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# Journal of the Dutch Burgher Union of Ceylon.



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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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— THE —  
**DUTCH IN CEYLON**

**VOL. I.**

BY  
**R. G. ANTHONISZ, I. S. O.**

*Copies may be had at the D. B. U. Hall  
at Rs. 5 each.*

**Journal of the  
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**A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.**

To go back a hundred years is to travel beyond the limits of ordinary human experience to a period regarding which we must depend for information on tradition and written record.

It was exactly a hundred years ago that Queen Victoria was called to the throne. But though that good Queen reigned for over sixty years, and even reached the threshold of the present century, "The Victorian Age" is a phrase which bears an old-world flavour.

A hundred years ago was only forty-one years after Dutch rule had ceased in Ceylon and when many of those who had transferred their allegiance to the British were still alive.

Among the outstanding events which occurred in Ceylon in 1837 were the commencement on a systematic scale of coffee cultivation in the hill country and the publication of Turnour's translation of the Mahavansa.

"The Ceylon Almanac and Compendium of Useful Information for the year 1837" was no doubt a very excellent publication in its day, but it is now of far greater interest to us, a hundred years later. It helps us to compare and contrast Ceylon as we know it now, with Ceylon a century ago.

Our Public Holidays are now devised on a liberal scheme to the satisfaction of the various communities and religious bodies in Ceylon. But a hundred years ago, the only holidays the Government Service knew were the following :

New Year's Day  
Ash Wednesday  
Good Friday  
Easter Monday and Tuesday  
Ascension Day

Her Majesty's Birthday  
 Her Majesty's Coronation Day  
 Prince Albert's Birthday  
 Prince of Wales' Birthday  
 Christmas day and two days subsequent.

It is true that some of these holidays have now disappeared, but the sum total of holidays under the new order leaves the Government service definite winners.

We have been so habituated to the "penny post" that it would be difficult for us to realise that a hundred years ago the postage of a letter from London to Scotland cost over a shilling. At this time, our rates for inland postage in Ceylon, which were calculated according to distance, varied from one penny for a distance not exceeding 10 miles to twelve pence for a distance exceeding 210 miles.

A hundred years ago Ceylon was divided into five provinces, the Northern, the Southern, the Eastern, the Western and the Central. At a time when economy in administration is so necessary, what an immense saving would result from a reversion to the old divisions. Think of the reduction in the personnel of the Public Service if the main administrative units were reduced from nine to five. Besides, we now live in an age of railways, motor-cars, telegraphs and telephones, and India has taught us the lesson that the effective administrative unit is very much larger than the one we are used to in Ceylon.

Even a casual glance at the Ceylon Almanac for 1837 reveals the fact that the locally recruited men, whose names appear as Proctors and members of the Public Service, are nearly all Burghers. The Burghers were the first to realise the advantages of an education in English and their names ranked high for integrity and efficiency of service.

There were three Judges of the Supreme Court, Sergeant Rough, Chief Justice, and Jeremie and Stoddart, Puisne Justices.

V. W. Vanderstraaten was Registrar and P. A. Loos and J. L. Cramer, Deputy Registrars.

There were then no Advocates, but the roll of Proctors practising in the different parts of the island was largely filled by members of well known Burgher families,

One of the District Judges of Colombo was C. E. Layard, who owned "Mount Layard", Kalutara, later known as "Teak Bungalow." He married a Dutch lady, Barbara Bridgetina Mooyart, by whom he had 26 children.

Another of the District Judges of Colombo was C. R. Buller, after whom Buller's Road is named.

The Burghers who were in the Judicial Service were J. J. Kriekenbeek, District Judge of Ambalangoda, P. F. Toussaint, District Judge of Point Pedro, and H. G. Speldewinde, District Judge of Chavakachechi.

The medical services were in the hands of a Medical Department and a Vaccine Establishment, at the head of each of which were several European officers, most of whom had obtained the degree of M. D.

Amongst the members of the Vaccine Establishment we notice the name of one who rose later to be Lieut. Col. E. F. Kelaart, M. D. At the time Kelaart was a mere youth, aged 18, with the rank of Medical Sub-assistant and stationed at Puttalam.

There was also Dr. John Garvin, father of Dr. T. F. Garvin and grandfather of Sir Thomas Garvin.

John Garvin aged 17, was then a medical volunteer, stationed at Galle.

In the Medical Department, there is the name of Dr. P. H. van Cuylenburg, Medical Sub-assistant, stationed at Mahara. Dr. van Cuylenburg was father of Sir Hector van Cuylenburg and Mrs. F. C. Loos.

F. C. Grenier, Secretary of the District Court of Jaffna, was father of Sir Samuel Grenier, Attorney General, and F. Dornhorst, Secretary of the District Court of Trincomalee, was father of Frederick Dornhorst, K.C., the famous Advocate.

P. L. de Vos was Superintendent of the Government Printing Office, and Jacobus van der Wall was Deputy Fiscal of Colombo.

There was then no Bishop of Colombo in the Ecclesiastical Department, the Bishop of Calcutta controlling the clergy of the Church of England in Ceylon.

Some of the standout men who were borne on the Establishment were the Rev. J. H. de Saram, M. A., (Oxon), Sinhalese Chaplain at Colombo. He matriculated at Exeter College, 4th June



1817, aged 21, and was created M.A. 20th May 1820. The M.A. degree was recommended by the Chancellor and conferred *honoris causa*.

The Rev. S. W. Dias, Sinhalese Chaplain at Galkisse and Moratuwa, later created Canon, was father of Justice Felix Dias.

The Rev. J. C. Arndt, Portuguese Chaplain at St. Paul's Church, Pettah, was father of the Rev. G. A. H. Arndt, late Sub-Warden of St. Thomas' College.

The Rev. J. D. Palm was in charge of the Dutch Church at Wolvendaal, of which the Clerk, the Organist, the Sexton and the Schoolmaster, were all borne on the Government Establishment.

The Educational Establishment was small but included many men who were famous in their day and generation.

The Colombo Academy under its first Principal, the Rev. Joseph Marsh, was a new-founded institution.

J. W. Spaar, father of the Rev. J. A. Spaar, was English teacher at Panadura.

J. E. vander Straaten, whose courtly manners won him the name of "Sir John" from his friends, was English teacher at Moratuwa. He later joined the Supreme Court Registry.

L. H. Koch was English teacher at Jaffna.

There were 14 roads in the island. Gone are the days when the Lady Boats made their voyages round the island. Gone, just in the same way, is the road round the island, the disused and consequently neglected portions going off the map by degrees.

There is an item in the Domestic Occurrences Column for 1836 over which I wish to linger.

December 25th. At Colombo, Mrs. Marsh, of a son. The infant was J. H. Marsh, son of the Rev. Joseph Marsh, and himself to be, in the fulness of time, Principal of the Royal College.

In January, 1891, I made my debut before him as an Assistant Master of the Royal College. Had he lived, he would be a hundred years old to-day—an appropriate note on which to end my short sketch of a hundred years ago.

E. H. V.

## LAND TENURE, REGISTRATION AND SURVEY IN DUTCH TIMES.

BY R. L. BROHIER.

(A paper read at a meeting of the Surveyors' Association of Ceylon, enlarged and annotated for publication in the D. B. U. Journal, by the author).

The machinery of administration for the tenure, registration and survey of lands, effected by the Dutch in Ceylon, had reference primarily to the agricultural lands and the revenue derivable therefrom. As the Portuguese before them, so the Dutch too at the beginning, were not slow to see the advantages of maintaining the ancient system of tenure to which the people were accustomed during the times of the Sinhalese Kings. Accordingly, in a general sense, property within the conquered territory was held at the will and pleasure of the Dutch East India Company as Lord Paramount, under the system established from time immemorial. That is to say, the possession of land was the foundation of the Company's right to the services and the contributions of the people. Entire villages were settled on the Headmen, who as a rule were paid no salaries, but derived the rights and dues usually rendered by the village community to the Chiefs of the village in the past. Such grants of land were called *accomodessa* or sustenance lands, and were measured out or divided roughly into classes on a basis of fertility. From the proceeds of these lands the Headman, who was nominally village lord, was expected to support himself and maintain his dignity.

The *majoraals* or husbandmen working under the village lords were granted *Duwels* or exemptions for which they paid no impost, in return for the services they performed to their village lords, or other officials of the Dutch Company who passed through the District.

Besides these grants, other grants were classified as *Ande*, meaning lands from which half the produce was to be delivered to the Company, and *Ottoe*, meaning lands from which only the tenth part of the produce was delivered. There were also grants which fell under the term *Paravenies* or private lands. I have already shown that no lands were private in the present acceptation of the term, because the Company always retained some claim on them

whether they were *paraveni* lands or *accomodessans*, or even if sold outright by the Company. The *paraveni* lands descended from parent to children under the conditions attached to the original grant. Other curious conditions were attached to the possession of property. The smiths were in some instances to present the Dutch Dissave every year with a knife or a hatchet, the potters with a pot, sometimes annual payments on specified lands were compounded by furnishing straw mats and sometimes by a certain number of cakes of jaggery.

A Dissave is a Chieftan, and in the times of the Sinhalese Kings the sub-ruler over a portion of the Island. The Portuguese continued the practice of placing the Government of the low lands under Dissavas. The Dutch borrowed the term, since the people of the maritime zone were quite used to it, and appointed the Company's servants to the office. There were two Dissavonies—Colombo, extending from Negombo to the Bentota River; and Matara, which included the two Giruwa Pattus. The Dissave, who was chosen from among the Company's servants and held rank next to that of the Commandeur, was primarily Land-regent, and settled all disputes and disagreements relating to all the lands within his jurisdiction. The Land-regent was assisted by a tribunal, which was known as the Land-raad, for settling the more serious disputes.

This was known as the *Oely* service. A Dutch Governor, commending the system to his successor, was prevailed upon by thrifty instincts to suggest that "although this is a small matter, yet these things come in very handy for the store-houses, while otherwise money would have to be spent on hatchets and mats, an expenditure which could be thus avoided". The intention behind all these several aspects of tenure appears to have been the same, namely, to maintain the conditions and customs under which property was originally held.

The following extract from the instructions to the Dissave holding jurisdiction over the Colombo Dissavony would imply that the Company trimmed their policy to suit the special circumstances as applied to each area. "Because nearly all the lands in this jurisdiction are de-populated, abandoned and laid waste, we have no need to follow any old laws, customs or practices of the Sinhalese in cultivating them, but may be guided by such regulations as may be made in the interests of the Company and for the welfare of the Island". (Instructions touching the Government of the Island 1656-1665, Translated by Sophia Pieters).

This system of tenure would appear to have operated for nearly a century of Dutch occupation, when an attempt seems to have been made to replace it by a more progressive system of

settlement eliminating the village lord. In effect, the relations subsisting between the village lord and tenant was to give place to direct relations between the Company's officials and the tenant. By this means more attention would necessarily be directed towards the individual. The motive for this change would appear to have originated from the instructions left by one of the Dutch Governors—Van Imhoff, to his successor. Having outlined the evils of the system in vogue, whereby the chiefs were rewarded with revenues of villages *en bloc* and with gifts of lands, Governor Van Imhoff stressed that "liberality such as this, is like giving away not only a branch from a tree where another will grow again, but like cutting its roots and allowing the tree itself to die". "Lands", he declared, "should never be entirely given away".

Memoir left by Gustaaf Willem Baron Van Imhoff, Governor and Director of Ceylon, 1736 to 1740, translated by Sophia Pieters.... See page 26 et seq for fuller details.

It so came about that alienation of land was suspended, the *accomodessans* in the possession of a deceased holder were taken back, and by a system of leasing, direct to the husbandman, were turned to the profit of the Company.

Extract from a letter dated 24th September, 1745, in which the Government of Batavia lays down clearly its revised policy as regards the alienation of Crown lands in Ceylon:—"The case may be mentioned of that in the village Bommerie, where sale took place notwithstanding that in the year 1740 positive orders had been issued from here totally forbidding any alienations on such a footing.. the land must be recovered by the Company.. all other lands sold or alienated since the order... must in like manner be taken back... so also must all the mistakes previous to that be remedied in a suitable way." (Report on Dutch Records—Anthonisz R.G., p. 76.)

For their services a Maha Mudaliyar was allowed 20 ammunams of sowing land, a Mudaliyar 12 ammunams, a Muhandiram 8, an Arachchi 6 and a Vidane 4. In exceptional cases the grants were enhanced and other privileges were added to the dignity.

Inasmuch as the system of land tenure was borrowed from the Sinhalese by the Portuguese and the Dutch, the system of registering lands and the tithes payable thereon was modelled on the *Lekam-miti*, or the registers of persons liable to regular service, which were kept by the chiefs of the Provinces in the time of the Sinhalese Kings. The Portuguese, in adopting the system of classifying the holding in each village and entering them in a

register, included among other entries what the villagers were obliged to yearly render to the Lord of the Land, for the property which they possessed.

Their rents were entered in a companion register called the Foral. For a description of the Portuguese Thombus and Forals see page 21 et seq. Vol. XXXI, No. 81, Journal of the R.A.S. (Ceylon Branch), Feudalism in Ceylon, by E. Reimers.

The Dutch Thombus or Land Registers now extant in the Archives are based on a system borrowed from the Portuguese, the name Thombu itself being an adoption of the Portuguese word *tombo* meaning a register.

Rather strangely, the old Portuguese Thombus, which would necessarily have been of much value to the later conquerors of the maritime zone, are said to have disappeared from the Dutch Secretariat soon after the Dutch had started to compile their land registers. The Private Secretary to the Dutch Governor de Heer, who had to face the charge of having made away with these Portuguese land registers, defended himself with the plea that they were "pieces and fragments" saved from the ravages of white ants, and being of little value were burnt on the orders of the Head of the Government. Governor de Heer having died very suddenly at Colombo, while holding office, had unfortunately left no memoir to his successor. The Secretary, who necessarily had to defend himself, was accordingly held solely responsible for the loss, on the finding that he, having custody and care of those papers, had allowed them, first, to suffer damage by neglect, and then, without apparent authority, had destroyed the evidence of his own laxity.

This incident is referred to by the historian Valentyn, who records that about the year 1700, Portuguese Thombus which were of "priceless value" to the Dutch were destroyed through the arbitrary act of Governor Gerrit de Heer, upon whose verbal orders they are said to have been burnt by the Private Secretary and Dissawe Gerrit Van Toll. Governor de Heer, died in 1702. Van Toll was shortly afterwards promoted Commandeur of Galle. Governor Simons, who succeeded de Heer, called upon Van Toll in 1702 to answer certain charges of misconduct during his tenure of office as Private Secretary. Among other charges was that of his having made away with the Portuguese land registers. (See pages 3-4, Report on Dutch Records. Anthonisz.) There is also a reference to this in the Memoir of Governor Simons to his successor Hendrick Becker, p. 15.

The Dutch Thombu or Land Register is divided into two parts, one is called the Hoofd or Head Thombu, the other the Land

Thombu. The Hoofd or Head Thombu is a genealogical register of the proprietors of the land distributed in the corresponding Land Thombu. It was called the Head Thombu because in each case names are tabulated under that of a head or representative of the family. The method of describing kinship between the person who claimed to be the head of the family, and the other family claimants whose names appeared on these registers, is specially interesting. For instance, there are such quaint entries as, "father's, brother's, son's, son"; or, Grandfather's, sister's, son". Whereas to the European, the word "father" denoted his male parent alone, the Ceylon *majoraal* or husbandman applies the term *appa* or father, with the prefix, *loku* (major) and *kuda* (minor) to his father, to all his uncles on the paternal and maternal side, and also, to all his wife's uncles. Again, the terms *ayiya*, elder brother, and *malli* or *malaya*, younger brother, are applied to all persons of the family who are male cousins from the European standpoint. On the same basis, an equal measure of uncertainty attaches to the term mother, sister, uncle or aunt. This elasticity in tracing kinship, which has grown by custom and tradition on the Sinhalese inhabitants of Ceylon, indicates the obvious necessity for the detailed entries which are a feature of these Hoofd Thombus compiled by the Dutch.

The Land Thombus are registers showing the lands belonging to each family entered in the Hoofd or Head Thombu. They are classified according to Korales, Pattuwas and Villages. The high and low lands are described separately. I have already premised that all the lands were assessed on a basis of fertility. The extents of high lands are therefore expressed by the number of coconut, jak or arecanut trees growing on the land. In the case of the low lands or sowing fields the extent is stated in *ammunams* and *kurunies*. That is to say, the extent of land which could be sown by the above measure. An *ammuna* is generally taken as six bushels in the low-country. A *kurunie* is about 1/8 of a bushel.

An impost known as the *wattu-badde* was chargeable on all the Company's high lands cultivated with or without permission. In the former case a tax was usually levied on one-third of the produce. In the latter case, where cultivation was done without permission, the tax was calculated on half the produce. There are two columns provided in the Thombu to show the extent of waste land and the amount in rix-dollars



Thombu; possessed thus without deduction of Co.'s shares and subject henceforth to the payment of tax.

The Galle Thombus in the local Archives show the genealogical particulars and the corresponding land holding in one and the same volume. That is to say, in columns side by side. The Colombo Thombus, however, are divided into two sets of companion volumes, the one being the Hoofd Thombu, the other the Land Thombu.

The Matara Thombus are not among the records preserved in the Archives. There is almost conclusive evidence that all the Dutch documents pertaining to lands in the Tangalle and Matara Districts were destroyed by the last Dutch Dissave while the British were in treaty for the Island. By this deplorable act, which was misjudged as loyalty, a portion of the island in which public interest in lands was very specially centred in the early days of British occupation was devoid of public documents to help the Government to ascertain the former possessors. "The last Dutch Dissave of Matara was Pieter Willem Ferdinand Adriaan van Schuler, who, as well as his wife Wilhelmina Cathirina Lambruggen, were the victims of a sad tragedy at Galle. . . . they were both assassinated in their bed by a domestic slave. . . . who used his master's own sword, which was hanging on the wall by the bed, for the perpetration of the deed. This he plunged deep into his victim's breast; and the lady, on being roused from sleep by hearing the death groan of her husband, was stabbed in the abdomen as she seized the assassin to prevent his making his escape. The husband expired immediately, but the wife lingered long enough to be able to identify the miscreant and to secure his conviction and execution. . . ."

(Note, p. 6. Report on Dutch Records, Anthonisz).

The foregoing extracts definitely indicate what a great deal of labour must have been expended in compiling the Thombus. As far as it is possible to reconstruct the methods followed, it would appear that in the first instance the lands were inspected by qualified surveyors drawn from the Company's servants. The surveyors had with them two Mudaliyars, who arbitrated on minor matters which were brought up by the inhabitants. After the preliminary schedule was drawn up, officers designated the Thombu Commissioners visited each village, collected more information, and heard evidence bearing on disputed claims on the spot. The Thombu-keeper, also a staff officer in the Dutch service, saw to it that all details were duly recorded in the registers.

For further details see page 19, Memoir of Hendrick Zwaardcroon, Translated by Sophia Pieters.

Numerous orders and extracts from the Memoirs of the Dutch Governors may be quoted, which manifest the great attention paid to the compilation of these Thombus, and the precautions taken for their preservation. Regulations provided for the records being kept in the Council Hall, the contents of which were in the custody of the Onderkoopman.

Duplicates of all these Thombus would appear to have been sent under a standing order by the Dutch Government in Ceylon to the Central Government at Batavia.

Such as it is, despite all the care which we are to understand was devoted to preserving these records, there are as far as I have been able to ascertain, no more than fragments and a few readable pages of the earlier Dutch Land registers, available to posterity. The large royal folio volumes of Hoofd and Land Thombus in the Archives are comprised more or less of the results of the later Thombu registration, started about 1740 when the Dutch revised their system of land settlement and registration. That is to say, they are records dating about 60 years prior to British occupation.

The bulk of the documents was kept in the Kachcheries at Galle and Colombo up to about 50 years ago. A clerk, first styled Thombu Holder, according to the Dutch title, and afterwards clerk in charge of Thombus, was placed in charge of them, whose duty it was to issue extracts from them upon the application of parties. In the course of time, when, with the disappearance of the older generation of the Burgher clerks, no one could be found with the requisite knowledge of Dutch to perform this duty, they were collected to form an important part of the Archives on the appointment of Mr. R. G. Anthonisz as Archivist.

At the root of any system of land settlement and registration there must lie some record arrived at by survey. But apparently, with a few very stray exceptions, the term survey as applied to the registration effected by the earlier Dutch Thombus merely implied an inspection of the various lots. No measurements seem to have been made by the qualified surveyors who carried out the preliminary inspection. Extracts from the Thombus written on olas in Sinhalese served as grants covering the right of any individual to occupy and cultivate any portion of land. Extensive areas of smaller allotments were scheduled on what were termed poth-olas which were issued to an overseer.

The following, which is a translation of an ola in Sinhalese relating to a tract of land in the District of Hambantota, will convey some idea of the type of deed referred to. I had occasion to see



this ola deed in the course of my duties, and have specially selected it as typifying the difficulties which beset the early Dutch surveyor in tuning his ear to the spelling of local names. It also indicates the general policy which the predecessors of the British followed to encourage the cultivation of land:—

'To the residents of Tangalle, Gikine Baddenegge Madoemen, who is an employee of the Elephant Department or Badana, is granted the honorific (patabendi) name of Moenstoenge Aatjele, as well as a piece of barren marshy land which brings no profit to the Hon'ble Company called Karre-die-oode-dala-warre-patti-mooroewe situated at Kannoeketti next to the village Heatagalle on the upper side of the water-course or stream called Kalle-metikalupuwa-gilma, which land he must suitably provide with bunds, clear and sow, and report after the lapse of three years how much of it has been sown, in order that the same may be possessed by him.

Thus written at Tangalle.

(Sgd) G. KRASSE,

(Dissava of Matara).

This system of issuing ola deeds and instruments affecting land was necessarily open to considerable abuse. As a matter of fact, one Dutch Governor after another, commenting on the facilities it afforded for the fraudulent alteration of olas, stressed that, in order to bring the system of thombu registration to perfection, an accurate survey, in the sense of measuring each lot with a view to drawing a plan and fixing the boundaries between properties, was very necessary. There are references to many *Laand-Karis* or plans of isolated properties within the limits and on the out-skirts of the larger towns which date from about the year 1665, i.e., from 20 to 25 years after Dutch occupation, but the first instance of an elaborate revenue survey by Dutch surveyors to which we have reference was done about the year 1695. Hendrick Zwaardecroon, the Commandeur of Jaffnapatam, records that "maps are being prepared for each *aldea* or village and each Province, of which our authorities in the Father-land desire to receive a copy."

Translation by Sophia Pieters, page 18

The term Province is frequently used by the Dutch when they refer to a Korale.

It is not quite clear what exactly was the unit of lineal measure adopted by the Dutch surveyors, but the standard adopted for reducing Dutch lineal quantities, locally, is the Rhenish Roede, equivalent to 18.75 links, approximately 12 feet. Where a map or plan was attached to the later grants of land made by the Company, measurements were stated both in the Thombu and on the deed. For instance, "a piece of land and sowing field situated at Livermente, north of Narahenpitti, three hundred and thirty roods from the high road to Galkissa, from *a* to *b* thirty eight roods, from *b* to *c* eighty four roods, from *c* to *d* seven roods, etc...in total extent 17 morgens and three hundred and ninety seven square roods, like as the same was measured by Land Surveyor, Tatik Oliviersz Helt, and figured in the annexed plan".

The Dutch morgen is a little over two acres in superficial measure.

The system of surveying lands by measurement, on a more extensive scale, begun fifty years after the Dutch arrived in Ceylon, was gradually introduced throughout the Maritime Provinces. By the year 1740 complete revenue plans existed of the northern Wannu, from the territory of the Sinhalese King to the sea-shore, and along the latter, up to the farthest end of Mantota. This plan is included in the list of Ceylon maps at the State Archives, at the Hague.

For fuller details of these maps see p. 63 et. seq: "Maps and Plans of Ceylon" E Reimers. (Selections from the Dutch Records of the Ceylon Government, No. 2).

The attempts to push on with the surveys in the Districts round Colombo appear to have been less successful. Governor Loten writes in this connection, "the gardens and fields of the village Attedie, situated in the Salpiti Korale, those of the villages Kosgamme in the Hewagam Korale, the village of Belleene in the Pasdun Korale, the village of Raygam in the Korale (or Province) of that name, and the Vidany of Kelanie situated in the Hina (Siyana) Korale have been surveyed by the sworn land surveyors, and maps and registers made thereof: but the refractoriness of the inhabitants caused this useful work to be interrupted."

Selections from Dutch records, Memoir of Joan Gideon Loten, Translated by E. Reimers,—(See pages 21-23).

A plan of a part of the Salpiti Korale may be inspected in the local Archives, while general maps of the boundaries of

lands showing all cinnamon, coffee, pepper, arecanut and teak plantations in the Siyane, Hapitigam, Alutkuru, Pasdun and Walallawiti Korales are listed among Ceylon records at the Hague.

One of the more recent ambitions of the Survey Department is directed towards securing and building up a Museum of old maps and plans of Ceylon. Perhaps the willingness always shown by the Netherlands Government to furnish copies of any records pertaining to the Island will enable students of cartography to examine these plans locally in the near future.

Extracts from these revenue plans were the precursors of the Title Plan of to-day.

When a new system of surveys was established soon after the British occupation of Ceylon, and a Survey Department was constituted by proclamation dated the 2nd of August in the year 1800, to be exact, provision was made for the relief of persons possessing title deeds on which partial maps had been drawn and issued by the Dutch Government.

The text of the proclamation on this point reads as follows:—

“We allow of their perfect and entire validity, but we order that they deliver them to the Surveyor of the District on his receipt, and that he shall send them to the Surveyor-General, who shall return them with his initials, to be delivered to the proprietor; and that unless they be so delivered by the proprietor to the Surveyor before the 1st of January in the year of our Lord One thousand Eight hundred and Five, they shall from that day lose validity, and a new survey must take place at the expense of the proprietor”.

This carries us from Dutch times to the early days of British occupation. The subject selected for this paper is necessarily a very wide one. I have ventured to considerably compress and present it in tabloid form. I hope the tabloid has been sufficiently sugar-coated.

## CEYLON'S SOLDIER POET.

Like the first Ceylon historian during the British period, the first person to write poetry on the subject of Ceylon was an Army Officer. Captain Robert Percival and Captain Thomas Ajax Anderson both belonged to His Majesty's 19th Regiment of Foot. Born in 1783, Captain Anderson received his commission at the age of sixteen, and appears to have first served in India before coming to Ceylon. On his arrival here he was stationed in Colombo, and having been gazetted Lieutenant on 17th November, 1801, he was in June 1802 quartered in Trincomalee. In accordance with the custom in those days, he married when he was only twenty years of age. He accompanied a detachment of the 19th Regiment that marched with Lieut.-Colonel Barbut's force from Trincomalee to Kandy, but he was fortunately spared the horrors of that expedition, for he was sent back to Trincomalee three months before the massacre. He remained at Trincomalee for a period of four years, after which he left for England on furlough. On his return in 1810 he was sent in military command of Calpentyn, where shortly afterwards he had to stand a trial by court-martial for "having submitted to be told by his Commanding Officer, Lieut.-Colonel Stuart, that he had told a lie, and secondly for not having fulfilled his written promise to leave the regiment within a year of his leaving for England on September 24, 1807". The proceedings appear to have been protracted, for it was not until a year later that, having been acquitted of the first charge, he was publicly reprimanded in respect of the second charge. He again saw active service in the Kandyan War of 1815, having commanded the seventh Division which marched from Batticaloa to Kandy. He was Commandant of Batticaloa in 1815 and 1816. Towards the end of the latter year he left the Army and embarked with his family for England, where he lived until his death which took place on 8th January, 1824, in his forty-second year.

In 1812 Captain Anderson conceived the idea of publishing a book of his poems. He originally intended to call it "Ceylon: A Poem in Three Cantos", but when it appeared in 1817 it bore the title "The Wanderer in Ceylon. A Poem in Three Cantos",

It was dedicated to His Royal Highness the Duke of York. In his preface Captain Anderson explains the circumstances in which the book came to be written. "During the eighteen years that the author in his military career has been doomed to wander over the interesting island of Ceylon, still but imperfectly known to Europeans, numerous objects of beauty and sublimity have presented themselves to his view; these he has often felt an inclination to impress upon his memory, and his feelings upon such occasions have generally prompted him to attempt their delineation in verse preferably to prose; an idle habit, probably first acquired in the long intervals of leisure inseparable from his profession, and perhaps subsequently strengthened by the 'fatal facility' of the octo-syllabic verse". The poem—to quote Mr. J. P. Lewis—"is written in the metre that had recently been made popular by Sir Walter Scot—the octo-syllabic or romantic rhyming measure, adopted earlier by Southey, later by Byron and Tom Moore. It describes Ceylon scenery and life with considerable facility of diction, accuracy and animation, and altogether is a pleasantly written poem—though it is true it may not contain much that can be strictly called poetry..... We have described for us, Colombo at dawn and at midday, with the Fort, the Pettah, Wolvendaal Church, Slave Island, the Kelani River with its mangroves, the harbour with its fishing canoes and dhonies, the paddy field, the huts and boutiques of the natives, coconut topes, the primeval forest, the bo tree, the talipot, the forests and rivers of the dry regions, a rock temple, the Kandyan country, Adam's Peak, the debacle at Kandy in 1803, and its recent conquest, Buddhist temples and rites as contrasted (much to their advantage) with those of the Hindu religion."

Captain Anderson appears to have had an observant eye, and his descriptive verses give us a very good idea of Colombo as it was in the early years of British rule. This is how he describes the Fort of Colombo:—

" Upon that further point of land,  
See yonder frowning fortress stand,  
Whose mould'ring, but majestic walls,  
Its former grandeur yet recalls;  
As when the conquerors of the isle,

First reared the firm commanding pile,  
To keep their slipp'ry footing sure,  
An infant empire to secure;  
To overawe a savage foe,  
And their sup'rior science show!  
Now, like a veteran decay'd  
Who once the sword of valour sway'd,  
You trace upon its ev'ning hour,  
The vestige of its noon-tide power!"

Our soldier poet saw Slave Island in a far more picturesque setting than we do at the present day after the Railway and Lake Development Scheme have done their best to spoil the natural beauty of the place. Of course, as was only to be expected, there is the usual gibe against the Dutch for keeping slaves:—

"Hence let the eye a circuit take,  
Where gently sloping to the lake,  
A smiling, lively scene appears,  
A verdant isle, its bosom rears,  
With many a lovely villa grac'd,  
Amid embow'ring cocos plac'd!  
Here once, to all but int'rest blind,  
The colonists their slaves confin'd;  
But now the name alone remains,  
Gone are the scourges, racks and chains!"

Captain Anderson then proceeds to contrast the colonising methods of the British with those of the Dutch:—

"When Britain sought the eastern world,  
And her victorious flag unfurl'd,  
She came to heal, and not to bruise,  
The captive's fetters to unloose;  
And 'tis her brightest boast and fame,  
That nought is left beyond the name!  
Yet here the African remains,  
Though broken are his slavish chains,  
Prepared to conquer or to die  
For her who made his fetters fly.  
As soldiers of a free-born state,  
He feels his dignity and weight;  
And with alacrity and zeal,  
The sable warrior learns to wheel!"

As is well known, the Kaffirs formed part of the fighting forces in the early days of British rule in Ceylon, the 3rd Ceylon Regiment being composed entirely of men of this race. The Kaffirs have always been known to be a pleasure-loving people, and Captain Anderson gives us a very vivid picture of this aspect of their character:—

“ But view him at the set of sun,  
His military duties done,  
His native glee will then be seen  
In antic frolics on the green ;  
See him with sparkling eyes advance  
To tread his own Mandingo dance,  
And view his smiling jetty bride,  
In cadence moving by his side ;  
Then own no joys the soul can move,  
Like those of liberty and love ! ”

As has already been mentioned, Captain Anderson marched with his regiment to Kandy, and he naturally retained very pleasing impressions of the majestic grandeur of the Kandyan hills, with their terraces of paddy fields:—

“ From scenes thus savage, stern, and wild,  
Where never cultivation smil'd,  
With joy my wearied eyes I rest,  
On yon bright mountain's sunny breast,  
Whose top just rises o'er that cloud,  
Like giant peeping from his shroud ;  
There with unmix'd delight I trace,  
From the tall summit to the base,  
Link after link of length'ning chain,  
Of fair and fertile fields of grain,  
Along its shelving side extend,  
And in the distant valley end !  
While every little rambling rill,  
That once stray'd useless o'er the hill,  
And sprang from many a various source,  
Pursued its independent course,  
Now taught to flow in one broad tide,  
Pours down the mountain's sloping side,  
And to each chain of verdant fields,  
A fertilising treasure yields ! ”

The ill-starred campaign of 1803 against the Kandyans, resulting in the massacre of the British troops and the taking of Major Adam Davie as a prisoner, is thus described:—

“ When Britain in an heedless hour,  
Once strove to bend him to her power,  
And urg'd to wrath by restless men,  
She sought the savage in his den,  
Unguarded, hurried to the field,  
' And snatched the sword, but left the shield ! ”  
How many a widow'd bride that day,  
Bewail'd her country's love of sway ;  
How many a mother mourn'd her child,  
Who perished in that gloomy wild,  
Where famine and disease assail'd  
Long ere the cruel foe prevail'd !  
Oh bitter day ! disastrous hour !  
When yielding to barbarian pow'r,  
And trusting to a despot's pledge,  
All perish'd by the sabre's edge ! ”

The final conquest of the Kandyan Kingdom calls for a more triumphant note, and the poem proceeds as follows:—

“ Let memory with a tearful eye,  
Grant them the tribute of a sigh.  
Gladly I turn my eyes away,  
Where brighter prospects guild my lay ;  
The debt of vengeance long delay'd,  
Hath been at length most amply paid.  
And now the haughty mountaineer,  
Bends at our feet with awe and fear,  
Who for three hundred years defied,  
Two mighty nations in their pride ! ”

Our poet is not very complimentary to the Mudaliyars of his day as will be seen from the lines I shall presently quote. He seems to have himself been conscious of this fact, for in a note he states:—“ It is but candid to declare that there are some striking exceptions to the picture I have given of the Moodeleers as a body, but in general I have found them to merit the character I have ventured to give them, in which opinion I am supported by Major Johnston, who in his narrative, points out some remarkable instan-

ces of their treachery. See Johnston's narrative of an expedition to Kandy in 1804".

"Observe that chief, so proudly drest,  
In purple doublet, antique vest,  
With hanging sleeves depending low,  
And button studded row on row,  
In shape resembling those of yore,  
The conqu'rors of the island wore :  
See at his heels a rabble rout  
Of slaves, to lackey him about ;  
One holds his 'broider'd belt and sword,  
And one the Betel's valued hoard ;  
Another, o'er his well-oil'd head  
Hastes the broad Talipa to spread,  
Like some huge fan expanded wide  
To screen him on the sunward side ;  
Examine well his smirking face,  
In every lineament you trace  
A dull vacuity of mind,  
To sloth, and apathy resigned ;  
Like some bleak common, waste, and bare,  
That never felt the tiller's care !  
Tho' here and there, a scatter'd flow'r,  
Just serves to show its fruitful pow'r."

The descendants of the Portuguese also come under our poet's lash :—

"Here from this elevated ground  
I view the Pettah, stretching round !  
With every narrow lane, and street,  
Where men of many nations meet,  
Moormen, Gentoos, and Cingalese,  
Mix'd with those mongrel Portuguese,  
Who boast indeed the Lusian name,  
But recreant to their father's fame ;  
Their torpid breasts no virtue fires,  
Degenerate sons of valiant sires !  
Unlike the ancient Lusian race,  
Who won the soil their sons disgrace !  
Unlike the race, who at this day,  
Keep Gallia's plund'ring bands at bay !"

Captain Anderson is kinder to the Dutch than he is to the Portuguese, as the following lines will show, his only gibe being against their habit of excessive smoking :—

"Those houses closely wedged in rows,  
Where faint and weak the sea-breeze blows,  
And heat reflected doubly glows,  
While clouds of smoke from every room,  
The stiffening atmosphere perfume,  
The Hollander's abodes declare,  
Those sons of patience, thrift, and care !  
In triumph once their navy bore  
Their flag to many an eastern shore ;  
Once bold and independent ; they  
Have seen their glory pass away,  
And now their free-born spirit broke,  
They groan beneath a foreign yoke ;  
Methinks I view some patriot stand  
Where the firm mole protects the land,  
Survey the scene with sullen pride,  
And as he views the restless tide,  
In fixt despair, I hear him say—  
"These waves once own'd my country's sway,  
"Tho' Britons now exulting reign  
"Unquestioned monarchs of the main !  
"And by a ruthless despot's hand,  
"Submissive falls my native land ;  
"Oh ! galling thought to earthly pride,  
"Fall'n to the power she once defied."

With reference to the last two lines, Captain Anderson states in a foot-note :—"This was written in 1814, but the picture is now happily reversed".

During the early years of British rule in Ceylon the Dutch Church at Wolvendaal was used as a place of worship by the military, and Captain Anderson must have frequently accompanied the troops there. It is not therefore surprising that he should have something complimentary to say of the Dutch who built that ancient edifice :—

"Yon shady slope then let me gain,  
And view that unassuming fane,



That monument of pious hands,  
 A Christian Church in heathen lands!  
 Oh, how it warms my heart to see  
 The founders of this Colony,  
 Amid their perils ne'er forgot  
 The pow'r who led them to this spot;  
 And reared in gratitude this fane  
 To Him who led them o'er the main;  
 Protected by whose watchful hand,  
 They reached at length this wealthy land,  
 From whence their offspring might proclaim  
 To savage tribes His awful name!"

Captain Anderson commemorates in verse the love story, which he declares to be true, of a young Dutch lady whose remains are interred in the Wolvendaal Church:—

"Within that solemn pile are laid,  
 The ashes of an high-born maid,  
 A victim of unhallow'd scorn,  
 Tho' once to princely titles born,  
 And of each female grace possest  
 That could adorn the gentle breast."

Her father, an avaricious old man, wished to give his daughter in marriage to a rich but unworthy suitor, but the girl had already lost her heart to a poor soldier:—

"Her father, haughty, selfish, old,  
 Of looks austere, deportment cold;  
 Whose avaricious hopes, and fears,  
 Increased with his increasing years,  
 Now sternly bade her plight her hand,  
 To one, the wealthiest of the land,  
 But of a base unfeeling mind,  
 A temper sordid, and unkind,  
 Who strove the shrinking maid to buy,  
 Nor sought for kindness in her eye;  
 But she had pledged her virgin truth,  
 To one a soldier from his youth;  
 Whose modest worth, unknown to fame,  
 With no proud lineage grac'd his name!"

The father, a man of some influence, pronounces a curse on his daughter, and orders that the young man should be transferred to Java:—

"A parent's curse attend thy bed,  
 (Thus to the shudd'ring bride he said)  
 Degenerate girl! now hear thy doom,  
 Thy future joyless years consume;  
 And wither that too-fatal bloom,  
 Where noxious exhalations rise!  
 In Java's pestilential skies!  
 Then furious rising from his seat,  
 He spurned the victim from his feet."

The usual result followed. The two young people were married and sailed for Java, where the unhealthy climate soon began to undermine the young lady's health:—

"But Java's unrelenting sky  
 Soon stole the lustre from her eye."

The young couple decide to leave Java for the more salubrious climate of Ceylon:—

"Not Albert's tenderness could save  
 The victim from an early grave;  
 One hope seem'd only to remain,  
 To trust the ocean wave again,  
 And try if some more genial shore,  
 To her flushed cheek could health restore!  
 To renovate her sinking frame,  
 Hither the woe-worn wand'rer came."

But it was too late. The mental anguish from which the young lady was suffering had sapped her vitality, and not even the more favourable climate of Colombo could do her any good:—

"But where can human sience find  
 An opiate for a wounded mind?  
 Like a gaunt fiend, upon her breast,  
 That fatal curse still hourly prest;  
 Fast sinks the poor heart-stricken maid,  
 Vain, vain, is every earthly aid!  
 She bless'd her lover, clos'd her eyes,  
 Then sought her mother in the skies!"

The end is told in a few words. The distracted husband, unable to live in Ceylon, where his dearest hopes had been shattered, returns to Java and dies on the battlefield:—

“ Albert appeared to meet his lot,  
At first, as if he felt it not;  
But in the wond’ring of his eye,  
A solemn purpose you might spy,  
A fearful wildness dwelling there,  
Resulting from confirm’d despair,  
An agonising, bitter scorn,  
That told how deep the rankling thorn!  
Slowly he left the sacred shade,  
Where all his soul’s best hopes were laid,  
Return’d to Java, fought and died,  
And joined once more his injured bride!”

The Cinnamon Gardens in the time of Captain Anderson were what their name implied, and not a fashionable residential quarter as they are to-day. This is how the poet describes them:—

“ View yon uncultivated wild,  
By courtesy a garden styl’d,  
And mark those dark green shrubs that stand  
Upon its level flats of sand,  
Half choak’d with tufts of grass and weed,  
That nearly all access impede,  
And then reflect, as you pass on,  
You view the far-fam’d cinnamon!  
Truth’s sober hand removes the screen,  
And a mere common shrub is seen;  
Then call to mind its wide-spread fame,  
And own the ‘magic of a name!’  
Its aromatic bark ’tis true,  
Is coveted the empire through,  
For what? to spur the appetite,  
And yield an epicure delight;  
While to these simple eyes of mine  
My native shrubs more gaily shine!”

The Pettah Burial Ground must have been a more conspicuous object in Captain Anderson’s day than it is now, encroached as it is on two sides by buildings:—

“ That square, with walls encompass’d round,  
Forms the colonial burial ground,  
How many a restless, plotting brain,  
Its narrow limits now contain!

The mind while fix’d upon this spot,  
Where human grandeur is forgot,  
With rev’rence views the silent scene,  
And ponders what each once has been”.

Captain Anderson seems to have thought the burial ground may have contained the last remains of Portuguese soldiers. According to Mr. J. P. Lewis:—“ There is no sign of any ‘Lusian’ tomb in the place, but it may have been originally used as a burial ground by the Portuguese”. To quote our poet once again:—

“ Some Lusian warriors here may sleep,  
Who boldly ploughed the eastern deep,  
And undismay’d by perils bore  
The cross to many a pagan shore,  
By fierce, but erring zeal impell’d,  
Their daring course undaunted held;  
How swift their empire rose and fell,  
Let history’s mournful records tell!”

Our poet has again a good word to say of the Dutch, though he must have a tilt at them for keeping slaves:—

“ And here those Belgic chiefs repose,  
Who tore the laurel from their brows,  
Who check’d their rival’s proud career,  
And fix’d a rising empire here,  
Till conqu’ring Britain won the gem,  
And fix’d it in her diadem!  
Then pause and in this sober hour,  
Behold the emptiness of pow’r;  
How vanished all their regal state,  
No ready slaves around them wait,  
No sycophants are on the watch,  
Each motion, word, or look to catch;  
Ah no! the fawning minions run,  
To worship at the rising sun!”

There is much more that one would like to quote from Captain Anderson’s delightful book of verses, but space will not permit of this. I will only content myself with reproducing the following lines from his farewell to Ceylon:—

“ For ever, then, Ceylon, farewell!  
The mournful truth remains to tell,  
That thou art fatal as thou’rt fair,  
As other beauties often are,  
That nurtured by thy forceful beam,  
Thy tyrant fever, reigns supreme.”

## THE DUTCH IN CEYLON.\*

BY F. DEKKER.

My last article dealt with the loss of Brazil; the one preceding it with the loss of the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel. Now I come to the loss of Ceylon, once the "costly jewel" of the United East India Company. Involuntarily I recall the words of Multatuli in his narrative regarding Saidja and Adnida:—"Yes, reader, I know that my story is tedious".

There is something very sad in the recollection of all these lost possessions. We have a feeling that the heroes of a great age reproach us with the inquiry:—"What have you done with the inheritance which we strove hard to win and have left behind for you?" It is as if a mirror of the past has been held before us, as Busken Huet has so well shewn in his "Land of Rembrandt".

Yet it is often good to think of those times, especially during periods of national depression, because we are then reminded again and again that we are the descendants of a noble race; not in order to pride ourselves on anything to which we have contributed nothing, but because we feel that nobility imposes obligations.

In Ceylon we find a good many of these reminders of the past. Nowhere are the material remains of the Dutch so plentiful as there.

We come across several Churches belonging to the time of the East India Company in which the doctrines of the Dutch Reformed Church are still preached and its practices observed. We find numerous fortresses standing as witnesses of the bold fights put up by our fathers. In the Churches, the church-yards, and other places we can still read on the monuments the names of a large number of historic persons side by side with those of lesser rank, who have long since been forgotten, but who have all lived, suffered, and fought there.

That many of these monuments of the Dutch period in Ceylon are still maintained with piety is specially due to the Dutch consciousness in a number of the old colonists and servants of the Company. They have become more and more conscious of their race and at the same time have felt the need for closer unity. With this object in view they founded in 1907 "The Dutch Burgher

\* A translation of an article appearing in "Neerlandia."

Union", in the formation of which Mr. Maurits Wagenvoort took an important part. Although the majority of the members were not conversant with their former mother tongue, they chose as their motto "Eendracht Maakt Macht". The number of members of the Union, in proportion to that of the Community, is, in the nature of the case, not large, and cannot be large, limited as the membership is by the constitution, to the descendants of the Dutch and Company's servants of European origin. Yet the Union has already, thanks to the initiative of some enthusiastic members, done much for the Dutch race, for which we must be thankful. It promotes pride of race and a feeling of fellowship among its members in various ways—by holding meetings in the Union Hall at Colombo, where lectures on subjects of deep interest to the community are delivered by competent speakers; by assisting indigent members of the Union; by the holding of classes for teaching Dutch history and the Dutch language; by establishing connections with societies in Holland, e. g., the Algemeen Nederlandsch Verbond; by the holding of festivals for children in order to awaken in them and keep alive the memory of their Dutch ancestors—the feast of St. Nicolaas being regularly celebrated with enthusiasm—while the Union also publishes regularly a magazine "Journal of the Dutch Burgher Union of Ceylon" which is edited with great care, and read with much appreciation. Besides the usual matter to be found in similar Journals, such as a review of the activities of the preceding period or of important events in the life of the Union, the Journal regularly contains articles of first-rate importance, chiefly historical, in which, with great knowledge of affairs and respect, events and great men in the history of the Dutch people, especially in India, are described. The Journal also contains sketches of the lives of many Governors of Ceylon, such as Coster, Maetsuycker, van Goens and others; while events which occurred in Holland, such as celebrating the memory of William the Silent, are not forgotten. Very often the Journal has published articles contradicting untrue historical statements, in which attempts have been made to show Dutch colonial rule in a false light.

Among the foremost men in the Dutch Burgher Union, most of whom have cooperated in the work of the Journal, are some who have also in other ways performed valuable services for the mother-land. The one-time President and founder of the Union,

Mr. R. G. Anthonisz, formerly Government Archivist of Ceylon, took in hand the preparation of a complete History of the Dutch in Ceylon; alas! the work has been temporarily suspended with the publication of the first part running up to 1658, the date of the conquest of Jaffnapatan, death having removed Mr. Anthonisz from his useful sphere of work, and the second part of his fine book has not yet made its appearance. Advocate F. H. de Vos, member of the Society of Literature, Amsterdam, following the publication in 1877 by Leopold Ludovici of "Lapidarium Zeylanicum" containing a description of a large number of monumental remains in Ceylon, with drawings, continued the work and amplified it extensively in "The Monumental Remains of the Dutch East India Company of Ceylon", which he published, in addition to other very important genealogical articles relating to Dutch families in the island. Mr. Anthonisz's successors in the office of President, viz., Dr. H. U. Leembruggen and Mr. E. H. Vanderwall, have followed in the footsteps of their predecessor, and visited this country with the object of acquiring a better knowledge of the Dutch language and of studying Dutch conditions on the spot.

(The writer of this article, no doubt inadvertently, has omitted to mention the name of Dr. L. A. Prins, who succeeded Mr. Anthonisz as President.)—*Ed.*

In my opinion, the praiseworthy efforts of the Union are not receiving the attention they deserve in this country.

That strong race sympathy can go hand in hand with loyalty towards their present rulers was shewn in a striking manner in the Great War of 1914-1918.

"The Roll of Honour", a large brass plate in the Union Hall, mentions, notwithstanding, as already stated, the limited number of members, no less than 150 names of members of the Union who voluntarily served their king in the war. Several of them were killed or died of their wounds.

In the following lines I shall briefly recall to memory the history of the establishment of our rule in Ceylon, and so far as is necessary, make mention of the material remains of the Dutch period.

I will not dwell at any length over the first contact of our compatriots with Ceylon; the arrival in 1602 of the famous Joris van Spilbergen at Batticaloa, on the east coast of the island, and his

attendance on the king of Kandy; how he represented himself as the ambassador of the "King of Holland", Prince Maurits, and in the name of that warrior presented his portrait in oils to the king, who was highly pleased and expressed the wish that the "King of Holland" should come to his help with ships in order to drive the Portuguese out of his kingdom. Nor will I dwell long upon the tragic fate of Vice-Admiral Sebald de Weert, who followed shortly after, and who was at first received in a friendly manner, but was later treacherously murdered, perhaps owing somewhat to his own fault—by tactless behavior and hurting the people in their religious susceptibilities. About Marcellis de Boshouwer, who was placed on the island by the Government in order to keep in touch with the king, and his adventures, I have already dealt with in my article about Denmark.

*(To be continued).*

## SNAKES IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

BY R. A. KRIEKENBEEK.

From the time when the serpent played a diabolical part in the episode wherein Eve succumbed to temptation and created trouble for us all, snakes have had but a sinister reputation in literature. It has taken a long while to live this down, especially as the general aversion in which people hold them has been fostered by poets and prose-writers. All educational efforts to dissipate this bad impression have met with the scantiest encouragement, as Mr. E. G. Boulenger points out in his article, "Need we dread Snakes?" which appeared in *John O'London's Weekly*, on August 22nd. The persistence of the unfavourable impression created by the serpent's first appearance in Biblical literature is shown in these lines from Tom Hood's "Paradise and the Peri:—"

"Some flow'rets of Eden we still inherit,  
But the trail of the serpent is over them all."

References to snakes are fairly numerous in Shakespeare, but it is difficult to judge how far he shared the common antipathy to them. One of his characters, Petruchio, speaks appreciatively of the adder. He declares that its "painted skin contents the eye." But this appreciation is discounted by the remark of another: "What! art thou, like the adder, waxen deaf? Be poisonous, too." And a lady, who suspects that an admirer of hers has slain her favoured lover, reproaches him in these terms:—

"An adder did it; for with doubler tongue  
Than thine, thou serpent, never adder stung."

Perhaps the most famous snakes in literature are those which Cleopatra applied to her breast, in her queenly resolve to thwart the unchivalrous plan of Octavius Caesar, to carry her a captive to Rome, there to figure in his triumphal procession. The words she uses on this occasion have become immortal. She addresses the asp in these terms:—

"Come, thou mortal wretch,  
With thy sharp teeth this knot intricate  
Of life at once untie; poor venomous fool,  
Be angry and dispatch. O, couldst thou speak,  
That I might hear thee call great Caesar ass  
Unpoliced!"

That some modern poets have found inspiration in snakes is proved by D. H. Lawrence, who, in his poem entitled "Snake", has given a dramatic description of a snake he encountered in Sicily. He relates how his admiration for this particular serpent struggled with the instinctive desire common to most people,—a desire to kill any snake whether harmless or not, at first sight. This is how he brings the scene before us:—

"A snake came to my water-trough  
On a hot, hot day, and I in pyjamas for the heat,  
To drink there."

In the deep, strange-scented shade of the great carol-tree  
I came down the steps with my pitcher  
And must wait, must stand and wait, for there he was  
at the trough before me.

\* \* \* \*

Some one was before me at my water-trough,  
And I like a second comer, waiting.

An inner prompting to kill the snake seizes the poet:—

"The voice of my education said to me  
He must be killed,  
For in Sicily the black, black snakes are innocent, the  
gold are venomous.  
And voices in me said, If you were a man  
You would take a stick and break him now, and finish  
him off."

But he resists this impulse, wondering at his own attitude:—

"Was it cowardice, that dared not kill him?  
Was it perversity, that I longed to talk to him?  
Was it humility, that I felt so honoured?  
I felt so honoured."

Yet this feeling changed again, as the snake, after drinking, began to withdraw into the hole whence it had come:—

"A sort of horror, a sort of protest against his withdrawing  
into that horrid black hole,

\* \* \* \*

Overcame me now his back was turned,  
I looked round, I put down my pitcher,  
I picked up a clumsy log  
And threw it at the water-trough with a clatter."



Then he is immediately filled with a sense of shame at his act:—

“ And immediately I regretted it,  
I thought how paltry, how vulgar, what a mean act !  
I despised myself, and the voices of my accursed human  
education.”

He concludes with this reflection :—

“ And so I missed my chance with one of the lords of life,  
And I have something to expiate :  
A pettiness.”

Snakes are so closely associated in the East with snake-charmers who fascinate them by playing weird tunes on a gourd pipe, that my thoughts inevitably turn to Sarojini Naidu's folk-song, *The snake-charmer*. The poetess imagines him to be reproaching the snake for concealing itself in some thicket or other :—

“ Whither dost thou hide from the magic of my flute-call,  
In what moonlight-tangled meshes of perfume,  
Where the clustering “keovas ” guard the squirrel's  
slumber,  
Where the deep woods glimmer with the jasmine's  
bloom ? ”

The snake-charmer is then represented as having recourse to blandishments, couched in these alluring words :—

“ I'll feed thee, O beloved, on milk and wild red honey,  
I'll bear thee in a basket of rushes, green and white,  
To a palace-bower where golden-vested maidens  
Thread with mellow laughter the petals of delight.”

He ends by coaxing the snake to surrender itself to his keeping :—

“ Come, thou subtle bride of my mellifluous wooing,  
Come, thou silver-breasted moonbeam of desire.”

In concluding this article I need only refer to Nag and Nagaina, the two cobras so realistically described by Rudyard Kipling in one of his well-known “ Jungle-Tales ”, for are not the exploits of Rikki-Tikki-Tavi, the heroic mongoose, who valiantly slays the two snakes in succession, familiar to all my readers ?

## NOTES OF EVENTS.

**Honours:** Dr. V. R. Schokman, who did good work in the State Council, has been appointed a Nominated Member of the Colombo Municipal Council, while Mr. Frank E. Loos has been appointed a Justice of the Peace for the Western Province, in recognition of his meritorious service of 42 years under Government. We congratulate these two gentlemen on their well-earned distinctions.

**The King's Coronation:** Along with the other Communities, the Union took its due share in the celebrations connected with the King's Coronation. On behalf of the Union an address was presented by the President and Secretary to H. E. the Governor at Queen's House on 12th May, for transmission to His Majesty. The address, which was artistically executed on a background depicting a map of Ceylon, was in the following terms :—

“ To His Most Gracious Majesty King George the Sixth, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India.

May it please your Most Gracious Majesty—We the members of the Dutch Burgher Union of Ceylon, humbly desire on this the occasion of your Majesty's Coronation to present our most loyal and respectful greetings and our heartfelt congratulations; our grateful sense of the benefits enjoyed by us under your Majesty's gracious rule; our loyal and dutiful assurances of devotion; and our earnest prayer that it may please God to long preserve your Majesty and your Royal Consort in health and happiness.”

In the evening a Children's Party was held in the Union Hall, and at night a Dance and Supper. The Union building was brilliantly illuminated and presented a pretty sight.

**Obituary:** The death of Mr. John van Twest, which occurred with tragic suddenness on the morning of 16th May, has deprived the Community of one of its most valued members. Entering the Public Works Department on 1st December, 1900, as Head Overseer after a course at the Government Factory, which was then the only avenue of admission into the Department, Mr. van Twest, by

sheer merit, rose to be District Engineer and served in some of the most important districts of the island. Wherever he was stationed, Mr. van Twest succeeded in earning the goodwill of the people by his winning ways. He enjoyed a high reputation as an Engineer, and after his retirement his services were requisitioned by the Urban District Council of Matale to supervise the scheme for a water supply.

Mr. van Twest gave of his best to the Union, of which he was an outstation Committee Member for a number of years. His purse was always open to calls on behalf of the Union, and we especially remember the promptitude with which he used to remit his subscription to the *Journal*. On his visits to Colombo he never failed to put in an appearance at the Club and take a hand at bridge, of which he was inordinately fond. We offer our heartfelt sympathy to Mrs. van Twest and the other members of the family.

**Ourselves:** Early last month the President addressed a letter in the following terms to about seventy-five members who are not already subscribers to the *Journal*:

"I regret to find that you are not a subscriber to the D. B. U. Journal and I can only attribute this circumstance to the fact that its claims have not been sufficiently brought to your notice. In the Bulletin for May you will find a statement setting out the salient features of the Journal, and I also referred to the matter in my address at the last Annual General Meeting. It would be a pity indeed if the publication of the Journal had to be suspended for want of sufficient support, and I would therefore invite you to become a subscriber and remit the annual subscription of Rs. 5 to Mr. J. R. Toussaint, the Editor. Your support in this matter will be highly appreciated."

In response to this appeal, only two members have asked to be enrolled as subscribers.

With this issue the *Journal* commences a new volume, No. XXVII. Will those members who have not yet paid their subscription kindly remit the sum of Rs. 5 to Mr. J. R. Toussaint, Muresk, Clifford Place, Bambalapitiya.

## NOTES AND QUERIES.

**Derivation of the word "Dutch".**—We take over the following from "De Halve Maen," the organ of the Holland Society of New York:—

"The name Dutch has a curious history. It is derived from an ancient Teuton noun meaning 'people,' but its first use to denote the speech of the Germanic tribes of North-western Europe did not occur in that speech but in the Latin of Anglo-Saxon missionaries.

"When the Dutch Republic won its independence from Spanish rule, it also obtained, by the Peace of Westphalia, the severance of all ties that bound it officially to the German Empire. The Dutch began to discard the name *Duitsch* for their language. *Duitsch* was German, and the language they spoke was the independent speech of a free nation deserving a name of its own. *Nederduitsch* did not satisfy them; it stamped their tongue as a low form of High German. So its place was taken by *Hollandish*. As a result, in present-day Dutch the word *Duitsch* means exclusively German, and Dutch as a name for the Hollander's speech is exclusively English. But to the Dutchman's annoyance Americans use it also in the sense of *Hollandish Duitsch*, thus obliterating the distinction between Hollander and German."

**Tupasses and Libertines.** Q. In dealing with the past one often hears of Tupasses and Libertines. I should be glad to have an authoritative pronouncement regarding the meaning of these two terms. BÜRGER.

A. John Christopher Wolf, who held office under the Dutch in Ceylon, and who knew the origin of the terms under reference, states of *Tupasses and Libertines* that the former were descended from the slaves made free by the Portuguese, and the latter from such as obtained their freedom from the Dutch. These two classes intermarried among themselves and among the lower orders of the native races of the island and formed a distinct community. We need hardly add that they were never regarded as Būrghers.

**The Introduction of Coffee to Ceylon.** Q. I have heard it said that the Dutch introduced Coffee to Ceylon, but as the statement is sometimes denied, could you furnish some proof to support the real facts of the case? AGRICOLA.

A. Tennant says that coffee existed in Ceylon from the earliest times, but that the Dutch first taught the people how to make a beverage from its berries.

We have however contemporary authority for crediting the Dutch with the introduction of coffee.

The R. A. S. Journal No. 54 of 1903, Vol. XVIII. describes a commemorative medal presented by Governor Rumpf "to Don Simon Wiedjewardene, Mudaliyar, Superintendent of the Bay-gams, Gireways, Catoene, Oedebocke and Kirama, who not only in the ordinary service of master and overseer of the hunt and sowing, but also in *the extraordinary planting of coffee introduced in September 1720*, greatly excelled all the Galle and Matara chiefs in obedient zeal".

**The Dutch and Roads in Ceylon.** Q. Will you be so good as to inform me whether there were any roads in Ceylon in the days of the Dutch, not merely for foot passengers and palanquins but for wheeled traffic. Some persons believe that roads in Ceylon were unknown until the British came here. TRAVELLER.

A. It is a century and a half ago since the Dutch left Ceylon. The fine road surfaces that are now found in most parts of the world were then not known either in Ceylon or elsewhere. But there were certainly roads in Ceylon in Dutch days and good roads to judge by the standards of the time.

Eschelskroon says that the roads made by the Dutch were wide enough for two or three waggons to pass each other.

Welsh's "Military Reminiscences" gives a picture of Ceylon at the end of the 18th century, from which we might quote: "Our first march was to Caltura, twenty eight miles from Colombo—the road which is generally close to the sea-shore being broad and well shaded by coconut and cashew trees."

**Paddy Cultivation and the Dutch.** Q. Many of the paddy lands in the island are suffering from an ill-adjusted distribution of water; either there is too much water and consequent inundation or there is too little water for the requirements of cultivation. Now the Dutch have a great reputation in our day as practical agriculturists. How did they deal with the water difficulties in our paddy lands during their administration? AN OUTSTATION MEMBER.

A. The instructions of Governor van de Graaf on this point to his Successor Governor van Angelbeck contain much information. The following passages are extracted of which the first refers to the great work which has immortalised the Dutch engineer officer, Captain Foenander:—

1. "In the Matara Dissavoney, a great deal of water was turned some years ago from the Matara river into the Giruwa

This occasions a double benefit. In the first place, it supplies a great part of the Giruwa with water, and in the second place,

as there is not so much water as formerly in the river of Matara, the lands situated below the outlet are in proportion less exposed to inundations."

2 "An inquiry has been made as to the manner of discharging the superfluous water from the Gangabodapattu, which contains many fine paddy fields and from the aforementioned land of Devature.

According to the report and drawing received, this work can be done with great hope of success, by giving the river of Gindura near Baddegama another outlet into the lake of Hikkaduwa, which would considerably improve a great number of fields in the Wellabadu Pattu of Galle.

Should this plan which has been sent to the Supreme Government at Batavia for their approbation be executed, the expenses thereof will speedily be reimbursed by the augmentation of the income on paddy, and it will be of the greatest advantage to the inhabitants of the large of Galle by supplying them with grain."— [Ed]

**The Union and the Community.** H. C. R. A. writes:—"I was very pleased to read L. E. B.'s article on the above subject in your last issue. What he says is quite true, and his remarks should be taken to heart by the younger generation. I have myself often stressed these points before, but not in such a convincing and forcible manner.

As regards L. E. B.'s first suggestion, I agree that it is advisable to admit everyone eligible, whatever his status and colour may be, provided he is of the right stuff—in short, a gentleman. I also agree with the second and third suggestions. A judicial frame of mind is very necessary. The members of the Genealogical Committee should be free from all prejudices and not bring any personal considerations to bear on the matter.

In regard to the fourth suggestion, I object to distinctions being made between members. It only creates ill-feeling and does not tend towards union. More intimate social intercourse is what I have always advocated; good friendship, where feasible, and perfect manners. No snobbery of any kind.

The sixth suggestion is very desirable but hard to attain with the present pleasure-loving generation. I do hope they will come to realise what is due to themselves and their Community.

I fully agree with L. E. B.'s suggestion that more attention should be paid to the moral and communal education of our young people. The last paragraph of L. E. B.'s article appeals to me greatly, and I would ask the younger members to give practical expression to his views and show the stuff that is in them."

## EDITORIAL NOTES.

*Notices of Births, Marriages and Deaths.*—Members of the Union are entitled, free of charge, to the insertion of notices of domestic occurrences. These notices must be restricted to a bare statement of the name or names, place, and date of occurrence, and must be sent to the Honorary Secretary of the Dutch Burgher Union.

*Standing Committee for Ethical and Literary Purposes.*—The attention of members is invited to the need for co-operation in carrying out the object laid down in sub-section (f) of Rule 2 of the Constitution. Any suggestions on this subject are to be addressed to the Honorary Secretary of the Committee for Literary Purposes, Mr. Neil Willé, D. B. U. Rooms, Reed Avenue, Colombo.

The Journal will be issued at the end of every quarter, post free, to each member of the Union who pays a subscription of Rs. 5/- per annum towards its cost of publication. Literary and other contributions are invited and should be sent to Mr. J. R. Toussaint, "Muresk", Clifford Place, Bambalapitiya, to whom also all remittances on account of the Journal should be made.

*Changes of Address.*—All changes of address (especially within the last three years) should be notified without delay to the Honorary Secretary of the Union, Dutch Burgher Union Hall, Reid Avenue, Colombo, or to the Honorary Treasurer of the Union. This will ensure the safe receipt by members of all notices, invitations, reports, etc.

*Remittances.*—Remittances, whether of subscriptions due to the Union or contributions for special objects, must be made to the Honorary Treasurer of the Union, Mr. W. W. Beling, Buller's Road, Colombo, and not to the Hony. Secretary.

Remittances on account of the Social Service Fund must be made to the Hony. Treasurer of the Standing Committee for purposes of Social Service.

*Dutch Burgher Union of Ceylon Buildings Co., Ltd.*—All communications should be addressed to G. H. Gratiaen, Esq., Secretary of the Company, D. B. U. Hall, Reid Avenue, Colombo.



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