

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY,

CEYLON BRANCH.

PROCEEDINGS,

1886.

COLOMBO :

GEORGE J. A. SKEEN, GOVERNMENT PRINTER, CEYLON.

1888.

PROCEEDINGS.—1886.

GENERAL MEETING.

February 13, 1886, 9 p.m., at the Colombo Museum.

Present :

T. Berwick, Esq., Vice-President, in the Chair.

A. M. Ferguson, Esq., C.M.G.	W. R. Kynsey, Esq., Vice-
D. W. Ferguson, Esq.	President.
Ph. Freüdenberg, Esq.	J. Loos, Esq., M.D.
A. P. Green, Esq.	J. D. MacDonald, Esq., M.D.
J. J. Grinlinton, Esq.	W. G. Rockwood, Esq., M.D.
R. W. Ievers, Esq.	J. L. Vanderstraaten, Esq., M.D.

W. E. Davidson, Esq., Honorary Secretary.

One visitor.

Business.

1.—Read and confirmed Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on December 21, 1885.

2.—Dr. J. D. MacDonald was duly elected a Member of the Society.

3.—Dr. Kynsey then proceeded to read his Paper, first explaining that the original had been presented to him by Professor Virchow in return for some human skin and hair which he had sent to the learned Professor. In translating the Paper he had been greatly assisted by Dr. MacDonald, who had a thorough knowledge of German, and he had thought it right to associate Dr. MacDonald's name with his own, though against that gentleman's wish. The title of the Paper was "Ethnological Studies on the Sinhalese Race, by Professor R. Virchow. (Read before the Anthropological Society of Berlin, January 17, 1885.) Translated by W. R. Kynsey, M.K.Q.C.P., and J. D. MacDonald, M.D."

The Paper commences as follows :—

"At the time when I wrote my treatise concerning 'The Veddás of Ceylon, and their relation to the Neighbouring Races,' it was not possible for me to obtain a single satisfactory scientific description of the principal race of the Island, viz., the Sinhalese. What I was then able to ascertain concerning them is there stated on page 60 and the following pages.

“My disappointment was, on that account, great, at not seeing the large caravan which Herr Hagenbeck brought to Europe in 1883.

“At the sitting of the Paris Anthropological Society, on October 18, 1883 (Bulletin p. 713), M. Manouvrier made an official report concerning that company, the meagreness of which is even acknowledged by the author himself, who explains it as due to want of courtesy on the part of the leader.

“Last year another caravan visited the country, and I consider myself fortunate in finding it still here on my return to Berlin. Herr Hagenbeck himself had the kindness to give the necessary instructions so as to facilitate my examination. After his departure Herr Von Schirp had the kindness to bring the people before me one by one. Notwithstanding this, I was only able to examine a small number of the forty persons of which the company consisted. There was all the preparation of their approaching departure going on, and I must say, like the Paris Commission, that the time spent in obtaining my results was too short. Besides, the determination of personal relations was surrounded with much difficulty.”

The difficulties referred to were due to the impossibility of ascertaining the previous history and descent of the persons examined. Professor Virchow had hoped to meet Ceylon-born Tamils, but was obliged to abandon this hope. The Sinhalese he divided into two groups, and he gives minute details regarding colour of hair and skin, measurements of height, &c., shape of head, hands, and feet.

On the conclusion of the reading of this Paper a discussion took place, in which Messrs. R. W. Ievers, Ph. Freüdenberg, A. M. Ferguson, T. Berwick, and Dr. Kynsey took part.

Mr. Ievers referred to the difficulty of finding pure specimens of Sinhalese in many parts of Ceylon, owing to the alliances which had taken place between Portuguese and Dutch soldiers and native women. He also said that as the agent of Herr Hagenbeck was again in Ceylon engaging another troupe to take to Europe they might communicate with him and learn something of the antecedents of the persons who were to go.

Mr. Freüdenberg said that as German consul he should be happy to give any assistance.

To this Mr. Ievers replied that they would have to be careful how they mixed themselves up in the matter, as the Ceylon Government had recently paid a heavy sum for the expenses of sending back from France a party of Sinhalese who had been abandoned by their employer.

Mr. A. M. Ferguson expressed his surprise at the statement in the Paper as to the Sinhalese being a very mixed race.

To this Dr. Kynsey replied that anyone visiting the Southern Province for the first time could not fail to be struck with the

Malay or Chinese look of the people, and it was known that there had long been an intercourse between the south of Ceylon and the Malay Peninsula.

Mr. Ferguson suggested that the local Executive Committee for the Colonial and Indian Exhibition should take steps to send to the Exhibition specimens of Singhalese types, which might be examined by Professors Flower, Virchow, &c.

Mr. Davidson thereupon read a list of the persons (Singhalese and Tamil) whom the Committee were sending.

4.—The Chairman, after expressing his belief in the mixed character of the Singhalese, expressed his pleasure at the lively discussion which had taken place, and asked if there could not be some practical outcome of it. He hoped a Sub-Committee would be nominated to take steps towards collecting information for the elucidation of the questions discussed in the Paper read.

After some further conversation, Dr. Kynsey proposed and Mr. A. M. Ferguson seconded, that the following gentlemen be appointed an Anthropological Committee with the special object of contributing materials towards the ascertainment of the genesis of the Singhalese:—Dr. W. R. Kynsey, P.C.M.O. (Chairman), Mr. Ph. Freüdenberg, Dr. J. D. MacDonald, Dr. Rockwood, Dr. J. L. Vanderstraaten, and Mr. R. W. Ievers, C.C.S., Secretary. Carried unanimously.

5.—The Meeting broke up, after a vote of thanks had been passed to Dr. Kynsey, Dr. MacDonald, and the Chairman.

COMMITTEE MEETING.

February 16, 1886, evening, at Darley House.

Present :

The Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Colombo, President, in the Chair.

W. R. Kynsey, Esq., Vice-President.	Ph. Freüdenberg, Esq.
T. Berwick, Esq., Vice-President.	S. Green, Esq.
J. B. Cull, Esq.	W. P. Ranasinha, Esq.
D. W. Ferguson, Esq.	H. Trimen, Esq., M.B., F.L.S.
	J. L. Vanderstraaten, Esq., M.D.

W. E. Davidson, Esq., Honorary Secretary.

Business.

1.—Read and confirmed Minutes of last Committee Meeting.

2.—Elected Mr. R. W. Ievers, C.C.S., a Member of Committee in the room of Mr. J. Capper, resigned.

3.—Nominated Mr. R. W. Ievers to act as Secretary during the absence of Mr. W. E. Davidson, c.c.s., from the Island.

4.—Elected the Hon. W. H. Ravenscroft a Member of Committee by virtue of the power to add to their number vested in the Committee, under Rule 5.

5.—Considered the proposal of Mr. J. J. Grinlinton, submitted through the Secretary, that Mr. J. Capper now leaving the Island should be elected an Honorary Member for life, in recognition of the eminent and distinguished manner in which he has, during forty years connection with the Society, from its original foundation, contributed to the objects of the Society (*vide* Rule 2, (b)). Considered also the Secretary's proposal, that Professor Virchow should receive the same recognition.

Resolved,—after considerable discussion, that further consideration be postponed to another Meeting.

GENERAL MEETING.

February 16, 1886, 9 p.m., at the Colombo Museum.

Present :

The Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Colombo, President, in the Chair.

T. Berwick, Esq., Vice-President.

Hon. R. A. Bosanquet.

J. B. Cull, Esq.

A. M. Ferguson, Esq., C.M.G.

D. W. Ferguson, Esq.

W. Ferguson, Esq., F.L.S.

R. W. Ievers, Esq.

S. Green, Esq., F.L.S.

A. Jayawardana, Mudaliyár.

W. R. Kynsey, Esq., Vice-President.

Pestonjee Dinshajee Khan.

L. O. Pyemont-Pyemont, Esq.

W. P. Ranasinha, Esq.

H. Sumangala Terunnánsé.

H. Trimen, Esq., M.B., F.L.S.

J. L. Vanderstraaten, Esq.,

M.D.

J. G. Wardrop, Esq.

W. E. Davidson, Esq., Honorary Secretary.

Visitors, five ladies and two gentlemen.

Business.

1.—The Hon. Secretary read the Minutes of the last General Meeting, and on the Chairman asking if it was the wish of the Meeting that they should be confirmed,—

Mr. Berwick rose to point out a slight inaccuracy in the wording of the resolution regarding the appointment of an Anthropological Committee.

The Hon. Secretary explained that the original copy of the resolution had been handed to the *Times* reporter, who had not returned it, so that he was unable to give the exact wording.

Mr. A. M. Ferguson said that, as Mr. Berwick had drawn out the resolution, his recollection of the wording might be taken as correct. He might mention that the resolution was already published in that evening's paper, but he feared that a copy was not in the room to refer to.

The Minutes were then confirmed, subject to possible verbal alteration in the resolution referred to.

2.—The President announced with regret the resignation of Mr. J. Capper, who on leaving the Island has severed his connection with the Society, which he has assisted in various capacities for forty years.

3.—The President announced the early departure of Mr. Davidson on leave of absence, and that Mr. Ievers had consented to undertake the duties of Hon. Secretary in his absence.

4.—The Hon. Secretary then made a statement regarding the probable work of the Society for this year. It was hoped to have a Meeting in March for the reading of Mr. Ph. Freüdenberg's translation of Wouter Schouten's account of Ceylon. It was the custom to devote the first three months of the year to Papers of this nature. This Paper, with Mr. Freüdenberg's translation of Saar and the late Col. Fyers' translation of M. Tombe, would form one Number of the Journal. In April, May, and June it was usual to have no Meetings. In July, August, and September they hoped to have another "popular series," Papers having been promised by Dr. Kynsey, Mr. J. Ferguson, Dr. Vanderstraaten, and Mr. Burrows. Messrs. Le Mesurier, Bell, and Parker had material for Papers, and would, he hoped, contribute. November would be devoted to the Játaka studies, Játakas 51–150 being translated and discussed. To this work the Bishop and Mr. P. A. Templer were to contribute, and Messrs. E. R. Gooneratna and Ranasinha, A. Jayawardana and P. Coomara Swámy, the Rev. S. Coles, Sumaṅgala Unnáṅse and Subhuti Unnáṅse, would also take part, as well as several others. The publications of the Society which would be issued were as follows:—Journals, No. 29 of 1884 (in the press); Nos. 32 and 33 (a *Veḍḍá* Number), 1886; Proceedings, 1884 and 1885 (in the press). There would also be hoped to be two reprints, the Committee having last year resolved to devote to this purpose the amount funded by composition of subscriptions.

5.—The President then rose, and stated that he laid on the table translation of Játakas 91–95. These it had been thought advisable to send to the editor of the *Orientalist*, for publication in that journal. Mr. Berwick's abridgment of Professor Virchow's Monograph on the *Veḍḍás* was also laid on the table.

6.—Mr. Freüdenberg then read the Paper for the evening, viz., “Outlines of Two Years’ Scientific Researches in Ceylon, by Drs. C. F. and P. B. Sarasin.”

The Paper begins by thanking the Society for the gift of a set of its publications, and individual Members for help. It proceeds to describe the distribution of the Singhalese and Tamils, and gives their numbers according to the last census.

The Paper then goes on to relate the researches made by the Drs. Sarasin among the Veddás. Details are given regarding height, size of head, and face, diameter of back part of skull, width of lower jaw, size of eyes, shape of nose, measurement of limbs, and colour of skin. The first portion of the Paper concludes as follows :—

“Summing up, we learn by the measurements that the Singhalese, Tamils, and Veddás are three well distinguishable races; and further, the measurements give much reason to suggest that the Tamils are more closely allied to the Veddás than the Singhalese, which latter no doubt represent the highest race, whilst the Tamils in many respects range between the two others.

“One result in any case is certain, viz., that the Veddás are by far the lowest in the scale of the three races, not only in their habits, but also in their anatomy; and this fact confirms the opinion of those who claim the Veddás as the remnants of an old tribe of aborigines. We can pass over the customs and the religion of the Veddás, because former writers have dealt with them, and the principal facts are generally known. We will call attention to one point only, because it illustrates clearly the primitive customs of this race, and that is the wearing of leaves as a cloth. A string is tied round the loins and small branches are put underneath, till a thick belt of leaves is formed. This custom is now almost extinct owing to increasing civilisation, but nearly every Veddá, if requested to do so, appears in a few minutes in his dress of leaves.

“It is our intention at a later period to deal more exhaustively with the anthropology of Ceylon, and to illustrate our writings by maps and photographs. We therefore confine ourselves in the meantime to these preliminary notes.”

The second portion of the Paper is entirely zoological, dealing first with the investigations carried on by the Drs. Sarasin into the development of *Epicrium glutinosum*, a kind of ground snake inhabiting the tropics, which has hitherto been classed with the *Amphibia*, but which, according to the learned writers, belongs to the *Reptilia*. The details given are of the highest interest to zoologists, but too technical for the general public. The results arrived at regarding this animal are given as follows :—

“1.—*Epicrium* (like *Coecilia*), on the basis of its anatomy, cannot be placed in any known group of Amphibians.

“2.—Its embryonic evolution passes the same stages as the salamander as a larva.

“3.—In consequence, *Epicrium*, notwithstanding its very different appearance, has to be classed as the nearest neighbour of the salamander.”

The Paper then describes researches carried on regarding the gigantic *rainworm* of the hills of Ceylon, which attains a length of about four feet and a thickness of a large thumb.

After giving details regarding investigations into the vascular system of *Epicrium*, the writers proceed:—

“The next five months were devoted to travelling in the south-east of the Island, partly in search of information about Veddás, partly with the object of obtaining an embryo of an elephant. His Excellency the Governor had the kindness to give us free permission to shoot elephants, with the special right also to kill females for the aforesaid purpose. But unfortunately our exertions in this latter direction were not successful. Three female elephants were killed, but none had an embryo. Part of the intestines of the animals has been preserved for future histological examination.”

Two parasitic *sea-snails* discovered by the Drs. Sarasin are next described, as well as gigantic *sea-urchins*, among whose spines small fish find refuge, these fish having the colour of their hosts, but losing it, chameleon-like, when removed. The Paper concludes with the description of a beautiful gigantic sea-urchin, apparently new to science, which the Messrs. Sarasin propose to call *Diadema imperator*.

On the conclusion of the reading of the Paper, Dr. Kynsey rose to propose a vote of thanks to the authors, and to Mr. Freüdenberg for so kindly putting it into a readable form, and reading it. He expressed his regret at the shortness of the Paper and the fact that the anthropological investigations had not been pursued further. The latter part of the Paper was of too special a nature for a general discussion. He heartily proposed the vote of thanks.

Dr. Trimen rose to second the vote, and regretted the absence of the authors of the Paper. Owing to the amount of detail, the Paper was difficult to criticise. The presence in the Island of the Drs. Sarasin would tend to elucidate many obscure points in our natural history. The British colonies were becoming quite international as regards the investigation of natural history, and this was only the beginning of Papers which would before long be written of the zoology of Ceylon. From his own personal experience he could only speak regarding the work of the authors at Péradeniya. The story of *Epicrium* was very interesting, the whole history being traced. The speaker also referred to the remarks on the vascular system of this animal, the discoveries made by the writers being original and very interesting. The

identification of the blue patches on the sea-hedgehog with eyes was new, but he did not know if it would be sustained. He concluded by cordially seconding the vote of thanks.

Mr. A. M. Ferguson rose and said that it had been a great comfort to him to listen to the Paper read that evening. At the last Meeting, the Paper by Professor Virchow had referred to the Sinhalese as a mixed race; and, while Mr. Ievers had said that to find a pure type of the Sinhalese one must go to the Southern Province, Dr. Kynsey had stated as soon as one left Galle one was struck by the marked Malayan type. The learned gentleman who occupied the chair on that occasion, moreover, had asserted the mixed character of the Sinhalese, and the fact of even minor subdivisions into classes; stating also that the successive waves of immigration themselves had brought elements of mixture. Mr. Ferguson then referred to the resemblance of the Bengális to the Sinhalese, which had struck him when he first saw them.

With reference to this last remark, Mr. Berwick asked if Mr. Ferguson would inform them to what extent the Bengális themselves were pure Aryans.

To this Mr. Ferguson replied that surely the fact of the Aryan invaders speaking of the aborigines as "black devils," who were to be torn and cut to pieces, showed the hatred they had towards them, and this would tend to keep the races from mixing.

Mr. W. P. Ranasinha then spoke at some length, affirming, from a linguistic point of view, the Aryan origin of the Sinhalese, and showing how few Tamil words had been incorporated into their language.

7.—The vote of thanks was carried by acclamation, and the Meeting broke up.

COMMITTEE MEETING.

May 31, 1886.

Present:

The Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Colombo, in the Chair.

P. Freüdenberg, Esq.

W. P. Ranasinha, Esq.

J. G. Wardrop, Esq.

[Mr. Freüdenberg consented to act as Secretary to this Meeting.]

Business.

1.—Proposed by Mr. Ranasinha, seconded by Mr. J. G. Wardrop, "That the Minutes of last Meeting be considered read."—*Carried.*

2.—Proposed by Mr. Ranasinha, seconded by Mr. Freüdenberg, "That Mr. H. C. P. Bell, c.c.s., be re-appointed Honorary Secretary, *vice* Mr. Ievers, now at Anurádhapura."—*Carried.*

3.—Proposed by the Chairman, “That Mr. Wardrop be re-appointed Honorary Treasurer.”—*Carried.*

4.—Proposed by the Chairman, “That a General Meeting of the Society be fixed for Saturday, June 12, at 9 p.m., at the Museum.”—*Carried.*

5.—Mr. Wardrop stated that he had taken over from the late Hon. Treasurer (Mr. J. G. Dean) various accounts, and gave an outline of the Society’s liabilities.

Resolved,—“That the Secretary be requested to apply to Government for the annual grant of Rs. 500 for the current year.”

GENERAL MEETING.

June 26, 1886, 9 p.m., at the Colombo Museum.

Present :

The Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Colombo, in the Chair.

T. Berwick, Esq.	|	P. D. Khan, Esq.
H. Bois, Esq.	|	W. P. Ranasinha, Esq.
Ph. Freüdenberg, Esq.	|	J. G. Wardrop, Esq.
A. P. Green, Esq.	|	R. Webster, Esq.
S. Green, Esq.	|	

H. C. P. Bell, Esq. Hon. Secretary.

And the following visitors :—F. H. M. Corbet, Esq. ; Rev. S. Coles ; Major Clutterbuck ; Captain Robinson.

Business.

1.—Read and confirmed Minutes of last Meeting.

2.—D. A. Tilakaratna, Esq., Mudaliyár of Talpé Pattu, Galle District, was elected a Member of the Society.

3.—The Hon. Secretary laid on the table a list of books received since last Meeting.

4.—Mr. T. Berwick said, before they commenced the regular business of the evening there was a matter which, he was sure, engaged the interest of every intelligent person in Ceylon, especially Members of this Society, on which many of them would be very glad to have a satisfactory account,—he referred to the translation of the “Mahávaṅso.”

The Hon. Secretary, Mr. Bell, said he was able to tell the Society that Mr. Wijasinha had been called upon for a Report of his year’s work, and he hoped that it would be received early next month. The Report would enter fully into the work of the year, giving the nature of the chapters which have been dealt

with and also a synopsis of the remaining chapters, with some intimation of how long the remaining chapters, which are rather more difficult to translate, would take ; by next Meeting he hoped that the Report might be laid on the table with Government sanction.

Mr. Berwick :—And a large portion of the translation itself ?

Mr. Bell :—If obtainable ; but I hardly think Mr. Wijasingha will be ready with it.

5.—The Hon. Secretary then read the first Paper on the order of the evening, a *précis* of Wouter Schouten's Account of Ceylon in the seventeenth century. Only portions of the Paper were read, as there was a very full programme to get through.

Mr. Bell said :—“ Mr. Freüdenberg is unfortunately unable to read his translation of Wouter Schouten's Account of Ceylon this evening ; nor has there been time to make a *précis* of the entire paper, if indeed it be possible to satisfactorily *précis* a narrative of this kind. I propose, therefore, to read a few extracts, from which the nature of the account may be gathered, premising that it contains, with much that is clearly second-hand, a fair amount of information of historical value, especially as regards dates and details of the capture from the Portuguese of the several fortresses held by them on the sea-borde of Ceylon.

“ Wouter Schouten entered the service of the Dutch East India Company as clerk at the age of nineteen in 1658, and left for Batavia on April 16. He had a contract to work in a mercantile office of the Company at Batavia for the first three years, but obtained permission to travel to other stations. He was subsequently employed at different places. He returned to Holland in October, 1665, and seems to have settled in his native town, Haarlem, for his name is mentioned amongst the members of one of the Guilds there. His book was published ten years later, the drawings of which were originally sketched by himself.

“ He appears to have first landed on this Island in September, 1661 (five years after the capture of Colombo by the Dutch), on the south coast at the harbour of ‘ Galyettis.’

“ A description of the villages and their inhabitants is given, in which they are represented as living peacefully and happily under the rule of the Dutch. Schouten and some companions visited ‘ Dondery’ (Dondra-head), and mention is made of the famous temple which had been destroyed by the Portuguese, and was even then lying in ruins. The country is said to have been ‘ infested with tigers, jackals, wolves, snakes, and many other monsters.’ Whilst enjoying a picnic, consisting of cocoanuts and fruit, they were interrupted by the visit of a snake, which Schouten remarks in no wise seemed to disturb the natives, who only laughed at the fears of the visitors. On this circumstance, he moralises as follows :—‘ This impressed us very much with

the reprehensible idolatry of the beguiled Sinhalese, who, as we were informed, actually worship snakes, tigers, crocodiles, monkeys, and such like monsters; they humour them and even furnish them with eatables, so that snakes and other animals generally dangerous to man should not hurt them. One really hears very seldom of the Sinhalese being injured by them. Some Dutchmen wish to conclude from suggestive symptoms (but who can speak with certainty on the point?) that the Evil One sometimes appears to the idolatrous Sinhalese in the shape of snakes, tigers, crocodiles, and monkeys. This much is proven:—that the Sinhalese sorcerers, as well as those of other East Indian nations, in catching and conjuring them, know how to bring about supernatural effects, just as has often been reported to us as likely. But on this I shall enlarge when an opportunity offers.'

“Mention is made by Schouten more than once of the value of arecanuts as an export to the Coromandel Coast; in fact, he mentions vessels laden with that commodity, and that by the trade some places were made populous and wealthy.

“The writer was at Colombo when the Dutch were making preparations for attacking the Portuguese settlements on the Malabar coast, and describes what he saw of the town:—

““Whilst thus riding at anchor off Colombo, we found an opportunity to go and see this old and famous town. Many fine buildings, even whole streets, were lying in ruins, partly from age, partly from sieges and wars, and many of the ruins were covered with grass and brushwood. Nevertheless, we found in the town fine buildings, lofty churches, wide streets and walks, and large houses in great number: they are spaciouly built, are airy and high, with stone walls, as if meant to stand for ever, according to the Portuguese way of building. The town of Colombo, famous since olden times, is situated barely seven degrees to the north of the equator, on the west coast of Ceylon. The gallant Portuguese constructed it well nigh one hundred and fifty years ago; they peopled it and have since dwelt in it in wealth and pomp. But in May, 1656, after a close seige of seven months duration, after many desperate assaults and furious fighting, the daring Dutch compelled the Portuguese to surrender the afore-named fortified town of Colombo by capitulation to the East India Company. The principal kings in India were surprised at this, and not less the Portuguese, who considered Colombo impregnable. Since then our countrymen have reduced the town, which was spacious and wide, and too large to garrison, to a smaller size and a more compact fortress. Still Colombo remained provided with many strong bastions, bulwarks, walls, and a fresh-water canal, and supplied with ammunition, war-material, and men, in such wise that it would not easily have yielded to any person in or out of the country. Behind, to the east and the north, is pleasant country

plains, fields, and woods rich in cinnamon, likewise lakes, swamps, tanks and big rivers. To the west the great Ocean washes the cliffs, and rocks of Colombo.'

"Further on, in describing the country, he says Ceylon in shape nearly resembles a ham:—'Before the time of the Portuguese, who were the first Christians who came to the East Indies, the Saracens, the Turks, and the Ethiopians often visited the Island, and made no small gains by their trade in pearls, precious stones, and above all in cinnamon.' In regard to the story of Chinese occupation, he says:—'Some would have it that this wealthy Island was first discovered by the Chinese, who, having been driven out of their course in a junk by a storm, and having landed here, gave out that their ruler was the son of the sun, which so pleased the Sinhalese (who likewise worshipped the sun) that they set up the captain of the junk as King of the Island, from whom it is said the kings and queens of the Island have descended.'

"A brief description is given of the forts, towns, and trading places on the coast taken from the Portuguese, including Kalutara, Colombo, Negombo, Chilaw, Mannār, Kalpitiya (Calpentin), Jaffna, &c., and incidents of the several assaults and sieges are related. Trincomalie and Batticaloa are also mentioned, and the remark is made that there is no cinnamon in that part of the country.

"Galle (always mentioned as 'Punto Gale') seems to have sustained a heavy siege and bombardment before it was surrendered to the Dutch:—'Beyond the town of Punto Gale, as also around the bay and further inland, there are beautiful fields, high mountains, pleasant plains, and delightful walks, which are neatly laid out here and there between high hills, crags, and rocks, by digging and cutting through them, and are called *gravettes*. The countries and villages attached to Punto Gale produce to the Company not a little profit, having frequently realised in the farming out alone more than 15,000 rix-dollars a year.'

"The treatment of the natives by the Portuguese, Wouter Schouten characterises as proud and tyrannical, harsh and unjust. 'This excited the wrath of God, and the hatred of the people has been since made sufficiently clear to that nation.'

"We have a history of the reigning dynasty in Kandy about this time, which is extremely interesting to all students of Ceylon history. The successes and defeats of the Portuguese, and how they were supplanted by the Dutch, is related in pleasant, readable form.

"In describing the Sinhalese, Wouter Schouten does not seem particularly impressed with their domestic virtues,—rather the contrary,—nor does he give them any very great credit for bravery:—'In war they are quick and skilful in going against

the enemy ; great heroes when the enemy is worsted ; but they cannot be trusted even in the smallest difficulty.' Caste and religion find a place in this relation, and the Buddhist priests, whom he terms Brahmins or 'Bragmannen,' get anything but a good character given them. The temples and dá gobas, with the sacred tooth—'the tooth of a white monkey'—and monasteries for the monks, are not omitted ; and for so short an account it is remarkable to find how almost everything relating to Ceylon and its inhabitants at that day finds a place.

"One passage may interest those who have lately been discussing the question of the Singhalese being a mixed race : 'There are also many Singhalese who, by the exertions of 'Moormen,' have been induced to adopt the Muhammadan religion. Many Moors and descendents of Turks, and other foreign people, are likewise found in Ceylon.' Elephants are described, and the mode of catching them in kraals, with a notice of their habits both in the wild state and in captivity."

Mr. Berwick said the Paper which had just been read possessed a considerable amount of interest, arising from the fact that the author had the advantage of being a contemporaneous historian. The exact precision with which the author gave the dates of the attacks on the various fortresses of Ceylon was of value. The Paper also dealt at some length with the embassy of the first Dutch General to Kandy, and following upon that was a very interesting notice of the relationship which existed between the Kandyan power and the settlers. It seemed to him (Mr. Berwick) that it would be desirable, as this Paper was to be printed along with the other Papers more or less connected with the same subject, to print also another Paper of exactly the same category which he had had the advantage of reading that day. So far as he knew it had only been published in the columns of the *Observer*, and it was the only detailed account of the capture of Colombo they had,—he referred to Mr. A. Clark's Account of the Capture of Colombo. Connected as it was with the account given by Schouten, he thought it might be very desirable that they should reprint in the same Number of the Journal that exceedingly valuable and more than interesting Paper of Mr. Clark's. He should like to know where Mr. Clark got his materials from. Wherever he got them they were evidently authentic.

Mr. Bell said he would at once answer the question whence Mr. Clark got his materials ; it was from Baldaeus chiefly. He did not think they were quite justified in printing Mr. Clark's Paper, as a translation of Baldaeus had already been in print for one hundred and fifty years. They had the book in their Library (Churchill's Voyages, vol. III.). If it was the wish of the Society that they should print it, he did not know of any rule against it.

Mr. Berwick suggested that the Paper should be sent round to those Members of the Society who took an interest in the matter: Baldaeus was not accessible to many of them.

The President said his own impression was that their object was rather to give new matter to the world than to put in the hands of Members existing literature. Mr. Clark's Paper had appeared in the *Observer*, and they had had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with it. Any copies they had in hand might be sent round to those interested in it.

Mr. Freüdenberg remarked that a description of the siege of Colombo was also given in Saar's Account of Ceylon, read before the Society last year, so that in the Number of their Journal in which Schouten's account would appear there would be a full description of the capture of Colombo.

6.—The Honorary Secretary next read a Paper on "Veheragoda Dévāle," by Arthur Jayawardana, Esq., Mudaliyār of the Wellaboda Pattu, Galle District.

At its conclusion, Mr. Bell said in connection with this Paper he should like to move that a sum of Rs. 20 or Rs. 30 be voted to the Mudaliyār to enable him to continue the excavation. Mr. Berwick seconded.

The President said he was very sorry to be in opposition to a suggestion of this kind, but on hearing the Paper he could not say that he had gathered that there was any considerable importance attaching to the place, except traditionally. He thought it would be a pity that this Society should pay into the hands of a local "Kapurāla," who was evidently desirous of being a successor to the original Déviyó. He thought they would be doing something perhaps a little below the dignity of the Society, without further knowledge of the probabilities of antiquities being found, if they were to take a step of that kind. He thought it was within the means of a gentleman like the writer of this Paper himself to make the excavation, and that he would be amply rewarded by the *éclat* which would accrue to him.

Mr. Berwick did not take the same view. He did not expect much advantage to result from further excavation, but he thought it was a very good thing indeed to know they had amongst them a Sinhalese gentleman taking an interest in this work, and he felt bound to support Mr. Bell's suggestion. It was a very small sum asked, and if any good could be accomplished by that trifling sum, and he thought some good might be accomplished—it should be granted.

After some further remarks from the President on the need of caution in granting money for excavations, Mr. Bell withdrew his motion for the present.

7.—The Honorary Secretary, Mr. Bell, read a Paper by Mr. S. M. Burrows, c.c.s., "A Year's Work at Polonnāruwa."

As to Mr. Burrows' explanation of "*Gaṅgawaṅsa*," as equal to "*Goyiwaṅsa*," Mr. Ranasinha remarked that the ancient kings frequently got their wives from the Northern Circars, and the word "*Gaṅga*" he did not take to mean as referring to the caste, but as referring to the river Ganges, which was the only river the people of the Northern Circars knew. He thought that the Queen mentioned came from the Circars, and was called "*Gaṅga*" because she came from there.

The Rev. S. Coles threw some doubt on the corrections of Mr. Ranasinha's contention, as the word "*Gaṅga*" was not unfrequently met with in Pāli and Sinhalese, used in a generic sense of Indian rivers.

The President said he should like to know how a Sinhalese scholar was struck by the way in which Mr. Burrows had vindicated (successfully as it seemed to him) the reading "*Segiri*" as opposed to "*Sigiri*." He seemed to have made good his ground, and it was just what this Society should do—show that the reckless generalisations of scholars in Europe could be corrected by careful observers on the spot. At the same time it was perhaps worth while, if they were going to print this Paper, that they should take care the transcriptions should be revised by competent scholars. Perhaps the Secretary could tell them what assistance Mr. Burrows had had at his command?

Mr. Bell said he could not say who Mr. Burrows' local paṇḍit was, but every inscription received by Government was revised by the Interpreter Mudaliyār of the Colonial Office, Mr. B. Gunasékera, than whom there was, he thought, no more competent scholar.

8.—A vote of thanks to the writers of the three Papers, moved by H. Bois, Esq., seconded by Mr. T. Berwick, concluded the Meeting.

COMMITTEE MEETING.

August 11, 1886.

Present :

W. R. Kynsey, Esq., P.C.M.O., Vice-President, in the Chair.

P. Freüdenberg, Esq.

W. P. Ranasinha, Esq.

S. Green, Esq.

J. L. Vanderstraaten, M.D.

H. C. P. Bell, Esq., Honorary Secretary.

Business.

1.—Read and confirmed Minutes of Committee Meeting held on May 31, 1886.

2.—With reference to Mr. S. M. Burrows' Paper read at the last General Meeting, and the ensuing discussion as to the true

meaning of "*Gaṅgawaṅsa*," applied to Niṣṣaṅka Malla's queen, the Honorary Secretary stated that "Notes" thereon had since been received by him from Mr. T. Berwick and Mr. W. P. Ranasinḡha; that Mr. Burrows had abandoned his own explanation of "*Gaṅgawaṅsa*" as equivalent to "*Gahawaṅsa*"—i.e., "*Goyiwaṅsa*," or the "Vellala caste," for that of Mr. Berwick. The latter understands the expression to mean "of the Gaṅga (or Kongu) race," an important dynasty during many ages in Southern India. Mr. Ranasinḡha had come independently to much the same conclusion.

Resolved,—that both these "Notes" be printed as Appendices to Mr. Burrows' paper.

3.—Read letter from Government (A) annexing extract from the diary of the Acting Government Agent, Anurádhapura (Mr. R. W. Ievers), relative to the discovery in his district of some ruins, the original purpose of which so far baffled conjecture. Mr. Bell said that from the description the ruins would seem to be ancient burial vaults, but that further particulars should be obtained, and that he had written to Mr. Ievers on the subject.

4.—Read extract (B) from the diary of the Acting Government Agent, Hambantota (Mr. C. A. Murray), regarding the ruins of an old palace at Tisamaharáma. The Honorary Secretary stated that he had been in communication with Mr. Murray with the object of eliciting his aid in continuing, if possible through his headmen, the important excavations made at Tisamaharáma by Mr. H. Parker, and read portions of a letter from Mr. Murray showing that further interesting discoveries might be expected.

5.—Read letter from Government (C) forwarding a marble *kaṇḍuwa* (casket), together with copies of letters from Mr. S. M. Burrows regarding its discovery by him when excavating the northern chapel of the Jétawanaráma Dágoba at Anurádhapura. The *kaṇḍuwa* bears an inscription in the modified Aśóka character, which Mr. S. M. Burrows reads tentatively: "*Siddham Gamini Tisa Maha Rajaha Rajini mi tabi haḍu teni dini.*" Mr. Bell stated that the *kaṇḍuwa* had been left at the Museum with a view to its complete decipherment, adding that Mr. Burrows' reading of some words appeared to be undoubtedly correct.

6.—Read letter (D) from the Office Assistant (Mr. S. M. Burrows) to the Government Agent, North-Central Province, forwarding some metal plaques similar to those found by Mr. H. Parker at Tisamaharáma, and believed by him to be coins of very great antiquity (C. A. S. Journal, No. 27, pp. 47–60). Mr. Bell said, that the majority of the plaques sent by Mr. Burrows agreed with those unearthed by Mr. Parker in the south of the Island, but that the six largest were exactly of the size and type

of the four found by Mr. R. W. Massie, c.c.s., in the Mullaittivu district; that a "Note" on these plaques (or "coins"?) would, he hoped, be shortly drawn up by Mr. Parker, to whom he proposed to send all together, for the purpose of comparison.

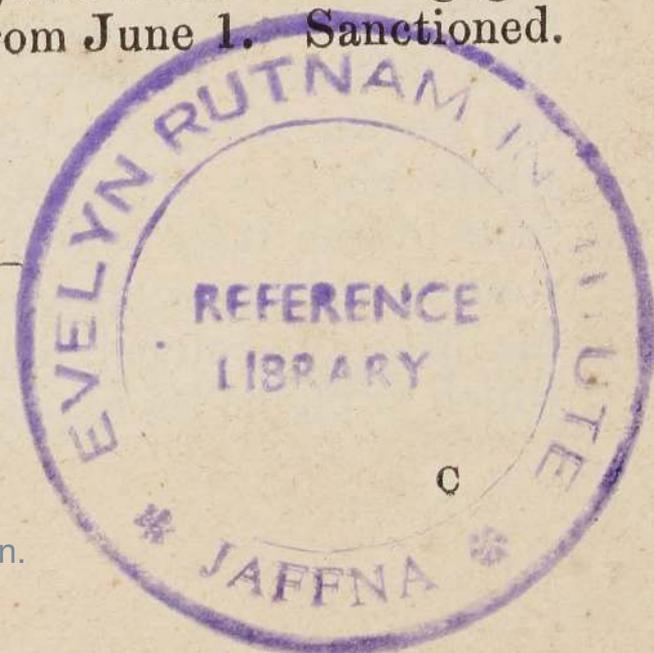
7.—Read correspondence between Government and D. A. De Silva Batuwantudáwé Paṇḍit and H. Sumaṅgala Terunnánsé, sent to the Society for its information, touching the *Tiká*, or commentary to the "Maháwaṅsa," entrusted to these learned Sinhalese scholars, and recently completed. The printing of the translation of the *Tiká* is to be taken up as soon as the Government Printing Office is less heavily weighted with work.

8.—Read letter from Government (E) forwarding copy of Mudaliyár L. C. Wijasiṅha's Report on his year's work upon the English translation of the portion of the "Maháwaṅsa" left uncompleted by Mr. Turnour. As this Report is eagerly awaited by Oriental scholars in Europe as well as in the East, and a General Meeting of the Society might not be held for some weeks, it was decided to send the Report to the public press. The Honorary Secretary was further authorised to similarly publish any of the other communications received from Government.

9.—The Honorary Secretary stated (a) that owing to an unfortunate oversight in 1885, Nos. 27 and 28 of the Journal and Proceedings 1885 had been wrongly paged, and that he had by circular called in all copies issued, to be repaged; (b) that Proceedings 1884 had lately been issued, those of 1885 would be out next week, and Journal No. 29 (completing Vol. VIII., 1883-84) within a month; (c) that No. 32 (Vol. IX., 1886) was in the press, and that copy for No. 33 was ready for the printer.

10.—Read letter dated July 28, 1886, from H. H. Risley, Bengal Civil Service, forwarding copies of printed papers regarding certain ethnographical inquiries now in progress in Bengal, and desiring the criticism or suggestions of Members of this Society. Decided to circulate the paper among the Committee in first instance.

11.—The Honorary Secretary pointed out that he had found it necessary to employ a clerk to assist him in properly carrying on the correspondence entailed upon him, and that he had engaged the services of one at Rs. 5 per mensem from June 1. Sanctioned.



A.—The Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY to the HONORARY SECRETARY of the Royal Asiatic Society.

Colonial Secretary's Office,
Colombo, July 24, 1886.

SIR,—I AM directed to transmit for the information of the Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon Branch, the enclosed copy of an extract from the Diary of the Government Agent, Anurádhapura.

I am, &c.,

H. C. P. BELL,
for Colonial Secretary.

Diary Extract referred to.

June 16, 1886.—In the afternoon I went about six miles with Mr. A. Murray to see some ruins, which I hear were discovered on the Anurádhapura-Trincomalee road near Kalpé. I was told the coolies, in cutting an ant-hill in the side drain, broke up a small bronze chatty, and that Mr. F. W. Johnson, the District Engineer, had the fragments. Met the Kórála, whom I had asked to have the "ruins" cleared. Found that they consisted of a large number of squares formed by four large uncut stones, the tops of which were almost level with the present surface of the ground, and having no slab or stone inside them. There were about twenty or more of these squares scattered about in the jungle, but no remains of pillars or structures. We were much puzzled to conjecture what the squares could be, as the Sinhalese never buried, but either exposed the dead bodies in ravines, &c., or cremated them, in ancient times. The Kórála was as puzzled as we were. He lives about a mile away, and says the place has neither name nor tradition connected with it. One square lay just where the side drain of the road will run, and one of its large side stones had been removed. Upon an ant-hill inside the square a tree was growing. We put on a number of coolies, and cut the tree and dug down and came upon a heap of round stones, from which we cleared away the earth. The stones were nearly all of the size of two fists joined, and naturally round: none were cut or squared. When these were removed, at a depth of about three feet, we dug into the earth, and found fragments of pottery in different places. Each little collection of pottery had with it about a handful of ashes; and we came to the conclusion that this was a sort of "family-vault," where chatties of cremated ashes were deposited, and that the roots of the trees above had broken all the small chatties, which were of red burnt clay, open mouthed, and about four inches high. Mr. Murray sketched in pencil the position and size of the square, which explains its appearance better than I can describe it.

B.—Extract from Diary of C. A. MURRAY, Esq., Assistant Government Agent, Hambantota.

May 30, 1886.—Went in search of the ruins of an old palace said to exist north of the Tisa tank, but could find no trace of it. Left two men to continue the search. * * *

Resumed search of palace, and found the ruins this morning (31st) in dense jungle two miles from and at the back of Tisa tank to the north. There were five pillars still standing, and some were lying down half buried. Taking the measurement from the outermost pillars, the building must have been 85 feet long by 35 broad, running from east to west, and standing on rising ground. The ground round about was covered with old bricks and pieces of broken pottery. The pillars were almost round, having been dressed to that shape, and having a more finished appearance than others I have seen, which were generally of an irregular oblong or square shape. Two pillars were lying on the ground in sections three feet in length, and had at one time been placed one on top of the other and joined by mortar. The ends have been chiselled to a smooth surface so as to fit. About 300 yards in front of the ruins are two artificial ponds which must have been on either side of the main approach. They are round, and each covers an area of from two to three acres. They are about 50 feet deep and must have been excavated, the sides having an even slope from top to bottom.

C.—The Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY to the HONORARY SECRETARY, Royal Asiatic Society.

Colonial Secretary's Office,
Colombo, August 5, 1886.

SIR,—I AM directed to transmit to you the enclosed copy of letter from Mr. S. M. Burrows relative to the discovery by him of a *karanduwa*, (casket) while excavating the northern chapel of the Jétawanárâma Dâgoba, Anurâdhapura, and I am to request you to be good enough to have the inscription on the *karanduwa* (herewith forwarded) examined with a view to its decipherment.

I am, &c.,

H. C. P. BELL,
for Colonial Secretary.

Letter referred to.

To the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Anurâdhapura, July 3, 1886.

SIR,—I HAVE the honour to inform you that a fortnight ago, when carrying out some excavations at the northern chapel of

the Jétawanárâma Dágobâ, I turned up the lower half of a marble *karandûwa* with an inscription running below the rim. I have reason to think (but I may be quite wrong) that this inscription has a right to rank among the oldest inscriptions in Ceylon. It is in the Sinhalese form of the Aśóka character; but there is no one here who knows anything of that character, and my own acquaintance with it is of very recent date. As the *karandûwa* is portable, I am taking it in with me to Máatalé (on my way to Badulia), and will venture to send it to you from there by train "On Her Majesty's Service," and I would suggest that it be submitted either to Mr. Gunasékara or to the Royal Asiatic Society for an opinion. I think that when deciphered, it might be as well to return it again to Anurádhapura, as all the inscriptions found there are gradually being collected in the Kachchéri compound, and will ultimately be arranged in chronological order.

I enclose a note upon the inscription, and I should be glad to know whether the *karandûwa* reaches you unbroken.

I have obtained the consent of the Government Agent before sending it.

I am, &c.,

S. M. BURROWS.

Note on inscribed marble karandûwa.

July 16, 1886.—I found this *karandûwa* while I was excavating the northern chapel of the Jétawanárâma Dágobâ, Anurádhapura. This chapel was entirely concealed by a vast mass of *débris*, and the casket was unearthed, at the bottom of a trench I drove into the heart of the chapel, about 12 feet deep. I am inclined to think that the inscription has some claim to rank among the oldest inscriptions yet discovered in Ceylon; but I wish to suggest rather than assert this, as my acquaintance with the language in which it is written (a Sinhalese form of the Aśóka dialect) is very slight. My reading of it is as follows:—*Siddham Gamani Tisa Maha Rajaha Rajini mi tabi hada teni dini*. I am pretty certain as to the first six and the last words, and extremely uncertain as to the seventh, eighth, and ninth words. The first five words, however, are the important part of the inscription, and are those which must determine its date. The genitival form "*Maharajaha*" fixes the date, according to Dr. Müller, as anterior to the fourth century A.D., and I think the words "*Gamani Tisa*" (if my reading is correct) thrust it back still further. A reference to Dr. Müller's notes on the first eight inscriptions in his valuable collection will show how very rare and obscure are the allusions to this king; while an additional interest is put to this inscription by the fact that all inscriptions of this age, and up to a considerably

later period, have hitherto been found only on slabs or on the living rock. I take the sixth word, “*mi*,” to be equivalent to “*nimi*,” “herself,” and would refer for confirmation to Dr. Goldschmidt’s third Report, dated Akuressa, September 11, 1876, pages 6 and 7.

I am inclined to think, however, that the forms of the letters of this inscription do not belong to quite the earliest times, but most closely resemble the lettering of the inscription at the Situlpa Vihára (No. 16 in Dr. Müller’s book); while if the date usually assigned to the erection of the Jétawanárâma is correct, the inscription cannot be older than the fourth century A.D. I will defer what further remarks I have to make on it until the opinion of more expert archæologists has been taken.

S. M. BURROWS.

I annex the passage from Dr. Müller’s “Ancient Inscriptions in Ceylon” (p. 26) which refers to the words “*Gamini Tisa*.” The italics are mine:—

3.—Dambulla Vihára. This inscription was published by T. W. Rhys Davids in the *Indian Antiquary*, 1873, p. 248, but he ascribed it to a son or brother of the great Dewánampiya Tisa, which for two reasons I think impossible: (i) no inscriptions are known in Ceylon as old as Dewánampiya Tisa: (ii) the temple at Dambulla is not known to have existed before the time of Duṭṭhagâmini or Waṭṭagâmini. *The combination “Gamini Tisa” does not occur in any other inscription, and therefore I believe that we have to correct “Gamini putasa Tisasa,” and that it refers to the same Tisa as No. 2 [Maháchúla Tisa, the son of Khallátanâga, who was adopted by Waṭṭagâmini].*

The Gâmini Tisa tank was bestowed on the Abhayagiri Vihára by Gaja Báhu, according to “*Maháwaṅsa*,” p. 223.

S. M. B.

D.—THE GOVERNMENT AGENT, Anurádhapura, to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Badulla, July 29, 1886.

SIR,—I HAVE the honour to forward eighteen metal plaques similar to those referred to and described by Mr. Henry Parker in his archæological report on Tisamahárâma, pp. 47–60, and said by him to be coins of very great antiquity. As I understand that a paper is shortly to be written on the subject by a more competent authority than myself, I will not trouble you with further remarks on them at present; but will simply state that I do not believe them to be coins, that they were found during some

excavations I carried out at the northern chapel of the Jétawaná-ráma Dágoba, and that the credit of first detecting the figures and symbols upon them belongs to Mr. R. W. Ievers, Government Agent.

I am, &c.,

S. M. BURROWS,
for Government Agent.

E.—The Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY to the HONORARY SECRETARY, Royal Asiatic Society.

Colonial Secretary's Office,
Colombo, August 27, 1886.

SIR,—I AM directed to transmit herewith for the information of the Society, a copy of a Report on the progress made during the past year in the translation of the “Maháwaṅsa.”

I am, &c.,

H. C. P. BELL,
for Colonial Secretary.

Special Report on the Translation of the “Maháwaṅsa.”

THE portion of the “Maháwaṅsa” that I am engaged in translating consists of 61 chapters ; that is, from the 39th to the 101st chapter. It contains 5,970 verses, and embraces a period of 1,336 years, from 479 to 1815 A.D. During the year I have finished translating 32 chapters containing 2,992 verses, or a little over half of the whole work. There now remain 29 chapters containing 2,978 verses to complete the task.

The elaborate and provokingly intricate style adopted in that portion of the work comprising chapters 62–79 require more than ordinary care to secure a correct rendering of the original. These chapters contain the narrative of the life and reign of Parákrama the Great, and form nearly one-third of the whole book.

Maháwaṅsa, “The Great History,” or “The History of the Great” is, as is well known, a metrical composition of the history of Ceylon from its earliest period down to the time of the British occupation of the Kandyan kingdom.

The first portion containing 36 chapters is known as the work of Mahánáma, an elderly monk, the uncle of King Dhátuséna. To it there is a *Tiká* or Gloss, supposed to have been prepared by the same author. This portion and chapters 37 and 38 were transliterated and translated by Mr. Turnour in 1836, which,

together with his learned and valuable dissertation, threw a good deal of light on some obscure points in the history of India, and consequently attracted the attention of the great Oriental scholars of that time. The work is out of print and is extremely scarce, and I would therefore respectfully recommend to Government the desirability of printing a new and revised edition of this work, which, though it contains many defects and errors, is, nevertheless, a production of rare value. The importance of the portion of the "Maháwaṅsa" translated by Mr. Turnour is admitted by a great many. But the larger portion of it treats of a period so early that legend and myth are intermixed with historical facts.

It is not so, however, with the later and subsequent portion of this "Great History": except in two or three instances there is nothing of the marvellous or incredible related in its pages, and the most scrutinising reader is struck with the air of soberness and truth which pervades the narrative as a whole. Exception must be taken, however, to that portion of the history which treats of the wonderful career of Parákrama the Great, wherein the author betrays a cringing flattery, and blind adulation of perhaps one of the greatest monarchs who wielded the sceptre of "Lańká," but the lustre of whose great fame has been tarnished by some deeds of needless cruelty and foul treachery. The murder of his foster-father's faithful General, and the spoliation of his wealth recorded in the 65th chapter; the dissimulation and treachery exhibited at Polonnáruwa while remaining as an honoured guest in the palace of his cousin, King Gaja Báhu, recorded in the 65th chapter, without one word of indignation or blame,—show that the hand of an unscrupulous minion was at work in the composition of the narrative.

Another salient feature observable throughout the whole of the "Maháwaṅsa" is the abhorrence shown to the too frequent Tamil invader, who was held in detestation, not only because he was a heartless ravaging foreigner, but also because he desecrated the holy places, and demolished the shrines of the land. Nowhere in the pages of this history does it appear that the Dravidian adventurers built up altars or shrines or monuments or works of public utility to improve the land over which they held temporary dominion from time to time. On the contrary, their vandalism and spoliation of the country are recorded in words eloquent with the indignation of patriotism. These are facts which militate against the view held by Mr. S. M. Burrows C.C.S., in his "Buried Cities," attributing a Dravidian origin to the superb architecture in which the ruins of those cities still abound.*

It might be said, however, that national prejudice made the Sinhalese historians suppress the good that might have been

* "The Buried Cities of Ceylon." Colombo, 1885, pp. 14, 15.

effected by foreign usurpers ; but this is not the case, as will be seen by a reference to the 21st chapter, in which the reign of the Chólian usurper Elála (204 B.C.) is described in most laudatory language. This king reigned over the north of the Island for 44 years, and although he left no public work as a monument to preserve the memory of his extraordinary reign, the historian records the fact that, although he continued to cling to his heresy throughout his reign, yet he was free from bias and enjoyed much glory.

Besides these considerations, there is another significant fact recorded in the "Maháwaṅsa," which likewise goes to show the improbability of Mr. Burrows' theory. The 78th chapter contains an account of the erection of sacred buildings by Parákrama Báhu, and among them is a great *Chétiya* or *Dágaba* towering above all others, and called the "*Damiḷa Chétiya*," because it was built by the combined labour of Sinhalese and of the "Damiḷas" (Tamils), who had been brought as captives after the invasion and conquest of the Páñḍiyan country. The passage occurs in "Maháwaṅsa," chapter 78, vv. 79-81. It runs thus : "He caused the great *stúpa* to be built by his own royal might, without the intervention of supernatural aid from gods or saints. A *stúpa* one thousand and three hundred cubits in compass ; it was larger than all other *stúpas*, and was like a second Kailása, and was named the "*Damiḷa stúpa*" because it was caused to be built by the Damiḷas, *also* who were brought hither from the Páñḍiyan country after it had been conquered." It seems to me that what the author means here is, that Tamil labour was employed *jointly* with Sinhalese labour in the construction of this stupendous edifice, and that the reason why the circumstance is specially mentioned is, because that was an uncommon instance in which the services of Tamils were utilised. It proves the exception rather than the rule.

Another important fact that would strike the attention of any ordinary reader of the "Maháwaṅsa" is the prominent, if not the leading, part played by the lords and princes of Róhaṇa, or the south of Ceylon, in the past history of the country. When the kingdom was divided against itself and became dismembered, when internal disorder brought on revolution after revolution, or when the foreigner took forcible possession of the Crown and ruled with a rod of iron the "King's country" (as the north was then called), deliverance came from the south. A Duṭṭhagámini (Duṭṭugemunu), a Vikrama Báhu, or a Parákrama Báhu, arose from among the princes of the south, drove the invader or usurper away, reduced the country under "one canopy of dominion," and restored order and prosperity throughout the land.

"The Hillmen," or the Malaya inhabitants, now known as the Kandyans, were, it would seem, of no consequence then. Enclosed by the hills and mountain fastnesses which nature had set up for them, they lived in the obscurity of their vales and glens a

life of ease and inactivity, without bestowing so much as a patriotic thought on their down-trodden countrymen. Their roads were impassable, their forests impenetrable, their rivers and streams dangerous, and their country unfrequented by their more civilised brethren of the north and south.

Here is a casual but terse and graphic description of the great wilderness, which as a contrast to its highly favoured appearance at the present day may perhaps be interesting. The passage occurs at the opening of the 70th chapter, wherein the successful campaign of the great Parákrama Báhu against the north is narrated:—“By cunning he (Parákrama Báhu) induced Rakṣha Daṇḍanátha, who was a General of King Gaja Báhu placed in charge of Yaṭṭhikandaka and Dumbara, in the great Malaya country, to come to him, and, after gratifying him by a display of great attention and hospitality, the King arranged with him for the surrender of the Malaya, a country passable only by a footpath, and which, on account of its many mountain fastnesses and wild beasts, was difficult of access and unfrequented by men of other districts, being moreover rendered horribly frightful by its being overspread with deep waters infested with crocodiles that eat human flesh.” I need only say that the General proved a traitor, and subdued the country for Parákrama in spite of the resistance of the people whose wishes he was bound to consult and whose rights he should have protected.

It is to be regretted that the perusal of the “Maháwaṅsa” may tend to damp the ardour of many an enthusiastic explorer. Its records will show conclusively that the Tamil invader, who from time to time held uninterrupted sway over the land for long periods of years, had ransacked its high places and plundered their treasures, so that it would be almost useless to make expensive excavations into the half-buried ruins scattered about the Island, with a view to finding anything valuable, ancient or great. Even the Ruwanweli Dágaba, in which were embowelled the richest offerings of a devout monarch, did not escape the savage rapacity of the ruthless invader, and the pages of the “Maháwaṅsa” abound in notices of the spoliation which had been thus committed from time to time. As an instance a striking passage occurring in the 80th chapter may be quoted. It relates to Mágha, a powerful chieftain of Kálinga, who invaded and conquered the Island 1222 A.D., and held sway over the land for 21 years, devastating the country, and spreading dismay among its inhabitants:—

“In consequence of some great sins committed by the people of Laṅká, its tutelary deities abandoned her to her fate, and a certain cruel and ignorant king, by name Mágha, who was born of the Kálinga race, and was a ruler over 24,000 strong men, invaded and conquered the Island. Like a wild fire raging in the wilderness during a drought his strong men spread themselves throughout

the land, and boasting that they were 'the Giants of Kérala, plundered the country everywhere. They robbed the people of their raiment and jewels, violated the purity of families that had been long preserved, cut off their hands and feet, broke down houses, seized and took cattle, tied up and tormented rich people, and took possession of all their wealth and reduced them to poverty. They broke down image houses and destroyed many shrines, took up their abode in Viháras, flogged devotees and children, persecuted monks, novitiates, and candidates for orders, and made the people carry heavy burdens, and put a heavy yoke on them. They, moreover, loosened valuable books from their covers and bindings, and cast them about everywhere. Even the high and noble structures, such as the Ruwanweli Dágaba and others, which stood like the embodied glory of former Kings, they spared not, but broke into and destroyed a multitude of relics which were to them like their lives. Alas! alas!" ("Maháwaṅsa," ch. 80, vv. 54-79, A.D. 1223.)

The number of tanks and other reservoirs of water for purposes of irrigation said to have been constructed by former kings would strike one as really wonderful. I fancy, however, that the inexactitude of the writers in using the same word "*kara*," "make," to convey the idea of both "construct" and "repair" has swelled the number to incredible extent. Nevertheless there can be no doubt that the country was everywhere studded with tanks and ponds in the days of former kings, and that there was neither lack of water nor population to till and cultivate the land. Among these great works of agriculture, Kalavápi or Kaláveva appears to have been the scene of struggles for power between rival princes arriving at supreme ascendancy over the whole kingdom. It seems that either from a strategic point of view or on account of the flourishing district that surrounded it at that time, it was regarded as the key to the opening up of the whole upper country. In 624 A.D. it was the scene of a pitched battle between two aspirants to the throne, Jetthatisa and Agrabódhi III.; and about 1160 A.D. one of the famous Generals of Parákrama the Great fought hard there to force a passage across the Kaláveva river. He raised fortifications on its bank, and spanned the river with a solid bridge which is thus described:—"This General (Deva Senápati), who was gifted with great prudence, equipped all his host, and advancing to the banks of the Kalavápi river, built a fortress and occupied it. Then, by order of the King, he constructed over the Kalavápi a bridge made of timber, two hundred cubits long and twenty broad, fastened and made exceedingly strong with iron plates and bolts—a most beautiful bridge, passable by elephants and horses and chariots and infantry. And the General, having left some of the officers, proceeded thence fighting heavy battles in various places." ("Maháwaṅsa," ch. 70, vv. 126-29.)

It is to be regretted that such an important historical work as

the “Maháwaṅsa” should have been composed in verse, wherein for the sake of metre or euphony a writer is often tempted to make superfluous additions or important omissions that tend to obscure the narrative. The “Maháwaṅsa” therefore is not free from such flaws, and it requires great tact and discretion to make out where they occur. To enter at this stage of the translation into a critical examination of the style of each separate chapter of the text would, I think, be unnecessary, and would besides entail an expenditure of time that could be more advantageously devoted to the work of the translation itself. Moreover, the composition and style of several chapters taken together are so similar that groups of them appear to point to the hand of one writer or of one school of writers.

For the present, therefore, I shall only briefly point out these groups which, in my humble opinion, deserve a critical examination by Páli scholars. Chapter 39, as well as the one preceding it, appears to be the work of one writer. The 40th chapter is missing, but the 41st chapter continues the narrative unbroken, although the reign of Kumáradása, a celebrated king whose name is associated by tradition with a tragic occurrence, is but cursorily mentioned. The 42nd chapter is very elegantly written, and appears to be the work of a master of the language. The 43rd does not appear separately numbered, but has evidently run into the 44th chapter, which, together with the following chapters as far as the 50th, is remarkably well written, the language being chaste and elegant. From the 51st to the 61st the style and phraseology are very rich and abound with the beauties of poetry. From the 62nd to 78th chapter the construction of sentences is intricate and complex, and the language elaborate, ornate, and verbose. They relate several incidents in the early life of Parákrama the Great, and give a minute and tedious account of his prolonged contest with Gaja Báhu and Mánábharana for supreme power. It also gives an interesting account of the great irrigation works and other public and sacred buildings constructed by him. The chapters abound in fulsome flattery of the king in whose lifetime it appears to have been composed. This portion is evidently the work of one writer who was proficient in Sanskrit literature, but who was sadly deficient in good taste and judgment for writing the history of a remarkably great man. From the 79th to 87th chapters there is a striking likeness in style and phraseology; the chapters are moderately well written. The five chapters following them are very elegant and abound with the graces of style and diction.

Chapters 92 to 101 contain many errors of grammar and prosody, and some of them are composed unsystematically. They appear to have been written at a period when literature was in a state of decay. Between 1542–1592 A.D. Rájasiṅha of Sítáwaka, who embraced Saivism, used all his efforts to destroy Buddhism

and its literature by putting to death its priests and destroying its temples and books. In consequence of this fierce persecution a large number of monks cast off their robes, a few remained in concealment, and some left the country, so that the religion of the land lost its vitality, literature perished, and the order disappeared. This state of things continued until Kírīṣrī Rájasiṅha, who ascended the throne about 1744 A.D., endeavoured to restore Buddhism and its order. It must have been at various intervals during this lamentable period that the chapters in question were composed.

As requested I have appended to this Report a rough synopsis of the remaining chapters of the "Maháwaṅsa," including therein those chapters also that have been already dealt with.

L. C. WIJASIṄHA.

Mátalé, July 18, 1886.

COMMITTEE MEETING.

October 19, 1886.

Present:

W. R. Kynsey, Esq., P.C.M.O., Vice President, in the Chair.

J. B. Cull, Esq., M.A.

S. Green, Esq.

W. P. Ranasinḡha, Esq.

J. L. Vanderstraaten, Esq., M.D.

H. C. P. Bell, Esq., Honorary Secretary.

Business.

1.—Read and confirmed Minutes of last Meeting.

2.—The Honorary Secretary read a further letter (A) from Mr. R. W. Ievers, Government Agent, North-Central Province, regarding the "stone squares" referred to in his Diary (June 16th). Mr. Ievers is convinced that these squares are ancient burial places.

3.—The Honorary Secretary stated that Mr. H. Parker and B. Gunasékara Mudaliyár had examined the inscription on the *karanduwa* excavated at the Jétawanáráma Dágaba, Anurádhapura, by Mr. Burrows, and that their readings would be printed in the Proceedings (*vide* B). Mr. Parker had further promised a note on the "plaques" (or "coins"?) also found by Mr. Burrows (*vide* C).

4.—The Honorary Secretary laid before the Meeting several additional Diary entries of archæological interest, extracted from the Diaries of Mr. Ievers, Mr. C. A. Murray, and Mr. H. L. Moysey.

Resolved,—That they be printed with similar communications in the Society's Journal or Proceedings.

5.—The Honorary Secretary moved that the Society do subscribe to the Hakluyt Society, stating the object of that Society in printing rare or unpublished voyages and travels not otherwise easily accessible to English readers, and adding that Mr. A. Gray, an Honorary Member, had strongly commended the Hakluyt Society to the notice of the Ceylon Asiatic Society. Mr. Bell tabled a prospectus of the Hakluyt Society for the information of the Committee.

Resolved,—That the Honorary Secretary do communicate with Mr. Gray with the object of arranging with the Hakluyt Society.

6.—The Honorary Secretary stated that he had received a Paper from Dr. Vanderstraaten, entitled "A Brief Sketch of the Medical History of Ceylon," which he had duly circulated among the Reading Committee, and moved that a General Meeting for reading the Paper be convened before the close of the month.

Resolved,—That the Honorary Secretary do ascertain whether His Excellency the Governor will be willing to preside at a General Meeting to be held at the Museum at 9 P.M., some evening next week, the exact day being left to His Excellency's convenience.

A.—The GOVERNMENT AGENT, Anurádhapura, to the HONORARY SECRETARY, Royal Asiatic Society.

Anurádhapura, (on circuit) September 22, 1886.

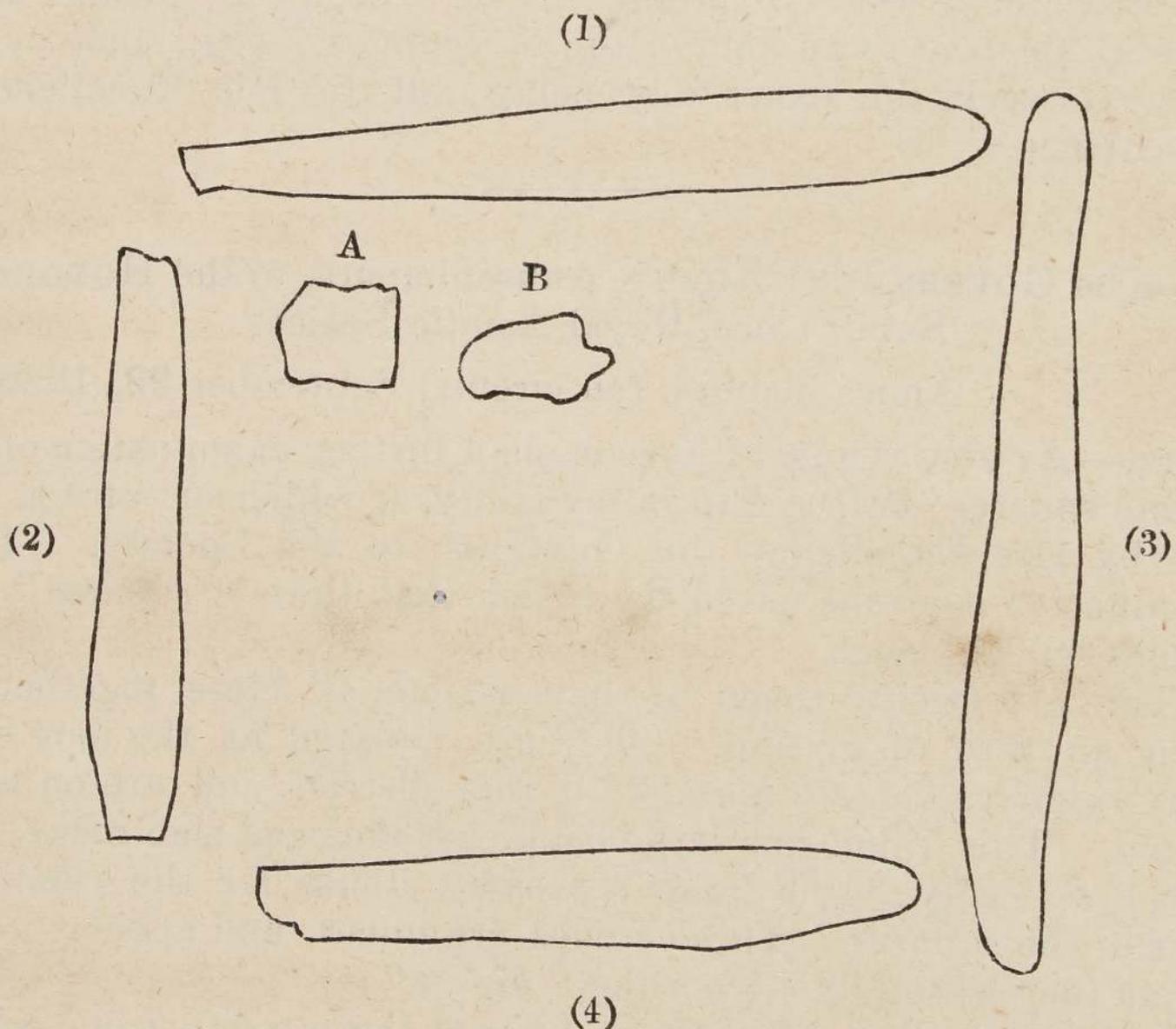
SIR,—AT your request I have made a further examination of the "stone squares" referred to in my Diary, of which an extract was sent by His Excellency the Governor to the Society. This examination confirms me in the belief that these "squares" are ancient burial places.

There are twenty-seven of them visible, all close together in about an acre of ground. They are situated at the foot of a rocky ridge called a "*hinna*" in this district, and are on level ground. This ridge has large boulder-stones and slab rocks, and must have easily afforded the necessary stones for the retaining walls of the squares. These stones are uncut, and appear to be just as they were taken from the "*hinna*."

Having looked at all of them, I found there was not one which was not more or less displaced by vegetation or pressure of the earth. I selected one which appeared to be in the least disturbed position, and the sides of which were some height above ground level. But even here two side stones were out of the perpendicular: No. (2) was leaning outwards, and the base seems to have been pushed in by some tree that no longer exists; while No. (1) was slightly inclined inwards at the portion above ground.

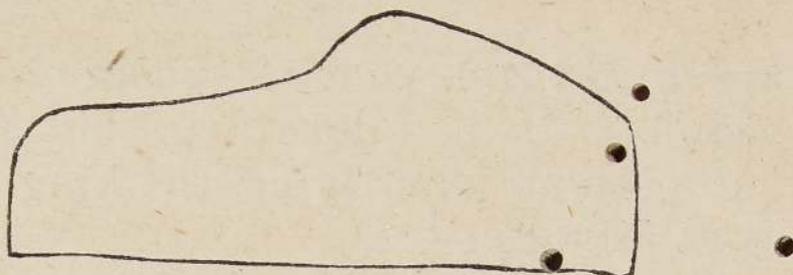
I carefully removed the earth inside, and at a depth of a few inches were found stones all over the area. Two were of considerable size; (A) was oblong and set up on end, being about 14 inches long by 6 inches across; (B) was a rough round stone. Underneath these were fragments of pottery and whitish earth, which may have been ashes. The stones were not symmetrically placed as those in the other "square" first opened, but laid without order. The earth was intensely hard round and beneath these stones, and though I removed it most carefully and slowly, the pottery was all in small fragments. No bronze or metal pieces were found. The pottery found in the "square" first opened, although broken, showed the shape of the chatty, but these pieces were broken too small to make out their shape.

I excavated to the base of the side stones inside, and for about half a foot above the base level the earth was free of pottery. In the centre I dug a deeper hole with the same result. The side stones are in this position—not drawn to scale, but I give the actual measurements:—



		Above ground.			Length.			Depth.			Width.	
		ft.	in.		ft.	in.		ft.	in.		ft.	in.
(1)	...	1	3	...	3	8	...	4	1	...	0	8
(2)	...	1	2	...	4	4	...	4	0	...	0	9
(3)	...	1	11	...	4	1	...	5	2	...	0	6
(4)	...	1	4	...	3	4	...	4	2	...	0	6

In giving the measurements I have taken them from the stone at its widest or highest point: they are only rough slabs, and the largest (No. 3) was somewhat of this shape seen from the inside.



(3)

Nearly all the “squares” are now level with the present ground level. But as we find in the excavations at Anurádhapura that the buildings are covered by an accretion of soil several feet in height, and this place being so old that there is neither name nor tradition connected with it, we may fairly assume that, when originally placed, these side stones stood about $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet over the then ground level.

Conical heaps of stone are common all over this province (North-Central Province), where a person of consideration has been cremated, but I have not seen or heard of any use of retaining walls formed of stone monoliths.

I may mention that in cutting the side drains of the new road which passes this place the fragments of pottery are so numerous that the overseer assured me it must have been “a potter’s field.” This may be a true explanation of the matter; but the side-stones are not taken into consideration.

I regret that my examination was so fruitless, but I doubt that any chatties would so long sustain the pressure of earth and the crushing of roots of trees, as to reward the trouble of opening other enclosures here.

I am, &c.,
R. W. LEVERS.

B.—The HONORARY SECRETARY, Royal Asiatic Society, to
the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Colombo, October 15, 1886.

SIR,—IN reply to your letter of the 14th instant, I have the honour to inform you that the inscription has been examined by Mr. H. Parker and B. Gunasékara Mudaliyár, and that their opinions will be printed in the Society’s Proceedings for the current year.

I am, &c.,
H. C. P. BELL,
Hon. Sec.

(i)—HENRY PARKER, Esq., to the HONORARY SECRETARY,
Royal Asiatic Society.

Vilāṅkuḷam, September 10, 1886.

DEAR SIR,—I RETURN your “squeeze” of the inscription with many thanks. It is interesting, but unfortunately there is no way of at present identifying the king who is mentioned in it. It runs as follows :—

Siddham! Maḷu Tisa Maha Rajaha Raji nimi tabi hada tani jani.

“Hail! Fashioned, established, (and) put in the prepared place in the reign of king Maḷutisa.”

Maḷu Tisa has not been identified as yet. There is an inscription by him in the north-western part of the North-Central Province, which I intend to include in my general report on the archæology of Northern Ceylon (if it ever see the light). In it he calls himself the son of “Naka Maharaja”; but there are so many kings of that name that this does not help us much. The shape of the letters on the *karandūwa* agrees with those of the inscription in the North-Central Province at Ussayippukallu; but in the latter we have the palatal *ḍ* of the modern form. This and the shapes of some other letters show that the date of this king is probably not earlier than the fourth or fifth century. This inscription contains nothing of importance; but among other things it says that he enlarged the city, and the priests’ grove (*tapawaṇa*). “The city” is, of course, Anurādhapura.

With regard to the *karandūwa* inscription I may throw out the following suggestions :—

Raje = *rajyahi*; I have found *rajahi* in another inscription of the first century A.D.

Nimi = *nimmita*.

Tabi—of common occurrence.

Hada—derived from *sādheti*; cf., the inscription on the Malpóruwa at Tisamahárama, given in my report on that place.

Tani = either *tanhi*, or (possibly) *tane*, the vowel being intermediate between *i* and *e*.

Jani—apparently derived from *dadhāti*.

Whatever translation may be arrived at, I have no doubt regarding the transliteration, except in the case of the *m* of *Siddham*. The horizontal mark above this letter usually denotes *o*; but in this case it is separated by a considerable distance from the consonant, and I think that it cannot be transliterated as *o* in this instance.

See also Dr. Müller’s notes on his inscription No. 98 (p. 55). This is also by a son of Naka. However, I intend to discuss these inscriptions by Naka’s son or sons, when giving a translation of the Ussayippukallu inscription. The date of the king can probably

never be ascertained with certainty. There is perhaps just a possibility that Maḷu Tisa is the younger son of Mahallaka Naga.

Yours, &c.,

HENRY PARKER.

(ii).—HENRY PARKER, Esq., to the HONORARY SECRETARY,
Royal Asiatic Society.

Mullaittívu, Northern Province, October 21, 1886.

DEAR SIR,—THANKS for your note regarding the *karandūwa* inscription. I am glad to find that Mr. Guṇasékara partly agrees with me regarding the reading. The hurried notes I added regarding it are merely tentative. With the exception, however, of the horizontal stroke over the “*m*” of “*Siddham*,” and the rather doubtful vowel in the “*ni*” of “*tani*,” the transliteration, at any rate, may safely be trusted. I have dozens of inscriptions in which these letters occur, where there can be no doubt regarding them, including several published by Dr. Müller.

I have had no chance of working at the “plaques” yet. At present I am on a long trip through this Province. On my return to Vilánkuḷam I hope to send you some notes on them. I have taken advantage of the opportunity that my stay here has afforded to visit the garden where the Mullaittívu “plaques” were found, and to examine the well out of which they came. I will give some particulars of the site in my notes. I also recovered five more of these “plaques” from the man, the last that he possesses, he said.

I believe that I have made a discovery of some importance during the last few days, regarding the site of another early station; but I must reserve particulars until I can refer to the “Maháwaṅsa,” on my return to Vilánkuḷam. There is a very long inscription at the spot, one of the longest in the Island. Some 75 lines of about 70 consonants each,—but the greater part of it is illegible. I have copied what I could decipher. I have now nearly exhausted the Northern Province inscriptions; I know of only two more that I have not copied, or perhaps three.

Yours, &c.,

HENRY PARKER.

Strange that there is not a single Tamil inscription in the Province.

(iii).—B. GUṆASÉKARA, Mudaliyár, Chief Translator to Government, to the HONORARY SECRETARY, Royal Asiatic Society.

Colombo, October 30, 1886.

SIR,—IN returning the “squeeze” of the inscription on the *karandūwa* found among the ruins of the Jétavanárāma,

Anurádhapura, I have the honour to state that it admits of different readings and as many renderings.

In the absence of reliable historical data to go upon, I would venture to read it "*Siddham Maḷu Tisa Maha Rajaha Rajini Mitabiya data nidane*," and submit the following interpretation :—

"Success! The treasure given by Mitabiya, Queen of the great King Maḷu Tisa."

One would at first sight feel inclined to indentify "Maḷu Tisa" with Chúla Tisa or Kaniṭṭha Tisa, but as this king reigned about the middle of the second century of the Christian era, neither he nor his queen could have endowed the *Aráma* which was founded by Mahá Séna, who, according to the "*Maháwaṅsa*" and "*Rájaratnákara*," reigned between 275–303 A.D.

I think this "Maḷu Tisa" is identical with "Makalan Datu Tisa," brother of Mahá Séna. Unfortunately, we read nothing of the above-mentioned queen either in the "*Maháwaṅsa*" or any other native chronicle.

The *karaṇḍuwa*, which is a casket, must have contained some valuable article, and the inscription is evidently a record of the grant to Jétavanáráma either during or subsequent to its foundation. The characters resemble those of an inscription at Ruwanweli Dágoba, in the reign of Kírti Śrí Méghavarṇa, son of Mahá Séna.

Whatever may be said of the reading and rendering arrived at, I think we cannot be far wrong in ascribing this inscription to the close of the third or early part of the fourth century.

I have, &c.,

B. GUNASÉKARA,
Mudaliyár.

(iv).—S. M. BURROWS, Esq., to the HONORARY SECRETARY,
Royal Asiatic Society.

Badulla, December 20, 1886.

DEAR SIR,—I OUGHT to have returned these to you long ago. Many thanks for sending them. I quite agree with the Mudaliyár about the latter part of the inscription; *i. e.*, I at once accept his emendation of "*tabiya data nidane*" for my reading. But I doggedly hold out for "*Gamini*" or "*Gamani Tisa*," as opposed to "*Maḷu Tisa*," until either the Mudaliyár or Mr. Parker have carefully examined the inscription itself and pronounced upon it.* For I would point out that the reading "*Maḷu*" leaves out of sight altogether the horizontal stroke over the *m* of "*Siddham*," which stroke certainly means something, and certainly does not

* Gunasékara Mudaliyár examined the *karaṇḍuwa* at the Museum, before writing his report.—*Hon. Sec.*

mean the “stopping” of the *m* in “*Siddham*.” There are several early examples of similar strokes representing a *g*; and the squeeze does not do justice to it. And I think too that the letter forming the last syllable of “*Gamini*” or “*Maḷu*” (whichever is read) is as likely to be “*ni*” as “*lu*,” but on this I do not insist so strongly. Nor do I for a moment set my opinion, as to the horizontal stroke, against that of such experienced Orientalists as Messrs. Parker and Gunasékera: I only appeal unto Cæsar instead of to an impression of Cæsar.

I shall eagerly expect Mr. Parker’s disquisition upon the “plaques.”

Yours, &c.,
S. M. BURROWS.

C.—H. PARKER, Esq., to the HONORARY SECRETARY, Royal Asiatic Society.

Panikkankulam Resthouse, N. P., August 27, 1886.

DEAR SIR,—THIS morning I duly received your letter and the packet of “plaques.”

Besides these there are about a dozen more in Anurádhapura, but these last are mostly in a very defective state. I will write to Mr. Ievers about them, so as to be able to compare the whole series.

There are three distinct classes of the “plaques”:—(1) those from Tisa, (2) those from Mullaittívu, and (3) those from Anurádhapura. The Mullaittívu ones are distinguished by the bull, while the Tisa ones differ in workmanship.

These Anurádhapura “plaques” decidedly strengthen my case. One of them has a very clear “Aum” monogram on it,—nearly the same as the symbol on the large circular coin found at Tisa, and like the “Aum” which accompanies Indian inscriptions.

There is a clear “E” on another bearing a bull’s head. What can this be but the initial of Elára? The sitting king of this coin is almost in the position of the king on my Yatṭhala gem and on the more modern coins. I am able to trace the prototype to Chaldea, where it occurs on early cylinders. I hope very shortly to send you a note on the “plaques,” but at present all my time is occupied with my plans, &c., for the irrigation of the Karachchi delta.

The sitting figures are very interesting, especially the king on the throne.

The two female figures are puzzling, but if these are really coins, they may represent Anula.

I do not see why the Sinhalese should not have oblong coins. The early Indian coins were square, Chinese (I believe) and Japanese oblong, and I have an elliptical coin of Parákrama Báhu I., which Mr. Nevill is going to figure in the “Taprobanian,” together with some other new coins.

The reference to Chinese coins (of which I have one small gold oblong one) reminds me that I have got a small series that I collected in the Southern Province. Probably most of them are comparatively modern, but the legends differ in all, fifteen in number. I intend to get a report on them from the British Museum.

Yours, &c.,
HENRY PARKER.

GENERAL MEETING.

November 3, 1886, 9 p.m., at the Colombo Museum.

Present :

His Excellency the Governor, in the Chair.

The Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Colombo, D.D.	P. D. Khan, Esq.
Hon. P. D. Anthonisz, M.D.	W. R. Kynsey, Esq.
T. Berwick, Esq.	L. F. Lee, Esq.
Hon. H. Bois.	Hon. P. Ráma-Náthan.
Hon. H. H. Cameron.	F. De Saram, Esq.
J. B. Cull, Esq., M.A.	J. H. De Saram, Esq.
A. M. Ferguson, Esq., C.M.G.	K. D. C. Seneviratna, Esq.
J. Ferguson, Esq.	M. Shamsh-ud-dín, Esq.
W. Ferguson, Esq.	Sir Cecil C. Smith, C.M.G.
P. Freüdenberg, Esq.	P. A. Templer, Esq.
A. P. Green, Esq.	J. H. Thwaites, Esq.
J. J. Grinlinton, Esq.	J. L. Vanderstraaten, M.D.
	G. S. Williams, Esq.

H. C. P. Bell, Esq., Honorary Secretary.

And the following visitors :—

Lady Clementi Smith ; Mrs. Miller ; Mrs. Cull ; Mrs. J. Ferguson ; Miss Haddon ; Mrs. Vanderstraaten ; Mrs. Burnett ; Mrs. Thwaites ; Mr. and Mrs. Ormsby ; Mr. and Mrs. P. D. Warren ; Mr. and Mrs. Cochran ; Rev. G. W. Mackenzie ; Messrs. W. Macready, E. Woodhouse, S. Anthonisz, B. W. Bawa, A. Berwick, W. Bowden Smith, A. Gunawardana, A. Haly, R. B. Hellings, F. Liesching, Dr. W. G. Keith, A. Nell, W. R. B. Sanders, &c.

Business.

Pending the arrival of the Governor the Bishop took the Chair.

1.—Read and confirmed Minutes of last Meeting.

2.—The following gentlemen were elected Members of the Society :—The Hon. H. H. Cameron, C.C.S. ; E. M. D. Byrde, Esq., C.C.S. ; Dr. W. G. Keith ; W. R. B. Sanders, Esq., C.C.S. ; and F. H. M. Corbet, Esq.

3.—The Honorary Secretary laid on the table list of books received since last Meeting.

4.—Dr. Vanderstraaten, on being called on to read his Paper on the Medical History of Ceylon, rose to say that, while he was ready, they had in their midst that evening a visitor in Mr. C. S. V. Stevens, from Australia, who had kindly consented to give them an account of his recent experiences during a prolonged visit to the Veddás and wanderings through the Veddá country, and he felt sure the Meeting would permit him to give way to Mr. Stevens and to read his own Paper at a future Meeting (*applause*).

The Bishop extended the thanks of the Meeting to Dr. Vanderstraaten for his generous proposal, and in introducing Mr. Stevens mentioned that he was one of the first to welcome him to Ceylon, having met him on the “Serendib” steamer voyaging round the Island, and that he was also the first to introduce him to the Veddás—that is to “Coast” or “Village,” rather than the “Wild” or “Rock,” Veddás. One of the schools he had inspected on that journey in the Batticaloa district included several Veddás who had been taught Christian knowledge to a certain extent, one woman who was all that was modest and seemly having her child baptised on the occasion. He felt sure from what he knew of Mr. Stevens that his observations would be interesting in their narration.

5.—After a slight interval, His Excellency the Governor having arrived, took the Chair, and Mr. Stevens, without the aid of notes and in a pleasant way spoke for nearly an hour and a half, giving a most interesting sketch of his experiences in the Veddá country. Mr. Stevens illustrated his remarks as he went on by reference to specimens of Veddá bows and arrows (as well as to their “fire sticks”) which he had on the table before him.

AMONGST THE VEDDÁS.

Mr. Stevens said: “Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I should not have allowed myself to have been persuaded to appear here this evening, had it not been that, in the first place, I consider I owed two duties—one to the Veddás and the other, in a minor degree, to the cause of science.

“I have undoubtedly collected a large amount of information and observation, but the facts, or rather supposed facts, which I have obtained, are entirely unverified. They require assortment and further examination as to their veracity by those who are far more competent to judge of such matters than I, with my comparative inexperience, can be. Therefore, I can to-night speak only in a sketchy manner of what I have seen among that interesting race. The scientific portion of my investigation must undergo revision, but I hope I have found some addition to that store of knowledge which is already possessed by the Ceylon Asiatic Society, and

shall certainly have pleasure, if it is so, in giving the Society the benefit of anything that I may have discovered.

“The debt of gratitude which I owe to the Vēddás certainly emboldens me to speak on their behalf as a much maligned race. They have been by previous writers described as semi-idiotic, or, at any rate, so by inference. That, I am sure, is perfectly incorrect: a much higher standard must, by those who carefully and thoroughly examine the Vēddá character, be allotted to them. At the point of death from jungle fever, far away—32 miles—from any European or Sinhalese settlement, the Vēddás, without being directed to do so, spontaneously, of their own inclination, carried me, tied to a pole with jungle ropes, to where I could obtain medical advice—to the resthouse at Bibile. It is on that account I feel that if I can in any way tend to remove the erroneous impression of their mental and social capabilities, which I see from works which Members of this Society and others have kindly lent me prevail very generally, I shall have, in some part at least, repaid the obligation which I feel towards the Vēddás.

“In the second place, I feel a great surprise that, while other communities, some very far distant from your shores, have thought the subject of the Vēddás of sufficient interest to send agents at great expense to inquire into their condition, manners, and customs, so little appears to be really known here, where they are at your very doors, so to speak. The surprise is not lessened by the fact, which I have since ascertained, that the information required can easily be obtained by any one enthusiastic enough to take up the work *con amore*. I found not the slightest difficulty in getting, not only among the Vēddás, but at their social life. It was only my inexperience that prevented my obtaining a much more varied stock of information than I have obtained.

“I may first remark that, being in the Civil Service of Queensland, and a member of various societies in Australia, on the occasion of my taking a twelve months' furlough, I was requested by the Royal Philosophical Society, on my intimation that I intended to visit Ceylon, to make such inquiries as were possible into the question of the origin of the Vēddás. That, I find, will require a much longer stay than at present I can devote; but the social habits, manners, and customs of the people from whom I have lately come are certainly worthy of the time that I have been enabled to spend among them.

“I started, as His Lordship remarked just now, from Batticaloa. My first introduction to the Vēddás was under the Bishop's auspices at Válaichchénai. From thence, returning to Batticaloa, I found from inquiry, and also in some degree from previous information in Colombo, that a very rigid line would have to be drawn between the ‘Village’ Vēddá and the ‘Rock’ or ‘Wild’ Vēddá. There is no doubt that the date for the observation of the

Veddá, as he originally existed, say some four or five hundred years ago, has gone by. The Veddá of the present day is not even in his wild state the Veddá of an earlier period, but sufficient interest still attaches to him to render it absolutely necessary for science, if she would obtain any record of a rapidly perishing race, to obtain by whatever means, a more authentic record of them than is possessed at the present time. There is no difficulty whatever in obtaining it. It is simply a question of £. s. d.; and anybody enthusiastic enough, and with time at his disposal to go among them, may obtain it. I speak with more confidence on this point because, in the course of twenty years, spent more or less among various races, I have never found a more pacific and humbler set of so-called savages than the Veddás. I do not speak of the 'Village' Veddá, but of the genuine wild animal. I think that, as far as the latter is concerned, I have come upon him. I found him in the Nilgala country, and only there at present. I have not yet visited the hill districts in which the Veddás reside, but hope to do so on my return from India.

"Starting once more from Batticaloa I went south. You will kindly excuse me from giving the names of the villages, as they are rather trying to an inexperienced tongue, and I have no acquaintance with Sinhalese or Tamil. I think that the non-acquaintance with those tongues was rather a benefit than otherwise to me in making myself acquainted with the Veddás. I should probably have talked more and seen less (*laughter*). The Veddá is a quiet man himself, and strongly objects to enthusiastic chatter. As long as I did not take a Sinhalese or Tamil with me into their camp they raised no objection whatever to a European. They have unquestionably an intense aversion—contempt I might almost say—both of the Sinhalese and the Tamil. The difference between the 'Wild' Veddá, when confronted by the European, with his ordinary retinue of Tamil or Sinhalese servants, and by the solitary European, is simply marvellous. He does not appear the same person.

"I had been warned, when entering the wild country, that if I came suddenly upon the Veddás I should very likely be greeted with an arrow shot, or that they would run away. Neither occurred. I was watched with some caution at first. But I took the precaution to send back the guide or native servant when within a mile of the Veddá encampment, to doff the ordinary European clothing and to simply assume that worn by the Veddás (which I need not remind you is scanty), and go among them simply with a present of tobacco, salt fish, cloth, salt, areka or betel-nut, just thrown over my shoulder. In no case was any hostility manifested to my sudden entrance among them; but, after sitting some two or three hours in silence among them, and being scanned with great surprise, they would gradually become friendly, would bring me water, and would accept what I

had brought them. There was no difficulty in my not being able to converse with them. They readily understand signs and pictorial representations. My notebook was always at hand, together with pencil and paper. In no circumstances, I think, did they fail, after a few minutes, to understand what I wished them to do. They allowed me to sleep either in the rocky caverns in some cases, or in the little huts in the chena that they build. They would go out with me hunting during the day, and consider me as simply one of themselves.

“The rocky dwellings of course interested me far more than did the chena huts; but they are very few. I think there were only some ten or a dozen Veddás in all the country I traversed, who were living in the rocks: and I think I may fairly claim to have been all over the Veddá country of the Eastern Province and the greater part of Uva. Some Veddás were endeavouring to cultivate chena in a very imperfect manner.

“The skill of the Veddá as a hunter is unquestionably on the decline. The old men use the bow with great skill and great force; the younger ones are but very poor toxophilites. Their food still consists, in the wild districts, of roast meat, jungle yams, and some berries and leaves.

“When I had become familiar with the Veddás, and gained their confidence, after a week or two I would take two or three back to the place where I had left my stores and native servants, and, carrying with me as I did a Sinhalese and Tamil interpreter, I would keep the Veddás for an evening and ask from them explanations of all that I had seen. They never withheld the information, but there is a peculiarity in them which I have not observed in any other race before, and that is that they never gave the information voluntarily. I had to draw it out of them, in consequence of which I had to verify at each camp that which I had gained in the others.

“I have come to the conclusion, from what I have seen, that the reputation of the Veddás among the Sinhalese, their neighbours, is correct. The Veddá is eminently truthful. He scarcely knows how, or does not care, to tell a falsehood. Neither is he addicted to the vice of petty theft. This may be readily explained by the fact that he has nothing to steal. Beyond his bow and two or three arrows, his axe, bark bag, and it may be a few gourds, and a little *kurakkan*, he has no possessions at all. So the absence of any regulations, or any punishments, among them, relating to stealing, can easily be accounted for.

“I paid particular attention to their form of government amongst themselves, for they do not trouble the Government Agent or the powers-that-be in any respect. I found only one rule among them; and, as far as I can gather, the enforcement of that rule has for many years been a very rare incident.

Should a Veddá make improper overtures to, or have improper relations with, his neighbour's wife, the injured husband, with the consent of the community, has a perfect right, at any time that he pleases, to send an arrow into the offender. No other law exists whatever, so far as I was able to gather. Should a Veddá be found lying dead from an arrow shot—a mark most unmistakable—the elder men meet, and immediately come to the conclusion that the defunct Veddá has been in fault in the above said respect, and he is at once interred without any further comment.

“Living as the Veddá does in some cases in villages near Sinhalese settlements—when I say ‘near,’ the Veddá has a different conception of distance: he thinks ten or fifteen miles near, because he is essentially a creature of motion—it may be supposed that, when he runs short of provisions, his neighbours' food might suffer. I made particular inquiry amongst the Sinhalese inhabitants, and in no case did I find that any charge of petty theft, or suspicion even of it, had been brought against the Veddás. In that respect they certainly are an improvement upon their neighbours.

“The language spoken by the ‘Wild’ Veddá is a most extraordinary one. When walking quietly together, as, for instance, hunting in the thick depths of the Bintenna forest, five or six preceding me, also carrying a Veddá bow and arrow, about twenty yards ahead, on the look out for elk or pig or anything that might occur, it was some weeks before I found out that the Veddá was talking. It is done so quietly; with the long hair thrown over the face—an intentional arrangement I am quite sure—the Veddá speaks to his neighbour Veddá in such a peculiar undertone, such a strange muttering, that, unless close behind, it is impossible to hear him. Their language, though I carried with me a very competent interpreter, is not intelligible to the ordinary Sinhalese on the whole. Probably in a long sentence the interpreter will understand about a third of it; they have an original language with which the Sinhalese is not familiar. I have obtained a vocabulary of 180 purely ‘Veddaic’ words,—if I may use the expression,—but that vocabulary will, of course, have to undergo revision at the hands of Oriental scholars before I can publish it.

“The life of the Veddá may be simply described as that of perpetual motion. With the exception of sleeping, he is not still a moment. I rarely saw a Veddá sit for five minutes in any given position. He will walk all day long without feeling the slightest fatigue, and walk in a most peculiar manner. I have often put on four or five pairs of heavy merino socks to deaden the rustling sound, and started out on an expedition. Despite my precautions and every effort I could make I have frequently scared animals before coming up to them. The Veddá moves like a

shadow : that is the only term that can be applied to it. You cannot hear him in the slightest. It is simply marvellous : they tread on sticks and twigs and not one will rustle under their feet.

“The bows and arrows which they use appear to be the same in all the villages with one exception, that at Unapani, in the Bintenna country, where I saw some arrows fourteen inches long in blade. Usually they are four or five inches : this is a fair medium sample [*taking up an arrow*]. The force with which the arrow is projected can be understood when I say this arrow was fired at my request through a large wild pig. It was shot on a moonlight night, near a waterpool. The Veddá wished me to shoot first : I declined the honour, and indicated that the Veddá was to fire. Sitting down he held the bow in a peculiar manner, and drawing the string with both hands he shot the arrow off ; at the same moment two other Veddás on each side of him fired. A pig squealed most dolefully, and I ran round the edge of the waterpool to find the arrow. I looked round for a moment or two. Some six feet from there the arrow was very nearly up to the feather in the bank. I have tried the experiment with a rifle. I was unable to send a bullet through the animal. The force with which the arrow was sent can therefore be imagined. When I say that, from what I have seen of them, I would far sooner at fifty yards face the fire of an ordinary rifle in the hands of an experienced person than I would allow a Veddá to fire an arrow at me at the same distance, you may be sure I feel pretty convinced as to the efficacy of the weapon. Up to the feather is a not unfrequent occurrence when firing at a buffalo.

“It is said that the Veddás do not eat the flesh of cattle at all. Certainly, I never saw them attempt to eat it. It is said also they will not eat fowls. I think that is an error. At any rate the ‘Village’ Veddás and those intermediate between the ‘Village’ and the ‘Wild’ Veddás have all of them, in their camps, a number of poultry. Eggs I know they eat, and sometimes, when the Veddás were in my camp, I gave them a part of a roast or boiled fowl, which they have eaten. It may be that they did not know what they were eating, but I am inclined to think they did know, and relished it too. They, however, will not eat the bear or the leopard ; the jackal especially they will not touch. I asked them why, and they gave me a reply which was equivalent to saying it was not clean. From what that notion arose I was unable to gather. In connection with the poultry another incident occurs to me. I remember seeing two Veddás trying to knock over with sticks a jungle cock. It is not likely that they wanted it for feathers for their arrows, because they usually employ peacock feathers. They did not succeed in getting the bird, and when I asked them what they wanted

it for, they pointed towards the camp, but my interpreter not being there, I could not ascertain for what purpose they wanted to catch the bird.

“They have no idea of boiling anything. The nearest approach to it is the case of the ‘Village’ Veddás, who, to make a candle out of beeswax, put a little water into a gourd which they have hollowed out. When the wax is on the point of solidifying they take it up in the hand and squeeze it round either a piece of cloth, if they happen to possess any, or twisted thread, and use it for giving light. Here are two of these primitive candles [*showing those on the table*].

“Light they obtain from wood, though some of them also have a rough kind of flint and steel which is composed of a piece of iron bar, about three eighths of an inch thick, made to go round the little finger. But they place much more reliance upon the wood. It appears to be the wood of a particular kind of tree. The old men carry the stick to assist them in walking. When fire is required, this stick is often simply snapped into two pieces. The Veddá sits on one piece laid on the ground, and, making a small hole in it, places the other piece, slightly pointed, therein perpendicularly; then putting a stone or cocoanut-shell on the top, he presses it down with his forehead, working it about in the hole with a cord of bark twisted round and held by the hands. [*Mr. Stevens here showed the manner in which the sticks and cord are arranged.*] The exertion required to produce fire is very great, but the Veddá will do it, apparently without any effort, and in five or six minutes smoke appears. As soon as he perceives the slightest spark, he places a bundle of fibre close by and begins blowing, and in five cases out of six succeeds in obtaining fire.

“The only other weapon the Veddá carries besides his bow and arrows is an axe. He uses the axe-blade for all the purposes of a knife: for skinning animals, for cutting up his meat—in short, for anything where a little edge is required the axe-blade is used. One blade that I have with me—this one [*holding it up*]—was forged by a Veddá himself. It was forged with the back of an axe on a stone. From some traces and indications among them, I am inclined to think they once universally possessed the knowledge of working in iron, at any rate so far as was required for their weapons. They seem to have lost it now owing to the greater ease with which they can obtain their weapons from Sinhalese or Portuguese blacksmiths at a distance of fifteen or twenty miles—what they term close at hand.

“Their proceeding is exactly that described in other accounts, only that the punishment for non-compliance with their wishes is not carried out now owing to the fear of the Government Agent and his orders. Taking a number of leaves, or a piece of wood—they seem to use them indifferently—of the pattern

desired to the smith's house late at night, they hang it up at the doorway.

"I accompanied a Veddá on one of these expeditions, and some of these arrows were made in that way. He hung it at the doorway, hanging at the same time a present of meat, wax, honey—the honey being placed in one of these bark bags. Three evenings afterwards he went again, and the arrows were ready for him. In former days had that smith not complied with the request—I do not take this merely from books, but I ascertained that it was true—the Veddá would simply have lain in wait for the unfortunate man and sent an arrow through him, as an intimation that he was offended at the want of compliance; and, therefore, the smith very rarely objects to put aside other work and go on with the work the Veddá wants done. If the work is done, for two or three nights subsequently presents will be laid at the smith's door. The smith is exceedingly over-paid for his work, according to the ruling rate of exchange, but the Veddá does not seem to care what he gives so long as he obtains his arrow, arrow-blade, or axe.

"I found great difficulty in getting them to part with some of these articles. Money is not of the slightest value to them; of trade they have no idea, and presents they look upon with wondering interest.

"The bag which I was speaking of is formed from a tree which grows principally round the Mahá-oya (in some districts it does not grow at all), and the Veddás have to travel into that district when they want to obtain any, either for use as bags or—as they did at one time, according to their own statement—for the purpose of garments for 'the ladies.'

"I wondered much that I did not see any skins used. In no case did I see any skin utilised for any purpose whatever. The Veddás sometimes wear the broad leaves of a tree, the name of which I have yet to verify. [*Mr. Stevens here drew the shape of the leaf on a sheet of paper.*] At other times simply a spray or twig of small leaf like the English hazel, is worn allround as a girdle, with a strip of bark or twigs tied in this manner. [*Shows.*]

"With his long hair and girded with leaves the Veddá looks, it may be supposed, a very peculiar individual, but when he is performing one of his dances by the firelight, he looks an individual a great deal more 'uncanny.' It was during one of these dances when 'in the leaf' that he gave me a very convincing proof of the great—I may say one of the principal—peculiarities of the 'Wild' Veddá. He will not stand ridicule. If you attempt to laugh at him the probabilities are that he will take a very speedy revenge.

"During a dance on one occasion at night such peculiarly comic antics were suddenly indulged in that I involuntarily commenced laughing. The dance was round an arrow stuck into the sand,

the bows being placed round in a circle. I had scarcely begun my ill-timed merriment before the Veddá pulled the arrow from the ground, in a moment his bow was in his hand, and before I could move—I was only three yards from him—an arrow whizzed past me ! I attribute my escape solely to my proximity to the enraged Veddá, and his extreme haste in shooting. I thought he was going to fire another arrow (for they are marvellously quick), but he did not happen to have one at hand, and perhaps he did not care about coming to close quarters with his axe. However, he took all the merriment out of my face, and taught me a very sufficient lesson not to laugh again.

“ On another occasion, in the presence of Mr. Ælian King, the Provincial Agent of Uva, and Mr. Moss, of the Forest Department, after the Veddás had carried me into Bibile, a similar incident occurred. Some Tamil and Sinhalese idlers gathered round began laughing at the dance, which by special request was being performed. Instantly every Veddá—there were seven—had his hand to his bow and the arrow drawn to the head, pointing at the Sinhalese and Tamils ! I jumped out of bed, though very ill at the time, as I saw there was mischief brewing, and, seizing the chief Veddá's bow, I called on Mr. King to send the laughers away. There was no necessity for the latter injunction, they had promptly disappeared—and it was well they had, for I verily believe the Veddás would have sent the arrows among them.

“ You cannot possibly annoy a Veddá more than by laughing at him, and that I think has been one of the great stumbling-blocks to observation among them before. Instead of going solitarily, the European has invariably taken a retinue of ignorant or careless Tamil or Sinhalese attendants. In the first place, the Veddá has a great aversion to them, and they are sure to begin laughing at him. They treat the Veddá simply as a subject for ridicule, and the Veddá thereupon assumes a mask of complete impenetrability ; he just looks what he has been described as—a perfect idiot. Drawing the hair over his face, so that his eyes are rarely visible, he stands a perfect picture of stolid unimpressionability.

“ On one occasion only did I see him assume that attitude towards me. I wanted to know what became of the dead Veddá babies. I could see no burial-place. I knew such a thing must occur. I could not find it out from the Sinhalese, and, having a good interpreter, I asked the first camp I came to what they did with their dead children. The only reply was—if you can call it such—to throw the hair over the face and remain stolid and impassive. I repeated the question to make sure that they understood it. They understood it well enough. They were too truthful to tell me a falsehood in the matter, and they did not intend to tell me, so they remained quiet, and not even threats on

the part of the interpreter (which I afterwards found out he had been using) could get me an answer.

“I am perfectly at a loss to know what they do with their children when they die. My own impression—it is only an impression—is that they place them in hollow trees and cover them in with clay ; but I am very doubtful about it. I was unable to find that out, but I hope to do so on my next visit. I do not know whether any Member of the Society has any information on the point ; if he has I shall be very glad to get it.

“The number of the Veddás has, I think, been over-estimated. Taking the district over which I went, and comparing it with those in which Veddás are known to exist, I question very strongly whether there are 500 Veddás in the Island. I think that within the next hundred years it will be almost impossible to get a real Veddá. Therefore it behoves the Asiatic Society, the Museum, the powers-that-be, and all others who may be interested in them, to obtain, before it is too late, the information which in a few years will be unobtainable.

“In stature, the Veddá, as far as I have been enabled to judge yet, varies from 5 ft. 7 in. (which is considered to be unusually tall amongst them) to 4 ft. 3 in. Their build is exceedingly slight. They appear not to have a pound of superfluous flesh upon them ; but, notwithstanding their slight dimensions, they are exceedingly strong and wiry. They will carry a load upon their shoulders that would fairly tire me, for I tried it ; and the ease with which they will draw these heavy bows and shoot, although a great deal may be due to practice, is simply astonishing. Any one present trying to pull this bow [*handling one*] will find it tax his muscles very considerably, and that is only one selected out of a number which I obtained ; some are far longer and stronger.

“Peaceable, mild, and quiet, the Veddás only ask to be let alone. Unfortunately the latter request is not complied with. The most shameless extortion and plunder are practised by the A'rachchies, Kórálas, and Raṭémahatmayás in their districts. On some occasions where I have been able to do so, I caused restitution to be made. Supposing an A'rachchi, having nothing particular to do, feels disposed to have some elk meat, bees-wax, honey, &c., as the case may be : he simply walks to the nearest Veddá village and intimates that the Government Agent requires these things as a tax, and invariably succeeds in getting it. The Veddá never thinks of resisting, and this little fraud is repeated in many cases three or four times in the year. I believe to some extent this is known to the Government Agents, but the question is how to put a stop to it. It is so difficult to obtain any evidence, for the Veddás simply refuse to speak if confronted with the Agent. It speaks volumes for their peaceable nature and also ready obedience to the law.

“Much has been said of the readiness of the Veddá to greet a stranger with an arrow. In some cases he does so. If a Singhalese or Tamil, I firmly believe, were to go among some of the camps which received me with simple, questioning wonder, I am very much of opinion that he would be promptly greeted with an arrow. The intense aversion which the Veddá feels to the Singhalese is rather difficult of explanation. He certainly considers himself his superior. The Singhalese rather allow that superiority, while at the same time they use the word ‘Veddá’ as a term of reproach.

“The nearest and most correct estimate of the Veddá character is probably that found over the initial ‘J. B.’ in the Appendix to an account in the Journal of the Ceylon Asiatic Society, No. 24, 1881.* There is nothing there but what I have actually observed, and though not quite complete, still it is devoid of any of the absurdities which have been written elsewhere.

“That number also contains an article by Louis De Zoysa, Mahá Mudaliyár. He specially states that the information embodied in the article was given him by a low-country Singhalese of Badulla. Mr. De Zoysa unfortunately did not verify his information, and has therefore placed on record some matter which appears to me to be so totally incorrect—I refer to the Veddá charms and songs—that I intend to make a special trip to Horaborawewa in particular to ascertain whether it is so or not. No Singhalese or Tamil, however educated, was able, in the first place, to make out more than two-thirds of any statement by the Veddás, more particularly their songs; but these are given by Mr. De Zoysa in detail. The remarks supposed to be made by the Veddás are such as I feel confident from my short acquaintance with them never entered into any actual Veddá head. Nor is the style of the literature at all like the Veddá songs.

“This I did not know until I entered the park country. When lying asleep in a Veddá encampment I was aroused by something tapping me on the head, from outside the little hut in which I was. Opening my eyes and peeping out, I found a party of Veddás squatted round listening to a song sung by another just outside. I kept my eyes shut and my ears open, and for more than an hour he continued this song—very different to the song that the Veddá sings when making an invocation or propitiation. It was a rather low musical rythm. Occasionally he would converse in a low voice with the other Veddás, and very frequently a laugh passed round.

“The old absurd statement that the Veddá never laughs has

* Extracts from the late Mr. John Bailey’s account of the Veddás, in Trans. Ethnol. Soc., vol. II., n.s., art. xxvi., 1863.

been effectually disproved. He can laugh just as freely as any Sinhalese or Tamil, and a great deal more musically; but anything more discordant than the Veddá's speech when suddenly confronted by strangers it will be difficult to conceive. It is positively as if under the influence of great fear, although the Veddá in the presence of wild animals exhibits considerable nerve and very little fear. But the whole manner of the man seems to have completely changed under the two circumstances of solitary insecurity, and in the presence of strangers, that you would scarcely believe the man to be the same.

“In one of this Society's Journals [No. 13, 1865-66, pp. 1-117], which were kindly given me by your Secretary, Mr. H. C. P. Bell, c.c.s., after my return—for I visited the Veddás unbiased by previous perusal of the literature on the subject—appears a very interesting article by Mr. Dandris De Silva, Mudaliyár, on the Demonology of the Sinhalese. I am sorry I did not see this article before I started on my trip. I made particular inquiry into the Veddá religion. From all I can gather, demonology is an incorrect expression to apply to it. It is rather ‘*Kapuism*,’ but with the indifference that they have no special ‘*Kapuism*’ among them. They do not believe in the existence of any injurious or malevolent spirits, differing very greatly from their neighbours the Sinhalese in this respect. The sight of myself, with my white epidermis burnt by the sun, groping among the habitations of their dead, must have given them a very strong notion of one or two Sinhalese demons which are very much dreaded! To further test the idea of the Veddá as regards superstition, I buried a skull under the entrance to one of their little chena huts in their full view. Not a single Veddá made the slightest hesitation in walking over it. From what I have read, I think an ordinary Sinhalese villager would absolutely have dropped down dead with fright if he thought any charm were placed under his feet in that way.

“Once a year the whole of the Veddá encampment make a propitiation. It is not worship: I am firmly convinced that that term is inapplicable to it. They simply make a propitiation to the collective gods,—the Veddás have some eight or nine gods,—and they consider the gods will ward off any injury to them if they make this propitiation. If injury happen to a survivor it is considered that the man has not performed his propitiation properly. But there is one remarkable exception. In gathering the honey of the large *Bambara* bee from the face of the cliffs a jungle rope is used with a cross-stick, which is lowered down to the place where the bees have formed their nest on the side of the cliff. The Veddá slides down, and gathering the honey into one of these bark bags [*shown*] put round his neck, ascends—that is, if the rope does not break, as sometimes it does. In that case no reference whatever is made to the man not having

properly performed his propitiatory rites. It is taken for granted that the next of kin, on whom always devolves the task of selecting and fixing the rope, has failed in judgment: he has to support the deceased Veddá's family in consequence, and the blame is not laid upon the spirits or gods.

“They have one or two dances when they are going out on any expedition: these seem to be directed solely to the spirits of their dead relatives. While I have repeatedly heard the Veddás invoke their dead fathers, mothers, and other relatives, I have never heard them invoke their children. The invocation is a repetition of two or three lines, of which I have a translation. I cannot give it now, but hope to do so shortly. That performed, the Veddá starts with a light heart on the performance of whatever he is doing. Superstitious he certainly is not. He knew, I think, a great deal more about rites and ceremonies at one time than at present. Having no written characters whatever the whole of the traditions have been handed down from father to son orally, and a great deal has evidently been forgotten.

“The life of the Veddá under his rocky cavern is simple in the extreme. Rising at the earliest dawn, the women—‘the softer sex,’ if I may call them so, but I really do not think the term applies to them—attend to their domestic duties. The Veddá wife is not quite a pleasing person. She is very unlike her husband; she is very noisy. She is rough in her manners and demeanour, and certainly reverses the ordinary condition of things, and is not half as good looking as her spouse. Only on one occasion did I see a good looking Veddá woman, with her two little children as good looking as herself; the generality are very plain. In one account I have come across an expression seems to hint that originally the Veddás were remarkable for their good looks, and it is not improbable that the observation may be correct, for I think that, physically and mentally, the Veddá, within the last four or five hundred years, has degraded very much indeed.—To resume: the husband, or men of the encampment, start out to look after game. They are out all day, and taste no food until they come back, when they take a little roasted flesh, and it may be some *kurakkan*, or yams, or berries,—the Veddá never eats more than once a day when by himself,—and then retire to rest.

“The Veddá is a good father: very kind. He seems to be an equally affectionate husband, and quarrels between husband and wife are exceedingly rare.

“As regards the children, I did not know until after my return that doubt existed in various writings that they had any playthings. They have: I have seen the Veddá children play. I am now speaking of the more remote Veddás. The children play with little balls, large berries, and three little sticks which they toss up in a peculiar manner, and different mud images. The fact of their making mud balls and images would seem to imply that

at no distant date the Veddá understood how to make pottery. There is certainly a tradition among the Sinhalese that they did, but they have no idea at present about it. The play of the children is of a very subdued character; not noisy, romping, and high-spirited, like other children, but rather as if they were under the impression that they were going to be scolded if they made a noise. When they have done playing, the playthings are carefully put away in the roof, or in a hole in the rock, or under a bush. Doubtless that is how the toys have hitherto escaped observation. They do not apparently attempt to play during the day—only in the evenings, when their parents have returned.

“Rice, the ‘Rock’ Veddás will not touch. On two occasions I gave ‘Wild’ Veddás some rice when they came to the camp of the interpreter. They ate it,—certainly with no great gusto,—but immediately afterwards asked for different food, ‘because if they ate that it would make them sick.’

“The Veddás divide themselves into eight clans. I am not aware that this information has been made public before. I have taken great pains to verify it, and I find that one of the subjects on which a Veddá most prides himself is in belonging to one of the higher clans, or ‘*Virga*,’ as they call it. Originally the whole of the *Virgas* appear to have been concentrated—at least so far as the Veddás have any tradition—in two clans, the *Unapáni* and the *Lochcho*. I am obliged at present to give these names phonetically; but they will be submitted to competent scholars, and the result will appear before the Asiatic Society shortly.

“The traditions in connection with these clans are rather interesting, and have to a great extent been verified. It would seem that the Veddás of Bintenna—whether they derived the idea from the Sinhalese or not I cannot say—believe one clan, *Bandára*, the greatest and first, to derive its origin from Wijayo. Whether that came from Sinhalese notions implanted in them I cannot say at present; but it certainly agrees with the theory that has been started, and with the assertion of the Sinhalese of the Bintenna district, who hold the same view. The second clan, *Nebadáni*, claim to be descended from the union of another Sinhalese prince with one of their own people. The third, *Unapáni*, was one of the original clans; and the fourth settled in a village of their name after they were driven back by the Sinhalese from some other part of the Island. It would appear as if that portion of the country is the Adam’s Peak district, Sabaragamuwa, or Saffragam. History records that they were driven back in that way, and the traditions of the Veddás go no further than the settlement in two particular villages, not very many miles apart, of the *Unapáni* and *Rukam* tribes. Between these two there was considerable rivalry and jealousy, but from them spread out, as they increased in numbers, the other clans. The localities to which each clan went

are rather important, and are under revision in order to ascertain what places can be found in those districts, to test the correctness of the tradition. *U'rava* is the fifth clan, *Rukam* the sixth, *Tala* the seventh, and *Embula* the eighth. The last-mentioned seems to have disappeared altogether. It was swamped in the parent stock, and in the district where it originally settled no trace whatever can be found.

“As regards *Unapáni* there is some doubt as to the meaning of that word—viz., as to whether it means ‘bear village’ or ‘hot water village.’ Another clan, after leaving the parent stock, settled at the time of very heavy flood at a pool, near the sea coast, in which, on the water subsiding, a large skate fish was found imprisoned. They killed the skate, an unusual thing for them to see, ate it, and took their name from it. *U'rava* is another clan. This outgoing colony settled by a large tank where many pigs were seen, and the settlers were called *U'ravas* or ‘pig-pond’ *Veddás*. The derivation of *Rukam* is yet in a state of uncertainty; the *Veddás* themselves could not explain it. *Tala* were ‘the open country’ *Veddás*, who settled away from the jungle. *Embula* has the most peculiar tradition of all. It is that a new colony, on starting away, proceeded, immediately on reaching their new grounds, to fell chena. One of the mothers of the colony left her little child under shelter while she went to work. Coming back she found the child apparently killed by an attack of red ants. The interpreter gave the translation to me at first as ‘red worms,’ but I found out afterwards he was wrong; the word means ‘red ants.’ Considerably shocked at the conduct of the mother the parent stock gave this colony the name of *Embula*, ‘red ant’ *Veddás*; and this tribe it is that has disappeared. *Nebudáni* is the tribe derived from a Sinhalese prince. The word means ‘wise’ or ‘witty.’ The Sinhalese prince referred to, on the occasion of his army arriving at a very dry region, had to go without any water to drink or cook rice. Two *Veddá* women thereupon set themselves to think how they could supply the king with water. Taking off their clothes, they laid them on a rock, and a heavy dew falling saturated the clothes, so that they were able to give the king sufficient water to drink and cook rice in the morning before proceeding. In recognition of their cleverness the king termed them *Nebudáni*, or ‘wise’; hence the name of the clan. This tradition appears to have some foundation in fact, and is not merely fanciful; but on my second trip I hope to bring back such information as will place it beyond all doubt.

“In the next room are seven representative skulls, one of each of the first seven clans. They vary considerably in many respects, but are fairly representative. The *Embula* is missing. There is also a skeleton showing the average size of the *Veddá*. The account of my trip, which appeared in the *Ceylon Observer* of the 1st

instant, is accurate in all respects with the exception of the statement regarding the use of skins : these I have never seen used.*

“ Before concluding, there is one point which I should be glad of the assistance of the Members of the Asiatic Society in unravelling. While taking up a Veddá skeleton I came upon a very ancient Sinhalese skull—indeed, so much so that the jungle roots were simply holding it together, and it fell to pieces in my hand. Driven into this skull were three iron nails, a piece of a carpenter’s bit, and a brass nail. Now there is a *húniyam* charm which doubtless many will recollect, of five nails being driven into a wax image. The skull was found so far away from the Sinhalese villages that no inquiries I could make could elicit any information upon the point. I shall be glad if those who have any knowledge of Indian charms could throw some light upon the subject.

“ I fear I have taken up, in the few disjointed remarks I have made, more time than I should have done ; but my only regret is that I have not been able to give you more information. I thank you most heartily for the attention with which you have listened to me, and I trust that the fuller information to which I referred will be obtained as soon as possible, in view of the rapid extinction of the Veddás. I may remark that I have made a proposition to Mr. Bell as to obtaining that information which may lead to some solid result, and be of assistance in bringing it about. I have, in other words, offered, if it can be arranged, to go and settle for one or two years among the Veddás, and transmit the information gained from time to time to this Society for revision and dissection. There exists in the Bintenna districts sufficient material for four or five Papers in the possession of an intelligent Sinhalese gentleman who has made the subject a special study. Some four or five hundred words I know exist, because I have been carefully taking notes of some ; and an educated Sinhalese has on many occasions been among the Veddás and picked out all the words which were neither Sinhalese nor Tamil. That information should be forthcoming, and a great deal more too, if only any one chooses to go and collect it. My own duties at present compel me to leave for India, but I hope, on my return, to spend six months more among the Veddás, and by that time I have no doubt some really more authentic information than what I have at present obtained will be at the service of the Asiatic Society,—to which Society I have to tender my best thanks for the assistance which they have given me in obtaining such information as I now possess. I regret it cannot all be laid at once before you, especially the scientific part, because so much

* “ In one encampment of the ‘Rock’ Veddás ten men were found in absolute nudity, whilst the women of the party apparently wore a small portion of the skin of some animal.”

has to be verified. So much rubbish has been written about the Veddás that I cannot but emphatically decline to have my name mixed up with any information unless it has the approval of those who are well qualified to decide upon such matters, in Ceylon. I have to thank you again most heartily for the patience with which you have listened to me." [Mr. Stevens then resumed his seat amid hearty applause, after speaking nearly one and a half hours with scarcely any notes to aid him.]

6.—On Mr. Stevens concluding, Mr. A. M. Ferguson proposed a very cordial vote of thanks from the Meeting, remarking that he had probably been chosen for the task from some supposed affinity to the Veddá as "the oldest inhabitant" (*laughter*). He alluded to several notable points in Mr. Stevens' most interesting and instructive address, more particularly to the "perpetual motion" of the Veddás, in striking contrast to the characteristic indolence of other Oriental races, and also to their absolute truthfulness, a virtue qualifying them to send a Missionary to other classes in Ceylon. Dr. Kynsey seconded.

7.—The Bishop proposed Mr. Stevens' election as an Honorary Member of the Society.—*Carried by acclamation.*

8.—His Excellency the Governor: "There is one question which I wish to ask Mr. Stevens. Speaking of the process of making fire by the fire sticks. Are the two sticks of the same or different wood?"

Mr. Stevens: "The same wood, one piece being cut off from the other."

His Excellency the Governor: "I have seen a good deal of fire-making, but there were always two kinds of wood used."

Mr. Stevens showed from the pieces that, in the case of the Veddás, the sticks were pieces of the same wood.

His Excellency the Governor: "There is one other question I wish to ask, with regard to the arrow. You said they are taken to the smith to be made. Does the Veddá take the iron or does the smith supply the iron?"

Mr. Stevens: "The smith supplies the iron: in one case, however, a piece of iron was obtained by the Veddá from some of the Sinhalese in the village, and then hammered into a blade."

9.—Mr. T. Berwick: "There is a further point, which perhaps Your Excellency will allow me to elicit. Mr. Stevens said the Veddás had eight or nine gods. I should like to know whether their idea—such as it is—of the unseen world has any reference to belief in gods or merely to the spirits of their departed ancestors?"

Mr. Stevens: "A distinction is certainly drawn by the Veddás between the gods and the *manes*. The god is a being of power: the departed spirits are simply present to watch over them, and can neither do them good nor evil."

Mr. T. Berwick : “ They have a belief in gods distinct from the spirits of their departed relatives ? ”

Mr. Stevens : “ Certainly : therefore I say it is not demonology, but rather ‘ *Kapuism.* ’ ”

GENERAL MEETING.

November 18, 1836, 9 p.m., at the Colombo Museum.

Present :

The Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Colombo, President,
in the Chair.

Hon. P. D. Anthonisz, M.D.	J. Ferguson, Esq.
T. Berwick, Esq.	W. Ferguson, Esq.
Hon. H. Bois.	W. R. Kynsey, Esq.
F. H. M. Corbet, Esq.	W. P. Ranasinha, Esq.
W. H. G. Duncan, Esq.	H. Sumangala Terunnánsé.
A. M. Ferguson, Esq., C.M.G.	J. L. Vanderstraaten, Esq., M.D.

H. C. P. Bell, Esq., Honorary Secretary.

And several visitors, including some ladies.

Business.

1.—Read and confirmed Minutes of last Meeting.

2.—The following gentlemen were elected Members of the Society :—P. Brito, Esq., M. Cochran, Esq., F. Dornhorst, Esq., C. A. Murray, Esq., C.C.S.; and the Rev. S. Coles was re-admitted a Member.

3.—Dr. Vanderstraaten then read his Paper : “ A Brief Sketch of the Medical History of Ceylon.”

4.—Mr. A. M. Ferguson thought some one else should have been asked to move the vote of thanks, though he would yield to none in his sense of obligation to the lecturer. He referred to the vast benefits conferred by medical science under the British Government—so great, through improved sanitation and continuous peace, that in some parts like Bengal, scientists feared evil rather than good results owing to over-population, the checks of periodical famine and devastating wars having been removed from a people who would not migrate to take up waste land. So it was at Jaffna in Ceylon: he was there in 1845, when a cholera epidemic swept away large numbers, simply because the people outraged every law of sanitation. The improvement was great in the health of their soldiers now occupying palatial barracks after the squat huts he could remember: the mortality was then equal to 50 per 1,000; it was now probably less than half.

The Hon. H. Bois seconded the vote of thanks, which was very heartily accorded.

5.—The usual vote to the chair was given on the motion of the Hon. Dr. Anthonisz.

6.—It was announced that there would be no more General Meetings this year, but that the Annual Meeting would be held in December as usual.

COMMITTEE MEETING.

December 14, 1886.

Present :

The Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Colombo, President,
in the Chair.

W. R. Kynsey, Esq., Vice-President.

Hon. Lt.-Col. F. C. H. Clarke,
R.A., C.M.G.

J. B. Cull, Esq., M.A.
S. Green, Esq.

W. H. G. Duncan, Esq., Honorary Treasurer.

H. C. P. Bell, Esq., Honorary Secretary.

Business.

1.—Read and confirmed Minutes of last Meeting.

2.—Considered certain proposed amendments in the Rules and Regulations, clauses 4 and 5.—*Carried.*

3.—Nominated the following gentlemen as Office-bearers for 1887 :—

President.—The Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Colombo, D.D.

Vice-Presidents.—W. R. Kynsey, Esq., P.C.M.O., and
T. Berwick, Esq.

Honorary Treasurer.—W. H. G. Duncan, Esq.

Honorary Secretaries.—H. C. P. Bell, Esq., C.C.S., and
W. E. Davidson, Esq., C.C.S.

Committee.

The Hon. H. Bois.

The Hon. Lieut.-Col. F. C. H.
Clarke, R.A., C.M.G.

Rev. S. Coles.

J. B. Cull, Esq., M.A.

A. M. Ferguson, Esq., C.M.G.

W. Ferguson, Esq., F.L.S.

P. Freüdenberg, Esq.

S. Green, Esq.

The Hon. P. Ráma-Náthan.

W. P. Ranasinha, Esq.

H. Trimen, Esq., M.B., F.L.S.

J. L. Vanderstraaten, Esq., M.D.

4.—The Hon. Treasurer submitted the Annual Balance Sheet of the Society, showing Rs. 541·96 to its credit.

5.—The Hon. Secretary submitted the draft Annual Report.—*Approved.*

6.—*Resolved*,—To hold the Annual General Meeting on the 16th instant, at the Museum, and to invite His Excellency the Governor to preside.

ANNUAL MEETING.

December 16, 1886, at the Colombo Museum.

Present :

His Excellency the Governor, in the Chair.

The Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Colombo, President.

W. R. Kynsey Esq., Vice-President.

J. Alexander, Esq.

Hon. P. D. Anthonisz, M.D.

Hon. H. Bois.

Hon. H. H. Cameron.

M. Cochran, Esq.

J. Ferguson, Esq.

W. Ferguson, Esq.

P. D. Khan, Esq.

W. P. Ranasingha, Esq.

A. H. Thomas, Esq.

H. Sumangala Terunnánsé.

Hon. G. S. Williams.

W. H. G. Duncan, Esq., Honorary Treasurer.

H. C. P. Bell, Esq., Honorary Secretary.

Some visitors, including two Buddhist priests.

Business.

1.—Read and confirmed Minutes of last General Meeting.

2.—*Excavations at Anurádhapura.*

His Excellency said, that before proceeding to the business of the evening for which they were summoned together, he wished to put upon the table for the inspection of Members some plans of the recent excavations at Anurádhapura. He also wished to refer to two coins of some interest. Those of them who had read Mr. Burrows' interesting Report upon the archæology of Anurádhapura would remember that he found in one of the ruins a copper coin of the Emperor Antonius. The coin was of interest as showing what communication there was between Constantinople and Ceylon in those days. At Galle a very beautiful gold coin of the Emperor Theodosius had also been found some time ago. It had been for a considerable time in the possession of the Mahá Mudaliyár, who had kindly lent it. It was a very beautiful specimen. The inscription on the obverse was plain, but the reverse could not be made out.

3.—*Alteration of Rules.*

(i) The Bishop of Colombo: “There are certain small changes which the Committee propose in the Rules and Regulations, of which I will briefly explain the purport. In clause 3, at the end of section *a*, it is proposed to omit the words ‘or more’ after ‘four,’ and add at the end ‘Rs. 62 after seven years’ subscription, Rs. 50 after ten years’ subscription.’ This rule has reference to Life Membership. The object of the amendment is to make it possible for those who have subscribed for a large number of years to a certain extent to commute and become Life Members on payment of a sum proportionate to that which they have yet to contribute to put themselves on a footing with those who qualified by paying originally Rs. 105. It is proposed therefore that it should be possible, after seven years, to pay Rs. 62 and become a Life Member, and after ten years or more to become a Life Member on payment of Rs. 50.”—The amendment was agreed to *nem con.*

(ii) The Bishop of Colombo: “The Committee propose also an amendment in clause 4, which regulates the Office-bearers of the Society. It is proposed to add certain words which will cause all who have held the office of President to be *ex-officio* Vice-Presidents so long as they are Members of the Society. That is a rule which obtains in the greater number of societies like ours elsewhere, and has the obvious advantage that it retains upon the managing body of the Society those who have necessarily acquired experience of its affairs, and who may be fairly reckoned upon as having a real interest in it. That general principle would have induced the Committee I think to propose the amendment; but we had in view also its application to a particular case which will commend it, I am sure, all the more to the Members of the Society. We have only one ex-President actually amongst us, Mr. Ravenscroft, and I am certain it will be the wish of all that we should have the benefit of his assistance and counsel. It is therefore proposed to insert after the words ‘appointed by open vote at the Annual Meeting of the Society’ the words ‘besides all ex-Presidents, who shall be *ex-officio* Vice-Presidents so long as they are Members of the Society.’—Amendment agreed to.

(iii) The Bishop of Colombo: “The Committee further propose in clause 5 to substitute the word ‘twelve’ for the word ‘nine.’ Since that clause was framed I believe the number of the Members of the Society has doubled. It seems, therefore, not unreasonable that the number of the Committee should be increased. There is a very largely increased number of Members whose interest and service may be counted upon. The Secretary informs us that there has often been great difficulty in obtaining a quorum: but if the number of those votes on the Committee were greater it would be more certainly obtained.

But though we propose to increase the Members of the Committee we do not propose to increase the number required for a quorum."—Amendment agreed to.

4.—The Hon. Secretary laid on the table the list of books received since last Meeting.

5.—The President then called upon the Hon. Secretary to read the Annual Report of the Committee for 1886.

ANNUAL REPORT.

"The past year may be characterised as normal. If there has been no falling-off either in numerical strength or in the quality of the work done by the Society, on the other hand there has been no marked advance. This condition of things can fairly be assigned to two causes: first, 1885 was an exceptionally active year, and a certain reaction has resulted; secondly, the Society has this year suffered by unusually frequent changes in the two officers upon whom devolves the greater part of its routine work: three Secretaries and Treasurers have held office during 1886. Under such circumstances your Committee is confident that it will not be expected that the Society should have made any great progress.

"*Members.*—The list of Members up to the close of 1885 gives the total number at 137. Since then 11 Members have severed their connection with the Society upon leaving the Island or through persistent default of subscription, chiefly the latter. In this connection it may be parenthetically noted as hardly creditable to a Society of our standing that so large a proportion of its Members (nearly one-fourth) should allow their small annual subscription to run into arrears in spite of repeated reminding. Your Committee trusts that it has only to earnestly commend this shortcoming to the notice of Members to bring about more regularity in this respect. Against the above loss of 11 Members is, however, to be set an increase of 23 (including those gentlemen just elected this evening), raising the full strength of the Society to 149, or more than double that of a few years back. The amendment of the rule relating to Life Membership, carried this evening, should induce more Members to compound their annual subscription by a single payment.

"*Meetings.*—During the year four General Meetings have been held. At those of February 16, August 26, and November 18, the following Papers were read:—(1) 'An Outline of our Studies in Ceylon,' by Drs. C. H. and P. Sarasin; (2) 'Wouter Schouten's Account of Ceylon in the Seventeenth Century,' by P. Freüdenberg, Esq.; (3) 'A Brief Sketch of the Medical History of Ceylon,' by Dr. J. L. Vanderstraaten. In addition, the Society had the benefit of listening, on November 3, to a very interesting address delivered by Mr. C. S. V. Stevens, of the

Queensland Civil Service, detailing his experiences amongst the Veddás. The change inaugurated in 1884 of convening these Meetings in the evening at the Museum has continued to prove successful in drawing together a larger attendance of Members. Whether it may not be advantageous to hold one or two *conversazioni* every year under the Society's auspices is a question worthy of consideration.

“*Journal.*—No less than five Numbers of the Society's Journal were issued in 1885, but the Government Printer, though ever willing to aid, has not found it possible to spare compositors and type so readily this year. What has been printed amounts to about four Numbers, *i.e.*, Proceedings, 1884; Proceedings, 1885; Journal No. 29, 1884 (too long delayed), completing Volume VIII.; and portion of No. 4, 1848-49, reprint. It was suggested in last year's Report that the Bengal Asiatic Society should be applied to for permission to reprint as part of our Transactions the valuable articles contributed to that Society's Journal by the late George Turnour. But until several Numbers of our own Journal (which have been out of print for years) are reprinted, it would be undesirable to seriously consider the proposal. Experience has proved that the Government Printing Office is too heavily weighted to undertake, in addition to our current demands on it, the reprinting of back Journals, with any prospect of completing them within a reasonable time. Since 1880 the only reprints issued have been No. 6, 1853, and No. 9, 1856-58, and of these the last was turned out by a local press. As there are at least half a dozen Numbers still to be reprinted, it would seem advisable to arrange, without further delay, with one or two outside presses to contract for their early issue.

“*Library.*—Although our funds have not admitted of a large investment in new works this year, by exchanges and presentations the Society has acquired a substantial addition to its Library. The last catalogue was issued in 1882, and subsequently a Sub-Committee was appointed to thoroughly overhaul the Society's Library and draw up a Report for its general improvement. The great defect hitherto has been the want of a regular system of checking the issue and return of books. It is hoped that the coming year will see this defect finally remedied. Your Committee has consented to hand over, under proper safeguards, the entire Library to the Museum authorities, for the purpose of being amalgamated into one joint catalogue. The Society will retain an exclusive right to its own books, which will be clearly distinguished in the Museum catalogue by an asterisk. The catalogue is to be commenced at once, and Members will be requested by circular to return temporarily every book now in their hands, very many of which have been lost sight of for years, and are not to be found in the catalogue of 1882. The sum of Rs. 69.50 was

spent in book-binding in the course of the year, but a great deal more has yet to be done to ensure the Society against the frequent expense of replacing unbound Volumes and Numbers of periodicals, now lying loose upon the shelves.

“*Archæology.*—Some interesting discoveries of ruins have been reported during the year by the Government Agent, Anurádhapura, and the Assistant Government Agents of Hambantota, Vavuniya-Vilankulam, Maññár, and Mátaalé, and it is proposed, under Government sanction, to print so much of these Reports as appears desirable, with other Papers of a similar character forwarded to the Society, as a separate Number of the Journal. Special attention has been drawn by Mr. W. J. S. Boake to the ruins of the ancient city of Tirukésvaram (Mántota); and in forwarding a box of antiquarian relics, Mr. Boake asked for a small grant to enable him to carry out some excavations at the site. The project seemed to your Committee sufficiently promising to justify it in voting a sum of Rs. 50 for the purpose, on the understanding that Mr. Boake would personally supervise the work. The balance remaining on the Excavation Fund raised by special subscriptions in 1884 amounts to Rs. 440·05, besides a small balance of Rs. 40 remaining in Mr. Ievers’ hands from the advance of Rs. 200 issued to the Government Agent, Anurádhapura, at different times. As the work at the Mirisweti Dágoba (for which the fund was originally subscribed) is completed the Committee is of opinion that the fund may be usefully transferred to the general funds of the Society, to be applied to such other excavation schemes as may commend themselves to the Committee at its discretion. To this proposal the consent of the Special Committee appointed to deal with this fund (of which His Excellency the Governor is Chairman) has been solicited.

“*Translation of the ‘Maháwaṅso,’ and the Vocabularies Committee.*—Brief reference may be made to two other subjects in which the Society is interested. First, the continuation of the English translation of ‘Maháwaṅso’ from the point reached by Turnour. L. C. Wijasiṅha, Mudaliyár, has now been nearly eighteen months engaged on the work, the completion of which Oriental scholars everywhere are eagerly awaiting. A long and interesting Report of Mr. Wijasiṅha’s progress up to June 30 was transmitted to us by the Government, was published in the *Ceylon Observer* of August 18, and will appear also in our Proceedings for the year. It is highly satisfactory to feel assured that, before our next Annual Meeting, this great work ought to be in the printer’s hands. This portion once out, the revision of the first 37 chapters will, it is hoped, be sanctioned and entrusted to the same able scholar.

“Acting on a suggestion thrown out by Mr. Bruce, in his Presidential Address of 1881. to supply ‘perhaps the greatest

literary need felt in Ceylon, the want of a good Sinhalese and English dictionary,' a Select Committee was formed in 1884 to take such steps as it deemed advisable towards this end. This Committee has met once or twice, but has as yet not advanced beyond preliminaries. A small 'Specimen Vocabulary' in the shape the work might ultimately best assume has been prepared, and is shortly to be circulated among the Select Committee, the Members of which will be invited to select each some one Sinhalese work, prose or poetical, with the object of making during 1887 as complete a glossary as possible on the lines of the 'Specimen Vocabulary.' These are small beginnings, and years must elapse before any real results ensue ; but, if steadily pursued, they cannot but aid the future dictionary-maker, a Sinhalese 'Murray' perhaps yet unborn.

“*Finances.*—The balance sheet of the Society herewith submitted shows that its financial position continues sound. It has been found undesirable to follow out a proposal made in last year's report to fund the subscriptions of Life Members separately, and the amount has accordingly in the present statement been incorporated with the other receipts. The balance to date on this general account is Rs. 541·96. The items differ but little from those of past years, though it should be remarked that the Society has undoubtedly profited by handing over the agency for the sale of its Transactions to a local firm, Messrs. A. M. and J. Ferguson. A sum of Rs. 126 appears credited under this head. The Excavation Fund has been dealt with already.

“In conclusion, your Committee congratulates the Society on its present healthy condition. For 1887 the outlook is certainly encouraging. Papers have been promised, yielding in no way in value and interest to the many read before the Society from time to time ; and it rests with Members themselves whether the Society is to continue to develop the sphere of useful work in the several branches of knowledge which it is its design to investigate and record.”

6. The Report having been duly adopted, Mr. J. Ferguson rose and said :—“Your Excellency, I have been asked to propose the election of the Office-bearers of the Society for the coming year, as nominated by the retiring Committee. The list which I have the honour to move is as follows :—*President*, the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Colombo ; *Vice-Presidents*, W. R. Kynsey, Esq., and T. Berwick, Esq. ; *Honorary Treasurer*, W. H. G. Duncan, Esq. ; *Honorary Secretaries*, Messrs. H. C. P. Bell and W. E. Davidson, C.C.S. ; *Committee*, Hon. H. Bois, Hon. Lieut.-Col. F. C. H. Clarke, R.A., C.M.G., Rev. S. Coles, and Messrs. J. B. Cull, M.A., A. M. Ferguson, C.M.G., W. Ferguson, F.L.S., P. Freüdenberg, S. Green, Hon. P. Ramá-Nathan, W. P. Ranasingha, H. Trimen, M.B., F.L.S., and J. L. Vanderstraaten, M.D.

I think, Sir, it will generally be admitted that the usefulness and prosperity of a Society such as our own in a colony like Ceylon, depend in a very great degree on the Committee, and especially on the executive officers, and I think I may congratulate the Members on this occasion on the exceptionally strong and representative character of the Committee proposed. Nearly all classes and races seem to be represented, and each Member, if I judge correctly, should be able to bring to the board peculiar and useful experience and knowledge differing from that possessed by his neighbours. I would particularly refer to the advent of one so well known as Mr. Duncan as Treasurer in the room of a gentleman who for many years faithfully served the Society, until he left the Island, and also to the nomination of our former Secretary Mr. Davidson as joint Secretary with Mr. Bell. Under this happy conjunction, Your Excellency, I think we may fairly look forward to a double degree of usefulness for the Ceylon Asiatic Society in 1887. I have much pleasure in moving the list as read."

The Hon. P. D. Anthonisz seconded.—*Carried.*

6.—The President then rose and delivered a short address, summarising the work done by the Society during the year:—

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

The Bishop of Colombo: "Your Excellency, Ladies, and Gentlemen.—If there are no other reasons for my rising, it will certainly be my duty, in my own name at least, whether or not I may take upon myself to speak for the other Office-bearers of the Society, to thank you for the honour which you do me in re-electing me to the office of President. I am very conscious that, during the past year, I have done very little for the Society. I suppose that I have fallen even more short of fulfilling the expectations of those who elected me than I have in fulfilling my own hopes; and I can hardly promise that I shall be more successful in the year which is coming than I have been in that which has passed. I can only promise that I shall do my best, and that the recollection that one of the two years for which I have held office has not seen much fruit from my exertions will stimulate me to try and make the most of the one that remains.

"Not that the year during which I have had the honour of presiding over the Society has been altogether a barren one. I think we may say very much the contrary. It has seen a large increase in the Members of the Society, and an increase in the interest which is taken in it both within and without. We cannot expect in every year to have Papers read of such marked importance as some of those which were given us in the year before—Dr. Trimen's Paper upon the Botany of Ceylon, or such reports as Mr. Parker's upon Tisamaharáma. But we have not been without very much during the past year of interest, and we have

touched upon and received some information in most branches which the Society aims at cultivating.

“In the field of Science we had from the brothers Messrs. Sarasin a very interesting and learned account of their work in Ceylon; and many of us will no doubt look forward with interest to the publication of the results. They gave us in so many instances only a description of the processes, and had not yet been able to tabulate and estimate the results obtained. In the same field we are making a little effort now, which, perhaps, it would be well to commend to the attention of the Members of the Society. The Committee has attempted to obtain information upon one definite and simple point. Upon the motion of Mr. R. L. M. Brown, a circular has been issued asking for information with regard to those flights of butterflies which so curiously are to be observed in different periods of the year. I venture to think that this is an instance of the way in which, without any high pretensions, Members of a Society like this by their own united action may contribute to the obtainment of really valuable knowledge; and I hope that those who happen to have it within their power to notice any of these phenomena will not think their observations unworthy of being contributed to the common store.

“In the field of history, we had the interesting account of Ceylon of Wouter Schouten translated for us by Mr. Freüdenberg. It has left a good deal that should be further inquired into, and I hope that it may be printed some day, accompanied with notes showing what are the places to which Schouten referred,—mere names not known to us at present,—and elucidating some other points which were just touched upon in the evening when the Paper was read. In this field too one of our most assiduous Members has been at work, though not exactly within the region of the Society itself. Our Secretary Mr. H. C. P. Bell, in conjunction with Mr. A. Gray, has nearly seen through the press for the Hakluyt Society Volume I. of their joint work, the translation of François Pyrard's Voyage to the Máldives and other parts of the East Indies,—a work which is of very considerable interest, and which I believe Mr. Bell is qualified to further illustrate by notes and researches of his own, which I hope he will ere long have time to give us the benefit of. We know that he has already done for us considerable work in that field, and he has by him still materials which only need time and leisure to be brought into order and applied in elucidation and illustration of such a work as that which, under the auspices of the Hakluyt Society, he is at present aiding in editing.

“In the field of Antiquarian Research we have not had any Paper read to us, but we have had many contributions, and none perhaps more replete with interesting information than those which Your Excellency has been kind enough to lay

upon the table this evening. The Diaries also of the officers in different parts of the country which Your Excellency has been kind enough to place at the disposal of the Society contain a great many interesting facts. We cannot expect that that should always be so within the limits of the Society, but it is kindred work which we are very glad to be privileged to record and count ourselves to have a share in. Mr. W. J. S. Boake is undertaking, as you have heard, a report on a work which may possibly lead to interesting discoveries at quite a new site (Tirukésvaram). The quantity of objects of interest which he has discovered is really remarkable, considering that he has at present only looked upon the surface. At the same time I suppose there is considerable wisdom in the warning of Mr. L. Wijasiṅha, Mudaliyár, in his Report upon the 'Mahávaṅso,' that the accounts which are given there of the elaborate thoroughness with which the Tamil possessors of the Island ransacked all the treasures of its ancient sites and ruins leave very little hope that much of any great value—at any rate of any great intrinsic value—will be discovered in ruins not yet opened.

“Nothing I think contributed more to spread the popular interest in the work of the Society than that pleasant evening which we spent in listening to Mr. C. S. V. Stevens' account of his visit to the Vēddás. It was astonishing, if only as a record of individual enterprise. The courage and resource which Mr. Stevens had himself displayed, the way in which he had gone unprotected either by arms or even by clothing, or by knowledge of the people, to bring himself into the closest possible contact with their modes of life, and the still more astonishing readiness which he displayed to go back and live there for a period of something like two years—these are (to my mind at least) revelations of a degree of enthusiasm and energy which were very startling. Mr. Stevens would not like us to consider that he had brought his researches to an end, or that his results were final; but at any rate we may note this much,—and I for my own part note it with very great satisfaction,—that he disposes, I think, finally of the notion that the Vēddás cannot laugh; and I mention that, not as a matter of so much importance in itself, but as typical of the exaggerated notion which has prevailed about the Vēddás and their savage character. He told us at the outset that they were very far from being the degraded semi-animal creatures which they were represented to be. We know how often an article in the *Daily Telegraph* will sum up mankind, through all his various races, from the writer himself down to the Vēddá. I hope that it will be impossible any longer, whatever may be thought of the writer on the *Daily Telegraph*, to put the Vēddá at the bottom, and that persons must look elsewhere than Ceylon to connect the missing link between ourselves and the lower forms of animal beings. This is an explosion

of an error which has been founded, like so many other errors, upon the exaggerated credence given to the reports of individuals and irresponsible observers. The tendency is, I think, always to place too little credence in records and monuments and too much in the statements of any one who rushes into print; and I confess I am very glad to see a systematic inquiry on foot which may have the tendency of letting in the light upon a region which has been darkened by what I may call these hasty and irresponsible statements.

“While I am speaking of the *Veddás*, I think it may be, perhaps, not impertinent if I note what does not seem to have struck the attention of so many of those who have discussed the subject—that, supposing the *Veddás* to be an independent and original race, they are among the very few who have preserved no name. Obviously, ‘*Veddá*’ is not a name; it is the description of their occupation; and not here only and in this language only, but in the languages of many parts of India, it is a generic term, descriptive sometimes of the huntsman and sometimes of the wild tribe, but in neither cases does it do duty as the name of any particular race or family of men. When Mr. Stevens began to tell us what names they have,—the clan names, for instance,—those were so far from being special or peculiar that they appear to have close affinity to the languages of the principal races of the Island. I cannot help remarking at the same time that, while I admit the wisdom and the necessity of prosecuting those cranio-logical inquiries upon which the Papers which we have listened to here, with considerable interest, have been founded, we may hope that, Mr. Stevens, by his large opportunities has carried them as far as they can be carried at present. We have had the skulls of our neighbours in this very building, and I hope the time has been reached when we shall not only feel that we may safely recognise in our *Veddá* neighbours our brother-men, but that we shall also feel that no race is merely a subject for scientific inspection, but is to be treated with the respect which one man owes to another, and in particular that there shall never be forgotten the reverence which man owes to his brother-man.

“In Dr. Vanderstraaten’s interesting account of the progress of Medical Science and Medical Instruction in the Colony, the Society diverged into a more general field where science strictly so called mingles with social and economic science. We were all, I think, very much interested in listening to the Paper, and I am in hopes that we shall not be too strict in drawing the line of the limits of our subjects: that subject must be very alien to our objects indeed before we refuse to listen to it. I think if we are ready to open our doors, and come and listen to any one who is ready to give us information on matters that really concern the life and history and interest of the people, we shall do wisely to do it.

“I would go further and add my word of persuasion to the suggestion which has been made in the Report which the Secretary has read, that *conversaziones* of a more informal character, and where subjects of whatever kind may be discussed among ourselves in a more or less informal way, should be held under the auspices of the Society.

“One branch, and that I must say a not unimportant one, of the subjects with which the Society generally deals, has had either no, or very little, place in our transactions this year. I mean the whole branch of Literature and Philology. It may partly account for my own feeling of having done very little for the Society ; as that is the only branch in which I should have hoped to have done anything for it. At the same time, I think, I shall, perhaps, be right in informing the Members that we have not been altogether idle, and that besides myself having laid upon the table certain translations from Páli at an earlier Meeting, several of the Members of the Society have been upon a concerted plan at work upon a similar translation. That takes time and those people who thought they would get through a certain amount of work at the end of twelve months, find themselves at the end of the year only at the beginning ; but there are several who have begun, and I hope we are not altogether forgetting at any rate that purpose.

“The same kind of description will apply to what has been done in respect of that Sinhalese Dictionary work, to which we are inclined rather to give the title of ‘Sinhalese Glossary Committee.’ I will just explain very briefly what are the objects we have in view. We are not attempting to produce a Dictionary, and therefore, perhaps, it is better not to mislead any one by the title of the Sinhalese Dictionary Committee ; but we do hope to set on foot what will be a permanent institution in connection with the Society, the collection of material on which hereafter a Dictionary might be founded ; that we should make it possible for any student in Ceylon with the aid of the Society to undertake such a work. I confess I regard it as one of the great advantages which a Society like ours confers, that it enables people to make use of small capacities and limited means of time and special knowledge by putting together what they are able to do. I hope that we shall make such a glossary that even a beginner studying for his own instruction should be able to contribute his mite towards the material which will be constantly accumulating in the hands of the Society until some one arises with genius and knowledge enough to take up the work. There are two kinds of work : that work of higher type which requires great knowledge and ability, where one man projects and another man carries through some large work ; and the other which depends upon the co-operation of many whose individual skill need not be great. We may compare them to two kinds of buildings.

There is such a structure as this great Museum or as that beautiful Cathedral which has risen at Kotahena, the finest work of architecture which Ceylon has I suppose as yet produced: these require the planning mind of a capable architect and large resources. On the other hand, when we go up the railway to Kandy, we see a building, of entirely different character. We see a whole hillside manipulated by the hand of man and accommodated to his purposes and laid out in small and regular terraces, everywhere fenced, sluiced with the greatest accuracy and minuteness—a work which I suppose is the accumulation of the separate industry of a multitude of individuals in a multitude of ways, gradually extending the range of their work and gradually seeing more and more what rule might govern and how it might be legislated for as a complete whole, and yet producing a work which we cannot but regard as stupendous and which may well be compared with those larger works of splendid genius, but which, if no less vast, is no less serviceable and may perhaps be even more durable than any of them. I hope it may be the privilege of this Society in the field of literature and science and kindred inquiry at least to enable its members during the coming year to bear their part in this humbler and perhaps not less remunerative kind of work.”

(*Applause.*)

At the conclusion of the Address,

7.—His Excellency the Governor said: “Your lordship was good enough to thank the Society for electing you again as President; but I am sure I only express the feelings of the Society when I say far more thanks are due on our part to Your Lordship for your kindness in consenting to retain that post. I am quite sure there is no Member of the Society, either present or absent, who would not most willingly pardon, I will not say Your Lordship’s indifference, to the work of the Society during the present year, in consideration of the valuable contributions which at great cost of your own time and labour you have laid before the Society from time to time. Might I ask, in a mere conversational manner, what progress has been made with that work to which Your Lordship has been devoting so much time?”

The Bishop of Colombo: “We hope to get fifty Játakas done during the year. Mr. Pánabokké has, I believe, done his ten, I have done about seven, and Mr. Templer has done about three or four; I am not aware what one or two other gentlemen who gave indefinite promises have done.”

The Governor then invited the Members present to examine the two coins, and the plans of the buildings the foundations of which have been cleared by the excavations recently executed at Anurádhapura. These have been prepared by Mr. A. Murray, Public Works Department, and are very elaborate and interesting; a few of them are to appear in Mr. Burrows’ Archæological Report.

Dr. The Honorary Treasurer in account with the Royal Asiatic Society (Ceylon Branch). *Cr.*

1886.		Rs.	c.	Rs.	c.
To Balance on December 31	...	488	40	...	...
" Members' subscriptions	...	989	50	...	...
" Entrance fees	...	68	25	...	...
" Government grant to the Society	...	500	0	...	...
" Sale of Journals, &c.	...	126	0	...	...
" Interest from Bank of Madras...	...	12	12	...	...
		<hr/>			
		Total ...	2,184 27	Total ...	2,184 27

Excavation Account.

	Rs.	c.
To balance on December 31, 1885	354	59
" dividend recovered from O.B.C.	85	46
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	Rs. 440	5

W. H. G. DUNCAN,
Honorary Treasurer.

Colombo, December 14, 1886.

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G.C.M.G., Governor.

Vice-Patron:

Sir CECIL C. SMITH, K.C.M.G., Lieutenant-Governor.

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The Right Rev. R. S. COPLESTON, D.D., Lord Bishop of Colombo.

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(Corrected up to December 31, 1886.)

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 De Soysa, C. H., J. P.
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 yaka, C. P., Mahá Mudaliyár.
 Dias, Wijayawardana Bandáraná-
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 mayá, P. M.
 Perera, E. F., Proctor.
 Perera, J. F., Mudaliyár.
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 Perera Wijayawickrama Senaratna,
 W. R. H., Mudaliyár.
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A P P E N D I X .

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‡3 ...	1847-48 ...	1-214 ...	With Appendix, Proceedings, April 22, 1848.

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