance at a Planters' Association Meeting to move—now nearly a decade ago—the proposition which made the corps its adopted child, and overcame, if it did not silence, the opposition of Colombo Agents and V. As. Thus, though abhorring notoriety, Mr. Thomas publicly identified himself with a movement of which the Colony has reason to be proud, though to him it must always been associated with the great sorrow of his life.

In 1887 Mr. Reginald Beauchamp Downall appeared on the Legislative stage, and adorned it for nine years extending to 1888, during which period the notable Uva railway extension agitation was the stand-out feature. The son of a Devonshire Archdeacon, Mr. Downall arrived in Ceylon in 1863 in the employ of Messrs. George Wall & Co., and when, after only a year and a half, the departing "Dick Mackay" highly recommending him, he became a full-blown V. A. He was a great sportsman, cricketer, keeper of hounds, and patron of the turf. He frequently went after big game in all parts of Ceylon and in Southern India. After becoming a Dimbula proprietor, he sold in 1877 to purchase Dambattenne and Lemastota in Haputale. But he also purchased Monarakanda, which proved a mill-stone as soon as coffee began to decline in Haputale. Consequently he had to give up Barnes Hall in Nuwara Eliya, and go to reside on his estates. He clung to coffee as much as possible, planting tea later than a good number of his neighbours, and when an incurable disease—cancer in the stomach—attacked him he was heavily involved. He was able to get to London in August, 1888, and was met by his life-long friend, Mr. Wm. Bowden Smith. He underwent a grave operation the next day. His life was prolonged only a few brief months and he died near Bristol in December of the same year. Extremely popular with the entire European community the premature end of so able a man at about 47 years of age, continues to be lamented in the colony, and a memorial fund was over-subscribed. The period of his most prominent public service were eloquent years for Mr. J. L. Shand was in the P. A. Chair during an early part and Mr. T. N. Christie for the last three years of Mr. Downall's "reign in Council."

Mr. Christie was Mr. Downall's successor in Council, and his first three years were "strenuous," too. Public testimony

has just been borne to his herculean struggle with Sir Arthur Gordon over the Woolly Wages Bill, the double cause for this tribute being his timely visit which enabled him to participate in the "Jubilee" meeting of the 17th instant, the subject upon which he delivered a characteristically able speech being the present labour problem and the desirability of seeking a settlement without asking for legislation—to avoid any risk of the repetition of the unworkable official proposals of fifteen years ago. Mr. Christie, too, proved a trenchant critic of Military Contribution demands, and of doubtful irrigation works involving the expenditure of much public money. Mr. Christie was again in Council in 1896 and 1897 for the first part of Sir West Ridgeway's regime. There has been no more effective debater in Ceylon than Mr. Christie, and although—after an almost complete absence of seven years, and with no expectation of again permanently residing in Ceylon—he has observed how many new men are now prominent in Ceylon politics, he will be sure of a popular welcome whenever he appears on the scene for a generation to come.

Mr. Christie was the first of three who presided over the Association for three years and succeeded each other in Council for a similar period. The late Mr. L. H. Kelly had a difficult task to follow Mr. Christie and his terms of office were also uneventful. All his successors are still in the flesh, although three of them have retired to the old country. The Hon. Mr. Giles F. Walker,—who is still an M. L. C., as acting General European representative, which post he has also held substantively—was Mr. Kelly's immediate successor. Educated at Marlborough and Tonbridge, he came out in February, 1866; was assistant on Sheen and Punduloya estates under the late Mr. Alex Fraser and the late Mr. Edward Hope, and in 1868 took charge of St. John del Rey, Bogawantalawa, where Mr. Walker continued for 28 years. He gave up charge on going home in 1896, and in 1897 took up his present position in Colombo with Messrs. J. M. Robertson & Co. Mr. Walker was Honorary Secretary first, and then for several years was Chairman of the Dickoya District P. A.; and was elected to the Kandy chair in 1891. His period in Council as Planting Member was 1894-96. Mr. A. Melville White was Chairman for these first two years, and had Mr. Christie not been available in 1896-7, Mr. White would most probably have followed the usual course and gone to the "Upper House." Meanwhile Mr. A. W. Stopford Sackville filled the chair for a twelvemonth, followed by the Hon. Mr. J. N. Campbell, whose wide-spread popularity caused him, towards the end of his first year, to be run for the chair at the same time that Mr. White came forward. It was the

keenest contest of recent times; and Mr. White, who lost, shortly after went home for good. He was an able and independent man.

Mr. Campbell entered Council about the time that Sir West Ridgeway effected the change from a sort of life nomination of unofficial members to periods of five years, with freedom to the Governor to re-nominate. Later on Sir West instituted a local decoration, entitling a gentleman who had served in Council for ten years—or when specially recommended by the Governor—to the prefix “Hon’ble” for the remainder of his life. Mr. Campbell was the first to secure this distinction, after his Council experience had extended from May, 1897, to February, 1903—the last few months as General European Member. Mr. Campbell was born at St. Andrew’s and educated at Marlborough. He first came to Ceylon in December 1870, and sailed for South Africa for the benefit of his health in February, 1872, spending about five years there recruiting and three in Europe. He returned to Ceylon in 1880, and took up work on Moray, Maskeliya. The same year he took his brother, Mr. Walker F. Campbell on last voyage: he died before reaching Europe. Mr. J. N. Campbell, who remained at home some months, returned at the end of the year; and did not leave Ceylon again until he went home in 1902 for the Coronation. He took charge of Henfold in 1892, and became Manager of the Anglo-Ceylon and General Estates Co. (then the O. B. Estates Co.) in 1894.

The occupancy of the chair being limited by custom to two or three years, and the seat in Council being tenable for five years it follows that there may occasionally be several eligible leaders of the community waiting for legislative honours. On the other hand the balance is liable to be adjusted by the withdrawal from tropical life of men who have borne the the heat and burden for upwards of twenty or even thirty years. Mr. F. G. A. Lane presided over the affairs of the Association in 1898-99; but then followed the example of two of his three immediate predecessors. Consequently, Mr. Gibbon’s acting appointment having just been announced, Mr. Kingsford is at present the only past Chairman in the island who has not yet entered Council.

The Hon. Mr. Edward Rosling, who so well sustained the traditions of the chair in 1900 and 1901, and has served two of his five years in Council, came out at the end of 1886, after being at school at Queenwood in Hampshire, with his home in the Isle of Wight. He “crept” with Mr Causland on Templestowe; took charge of Fruithill as an acting appointment for seven months; and then went home and was married.

Coming out again at the end of 1888 Mr. Rosling took charge of Dessford, Nanuoya—at about 26 years of age, we may assume—and stopped there until he moved to his own residential property, Netherleigh, Nuwara Eliya, from where he does his extensive visiting agency work.

Mr. A. C. Kingsford, whose two years of office expired on the 17th instant, may safely, we think, be announced as the youngest occupant of the Planters' Association chair, being just sufficiently junior to Mr. Rosling to secure this distinction. It was Mr. Kingsford's good work in the Kelani Valley—the collection of statistics of traffic for the desired railway was a triumph of ability and industry—and on the Kandy committees, which he continued after taking charge of Rookwood, Hewaheta, some six years ago, which marked him out as a well-qualified president.

The twenty-fourth Chairman of the Association, Mr. Edgar Turner, has the distinction of inaugurating the second half century of its history. Born in Ipswich, Suffolk, in 1862, and educated there, Mr. Turner went to Mincing Lane to learn tea tasting. A heavy premium was demanded in those days; but in the spring of 1884 he had to leave London owing to an accident at athletics, and three years elapsed before he was allowed to do any work. Mr. Turner came out to Ceylon in 1887, and lived for five months with Mr. N. M. Home, on Woodstock, Ambegamuwa. He then took up a billet on Rahatungoda under Mr. P. E. Sewell, and has lived in Upper Hewaheta ever since. He helped to start the Maturata and Hewaheta District Planters' Association in 1896; and became Hon. Secretary in 1897; Chairman in 1898; and again served as Hon. Secretary in 1899. He has been a member of the "Thirty Committee" since 1897; and last year he visited South India as one of the two Labour Commissioners sent over by the Association. Mr. Turner married in 1889 the daughter of the late Mr. R. J. Ramsome, of Ipswich.

There are many "names to conjure with" of men who have not occupied any of the three leading positions in the Association; but it has been possible only to briefly mention those whose names are tabulated in one of the opening pages of the Association's Year-Book, and to limit the portraits to a still smaller number. Several of these—the counter feit presentments of the four younger leaders who are still amongst us—have not yet been placed in the gallery of worthies in the headquarters building; and are published in this brochure for the first time, as also is the portrait of the Association's first Chairman.

Covering the whole of eight Governorships and part of two, and embracing twenty-two periods of administration by Lieut.-Governors or other offices, the Planters' Association of Ceylon has been as consistently administrated as the Government of the Colony; and the zeal and public spirit which have almost uniformly characterised the work of its leaders is the best promise of the maintenance in the future of its fine traditions.

Colombo, February 20th, 1904.



The Portraits selected from the collection in the Planters' Hall have been photographed and all the half-tone blocks have been prepared for us by Messrs. F. Skeen & Co., of Colombo and Kandy.



Mr. Wm. Martin Leake, former Secretary, Chairman, and M. L. C.

EVENTS OF ELEVEN YEARS:

1863-1873.

BY WILLIAM MARTIN LEAKE.

The Planters' Association of Ceylon has not been free from the ups and downs common to all human institutions; it has had its seasons of strength and its seasons of weakness. But throughout its career of fifty years, whether in good times or in bad, it has exhibited always, even in its mistakes, a spirit of vitality characteristic of the community which it represents. It has been always pre-eminently a live body. The ideal community has been defined as that "where all feel what befalls any, and all are solaced with the same joys, and all languish in the same sorrows, and all unite in the same ends." By those who remember the joyous old days of King Coffee's prosperous reign, the sorrows of Hemileia Vastatrix that darkened the declining years of the poor old monarch, the subsequent Tea boom and its check now happily mitigated, it may be doubted if any community has ever more closely conformed to the terms of the definition than Ceylon's Planters. Be that as it may, there are yet other distinguishing features in the case. The Ceylon Planter is a man in the prime of life; he is a man in authority, with many obeying his behests; he occupies broad acres in a district, limited in area, but of surpassing, not to say inspiring, loveliness. Finally he lives under a Government if mildly despotic, yet always benevolent and, what is more in point, easily accessible and ever amenable to wise counsel and judicious pressure. What wonder then if the history of his representative Association be a record full of life and energy?

Turning from these general considerations to the more personal reminiscences for which request has been made, I can say little as to the earlier years of the Association's career. My own first visit to Kandy did not take place till 1860 when on the 1st March I attended the ceremonial opening by Governor Sir H. Ward of the Kattugastota Bridge. It was a characteristic Kandyan function very impressive to one to whom all was new; but the collateral rejoicings were sadly damped by the serious accident that on the previous day befell Mr. Simon

Keir, who, falling from his horse, lay for many days insensible from concussion of the brain, hovering between life and death. The Ball at the Pavilion and other pre-arranged entertainments were postponed, and the festive gathering came to a premature end. It is pleasant, however, to call to mind the friendships that that first visit to Kandy gained for me. It was then that I first met Mr. Philip Braybrooke, the confirmation of whose appointment as Government Agent of the Central Province was announced by the Governor in his speech at the Bridge. Later in the year I had the pleasure of joining the new Government Agent in a most enjoyable trip in Bintenne, where I had a commission from the Government to report on the possibility of restoring Horabora Wewa and Minipe Ella. Well can I now recall the almost paternal dignity with which at the various halting places the local chiefs were received; and a ready justice administered between contending natives. A little incident of the trip remains in my memory. Each evening we found awaiting us a white cloth resting place, affording sufficiently comfortable quarters in fine weather; but one night in the small hours a furious gale beat on our frail tenement. I was rudely awakened by a jungle washstand, with a basin full of water on it, being blown on the top of me as I lay in bed, while around the linen walls were flapping in all directions. In those days happily mischances of the kind served only to give added zest to the pleasures of travel. Two score and more years have passed: and I have before me a letter from my old friend written in September last, in a clear, firm hand writing, too, in which he tells me that he completed his 80th year in July last, adding with a touch of pathos "and so naturally there are but few of my compeers alive." Other friends met for the first time were Mr. W. E. Thompson Sharpe, then Assistant Government Agent in Kandy, now M. P. for North Kensington, Messrs. "Jack" Tyndall and John Brown, hailing respectively from Glenloch and Rajawelle. Mr. Brown was good enough to take out my partner, Mr. Harrison, and myself to his estate to show us the recently erected irrigation works which it was hoped would give new life to the parched coffee of Dumbara: and under his roof, where we stayed the night, I had my first taste of planting hospitality, of which the coming years were to bring me so abundant a store.

In 1860 the Planters' Association was in one of its quiescent moods. Begotten six years before of the lethargy of Sir George Anderson's Government the infant Association was in its years of childhood lulled into a peaceful and contented slumber by the masterful energy of Sir Henry Ward, who,

acting on his famous maxim that "In semi-civilized countries it is with material improvement that all other improvement begins," in his five years' reign gave the Planters many new roads and bridges and made a start, though not altogether a fortunate one, with the Railway from Colombo to Kandy. It was in fact this question of the need of improved communications throughout the planting districts and between them and the shipping port of Colombo that brought the Association into life in 1854, and it was the same question that in 1862 under the Government of Sir Charles MacCarthy aroused the lusty young infant from its wholesome slumber.

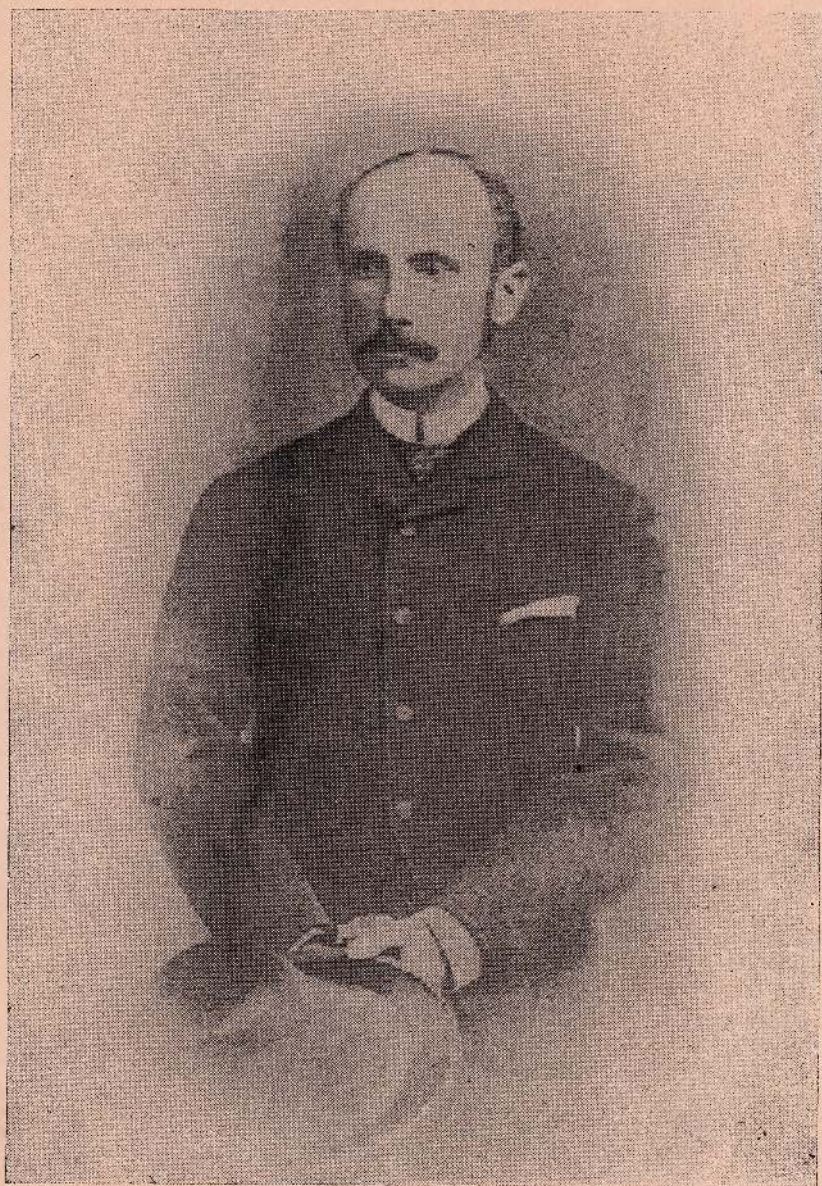
To Planters of the present day, when Railways traverse the Central Province from west to east and well metalled roads penetrate the most remote districts, a strong effort of imagination is needed to realize the "semi-civilized" condition of the country forty years ago. The overflowing Coffee crops poured into Kandy from every quarter during the later months of the year, there to be stored, for few of the up-country cartmen were willing to extend their journey to Colombo. When the Kandy stores were filled to repletion the Colombo cartmen, seeing their opportunity, demanded higher rates; and up would go the cart hire to Colombo by leaps and bounds, from 4½d., say 20 cents, per bushel, the normal rate, to 9d., say 40 cents. One year I can remember, when the pinch began, the various Kandy Agents met and agreed unanimously that a limit must be put to these demands. The cartmen were vociferously claiming a rise of another ½d. and would accept nothing less. The up-shot, if not encouraging for further combinations, was at least comic. One of the combining Agents, taking advantage of the position, let it be known quietly that he was not averse to making the required concession. Before the rest of us got an inkling of what was going on, every cart in the town was loaded with our friend's parchment coffee and his stores were empty ready to receive further deliveries from the estates.

Under such circumstances, when the transport of coffee from the estates store to Colombo was often a business of many weeks, sometimes even of months, the state of the roads was a question of the very first importance.

Sir Charles MacCarthy, having been promoted from the office of Colonial Secretary, landed at Galle as Governor of the Colony in October, 1860. He came with instructions from the Colonial Office to cut down expenditure in every way possible, the object being, if one may judge by the sequel, to prove the capacity of the Colony to pay a largely increased contribution towards the Military expenditure. Sir Charles' temperament was in harmony with the policy sketched out and, if in any

respect he was lacking in the vigour necessary for the effective execution even of a retrograde movement, the deficiency was admirably supplied in the person of his lieutenant, Mr. William Charles Gibson, his successor as Colonial Secretary, a most estimable and efficient public officer, who entered on the campaign of "Parsimony" with a will.

I have a vivid recollection of the sudden change of policy, for it was in fact the turning point in my career which brought me into permanent contact with Ceylon and her planters. Messrs. Harrison and Leake had, in Sir H. Ward's time, been fully employed as Government Contractors for certain works in the Southern Province: we had already in 1860 sent in to Government reports and estimates for several other works which we hoped would keep us busy for some time to come. But it was not to be. On the return of Sir Charles MacCarthy to the Island it was quickly made known to us that, so soon as we had finished the work still on hand, we might pack up our traps and be off. And then what next? became the question of the moment. While thus placed news came to us that Mr. John Gavin, of the firm of Keir, Dundas & Co. of Kandy, was seeking partners to replace Mr. Simon Keir and Mr. G. H. Dundas, both of whom had gone home to Scotland and were not anxious to return. A cordial invitation from Mr. Gavin for us to go and stay with him and take a run round the estates was readily accepted: and so in June, 1861, my interest in Planters and planting first began. That trip decided our future: the lovely scenery, the invigorating climate, the open-handed hospitality of our planting hosts, their keenness in their business, and perhaps not less the congenial company of my fellow travellers, respectively Scotch and Irish, were to me at least fascinating: and I felt as if for once a round peg might be thrust into a round hole. As types of the Planters of that day, among those who so ungrudgingly entertained us, I may mention James Taylor of Loolecondura, afterwards the careful nurse of the Cinchona and Tea industries, the two John Martins—big John of Dimbala and "the Reverend" John of Melfort—David Webster, of Wattedelle, Arthur Morice of Mooloya, J. L. Gordon of Wavendon, R. J. Mackay of Cabragalla, Scotsmen all, and all now but shadows of names. Of all who entertained us during our wanderings I know not of one survivor save only Mr. Walter Cross Buchanan, whose kindly reception, then at Rathoongoda, and at later dates at Patiagama, still lingers in my memory. The time was one of great prosperity: Coffee planting was being rapidly extended in all directions, the exports being as yet little more than half of the maximum reached ten years later. Hopes were accordingly high; and no sign of the coming doom was yet visible even to the



The late Mr. R. B. Downall, M. L. C.

most confirmed prophet of evil. Grumblings there were at the delay in road repairs, but popular wrath was not yet strongly aroused: and the Planters' Association still slumbered on.

In September, 1861, I came home to England for a holiday, undertaking that, should Messrs. Gavin and Harrison arrange matters for our partnership, I would be back in Kandy in June, 1862, ready for work. On my return as arranged I found all changed. The whole country side was aflame with indignation at the do-nothing policy of the Government. Early in the year the Planters' Association had been remodelled; and at a General Meeting on the Queen's Birthday, 24th May, the Chairman, my old friend and colleague, Captain Bird, and the Secretary, Mr. T. C. Hutton, both of whom had in February been elected to their offices, resigned their posts; and the newly constituted Association was started on its career under the Chairmanship of Mr. John Gavin, Mr. Lindsay H. Daniell being appointed Secretary. From that day the Association became once more a power in the State. The extent of the revival may be gauged by a comparison of the reports of the two years.

The report of the years 1861-2 is limited to a page and a half of the yearly book—what says Mr. Secretary Philip to that?—and the following doleful extract from it shows the lack of public spirit at the moment:—"Many gentlemen, whose names were on the list as Members, on being applied to for the arrears due by them, have taken no notice of the application, and some declare they never belonged to the Association. Several have also resigned; so that the Committee regret that the Association is not as flourishing as has been represented." The report deals almost exclusively with the Labour Supply question; and it is interesting to note that even in those far-off days Mr. W. D. Gibbon, the veteran Planter of to-day, was a leading authority on the subject. I call to mind even now with admiration the easy familiarity with which at our Committee meetings he would discuss such places as Ramnad, Poodacotta, and Davipatum, and the necessity for wells and sheds on the roads thereabouts.

The report of 1862-3, a much more cheerful document, covers four full pages of smaller print, and deals with a variety of subjects interesting to Planters. It is stated therein that the Association "numbers among its members a sufficient proportion of the influential Proprietors and Superintendents to make it acknowledged on all hands as the representative of the planting interests."

The subscriptions rose from £120 in the earlier year to £252 in the later.

The main causes that led to this revival have already been mentioned, but a minor incident that stirred a good deal of feeling was the appointment by the Governor of Captain Jolly as M. L. C. without reference to the Association. At the Queen's Birthday Meeting, mentioned above, a strong resolution was moved by Mr. A. Brown, commonly known as "Sandy," the great P. A. orator of the day, expressing "disappointment and regret" at the withdrawal of the privilege of nomination extended to the Association "by the late lamented Sir H. Ward." The resolution was carried and forwarded to Government. On this Captain Jolly withdrew his acceptance of the Governor's nomination; and at a subsequent Meeting of the Association on 24th June Mr. R. J. Corbet was unanimously recommended to represent the planting interests in Council. This little matter was being discussed with much acrimony on my return to Ceylon. One highly respected friend of mine, a learned legal luminary, went so far as to say that he would have sent his Apoo into Council sooner than yield after the fashion of the Governor.

In anticipation of the June Meeting the new Chairman issued a circular exhorting Planters to attend and help in the appointment of "a real working Committee, consisting of Members possessing the confidence of their brother Planters in the same district;" and then, carrying the idea a step further, he suggested the appointment of District Committees, a suggestion wherein the flourishing District Associations of the present day found their origin.

On my return to Kandy Mr. Gavin begged me to take up my quarters in his house, and so it came to pass that I was brought at once into close touch with all Association affairs at the very time that they were acquiring a new interest. I remained an inmate of Haramby House till the following January when Mr. Gavin resigned the Chairmanship on his departure from Ceylon. These months of intimate daily intercourse with an experienced old planting magnate I found of the highest value in the work that was so soon to be thrown on me. Through those months the state of the roads and the need of a railway formed the burden of our lamentations, which were both loud and long.

I do not seem to have taken active part in the proceedings of the Association at this time, and it is not till the Annual Meeting in February, 1863, that my name appears at all in the proceedings. On that day I was appointed a Member of Committee, and I seconded a resolution proposed by Mr. David Webster calling on the Government to institute an enquiry into the state of the Public Works Department. It was asked

further that the Committee should consist of three members, of whom one should be the Chairman of the Kandy Provincial Roads Committee, the other two being nominees of the Government and the P. A. respectively.

When this resolution was forwarded to the Government, the reply came promptly that the wishes of the Association had been "forestalled" by the appointment on 12th February (*i.e.* some days after public notice of the resolution had been given, but some days before the P. A. meeting) of Messrs. R. T. Pennefather, Auditor-General, P. W. Braybrooke, Chairman, P. R. Committee, and G. Wall as "a Committee to take into consideration the question of the Roads." The report of the Committee, received in the following September, admitted in the main the justice of the complaints, and proposed as a remedy an auxiliary scheme of Trust Roads, which, however, was disallowed by the Secretary of State.

It was, I think, after this Annual Meeting that I first appeared as a correspondent to the then "Colombo Observer." The ambitious young sub-editor, now my good old friend, Mr. John Ferguson (whose recently acquired tail of six letters is all too short adequately to measure his services to Ceylon), denounced our proceedings in Kandy as "unsavoury:" and I wrote repelling the charge.

Meanwhile Mr. Gavin had on 17th January addressed his famous farewell letter to the members. I can still remember the discussions in settling the draft of that letter—the various points that we partners considered together. Reading it again now after forty years it seem to me a powerful statement of the position then existing: and I can commend it as good reading to all interested in P. A. history. To one sentence I would especially call attention as exhibiting rare foresight. "I think there should be a recognized Agent of the Association in London." Mr. Gavin in 1862 not only restored the Association to its representative position, but in his two official pronouncements, made within a few months, indicated the necessity for strengthening that position by the establishment both of local Committees in the various districts and of an Agency in London: in fact he dimly foreshadowed the whole of the present powerful planting organization.

At the Annual Meeting in February, 1863, Captain Henry Bird resumed the position of Chairman vacated by Mr. Gavin, and Mr. L. H. Daniell was re-elected as Secretary, and Mr. Rawdon Power was nominated as London Agent; though subsequently a small financial difficulty stood in the way of his acceptance of the appointment. At the next Committee Meeting, however, held on April 18th, according to the minutes, "Mr.

Daniell announced his departure for England by the mail of April 30th, and requested that Mr. Leake be allowed to act for him till the General Meeting, which request was acceded to."

Then came the great meeting on the Queen's Birthday, 1863, at which, the records state, "the whole Planting Community assembled." Never probably has there been a moment in the history of Ceylon when indignation at the conduct of Government burned more fiercely than on that day. Two events had taken place since the February meeting which made the fire of public wrath seven times more hot.

In March the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies had announced in the House of Commons that Ceylon was forthwith to be called upon, in accordance with the terms of the report of the Special Committee on Colonial Military expenditure, to contribute more largely than hitherto. It was felt that the large surpluses, due to the unexpended balances, which were at the bottom of all the Roads trouble, had brought on the Colony this new demand. Not only the roads neglected, but the money that ought to have been spent on them was to be swept into the coffers of the Home Government and a permanent additional charge established for all time on the strength of the fictitious surplus revenue. Now the planters began to recognize the full meaning of the economy enjoined on Sir C. MacCarthy on his assumption of office three years previously; and the whole population joined with them in a unanimous protest.

The other event, more specially affecting planting interests, was the issue by the Colonial Secretary to the unofficial J. P.s of a letter of the Queen's Advocate, dated 27th March, in which it was stated that a case is "hardly ever known of a Justice in the planting districts doing anything to secure the apprehension of criminals in cases of serious crime or breach of the peace, although the gaols are crammed with scores and hundreds of men, women, and children arrested on warrants for desertion." After more in the same strain it was said that "no useful purpose can be served by any enquiry into what has heretofore been done," and then warnings were given as to future procedure. This circular soon found its way into the newspapers. And the storm already raging rose to a hurricane.—

Both these subjects of contention bore in them weighty consequences, of which more presently.

The crowded Meeting at which they were discussed was asked to consider no less than 10 resolutions. Mr. Harrison in a weighty, and temperate speech, proposed that a memorial, on the Military Expenditure question should be sent to the Home Government. Mr. A. Brown dealt with the unexpended

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Mr. Thos. North Christie, former Chairman & M. L. C.

balances and the labour question. Mr. A. Nicol, J. P., in moving a resolution as to the Queen's Advocate's letter spoke plain words in respect of the charges against the unofficial Justices; while a second resolution, calling in question the accuracy of the statement in regard to the "cramped" gaols and asking for a return "of the number of coolies in gaol on the 1st of this month, charged with desertion only," was moved by Mr. W. M. Thompson of Maturatta, and Tipperary (he was commonly known as Tip Thompson), in a speech which for brevity and emphasis probably holds the record even in the annals of the P. A.:—"Gentlemen, all I have to say is that these statements are all d——d lies." I quote from memory, but I was much impressed by the flight of oratory at the time, voicing as it did the general sentiments; and the report tells us that the resolution "was carried with acclamation," a fitting sequel to so stirring an appeal.

After the nomination of Mr. W. Thompson, of Colombo, as M. L. C. in place of Mr. R. J. Corbet resigned, this exciting Meeting, having lasted for four hours from 2 p.m. till 6 p.m., ended with a contested election for the Secretaryship in which 78 votes were registered for me, against 54 for Mr. W. B. R. Wylie; and so at the very height of the indignant uprising against Sir C. MacCarthy's Government I found myself installed permanently in office. In the early days of my Secretaryship, which was destined to last for over five years, the duties of the Office-bearers of the Association were simplified by the perfect unanimity that prevailed among the planting community. The only difficulty was to find language strong enough to express adequately the feelings of the outraged complainants. It was not a matter of much surprise, therefore, that, before many months were over, even the then Government turned, like the proverbial worm, and declined to reply to a letter, dated 27th July, on the ground that it was "characterized throughout by such a strange want of courtesy and respect." In the offending letter it was shown by returns which we had obtained for ourselves that during the six months ending the 30th June at no station had there been a hundred coolies in gaol on charges of desertion from first to last, and that the number arrested on warrants issued by unofficial Justices during that time might be counted on a man's fingers. "How Government should deal with its subordinate who has so recklessly put forth these false assertions," the letter went on to say, "is not a matter that falls within the province of this Association." I can remember calling the attention of the Committee to this sentence as been just a little strong; but no one agreed with me. In those days it seemed fitting to call a spade a spade, without circumlocution. The ruffled feathers

of the Government were easily smoothed down by a few words disclaiming intentional discourtesy and the correspondence was sent to the Queen's Advocate for report.

On the publication of the correspondence, which brought out the fact that the statement as to the "crammed" gaols had emanated in the first instance from the then D. Q. A. in Kandy, my learned old friend, Mr. Thomas Berwick, there was a great hubbub in the Colombo newspapers, the "Examiner," then in the hands of the witty Charles Lorenz, fighting manfully for the legal rights of the oppressed cooly and calling aloud on the Association to eat its "Leake." I am inclined to agree with the late Mr. Lorenz that our then style of correspondence, though undoubtedly effective, was open in some respects to improvement, and was not such as would altogether commend itself to the Members of the P. A. nowadays. But other times, other manners. Critics of the present day must allow for the isolation of the Planters of the early sixties. The only means of communication between the Central Province and the Coast at that time consisted of two daily coaches between Colombo and Kandy, conveying in all ten persons each way, the fare for the single journey being Rs. 25 and the time occupied about 12 hours, 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. The voyage home, except by sailing vessel round the Cape, cost £100. A trip to Colombo was therefore a matter of rare occurrence with the average Planter and a trip home possible for the very few. I was myself for over two years in Kandy without visiting Colombo. For the same reasons visitors from the outer world were conspicuous by their absence. The mail steamers called only at Galle, from which port access to Colombo was as difficult as it was from Kandy: and very few steamer passengers were ever seen even in Colombo. In a community so situated, cut off from the outside world, grievances are apt to rankle and complaints to find vent in unmeasured terms. But storms in such an atmosphere quickly blow over.

It soon became evident that, though the Planting Justices were in the main innocent of the charges brought against them, the law in respect to the issue of warrants for desertion was very uncertain. The opinion given by the Queen's Advocate that an ordinary estate cooly running away was not in the eye of the law a deserter was quickly followed by a decision of the Supreme Court in the opposite sense. And other points cropped up in connection with the Labour Laws which proved clearly the need of further investigation. It so happened that just at this juncture Mr. Richard Cayley arrived in Ceylon to try his luck as an Advocate. He and I had been close friends at Cambridge, and knowing well his capacity

I was able strongly to recommend that he should be asked to go thoroughly into the whole subject and make a report thereon. On 24th November Mr. Cayley presented his "Report on the various laws affecting Immigrant Labourers in Ceylon, drawn up at the request of the Committee of the Planters' Association with a view to the Consolidation and Amendment of the Law relating to this Subject." This admirable and exhaustive document came before the Annual Meeting of the Association in February, 1864, when a resolution was proposed by Mr. C. S. Hay, then a Planter, afterwards Advocate of the Supreme Court, whose services in this discussion were of high value, that Mr. Cayley be instructed to prepare the draft of an Ordinance "consolidating and amending the law as regards the mutual relation of master and servant." This draft, when prepared, was most carefully considered, clause by clause, not only by a Special Committee of the Kandy Association, but by the Uva Association, then an independent body, and by local meetings in each District. It was then finally forwarded to the Government, in whose hands it formed the basis of Ordinance 11 of 1865, an Ordinance which, subject to several amending Ordinances, still stands on the Statute Book. Thus was all strife composed in a manner creditable alike to the Association and to its learned adviser.

In closing this chapter of my little history it is only fair to say that Mr. Berwick, when called upon, met the denunciations of the planters in an excellent spirit, explaining away in several long letters the meaning of his remarks without sign of irritation. Further Mr. R. F. Morgan, Q. A., in the matter of the Ordinance, co-operated heartily with Mr. Harrison, who in 1865 had become M. L. C., and with Mr. Cayley, to make the law fair and equitable. Whatever friction may have been caused for the time by Mr. Berwick's statements, he can justly claim that to them was due primarily the amendment of the law.

The question of the Colonial Military contribution was not destined to be so easily or so quickly settled. The memorial of the Association of 1863 had no effect in staying the hand of the Home Government. Mr. Cardwell had succeeded the Duke of Newcastle as Secretary for the Colonies; and from him orders came out to the Lieutenant-Governor, General O'Brien, who was acting in the absence of Sir C. MacCarthy, to pass through the Legislative Council the increased contribution by the enforced votes of the Official Members. The six unofficial Members resigned and the agitation passed from the hands of the Association into those of the whole community. Public Meetings were called, and even-

tually the Ceylon League was formed under the presidency of Mr. George Wall, who at once initiated his agitation for the reform of the Council. In September, 1864, Sir C. MacCarthy died at Spa; but his successor, Sir Hercules Robinson, did not arrive in Colombo till March, 1865: and it was during this interval that the stirring events just mentioned took place. The Military Contribution controversy, however, long survived the Ceylon League, and, as is well known, found a final settlement only in 1891, when Sir Arthur Gordon on his return to England produced his masterpiece on the subject.

To return to the P. A. On 10th September, 1864, while the Governor was on his death bed in Europe Mr. Harrison was moving at a General Meeting in Kandy "That the policy of the Government during the past four years has been such as to impair most seriously the efficiency of those Public Departments upon which the material progress of the Colony mainly depends." Mr. Harrison's powerful speech, which caused much sensation at the time, was nothing less than an impeachment of Sir Charles MacCarthy's Government and all its works: he contrasted the efficiency under it of the money-hoarding departments with the inefficiency of the money-spending departments: again he contrasted that inefficiency with the efficiency of the same departments under Sir Henry Ward. "The cursed love of money, this is the blight, this is the cloud, which has hung over this Colony for the last four years: under a rule of apathy and indifference the money-hoarders have had it all their own way." Other speakers followed in the same sense. Mr. A. Brown, however, while emphasizing all that Mr. Harrison had said, in a characteristic speech drew a distinction between the Government of Sir C. MacCarthy himself and that of the Lieutenant-Governor, General O'Brien. "Sir Charles MacCarthy was impressionable and concessions were made to outside pressure. But what pressure, what amount of screwing, will squeeze anything out of the present Government? It was like squeezing an India-rubber ball which rebounds to its former position." This simile of the India-rubber ball "caught on" (as they say nowadays). It was felt to describe aptly the resisting power of the Colonial Secretary, Mr. W. C. Gibson, the really strong man in the Executive Council—in the words of Mr. Harrison "a most able, zealous, and conscientious Public Servant"—whom no opposition, however strenuous, could cause to swerve one jot from that which he conceived to be his duty. At this time his brother, Mr. Tom Gibson, was District Judge in Kandy, and was disposed to resent the P. A. proceedings, but it was currently stated that the Colonial Secretary only laughed at his feelings of resentment, saying that for his own part he



The Hon. Mr. Giles F. Walker, former Chairman and M. L. C.

considered that the Planters were letting him off cheaply. Throughout I never heard of the least personal friction between the Colonial Secretary and those who unsparingly denounced his policy. On the contrary we all held him in the highest respect.

After Mr. Harrison's resolution had been carried, Mr. Brown moved "That in view of the danger which is likely to arise from hoarding balances the Government be requested to vote away the £214,000 now in their hands in the following manner:—£14,000 for the importation of Labour; £50,000 for Roads and Bridges; £150,000 to the liquidation of the Railway debt." The Railway works on the Kandy and Colombo line, it should be mentioned, had been recommenced in 1863 by Mr. W. F. Faviell, under contract with the Government. The above resolution was in effect carried, though not quite in the form in which Mr. Brown proposed it. But it was all too late. In this same month of September Mr. Secretary Cardwell formulated the demands for the Military expenditure in his famous Despatch and Memorandum, and thus the immediate object of the hoarding policy was achieved.

There was one reply, and only one, made to the attacks by the Planters on the policy of "Parsimony:" and that came from Downing Street. In the last paragraph of Mr. Cardwell's Memorandum it is said "the present statement would not do justice to the views of Her Majesty's Government if it closed without a recognition of the admirable management of the Ceylon finances by Sir Charles MacCarthy, whose wise adherence to economy at a time when the resources of the Colony were expanding has created the ample surplus revenue without which it would have been impossible to issue proposals of the present character." Sir C. MacCarthy's death and this cynical avowal by the Home Government of the object of the "wise adherence to economy," the cause of all our woes, served together to divert public wrath from the local authorities, while the arrival of Sir Hercules Robinson and the formation two months later of the Ceylon League brought to an end at once both the era of Parsimony and that of Planting unanimity. Sir Hercules lost no time in visiting Kandy, where he received a deputation of P. A. Members, listened most patiently to the statement of their grievances (his power of patient listening was one of his strongest points), and, though making no great promises, treated the complaints in a spirit so sympathetic and so widely different from that to which we had of late years been accustomed that all went away well pleased and hopeful. It might have been well if in Colombo the new Governor had devoted equal attention to winning the confidence of Mr. George Wall,

who as the senior of the resigned M. L. C.'s, with the whole Colombo press at his back, was already demanding a reformed Legislative Council. What actually passed between the Governor and the political leader I know not, but in a letter to the Secretary of State at a later date Mr. Wall stated that the Governor had not granted him "ten minutes conversation."

In May the Ceylon League was launched on its career; and as the time for the meeting of Council drew near the difficulties of the position became acute. The Governor was in duty bound to nominate new Unofficial Members. The League and its supporters (among the latter the unanimous press) were anxious, if possible, to deter all unofficial persons from accepting the proffered honour. We in Kandy, who had no part or lot in the formation of the League, were free to act as we thought best in the interests of the State. The Governor, meanwhile, had been showing in many directions upcountry his capacity and goodwill; and we had little difficulty in deciding that it was our duty to support him. Mr. Harrison accepted His Excellency's invitation to represent the Planting interests, while in Colombo Mr. G. S. Duff, Manager of the Oriental Bank, and Mr. C. B. Smith, of the Ceylon Company, Limited, agreed to sit for the Mercantile and European communities respectively. Three gentlemen were also found to complete the tally as representing the native races. The copious outpouring of printing ink in Colombo on the heads of these so-called representatives and of all those who sympathized with them was a thing to be remembered. The caustic Scotch wit of Mr. A. M. Ferguson, the more subtle English invective of Mr. J. Capper, and the brilliant Eurasian humour of Mr. C. A. Lorenz reminded us daily of our political shortcomings,

The P. A., which for three years as the representative of the united Planters had been the leading power in the State, found itself in an altered position. In a humble way the effect of Mr. Wall's policy of Council Reform in 1865 on the Planters may be likened to that of Mr. Gladstone's policy of Home Rule in 1885 on the Liberal party here in England, or to that of Mr. Chamberlain's present policy of Tariff Reform on the Unionist party. The League had its adherents upcountry as well as in Colombo. The situation no longer admitted of complete unanimity and the Association, whose leaders stood aloof from the Reform movement, by force of circumstances was compelled to act rather in alliance with than against the Government. Dropping all high politics we had to devote ourselves to the less exciting, but perhaps more profitable, work of aiding, and to some extent guiding, the

Government in their measures for repairing the disastrous effects of the previous "wise adherence to economy." It may be doubted if ever in its history the Association has done more good work in a quiet way than during the next few years, 1865 to 1868, but the work was not of a nature to stir public enthusiasm. General Meetings were no longer attended by shouting crowds: subscriptions fell off till, at the end of 1867, the number of Members on the roll was reduced to 75, and the balance sheet showed a substantial sum due to the Secretary.

If such was the effect of the Association's proceedings on contemporaries, not the pen of a ready writer could give them interest to succeeding generations. I must, therefore, in regard to these years, restrict myself to a selection of a few of the leading subjects that engaged attention.

In 1865 the Committee were kept usefully employed in helping to perfect the Labour Ordinance as it passed through Council; while 1866 should be ever remembered as the first year in the annals of the Association in which the cultivation of Tea formed the subject of discussion. This was to me already a matter of personal interest. The proprietors of Loolecondura Estate in Hewaheta, of whom I was one, having been successful in some experiments in Cinchona growing, were then turning their attention to Tea. Mr. James Taylor, the Manager of the Estate, was experimenting in the manufacture of Tea from the leaves of some China bushes that he had planted along the road-sides, with results not altogether hopeless. Mr. Arthur Morice of Mooloya, a neighbouring Estate, took an interest in these proceedings; and hence arose the suggestion, though who was the first to make it I cannot now say, that it would be a good thing if Mr. Morice could be sent to India as Commissioner to report on the cultivation and manufacture of Tea as practised in the Tea districts there. I have not the P. A. Book for 1866-7 to refer to, but I believe I brought the proposal before the Association, and that it was resolved to vote £100 for the purpose on condition that the Government also voted £100. The Government assented, and Mr. Morice set forth on his travels, the results of which were embodied in a full report published in 1867. On receipt of the report the Proprietors of Loolecondura at once ordered from Messrs. Weinhold Bros., of Calcutta, a consignment of Assam Hybrid Tea Seed to plant their first field of Tea. And this is how this epoch-making event is dealt with in the P. A. Committee's report, of which I presume that I was the author:—"Among subjects of less importance the Committee have to notice the publication in the course of the year of the report

on the Tea districts of India by the Commissioner of the Association. Mr. Arthur Morice." The Committee seems to have approved of the Report, for "as a mark of their sense of the value" of it they made Mr. Morice an Honorary Member of the Association. The coffee crop of 1866-7 was a very large one, indeed the largest in proportion to the acreage in bearing in my time. Who could have conceived that within 20 years Coffee would have become a "subject of less importance" than Tea ?

In the middle of 1866 Mr. Harrison went home. For four years past he had been a tower of strength to the Association both in Council and in debate: and in the Legislative Council, though not nominated by the Association he had served the Planters well. I was invited to fill the vacant seat in Council, but with all the work of my firm and of the Association on my hands I felt unable to accept the honour; and further, as Secretary of the Association, I was unwilling to sit unless duly nominated at a General Meeting, the more so as it was almost certain that, were the question of nomination to Council raised, the Leaguers, as Mr. Wall's followers were then called, would eagerly oppose the nomination of any one. Mr. M. H. Thomas, then of Alston, Scott & Co., now one of the oldest and most respected of upcountry residents, was appointed to the vacant seat.

It was shortly after Mr. Harrison's departure that Ceylon found herself, almost suddenly, confronted with the fears of impending famine. Stocks of rice had been getting low upcountry; when, without warning, supplies from the accustomed sources in India began to fail and soon almost ceased. Prices ran up day by day to Rs. 20 and even Rs. 30 per bushel. On estates whose stocks had run out coolies were absolutely starving and they wandered away into Kandy, or the nearest town, to seek what they might pick up. One Sunday morning the congregation at St. Paul's, Kandy, were disturbed in their devotions by an unseemly uproar outside. A hurried messenger sped down the aisle to summon Mr. Frank Templer, then Acting Government Agent, to the scene of the riot, where he found an assemblage of these hungry coolies breaking into the rice shops. Mr. Templer, called upon to act on the spur of the moment, ordered the vendors of rice, who were holding for famine prices, to open their boutiques and distribute the rice at a comparatively low rate. This appeased the hungry crowd for the moment: but it was manifestly a precedent that might be disastrous in its results. Though there was very little rice in Ceylon and a famine in South India, there was plenty in Burma and North India,



Hon. Mr. John Norman Campbell, ex-Planting M L. C.

which the high prices would quickly attract. But let it be noised abroad that Government was interfering to lower prices and our case would be hopeless. A letter was promptly despatched to the Governor, then in Colombo, pointing out the danger of Government interference. Sir Hercules, with his usual promptitude, replied by return of post in terms completely satisfactory. The events of these few weeks of quasi-famine are graven on my memory. My partners were all away at home. I was responsible for the supply of rice for some 20,000 coolies, and the anxiety was very great. Fortunately the high prices soon told their tale. Rice poured into Colombo from all quarters and prices dropped rapidly to a normal level, to the dismay of importing speculators, whose losses were great.

But it was not only scarcity of food that troubled Planters in 1866. There was in addition a grievous scarcity of money and credit. Black Monday, 26th May, lives in history. The numerous failures in London on that day re-acted sharply on Ceylon. In the preceding years, owing to the opening of branches in Colombo and Kandy by two Banks from Bombay, the Bank of Hindustan and the Asiatic Bank, money and credit had been only too abundant, especially in Kandy and upcountry. These Banks, children both of the Bombay Cotton boom during the American war, had been weakened by the rapid fall in the price of Cotton at the end of the war, and in the great financial crisis of May, 1866, both had to close their doors. For a few days Kandy was panic-stricken. Reports of failures in London passed from mouth to mouth. Rumour anticipated history by well-nigh a quarter of a century in the matter of the collapse of the great house of Barings, whose interests in Ceylon were known to be large. In this crisis several good Coffee estates were brought to the hammer, and in the absence of bidders passed to the mortgagees. But in the main the Coffee enterprise was still sound; there was, as already mentioned, a grand crop on the trees that year, and the effects of the shock soon passed away.

In the case of the native traders upcountry, however, the effects were not so easily surmounted. These gentlemen had lately had a high time with four Banks competing eagerly for any paper that they might please to manufacture. Prices of property of every kind had risen under the flood of rupees to that extent that numbers felt, and were accounted to be, rich. Suddenly all discounting ceased—for the old Banks, the Oriental and the Chartered Mercantile, both forthwith tried to get some of their money in and restricted all further advances. No property could find a purchaser, and I do not

think that there was one native trader in Kandy who was in a position to meet his liabilities. I speak of what I know, for it fell to my lot, as attorney for Mr. W. Turquand, to wind up the Ceylon branches of the Asiatic Bank. As a sample of the kind of transaction then in vogue in Kandy I may mention a line of business that amused me much. There was in the town at that time (or perhaps there was not) an old waggonette. This vehicle B. bought of A., giving him a promissory note in payment. C. then bought it of B., D. of C., and so on through half the letters of the alphabet, payment being in each case made in the same way. All these promissory notes came into my hands as liquidator. Many of the letters of the alphabet had disappeared, possibly had never existed. Those who appeared all told the same tale of the waggonette and of total inability to pay.

It was in this same year, 1866, that the Annual P. A. dinner was revived after a lapse of five years. Captain Byrde (the family name had been changed), as Chairman of the Association, presided, and there was a goodly meeting of the Planters of the day. "Sandy" Brown was as usual much to the front, and I had the pleasure of proposing his health as "the mainstay of the Association." Another pleasure of that evening was that I had as my guest for his very first appearance on the P. A. boards one who was destined in eloquence to out-shine in later years even the redoubtable "Sandy"—my old friend and now near neighbour, Mr. J. Loudon Shand. The feast was no doubt convivial as Planters' feasts are apt to be; but I myself seem to have been in a depressed state, for I see that in returning thanks when my health was drunk I mourned over the Association as being "almost without members and without money."

By far the most important event in these lean years with which I am now dealing, was the opening in August, 1867, of the Railway through to Kandy. On the 4th April of that year I travelled for the first time from Kandy to Colombo, with Mr. J. F. Churchill, on the invitation of the contractor, Mr. W. F. Faviell, at whose house in Colombo we spent the night. On the following day Mr. W. F. Faviell ran a select party of friends, we being among the privileged number, to Peradeniya where a sumptuous lunch awaited us. On the journey up Mr. A. M. Ferguson stands out in my memory as full of vigour and life. I can remember well his admiration of the terraced paddy fields as seen from the incline below Kadugannawa. There had been a good deal of paper warfare between us in the previous year or two, and it was pleasant to shake hands and hold friendly converse.

The Railway was not opened for traffic till 1st August : but six months before, at its Annual Meeting in February, the Association was busy estimating the probable traffic and calling on the Government for detailed information as to the rolling stock to be provided. To me personally, with very large quantities of Coffee needing quick despatch from Kandy to Colombo, it was of the utmost importance that by the end of September, when crop season began in earnest, the railway should be in full working order ; and accordingly at an early date I began to look closely into the previous estimates of traffic. Investigation soon showed that so far as Coffee was concerned these had all erred in being much too low. Two factors had been overlooked : one that parchment Coffee as sent down by rail is much heavier than clean Coffee as shipped ; the second that about two-thirds of the whole crop had to be transported in five or six months so that at the height of the busy season the daily down traffic was likely, and proved, to be very largely in excess of anticipation. Throughout the year an animated correspondence with the Government and with the Director General (now Sir G. L. Molesworth) was carried on, with the result that in spite of the large excess of traffic above the estimated quantity, the crop found itself safely in Colombo without any very great delay. A spirited little passage of arms took place over a request for a goods station at the point where the railway crosses the Deltota road, but I must not pause to describe it, nor how I spent the early hours of each day at the Kandy station, helping the executive officers, Messrs. E. Robinson and E. G. Strong, to despatch the Coffee.

By the end of 1867 not only was the Ceylon Government Railway working well, but its financial success was assured. The passenger traffic had gone beyond even the goods in exceeding expectation : and it was clear that the Government was in for a good thing. But others beside the Government had contributed to the cost. For eleven years all produce exported from Ceylon had been subject to a duty of $2\frac{1}{2}\%$, in the case of coffee to 1/- per cwt, as a guarantee against loss to the Government on the Railway venture. In this way a quarter of the total cost of construction, say £450,000, had been paid by the proprietors of agricultural lands throughout the Island, by those growing sugar and grasses in the South, or coconuts in the East or North, equally with the coffee growers of the Central Province. The results of the working to Ambepusse, to which place the line had been opened for over two years, and the expanding estimates of traffic had already at the beginning of 1867 made it clear that, whatever was the need of a guarantee in starting the venture, the Railway would in

future be sufficient and ample security for all liabilities connected therewith. It should hardly, then, have been a matter of surprise to the Government that at the Annual Meeting of the Association in February 1867 the Chairman (Captain Byrde) brought forward a resolution:—"That the Governor and the Legislative Council be memorialized to repeal the export duty on Coffee as soon as the Railway is completed to Kandy." This resolution was supported by Mr. A. Brown and myself, and, of course, was carried unanimously.

The Memorial was duly drawn and circulated for signature by all proprietors throughout the Island. Those of the North, South, and East, as might be expected, hailed the movement with delight. But when the time came for the presentation, a roaring lion sprang up in the path. Under the Railway Loan Ordinance, it appeared, the Export Duties had, in common with all the revenues of the Colony, been pledged as security for the sums borrowed for the construction, and, till the loans had been paid off, it would be an act of repudiation to remit the duties. The legal advisers of the Government were clear on this point. A mysterious letter appeared in the *Observer* setting forth the Government position. To this I promptly made reply, showing beyond the possibility of doubt, that the terms on which the Planters had in 1855 agreed to the duties, were as a guarantee for payment of interest on the loans during construction and for any subsequent loss on working, and that, if the Government had, as stated, irredeemably pledged the duties, as being permanent, they had in fact exceeded their powers. The Government made every effort to prevent the presentation of the Memorial. Mr. M. H. Thomas, to whom, as representing the planters, I first applied, was so impressed with the futility of our action that he declined to aid and abet it in any way. Mr. R. V. Dunlop, to whom I next applied, said that he was prepared to present any Memorial properly drawn on any subject whatever, but that we must not expect him to say a word in support of our petition,

The reception of the unfortunate Memorial in Council is thus described in the P. A. report of the following February:—"It was presented to the Council by Mr. Dunlop. The arguments of the Memorialists, though couched in the most respectful terms, were met only by unwarrantable insults. But from the speech of the Colonial Secretary it would appear that the Government has, in violation of the original understanding with proprietors, irredeemably pledged the duties for many years to come." This was the last word in the controversy. But, finally to close the incident, I must jump forward a year. Sir Hercules Robinson went home on leave in the



Hon. Mr Edward Rosling, Present Planting M. L. C.

middle of 1868. In November I, too, went home. A few days after my arrival in London we met in Kensington Gardens. He received me with more than usual warmth, saying as we shook hands "I have some news that will please you." He then told me that orders were to be sent out at once to repeal the export duties. The matter had only just been settled; and he added "You shall be the first to send the news out to the Planters." His Excellency was in high good humour, for Mr. Wall, who, as President of the Ceylon League, had for some months been in London, trying his best to move the Home authorities to adopt his proposed reforms, had by this time been compelled to own himself defeated.

I have always remembered with satisfaction the work done by the P. A. during the period that public support was so sadly lacking, a satisfaction which has not grown less with the passing years. It was well to have placed the Labour Laws of the Island permanently on a footing sufficiently equitable to preclude for all time the often threatened interference of the Indian authorities with cooly emigration to Ceylon. It was well to have acted even as the fly on the wheel in securing the immediate successful working of the Government Railway. It was better to have provided for its future prosperity by taking the first step towards founding the great Tea industry. Best of all, perhaps, for that self-sacrificing generation of Planters, was the success obtained in repealing the export duties. This tax, owing to the circumstances of the time, was weighing very heavily on many of the owners of estates. Prices had fallen much, and 1/- per cwt. made a big hole in any margin of profit after payment of interest on debt.

Looking at the ultimate fate of the Coffee industry, a fate beyond the help of railway facilities, nothing could have been more happy for Ceylon's future welfare than the action of those gentlemen who in 1856 went to Sir Henry Ward and asked to be taxed. But for the majority of them it was a case of "*Sic vos non vobis.*" Who should be considered their heirs may be a question open to discussion. But I think that in equity the fact that the Planters of the day paid out of their own pockets one fourth of the cost of constructing the Colombo-Kandy line should for all time be considered a material element in dealing with the profits on that line.

Despite its beneficent work the P. A. by the end of 1867 was in a parlous state. As regards popular support things had gone from bad to worse. Had my firm withdrawn its estates at this juncture the number of the properties enrolled would have been few indeed; and it looked as if the sum due to me at the end of the fourteenth year of the Association would be

much too large to be pleasant. It began to be said that the Association was only Keir, Dundas & Co. This reproach, though having a substratum of truth, was very far from the mark as regards the representative Members of the Association. Captain Byrde was throughout our efficient Chairman: no two colleagues could have worked more heartily together than did he and I during our five years of joint office. Mr. A. Brown was always zealous and helpful. The Committee Meetings of the year had been well attended by such leading Planters as R. J. Corbet, R. B. Downall, W. Rose, G. H. D. Elphinstone, T. S. Dobree, J. Walker, J. Shipton, W. Bowden Smith, H. S. Saunders, W. G. Proctor, A. Sinclair, W. D. Gibbon, A. S. Blacklaw, and W. A. Swan, not one of whom had any connection with K., D. & Co. I was myself proposing to go home in 1868 and wished therefore not to offer myself for re-election on the 17th February. But who would be willing to succeed me under the depressing circumstances? It was a case where something had to be done: if possible some stirring sport provided to bring in those for whom good useful work had no attraction.

It so happened that Mr. George Wall was intending shortly to proceed on a second mission to London in the interests of the Ceylon League and its reform scheme: he had already in 1866 been home once, when he succeeded in getting the late Sir E. Watkin to bring the League proposals before the House of Commons. The attitude of the P. A. had, however, on that occasion been a stumbling block in his path. The League newspapers now began to hint that this difficulty might be remedied for the coming visit by a great effort to carry the Chairman of the League as Chairman also of the P. A. Readers will understand the relief that this suggestion brought to us in Kandy, especially to myself. A contested election for the Chair was clearly the "deus ex machina" to solve all our difficulties. I had by this time drifted into, rather than been elected to, the position of leader of the Anti-League (or as it came to be called by the other side, the Queen's House) party: and Mr. Wall soon opened communications with me in all due form as became one high power addressing another. Reform was at that date in the air. At home, as in Ceylon, two great leaders had on this question been marshalling their hosts for the fray. I so often heard Mr. Wall compared to Mr. Gladstone, to whom he certainly bore some personal resemblance, that it became in time something of a personal grievance that no one could be found to liken me to Disraeli. Mr. Wall wished first, and evidently wished very much, to become Chairman of the Association. The difficulty was that, as the Association was then constituted, I was all-powerful. I believe that, if he had had the courage to appeal directly to the general body of

Planters without consulting me, he would have won pretty easily ; but certainly I should have done my best to defeat him. As it was his proposal was that he should be allowed to walk over for the Chairmanship while I retained the Secretaryship. Thus a wider basis would be given to the Association. Captain Byrde, entering gaily into the spirit of the crisis, made it known that, come what might, he would not be ousted from the Chair without a fight. On the 3rd February he issued a spirited address giving his views on the situation. As an encouragement to Mr. Wall I undertook to give my voters a free hand in the contest ; and I also agreed to accept re-election as Secretary. Preliminaries having been thus arranged it was announced far and wide that Captain Byrde and Mr. Wall would both be nominated for the Chair, and that no one would be entitled to vote unless the subscription for 1867-68 had been paid before the Annual Meeting on the 17th February. Then the sport began : the much desired members and coin poured in till the subscriptions for the year, which up to that time had been miserably small, reached the record figure of £484-2-0. The accounts for the year, in place of showing a sum in three figures on the wrong side, exhibited a balance of £205-3-6 in the bank.

About a week or so before the fateful day of meeting Kandy experienced an entirely new sensation in the appearance of a local newspaper. The *Kandy Herald* was no doubt brought into being in the first instance by the prolonged unanimity on the League question of the Colombo press, though by the time that the first number actually saw the light of day the *Ceylon Times*, then edited by Mr. Keppel Jones, who had not, like Mr. J. Capper, been one of the resigned Unofficial M. L. C.s, was showing signs of breaking away from the somewhat monotonous concord. The proprietors of the new journal were Mr. Charles Tottenham, the well-known surveyor, who had recently made his great coup in the Temple lands survey, and Dr. Baylis, who having sold his practice at Madoolkelle, now exchanged the lancet for the pen as being a more congenial instrument. Mr. Tottenham, as a fellow countryman and a great admirer of Sir Hercules Robinson, was an enthusiastic Queen's House man ; and there was no question as to what the politics of the Kandy organ should be. I was at an early date taken into the confidence of the adventurers, who had engaged as Editor Mr. Arthur Jones, one of the *Daily News* staff, and brother of Mr. Keppel Jones of the *Ceylon Times*. The Editor, who had freshly arrived from home, naturally knew nothing whatever of local affairs ; and so it came about that to me fell the honour of writing the opening article in Kandy's first and last paper. I remember something about "a frail little bark

putting out to sea in a raging storm," but otherwise only that the general views of the paper on the question of the hour were set forth in no uncertain terms. The opportune appearance of this meteoric broadsheet in the planting Capital no doubt stimulated interest in the coming election and helped to bring in all hesitating Leaguers to the ranks of the P. A.

But before the day of the Meeting had arrived the *Herald* was to add fresh fuel to the flames by the publication of Governor Robinson's great despatch of 23rd April, 1866, "that singularly and inexplicably bitter and offensive despatch" (I quote the words of the late Mr. A. M. Ferguson) in which His Excellency analysed mercilessly the claims of the people of Ceylon to direct electoral representation.

Colombo newspapers were not so well served in those days as they are now. This famous despatch, with other connected papers, was printed and issued in London by order of the House of Commons on the 17th January: it was not till the 12th or 13th February that it appeared in the *Kandy Herald*, and yet its appearance was hailed by the leading journal in Colombo as "strange and utterly unexpected." There was much searching of heart as to how the precocious Kandy infant could have thus got ahead of its elder brethren in Colombo; and at the P. A. Meeting I so far gratified curiosity as to say that I, having a copy of the document, had handed it to our own local organ, requesting that proofs should be sent to the Colombo press. As a matter of fact I had received the copy from Mr. W. Rose, Mr. Wall's partner, who had been commissioned at Nuwara Eliya by the Queen's Advocate to bring it to me. The position of the *Observer* in this little matter was distressing. Writing on the 15th February the then Junior Editor said "By the French Mail last evening we received a few lines from the absent Editor of this journal, in which he said 'Sir Hercules Robinson's despatch by book post.' That book packet most unfortunately has not arrived."

The terms of the despatch, which certainly lacked nothing in outspoken candour, raised party spirit to a white heat; and it was in this atmosphere that the meeting of the resuscitated P. A. took place. Of this meeting I have no printed record. In my file of the *Observer* the number containing the report is missing. I can remember little but a room "crammed with scores and hundreds" of excited Planters shouting themselves hoarse in rivalry over Captain Byrde, Mr. Wall, and myself. Certainly on no other occasion has it fallen to my lot to meet with a like reception. One burly figure, however, that of Mr. R. B. Tytler, stands out in my memory. I can see him still, erect at the lower end of the room, as in proposing Mr.



Mr. A. C. Kingsford, Chairman in 1902-3.

Wall as Chairman he contrasted the meeting that day and its crowd of 40 or so with one that he attended a year or two earlier when he could count those present "on the digits of his two hands." Mr. Wall was elected to the Chair by a large majority; I was re-elected as Secretary; a resolution was carried advocating an inquiry into the rules under which the Colonial revenues were appropriated by vote in the Legislative Council; and on my motion it was resolved to memorialize the Governor for a reduction of the Railway rates on Coffee to compensate for the continuance of the export duty. What was the fate of that Memorial I cannot clearly remember, but I am inclined to think that, before the Governor went home in June he made a reduction in the rates, and then, when he got home, succeeded in persuading the authorities to abolish the duty. If so, estate proprietors scored doubly.

The proceedings at the meeting, though tumultuous, were essentially good humoured. It was fitting so, for Mr. Wall and his supporters had secured the object of their desire in the P. A. Chair, while Captain Byrde and I had full compensation in being enabled to hand over to our successors a vigorous P. A., well endowed both with men and money.

A heated newspaper controversy arose from the publication of the famous Despatch and of other connected correspondence, but for some weeks it was allowed to blaze away harmlessly outside the walls of the P. A. Then one day there appeared, signed by Mr. Wall, a strong party letter, in which the Queen's House party and their works were dealt with as leading politicians are wont to deal with the other side. But for our P. A. relations I should probably have replied in like spirit, for though by no means a pugnacious person, I have this in common with Mr. Chamberlain that, when attacked, I do not, without good reason, "take it lying down." It seemed to me, however, that it would not be seemly in the interests of the P. A., or indeed of the office-bearers themselves, that the Chairman and the Secretary should be belabouring each other in the public Press. My protest, therefore, took the form of resignation. My action was severely criticized at this time; and I do not know that I should care now to be called on to justify it. That which seemed an advantage at the time, that it was annoying to Mr. Wall and his leaguers, might, under the influence of time, appear in a different light. Mr. Wall and I came perilously near to a personal quarrel; but it is pleasant to think that in later years, being brought together in the service of the *Ceylon Independent*, we co-operated and corresponded on the most friendly terms; and finally, with sincere regret, I followed him when he was carried to his last resting-place at Bromley.

At the May Meeting of the Association I retired from the Secretaryship, and Captain Byrde was elected in my place. I remember nothing at all of the meeting; but at the Annual P. A. dinner there was a quaint little incident illustrative of the relations then existing between the Governor and Mr. Wall on the one hand and Mr. Wall and myself on the other. Mr. Wall, as P. A. Chairman, of course presided at the feast, and it was part of his duty to propose the Governor's health, a somewhat delicate business in the circumstances. I was told off to propose the Civil Service, coupling with it the name of Mr. P. W. Braybrooke, our very popular Government Agent. It had been subject of speculation how the Chairman would meet the difficulty. He did it by raising his glass and saying only "The Governor." This produced a perfect storm of cheers from the Queen's Houseites who made up for the lack of speech by the loudness of their applause. At once a sum in proportion presented itself to my mind: "If a Governor has no words, how many will go to a Government Agent?" The only difficulty was that I was bursting with a well-prepared oration setting forth the virtues of my friend Mr. Braybrooke, which it was pain to withhold. The desire to score off our Chairman was, however, too strong. And my speech was in this wise: "The shorter the speech, the greater the compliment. 'The Civil Service.' To secure your most hearty reception for the toast I have only to mention the name of Mr Braybrooke."

The six months that elapsed between the May Meeting and my departure for England in November were uneventful so far as the P. A. were concerned. During that interval both the Governor and Mr. Wall transferred the scene of the Reform contest to London. As a result Ceylon and her constitution were subject of a good deal of unavailing talk in the House of Commons; but by the end of the year Mr. Wall had returned to Ceylon defeated, and the Ceylon League soon ceased to exist.

There were two notable functions in Kandy that year. One was the Address and Ball to the Governor on his leaving for home. This was a counterblast to the League meetings that had been held throughout the country, and as a political demonstration had great effect in strengthening the Governor's hands. At the ball supper, at which Sir Edward Creasy presided, His Excellency for the first time since his arrival in the Colony unbent in speech. He was sent on his way home greatly rejoicing. The other function, in all the arrangements for which Captain Byrde and I once again co-operated, was the unveiling of Sir Henry Ward's Statue on the Bund. It was a striking scene: the esplanade was hidden by a dense mass of natives, when suddenly there was a tremendous downpour of rain. I

have a photograph taken at that moment of the sea of umbrellas that appeared. The ceremony passed off without further hindrance, and was followed by a lunch at the Library whereat the speaking was in every way worthy of the occasion. Mr Braybrooke presided, and in proposing the Memory of Sir Henry Ward spoke in most feeling terms, while Sir Edward Creasy appealed to the kindest feelings of his audience in giving the health of Lady Ward and her family. Mr. Wall, Mr. C. A. Lorenz, Mr. A. Brown, and others who had known Sir Henry contributed to the rich feast of oratory.

Mr. Harrison returned to Ceylon in time for the 1868-69 session and resumed his seat in Council which had not been vacated by his absence. He continued to represent the Planters till 1872 when he went home again, never to return.

Before transferring myself to England I will close the sad tale of the *Kandy Herald*. The editor, Mr. Arthur Jones, was no doubt a practised Fleet Street journalist, but he was both physically and mentally (I do not mean intellectually) weak. He was but ill-fitted for the rough and tumble, close quarters, work of a small and excited community. The heat of the League controversy, in which he found himself called on suddenly to take a leading part, was too great for him. He soon showed unmistakable signs of weakening of the brain and had to go back home, where very shortly he died. Dr. Baylis then took the editorship into his own hands, but he, unfortunately, was in no sense a practised journalist. Like Mr. W. T. Stead he revelled in intercourse with "spooks" and such like. The paper in his hand became a journal of Spiritualism, singularly ill-suited for Planters' reading. The newspaper and the League each died a natural death some time in 1869.

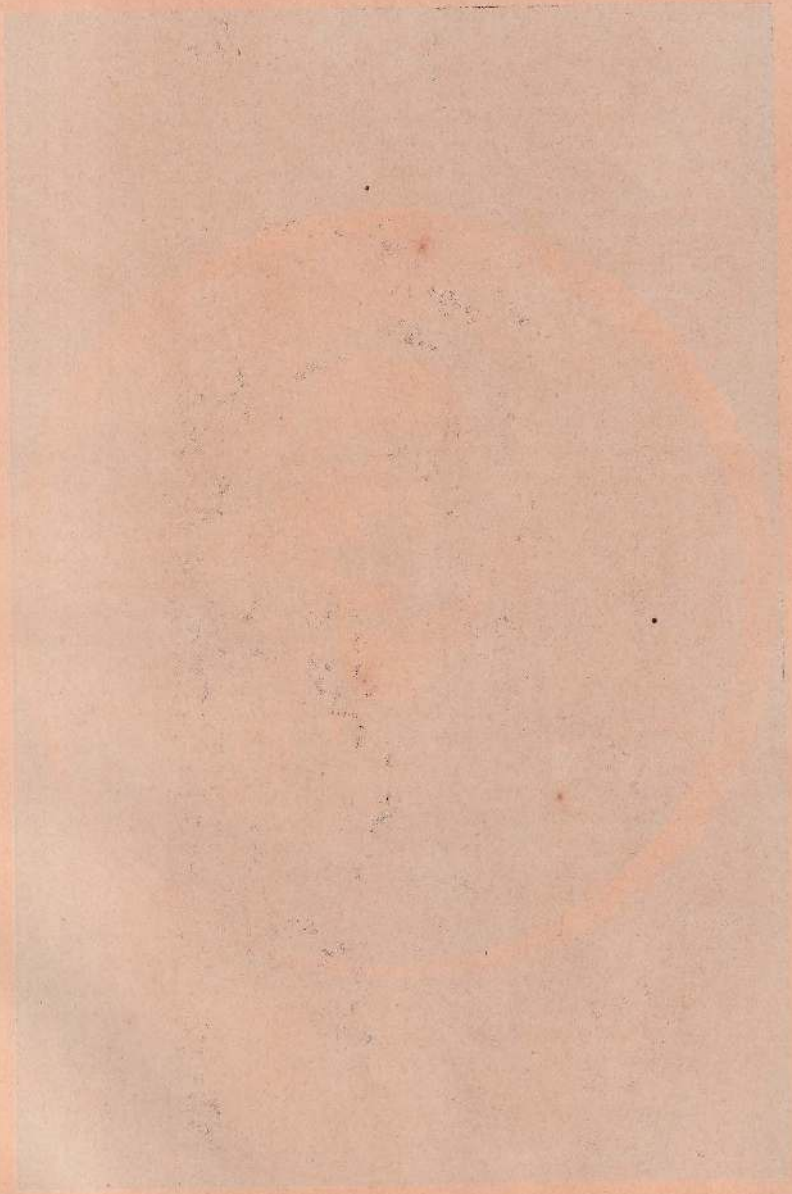
Mr. Harrison having returned to Kandy I was free in November to go home and take a holiday after my six years of lively work. My planting friends were kind enough to commemorate the occasion by presenting me with a noble tea and coffee service with two handsome salvers. For 35 years it has been my pride to show these to all comers as an evidence of my old-standing relations with Ceylon and her Planters. On my way home I made a sort of a trial trip. Leaving the P. & O. in Egypt I took the Austrian Lloyd's steamer from Alexandria to Brindisi, to which port the railway had just been opened. Journeying by a train that left Brindisi on Wednesday evening I reached Susa, the Italian terminus of the Fell Railway over Mont Cenis, late on Thursday, started to cross Mont Cenis at daybreak on Friday, a lovely bright December morning, and arrived in Paris in time to catch Saturday's day

mail to London, where I arrived about 6 p.m. Some weeks later a traveller published in the London papers his experience of the new route, recommending it as the Eastern mail route of the future. But his time had been 12 hours or so longer than mine. It is matter of history how in 1870, about 18 months later, under the stress of circumstances during the Franco-German War, the P. & O. adopted Brindisi in place of Marseilles as the port of call. The journey to or from London now occupies less than 60 hours.

Great events had taken place in the political world during my homeward journey. The decisive result of the first General Election under the Reform Act of 1867 had caused the immediate resignation of Mr. Disraeli; and Mr. Gladstone had formed the famous Cabinet from which so much was expected.

Mr. Wall was in London; and one's first thought was that the fates had played into his hands, and that he now might receive from reformers like Gladstone and Bright a ready hearing for his plans of reform in Ceylon. There was, however, in the new Cabinet, in the leading position of Chancellor of the Exchequer, an antagonistic element in the person of Mr. Robert Lowe. Mr. Lowe, as a constant guest in old days at my father's house, had known me well in my boyhood. Hearing of my arrival in London he invited me to his house and entertained me with a vivid account of a recent interview with Mr. Wall. It goes without saying that the man that made those magnificent anti-reform speeches of 1866 and 1867, speeches which for the moment cast a shade even on the efforts of Gladstone and Bright, would give short shrift to proposals for electoral representation in Ceylon. And it is probable that it was at the hand of "Bob" Lowe that the Ceylon League received its death stroke.

There was another reason why I rejoiced to see a friend, to whom I could obtain direct access, in charge of the finances of the country. Some three or four years before, the P. A. had approached Mr. Gladstone, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, with a prayer for the reduction of the duty on coffee, at that time 3d per lb. We relied mainly on the assertion that the *ad valorem* tax on coffee was unduly high in comparison with that on its chief competitor tea, then taxed at 6d per lb. Our chief difficulty in Kandy in making this comparison (to call it a difficulty would in these days raise a smile) was that of obtaining accurate information as to the average price of tea in bond in London; and when Mr. Gladstone replied somewhat brusquely that our figures were all wrong, although we felt sure that he was mistaken, we had





Mr. Edgar Turner, newly elected Chairman.

no authority such as is to-day ready to hand whereon to take our stand. In London of course I had no difficulty in getting information as to the prices of tea and coffee for the past years; and I found that in our previous Memorial we had taken the average price of both a good deal above the true average of all grades. The future G. O. M. (he had not then been promoted to that honourable title) adopted the simple expedient of reducing our figure for tea to the true average without subjecting the figure for coffee to the same treatment.

I delayed taking any action till it became evident that in the Budget of 1870 a considerable surplus was assured. I then addressed the Chancellor on the subject. Soon I discovered that I was not alone in the field. Mr. R. W. Crawford, Governor of the Bank of England and M. P. for the City of London, a strong supporter of the Government, had also written his views to the Chancellor about a fortnight earlier. Mr. Crawford was interested as the proprietor of estates in South India. Budget night came and went, and nothing was done for coffee; but every encouragement was given us to continue our efforts. Writing to Ceylon on 3rd June, 1870, making report of a meeting of representatives of the coffee trade held that morning in Mr. Crawford's room at the Bank of England, I said "After the Budget Mr. Lowe told him (Mr. Crawford) that he had made out a good case, but that this year (1870) if the sugar duties were to be dealt with once and for all there was no room to touch coffee." The question of the coffee duty was now taken up in due form by the Associations both in Ceylon and South India. The whole case for the reduction was admirably set forth at length in a letter dated 24th June, 1870, by Mr. Harrison, Chairman of the P. A., and the ultimate success of the campaign was thenceforth assured. In the Budget of 1872 the duty on coffee was reduced to 1½d. per lb., at which figure it still stands to-day.

It was at dinner at Mr. Lowe's house in Lowndes Square that I first met Mr. W. H. Gregory, then Liberal M. P. for Galway, soon to be Governor of Ceylon, and later again President of the Ceylon Association in London. Both in Ceylon and in London it was my privilege in later years to work in cordial concert with him for the interests of the Colony.

In November, 1869, the Suez Canal was opened: and shortly afterwards some Russian Agents visited Ceylon, prospecting for possible cargo for a line of steamers from the Black Sea through the Canal eastwards. They thought that the market for Ceylon coffee in Russia might be best supplied directly by this route as soon as the railway from Moscow was

opened to Odessa. Mr. Harrison accordingly arranged with these gentlemen that I should visit Russia in the summer of 1870. I had a very interesting trip, but the result of my inquiries was not encouraging. The consumption of coffee in Russia was very small, tea being then as now the popular beverage; and the trade was almost entirely in peaberry. I visited St. Petersburg and Moscow, had a few days at Nijni fair—where some of Keir, Dundas & Co.'s peaberry (I saw our own packages) was being sold as Mocha—and was one of the first travellers through by rail from Moscow to Odessa. Arrangements were made for opening a direct trade and one trial shipment was made. But times were adverse for opening new outlets for Ceylon coffee. The quantity of the commodity soon began to dwindle ominously, while in the course of two years the prices in London took an upward movement which was not checked till the value of the berry was doubled. There was no need then for Ceylon Planters to be seeking new markets or new routes.

In January, 1871, I once more set sail for Ceylon and made my first passage through the Suez Canal. On arrival in Colombo towards the end of February I learned that the P. A. had again restored its fortunes by a contest for the Chair wherein Mr. J. A. Bell had been elected by a majority of 48 votes over Mr. R. B. Tytler, 170 to 122. The two years of my absence had not been eventful years in the history of the P. A. I have before me the reports of 1870 and 1871, and the chief items therein respectively are the repeal of the export duty and the agitation for the reduction of the Home duty on coffee, with both of which I have already dealt at length.

At the end of 1870 a sharp controversy sprang up as to railway extension from Gampola: and at a crowded meeting of the P. A. held on 7th January, 1871, a proposal for inquiry made by Mr. Wall was set aside by a vote of 182 to 36 in favour of an amendment that "the railway should be continued to Nawalapitiya without break of gauge." The Governor then pronounced in favour of finality to Nawalapitiya and no further: and railway extension was allowed to rest till his departure in the following year.

One other subject was troubling the wise heads of the Association, the question of Manure: and that leads me to the most serious event of all that disturbed Planters at that period. Up to my leaving Ceylon in 1868 I had neither seen nor heard of "Hemileia Vastatrix:" on my return in 1871 it was everywhere. I was at once introduced to it in my compound in Kandy; and from that day forward it was with a melancholy interest that one watched the young leaves burst forth again

and again only to be attacked and fall under the ravages of the pest. During the next ten years vast sums were squandered by "plucky cultivators" in applying expensive manures, good money thrown after bad, in hope of staying the plague. Manure was as little helpful in the dire struggle as railway facilities. "Physicians were in vain." Dr. Morris and Professor Marshall Ward, men of light and leading, came and went. The former even wrote a book which was to explain how to smite the "Hemileia" on its most vulnerable port, aye and printed it—and then took it to Jamaica, whence it never came back.

The year 1871 was memorable in the Colony for the change in the system of keeping accounts. On 1st January, 1872, all accounts, hitherto kept in £. s. d., were reopened in rupees and cents. It is difficult to realize now (I could not understand at the time) the feeling stirred against the Government proposals among the merchants in Colombo. It seems obviously a misleading, not to say a foolish, practice to receive a rupee, enter it as 2/- in your books, and then put it right by opening another perfectly imaginary account and entering there the difference as loss by exchange. How can one lose what one never had? Yet this was the practice, pursued till quite recently by the Indian Government. The di-satisfaction at the change in Ceylon was not deep seated and soon subsided.

Early in 1872 Sir Hercules Robinson completed his seven years' reign; and in its farewell address to the retiring Governor the Planters' Association recognised in the most cordial terms the value of his services to the Colony and the Planters. After enumerating the various troubles to which the latter had been subjected, the Address says "To your Excellency's policy it is owing that difficulty after difficulty has been met and overcome and that Planters may yet look forward to good times in the future."

In February I had the honour of being elected Chairman of the Association in place of Mr. Bell. Once more I found myself co-operating with my old colleague, Captain Byrde, who still held the post of Secretary, our positions being thus reversed. Times had much changed during the nine years since we last entered our joint offices; and our task of running the Association business, till I retired in August, 1873, was comparatively an easy one.

Mr. W. H. Gregory arrived in Ceylon in March: and within a week or two of his arrival he made a tour through the Coffee districts, accompanied by Mr. Harrison. The new Governor at once expressed his doubts as to the permanence

of the Coffee industry and never ceased thenceforth to advocate the cultivation of new products. He shewed the greatest interest in the Tea and Cinchona experiments at Loolecondura.

The arrival of Mr. Gregory may be taken as marking a new departure in the Ceylon Government policy. Sir Hercules Robinson, walking closely in the footsteps of Sir Henry Ward, devoted himself, in his careful, thoughtful way, to those "material improvements" that according to Sir Henry should be the precursors of "all other improvements." Mr. Gregory, scholar and art connoisseur, at once extended the Government field of action; and his programme was found to include liberal votes for Prisons, Hospitals, Medical Aid, Education, Museums, Archæological Research, etc. I am free to confess that I was not altogether an ardent supporter of this policy. I was painfully aware that our staple Coffee was sadly sick, while hopes from Cinchona and Tea, though daily growing, offered no immediate comfort. I doubted the wisdom of entering at that time on expenditure that offered no money returns.

In the middle of the year Mr. Harrison went home again; and the Governor had to fill his place in Council for the coming Session. He (the Governor) and I were walking together one morning in May on Lady Horton's Walk when he asked me to take the vacant seat, saying that in asking the Chairman of the P. A. he "concluded that he was taking the course most acceptable to the Planters." The quotation is from a memo of our conversation drawn by Mr. Gregory himself. In reply I explained that as Chairman I could hardly accept the honour so kindly offered without reference to the P. A., owing to the claim to the privilege of nomination successfully maintained by the Association up to the date of the resignation of the Unofficial Members in 1864. "The Governor, in reply, said that he had never before heard that such were the wishes of the Planters, or that any such claim had been preferred." I undertook to put on paper the whole story of the privilege in question, and did so in a long letter dated 23rd May, in which I was able to write as follows:— "As long ago as 1859 Sir H. Ward described the privilege of nomination as one which the Association has exercised for the last four years with much advantage to itself and to the Public. On that occasion Sir H. Ward went so far as to refuse to accept a resolution of the Association regretting that it had been unable to find a gentleman willing to accept the office, and in an excellent letter, dated 6th June, 1859, which I venture to commend to your notice, gave a full explanation of his views on the subject." The Governor readily





Mr. Alexander Philip, Secretary since 1876.

acquiesced in my suggestion that the P. A. should be allowed to nominate its own representative and sent me the memo. from which I have quoted, to be read to a General Meeting, summoned for the 6th June, to consider the Government proposals for Medical Aid in the Planting districts. The actual nomination of the future M. L. C. was postponed to a subsequent meeting held on the 14th July. In the interval I wrote to or saw every possible person with a view of obtaining some other to accept the nomination, for business claims on my time made it impossible that I should attend each week in Colombo for the Council sittings. I met with no success, and so on the 14th July it was proposed by Mr. R. B. Tytler, in a speech beginning "Will anybody volunteer to go down to Colombo and appear for us in the Legislative Council?" that I should be the nominee. I accepted the honour gratefully, but gave warning that I should be an irregular attendant.

There was one occasion on which I made a point of being present, namely at the second reading of Ordinance 14 of 1872 "to provide for the Medical wants of the Coffee districts." The planting community had been much exercised by the publication of the Draft Ordinance early in the year. A Special Committee of the Association had been appointed to discuss the whole matter with the Government. At the General Meeting in June Mr. Tytler spoke against the proposals with much vigour. "If we could only get to know who is at the bottom of all this! Whoever it is, if we could only get him and put him into the lake there, who would say there was any harm in it? If it is the Indian Government, I say it is most unjust." Compulsory Medical Aid and Government inspection of lines were up to that time unknown, and Planters were afraid both of outside interference and also of the possible expense. "Misimposed taxation," Mr. Tytler called it; and then behind lurked that suspicion that "at the bottom of all this" was the Indian Government. My own course became clear. On the one hand there was no doubt as to the general view of the Planters; on the other the Governor made no secret of his intention (I believe under instructions) to carry the second reading by the official votes. Knowing thus that I could do no harm I moved that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, in the longest speech that I ever made in my life, though what it was all about I cannot now say. I must have made a good deal of noise, for one of the reporters spoke of my "stentorian" voice. The sound did not, however, seem to disturb the impassive Councillors on whom all my oratory was only as "a bumblecock buzzing over their heads." Mr. W. Rose seconded my amendment, for which we two were,

as far as I remember, the only voters. In Committee we had comparatively a free hand and succeeded in carrying many amendments. But the ordinance was in fact beyond amendment. The result justified our opposition. The new law never worked well, and in a few years was repealed *in toto*.

At the Annual Meeting in February, 1873, I was re-elected to the Chair of the Association. In giving an account of my stewardship for the previous year I see that I repelled the charge that had been made in the *Observer* that I had attended the Council only five times, for the fact was "I was present at eight meetings." I also said, "If the Medical Aid Ordinance is carried out fairly it may be found to work for the benefit of the country." Coffee stealing at this time became a burning question and strong representations on the subject were made to the Government, the result of which I did not stay to see. Railway extension also was once more in the air. My own last speech to a General Meeting was in making one more fruitless attempt to secure a goods station at the crossing of the Deltotte road. On the 21st August, 1873, I wrote to the Secretary, "Having parted with all my interest in Coffee Estates I beg to tender my resignation of the Chair of the Association." I was succeeded in the Chair by Mr. Wall and in Council by Mr. W. Bowden Smith.

In September I finally left Ceylon. Here ends my tale of the P. A. My connection with Ceylon in London is another story.

"Old happiness remembered is still an inestimable treasure." The truth of that saying has been borne in upon me again and again as I delved in the records of these bygone days. But that reminiscences of the dim and distant past should have a like interest for readers who had neither part nor lot in the events recorded seems most improbable. Throughout, for why I cannot say, an old hexameter, an example of I know not what rule in the Eton Latin Grammar, has forced itself into my head. "Percontatorem fugito, nam garrulus idemest." "Percontator" cannot rightly be construed as "the man that bubbles of old times." If it could, I should say "Shun him, for he is bound to be a garrulous old boy." Garrulous egotism is "the badge of all the tribe." Of my offences in that respect I humbly ask pardon of my readers.

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Mr. John Loudon Shand, former Chairman and M. L. C.

Mr. J. LOUDON SHAND'S CONTRIBUTION.

The 21st May, 1866, the first day I took any part in the proceedings of the Planters' Association of Ceylon was to me a happy day, for my ever-since good friend, Mr. Martin Leake (on one of whose estates I was an assistant), had invited me to come and stay with him in Kandy and play in a cricket match, "Keir, Dundas & Co. vs. The World." Having been fond of cricket at home and having been a year and a half in Ceylon without a game, there are some who will be able to enter into my feelings. In the evening Mr. Leake took me to a dinner of the Planters' Association, and untrammelled by any sense of after-dinner responsibility and with the appetite of a twenty-year old *sinne-durai* I enjoyed this my first public dinner most thoroughly.

The battle of the Ceylon League had begun, but I cared for none of these things then, and I was under the impression that the proceedings represented the harmonious voice of all Ceylon until now in looking up to fix the date I find in a Ceylon paper the following reference to the dinner:—"The press were not invited, but we are very sure even if they had been, a proper sense of self-respect would have led in every case to a refusal."

My first active appearance in the Planters' Association was in February, 1875, on what was called the tappal-book question. The Postmaster-General had somewhat arbitrarily issued an edict that planters could not keep tappal-books, but must pay £1-1s. per annum for a locked box. This incident was also accompanied by a pleasant recollection of hospitality, for Stopford-Sackville and I were appointed a deputation to Sir William Gregory, then at Newera Eliya, who not only conceded what we wanted, but invited us to one of those charming little Sunday dinners he gave so well.

After this I began to take an active part in the affairs of the Association, as the proceedings show, and I seldom missed Committee meetings. Many a time how I made a night ride from Dimbula or Dikoya to Nawalapitiya to catch the early morning train for Kandy. On 17th February, 1879, I was elected Chairman of the Association and held the office for two years. I and my fellow office-bearers, many of whom have passed away and to all of whom I owed infinite thanks, were as buoyant and, I hope, as useful as possible. The questions the Association has ever with it—labour, medical aid, new products, roads, railways, &c., &c.—were attended to; but it was a time of famine, probably the two worst years Ceylon had: it

was not a time for initiation. We had a debit balance and a very dark cloud over us. Many of the most valued servants of the Association had a weight of personal financial troubles, to which, alas! several of my best friends succumbed, which prevented their taking the active part in public affairs which they had formerly done. All we could do was to put our shoulders to the wheel and prevent the Association slipping backwards, and wait till the effervescence of prosperity aroused public spirit; which it happily very soon did.

The first sod of the Nawalapitiya-Nanuoya railway was cut by Sir James Longden during my term of office. It was by no means then proved that the coffee estates of Dimbula, Dikoya, and Maskeliya could be converted into profitable tea properties, and though we all tried to look cheerful, we did not feel so.

The work in which I took an active part and on which I most congratulate myself was bringing about the affiliation of the District Associations. When I went to Ceylon there were few resident proprietors. Most estates were in the hands of the agency firms, and the rival firms of Keir, Dundas & Co., and George Wall & Co. had the Planters' Association pretty well in their own hands; and any one who reads the records of the Association of those days will see how splendidly in the face of discouragement and want of support they fought the battles of the planters, and there was far more necessity to fight Government then than now. But times changed. We soon had a large body of residential proprietors with important public interests to attend to in their own districts and who would only come to Kandy meetings for contested elections, or other burning questions; and though there were deep thinkers, deep readers, and good writers in all the planting districts, the voice of the working planter was but seldom heard in the Kandy Council Chamber because the planter was "unaccustomed to public speaking." I well remember when we were discussing the affiliatory scheme being told by the most prominent member of the Association that I was helping to bring about downfall and disintegration; but I watch the proceedings of the Association, I read the excellent speeches of the working planter, and I feel that the affiliation of the District Associations has amply fulfilled expectation.

To the zealous services of the present Secretary and his predecessors in office the Association is greatly indebted for its vitality, but it seems as if vitality was transmitted also from the Association to its Secretaries, for I notice those who have held this office for thirty-eight out of the last forty years are Secretaries of all sorts of things still.

J. L. S.



Mr. W. D. Gibbon, former Secretary and Chairman, and about
to serve as M. L. C.

Mr. W. D. GIBBON'S NARRATIVE.

I have been a Member of the Planters' Association for 46 years, so have been associated with all the Chairmen, Members of Council, Secretaries, and Committee Members of that wonderful and powerful Institution.

Captain Gallwey, one of our oldest Chairmen, impressed one with his courtesy and geniality, and thus made an effective Chairman. Mr. Wall, of course, was probably the most intellectual and versatile of all who passed the Chair. He had, however, his peculiarities, and these did not at times fit in with Mr. R. B. Tytler's. During a temporary coolness that existed between these able men, Mr. Wall had a fall from his horse. Mr. Tytler heard of it and went to the rescue. Mr. Wall did not at the time relish the advent of his political rival; but the strained relations were much less forcibly illustrated than on another occasion, when Mr. Tytler was himself chucked off his horse into the Mahaoya on his way to Kandy from Doombara. A planting rival, looking over the bridge, and finding Mr. Tytler like a drowning rat in the river, shouted out "Is that you?" and quietly rode off without offering any assistance *whatever*. When Mr. Tytler was Chairman and Mr. Brown was Secretary, the Keir, Dundas party stood aloof from the Association. In the proceedings for 1855 (my first year) on March 26th there was a Committee Meeting of only three members, but by a General Meeting in May of the same year there had been a resuscitation from 60 or 70 to 200 Members. Interest fell off again, and in 1862 I find Committee Meetings attended by only 3 or 4 Members and on one occasion one of the Members of Committee was represented by proxy—so as to form a quorum. At a General Meeting in the same year only 12 Members were present. Still with all its paucity of Members the Association was a power in the Island. Messrs. Abercrombie Swan, A. Forrest Harper (still alive), Peter Moir, John Forbes, Wm. Rose, Alex Lindsay, Andrew Nicol, R. B. Tytler, and Alexander Brown were leading lights. The Keir, Dundas & Co. party came in with Mr. John Gavin's accession to the Chair; and from that time onwards Mr. Martin Leake is a very excellent chronicler of the Association's work and workers. Mr. George Wall had a long innings as Chairman; but Mr. Henry Saunders, much to the former's surprise and disgust, ousted him on a Railway extension

question, principally through the votes of the Uva Members of the Association and through Mr. A. Brown's exertions, for at that time these two old political friends had parted company.

Mr. Harrison, when King of Kandy, and head of the big agency firm of Keir, Dundas & Co., was for some time Chairman. Mr. R. B. Tytler had then for some time settled in Aberdeen, paying occasional visits to the Island. On one of these occasions there was a big question on, and Messrs. Tytler and Brown took opposite views from Mr. Harrison. Mr. Harrison introduced his resolution with a long and able speech, and at its close the bulk of the very large meeting in the large Hall of the United Service Library believed Mr. Harrison would have his way. However Mr. Tytler rose and moved an amendment. He then was a fine, pretty elderly gentleman, with fair curly hair, clear blue eyes and massive head (the wart on his otherwise very good nose being a rather prominent feature; and his waist was encircled with yards of red silk). Mr. Tytler began his speech in his rather hesitating way, and complimented Mr. Harrison on his elegant diction but rather lengthily spin out speech, and at last said: "I cannot help comparing our able Chairman's speech to a big tumbler of English bottled beer. We require," said Mr. Tytler, suiting his action to the words, "to blow away the froth to get to the liquor." This took the fancy of the Hill Tribes, who cheered till they were hoarse; and Tytler, with the assistance of his able henchman (Sandy Brown), whose doric, incisive eloquence always commanded attention, got his amendment passed by a large majority.

Alas! how few of my planting friends are alive or in the Island who began life with me nearly 50 years ago. Mr. Walter Agar, of Logie—who is two years my senior—Mr. Harvie of Vicarton, Matale, and Mr. Lamont are the only ones I can at the moment name who are still in Ceylon.

Planters have their faults. What body of men have not? But for honesty of purpose, kindness to their employees, hospitality to strangers, and a readiness to carry out to the best of their ability the wishes of their employers, I feel certain they will take first rank in any agricultural community. Amid the temptations to float Plantation Companies on the market, too, the Planters, and Merchants, of Ceylon come well out of the Company-forming craze. There is not one of their Companies, formed by the men of the Island, that one can call a swindle.

W. D. GIBBON.

