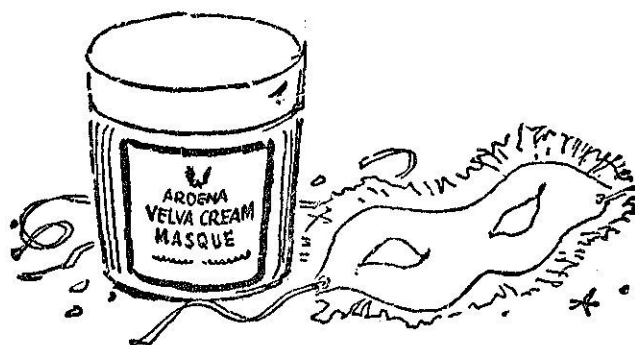


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Contributions are invited from members on subjects calculated to be of interest to the Union. MSS. must be written on one side of the paper only and must reach the Editor at least a fortnight before the date of publication of the Journal.

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Journal of the
Dutch Burgher Union of Ceylon.

VOL. L III.

JULY—OCTOBER 1963.

[Nos: 3 & 4]

OUR NEW PRESIDENT

We offer our hearty congratulations to Mr. W. J. A. van Langenberg on his election at the last Annual General Meeting, as President of the Dutch Burgher Union.

Mr. van Langenberg possesses in a remarkable degree all the qualifications needed to fill the office. Nurtured from cadet-ship, and rounding off his career as Permanent Secretary in the now defunct Ceylon Civil Service, he has acquired its many traditions which lend him an aura of authority diluted with the technique of making a point without rancour. He will surely be remembered as a stalwart of the Service, and we have little doubt, will leave the imprint of his stature during his tenure of office in carrying out the objects of the Union.

Our pleasure at having Mr. van Langenberg fill this highest office in the Union, is all the greater as in addition to his qualities of head, which will enable him to do so much for the Union, he is possessed of personal qualities of heart which endear him to all who have the privilege of his friendship.

Mr. van Langenburg is indeed fortunate in having to help him a co-worker in the person of his wife, who as is well known, has a flair for entertainment. We confidently trust that there is a brighter future in store, for the Union, with him at the head of affairs.

We cannot refrain from paying a tribute to the retiring President—Dr. Direkze. His interest in the Union prompted him to take office when clouds had gathered and dangers loomed ahead. It is unfortunate that subsequently he was called away from Colombo to take up an appointment in the Medical Service, and found himself out of touch with Union affairs and happenings.

THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS AT FOUNDER'S DAY CELEBRATIONS, 22nd October, 1963.

This is the first occasion I have had of meeting members of the Union as a group since I was appointed President, and I should like to make use of the opportunity to thank you for the confidence you have placed in me. I assure you that I will do my best to live up to it.

For various reasons which I need not enumerate, the time for preparing for today's function has been unduly short. This is perhaps one reason we forgot to put a date on the notice. Mr. Douglas Brohier, our Secretary, who has been responsible for the arrangements has been indefatigable in his labours, but he has had the assistance of a splendid band of helpers. You will note a new look about the hall and its environs and this is due to the energies of the House Committee, the members of which have not hesitated to wash, scrub and paint the hall when labour has not been available. Mr. Eric Bartholomeusz and Mr. Bill Jennings, President and Secretary, have been equally enthusiastic and have been responsible for the entertainment and refreshments. To these willing members and to those who have contributed towards the expenses your thanks and mine are due.

Now for the formal business of the day. It has been the practice in the past for the President or an eminent speaker to make a few comments on the significance of Founders Day. I have decided on this occasion to address you as President because there are a number of important issues which cannot be allowed to lapse by default and which I think should be brought to your notice.

The origins of our present compact community can be traced to the turn of the 18th century. When Britain took over Ceylon, the European employees of the Dutch East India Company were given the opportunity of leaving Ceylon or staying on. A large body opted to make Ceylon their home and created the community to which we belong. The decision was more than a social one and has had far reaching consequences. It has cut off all juridical connections with Holland and has made Ceylon our native-land.

Our community originally bore many names, for instance European descendants and Dutch inhabitants. But the one that caught on was Burgher or Dutch citizen. In spite of various endeavours to limit the word Burgher to legitimate descendants of the original group, the word Burgher acquired wider connotation and there arose the growing danger that the community would lose its identity.

It was about a hundred years after the formation of the Community. in the early years of this century, that there appeared a man of leadership, determination and vision, Mr. R. G. Anthonisz. He saw with a clear mind that the traditions and culture of the Burghers would be

swamped and lost if they did not unite into a compact identifiable body. His first job was to communicate his vision to the community at large. Mr. Willie de Rooy, that most lovable personality, unfortunately no longer with us, has told me how as a young man, he arranged for groups to meet at various homes and to discuss every aspect of the interests of the community with Mr. Anthonisz. Looking back at the records, I observe such names as Dr. W. G. Van Dort, Sir Hector Van Cuylenburg and Mr. F. C. Loos, taking a leading part in the proceedings, but those who co-operated included names of most of the families in the Union today.

In November, 1907, Mr. Anthonisz thought it time to arrange for a full-dress meeting of the Community. It was a great success and approved Mr. Anthonisz's idea. The Committee appointed to deal with the matter acted with great dispatch and the first and inaugural meeting of the Union was held in January 1908.

I need hardly repeat to you what the objects of the Union are. You will find them in our Constitution. The theme behind the aims is clear enough, to foster general unity and well being and to assist each other, so that the strength of the group might contribute to the prosperity of the individuals. Dr. Van Dort emphasized this at the inaugural meeting by referring to the need for "the Union of moral forces in the services of the poorer classes who are struggling in distress and under adverse social pressure." The Union is not only for the well to do.

All Burghers did not join the Union. A number of persons, especially members of the legal profession who had personal friends among other communities and who wielded considerable influence in local politics considered that the formation of the Union would create ill-will and barriers which in the long run would be detrimental to the Burghers. I am not constrained to attack or defend this group to which my own family belonged. But it indicated a curious phenomenon. The Burgher group which dominated local politics at that time, cut very little ice within the community itself. The same tendency may perhaps be seen today.

Since 1907, a number of changes have taken place. A building company has provided the Union with quarters; a club supplements purely social activities. More recently we have introduced the idea of Associate Members.

So much for history. But let us take stock in 1963. Where do we go from here? Do we treat the ideas of 1907 as a blue print for 1963? I think we shall find the answer to this question by examining the character and conduct of our chief founder Mr. Anthonisz. He was not satisfied with existing conditions and he did not look to the past to solve the problems of the present. He chose instead to get the Community to grapple with its problems and to solve them. That is why Mr. Anthonisz plays so small a place in the official records. He was a

modest man and for all his capacity for leadership was prepared to assume a minor role. Not everyone realizes that he was the first Secretary of the Union and that the mantle of President did not fall on him till 1915.

Following then the precedent created by Mr. Anthonisz, I propose to set before you the main problems that face the community today. I am not presenting them today for discussion but only for information, so that you may start thinking about them.

First, I should like to refer to our Club-Union activities. It is apparent from the accounts that we are running the Union at a loss. This appears to be due partly to a reduction in membership arising from migration and partly to the fact that members do not find the club attractive and patronize it less frequently than before. The problems arising out of this situation are being discussed by various Committees of the Union and will be brought up at an early date to the General Committee. Changes that are proposed will in due course come before a General Meeting. For your consideration your Treasurer Mr. Richard Arndt, has done wonderful work in preparing the data.

One fact is fairly obvious and that is that the appearance of the building, and the services provided by the Club need to be improved. We do not want our splendid building to become a historical monument of the past. As a first step we are trying to improve this hall and to add to our income by letting it to the general public. I hope that members will not mind my appealing to them to assist the House Committee by making contributions of such items as spoons, plates, duster towels, vases, pictures and similar items. The Chairman of the House Committee will be making a personal and individual appeal today and I request a generous response.

Secondly I refer to the subject of migration. The Union is concerned with Dutch Burghers who remain in Ceylon, not with those who leave its shores. Nevertheless the impact of migration on the Union is considerable and a general study of its operation will be most valuable. Moreover the social causes need to be examined. It is better I suppose that Burghers leave Ceylon than become labourers and hewers of wood who cannot live up to the standards that Burghers have observed in the past. I remind you of the Union. It should not be said that the Union stood by, while the Community gradually degenerated to the status of manual labourers. This problem is not one to be solved quickly over night, in spite of the excellent work done by the Social Service Committee. But I hope to have a fact finding Committee to report on the situation.

Thirdly there is the question of Education. The Community has asked for an education of its children in English and by and large this is now available. But the Union as such has no precise information of the problems of finding places in schools and the cost of education except in

particular cases which come before the hardworking Education Committee. Moreover how far are we satisfied that the present system of education for Burghers is conducive to the getting of employment in Ceylon? We need very badly a bureau to give advice to parents. I have a feeling that our present form of education is more suitable for those who wish to go to Australia than those who wish to stay in Ceylon, and perhaps encourages migration. However that may be, what we want is up to date and expert information for parents. I am sure that this will also be very useful to Mr. Rex Poulier in his activities in Parliament.

Fourthly I should like to draw attention to the importance of making our youth Union conscious. We have to face the fact that young people today like to be independent and do not wish to trail behind their elders. This is good and to be commended. A group of members including your past President Dr. Herbert Dirckze, Mr. Leslie de Kretser and Mr. Bill Jennings have taken a great interest in the youth movement and have helped the Comrades to become a successful club within a club. I think you will agree that this movement is to be supported to the full, and that our children should feel that this building is their home as well as ours. Moreover they will add joy and gaiety to a hall which is usually employed for more serious occupations. Here is something achieved already and I think it is a matter for congratulations. All we need to do is to consolidate what has been done and to ensure that the young members of the Comrades join the Union as soon as they are able to. Let them not be nervous to do so. The Union needs youth to keep it alive and to make it move with the times.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have indicated our problems but I am not a prophet of gloom. Our founder Mr. Anthonisz, saw the problems of his day but he never doubted the ability of his people to surmount them. Let us then move forward like Mr. Anthonisz, not looking for remedies of the distant past, but looking ahead in unity and fellowship to remedy defects in, and to bring improvements to the Union and the Community which makes its members. So far the response of groups I have approached has been most helpful and heartening. I have no doubt that I can count on similar assistance from all the wise and practical men of the Community.

I thank you for your patient hearing.

HISTORICAL LINKS BETWEEN THE NETHERLANDS AND CEYLON

By R. L. Brohier, D. Litt. (Ceylon)

(Originally printed in "The Netherlands", a monthly Bulletin
published by The Royal Netherlands Legation, Colombo)

It has been said of the man who lives behind a dike, that he is like a mountaineer; he climbs on top to scout for a wider horizon. If the other side is water, he is driven to explore it, especially if his little bit of soil offer only limited possibilities for self-sufficiency. That perhaps is why the enterprising Netherlands took to water at the end of the 16th century, and went down to the sea in ships. They travelled far away from their homeland, under strange stars.

In the year 1595, Cornelius Houtman flying the flag of Holland, conducted the first fleet of free merchantmen of the "Company for Distant Lands", round the Cape of Good Hope. One of these ships: the *Leeuw*, on the homeward journey called at *Matecalo* (Batticaloa) for provisioning. This proves that the first Dutch visit to Ceylon was pre-arranged, and not accidental. Seven years later, on the 30th of May, the "La Brebis", commanded by Admiral Spilbergen, dropped anchor in an east coast bay, south of Batticaloa.

At that time the coastal plain of Ceylon was over-run by the troops of Portugal. Under the guns of their harbour forts, the produce of the Island was collected and loaded into Portuguese ships. The legitimate sovereign of the realm meanwhile made feeble resistance from behind the lofty rampart of mountain-ranges which separated the maritime districts from the central hill-country.

Gaining the sympathy of a Sinhalese chieftain of Batticaloa, Spilberg was able to present his credentials from the Prince of Orange personally to Wimala Dharma the accredited sovereign at the time. It contained an offer of alliance both offensive and defensive. The king detained Spilberg at Kandy, till the approach of the monsoon, warned the admiral to return to his ship. When the admiral sailed away, he carried unsolicited permission for the Dutch to erect a fort in any part of the king's dominion. Immediately after the new Fort was erected at Cottair, off Trincomalie, in 1612, it was surprised and destroyed by a Portuguese force.

There followed three decades of cold-war or strategy, as they called it in those spacious times when under heat and burden, Empires were in the building. In that period, three kings had occupied the Kandyan throne. It was the last of them, Rajasingha II, who in perplexity turned to the Dutch at Batavia, and tendering friendship, offered active co-operation if they settle in Ceylon. The invitation was promptly accepted

and in 1638, Admiral Westerwold appeared with his promised fleet in the waters of Ceylon. Batticaloa was taken by the Hollanders in 1638, Trincomalie was occupied and garrisoned in 1639, and in that same year, Negombo, Matara and Galle were occupied,

The fascinating story of the ding-dong struggle for position in the next twenty-years—the diplomacy, drama, tragedy: call it what you will, which eventually left the Dutch virtual masters of the seaboard and the low-lands of Ceylon, is a gift to posterity by two historians from opposite sides.

The Portuguese historian Ribeyro, served as a soldier in the army; Baldaeus, the Netherlands writer was a Chaplain to the forces of Holland. They graphically describe how both powers strove to consolidate themselves, sometimes losing, sometimes gaining, until on the arrival of Director General Hulft in 1655, the fortune of war took a decided turn.

General Hulft's advance was made from Galle with the intention of reducing the fortress at Colombo. In an effort to hold Colombo, the Portuguese lost their fort at Kalutara, and found Colombo besieged. Though heroically defended by them for seven months, Colombo capitulated on the 12th of May, 1656, and the Orange flag was raised on the siege-scarred battlements of the fortress. It took two more years before the Portuguese stronghold at Mannar was captured, whereupon Jaffna capitulated on the terms that the garrison would be transported to Europe and the ecclesiastics to the neighbouring Coromandel coast.

The dominion which Holland had acquired over coastal Ceylon however proved to be an inheritance of ill-will. Rajasinghe, their Kandyan ally had in his eagerness to get rid of the Portuguese promised more than he could perform. Holland took advantage of it. Whereas the Kandyan king contended that he had been swindled out of his territory, the Hollanders said: "Meet the charges of the war and we will evacuate the forts when you please". It may well be that Van Dieman, who wrote as much to the king on the 26th of September, 1640, would not have been so free in his offers had he not been certain the king could not meet their claims!

Howbeit, while the Dutch showed no lust for further conquest, and Rajasinghe soured in mind, secluded himself within the zone of his impenetrable mountains; the merchants of Holland applied themselves to secure the utmost amount of profit from their victory. The lure of the East was its spices. Ceylon offered cinnamon of the best, nutmeg, pepper, cardamoms and cloves. The western coastal areas where these commodities chiefly grew, were guarded as the gem of the Island: "*een kostelyk juweel van compagnies*".

Shielded by a military policy which was purely precautionary and defensive, the Hollander turned attention to promoting an agriculture identified with that which the peasant in the coastal belt was used to

The cultivation of rice was encouraged by every means—the old irrigation reservoirs which had gone to decay were repaired, and new schemes for irrigating the land were planned and undertaken. Groves of cocoanut came to be grown principally along the western and southern coasts and this provided an impetus to the distillation of arrack. Correspondingly, trade at Galle and Colombo proceeded apace. Cinnamon-oil, spices were sent to Amsterdam; timber and arrack to Batavia. Other cargoes which included elephants and arecanuts, “black sugar” extracted from the Palmyra and Kitul palm trees, Choya-roots for dyeing, and salt, were loaded for shipment to Mocha, Malabar and Coromandel. Persia, India and the Moluccas—but only from Government Stores, trade in private hands either in exports or imports being rigidly prohibited.

Despite all these efforts, from the commencement to the conclusion of Dutch dominion, Ceylon was not productive of any considerable gain. In fact, latterly it involved an annual loss. Van Imhoff in 1740 contrasting the magnitude of the anticipations heralded, with the meagre results obtained, linked Ceylon to “the costly tulips of Holland bought at fabulous price, yet in reality without any intrinsic value”. However, a bigger price had yet to be paid for Holland’s dominion in Ceylon.

The Supreme Government at Batavia had all along urged the maintenance of peace with the Kandyan monarch—at all costs. Baron van Eck who arrived in Colombo as Governor in 1762, was however so provoked that he was roused to retaliation. With unwanted vigour and zeal he mustered an expeditionary force at Negombo, and personally taking command of it led his troops to the lofty fastness in the hills. Following the tortuous route which rounded the spurs and skirted the precipices of the Galagedera and Balakaduwa passes, the force reached Katugastota on the 15th February; Kandy was occupied four days later—the king having retreated to his strong-hold off Honguranketa.

Although easily captured at great cost both in money and human life, the Dutch (like the Portuguese before them) found Kandy dangerous to hold. After a struggle which lasted for nine months they abandoned the Kandyan capital and withdrew what remained of their army to the coastal belt.

Four years later the succeeding Dutch Governor : Willem Falck, by judicious management terminated the protracted struggle and by treaty secured for the Dutch absolute possession of three times as much territory as they had before in the maritime plains, together with the adjustment of favourable conditions for trade.

Despite these many dissensions there are links in the historical story of the Netherlands and Ceylon which are indicative of more generous impulses. Professor Thorold Rogers, the author of “Holland” in ‘The Story of the Nations’ series, says of the Dutch : “The debt which civilization and liberty owe to these people is greater than that which is due to any other race—however little it may be known and

acknowledgedthey made mistakes, but they were fewer than their neighbours made. The benefits they conferred were incomparably greater than the errors which they committed”. A generous tribute indeed, coming as it does from a scholar trained to sift the value of historical evidence.

The earnest toil of their traders to extract the utmost amount of profit and entrench their trading monopolies, is one of the principal charges laid against the Dutch in Ceylon. Yet, there are grounds for confidently saying that they also imported their native institutions, and generally looked after the people of the country with a kindness and moderation which made their colonial administration famous. History bears out that they were singularly free from colour prejudice. Froude, in his “Oceana” says : “Better colonists, or more successful did not exist than the Dutch”.

Their “placaats” or enactments in the Dutch archives at Colombo, bear testimony to their propagandism in the interests of legislation, while an yet more abiding memorial to Dutch utilitarian genius is the Roman-Dutch law adopted for their “Raad van Justice”. It still prevails in the Supreme Court of Judicature of the Island. The codification of the customary laws of the Tamils in to the Thesawalamai, to this day observed as a law on matters of inheritance and mortgage, is a tribute to their knowledge of the customs in the Tamil provinces in their domain.

Much can be said of the pursuits of the Hollander in Ceylon other than the satire that they devoted themselves only to collecting cinnamon and spices. The canals they constructed in considerable numbers to facilitate transport survive to this day. They were even the first to introduce trade unionism; for as early as 1658 they had Bakers, Butcher’s, and Tailors’ Guilds. Their educational system which provided for compulsory attendance and free vernacular tuition, and for Seminaries where the learned languages among other things were taught, was one of their greatest contributions to the wider horizons they brought to Ceylon. But—we must hurry to the end of this story.

And so we move to the later half of the 18th century. The British East India Company had by then an extensive Eastern trade. The advantages which Holland derived from the possession of the harbour at Trincomalie was too evident to be overlooked. Something had to be done to eliminate their one formidable rival who competed for the commerce of the Indian Seas.

The initial move of the British East India Company to secure a footing in Ceylon was taken in 1763, when John Pybus, a member of the Madras Government arrived at the Court at Kandy and proposed an amicable treaty to king Kirti Sri Raja Sinha. The overture was favourably received, but subsequent neglect to carry out Pybus’ promises defeated the intention of the embassy.

Two decades later Holland found herself at war with Great Britain. Trincomalie was stormed and garrisoned by the British on the 2nd of January, 1782, and Hugh Boyd was hurriedly sent to Kandy to bring about a treaty with the Kandyan king and also to solicit his co-operation against the Dutch. The king declined to negotiate with Boyd, who on his return to Trincomalie found to his surprise the French colours flying from the battlements.

France occupied Trincomalie for nearly a year. It reverted to Holland once again in a curiously round-about fashion—being first ceded by France to Great Britain, and next by Great Britain to Holland on declaration of peace. This inglorious peace was shattered before a decade and two years had passed.

In 1793, the armies of the French Republic were involved in war against England and the Netherlands. The French were known to be using their vantage at the juncture to fulfil their cherished scheme for taking over the Dutch Colonies of the Cape, Java and Ceylon. On the other hand, it may justifiably be assumed that Great Britain was aware of the opportunity the situation afforded for annexing Ceylon. Emphasising her friendly relations with William V. Prince of Orange, who was an exile in England, Great Britain persuaded the erstwhile Stadtholder to empower the authorities in the Dutch Colonies to avail themselves of the protection His Britannic Majesty was desirous of holding out to the Dutch.

It so happened that on the 25th July 1795. van Angelbeek—the 60 year old Dutch Governor of Ceylon received the following bewildering communication from the authorities at Fort St. George, in Madras :—

Noble and most Honoured Confidante, Our trusty and Well Beloved.

We have deemed it necessary to address you this communication and to require you to admit into Trincomalie and elsewhere in the Colony under your rule the troops of His Majesty the King of Great Britain which will proceed there, and also to admit into the harbours of such other places where ships might safely anchor the warships, frigates and armed vessels which will be despatched on behalf of His Majesty of Great Britain : and you are to consider them as troops and ships belonging to a power that is in friendship and alliance with their High Mightinesses, and who come to prevent the Colony from being invaded by the French,

Wherefore, Noble and Most Honoured Confidante, our trusty and Well-beloved, we commit you to God's Holy protection, and remain.

Your Well-wishing friend,

W. Pr. of ORANGE.

Kew 7th February 1795.

Five days after the Dutch Governor received the communication an expedition fitted out by Lord Hobart, the British Governor at Madras, arrived off Trincomalie. The fortress offered resistance, but surrendered after a short siege of three weeks. Jaffna surrendered the following month and Kalpitiya (Calpentyn) on the 5th of November. Colombo capitulated on the 16th of February the following year, and the fortress of Galle was handed over a week later—in every instance without resistance.

Thus, with the passing over of a domain which formed a belt round the Island extending in some places not more than six, in others thirty, and on the northern side sixty miles into the interior, there was broken the historical link between the Netherlands and Ceylon which had held fast for nearly 150 years.

THE GOOD OLD DAYS—V

How to become an Ambassador

By BAAS KEUVELAAR

Jan Roskammer of Amsterdam acquired his love for horses from the fact of his having been, as a youth, the *jagertje to a trekschuit*[†] in Holland. The stivers he earned as such did not give much promise of future wealth, and so when the *zielverkoop* or recruiting sergeant asked him whether he would like to enter the service of the Hon'ble Dutch East India Company as a *soldaat*, he at once jumped at the offer. He set sail from Texel in the good ship "Het Hof van Hollandt" for the Kamer Amsterdam and in due course arrived at Colombo, was paraded before the General and posted to his bastion, the name of which I forget. He had not been in Ceylon three years before he was raised to the rank of a corporal, when he married Sara Blaauwkousen, the daughter of David Blaauwkousen and Helena Jansz. David Blaauwkousen was school-meester sergeant to the Dutch forces at Negombo. It was quite a good move this on the part of Jan, as it gave him the opportunity of perfecting himself in literary Dutch under the guidance of his father-in-law and getting rid of the jargon spoken by people of his class in Amsterdam.

Some years afterwards, when Jan Roskammer was holding the rank of a sergeant, there was to be sent an embassy to the King of Kandy. These embassies were not much of a "catch" in these days as the King had a playful way of detaining the ambassadors and their suite at Kandy for years on the flimsiest of pretexts. For this reason few Dutchmen of any residence in the country volunteered their services in these embassies and the King was very wroth if other than his "beloved Dutch" took part in these expeditions. But some Portuguese and Sinhalese were always included in these missions as interpreters, as the Kings of Kandy were not good Dutch scholars. But there were always many adventurous spirits among the new arrivals from Holland, who in expectation of a "good time", were most eager to go up to Kandy. Jan had heard that among the presents to be sent up to Kandy were two Persian horses richly caprisoned, and this fact was quite enough for him. He offered his services as ambassador and was accepted by the Government.

But there was a little difficulty. Mrs. Roskammer would not hear of it. It was horrible to think of Jan being exposed to the dangers and temptations of a heathen court with its lax social manners and horrid native customs. She was a church-worker and taught the little heathens qualifying for admission into the church, the tenets of the Christian religion. But Jan had a brilliant idea. He had heard that the Dutch were at the time in bad odour with the King, as, at the last embassy, the letter from His Excellency the Governor was not wrapped in a proper silk cloth. He knew therefore that the embassy would not be received

by His Majesty, that they would be left waiting at the confines of Kandy for months, with the result that all the animals intended as presents would be starved to death, and that, if he could only manage to save the horses, he would find no difficulty in inducing the Governor to give them to him. They would then be "carriage-people," and Sara could then look down with scorn upon her cousin Augusta de Snoever (the daughter of Hendrik de Snoever and Maria Jansz) who was engaged to be married to Hans de Ruiter, *stalmeester*[†] to the Governor at Colombo. This had only to be mentioned to Sara to obtain her unqualified assent to Jan being the ambassador—the *Heer gezant* as he was afterwards called by his admiring friends. One would have thought that Sara, with her religious upbringing and gentle manners would have been above entertaining any desire to scorn her cousin, but her old *toepas ayah* was always dinning into her ears, in the local Portuguese patois, that Augusta and her parents were *muito falsidade gentes*—very envious people.

As expected by Jan, when they reached the confines of Kandy, one of the King's courtiers came to inform him that the embassy was to remain where they were for a week. It was raining heavily and it was all they could do to find habitable quarters for themselves. In the meantime intelligence was received by Jan from Kandy that the King was in one of his murderous moods. He had put to death some of his courtiers on suspicion of a conspiracy to poison him. At the end of the week the King sent word to say that he would not receive the embassy as the ambassador was only a sergeant and therefore not a "qualified" person. It goes without saying that the embassy lost no time in starting on their return journey. After a weary trudge they reached Colombo more dead than alive. The animals they had taken up had all died of starvation, save one Persian horse, which was all that Jan could save and which arrived at Colombo—a veritable bag of bones. Jan duly forwarded his Report to the Governor. It is to be found in the Dutch Archives and the curious reader is referred to it for full details. Of course it was duly revised and corrected by David Blaauwkousen before it was sent in.

Jan found no difficulty in getting the Governor to present him with the Persian horse, and having obtained an old palankeen from one of the *walauwas*, he converted it into a carriage. Coir rope being plentiful and easily procurable as harness, Jan and his wife fructified into "carriage people", were often seen driving about the streets of Colombo to the evident envy of the de Snoevers and the de Ruiters, and the amusement of the Society folk.

The Persian horse however did not survive very long to add to the grandeur of the Roskammer. Jan's equipage was sent to Negombo to fetch the sergeant schoolmaster and his wife for Augusta's wedding at the city church of Colombo. Jan's parents-in-law, not being feather weights, the poor horse, although it brought them to Colombo in time for the wedding, sickened and died the next day.

[†] i.e., in charge of a horse-towed barge.

[†] Equerry.

When the Governor received Jan's report, he was very angry with His Majesty of Kandy, and wrote to the King complaining of the treatment accorded to his ambassador. The King, who was inclined to "climb down", granted to Jan, as compensation for the insult, a village in the Kandyan district close to the Company's lands, together with the monopoly of supplying Kandyan produce to the Dutch at Colombo. This being a profitable concession, Jan resigned the Company's service and became a *vrijburger* and *vrijkoopman*.[†] Needless to say that he was soon a rich man, so much so that he at the instance of his wife sent his son Godfried to the University of Leyden, at his own expense, to prepare him for the ministry. His name is inscribed in the Album Studiosorum as Godfriedus Roskammerus, Ceiloniensis.

Jan acquired such influence over the King of Kandy that he was often commissioned to proceed to the Kandyan court to intercede on behalf of the detenus there who were Company's Servants. Being a man of great resource, he often had resort to ingenious subterfuges to get these detenus out of their difficulties.

On one occasion it was reported that a German soldaat, Hans Breitmann of Berlin, a Company's Servant, was to be thrown by the elephant for having spoken disparagingly of the King's country. Jan of course was requisitioned to go up to Kandy and see what he could do for the unfortunate man. He ascertained that the word used by Breitmann were vassa ratte (bad country). A brilliant idea struck Jan. He went up to the King of Kandy and told him in the local Portuguese. "*Isle mafino nuve de casta Hollandeza, mas um Germanico, e a palavra que elle ja usa tem "wasser ratte," en sua lingua rato de agua.*" (This fool is not a Dutchman but a German, and the word used by him was *Wasser ratte*, which means in his language a water rat). He also said (and this was not true) that some of his dealers were present at the time when the words were uttered and that they noticed a water-rat running into the lake at the time. The King who was in a very cheerful mood (his second wife having the night before presented him with an heir to the throne) was quite amused at the mistake, related the funny incident to his queen, set Breitmann free, and allowed him to return to Colombo with Jan. The incident was the talk of Colombo for months and a little brochure was published about it by a newly-arrived cadet entitled "*Een Mof gered of een Heer gezant*" (A German Saved or A Crafty Ambassador). It is believed that there is only one copy of this curious pamphlet left and it is in the British Museum. Hans Breitmann, of course, came in for a lot of chaff by his comrades in the barrack-room. He swore that he would *nimmer** go up to the Kandyan court again.

Jan was getting old and his thoughts turned to *het lieve Vaderland*.[‡] He converted his property into money and repatriated with his wife, taking Hans Breitmann with him as his valet.

† i.e. Free citizen and merchant

* never

‡ The beloved Father Land

He settled at Amsterdam, his native city, and his "yarns" about Ceylon were listened to with much interest by the stay-at-home people there.

Hans Breitmann was right glad to get back to Berlin and nothing had been heard about him for some time. The Revd. Godfried Roskammer often used to visit his aged parents at Amsterdam. He eventually succeeded to the paternal estate, resigned the ministry and became a Director of the Dutch East India Company. He had quite lost touch with Ceylon although the de Snoevers and the de Ruiters were still flourishing here, Hans de Snoever and Hendrick de Ruiter having left numerous descendants to swell the ranks of the Dutch Burgher Union.

Hans Breitmann on his return to Berlin had taken a copy of the brochure with him. It was promptly translated into German and sold in all the bookstalls of that city under the title of "*Ein glucklicher Berliner oder ein Raja betrogen*" (A lucky Berliner, or a Raja deceived.) A well-known play-wright dramatized it, Breitmann giving the details as to the costume of Raja and his courtiers and the structural features and internal arrangements of the Kandyan court. The play was staged with great success, many Dutchmen (who knew Sinhalese) and many Portuguese taking part in it. They had on the stage even a stuffed elephant with malevolent eyes and the figure of the mahout executioner perched on its back.

About a century after these events, a German professor came out to Ceylon to find out the true history of the lucky Berliner. Such was the apathy of the descendants of the de Snoevers and the de Ruiters that they had not heard of the slimness of Jan Roskammer. The Dutch records however supplied the necessary information and investigation led to a correspondence between the Roskammer in Holland and the de Snoevers and de Ruiters of Ceylon reviving past traditional memories and establishing the connection between themselves. Needless to say that many of the Roskammers applied for membership of the Union and no one has dared to question their eligibility. The de Snoevers and the de Ruiters have caused certified copies of the record of events to be printed in book-form, and published in the Journals of the Union in reminiscence of one of the funny things that took place in Ceylon in the Good Old Days.

SINHALESE CHRISTIAN LITERATURE OF THE XVIIth AND XVIIIth CENTURIES

BY

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The first organised attempt to preach Christianity in Ceylon, took place about the middle of the XVth century, first by the Franciscans then by the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, who were soon joined by the Augustinians and the Dominicans. We know that the foremost item in the equipment of a Missionary, as Pope Benedict XV said, is a knowledge of the language of the people. But it is easy enough now a days for a new-comer to learn the languages of a missionary country; but in those pioneer days there were no books and the Christian missionaries had to learn Sinhalese and Tamil by the slow and painful direct method. Among the early missionaries there were not a few whose culture and spirit of critical study and scientific research, enable them to attempt to master the vernaculars.

In India, where missionary work began much earlier than in Ceylon, the Catholic Missionaries made scientific inquiry into the history and literature of the country. De Nobili and Beschi, both Priests of the Society of Jesus, are to this day great names in Tamil literature (Caldwell, pp. 149 etc.; Smith, *Conversion of India*, p. 69). Their work as pioneers in Sanscrit studies and the learned contributions made by their brother missionaries, towards a critical appreciation of the ancient culture of India and the advancement of the Sanscrit vernaculars, have been repeatedly acknowledged by such scholars as Max Muller (*Lectures*, pp. 167 etc.) Benfey (*Geschichte* pp. 334 etc.) and Franz von Schlegel (*Sammlinge*, p. 227). In fact, the Asiatic Society of Bengal did but "take up the clue where it had been dropped by the Roman Catholic Missionaries." (*Journal*, A.S. Bengal, 1893 p. 50).

In Ceylon, as far as we can gather from the scanty information hitherto available, the contribution made by the Catholic Missionaries of the XVIIth century, to oriental studies, was not so impressive as in India, except in the field of history. For one thing, Ceylon is a small country; for another, a time of wars and strifes was too unpropitious for literary pursuits. But, an honest effort was made to study the languages of the land and to promote instruction through the vernaculars. As is to be expected, the Missionaries directed their attention, in the first place, towards the production of religious works that would instruct and edify their converts, and grammars and word-books for the use of the Missionaries,

About the year 1545 the Jesuit Fathers of the College of St. Paul in Goa composed a book of Christian doctrine, for the use of the two Sinhalese princes and the noblemen of Kotte who had fled with them to Goa as a result of the great domestic discord which arose from Bhuvaneka Bāhu's attempt to place his grandson on the throne of Kotte. The work was evidently written with the collaboration of the Sinhalese gentlemen themselves (Juan de Beira, 15 Nov. 1545).

In 1610 the Jesuit Missionary of Malvāna, who is said to have been well versed in Sinhalese, translated with the help of an old Sinhalese pandit of 70 years, a Catechism, 26 Lives of the Saints, the Passion of Our Lord, the explanation of the seven Sacraments, some prayers and many other things useful to the Christians. He also trained school children to chant canticles and prayers in Sinhalese (Pedro Francisco, 2 Dec., 1612; Franc. Cagnola 9 Dec., 1610). At that time Malvāna was the head-quarters of the Portuguese Captain-general. Besides ministering to the household of the General, the Priests there were entrusted with the task of investigating into the antiquities of Ceylon and had to keep a record of the principal events of the Portuguese regime in the island. He had special opportunities for learning Sinhalese and new Missionaries were sent to him for instruction in the vernacular. There was a school where the children were taught their own language, and classes of Christian doctrine were given in the church, to the Sinhalese "in their mother tongue" and to others in Portuguese (Gomez, 29 Dec., 1606; Cagnola, loc. cit.).

Father Emmanuel de Costa, a Ceylon born Portuguese, is credited with the first Sinhalese grammar composed in a foreign tongue. He studied at the Jesuit College of Colombo, was ordained Priest in 1620 and died six years later in the prime of manhood. His work was entitled, *Ars Chingalensis Linguae*; it was never printed, but used obviously by his fellow Missionaries (*Litt. Ann.* 1626). Copies of this work are not known to exist. But we are more fortunate about another work on Sinhalese grammar, which was composed by Fr. Pierre Berguin, a French Jesuit and Missionary first in Cochinchina and afterwards in Ceylon. According to Ferguson: "The original MS. is probably in the Library of the Propaganda in Rome; but copies exist in the Libraries of the University of Jena and the Berlin Academy. The title of the work in the Jena MS, is as follows: 'Arte e grammatica da Lingoa Chingala Para a ousa e servico das Ogregias e Christianidades de Ceilao. Composta no anno 1645. Pelo Padre Pierre Bergoim. Ad majorem Dei Gloriam'. The work is divided into three parts, the first containing 6 chapters, the second 15, and the third 5 (*CLR. Vol.*, iv, No. 8, p. 62, note). There are other Priests described in the historical records of the Society of Jesus, as proficient in the Sinhalese language, though they are not honoured with the authorship of any literary work. Three of them deserve special mention here, as they were respected and loved by the people for their holiness of life and for their acquaintance with the language of the country. They were Fr. Anthonius de Pedrosa, a military chaplain in the Kandyan districts,

and Frs. Luis Mattheus Pelingotti and Johannes Metalla, missionaries in Macadura and Metiyagana, both of whom were killed for the Holy Faith (C.A.L.R. Vol. v, p. 129; Vol. ii, p. 77). About the same period there lived in the South of Ceylon, a Franciscan Missionary, named Antonio Peixoto, who had mastered the Sinhalese language to such an extent as to be able to compose poetry and drama that called for much admiration among the people. His many canticles on the Passion of Our Lord were set to plaintive tunes and sung in the churches, to the great edification of the Christians. To him were sent new Franciscan missionaries to be instructed in the Sinhalese language. Mention will be made later about his dramatic works (*Conquista Spiritual do Oriente*, MS. 1626, Fol. 800—823).

With the exception of Fr. Berguin's grammar, not one of the other Sinhalese works of the Catholic Missionaries of the XVIIth century is now known to exist; most probably they perished in the fatality that befell the Portuguese power in Ceylon.

There is a remarkable literary production of this period by a Christian convert, no less a person than the great Alagiyawanna, the last of our classical poets and the author of the *Subhasita*, the *Dahamsonda Kava*, the *Kusa dā Kava* and the *Sevul Sandesa*. The work alluded to is the *Kustantīnu Hatana*, written by the poet about the year 1620, eight years after his conversion to Christianity, to celebrate the victory of his benefactor, Constantine de Sa, over the rebel Antonio Barreto. Details about its author and its literary merits are supplied in the critical edition of the poem by Fr. S. G. Perera, S. J. and Mr. M. E. Fernando. The poem should have an important place in our literature. For one thing, it is the earliest specimen we possess of a *Hatana* poem in our language; the other war poems, like *Ankota Hatana*, *Parangi Hatana*, *Maha Hatana*, *Ingrisi Hatana*, *Waduge Hatana* or *Ehelepolo Hatana*, were composed later. It is, moreover, a splendid attempt at a synthesis between Sinhalese poetic diction and a definite Christian outlook. The Hindu classical and mythological allusions, considered so important in Oriental poetry, are retained in this poem, in the same spirit as any Christian writer of Europe would use Greek and Latin mythological allusions to adorn his diction. In later years Father Goncalvez used them in his prose and poetry, and before him Father Beschi, the author of the Tamil Christian classic, the *Tempāvani*, made free use of the literary devices of the *Chintāmani*, *Kūral*, the *Ramayānam* and the *Nāladīyār*. Such terms, therefore, as *sat sindu*, *sat Kula* (Kust. *Hatana*. vss. 78, 90, 97, 171), *tipura* (vs. 146), *maha mera*, *rang giri* (vss. 21, 48, 49, 78, 168) *yugata*, *yuga kela handa* (vss. 56, 145, 171), *aturu kapa* (vs. 7), *anata urgindu* (vss. 47, 121), and *garuda* (vss. 61, 174), or references to deities like *Brahama* (vss. 7, 149), *Isvara* (vss. 18, 131, 146), *Skanda*, *Upendra* (vs. 80), *Sakra* (vss. 38, 72, 87, 110, 151), *Visnu* (vss. 81, 127, 139, 182), *Vināyaka* (vs. 121), *Ananga* (vs. 108), *Rāvana* (vss. 101, 175), *Asura* (vss. 18, 184), and *Rākṣasa* (vss. 24, 170, 176), do not mar the Christian

flavour of the poem: It is, on the other hand, stressed by the ascription of worship, which, here, is not to the *tun ruvan* but to the Holy Trinity, Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Mother, Mary; the final invocation is in the same devout strain, (vss. 1—3, 186—188). The hero is praised for his reverence to God and Jesus Christ (vss. 57, 60, 83, 124). In fact, the poem foreshadowed great possibilities for Sinhalese Christian literature; but the change of Government disturbed the sources that might have produced it. Alagiyawanna's work, the works of the Jesuit Fathers and of Friar Peixoto, were more or less contemporary, from 1610 to 1630. Of the subsequent literary activities nothing is known, because the great political upheavals that finally brought about the downfall of the Portuguese, began at this time.

In 1658 the Portuguese power in Ceylon came to an end and the Dutch became masters in their stead. It was the settled policy of the new Government to promote in every way 'the Reformed Christian religion' (Instructions 1655—1665, p. 2). For this purpose, a *Kerkraad* or Consistory was established at Colombo, Galle and Jaffna. All the European clergymen of the town, together with two or three lay elders and 6 deacons, were members of the board, but not the proponents and Ceylonese subordinate preachers (J.C.B.R.A.S. No. 2, p. 139). They were much exercised over the suppression of 'Popery' and heathenism. The schools, which were considered a powerful means for the propagation of the reformed religion, were supervised by the *Scholarcha*. Commission, composed of the *Dissava* or Collector of Colombo, all the clergy of the town and three or four officers, Civil and Military, all nominated by the Governor. Similar boards existed in Galle and Jaffna. They not only visited the schools but took cognizance of all matters referring to Ceylonese marriages, and appointed schoolmasters and *tombo* holders, and even inflicted fines, according to the directions of Government, on all persons who neglected to attend school on week days and divine service on Sundays. (ib. pp. 106 etc.). There were Dutch schools for Europeans and Vernacular schools for Ceylonese children, where the catechism and prayers were taught as well as the elements of reading and writing in the vernacular. The Dutch clergy in Ceylon stressed the need of men who could deal with the people in their own language; and requested the *Classis* of Holland to send out young Ministers capable of acquiring the requisite knowledge of the languages. (ib. No. 3, pp. 8, 18). All clergymen were instructed by Government to learn the Vernaculars. (Minutes, 1668, March—April. A Seminary was established in Jaffna in 1690 and in Colombo in 1696, to provide for higher education, the potent charm that would open the portals for ecclesiastical and civil preferment. Besides theology, Greek, Latin and Dutch, the course of studies included Sinhalese or Tamil, for which special teachers were employed. (Zwaardecroon, p. 51 & 58; Van Rhee, pp. 51). The vernacular schools indirectly and the Seminary directly contributed to the production of Sinhalese Christian literature under the Dutch Government.

Among the Dutch ministers in Ceylon, the two who attained distinction early as Sinhalese scholars, were Simon Cat and Johannes

Rüell. Cat was sent to Ceylon in 1668; he had been chaplain on board a fleet and proved himself an energetic worker during his residence here. His knowledge of Sinhalese was in advance of his contemporaries, and at the establishment of the Colombo Seminary he was appointed its Rector by the Batavian Government, though the local Government set it aside owing to his advanced age. But he worked diligently, "day and night" as we are told, at producing Sinhalese books for the use of the Seminary. He prepared a Sinhalese dictionary and translated a part of the Gospel of St. Mathew. His version of the Acts of the Apostles in Sinhalese, done with the help of interpreters, was revised and printed in 1771 by Johan Joachim Fybrands and Henricus Philipsz. In a letter to the XVII Representatives, dated 1697, we are told: "If it should please the Almighty to remove by death S. Cat and J. Rüell, no one would be left to do anything for the good of Christianity in Ceylon." (J.C.B.R.A.S. No. 3, pp. 11, 36, 40, 41). Rüell too was a diligent scholar and his first Sinhalese sermon on October 14, 1696, was considered worth recording. In his day he was esteemed the greatest Sinhalese scholar, an epithet which was later applied to Rev. Conyn as well. (ib. pp. 37, 40, 41, 44, 57). He is the author of the first grammar of the Sinhalese language composed under the Dutch. (ib. p. 57). There is a copy of this work in the British Museum (B.M. 622, i); it bears on its inner cover the coat-of-arms of Governor North. The title is as follows:

GRAMMATICA OF SINGALEESCHE TAAL-KUNST synde
Een korte methode om de voornaamst Fondamenten van de
Singaleesche Spraak te leeren. Door JOANNES RUELL,
Bedienaar des Goddelyken woords, en Rector van het Singaleesche
kweekschool tot Colombo op het Eiland Ceylon. T'Amsterdam.
By Francois HALMA. Boekverkoper. MDCCVIII. 8vo.
VI + 179 pp.

The text is in Dutch and the examples generally in Sinhalese characters. An English translation of the Introduction is given in Alwis' Sidatsangarāwa (pp. ccxix¹—ccxxi) together with a specimen page (p. cclxviii). The grammar is comprised in 14 chapters, which deal with the Sinhalese characters, spelling, parts of speech, nouns, pronouns, verbs, active and passive, adjectives and their degrees of comparison, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, interjections and syntax, which is summed up in all short rules. The last lap treats of numerals up to 1,000, written in the old Sinhalese ciphers, and the names of the months. Here are a few examples of the rules of syntax:

Rule 2: When two substantive nouns signifying different things are brought into relation with one another then the second is placed in the genitive as in Dutch, but in Sinhalese the word in the genitive always precedes the other, as: අද්දිසන්ගේ යහපත් කම, ලංකාවේ රජ්ජරුවෝ.

Rule 4: "To show by what a thing is of such quality, the word showing the cause so to say, is placed first, sometimes in the dative followed by the particle වෙහෙව or otherwise in the ablative, as: කිසිකමට වෙහෙව සෙසෙන්නෙහි, අද්දිලිලෙන් සෑදුරුණි. As a grammar of

the Sinhalese language it is of little value to us; but it contains some grammatical curiosities, at times bewildering, which should engage the attention of students of the history of our language. Any way Ruell's labour of love was so much appreciated by his countrymen, that they made for it the first Sinhalese types, in Amsterdam. The next Sinhalese grammar to be printed was composed by Rev. Henricus Philipsz, and printed in 1783 in the Colombo Printing Press. He was the son of Van Gollenesse's trusted Maha Mudaliyar, Panditaratna; and after his early education in the Colombo Seminary, was sent to Utrecht and Amsterdam for higher education. It is said, that he was one of those who prepared the Sinhalese text of the treaty between the Dutch and the King of Kandy, in 1766. (Pieris' *Hollanders*, pp. 90, 121; C.A.L.R. Vol. I, p. 192). As he is the author of many religious works in Sinhalese, his grammar would be of considerable interest to us, if discovered. (CLR, Vol. ii, p. 110).

To the student of a foreign language, dictionaries of word books are indispensable. One of the earliest vocabularies written for foreign use was the one made by Robert Knox, the author of "An Historical Relation of Ceylon". It was found among the papers of Dr. Robert Hooke, Secretary of the Royal Society from 1677 to 1682, and an intimate friend of Knox. In his Preface to the "Relation" Hooke tells us that Knox could have given us a complete dictionary of the Sinhalese language, 'understanding and speaking it as well as his mother tongue'. Donald Ferguson published this vocabulary in a journal of this Society together with a list of Sinhalese words found in the "Relation". The full list consists of 767 words and expressions, culled from the everyday speech of the Kandyan Sinhalese of the 17th century; and in this lies its chief value. (J.C.B.R.A.S. No. 47, pp. 155—200; Wickremesinghe, 81A).

In 1717 there was published at Leyden a book entitled *Museum Zeylanicum*, comprising a Catalogue of Ceylon plants collected, classified and described by Paul Hermann, whom Linneus called 'Princeps Botanicorum'. Hermann came to Ceylon in 1671 as first physician to the Dutch East India Company; left the island in 1679 for the Chair of Botany in the University of Leyden, and died there in 1695. The book runs to 72 pages, octavo. All plants are given under their Sinhalese names, with their Latin equivalents and terse notes, indicative of the author's familiarity with the speech and customs of the people. For instance; in describing Jacobēriya or Andanahiriya, he remarks: "Jacca is the name for the devil. Bēriya means, sound or whisper. For the pods when touched or shaken give out a sound. It is a diabolical plant; the Sinhalese believe that with the help of its pods, the devil gives replies to questions asked. For when these pods, being mature and dried, are shaken by the least gust of wind, the seeds, which hang by thin filaments, as in a balance, rustle, touching the walls of the pods,". Under Ghedūba, he notes: "The word is pronounced Ghedumba; its burnt wood is made into a powder for fireworks". Etymologising on "Padhul-

wanassa" (Badalwanassa) he says: "Padhul means goldsmith; wanassa indicates inability; as if to say, the goldsmith cannot do it." Museum Zeylanicum, Vol. ii, no. 21 & I; vol. i, no. 29). The work is fascinating not only as one of the earliest European contributions* to Ceylon botany, but also as an old curiosity shop. Besides this book, Hermann compiled a list of 121 words for the different parts of the body, to which he appended names for the months of the year, the signs of the Zodiac, the days of the week with their ciphers and a description of special terms, namely: devi maha rajjuruvo, kumāra sinha astāna, bisounnānse, adikārama, wannokurāla, gabadarāla, maha mōhottī rāla, gajanāyaka rāla, maha mudiyānse, dissāwa, kōrāla, vilāne, kankānama, āratēhila, hewanannēhe, appuhāmy, and rālahamy. He entitled this word-book, 'Vocabularium Selandense'; it consists of 7 folios quarto, written in simple, straightforward Latin, except for the Sinhalese portion, which is in an unformed irregular hand. The Ms. was given by him to Dr. Thomas Hyde, Professor of Oriental Languages in Oxford, who wrote on it: "From Dr. Paul Hermann, August, 1683." (Mss. Hyde, Reg. 16, B. xx, British Museum; Wickremesinghe, 81 & 83). Hermann seems to have been as scatterbrained as Knox; and according to the publisher's foreword to the Museum Zeylanicum, Hermann had intended "to describe in it the plants, animals and minerals indigenous to Ceylon".

It is on record that two Dutch Ministers, J. D. Voogt and A. de Mey, had, some time about the year 1691, succeeded in making a Portuguese-Sinhalese, and a Sinhalese-Dutch dictionary; and that a Dictionary of the Sinhalese language was printed in the Colombo Printing Press in 1759. But no further information is available about them. (J.C.B.R.A.S. No. 3, p. 34; C.L.R., Vol. ii, p. 110). In the Ferguson Collection of the Government Archives (Ceylon) there is a Ms. copy of a Dutch-Sinhalese Dictionary, entitled: NETHER-DUTSCH en SINHALEESCH WOORDEN, ඔලන්ද බසට සහ සිංහලට වචනවල: 396 pages, folio. The following word-books are mentioned, in a list of documents preserved in the Dutch Reformed Church of Colombo in 1757; (i) Sinhalese-Dutch and Portuguese-Tamil, by Simon Cat; (ii) Sinhalese-Dutch; (iii) Dutch-Sinhalese by Johannes Ames Commenius; (iv) Dutch-Sinhalese-Tamil; (v) Portuguese-Sinhalese and Sinhalese-Portuguese; (vi) Portuguese-Tamil-Sinhalese-Dutch. (Minute Book of the D.R. Church, 1750-1760, Vol. No. 4A/2). The trilingual dictionary composed by Fr. Goncalvez, will be dealt with later.

It is fascinating to conjecture whether a Christian hand had passed over the second half of the Rajavaliya. The presence of such expressions as අපගේ සම මවු සේසුන් ක්‍රිස්තුගේ වම්සෙන්, දෙවොලු කාමය දෙවියන්වහා නොදන්නේ (රාජාවලිය, 51, 56), the dropping of the Buddhist

* Garcia da Orta incidentally refers to a few plants found in Ceylon, in his work on Indian medicine. (C.A.L.R. Vol. iv, iii, p. 143); Grimm, the author of "Laboratorium Ceylonicum", was a contemporary of Hermann. (ib. Vol. III, ii, p. 80 etc.

era and the retention of the Saka era, and the intimate knowledge the author shows of the titles, customs and manners of the Portuguese and the Dutch, and of their policy of Government in addition to a thorough acquaintance with the history of his own land, are facts which cannot be passed over unnoticed. (Wickremesinghe, 70). An extended version of the Rājāvaliya, called the Vijitavella Rājāvalia, which takes the narrative down to the early British times, notes carefully certain events of particular interest to Catholics; for instance, the stringent measures adopted by the Dutch against Catholics and the ministry of Venerable Fr. Joseph Vas. (B.M. MS. Or. 6606, 73, fol. 115-117). However, the authorship of the Rajavaliya is yet a problem.

The efforts of the Dutch clergymen and their Ceylonese colleagues were mainly devoted to the translation of works on Christian doctrine and of the Holy Bible. Already before 1681 they had translated into Sinhalese the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, and a Catechism, including the Tamil Catechism of Baldeus on the Lords Supper and a Dutch work on "Comforting the Sick". (J.C.B.R.A.S., No. 3, p. 17). In 1710 a series of five Catechisms was in use, an Infants' Catechism, a summary of Scripture history, possibly from the Tamil of Baldeus, a compendium of Christian doctrine and an advanced course, translated from the Dutch (ib. No. 2, p. 124; No. 3, p. 17). Some of these works were revised by Simon Cat. (ib. No. 3, p. 40). In 1722 a collection of prayers, the form of administration of the Sacraments and five sermons, were circulated for the use of the schools at Cotta, Bolawalana, Coelawatte, Kelaniya, Mapitigama, Minuwangoda, Weligampitiya, Wolfendhal, Milagiriya and Moratuwa (ib. No. 2, pp. 124-5). In 1724, Rev. Wetzeliuss, who with Wilhelmus Conyn held the palm for Sinhalese scholarship among their brethren, translated D'Outrein's 'Sketch of Religion'. The same year a Sinhalese version of the Heidelberg Catechism and a setting of the Lord's Prayer and Ten Commandments into Sinhalese foot-measure, were brought out. But the circulation of literature by means of hand-written books was found to be a tedious task, too slow for the evangelical zeal of the Dutchman. A Printing Press was therefore considered necessary.

In 1672 Tamil type was made in wood-cuts in Amsterdam for Baldeus' book on "The Coromandel Coast and Ceylon"; and in 1707 Sinhalese type for Ruell's grammar. But the credit of having made the first Tamil type does not belong to the Dutch. (Jurriaanse, C. Daily News, 14-1-43); for before them, in 1577, a Jesuit lay-brother called John Goncalvez, had cast the first Tamil types at Cochín. They were improved upon in 1578 by Fr. John de Faris, a distinguished name in Indo-Portuguese architecture. (New Review, 10, 35). The establishment of a printing press was first seriously taken up in 1734 by Governor Jacob Christian Pielat, who believed "that there was no better means of conviction than hearing and reading God's Holy Word in one's own tongue." He left instructions to his successor to

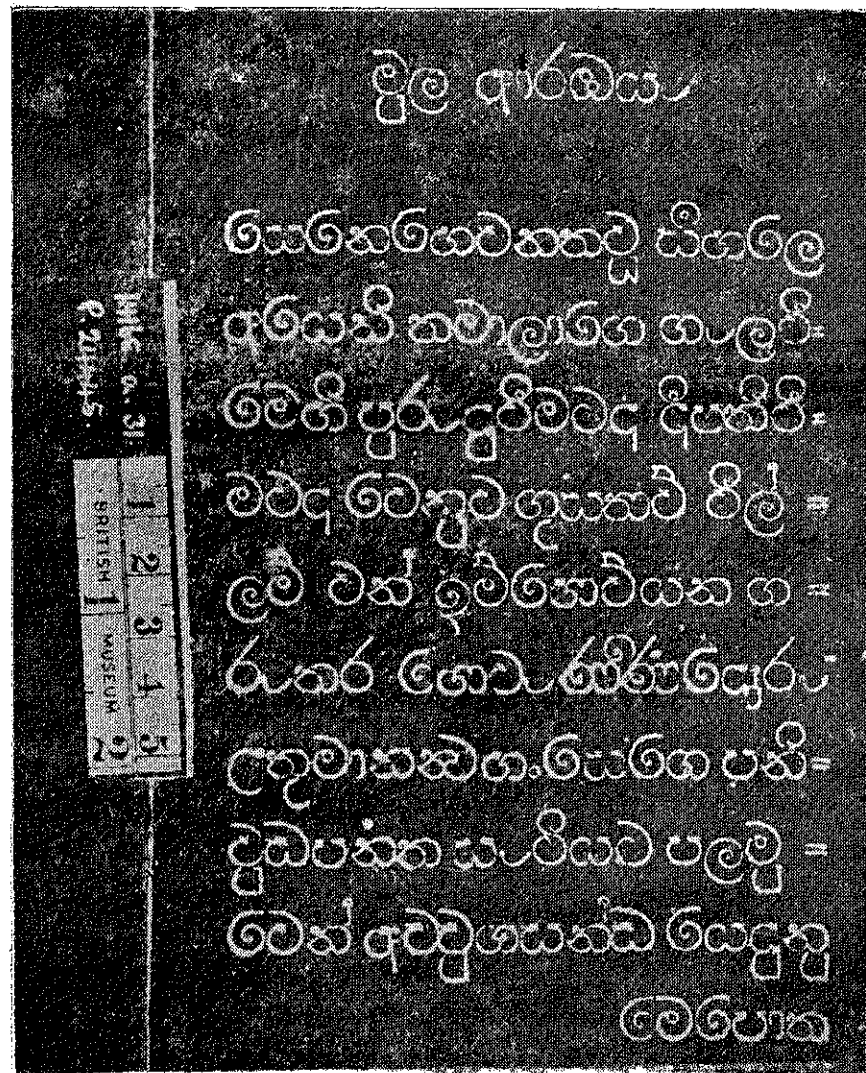
further the project with the help of the two clergymen, Conyn and Wetzeliuss, and the Baas of the armoury, Gabriel Schade, to whom is given the honour of casting the first Sinhalese types. (Memoir of Pielat, 1734, pp. 38, 60). The Printing establishment was brought to perfection and a 'second press' added under Governor Van Imhoff, who seemed to have been much concerned about its progress. (Memoir of Van Imhoff, 1740, p. 59).

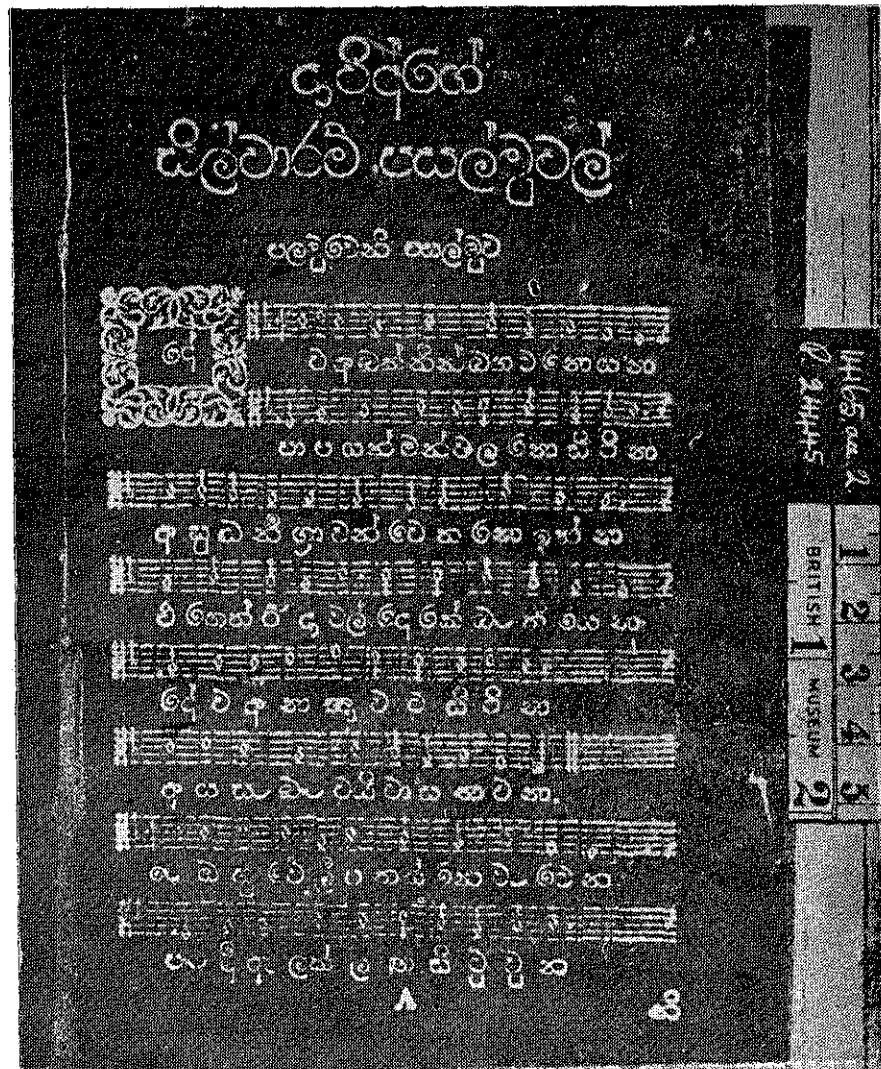
The first book to be printed at the new Press was a Sinhalese prayer book, in 1737, containing the Lord's Prayer, morning and night prayers, grace before and after meals, 12 articles of the Creed and 10 Commandments of God. It has a short introductory note in Dutch and Sinhalese, and runs to 41 pages, octavo, printed in clear large type. The first page of the book, which also claims to be the first printed Sinhalese page* is reproduced here as a witness to Baas Schade's excellent workmanship (Plate I).// The following year a "Confession of Faith" containing prayers and questions and answers on the principal tenets of the Reformed Church, was printed; it was enlarged and re-edited by Wetzeliuss in 1742; it had five parts of 112 pages altogether, comprising the usual prayers and a catechism on the fundamental principles of doctrine. A special feature of this work, is the addition of marginal glosses in small type to explain the meaning of certain loan words from Portuguese and Tamil, e.g. spiritu (husmavātayānanwahanse), baptisma (diyawāra isima), pān (goduma kabalu) vanakkama, orassama (yakgnawa) kumunjāwa (rāstri bōjanaya), grāsaya (karunāva). The Heidelberg Catechism, translated by Conyn in 1742, was printed in 1741, and reprinted in 1761 and 1780, the last edition having being carefully revised by Sinhalese scholars. There was another summary of doctrine called "A short statement of the doctrine of Faith unto Godliness", by Wetzeliuss, consisting of 243 pages and divided into 25 chapters. (J.C.B.R.A.S., No. 3, p. 60). It was published in 1744, with a high-flown dedication in Dutch, Latin and Sinhalese, to Governor Stein Van Gollenesse and his consort Cornelia Van Loon. It went into a second edition in 1790. To help the laity to follow certain rites of the Reformed Church, the formulae and prayers of Baptism, of the Lord's Supper, of Marriage and of Comforting the Sick, were translated and printed in 1744. Two sets of four sermons each, translated by Conyn, appeared in print in 1740 and 1753 (C.L.R. Vol. ii, 1887, pp. 101—104 W 108—111).

As psalm-singing was considered an important part of the Divine service in the Dutch Reformed Churches, it was thought desirable to give the converts the necessary training. Therefore, in 1723 the

* See note on Plate I.

// Baas Schade began the first Sgh. types before 1729; but he gave up the work owing to the maltreatment under Vuyst. Schade must have died before June 1737; (G. A. Dutch Records, No. 905, 12 Jan, 1737 No. 1153; 22 June 1737),



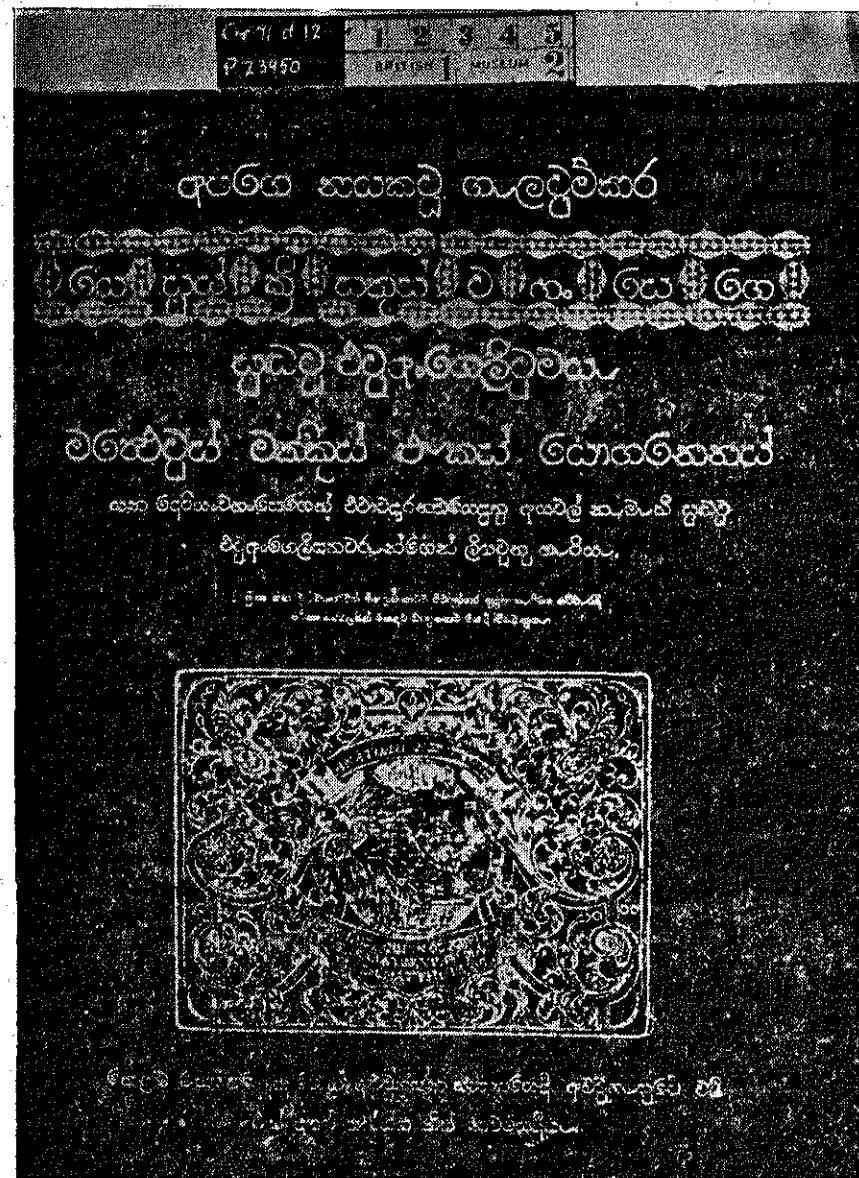


Governor himself proposed evening schools "to train, if possible, the Sinhalese to psalm-singing". A metrical version of the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayers, was the first contribution. (J.C. B.R.A.S., No. 2, pp. 110, 124). In 1755 the Government Printers brought out a neat hymnal, with Sinhalese words by Anthony Perera and Louis de Saram, probably of the staff of the Colombo Seminary (Pieris, op. cit. p. 90), and music by a certrin Petrus Dateni. The Introduction says, that "it was printed through the paternal benevolence and at the order of the most noble Governor John Gideon Loten, for the edification of Sinhalese music-lovers, and issued for the first time at their humble request; and that Matthias Wermelskircher, Predicant in announcing God's Holy Word to the Sinhalese communities of Kotte, Negombo and Kalutara, had cleansed it of many errors and copyists' mistakes till then present, which had slipped into it by continual transcribing". A second and enlarged edition, printed in 1768, gives us the further information that the first copy of the hymnal was made in 1723 by Conyn, with the help of the two scholars mentioned above; and that the 1755 edition contained the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, Psalms 23 and 50, verses 1 and 2 only, and the song of Simeon, to which were added Psalms, 1, 2, 6, 24, 25, 51, 87, 103 & 110, by Henricus Philipsz. The prefatory note on the music is by Abrahamsz Bronsveldt, Rector of the Seminary. These hymns are just rough rhymed prose and the plain music of psalm recitals tacked together. They do not seem to have ever caught the fancy of the Sinhalese people but, as far as the printing went, the work deserves much praise. (vide Plate II).

The most notable contribution to Sinhalese literature, made under the patronage of the Dutch Government, was the translation of the whole of the New Testament and a part of the Old, by the ablest scholars in the service of the Dutch Reformed Church in Ceylon. They had the good will and support of the Governors, who were confident that it was a very powerful means of conversion. "Since my arrival" wrote Governor Becker, "many heathens have been admitted to the bosom of the Church by holy Baptism through the zeal of the clergy, and religion has greatly advanced..... This was due partly to the translation of three of the Gospels from Dutch into Sinhalese by Rev. Wilhelmus Conyn, which was distributed all over the country and read to the people with good results". (Becker's Memoir, 1716, p. 40). Conyn's translation of Matthew, Mark and Luke, were completed in 1711 and presented to Becker himself. (J.C. B.R.A.S., No. 3, pp. 45, 48). Whenever a clergyman paid his official visit to a school, it was part of the programme to read to the assembly a chapter or two from the Gospels. (ib. No. 2, p. 108). Governor Pielat, who greatly interested himself in the translation of the Bible and even intended to bring the matter before the Honourable the Indian Government, left to his successor a long note on the subject and asked him to give every facility and encouragement to Conyn and Wetzelijs to go on with the work. (Pielat's Memoir, 1734, pp. 38, 39).

At last in 1739 the Printing Press issued the Four Gospels in Sinhalese. The Preface by Watzelius tells us that the veteran Conyn did not live to see the crowning of his arduous task, and that the translation was found among his papers. A glowing tribute is paid to Governor Imhoff, who in his great zeal for the spiritual welfare of his people had within two years brought the printing press to perfection. Credit is certainly due to the printers for the shapely type, the artistic setting and the neat print. (vide Plate III). A revised edition was brought out in 1780 by Johan Joachim Fybrands and Henricus Philipsz. The same learned clergymen revised the Acts of the Apostles, done into Sinhalese by two Interpreters under the supervision of Simon Cat. Philipsz followed this up with the translations from the Greek, of the Epistles of St. Paul: Romans in 1772, Galatians and Corinthians in 1773 and the rest of the books of the New Testament including Revelations in 1776. To the last volume he appended an epilogue of 8 pages containing a compendium of the New Testament and two pages of an Index to the books and chapters of the whole Bible. He did not rest here. He next proceeded to translate the Old Testament, from the Greek text and with the help of the Hebrew version; the book of Genesis appeared in 1783, Exodus in 1786, Leviticus Numbers and Deuteronomy in 1789. He may have translated the rest of the books up to the book of Job; but they were not printed. A Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society of 1813 mentions: "The Old Testament to the book of Job, by a native clergyman of the name of Philips Ms. This manuscript is deposited among the archives of the Dutch Church in Colombo; but on examination it was found to be deficient in many places. The Rev. Mr. Giffening, a Dutch minister born in Ceylon and versed in the Cingalese language, has lately undertaken to revise and complete the translation". (Report, App. p. 18; Historical Catalogue, Part iv, sub 1783). Governor Imhoff instructed his successor to urge the translation of the Song of Solomon and the Psalms of David, a few of which were included later on in the hymnals of 1755 and 1768. (Imhoff's Memoir, 1740, p. 60). But the entire book of Psalms never appeared in print. It is worth mentioning here that in the time of Governor Bruyninck, there was even a suggestion to print the Bible in three columns; Tamil, Sinhalese and Portuguese; but whether the Tripla was ever carried out, does not appear anywhere. (J.C.B.R.A.S. No. 2, p. 125 & G. A. Dutch Records, No. 907; 16 Dec. 1738).

The Bible is a difficult book to translate. It is not only the expression of a nation's genius, stretching over many centuries of vicissitudes, but also the depository of the Word of God. Its universality



of interest, the rugged severity and conciseness of its language and its picturesque style and rhythm, its simplicity of structure as well as its depth of thought; such characteristics demand from the translator a wide and intimate knowledge of both the original language and the language into which it is translated. History bears witness to the fact that a translation of the Bible, done correctly and elegantly, can hold fast the affections of a people, shape their morals and even their language.

It can be presumed that our translators had a fair knowledge of Greek, Latin and even Hebrew. But of Sinhalese, they seem to have known only a great deal of the spoken idiom of the time and not much of the literary language. Although a detailed criticism of the translations is beyond the scope of this paper, it may not be out of place to point out certain general defects, common to all the religious works issued by the Dutch Printing Press of Colombo. (i) Clarity and elegance are often sacrificed for slavish adherence to the idiom of the original language; the sentences are generally involved and awkward. (ii) There are too many loan words, especially from Portuguese, e.g. anju from Port. anjo (Matt. I, 10), rapesas from Port. raposa (ib. V, 20), lobos from Port. lobo (ib. X, 16), bautisaru karanda from Port. bautizar (Matt. II 14); and from Latin, mera (myrrha), tempalaya (templum), sinagova (synagoga) legiyoya (legio), presalitaya karanda (proselytum facere) of Matt. II, 9; IV, 4, 23; Lk. VIII 30; Matt. XXIII, 16. (iii) In the inflexions of verbs and nouns, grammar is sometimes violated: e.g. Singular verb with a plural noun, direct case instead of the oblique. (iv) The orthography is often irregular, especially in the use of dental and cerebral S, N, L; and such obsolete and peculiar forms as rästriya, tipāsaya, pavistraya, mistrayā, mastakayā (Matt. II, 14; V, 6, 18, 24; XVII, 27) occur frequently. On the other hand, these translations are not without their merits. Their vocabulary is extensive and they have preserved for us a large stock of words, both learned and unlearned, which would otherwise have been lost. Moreover, as they grew out of a literature that cultivated a simple and forthright style, they made for a new influence in our literature which is one of leisure and not of action.

In the midst of the literature that bloomed fair in the sunshine of Government favour, there sprang up another of a stock, hardy and sappy, but despised and oppressed. For reasons both political and sectarian, the Dutch Government set its face against the Catholics in Ceylon, and took severe measures to stamp out their religion. Immediately after the capitulation of Colombo, they saw to it that the Catholic missionaries were sent out of the island, their churches confiscated, their schools suppressed and their converts trodden-down. For about 40 years there was not a single Priest to minister to the Catholics. Then in 1687 there came to Ceylon in the guise of a poor labourer an Indian Priest, called Fr. Joseph Vaz, whose name is held in veneration by the Catholics of this country. Wimaladharma Suria II, King of Kandy, at first suspected him to be a spy and held him a prisoner, but later seeing his singular holiness of life, set him free and even protected him. Within a short

time he succeeded in inspiring Catholics with confidence and self-reliance. As the few religious works in the vernacular written by the Portuguese Missionaries had practically vanished; his first care was to translate at least the prayers and compose a simple course of instruction. To one acquainted with Portuguese and Tamil, it was not difficult, in those days, to find a tutor for Sinhalese in the hill capital. His earliest Sinhalese works were the prayers of the Catechism, a summary of Christian doctrine, devotions and litanies to the Blessed Virgin, short meditations on the Stations of the Cross and a word-book, for which he had the assistance of Buddhist monks. (Vida II, vi. p. 159; Chronica III, xvi, sect. 442, 550). It is said that at the request of King Narendrasinghe, who was ever gracious to the Catholic Missionaries, Fr. Vaz translated into Sinhalese a Portuguese work on medicine. (ib.)*

Within the Kandyan kingdom the Priests had full liberty to exercise their ministry, but in the Dutch territory, where most of the Catholics lived, they had to move about in secret and under cover of night. The Catholics had no books of instruction and it was not safe for a Priest to stay long enough in one place to be able to give sufficient instruction. On the other hand an active propaganda supported by stern sanctions was afoot to disseminate doctrines opposed to the faith. Fr. Vaz therefore decided to set apart one of his Priests to write books to instruct and fortify the Catholics. The choice fell on Fr. Jacome Goncalvez, a young Priest who had arrived in Ceylon in 1705; and right royally did he rise to the occasion. Like the other oratorians, Fr. Goncalvez was a Konkani Brahmin of Goa. After a brilliant scholastic career, he was appointed to the chair of Philosophy in the University of Goa. But after a year he threw up the post and joined Fr. Vaz in order to minister to the down-trodden Catholics of Ceylon. In Kandy he applied himself to the study of Sinhalese and was not loth to seek held from the then guardians of Sinhalese scholarship. ("Ven. Fr. Vaz" July 1942, p. 12). He often discussed Sinhalese grammar and literature with the romantic Gascon Adigar, who as a boy had studied under Fr. Vaz. (Letter of Fr. Menezes, 24 Feb. 1713; Fr. de Almeida 1713).

Contemporary documents give a list of 42 works of Fr. Goncalvez; 22 in Sinhalese, 15 in Tamil, 4 in Portuguese and 1 in Dutch, (Relacao, 1733—1740); to this list, well founded tradition has added 4 more in Sinhalese and 1 more in Tamil. In Sinhalese he wrote both prose and poetry and attempted to provide the Catholics with a complete literary outfit for their instruction and edification. His prose works range over a variety of subjects: Holy Scripture, theology, hagiography, the practice of Christian virtues, devotions and controversy. His poetical works include a long poem of 537 verses, two metrical compositions on devotional subjects and a few moral verses. For the use of his brother Missionaries, he compiled four word-books. As he varied his literary style to suit the subject matter and the capacity of his readers, his writings are not of the same literary standard; they range from the

* Could this be, "Coloquios dos Simples, drogas he cousas Medicinaes da India." Goa 1563, 4to. by Garcia da Orta? (cf. C.A.L.R. IV, iii. 149).

colloquial to the classical. In his many missionary journeys, up and down the length and breadth of Ceylon, he had come in contact with the high and the low, with the learned and the illiterate; moreover, his reading in the Sinhalese classics was very wide. Consequently his vocabulary was both rich and varied; and from its vast store he drew 'not laboriously but luckily,' with the accuracy of a trained mind and the sense of an artist, that Quintilian would have described as "curiosa felicitas."

His masterpiece in Sinhalese prose or his 'magnum opus,' is the Deva Veda Puranaya, which is a compendium of the Holy Bible and of Catholic theology. It consists of two parts, which in print run to 400 pages quarto. In style it compares very favourably with the muscular and majestic prose of the Pujavalia. There is something more than literary excellence in the Puranaya; it is the harnessing of a language till then unfamiliar with Christian ideas, to express Catholic theology with precision and elegance. To place the contents of the Puranaya within the reach of the less educated class of readers, he compiled the Deva Veda Sanksepaya, a summary arranged in catechetical form. The Gospel texts read on Sundays and feast days, he translated into Sinhalese, adding a short commentary on each. The Suvisesa Visadhanaya, as it is called, was meant to be read in the chanting style so familiar in the East. In diction, therefore, it has a cadence and modulation in the ebb and flow of well-set words and phrases, that can hold the attention of the listener. In the churches where Sinhalese is in honour, the Visadhanaya is still chanted as of yore.

To instruct the Catholics on the purification of the soul and on the practice of virtue, he composed, in an easy style, the Gnananjanaya, the Deva Niti Visarjanaya and the Sukrita Darpaneya; and further illustrated the doctrine in the Dharmodyanaya, or Lives of the Saints, and Pratiharyavalia, a collection of miracles. In times of trial the Christian looks to the Cross for consolation; in order to foster this attitude, he wrote the Dukprapti Prasangaya or sermons on Christ's sufferings and a book of mournful songs, still very popular among us. In his student days Fr. Goncalvez had been the organist of the Theological Seminary, and he always retained a marked penchant for music, which is noticeable even in his prose writings. He seems to have been no stranger to Oriental music, for his collection of sacred chants for the feasts of the year, which he entitled the Mangala Gitiya, is altogether on Oriental melodies, of the Carnatic type.

There are four controversial works of Fr. Goncalvez; the Agnana Ausadaya, Bhedakarainge Tarkaya, Matara Pratyakasaya and Budu Mula. The Tarkaya is the record of a controversy between him and Nanclairs de la Nerolle, held in the presence of King Narendrasinghe at Hanguranketa (Letter, Kandy, 8 Sept. 1712). On the 2nd December 1732 there arrived in Colombo a special Commissioner named Jacob Christian Pielat, to visit the towns and fortifications in Ceylon. To welcome him there assembled in Colombo a large number Sinhalese chiefs, and among them the Mudaliyars of Matara, Fr. Goncalvez

himself has described the men of Matara as men of letters and admirers of the lofty and elegant style. Now, these Mudaliyars happened to see in the hands of the Catholics, some books of controversy written by the Father. They read them and conceived a desire to see the author. On their invitation he went to Matara and preached Christianity. For the instruction of the converts there, he wrote the Pratyaksaya. (Life of Fr. Goncalvez, X, pp. 94, 95). Budu Mula or an account of Buddhism, was written in 1737 and presented to the Crown Prince Kumara Astana, who on his accession took the throne name of Sri Vijaya Rajasinghe. (Relacao, 1733—1740).

Of his poetical works the most important is the Veda Kavyaya, a long poem of 537 verses, on the same theme as the Puranaya. It is redolent of phrases and passages from our classical poetry, especially from the Perakumbasirita and the Budugunalankaraya, to which he refers in the Pratyaksaya. He tried his hand at every sort of rhythmic device admitted in Sinhalese prosody, and generally succeeded. The synthesis between Catholic thought and Sinhalese poetic diction, which Alagiyawanna attempted, was perfected by Fr. Goncalvez in the Kavyaya.

Fr. Goncalvez compiled four dictionaries of word-books, for the use of the Missionaries: (1) A Sinhalese-Portuguese dictionary; (2) A Portuguese-Sinhalese dictionary; (3) A dictionary of select phrases, in Tamil; (4) A trilingual dictionary; Portuguese-Tamil-Sinhalese (Relacao, 1773—1740). Of the first three we have no trace so far. Of the third, there are two copies in the archives of the Archbishop of Colombo, and a third in the library of the Benedictine Monastery of Kandy. The copy that seems to be the most perfect has the following title:—

VOCABULARIO/ordenado/Para os que se applicao ao Tamul e Cingala/comecado/Pello Portuguez, proseguido pello Tamul/e accabado pello Cingala/Tresladado/Pello Pe. Euzebio do Rosairo da Congregacao/do Oratorio de Goa/No anno de 1772/, (= Word-book compiled for students of Tamil and Sinhalese, proceeding from Portuguese to Tamil and thence to Sinhalese. Transcribed by Fr. Eusébio do Rosairo of the Congregation of the Oratory of Goa, in the year 1772).

The Ms. consists of 324 pages quarto, a page containing, on an average 32 Portuguese words, against each of which are Tamil equivalents, varying from 1 to 8 words, and Sinhalese equivalents varying from 1 to as many as 15 words. The Portuguese words are arranged in alphabetical order, evidently taken over from a standard Portuguese dictionary. The script is small, but legible, written in the same neat hand throughout. It is possible that this Ms. is a copy of the final recension of the original. The vocabulario is of special value to us, as it has preserved a large number of words current in the 17th and 18th

centuries, gathered by intimate personal contact with people of every rank in the island. Here are two examples taken at random, from the Vocabulario:

Vassoura : විලக்குමාලා, අලලුකුලාපය, වරලු කොළ—ඉලලන, බෝලන, බෝල් අනන, හින, දඬු මිලි, මුසක.

Rabo : බාබ, නකුට, වරලන, වලලික, කුනර, බාබ, පෙද: de Peeva, தொனிக, பிල්லெ, பி.

In estimating the worth of Fr. Goncalvez as a man of letters, one must remember that he wrote in the midst of a very busy life and at a time when Sinhalese literature was passing through a period of decadence, Spoken Sinhalese had absorbed a large number of Portuguese words, and had got hopelessly mixed up with Tamil words, expressions and grammatical forms. That in the works, written for the poorly educated, we find colloquialisms despised by our generation is not surprising. Allowance too must be made for copyists' errors, for the Catholics of those days had not the luxury of a Printing Press. It should be remembered that his services to Tamil literature are not less remarkable. But so long as Sinhalese is read, the name of Fr. Goncalvez will be held in benediction as "the Father of Sinhalese Catholic Literature".

There are a few literary productions by Christian writers of the 18th century, which may be mentioned here. One of them is a poem of 266 verses on the Life of St. Alexis. The author, whose name is given as Santiago, acknowledges his indebtedness to Fr. Goncalvez for the theme of the poem. The date of composition is given as "17th poson (June) 1708". There are two other poems, the Helena Katawa and Orison Palenten Katawa or Belasanta Katawa, which enjoyed some popularity in the last century. James de Alwis has attributed them to Fr. Goncalvez; but the evidence of the Mss. gives no support to this theory, though it must be admitted that there is no internal evidence to determine the author or the date of composition. The influence of Father Goncalvez is palpably manifested in the writings of the Catholics of the last century, especially in their metrical and dramatic work.

It is a remarkable fact that there is no drama in Sinhalese literature, though there is plenty of it in Sanscrit and its vernaculars, and dramatic material is abundant in Ceylon History and in the Jataka histories. This gap in a literature fairly full in other respects, is probably due to the influence of a religious ideal, that regarded music, dancing and drama as a sure incitement to unholy passions. Some have suggested that the drama received no encouragement, because singing and dancing were relegated to the lower classes. It is true that professional singers and dancers were from the lower classes, but music was among the royal accomplishments and one of the siv seta kala sip (Mahavamsa. XXI, 82; LXIV, 47; LXIX, 22). Masques farces and puppet-shows, however, were not unknown in ancient Ceylon. Rukadda netima and kolan netima formed part of great festivities; and sandakiduru katava and maname raja, were favourite themes. (J.C.B.R.A.S. Vol. VIII No. 54, pp. 90—99 and 139, 140).

But the first serious attempts at dramatization in Sinhalese, were made by Catholics as early as the 17th century. Indeed, there is a good deal of dramatic material in the liturgy of the Church and the Lives of the Saints; and the celebrations of Church festivals provided occasions for staging sacred plays. In February 1609, on the occasion of the titular feast of the Jesuit church in Colombo, a dramatic performance was given, the theme of which was 'a comparison between the Synagogue with the Ark of the Covenant and the Church with the Mother of God.' (Christopher Joam, 1 Dec., 1609). At Chilaw on the occasion of the blessing of the new church in 1617, and in honour of the baptism of a large group of new converts, 'the Baptism of Constantine the Great' was staged. (Emmanuel Barrada, 15 Dec. 1617). On a similar occasion too, at Kammala, the Creation of the World and the Incarnation of Christ, was dramatically represented. (id. Dec., 1613). Father Antonio Peixoto, who has already been mentioned, seeing that the Sinhalese loved poetry and music composed for them many Canticles and dramas, which were staged. The themes were events from the Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Lives of the Saints and of Adam and Eve. His drama on the Life and Death of St. John the Baptist, was acted at Matara to the great delight of the people, who are described as lovers of poetry. (Conquista Spiritual do Oriente, Ms. 1626, foll. 800—823). Unfortunately, none of these dramas have survived. Passion shows and Passion plays seem to have come into existence under the inspiration of Fr. Vaz and his companions, who had witnessed such performances in Goa. (Hist. of Cath. Church in India, Vol. i, ch. 10, pp. 84—87). We hear of Passion plays in the Vanni, already in 1706. (Oratorian Records, D. 12, p. 54). The influence of the writings of Fr. Goncalvez on representations of the Passion of Christ, was very marked. The Catholic drama came into its own again in the 19th century, when it boldly proceeded to tackle connected sacred themes with a well developed technique, borrowed generally from the South Indian drama.

Sinhalese Classical literature began and progressed under the impulse and influence of Buddhism on the one hand and the inspiration of Sanskrit and Pali literary form on the other. Such a literature cannot be expected to treat of God, the Incarnation, the Redemption, the life of grace and Divine Love; subjects which are distinctly Christian. Sinhalese literature, therefore, in spite of its excellence, cannot be considered incapable of improvement by contact with the life and thought outside. Its impact with Christianity has resulted (1) in the urge for a systematic study of grammar and vocabulary, (2) in the absorption of new ideas, and (3) in the introduction of a new leaven that made for a simpler and forthright style of expression. It is not contended that Sinhalese Christian literature within the short period of its existence, excelled or even equalled either in volume or in literary form, the literature produced outside the influence of Christian thought in this country. But, it must be admitted, that Christianity even in the two first centuries of its existence here, in spite of wars and strifes, fears and disappointments, did make a contribution to Sinhalese literature, that is worth being recorded and gratefully remembered.

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Plate I :

The first page of 'Singaleesch Gebeede Boek' (Sinhalese Prayer Book), printed at the Government Press of Colombo, 1737. The text claims to be the first book printed with the new Sinhalese types. "The earliest Plakaat in Sinhalese type, in the Archives (of Colombo) is dated 6th April, 1737; the earliest Dutch 31st May 1740, the earliest in Tamil 6th August 1742." (Catalogue of the Dutch Archives of Colombo : by M. W. Juriaanse 1943; foot-note p. 127).

Plate II :

A page from the Sinhalese hymnal, printed at the Colombo Printing Press in 1768.

Plate :

The title page of the Sinhalese version of the Four Gospels, printed at the Colombo Printing Press in 1739.

PRINS'S EMBASSY TO THE KANDYAN COURT, 1770

(Continued from page II, Vol. LIII)

A respectful communication addressed to the Right Hon'ble Dr. Iman William Falek, L. L. D., Extraordinary Councillor of India, and Governor and Director of the Island of Ceylon with the Dependencies thereof, by Francois Albert Prins, Major of the Honourable Militia of this Government containing a daily register of occurrences, when as ordinary Ambassador to the Court of Kirti Sree Raja Sinha Emperor of Kandy.

Right Hon'ble and respected Sir. Pursuant to the order and Resolution passed by the Council of the Government of Ceylon on the first December¹; appointing me Ambassador to the Court of Kandy to convey a letter with the yearly presents from your Excellency to His Majesty the Emperor, I parted on Monday the 15th of January A. D. one thousand seven hundred and seventy from the Fort of Colombo, accompanied by Your Excellency and the Members of the Council, together with some other gentlemen of distinction, with such pomp as is recorded in the Daily Registry of Colombo²; and having rested a little while at Pass Nacklegan³; and taken leave of Your Excellency, I proceeded in company with the Dissawe de Costa, Captain de Ridder and Lieutenant Gerard as Commissioners, together with Samuel Radermacker Esquire, Junior Merchant, Secretary, on my journey to Hanwella⁴ escorted by a Corps of Fusiliers under the command of Ensign Eickkoorn; and arrived there at half-past six o'clock.

1. Govt. Archives Vol. D 146 dated 1-12-1769. Translation kindly furnished by Mr. E. Reimers as follows:—"Since the time for the usual Embassy to Kandy is near, it has been approved after deliberating on the representation of His Excellency the Governor to appoint His Honour, Major Francois Albertus Prins as the Company's ordinary ambassador to the Court of Kandy and the Onderkoopman Samuel Radermacker as Scriba".

2. I am indebted to Mr. E. Reimers for a translation of the reference in the original Diary of Colombo for 1770. Vol. 2124 D. Govt. Archives:—"Monday January 15th the Major of the Hon'ble Militia, Francois Albertus Prins, left as Ambassador to the Court of Kandy and was accorded the same ceremonial send off as that given to Heer van Angelbeck, vide the Day Register of 1767. The Junior Merchant (Onderkoopman) Radermacker left as Secretary to the said Ambassador".

3. There were two passes leading out of Colombo, Pas Betal on the Negombo road and pass Nacalagam on the way to Kelaniya. The latter was the more important exit and is the Grand Pass of to-day. According to Daalmans there was a "Noble house" at Grand Pass where the Kandyan envoys used to live whenever they came down to Colombo. The route lay apparently along the south bank of the river which was crossed near Ruvanwella "The old Kandyan road reached Ruvanwella from Sitawaka by Telduwa and Epalapitiya along the left bank of the Kelani River". (Bell. Kegalle Report, p. 59).

4. Also known as Gurubewela until comparatively recent times. Situated on the river bank 18 miles east of Colombo on the old Kandy road and would correspond with the site of the present Rest House. There was a fort there occupied in turn by the Portuguese, Dutch and British, and was the scene of many a grim struggle.

Tuesday, 16th January, I departed from Hanwella at half past six o'clock, and reached Avissawella⁵; about half past twelve, where the Mohattear of three Korles came to meet and welcome me, and I returned immediately to make arrangements to convey the presents; and about three o'clock we crossed the river under a salute of three volleys being discharged by the Escort, which was immediately returned by the opposite party. At Sitawaka⁶ from the 17th to the 22nd January, but nothing of importance occurred.

On Tuesday the 23rd January in the afternoon, the following Court Officers arrived here to convey me further Pileme Talavey Ralahamy, Great Disawe of three and four Corles, Halangoda Ralahamy, Gajenaike Wakeeregalle Ralahamy, Nanayekkara Mohettale, Mampitiya Rala Hamy Ratterale of Odoonowere, and Moregammene, Elapan Gamuwe and Tallegonne Mohandirams, having with them ten tusked elephants richly caparisoned with bells. They came to my lodgings at seven o'clock in the evening, and left us after the usual ceremonies and compliments.

Wednesday 24th January I went on my journey, and at five o'clock in the evening arrived at Ruanwelle,¹

Thursday 25th January I set out, and at seven o'clock in the evening arrived at Iddemalpane,² and lastly on

5. A village situated on a tributary of Kelani River which marked the boundary of the Company's territory 11 1/2 miles from Hangwella and 29 miles east of Colombo. Was the seat of Maya Duna who opposed the accession of Dharma Pala to the throne of Cotta. It was taken possession of by the Portuguese after his death and found to contain strong fortifications the remains of which are still to be seen.

6. Sitawaka, once a royal residence is situated on a tributary of the Kelani Ganga to which it has given its name, about 30 miles from Colombo. It probably received its name from Sita (consort of Rama) who is said to have been imprisoned in the vicinity. Descriptions of Sitawaka are given in the following:—Bell: Report on the Kegalle District; H. White: Sitawaka and its vicinity, Orientalist Vol II; Christopher Schweizer: "A Voyage to the East Indies &c 1675—1683"; Davy: "An Account of the Interior of Ceylon"; Percival: "Account of the Island of Ceylon"; Forbes: "Eleven Years in Ceylon"; etc. Once a place of considerable importance, the very name has disappeared from modern maps, and the town which has grown up on the old site is now known as Avisawella.

1. Eight miles from Sitawaka along the old path to Kandy at the junction of Kelani Ganga and the Gurugodaoya. Having the advantage of water communication with Colombo by means of the Kelani Ganga, it was a place of some importance. See Bell: Kegalle Report p. 59.

2. A village 52 miles North East of Colombo described as follows by Capt. William Macpherson, Brigade Major to General Macdowall, and Secretary to the Embassy to Kandy in 1800. "Iddamalapanie is a most beautiful spot. The Goorkuda Oya, a fine stream runs close to the tents, a cascade falls down a precipice in our front and very near to us is one of the most picturesque bridges which can be conceived". The principal part of it is suspended by withes (creepers) from the boughs of large trees. (Cordiner Vol. II p. 292)

Friday 26th January I arrived at half past ten o'clock at Attapitiya,³ where again I had to wait seven days until the arrival of other Court Officers.

From 27th January to 1st February nothing occurred at Attapitiya, save that on Monday the 29th January at seven o'clock in the evening the Dissawe of Three and Four Corles with other gentlemen arrived preceded by royal music, and having asked for me and taken their seats, the Dissawe told me that he lately received a letter from Colombo that he should speak to me concerning the elephant-tusks forwarded from the Court, and questioned me whether I also received any orders touching the same? I answered in the affirmative. He then went on to state that he received sometime ago a letter in which it was stated that all tusks of eighteen pounds of weight and under may be sold for thirty Pagodas, and those above eighteen pounds weight for forty Pagodas, and that the price for which they were subsequently sold and received from Colombo varied very much from the above. I said that I knew nothing of the former letters and that I was to inform the Court Officers that like every other merchandize the rise and fall of prices in the value of Elephant Tusks depended on the market. The party sent by them had mixed together all sorts, and that according to the evidence of experienced merchants they were sold at very good prices as some of the tusks were yellow from age, and many of the second sort were broken in pieces. I added that the Court Officers may rest assured that the Hon'ble the Company were always in a position to give the best prices. I also informed him that there was at present an opportunity for the Court to secure higher prices, as the Supreme Indian Government of Batavia had authorised us to accept one hundred and twelve pounds weight of Elephant-Tusks from the Court at Six-dollars fifty per picul, a price which could not to be obtained either here or on the coast. After some further conversation on the subject, the Dissawe suggested that neither the Court nor the Hon'ble the Company would suffer any loss if a middle price was agreed to, and he requested me to submit the matter to Your Excellency's consideration, which I promised to do.

3. "Fort King, a military post, and station of the officer commanding the four Korles, situated about 23 miles south west of Kandy, on the old road to Colombo. It is called *Attapitiya* by the Sinhalese, but the present name was given to it, for the circumstance of Captain King having planned and superintended the work. The fort stands on the top of a steep hill, and commands the ferry of the Maha Oya, which glides along in the neighbourhood in its progress to the coast, and possesses a very agreeable climate, while the surrounding country displays a high degree of vegetable luxuriance. The village which is contiguous to the fort is fairly populous and the bazaar is abundantly supplied with provisions". (Davy)

On Friday the 2nd February, at six o'clock in the evening, the under-mentioned Court Officers arrived to conduct me further on to Ganoroova¹, viz;—Ratwatte Ralehamy, Great Dissawe of Mattella, Ellepolla Ralehamy, Weddickare Mohottale, and Kottagalloowe Ralahamy Mohandiram, having with them four state procession eight large and twenty five small flags, forty lances, ten guns and 24 muskets. A little while before this, I received a message from the Dissawe of Three and Four Corles enquiring how I intended to receive the newly arrived Court Officers. I said just in the same manner as in the last Embassy, namely within the front door of the Rest House, with which they were satisfied.

On Saturday the 3rd February, leaving Attapitiya at about eleven o'clock, I arrived at six o'clock in the evening at Wallawagodde.² Here I was received by Dodanwelle Ralahamy, Mohottale of the Attepatoo and Ratteralle of Yatinuwere.

On Sunday the 4th. February, I left Wallawagodde at half past one o'clock, and about this time the Dissawe of Three and Four Corles informed me that the first Adigar of the place would make to meet me as Ganoroowe, and inquired of me likewise whether I intended to step out of my palanquin or whether I wished to be carried to the Rest House, adding that at the reception of the Emperor's Ambassador at Grandpass, our Commissioners came up to the Bridge to meet him, and that they stepped out of the palanquin at the first hedge, and that in case I also stepped out of the palanquin it would amount to the same thing; as in the one case the ceremony was observed in honour of the Emperor, and in the other in honour of the Hon'ble the Company. I replied that if the first Adigar of the place came forward to meet me, I would get out of the palanquin and not otherwise. This, he assured me, would be the case. Further on in the evening about six o'clock, having arrived at Ganoroowe I again enquired through the first interpreter whether the first Adigar would come to meet me, as the Dissawe of Three and Four Corles assured me would be the case. At this time he was already on his way, as I

1. "A village in Gangapalata, Yatinuwara, on the opposite side of the river from the Peradeniya Gardens." (Lawrie). Here the Ambassador to Kandy and their suites were usually accommodated. Vide "Miscellaneous Works of Hugh Boyd" pp. 196—199. The distance to Kandy from here was 4 miles. Percival was much impressed at the beauty of the place and says:—"At the foot of the mountain where the escort now halted, lies a beautiful valley watered by the Malivaganga. The view from Ganaroa is extremely grand and takes in a vast range of hills, covered with thick woods and jungle and interspersed with valleys, presenting here and there fertile spots cultivated by the Candians" (P. 400).

2. "A village in Kandupalata Korale, Yatinuwara" (Lawrie) about 6 mile from Attapitiya.

made out by the sound of the cracking of the whips¹ by twelve whipcrackers which is always an intimation of the approach of Court Officers. Upon this I walked up to a certain Tamarind tree² a great distance from the Rest House (Where it is customary for our Ambassadors to dress after leaving the palanquin), and there I took a seat with the aforesaid Court Officers who accompanied to meet the first Adigar Angamma Ralahamy, who after sending forward to the Rest House the Royal Letter by some Court-Officers, advanced full three hundred and eighty steps from the Rest House to welcome me, having with him Pamoonoowe Ralahamy, Podickare Mohottear, Nugewelle Ralahamy Ratte Rale of Harispatoo, Wadegodde Ralahamy Rate-Ralo of Tumpane, together with the Mohandirams Iriagama and Hippola, marching between a double line of four hundred and sixty soldiers with muskets and fifty four flags to the Rest House. After the usual Compliments and Ceremonies, the first Adigar together with the Court Officers who came to meet me at Sitawake and Attapitiya, returned back to the Court and I accompanied them in accordance with the custom observed since 3 years as far as the steps at the bank of the river. I then returned in the company of the five last mentioned Officers under a double rank of soldiers to the lodgings prepared for me.

At Ganoroowe, on Monday the 5th February, at six o'clock, two Court Officers arrived with a message from His Imperial Majesty to inquire after my health. They were received within the first entrance door of the Rest House.

On Sunday the 11th February, about eleven o'clock, two Court Officers arrived by order of His Imperial Majesty to enquire after my health, and they intimated to me that I would have to proceed that night to have an audience with the King. At five o'clock in the evening Pilame Talawe, Dissawe of Three and Four Korles, together with two other Court Officers came here for that purpose. The Dissawe, after desiring his attendants and mine to fall back a little, began with a flow of words to talk about the ceremonies observed therefore, and enquire how I intended to act, and I could by his dark hints and insinuations perceive that he again wanted to suggest the ceremony of kneeling, but

1. "The whips were made of hemp; coya grass or hair and consist of a thong or lash from eight to twelve feet long without any handle. The loud noise which the forerunners produce with their whips, as well as the dexterity with which they avoid touching those who come in their way, is truly astonishing, although an European, from the indiscriminate manner in which they appear to deal their lashes, cannot help feeling alarmed for his safety. In all the interviews which the Embassy I attended had at the Court of Candy the ceremony of the whipcrackers was never omitted, to the great annoyance of our troops, who were very sulky and displeased on the occasion. Indeed it was impossible for the men under arms to attend to what they were about while these long whips were kept continually brandishing and cracking about their ears; and for my own part, although I was well convinced of the dexterity of those who wielded them, yet I could not help expecting every moment to come in for my share of chastisement." (Percival, P. 225).

2. This tamarind tree is still in existence and is on the road to Peradeniya near the Mulgampola Ambalama. I am grateful to Mr. Vernon Grenier for having located it.

I gave him to understand that it was quite plain to me that he referred to the ceremony of kneeling: but that I declined to kneel before the King and that I was positively forbidden to do so. He immediately replied that he was innocent of such an intention, that he had not the least idea of speaking about it, but only wanted to speak touching some other ceremonies about which there was no dispute. I answered that I was prepared to take into consideration the new ceremonials and intended steadily to abide by what he may agree to. Then the conversation ended.

(KANDY) I commenced my journey to the Court and arrived at nine o'clock in the Maduwa or resting place within Kandy, in front of Udunuara street¹, and after waiting there for a little while proceeded with the assembled Court Officers to the Imperial Palace; and on the road near a banyan tree² within the City came the second great Adigar to meet me, and said that he was desired by His Imperial Majesty to tender his compliments to me and conduct me to the Royal Palace. I followed him to the Palace, and here I found the first great Adigar to whom I mentioned that I was directed to request him earnestly, before the audience with the King to inform His Imperial Majesty that it was necessary that all my proposals should be acceded to, or that I shall have to protest against it. Secondly that I must speak to the Gentlemen Adigars and the other gentlemen Court-Officers touching the fulfilment of the yet unfulfilled points of the new Articles of Peace, viz. the returning or giving back of our cannon and our prisoners, deserted rebels and slaves; upon which the first Adigar answered that, touching the first point of my representation, he would communicate everything connected with it faithfully to His Imperial Majesty, and that touching the second article, as two years have elapsed since it was first taken it can be considered hereafter. Having arrived at the door of the Audience Hall,³ several curtains were hauled up, the last being a very wide one and I then approached His Imperial Majesty with the letter which he personally took from the Silver Tray which I carried.

After the exchange of the usual compliments, enquiry was made from me as to what I had to propose in behalf of Your Excellency. I answered that I was directed by Your Excellency to congratulate His Imperial Majesty on the great marriage about to be solemnized between His Imperial Majesty and the Princess on the opposite shore (India), and out of respect to His Imperial Majesty Your Excellency has despatched the necessary vessels to Karikal to transport the said

1. Udunuara Street. Udunuara Widiya or Pilladeniya Widiya is identical with the Katukelle Road of the present day.

2. This banyan tree or Bo-tree is said to have stood at the junction of King Street and Trincomalie Street not far from the old jail and to have been cut down many years ago.

3. Andrews has given a very interesting description of the approach of the Embassy to the palace and into the presence of the King (J.C.B.R.A.S. Vol. XXVI No. 71 pp. 9-20).

Princess with all possible comfort to Manaar. That I was further directed to inform His Imperial Majesty that, though the intended peeling of Cinnamon was not great, yet our peelers had convinced us that they met with no hindrance which was very pleasant and agreeable to all concerned, and further, that we, on our side, were not less ready in accommodating the King's servants at the Salt-pans, adding that we also, in like manner, expected the same for our Cinnamon-peelers by virtue of the VIIIth. Article of the Treaty. Thereupon the first Adigar of the Kingdom said that he would not at present speak to His Imperial Majesty touching the salt, but that he would do so as regards the other matters, and without waiting for a reply he began to address His Imperial Majesty touching the Cinnamon. The answer of His Imperial Majesty upon the first article was to this effect: that on my arrival at Colombo I was to convey to Your Excellency on his behalf his friendly thanks for the congratulations offered on his marriage and the satisfaction he experienced at the steps taken by Your Excellency to convey His Royal Bride from Karikal to Manaar. And upon the second article, that during this year also Cinnamon could be peeled in the same manner as during the last year. It was near one o'clock when the Audience was over, after which the gentlemen Court-Officers invited me to the Banqueting Hall.¹ I accepted the invitation, and after being there for a little while I walked over to the Esplanade, where the first Adigar of the Realm and other Court Officers followed me immediately, and they conducted me further to the place where it was customary for the Adigar of the Realm to take leave of the Ambassador. I then pursued my journey, and at half past three o'clock in the morning arrived at my lodgings, together with the Vedikkare Mobottar and two other Court Officers who were given to me to conduct me to Ganooruwe.

On Monday the 12th February, at six o'clock in the evening, two Court-Officers arrived to enquire in the name of His Imperial Majesty after my health.

On Wednesday the 14th February the Court-Officers who were left with me received orders to conduct me in the evening to the Palace for the second Audience. To carry out these instructions, at half past 5 o'clock in the evening there arrived Ehelepole Ralehamy, Dissawe of Udalapate, together with two other Court-Officers with whom I started for Kandy, and, as before, was received by the second Adigar of the Realm at the aforesaid Banyan Tree. I then for the first time spoke to him touching the sale of Elephants, and received as answer that that was not the place to speak on the subject, and that when they reached the Court, an opportunity would be given to me to do so, upon which I replied that he was right; but that I took this opportunity of speaking on the subject as he absented himself at the first Audience. Upon this he conducted me to the Court, where in the presence of all the Court Officers, I repeated to him my sentiments on the subjects of the sale of Elephants and referred to the contents of Your Excellency's letter of the 3rd instant, and with all earnest solicitations I made them understand

that in case the Court demanded any profit from the Hon'ble the Company, some other source of profit should be given to the Company in return. and that if the Court wished to share in the trade of Elephants the Emperor should in like manner throw open all his Territories to the peeling of Cinnamon without restricting the privilege to Three and Four Korles. Saffragam and Seven Korles only. That such a privilege would entail no less whatever, whereas on the contrary the sale of Kandyan Elephants was more or less a loss to the Company, as it seldom happened that the Company could sell all the Elephants purchased by it. That when the Cinnamon peelers were allowed to peel Cinnamon throughout all the King's Territories. Your Excellency would give him all possible assistance to dispose of some Elephants for the King at Jaffna, provided they were of good size and tuskers, as those without tusks and females were difficult of sale. Hereupon they enquired whether I was not in error, and whether I did not mean only those countries in which Cinnamon had been allowed to be peeled before. I answered in the negative and said that all the King's Countries without distinction should be thrown open our Cinnamon peelers. This they insisted could not be done, but that the peeling of Cinnamon should remain as it is. That now the sale of Elephants may take place. This they requested may be communicated to Your Excellency. After this I presented to them with what distinction and respect the King's Ambassadors were treated at Colombo, and that it was therefore nothing but just that the same respect should be shown to us, especially as the King's Ambassadors were at their departure provided with music and tom-toms. They answered that such was not the case: and that it was not in their power to do so, but that nevertheless they would represent the matter to the King. I informed them that unless this request was complied with they could not expect tom-tom or music at their departure from Colombo. Afterwards I was conducted before the King, who, after making some complimentary remarks, told me that, having read Your Excellency's letter, he found some very agreeable things therein, and that it gave him great pleasure to peruse it, after that, having received permission to depart, I came out of the Audience Hall, and stood among the Court-Officers and by order of His Majesty they informed me that the Headman of the Mahabadde caused Tom-toms to be beaten in the King's dominions and went round tom-toming in an unusual manner, which could not be allowed, and that they had written on the subject two or three times to the Great Dissawe of Colombo, but had till now received no answer, and requested me to inform the same to Your Excellency, in order that such a practice may not be continued.

Second. That touching the boundaries of the Saffragam and Hewagam Korles, an error of two and three quarter miles had taken place, and that I was requested to mention this matter also to Your Excellency so that competent persons may be appointed on both sides to enquire in this matter, in the same manner as was done touching the boundaries between the Hina corle and the Three and Four corles.

Third. That there still existed some differences with the Court which should have been settled at the time, but they wished in the meantime that Your Excellency should settle the first, and by that means give the Court an opportunity to show more favour to Your Excellency. I promised to inform Your Excellency of the same, but added that, in case the Court had first given satisfaction, its requests could have been addressed direct to Your Excellency, and to no other quarter. Touching the request made at the first Audience upon the points which are not yet settled, they replied that they had been settled before. I mentioned that a merchant of Bengal had assured Your Excellency that, in order to make a profit any where, no more than Rds. 50 would be given for a picul of Elephant tusks. They said that that was right, but that they mooted the subject as the price was heretofore higher. After which I again at the request went to the Hall of refreshment and after remaining there a little while I returned, and was by the first Adigar and other Court Officers conducted to the aforesaid Banyan Tree in the middle of the City. From this point I returned together with the Nanayakkara Mohottale, and two other courtiers about four o'clock to the Rest House.

On Thursday the 15th. February, at two o'clock in the afternoon, came the chief Adigar of Kandy, and the Court Officers went with me and met him at the steps leading from the river. Having arrived at the Rest House he intimated to me His Majesty's order to prepare for my departure. I departed at 4 o'clock from hence and the first Adigar and other gentlemen accompanied me in a very satisfactory manner to the place where he first received me. Here he brought forward a tusked Elephant which he said His Majesty has made a present of, at the last Audience. After the usual compliments I took leave of the Imperial Minister, and with the Weddekare Mohottale, the Rataralee of Tumpane, and Ireeyagama, I set out on my returned journey, and arrived at half past eight o'clock in the night at Wallawagodde and on the 19th. February at Sitawaka, where I took leave of my companions, wishing them a speedy and safe return; and having again set out on my journey, I had happiness on Tuesday the 20th day of February, in the afternoon to appear before Your Excellency, and give an account of my commission and deliver my Report.

I close this Report, commending Your Excellency to the protection of the Almighty: and I beg, with all possible regard and respect to subscribe myself.

Right Hon'ble and Respectful
Sir,

Your Excellency's Most Obedient
and Humble Servant,

F. A. PRINS.

Note by Editor :—

A misprint in the penultimate sentence in the earlier part of this article (page II of Vol. LIII, No: 1 & 2), is regretted. It should read: This translation is the one that appeared in the "Examiner", and is said to have been obtained from a Kandyan gentleman who found it in the *Hallangoda Walauwe in Dumbera*.

APPENDIX

GENEALOGY OF THE PRINS FAMILY OF CEYLON

(I)

Cornelis Arnoldus Prins was a relative of Willem Prins, Secretary to the Court of Directors of the Dutch East India Company and was sent out of Ceylon by him. In the roll of the Company's Servants of 1720, found in the Colonial Archives of Holland, the name of Cornelis Arnoldus appears as "Adsistent" at Trincomalie. It also says that he entered the Company's service as "Soldaat Aan de pen" in 1703 and that he came from Galle to Trincomalie. Eventually he rose to the office of "Secretaries van Politie en Justitie" at Trincomalie. He had a son Francois Albertus Prins.

(II)

Francois Albertus Prins who married

- (1) Jongvrow Johanna Cornelia Suijk on the 13th February 1742.
- (2) Jongeockter Johanna Lydia Tijewitz on the 8th. October 1769.

1734 He joined the O.I.C. Service as Soldaat Aan de pen

1744 He became Vaandig

1754 „ „ Lieutenant

1757 „ „ Kaptein

1767 „ „ Major

1770, January 15th. he was sent as "Gesant" or Ambassador to the King of Kandy.

He died in 1779.

In the Dutch Colonial Archives Vol. No. 5114 the last will of Francois Albertus Prins and his wife Johanna Lydia Tijewitz is to be found and from it, it appears that he had two children.

- (1) Wilhelmina Getrudia, baptized in 1772 married in 1789 to Abraham Cornelis Frobus. Both left for Batavia after the surrender of the Island to the British.
- (2) Cornelis Arnoldus (who follows under III).

(I I I)

Cornelis Arnoldus Prins was baptized in Colombo on 15th. December, 1770. At the time of the surrender of the Island, he was holding the post of "Bockhouder". He took service under the British as "Proctor for Prisoners and Paupers" and acted for sometime as Advocate Fiseal. He married (1) Maria Cornelia Walles, also known as Maria Cornelia Deegan and had one child, Aletta Johanna Magdalena but mother and child died soon after; (2) Gerraidiana Maria Goldestein and by her:—

1. Cornelis Arnoldus
2. Francois Albertus Wilhelm (who follows under IV)
3. Johannes David Theobald (who follows under V)
4. Arnoldus Hermanus Ernst
5. Charlette Wilhelmina Aletta
6. Henri Carmichael (who follows under VI)
7. George Richard
8. Platina Ottalina & William Rudd.

(I V)

Francois Albertus Willem m Petronella Theodora Vander Straaten. He had by her:

1. Francis.
2. Charlotte Frances m W. M. Conderlag
3. Francis Albert m Adeline Muller
4. Eugene Godwin
5. Agnes Catherine m A. van Cuylenburg
6. Georgiana Maria m Kriekenbeck

(V)

Johannes Daniel Theobald m Henrietta Cornelia Ferdinands. He had by her:—

1. John Frederick m Elizabeth Hortensia Dornhorst
2. Phillip (went to India)
3. Richard Theobald m S. E. Newman
4. Son settled in New Zealand
5. Clara Henrietta m David Ernest de Saram
6. Edward H m Louisa Mariana Dornhorst.

(VI)

Henry Carmichael m Ulrica Wilhelmina Reekerman and had by her:—

1. Maria Elizabeth m William Wright Beling
2. Hennela Eleanor
3. Cornelis Arnoldus
4. John Henry
5. Clara Amelia.

NEWS AND NOTES

Pybus :—

In 1762, when the maritime regions of Ceylon were in the hands of the Dutch, the British East India Company at Madras endeavoured to enter into diplomatic relations with the Kandyan King. They entrusted the mission to a Mr. Pybus, who after undergoing much tribulation, (which is all told in a diary this envoy kept) eventually reached Kandy. He vividly describes his audience with the despot in the historic Audience Hall of the Kings of Kandy.

Appropriately enough, it is a night scene, for the Kandyan Kings held their receptions in that hall, at night-time, being doubtless conscious of the greater mystery and scenic effect that could be produced by doing so. It was about 11-30 p.m. before he got near the King's Palace, and it must have been long past midnight before "at length a white curtain at the door was drawn up, behind which, a few yards advanced in the hall, was a red one, and so on for six different curtains which discovered the end of the hall, where was a door with another white curtain before it. A few minutes afterwards, this was drawn, and discovered to us the King seated on a throne, which was a large chair, handsomely carved and gilt, raised about three feet from the floor".

"Upon the drawing of this last curtain" Pybus writes, "I continued standing with the silver dish (on which reposed the letters he carried) on my head, till I was pulled down by the skirts of my coat, and forced to kneel upon one knee on the bare ground. The hall had five larches formed across it, with bamboo or some other kind of wood, which were covered with white muslim, intermixed with pieces of red silk spotted Bengal handkerchiefs, puffed much in the same manner as a lady's ruff for her neck. The walls, ceiling and floor were all covered with white cloth, and I should have been well enough pleased with the appearance it made, had I been in a more agreeable situation".

Pybus eventually returned to Madras, having actually accomplished very little.

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Boyd :

Twenty-one years later a much better known personage, Mr. Hugh Boyd-long reputed to be the author of "the Letters of Junius"—appeared in this same Audience Hall on a similar mission from the Madras Government early in 1782. He too describes the "long hall almost covered with a fine large carpet; the ceiling divided by arches that extended from side to side. Within the pillars were ranged the courtiers, sitting, in their

fashion, on their heels. The whole terminated in a large alcove, retired within which was a very high throne, and His Majesty seated on it with much solemnity. The removal of the curtain was the signal for our obeisances. Mine, by stipulation, was to be only kneeling."

The embassy took place during the American war of Independence, after France and then Holland had come into the struggle as enemies of Britain. On Boyd's return to Trincomalee from Kandy he found that the warship in which he was to have embarked had already sailed to join the main squadron under Sir Edward Hughes, who was fighting a series of stubborn engagements with the French Admiral Suffren. Boyd, therefore, chartered a trading vessel on April 10th and embarked for Madras. But, the next day he was sighted on the high seas by a fast enemy ship "La Fine" (Captain le Chevalier de la Corne) who gave chase and swiftly overhauled him. Capture was certain, so Boyd flung his papers overboard. But they were still floating when the Frenchman came up and fished them out of the water. Later they passed to the Dutch and are now preserved in the Archives (Codex No. 3404) deeply stained with brine and illegible in parts.

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The Press in Ceylon:—The following gleanings may not be without interest when so much is being said and written today about the Press in Ceylon. The art of printing was introduced to Ceylon by the Dutch East India Company in 1734, when van Imhoff was Governor. Publications were mainly of a religious nature and credit goes to the Dutch for producing the first Sinhalese book. The *Sinhala Sebeede*, as also the Bible and the gospels in Sinhalese.

When maritime Ceylon capitulated in 1796, the printing presses were delivered up to the British "with all other effects" under Article 2 of the terms of capitulation. For some time thereafter when Ceylon was being administered from Madras, printing was a Government monopoly. Three months after Ceylon had been made a Crown Colony in January, 1802 the "Ceylon Government Gazette" was started. It was published every Saturday and Wednesday. Important local news, and extracts from English and Madras papers were printed and issued as a Supplement to the Saturday issue.

The English reading public at that time was small and consisted of only a few British merchants and the garrison. The English planter did not arrive until a quarter of a century later, and of the permanent inhabitants of the Burgher, Sinhalese and Tamil communities, only a very few were familiar with English at that time. Howbeit, even that restricted circle of reader was apparently not satisfied by the "arts of governing and trading" laid down in the Supplement to the Government Gazette, but it continued to appear, much as it did originally and is still going, like ancient Gaul divided into three parts, each duller than the rest; with innovation to meet the language tangle,

Nevertheless, the circumstances which made printing a Government monopoly appear to have broken in 1814; when the Wesleyan Mission set up their presses and improved printing by substituting metal type for the wood-blocks hitherto used. Most of the publications by them too were of an ecclesiastical nature.

The first newspaper which laid claim to be independent of Government, was the "Colombo Journal." It appeared in 1832, was edited by George Lee Superintendent of the Government Printing Office, was set up in Government type by Government compositors, and printed on the Government printing press. The public were well aware that Sir Robert Wilmot Horton who had taken office as Governor a year before this paper made its appearance, had initiated it. Lee denied that the *Journal* was a Government paper, and that the Governor—of whom it was said: "he was never happy unless he had a newspaper controversy on his hands", controlled him as Editor, and this, notwithstanding the fact that he was assisted by Henry Tuffnel the Governor's Private Secretary and son-in-law! Government servants supported the paper but the public, especially the merchant community, complained that it treated them with "disrespect and marked discourtesy." This led to an order from the authorities in England for the discontinuance of the paper, permitting it however to continue publication till private enterprise⁹ supplied an independent newspaper.

Private enterprise was slow at stepping in to undertake the task for some time, so the *Journal* continued to appear until the last day of December 1833 when it ceased publication after a run of two years.

Meanwhile, as there was a clear demand for a free newspaper, the merchants of Colombo joined by the planters who had by now arrived, entered the open field of private enterprise by publishing the "Observer and Commercial Advertiser" which made its first appearance on the 4th of February, 1834.

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Monuments of The Dutch Period:—Consequent to the adoption by the State Council of a motion by Mr. G. A. H. Wille, the Government, in 1941, decided that the Archaeological Commissioner is the appropriate authority to be in charge of the maintenance of the historic relics of the Dutch occupation of the Island. Up to that time, the only "historic relics of the Dutch occupation" which were looked after by the Archaeological Department were the Fort at Katuvana and the remains of the Fort built on the site of Rajasinha's Palace at Sitavaka. The reason for this is that it was hitherto considered that the Archaeological Department should interest itself only in such monuments as have been abandoned and are in a ruined condition. Most of the buildings dating from the Dutch period are found in towns like Galle and Jaffna and cannot be described as ruins. Dutch churches are still used for religious worship, and the different religious bodies, in whose charge they are, see to their proper maintenance. A considerable number of Dutch buildings have been utilised by the Government as offices or residential quarters, and their maintenance has been the responsibility of the Public Works Department. The original character of many of this

class of buildings has been obscured by later additions and they are therefore of little interest as historical relics. The Forts at the various coastal towns, notably Jaffna, Galle, Matara and Trincomalee, constitute, to the student of history, the most impressive, durable and characteristic monuments which bear witness to the commercial and political activities of the Dutch in Ceylon during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These Dutch Forts constitute, in towns like Jaffna and Galle, one of the principal civic amenities and impart to them an individuality which makes the strongest impression on the mind of the visitor. The ramparts, however, perform but little of useful functions today and, in accordance with the utilitarian philosophy which guides our actions, they have at best been permitted to exist where they do not come in conflict with the necessities of modern life. Their maintenance had been entrusted to the Public Works Department.

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Dutch Churches at Kalpitiya & Mannar:—These two

buildings are at present the property of the Church of Ceylon; but, as the *Christian congregation of that denomination at the places is limited to a very few individuals*, the Church authorities do not consider it justifiable on their part to incur the expenditure necessary to keep these historic buildings in proper repair. The Church at Kalpitiya has many points of interest to the antiquary. It appears to have been built in the early period of Dutch rule and contains within it a number of tombstones of historical interest. Its facade with a gable end crowned with pyramidal turrets and scroll moulded features is characteristic of Dutch architecture. The Church at Mannar is less interesting architecturally than that at Kalpitiya, but is worth preserving for its historical associations. Both buildings were in a sadly neglected condition and their maintenance by the Archaeological Department was sanctioned by the Executive Committee of Education. Both have been declared to be "protected" under the Antiquities Ordinance.

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Ancient Monuments:—The following Dutch buildings were considered to be ancient monuments for the maintenance of which the Archaeological Department ought to be responsible:—

1. The Ramparts at Galle
2. The Star Fort at Matara
3. The Ramparts at Jaffna
4. The Dutch Church in the Fort, Jaffna
5. The Fort at Kayts
6. The Fort at Pooneryn
7. The Old Dutch Cemetery, Jaffna
8. The Ramparts of the Fort at Mannar
9. The Dutch Church in the Fort at Mallar
10. The Ramparts of the Fort at Batticaloa
11. The Dutch Fort at Kalpitiya
12. The Dutch Church at Kalpitiya
13. The Fort at Ratnapura.

The transfer was effected from the commencement of the Financial year 1945-46.