

CENTENARY
VOLUME
of the
Colombo Municipal Council
1865—1965

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By

H. A. J. HULUGALLE

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Foreword

WHEN I was invited to write its Centenary Volume by the Colombo Municipal Council, I decided that my first task was to acquaint myself with the history of the city, from its remote beginnings, and with the printed records of the Council's activities over the one hundred years of its existence.

I have tried to give in the text, as far as it is practicable, the sources of the historical information ; often quoting the words of Sinhalese, Muslim, Portuguese, Dutch and British writers. Until 1887 the Government Agent of the Western Province was the Chairman of the Colombo Municipal Council, and Municipal affairs were briefly treated in his annual Administration Report. After that, the full-time Chairman furnished the Council and the Government with his annual report. Much of the information dealing with the Council's activities in this book is derived from these reports, which after 1937 became the responsibility of the elected Mayor and the Municipal Commissioner.

It would not be possible to mention individually all those who have helped me with first-hand information on the many subjects dealt with in this volume ; but I should like to mention Dr. C. V. Aserappa, the Chief Medical Officer of Health from 1927 to 1940, who gave me a valuable collection of newspaper cuttings, and Mr. K. J. L. Perera, Secretary of the Council since 1950, without whose willing co-operation it would not have been possible for me to complete the task I had undertaken without fully realising what it involved.

Finally, I must record my deep obligation to Mr. Bernard de Silva, the Government Printer, who, at short notice and much inconvenience to himself, agreed to print the book for the Colombo Municipal Council.

H. A. J. HULUGALLE

1st September 1965.

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The Governor-General, the Hon. Mr. W. Gopallawa



The Prime Minister, the Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake

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The Hon. Mr. M. Tiruchelvam, Q.C., Minister of Local Government



Mr. M. Vincent Perera, Mayor of Colombo in the Centenary Year

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Introduction

THE present volume is published to mark the Centenary of the birth of the Colombo Municipal Council. The Legislative Council of Ceylon passed a Bill in its session of 1865 constituting the Colombo Municipal Council which met for the first time on the 16th January 1866. The story of the Colombo Municipal Council is offered to the reader in the setting of the history of the city which it administers.

The first part of the book therefore attempts to give a series of impressions of the Moorish settlement which became a fortress under Portuguese rule and grew into a metropolitan city during its occupation in turn by the Portuguese, Dutch and British. Although Colombo is not an ancient city like Athens or Anuradhapura or a pulsating capital like Tokyo or Paris, the impact of the four seafaring nations on its growth is not without interest to the student of history and even to the general reader.

The second part of the book draws attention to some of the principal features of the city and the evolution of the Municipal Council. The third part deals with the Council's current activities as the chapter headings indicate: The Town Hall, Finance, Health Services, Housing, Town-planning, Roads, Markets, Poor Relief, Water, Lighting, Drainage, and so on.

Nine elected members and six nominated members comprised the first Council. The inclusion of a large 'elected' element was a bold innovation when the Legislative Council itself had no members elected from the Ceylonese population. In a speech to the Legislative Council, the Governor, Sir Hercules Robinson, gave his reasons for it when he said: "If ever the bulk of the population can be

fitted for the right use of a large measure of political power, it can only be effected through the training which the exercise of municipal functions afford. They can thus establish a right to claim further concessions by proving that they are prepared to make personal sacrifices for the common good, that they can exercise with fairness, moderation and self-restraint, the power and privileges conferred on them, and carry on self-government with justice to the contending interests and classes”.

The British endeavoured to develop local government on a democratic basis, in the spirit of the recommendations of the Colebrooke Commission of 1833, one of whose members, Mr. C. H. Cameron, said in his report on *Judicial Establishments and Procedure in Ceylon* that “the peculiar circumstances of Ceylon, both physical and moral, seem to point it out to the British Government as the fittest spot in our eastern dominions in which to plant the germ of European civilization, whence we may not unreasonably hope that it will hereafter spread over the whole of those vast territories”.

Local government was not unknown in ancient Ceylon. The great cities of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa had their mayors and town councils. In the 5th century B.C., Anuradhapura had a fairly complete and efficient system of administration presided over by a mayor or *nagara guttika*. “From that time”, says the Mahawamsa, “there have been *nagara guttikas* in the capital.” The village council is an ancient and familiar feature of rural Ceylon. Centuries of Colonial rule saw a decline of local administration and the Ordinance which gave municipal councils to Colombo and Kandy was conceived as a means of training the Ceylonese in the art and science of self-government. But it also had the immediate and practical result of relieving the central government of the full burden of city administration and of providing efficient and adequate machinery for supplying the growing needs of a metropolitan community.

Colombo was a small seaport used by Arab, Persian and Chinese sailing vessels. Between the ninth and sixteenth centuries A.D., it had a predominantly Muslim population of pure or mixed Arab descent, called Moros by the Portuguese and Moors by the British. Following the occupation of the maritime provinces of Ceylon by the Portuguese, Colombo became the metropolis of the European rulers; and, after the annexation of the Kandyan territory by the British in 1815, it became the capital of the whole island. Even a more important reason for the growth of the city was its strategic position in commerce and shipping, especially after 1885 when the open roadstead was transformed into a protected harbour with the construction of the south-west breakwater and the many other improvements that followed. The opening of the Suez Canal, on the 19th of November 1869, greatly added to the volume of shipping traffic in the eastern waters but the decision to make Colombo rather than Galle the principal port of Ceylon was not taken till 1871.

Early estimates of the population of Colombo are not very reliable. In 1824, the Governor, Sir Edward Barnes, caused a "Return of the Population of the Island" to be prepared. This disclosed that the population of the Fort was 734, of the Pettah 4,979, and beyond the Pettah 25,475 : a total of 31,188. At the time of the establishment of the Municipal Council the population was in the region of 80,000. In 1871, when the first Decennial Census was held, it had risen to 95,843. Colombo has now a population of over half a million. The present area of the city is over nine thousand acres (or about 14 square miles) including about a thousand acres of marshy and open land and 213 acres of the Lake.

The Colombo Municipal Council had an income of Rs. 45 million in 1964 including grants from the central government. The annual value of premises in the city at the end of 1961 was Rs. 52,877,841. The fact that Colombo is the administrative and commercial capital of Ceylon, and is the only large city in the island, is one of two reasons for its growing population and wealth. The other is that it has been for eighty years one of the busiest and best-equipped harbours in the east.

In many respects Colombo is a progressive city by Asian standards. It has an enviable record of public health and provides most of the amenities and services which a city is expected to supply in the twentieth century. It enjoys the mixed blessings of a capital city. A continuous increase in land values escalates the Municipal Council's income derived from the consolidated rate. The central government undertakes to provide certain services which are normally discharged by the municipal council of a large city. As against this, the Council is denied some of the sources of revenue which it may legitimately claim, such as the profit from the supply of electricity and from a comprehensive system of city transport and fees from the licensing of motor vehicles. In some other ways too the shadow of the central government falls heavily across the municipal administration.

The definition of the financial relations between the central government and the Municipal Council has in the past given rise to disagreements, and even today there are questions to be resolved. Another matter that will gain importance in the future will be desirable limits to the growth of the city, and its relations with neighbouring local authorities.

Students of local government have in recent times given attention to the problem of size. Great cities like London and Moscow have tried to solve the problem arising from bigness by the adoption of a two-tier system. The municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, which began to function in 1954, has a metropolitan council responsible for certain services in an area comprising the city of Toronto and twelve contiguous municipalities. These services include the supply of water, trunk sewers and sewage disposal plants, and major highways.

Professor William A. Robson of the London School of Economics and Political Science, points out, in the Introduction to his *Great Cities of the World*, that “ the two-tier structure possesses definite advantages for a great city quite apart from the increase of popular representation which it makes possible. In a city with a population of more than, say, half-a-million, the city council finds difficulty in maintaining a close contact with the citizens. The Town Hall, the councillors and officials, seem to become remote and aloof : and the citizens see the city government as ‘ they ’ rather than ‘ we ’. However good the intentions of the governors may be, the bureaucratic element tends to prevail as the size of the city becomes really large. This tendency is assisted by the increasing scope, magnitude and complexity of municipal functions ”.

It may be that Colombo has not yet reached the point at which the Town Hall becomes remote to the ratepayer and the voter, but the increasing complexity of municipal functions referred to by Professor Robson calls for greater flexibility in the administrative machinery and closer co-operation with neighbouring local bodies. Meanwhile, next to the central government itself, the Municipal Council of Colombo is the largest administrative machine in the island and is a good example of government of the people, by the people and for the people.

The First Settlement

COLOMBO has an eventful history although the city is as artificial as its harbour and was built on a low swampy marsh subject to floods. It is first heard of as a Moorish trading settlement. Its port at the bend of the sea below the mouth of the Kelani river was frequented by ships from China, Persia, India and Arabia. Arab traders, who were engaged in the spice trade with the island, obtained the permission of the king of the country to build warehouses and dwellings for themselves near the port which was in the centre of the cinnamon-producing district of the Kelani valley. They were protected on the land side by a low-lying marsh, which in later years was drained and gave rise to the modern city. Colombo was also the principal port of the island after Kotte became the Sinhalese capital.

It would be true to say that, until Ceylon received her political independence in 1948, Colombo was always under strong foreign influence and usually under foreign domination. The Sinhalese do not seem to have formed a significant part of the town's population and had very little say in its administration. The establishment of the Colombo Municipal Council in 1866 was perhaps the first substantial step taken by the rulers to give the Ceylonese as a whole the feeling that Colombo was their city and metropolis.

References to Colombo before the Portuguese arrived are scanty. Sir Emerson Tennent states in his well known book on Ceylon that the rocky headland near which Colombo stands was "the Cape of Jupiter", the "Jovis Extremum" of Ptolemy, the mathematician and geographer who lived in Alexandria between 127 and 151 A.D. His description of Ceylon proves that the island had been circumnavigated and examined by the mariners who were his informants.

With the spread of Islam after the seventh century, Arab traders dominated the seas around Ceylon, and there is a tradition among the Muslims that their ancestors established themselves in the early part of the eighth century at Colombo, Galle, Barberyn, Jaffna, Mannar, Trincomalee, Puttalam and Kudiramalai. About the year 1787, a Dutch official removed a stone from the Muslim cemetery in Colombo which had an inscription in crude Arabic (cufic) letters commemorating an Arab who died in the year 317 of the Hejira (939 A.D.). The inscription was sent to the Royal Asiatic Society in London by Sir Alexander Johnston, Chief Justice of Ceylon, about fifty years after its discovery. Though the name of Colombo does not occur in the inscription there is a tradition that it marked the gravestone of a Muslim priest who built the first mosque in Colombo and died here and was buried in the old Mohammedan cemetery of the town.

The early Muslim settlers could hardly have been all of pure Arab stock. A good many were undoubtedly of Arab descent. The Portuguese referred to them as 'Moros', the word being Anglicised to 'Moors' by the British. The term 'Moro' or 'Mouro' was first used to describe a native of Mauretania, a region corresponding to adjacent parts of Morocco and Algeria. Later it was used when referring to Muslims of mixed Arab and Berber race who overran Spain in the eighth century.

Odoardo Barbosa, a Portuguese captain who was in Ceylon at the dawn of the sixteenth century, records that when his countrymen first came to Ceylon many Muslims lived in the seaports of the island. Indeed, all the evidence points to the fact that they were an enterprising and prosperous community of traders and middlemen who enjoyed a near-monopoly of the trade in spices, aromatic drugs, pearls, precious stones, cinnamon, ivory and elephants. The site of the old settlement was probably Bankshall Street (from 'bangasala' meaning store or warehouse). Barbosa speaks of "their heads covered with the finest handkerchiefs; of their ear-rings so heavy with jewels that they hang down to their shoulders; of the upper parts of their bodies exposed, but the lower portions enveloped in silks and rich cloths, secured by an embroidered girdle". Their language was a mixture of Arabic and Tamil and "their co-religionists from the Indian coast resorted constantly to Ceylon, and established themselves there as traders, attracted by the delights of the climate, and the luxury and abundance of the island, but above all by the unlimited freedom they enjoyed under its Government".

Not surprisingly, the first mention of Colombo in a written work is by a Chinese writer. Chinese travellers knew Ceylon well and the pilgrim Fa Hien, who spent three years in the island in the fifth century A.D., gives a graphic description of Anuradhapura. The presence of Chinese traders in Ceylon, says Codrington, is attested by coins dating from the tenth to the thirteenth century. Wang-Ta-Youan, who came to Ceylon in 1330 A.D., describes Colombo—"Kao-lan-pu"—as "a deep, low-lying land, the soil poor, rice and corn very dear, and the climate hot".

Fourteen years later, in 1344 A.D., Ibn Batuta, an Arab traveller from Morocco, who came to Colombo by way of the Maldives, wrote: "We were for nine days

under sail, and on the ninth we went on the shore at the island of Ceylon. We perceived the mountain of Serendib, raised in the air like a column of smoke. When we came near the island, the mariners said, 'this port is not in the country of the Sultan in whose dominions the merchants can go in safety ; it is the country of the Sultan Airy Chakravarthy who is one of the unjust and perverse. He has ships engaged on piracy on the high seas' ". Ibn Batuta's party disembarked at Puttalam and, having completed the pilgrimage to Adam's Peak, visited Dondra and Galle before arriving in Colombo.

He relates : " We took our departure for the city of Kale (Galle), a small one six parasangs from Dinewar (Dondra). A Mussulman there, called the ship-captain Ibrahim, entertained us at his house. We then took the route for the town of Calenbou (Colombo), one of the largest and most beautiful in the island of Serendib. There dwells the Vizier, Djalesty, the prince of the sea (Hakim-al-habr), who has there about 500 Habshis (Abyssinians). Three days after leaving Colombo, we arrived at Batthalah (Puttalam), of which mention is made above ".

It was from Colombo that in 1411 A.D. Ching Ho, the head of a Chinese expedition, carried off the Sinhalese ruler Vira Alakesvara together with his wives and children to China as retaliation for inhospitable treatment.

To the Sinhalese, who were content to leave the external trade of the island in the hands of the Moors, Kelaniya and Kotte, now suburbs of the city, were, from an administrative and cultural point of view, of greater importance than the seaport. According to their tradition Gautama Buddha on his third visit to Ceylon stayed at Kelaniya. Branches of the Sinhalese royal family lived at Kelaniya since the earliest times. The *Nikaya Sangrahaya*, which is a brief history of Buddhism, compiled by Gadaladeniya Dhamma Kitti, a monk of the fourteenth century A.D., says : " With houses, bo-trees, grand promenades, pavilions, city walls, halls, image houses and most beautiful gates and porticoes, the city of Kelaniya shines glorious ". In the same year that Ibn Batuta visited Ceylon (1344), an inscription at Kelaniya records that the wife of the Minister Alagakkonara helped to repair the Kit Sirimevan Vihara.

The history of Kotte is more recent. It was built as a fortress by the same Alagakkonara, the powerful Minister of king Vikrama Bahu (1360-1374). The Tamil king Arya Chakravarthy had captured Chilaw, Negombo and Wattala and encamped to the north of the Moorish settlement of Colombo and the Sinhalese were hard pressed. " Thereupon ", says the *Rajavaliya*, " he (Alagakkonara) made search for a position suited for the erection of a stronghold, and after erecting a site which was adapted for a Jayawardhanapura, he built a lofty fort, furnished with pools and tanks of water strengthened with buttresses, fortlets and watch-towers ".

The war was precipitated by Alagakkonara hanging Arya Chakravarti's tax collectors. It ended with the defeat of Arya Chakravarthy and the capture of his encampments at Colombo, Wattala, Negombo and Chilaw by Alagakkonara. The threat to Colombo and the southern kingdom by the ruler of Jaffna was finally eliminated by this campaign.

But soon there was to be a new menace from across the seas. Rajasinha, the King of Kandy, later summed up the feelings of the Sinhalese kings when he wrote to the Dutch in 1641 : “I have for many a long year had a longing to destroy the city of Colombo and raze it to the ground, as it is the origin and mother of all the evil that has come upon this Island and the natural kings of the same, killing the same and keeping them from their kingdoms”.

The name: "Colombo"

THE derivation of the name 'Colombo' has given rise to much speculation and several theories. The Sinhalese called the Moorish settlement 'Kolamba' or 'Kolontota'. As already recorded earlier, the Chinese visitor called it 'Kac-lan-pu' while the Moroccan traveller referred to it as 'Calenbou'. The Portuguese spelled the word 'Columbo' while the Dutch, French and German maps generally use the form 'Colombo'. Robert Knox (1681) and other early British writers adhered to the Portuguese spelling. Today it is, of course, Colombo.

The Portuguese writer, Father Fernao de Queyroz, says that "the name 'Colombo' is a corruption, as the true one is 'Caleambe' which means in the Chingala language 'the leaf of the mango tree'".

Robert Knox elaborates on this when he writes : "On the west of the city of Colombo, so called from a tree the natives called 'Ambo' (which bears the mango fruit) growing in that place ; but this never bear fruit, but only leaves, which in their language is called 'Cola', and thence they call the tree 'Col-ambo': which, the Christians in honour of Columbus turned to 'Columbo'. It is the chief city on the sea-coasts, where the chief Governor hath his residence".

The Dutch went one better when they adopted a punning coat-of-arms for the town : a mango tree with a dove (Latin : Columba).

Close beside the point of St Laurence, near what is now Commissariat Street, flourished for many generations, the bushy mango tree which bore no fruit but only leaves and whose dense foliage was visible as a landmark far out at sea.

The mango tree is one theory. Another refers to Kolontota. Sir Emerson Tennent says that the city earned its early name of Kalan-tota (the Kalany Ferry)

from its contiguity to the river. He is of the opinion that the Moors converted the name to 'Kalanbu'. He thinks that the designation of the city was further changed to 'Kolamba' or 'Columbu' and the Portuguese were pleased to discover that the name of their new settlement so nearly approached that of Christopher Columbus.

Father S. G. Perera, S.J., who was an acknowledged authority on the history of Colombo, says that the Kolon river, which gave its name to Kolontota, was not the Kelani (or Kalani) river but a rivulet which was a flood outlet : " To the west of Colombo (he writes) there was a ridge of hills culminating in the peaks which we call Wolvendaal, Hultsdorp and San Sebastian. On either side of this ridge were lowlands. Between this ridge and the Kelani river were the marshy tracts. Through these marshy tracts there flowed the river which cut the harbour in the middle. This rivulet was a flood outlet of the Kelani. It branched off at Nāgalagam, which was called 'O GRANDE PASSE' by the Portuguese, and by us Grandpass.

" After flowing westward the rivulet was split into two and flowed on either side of a rising ground which thus became an island and was called 'Medaduwa' or the middle island. The modern Grandpass road passes over it. When this stream reached the ridge of hills it turned southwards and doubled the ridge through a gap between San Sebastian and the Dematagoda hills, and, thus crossing over to the other side of the hills, flowed leisurely into the sea along what was not long ago the Lake, and what is now the railway line. And finally it entered the sea near Kayman's Gate. This was the rivulet which was afterwards dammed to form the Beira Lake.

" The name of the river is not given by any of the writers who allude to it. But as Kolontota was the literary Sinhalese name for Colombo, I have always been tempted to suppose that, just as the Gin-ganga flows into the sea at Gintota and the Kalu-ganga at Kalutara (Kalutota), so it was the Kolon river that flowed into the sea at Kolontota. 'Kolon' is popular Sinhalese for the tree called Kadamba in Sanskrit and Pali and *nauclea cardifolia* by botanists. The river of Anuradhapura, now called Malwatu Oya, is called the Kadamba river in the *Mahawamsa* and the Sinhalese translators of the *Mahawamsa* rendered it Kolon Oya "

But Kolontota was more popularly called 'Kolamba', which the standard Sinhalese grammar gave as an example of a country-born ('nipan') Sinhalese word; that is, one not derived from any other language. Julius de Lanerolle points out, in an article in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon Branch, that 'Kolamba' (Anglicised 'Colombo') is a Sinhalese word meaning port, ferry, harbour or haven. 'kolamba' is thus a synonym for 'tota'. In course of time 'kolamba' came to be fixed as the name of the principal port of the western coast of Ceylon.

The reader can thus have his choice : Colombo from 'Kolamba', meaning a leafy but barren mango tree, like the one which stood at the point of St Laurence where the city first began its existence ; or Colombo from the Sinhalese word 'kolamba' which means a port or harbour.

Arrival of the Portuguese

THE first Portuguese to put into the port of Colombo did so almost by accident. Dom Lourenco de Almeйда, son of the viceroy of Goa, set out from Cochin in the month of November 1505 with nine sailing ships and made for the Maldivé Islands, hoping to intercept Muslim ships bound for Mecca. But his fleet was caught in a violent storm and driven to the port of Galle. After a stop in Galle for victualling, the ships followed the coast line to the port of Colombo in which they anchored causing "much astonishment to the natives and great grief to the Moors".

Passing coconut gardens and thatched roofs, as Colombo came into view they saw the white walls of the two mosques, sailing ships and fishing craft. The news of their arrival soon reached Kotte, which was the seat of the Sinhalese king of the region. It was reported to him that "there is in our harbour of Colombo a race of people fair of skin and comely withal. They don jackets of iron and hats of iron; they rest not a minute in one place; they walk here and there; they eat hunks of stone (bread) and drink blood (wine); they give two or three pieces of gold and silver for one fish or one lime; the report of their cannon is louder than thunder when it bursts upon the rock Yughandara. Their cannon balls fly many a 'gawwa' and shatter fortresses of granite".

At this time Vira Parakrama Bahu VIII was king of Kotte; Vikrama Bahu was king of the hill country; and Pararasa Sekaran was king of Jaffna. One of Dom Lourenco's first acts on landing on the coast of Ceylon was to send an emissary to the king of Kotte. For this task he chose Captain Fernao Cotrim who was told to inform the king that the Portuguese fleet had no warlike aims and had been driven out of its course by rough weather.

The Moors who had been chosen to guide the Portuguese emissary to the royal palace at Kotte decided to confuse him, and took him to Kotte by a circuitous route spending three days to reach a destination which was only six miles from Colombo. Cotrim was not deceived but feigned ignorance. The incident gave rise to a proverb in Sinhalese : 'as the foreigner went to Kotte'—පරිගිත කොට්ටේ ගියා වූයේ when speaking of a roundabout journey to a nearby place.

Parakrama Bahu's reception of Dom Lourenco and his suite is described graphically in a letter which King Manuel of Portugal wrote to Pope Julius II. A treaty was signed, the Portuguese agreeing to protect and defend the ports of Ceylon. The king, for his part, agreed to pay an annual tribute of 400 bahars (about 60 tons) of cinnamon.

With the king's permission Dom Lourenco erected a factory, i.e. a trading station, on the narrow point which now forms the foot of the south-west breakwater. At the same time he built a chapel dedicated to St Laurence who was adopted as the patron saint of Colombo. Dom Lourenco ordered the Portuguese coat-of-arms to be inscribed on a rock in front of the bay. This rock was discovered in 1898 when an old building which had been used as the headquarters of the harbour police was demolished. It was moved to the Gordon Gardens where it is today and is said to weigh about 27 tons. The quintas, or 'Fives', of Portugal are clearly and elegantly inscribed on it. There is some speculation as to why the year 1501 is carved on the side of the crest instead of 1505, the year in which Dom Lourenco de Almeida set foot on Ceylon soil. The figures themselves are crude and were probably cut into the rock by a careless worker.

After an exchange of good wishes, Dom Lourenco and his ships departed, leaving a few men behind in the 'factory'. This factory did not, however, last long. The Moors, who had enjoyed a monopoly of the foreign trade, did not fancy competition and succeeded in inciting the populace to harass the newcomers, with the result that in 1507 the Portuguese dismantled the factory. But they did not abandon the idea of building a fortress in Colombo at a more appropriate time.

In 1518 Lopo Soares de Albergaria, Governor of Portuguese India, set out with a fleet for the purpose of establishing a fortress in Ceylon. Rough winds drove him to Galle where he remained for some weeks. He toyed with the idea of building the fortress at Galle which was better suited to the needs of the sailing vessels than the open roadstead of Colombo. But he feared that the Moors of Colombo might say that they had frightened him off Colombo. He therefore decided on Colombo. Here, as the historian Ribeiro says, "many ships from Bengalla, Persia, the South and the Red Seas used to assembled to take on board cinnamon and elephants, and here was carried on the trade of the island in other commodities which they brought". Soares met the king of Kotte, who had never seen the port before, and persuaded him to allow the Portuguese to erect a small fort in Colombo, pointing out to him that the hostility of the Moors made

such a fort necessary. The friendly attitude of the king made Soares to believe that the king might even agree to banish the Moors from Colombo and settle them in another part of the country.

The Moors were naturally alarmed when they heard about the negotiations. They begged the king not to trust the foreigner. They claimed that they had never interfered with the internal affairs of the island. They warned him that the arrival of the Portuguese was a threat to the national religion of the Sinhalese. Failing to impress the king, they decided to take their cause to the people and inflamed them against the newcomers.

The Portuguese were, however, strong enough to deal with the situation, and proceeded to erect their fort on the site of the former factory. It was at first built of cabook and mud and had a garrison under the command of Captain Joao Silveyra. It was under constant attack. During one of these attacks the reinforced garrison burnt the Moorish houses and thereafter separated the 'point' of St Laurence from the mainland by cutting a ditch from the harbour to the sea.

There followed a period of conflict between claimants to the maritime provinces on the west coast. From 1521 the three brothers, Mayadunne, Rayigam Banda and Bhuvanaka Bahu were engaged in a struggle for power. The last-named controlled Kotte itself and most of the seaboard. The Portuguese and Moors, always in different camps, supported one or other of the brothers. With the support of the Samorin of Calicut, Mayadunne attacked Colombo but was routed by Bhuvanaka Bahu who was backed by the Portuguese. In 1524 to please the king the Portuguese decided to reduce the status of their fortress to that of a simple trading station or factory.

In 1543 a party of Franciscan monks arrived from Goa and their activities rather complicated the local situation. Dom Alfonso de Noronha, the new viceroy of Goa, visited Ceylon and took the king to task for persecuting the Christians, demanding an indemnity which Bhuvanaka Bahu was not in a position to pay. Such conduct by the Portuguese was resented by the people and we have this comment in a letter dated 15th December 1552 written by a Jesuit priest who was in Colombo at the time : " There are no people in the place where the Portuguese live (i.e. Colombo) save very few, because all are fled to the forests, and Christians who were there, for fear of Vidya Pandar (son-in-law of Bhuvanaka Bahu) turn pagan as before. The houses of this city of Cotta are all demolished and burnt, the which we saw in ruins, which is a great pity to see and I should have to write these things with tears and not with ink, for we saw the way of making many Christians obstructed because the deeds which the Portuguese do here give room to think that our faith is not so good as we preach, and they forthwith throw in our face the things that the Portuguese do and are wrong".

While the rivalry between the king and his brother, Mayadunne, continued, life in Colombo was unsettled. Unmarried Portuguese troops were withdrawn from the island and married men and traders were ordered to live around the monastery

of St Francis in Colombo. In 1551 Bhuvenaka Bahu, the king of Kotte, was shot dead in his summer palace at Kelaniya by, it was believed, an agent of the Portuguese viceroy.

The viceroy (Noronha) paid a second visit to Colombo on the pretext of inquiring into the murder of the king but in fact to seize the treasures of the court which he coveted. When the authorities in Portugal heard about Noronha's depredations he was recalled and made to disgorge his unlawful exactions. His successor was instructed to take steps to protect the Christians of Colombo. He sent Duarte d'Eca as Captain of Colombo with orders to build a fort. The new fortified town comprised the land which now lies between Galle Buck and York Street and between Canal Row and the harbour. Within the kabook wall which enclosed it there were a fortress, two churches, an official residence and some private houses.

The Portuguese were now in a position to consolidate their position and control Colombo. In this they were helped by the weakness of the new king, Dharmapala, the grandson of Bhuvenaka Bahu, and the intransigence of the Regent, his father Vidiya Bandara. Dharmapala was no more than a puppet of the Portuguese, and had been christened Don Juan. As he could no longer live in safety at Kotte, he transferred the capital to Colombo. Thus it could be said that Don Juan Dharmapala was the first king to rule from Colombo. Kotte was dismantled and fell into ruins, becoming the haunt of wild beasts. King Sebastian of Portugal thereafter referred to "My Cidade of Colombo". The town had attained the dignity of a metropolis and although Don Juan Dharmapala lived for another forty six years the real ruler was the Portuguese Captain-General. On his death in 1597, Dharmapala was buried in the main chapel of the Convent of St Francis in Colombo (behind the present Queen's House). As he had no heirs he made the king of Portugal "the heir to the whole island", in whose name General D. Jeronimo de Azvedo was sworn in as the new ruler.

"Colombo from being a small stockade of wood grew to be a gallant city fortified with a dozen bastions; it is true that these were six-sided after the ancient fashion, and of small size, but they were conveniently situated", writes Ribeiro. "The ramparts were a single line of taipa (walls of timber and mud), a sufficient defence against the natives, with a ditch and moat on either side ending in a lake which skirted a third of the city on the land side. Its artillery consisted of two hundred and thirty-seven pieces, of three kinds, from ten up to thirty-eight pounds. It was situated on a bay capable of holding a large number of small ships, but exposed on the northern side, and its line of circumvallation stretched over one thousand three hundred paces".

The First City

THE earliest Portuguese maps confirm the graphic image of Barros that “the port of Columbo has almost the shape of a hook, for it has a spacious entrance, the middle of which is cut by a river, and the point that forms the barb of the hook is so sharp, and is so separated from the body of the rest of the land, that a stone could be thrown across its breadth, and being cut off by a ditch forms as it were an island, having no entrance but by the ditch.”

The city was spread round the bay which was not more than three fathoms in depth where it was deepest. The land between the fortress and the interior was at first unoccupied and covered with trees. The Portuguese were compelled to reinforce the garrison to resist attacks by Mayadunne and Vidiya Bandara. The new population needed houses and supplies.

“They built houses”, writes Queyroz, “giving rise to the City of Colombo which had within it the mound of St. Laurence, and was surrounded by Calapana (Kalapuwa), a lake of nearly three leagues and a half in length, which in the summer admits of access to Colombo in some places with water up to the waist.”

“By the river Calane there comes to it from the inland country an abundance of provisions, and in course of time it grew till it had 500 Portuguese families besides many others of the people of the country, a handsome row of houses, well laid out streets, and four monasteries of the four (religious) orders which first came to India. (The members of which) while helping the cultivation of souls sometimes also took arms to defend (the city). Outside the walls, which never reached completion, all were palm groves and refreshing gardens wherein the Portuguese lived in times of peace and took their recreation.”

Portuguese families moved to the suburbs when Colombo was no longer menaced by Rajasinha, the ambitious son of Mayadunne. But while his attacks continued, the Portuguese hold on the city seemed precarious. Colombo was besieged by Rajasinghe more than once. He encamped at the place still called Maligawatte and his troops occupied the hills surrounding the city. He cut off the city's food supplies, which usually came to Colombo by canal from the Kelani, the chief market place being the island of Medaduwa. The fighting was on the east side of what is now the busiest part of the Pettah, namely, Fifth Cross Street, Gas Works Street, the site of the old Town Hall and the markets. Rajasinha even drained the lake dry by canals, one of which is now represented by the San Sebastian canal. The Lake was full of crocodiles, which is why one end of it was called Kayman's Gate, "cayman" being a word used to mean crocodile by Portuguese and Dutch writers. The shallow parts of the Lake were inhabited by buffaloes.

We have the following reconstruction of the city of Colombo at the end of the Portuguese regime in the words of the late Father S. G. Perera, S.J. : "It consisted of two parts which the Dutch called the Castle and the Oude Stad. These two parts were connected by a road which is now the Main Street. Between the road and the lake there was a coconut grove. The western part of the city consisted of official quarters and the mound of St. Laurence which covered a good part of the city. On the summit of the hill was the monastery of the monks of St. Augustine, and by its side was the powder magazine. The hill was planted with coconut. There were no houses on it but only some boutiques. It was the Dutch who levelled the hill.

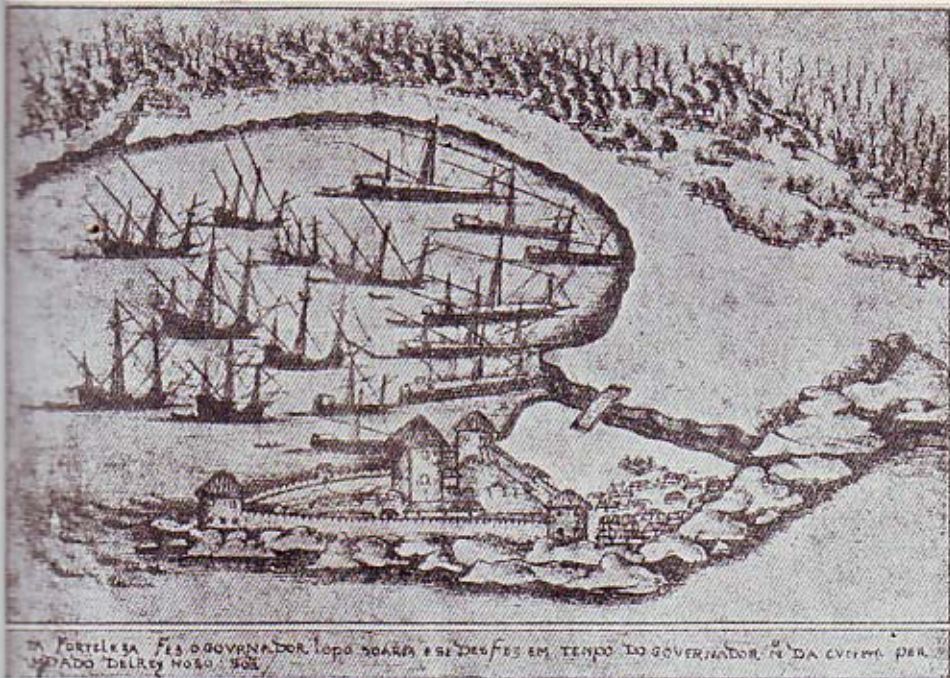
"Along the sea shore ran the Galbocca Street which led from point St. Laurence to the south gate. The road coming down the hill was the street of St. Augustine. At the foot of the modern breakwater stood the church of St. Laurence, patron of the city, whose emblem, the gridiron, was featured on the Portuguese coins of Ceylon. It was the parish church of that part of the city.

"At the back of the Gordon Gardens stood the church of St. Francis, in which King Dharmapala was buried. It was afterwards used by the Dutch as their city church and its ruins survived down to British times. In front of the church was a street called the Street of St. Francis.

"Near the present St. Peter's church there stood the church of the Misericordia, or House of Mercy, the chapel of a charitable organization like the Friend-in-Need Society. The street running in front of it, corresponding to the modern Church Street was the Street of the Misericordia. The street terminated at the jail, which was near the modern G. O. H. (Hotel Taprobane). Next to the jail was the hospital and between the jail and the hospital was the bridge over the lake-to-harbour canal.

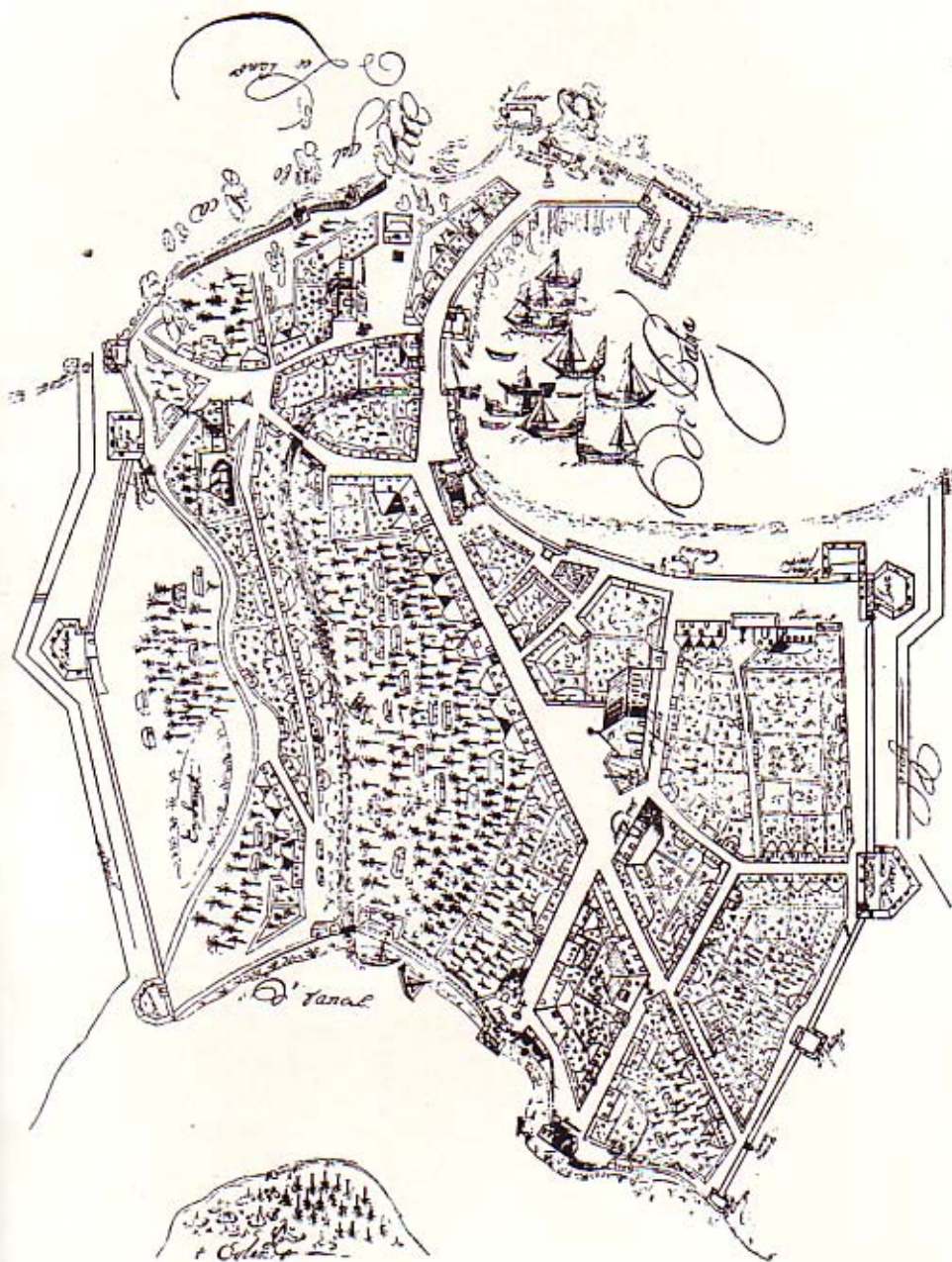
"From that point there ran a road, called the Straight Street (Roa Direto), which traversed the full length of the city and terminated at Queen's Gate, the chief gate of the city, leading to San Sebastian and Kotte. This gate was somewhere near the end of modern Prince Street, Pettah. It was the longest and most

The First Fort



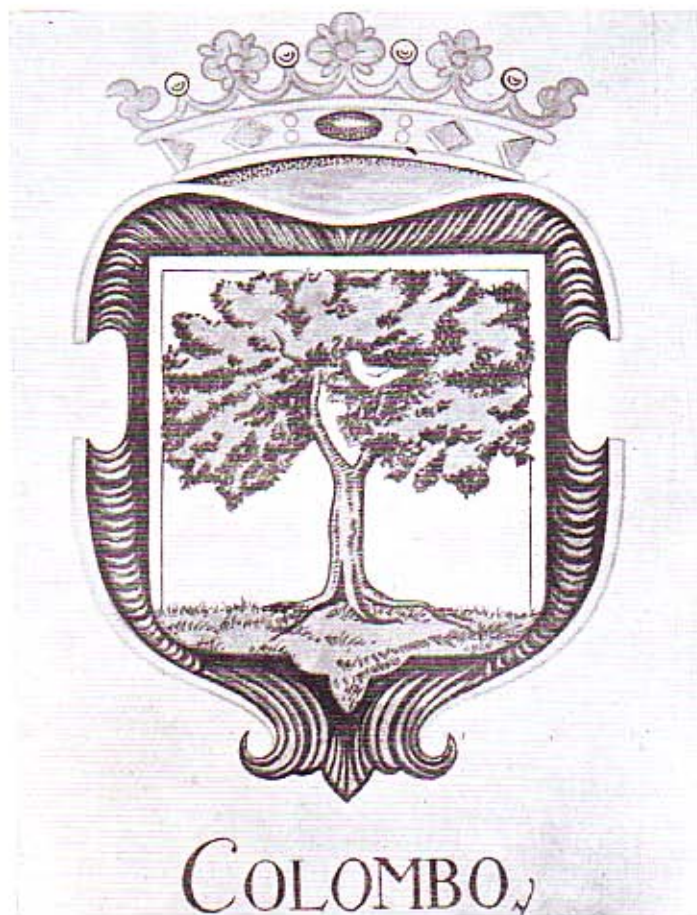
An early Portuguese Map showing the first fortress of Colombo (1518) which was situated on the narrow point which now forms the foot of the south-west breakwater. For greater safety it was cut off by a ditch and had no other entrance but by the ditch

Portuguese Colombo



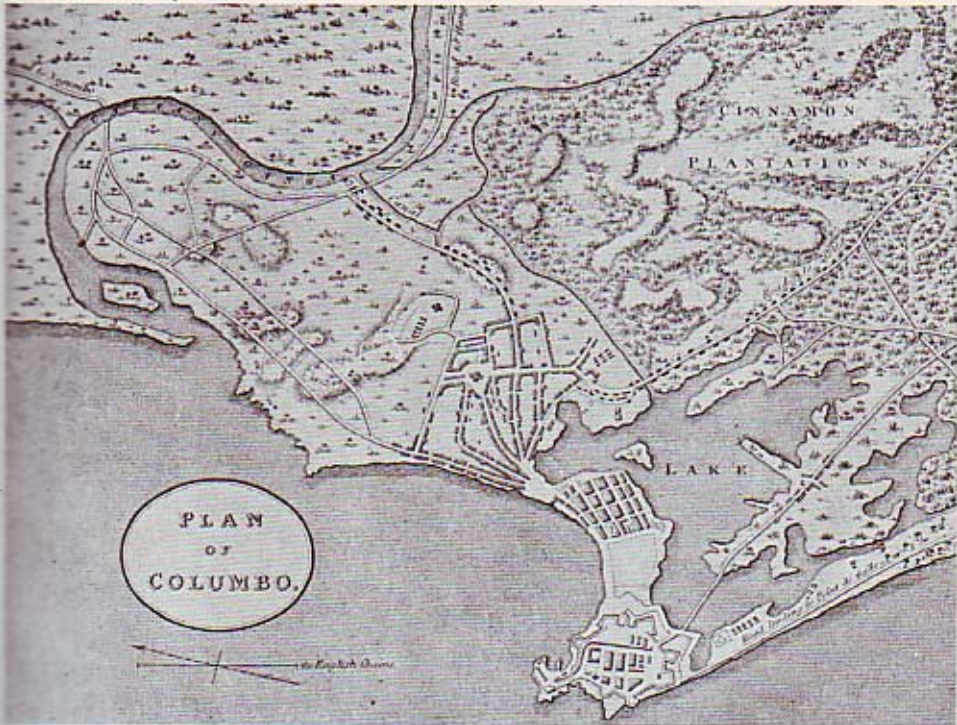
A Map of Colombo at the end of the Portuguese period. It shows sailing ships in what was then the harbour and the Fort with the various bastions. The large Jesuit church is in the centre of the picture

The Name: 'Colombo'



The Dutch coat-of-arms of Colombo : a leafy mango tree ('Kola-amba') and a dove (Latin : 'Columba '). A pun on the name 'Colombo'

Colombo in 1800



Plan of Colombo when the British arrived. It shows the Fort and Pettah, the Beira Lake, cinnamon gardens and the Kelani river. Reproduced from "A Description of Ceylon" by the Rev. James Cordiner

important street of the city. Half way down this street, on the site of the Consistory buildings (between Front Street and First Cross Street) stood the Town Hall, or Chamber, of Colombo, for the city had a Chamber, deputies, aldermen and clerk, and an office. In front of the Chamber was a square and between it and the sea there was the Jesuit College and the church (near present Khan Clock Tower). The church was a magnificent building, one of the best in India.

“ At this point the Straight Street was met by a cross street, at the lake end of which was the Capuchin monastery and at the harbour end the Governor’s house, where the two parts were known as the Capuchin Street and the General’s Street. Half way between the Chamber and the Queen’s Gate there was another cross street which had at the Lake end the church of the Mother of God, which gave its name to that part of the street, and at the harbour end, near the present Bankshall Street, there was the Dominican Monastery, and that portion was known as the Street of St. Domingos.”

All round the city ran a wall with watch towers and bastions at various points. The main gate of the city was by the bastion of St John, which was almost on the beach beside the present fish market. Access from the sea front to the fortress was gained through the Water Gate in the middle foreshore by the present Queen Elizabeth Quay. San Lourenco was on the hook and Santa Cruz on the point jutting into the sea.

Leaving the harbour area near the Customs Gate at Commissariat Street, the visitor would see before him, by Flagstaff Street, the twin bastions of St Iago and St Augustino. The religious house of St Augustino stood on the ground on which the Chartered Bank is built. The Gate of Mapana gave access to the Galle Road through what is now the Galle Face.

The bastion of San Antonio stood at the corner of the Echelon Barracks nearest to the sea, over against the present House of Representatives. Near the roundabout at the other end of the barracks rose the bastion of San Jeronimo. The bastion of San Estavo was on the ground where the Pettah belfry now stands and that of the Conception opposite the Fort Railway Station.

The Portuguese left a lasting impression on Ceylon, notably by the spread of the Roman Catholic religion. In the twentieth century many Portuguese surnames survive among the Sinhalese and Tamils of the island. The Sinhalese language has also adopted a large number of Portuguese words, e.g. kalisan, sapattu, mes, kamisa, lensuwa, bottama, alpenithi, saya, tinta, kadadasi, almariya, mesa, viscotu, dosi, kaju, kalderama, janela, tappe, karatha, ayah, annasi, pornuwa, alavankuwa, rodé, parala, reepa, viduruwa, kussiya, kanuwa and camara.

The Portuguese occupation of Colombo ends with the siege of 1656 when the city was captured by the Dutch. It has been said that the defence of Colombo against overwhelming odds was the most gallant feat of the Portuguese. The Kandyan king, Rajasinha II, who had invited the Dutch to expel the Portuguese from the island, realised in the end that he had made a bad bargain. His kingdom was more isolated than ever and he expressed his sense of disappointment in the words of the Sinhalese proverb : “ I gave pepper and got ginger.”

Dutch Rule

THE Dutch occupied Colombo and other parts of maritime Ceylon from 1656 to 1796, a period of 140 years. The continuous bombardment during seven months of the siege had left the Portuguese city of Colombo in ruins. There are today hardly any traces of Portuguese buildings, sacred or secular.

When they took possession of Colombo, the Dutch contracted the line of fortifications to a third of its former dimensions. They abandoned the outer line of defences along with its bulwark Madre de Dios in what is now Fourth Cross Street. The low-lying ground outside was flooded and the broad expanse of the lake flowed in as far as Kayman's Gate.

Bastions were built on more solid foundations : Leyden behind the present Caffoor's building ; Delft in Main Street ; Hoorn by the side of Tramsworks House ; Rotterdam at the eastern corner of Echelon Barracks by the overhead bridge ; Middleburg at the southern end of Queen Street overlooking the Galle Face green ; Enkhuisen on the ruins of the Agostino in Flagstaff Street ; Amsterdam near the main Customs Gate. As a compliment to the Sinhalese king, the Portuguese bastion of St Estavo near the Pettah belfry was for a time called the Rajasinha bastion. St John's bastion near the fish market was rebuilt and named Victoria point.

Walter Schouton, who walked round the city within a few years of its capture by the Dutch, wrote that there were " many fine buildings, even whole streets lying in ruins Nevertheless, we found in the town grand mansions, lofty churches, wide streets and walks and large houses in great number. They were built spacious, airy and high with stone walls as if meant to stand for ever ".

The Fort and Pettah were separated by an open space which was afterwards turned into a pond by admitting water from the lake. This work was carried out by an engineer named Vyver. The lake-to-harbour canal is a more recent development.

The Dutch did much to improve the Fort. We have a contemporary account by Dr. Aegidius Daalmans, a Belgian physician who visited Ceylon in 1687. He writes : " In the Castle (i.e. the Fort) are a few respectable houses, and most of these built by the Dutch, of which the house of the Governor, with that of the Secretary which is close by, is very large and, with its garden, forms a complete square. Its front faces the sea shore. The wall or the fortification serves as a road for the said house. At one angle towards the east stands a bastion, and at the other angle towards the west is a *corp de garde*, where the Company and the servants, with the trumpeter of the Governor, have their residence close to the Water-poort.

" The Castle has two streets from the north to the south, the longest of which runs from the Water-poort to the Gaalse-poort, is very broad and irregular, and only ten or twelve houses stand there in order, to wit, as one enters by the Gaalse-poort on the right hand, where the shopkeeper, the cashier, the dispenser, warehousemasters, &c., dwelt. In the middle of this street stands the church, which lies north and south, and is one relic of the fifty churches that in the time of the Portuguese stood in the districts of Colombo, of Negombo and Gaalen, and it did not differ much from them, but was also in ruins when I was there, and the ground was all marked off for the building of a new one close by, but there it remained ".

Christopher Schweitzer, a native of Wurtenburg, who served with the Dutch in Ceylon for five years in various offices and was fluent in both Portuguese and Sinhalese, has left his impressions of Colombo. He had his troubles and was " pestered by the matrimonial advances of a widow with whom he lodged." He writes : " I will, now that I am treating of Colombo, give you some description of the city When the Dutch East India Company took possession of it, they demolished many parts, and rebuilt others after the Dutch manner. And to this day they are building at the castle (Fort) and city (Pettah). The castle has on the west side the sea ; on the north-east side the city ; on the south-east side a sweet river. It is fortified with several bulwarks each of which has 20 or 30 guns ; a very good counterscarp ; and there are so many rocks on the sea side that no ships can come near it.

" Within the castle are many pretty walks and nut trees, set in an uniform order ; but they bear no fruit, only red and white flowers. The streets are pleasant walks themselves, having trees on both sides before the houses. The castle contains about forty acres of land. The Governor, all the merchants, officers and soldiers have their dwellings within the castle. Without the walls, between them and the sea are the huts where near four thousand slaves belonging to the company lie at night. They are of different nations and are constantly kept at work. Their huts are very little, made up with nothing but straw and leaves.

There are Dutchmen to look after them, who are called Mucadons. Each of them have seventy, eighty, ninety or a hundred to oversee and must give an account of them”.

Schweitzer says that there was a very fine stable full of Persian horses. Although cattle were not allowed to graze in the Fort, an exception was made in the case of horses.

“The inhabitants”, he continues, “are a mixture of officers, soldiers, burghers and tradesmen, blacks and whites and others : for which reason the Hollanders are obliged to keep a careful watch every night. The streets are always very clean, though it rains never so much. There is an hospital for the Dutch, very well provided with able surgeons, and they with very good medicines, and slaves allowed them. The chief doctor that had the care of it in my time was in ill repute for his ill management of those who came under his hands, and for several ill actions he was accused of. And among others for having a pretty while too familiar with a slave of his and then killing of her and burying her in his garden”.

The old Portuguese roads in the Pettah, some of which were narrow and crooked, were replaced by straighter and broader thoroughfares. Main Street, which the Portuguese had called Straight, was named Koning's (King's) Street, while Keyzer and Prince Streets still retain their original names. The seminary in Prince Street, mentioned in a map of 1723, altered very little since the Dutch occupation and now used as the Pettah Post Office, has an inscription on a stone, over the entrance :

Psalm GXXVII Nisi Jehovah Aedificet Domum Frustra Laborant Ao MDCCLXXX

First Cross Street was named Market Street because of the block of land lying to the south of the Cemetery which was reserved for a market place. The present Second Cross Street was at the time called Haarlemmer Street and Third Cross Street, Kruis (Cross) Street.

Maliban Street (Malieban literally means “The Mall”) was the fashionable promenade of the Dutch ladies in the good old days when carriages were not wanted and the Pettah enjoyed all the privileges of gentility. The present Front Street was called Visschers (fishers’) Street, with the fish market (vismarket) where Messrs. Hunter & Co. have their store.

Schweitzer gives us a glimpse of the Pettah market : “The Dutch churchyard is in the middle of the city, enclosed with a wall, on which a Malabarian school stands. On the outside of the churchyard there is sold, all the week long, silks, stuffs, and linnen, by the Moors and Persians ; and all sorts of fruits, dried fish, onions, sugar and rice by the Malabarians, Maldivians, Cingalayans and other inhabitants of Colombo”.

The Portuguese had found the Moors to be formidable adversaries. It was only with reinforcements from India that they were able to relieve their newly-erected fort in Colombo in 1517 from the Moors who besieged it for several months. But they did not interfere with the trade of the Moors so long as they carried it on

peacefully. The Dutch, on the other hand, were keenly interested in trade and disliked the commercial activities of the Moors who were required to register themselves under pain of banishment (1665). Landed property could not be sold to them and they could not own slaves (1749). A Dutch proclamation prohibiting Moors and Malabars (Indians) from possessing houses and grounds within the Fort and the Pettah of Colombo was repealed by the British regulation, No. 2 of 1832.

We get through the eyes of Dr. Aegidius Daalmans a glimpse of the activities of the port : " There is yet another small gate, by which one gets to the pier and wharf, where all the goods are discharged and loaded by means of punts and small boats or skiffs, and also taken to large vessels, which mostly lie a good half mile outside the bay on account of a bank, and the north wind in the 'Mousson', in November, December and January, as the north wind blows sometimes very strongly there, and then the ships cannot get out of the bay on account of the north winds, but are driven towards the shore, so that they part from their anchors. On the north side the fort has a bend towards the sea, like an elbow, on the end of which stands a bastion with a four-cornered tower well provided with metal cannon. This bastion bears the name of Waterpass. Behind this bend, towards the shore, lies the wharf for building small vessels ; there stands a saw-mill driven by the wind. In the middle of the elbow stands a smithy, besides carpenters', turners' and coopers' shops. Here the gun-carriages and everything needed on sea or land are made for the Company. The rest of this crooked elbow is entirely occupied by store-houses, in which the goods of the Company are kept. Close by the Gaalse poort stands a powder mill, also driven by the wind, where gun-powder is made."

A narrow passage through the ramparts near the Rotterdam bastion communicated, by a causeway and bridge, with Slave Island. Hultsdorp was the seat of the Land Court and a short distance from the church at Wolvendaal was " a stately mansion in which visiting ambassadors from Kandy were lodged and entertained ".

Johann Wolfgang Heydt says in a book published in 1744 that Hultsdorp " lies about a cannon-shot from the castle of Colombo on a little hill. This house is the regular seat or dwelling place of the Dissawa or rural judge who rules over the country as does the Governor over the castle ; yet he must send a daily report to the Governor if anything happens ". The house was built of two storeys, but only the upper one was occupied. " About 80 paces from the guard-house is a Mondour or pleasure-pavilion below, which was built in order to celebrate in the presentation of a Dissawa, or other festivities ".

Less complimentary to Ceylon is Dr. Aegidius Dalmaans' parting shot: "Before I leave the island of Ceylon, it will not be unreasonable if I briefly relate what I heard and saw of that island during the period of eighteen months that I lived there. It is true that Baldeus has written much about it and extols it mightily high, but indeed and in truth the whole island and all that is in it, excepting the

cinnamon tree, is not worth as much as an ordinary village in Brabant or Flanders : for all the fruits that grow there are not worth describing . . . The cattle are so thin that they are not eatable. The fish that comes into the fish market on a Friday in Antwerp is better and worth more than all the fish that is caught in a whole year throughout the whole of Ceylon. The schools . . . are nothing more than a wretched hut and a roof on sticks, that is open all round, and some covered with straw and others with tiles". It is interesting to note that Dr. Daalmans also wrote that Ceylon "was first discovered by Christoffel Columbus, an Italian, whence the chief town bears his name" !

The late Mr. R. G. Anthonisz, who was Ceylon Government Archivist, has given an admirable description of a well-to-do Dutch home :

" Let us imagine ourselves taking a peep into a Dutch house in the Petrah of Colombo, the OUDE STAD, or old city, somewhere in the year 1750.

" In front of it, stretching the whole length, is an open paved platform, called the stoep, which we have to cross in order to enter the house.

" Opening into the house from the stoep is a wide portal set in a massive framework of wood with heavily-pannelled shutters and surmounted by a fanlight filled in with a huge cipher monogram.

" On either side are lofty windows nearly four feet from the ground.

" The door leads us into the kleine zaal, which is a kind of lobby or passage, but it is wide enough for two rows of chairs to be ranged against the wall on either side. No other furniture is here, but the walls are decorated with a number of portrait engravings and historical scenes set in broad ebony frames. The portraits are those of the first Stadtholder, Willem the Silent, of his son Maurice, of the Admirals Tromp and De Ruyter, and other heroes of Dutch history ; while the pictures represent the Siege of Leyden, the murder of the De Witts, the Escape of Grotius in a chest, and similar events which in those days they delighted to recall.

" Two doors lead from the kleine zaal into chambers on either side; but we shall for the present pass on to the zaal or great hall, which is a wide and lofty room stretching across nearly the whole breadth of the building. It is the living room of the family. On one side is a long dining table of four square pieces, each standing on a single centre pedestal after the fashion of a round table. Around it are placed a row of high-backed chairs. An eten kast, which serves as a larder, and a kelder or cellaret of calamander wood bound with copper, stand close by. Along the walls are chairs of diverse shapes and sizes, some broad and roomy, others small and low. A settee of ebony, with two foot-stools beside it occupies a blank space of wall ; while by the window near it stands a small table with a dambord, or draughts-board.

" By another window stands a lessenaar, or desk of calamander or ebony, on which stands the Staten Bybel, a large folio black-letter Bible in heavy wooden boards covered with stamped leather and fastened by brass clasps and corners. In this Bible, if we opened and examined it, would be found the stamboek, or

family register, in which the head of the family kept a chronicle of domestic events. Often a genealogical tree would be attached to the stamboek to trace the family back to the first settler in Ceylon or to some distinguished ancestor in the Vaderland. A couple of brass candle-stands, a couple of tall spittoons of the same metal, a kantoorje or writing desk, and a bookcase are other objects which attract our attention. A large variety of porcelain jars, ivory boxes, and brass articles of various shapes lie on the tables.

“ On the walls are pictures larger than those in the passage. Some of these are oil paintings—not on canvas, as we have them now, but on broad wooden panels. On a rack on the wall are a number of swords of various sizes and shapes, from the ponderous long sword of brass and steel to the slender weapon, silver-mounted and gold-chaised, which the fashion of the day required every gentleman to wear as a part of his full dress. On the same rack are also displayed several three-cornered hats and a wig or two. Hanging from the ceiling are large square lamps. These are made of four panes of glass mounted in brass with a centre support for a burner.

“ We also catch a glimpse of the mevrouw, in her morning toilet of a crisp gingham skirt and a long white jacket of spotless linen, as she sits in the halve dak or back verandah and orders the servants about, her shrill voice ringing through the house as she keeps constantly calling for them by such names as Rosalie, Belisante, Aurora, or Champoca. The children are also preparing for school, which they attend at 8 o'clock. They go out, the boys in their opperbroeks, a sort of combination garment; and the girls in skirts and short white jackets.

“ While many of these things are familiar to us because the Dutch were a very conservative people, and the fashions they observed fifty or a hundred years previously came down very little changed even to our own early days, the appearance of the domestics strikes us at once as unfamiliar. Instead of the fine-featured, brown-complexioned Sinhalese servants who now take the employment in our houses, we find here a swarthy, woolly-haired and thick-lipped race of men and women engaged in several household duties. They are variously clad. Some of the men are in pantaloons and jackets, others in waistcloths; while most of the women wear skirts with short tunics of coloured stuff. The men as well as the women wear ear-rings, the latter generally heavy ones which weigh down and tear the lobes of the ear. And all go bare-headed. It is scarcely necessary to mention that these are slaves. Yet they are not all of pure African descent. Traces may be observed in many of them of an admixture with higher types; and some of them may have come from Tanjore, in the south of India ”.

Many commonly-used Sinhalese words are derived from Dutch, e.g. artapal, bonchi, goraka, bira, Isnaps, pastala, advokaat, kantoruwa, istoppuwa, ispiritale, iskuruppuwa, karakoppuwa, kalukum, toloku, tarappu and notharis.

Among the legacies of the Dutch to Ceylon were canals, buildings and the Roman Dutch Law. The Government of Ceylon was in the hands of the Governor and Director of the Island, who was also a member of the Council of India,

and the Political Council, consisting of the Hoofd Administrateur (Controller of Revenue), the Dissawa of Colombo, the chief military officer, the Fiscal (Public Prosecutor) and five others, the heads of the principal departments.

With the outbreak of war between England and France at the end of the eighteenth century, the Dutch colonies in the East were under threat. The hereditary Stadtholder of the Netherlands, who had fled to England in February 1795, requested the Dutch Governor in Ceylon, Van Angelbeek, to admit English troops and ships within the settlements in his charge and treat them as allies coming to protect them from the French who had already occupied the Netherlands. After some hesitation the Dutch Governor and Council in Colombo rejected the instructions. The English thereupon captured Trincomalee, Jaffna and Negombo and laid siege to Colombo. Major Agnew, a British emissary from Lord Hobart, the Governor of Madras, arrived in Colombo and informed Angelbeek that Count de Meuron, the proprietor of the Swiss mercenary regiment which formed part of the Colombo garrison had transferred it to the British, by an agreement entered into on 30th March 1795, which had been negotiated by Hugh Cleghorn, onetime Professor of St Andrews' University, Scotland (later he became the first Colonial Secretary of Ceylon). Meanwhile the news of the transfer had been communicated to Colonel Pierre Frederick de Meuron, the Count's brother, who commanded the regiment, in a letter hidden in an Edam cheese.

There was considerable dissension among the Dutch officials in Colombo and the Governor Van Angelbeek, "a very respectable old officer of moderate principles and a mild disposition", as Percival describes him, was accused of treachery. "All the troops were so indignant with the Governor that if the English Colonel had not sent him a detachment as bodyguard, he would certainly have fallen a victim to the fire which destroyed his house and menaced the interior of the Fort".

The attack of the British soldiers came from the north of Colombo with the support of their ships from the sea. They crossed the Kelani river on bamboo rafts without opposition, captured Korteboam and reached the Pettah through Kayman's Gate. On 16th February 1796 all the settlements in Ceylon of the Dutch East India Company passed to the British East India Company without a prolonged struggle.

The British Period Begins

COLOMBO was captured by the British in 1796 but it was not until 1815 that it became the metropolis of the whole island. The administration of the city was in the charge of a Collector and John Macdowall of the Madras Service was the first to hold the office. After 1833 the Government Agent of the Western Province administered the city until the Municipal Council was established in January 1866.

We are indebted to the Rev. James Cordiner and Captain Robert Percival for the best descriptions of Colombo during the early British period. Nine years after the Dutch were ousted the character of the city had not changed much. The Fort was chiefly occupied by British residents ; the Pettah, then a clean and airy residential district, by the Dutch and Portuguese ; and the suburbs by the Sinhalese, Tamil and Moorish population. "Including all these", writes Cordiner, "Columbo contains upwards of fifty thousand inhabitants".

The Fort was divided roughly into four quarters by two principal streets. A broad street which went round the ramparts served both the bastions and the soldiers' barracks. There were seven bastions of which four looked towards the sea and three faced the lake. All these were demolished in 1869 with the levelling of the city walls and filling up of the moat.

The principal street in the Fort was what is now known as Queen Street and was called King Street before Queen Victoria began her rule. Next to the wharf were the Harbour-master's office and Customs House. An arched passage up a gentle rising ground led to the Parade Ground on one side of which stood the Supreme Court building. Government House, which faced the sea, was a long and spacious building of two storeys. The present St Peter's Church in the

Fort formed part of the building, and is the hall in which the Governor gave audience, held levees, received ambassadors from the Kandyan court and conferred honours. It was also used as a theatre and a ball room and sometimes as a church or court house.

The first British Governor of Ceylon, Frederic North, lived in a house belonging to 'Gezaghebber' Sluyskens, a ground floor bungalow at the junction of the present Prince Street and York Street, the site on which the Cargills building stands. He had to rent this house because the roof of the house used by the Dutch Governors was in a bad state. But he found the Sluyskens house "hot and confined from the vicinity of other buildings".

A new Government House was purchased at Hulstsdorp for 4,500 star pagodas (about £1,800). But its situation too was not suitable. "It was shut up by thickets of 'jak' and 'jamboo' trees, which deprived it of the benefit of the sea breeze; and it had no prospect, but a confined view of a valley of paddy fields, sometimes overflowed with water, and the mountain of Adam's Peak seen through an opening of a deeply-shaded and luxuriant avenue. The back verandah is, perhaps, the most spacious hall of the kind to be seen in India, being upwards of one hundred and fifty feet in length and so broad that a coach might be driven in it with perfect ease. This was the place allotted for dancing; to render which amusement more agreeable, two stages formed of elastic boards were raised about one foot or eighteen inches above the same floor, and railed in to prevent accidents".

The Hulstsdorp house was occupied by the Governor till the end of 1803. He moved from there to a house in San Sebastian constructed by the Civil Architect out of a large powder mill and magazine which had been purchased for 11,000 rix dollars. The Hulstsdorp house was given over to the Collector of Colombo for his kachcheri and other public offices, while the gardens were converted partly into a bazaar built by the Government, the intention being to sell the rest as building sites, for which purpose it was considered suitable owing to the proximity of the canal.

The Governor's mansion at San Sebastian, near Trinity Church and the present Police Barracks, was a less splendid dwelling but "in a more eligible situation . . . surrounded with pleasant prospects and fanned by perpetual breezes. It was a two-storeyed structure and, until the departure of Governor North in 1805, "it formed the theatre of all gay and festive entertainments".

North's successor, Sir Thomas Maitland, preferred to reside in Mount Lavinia. It was here that he received Ehelepola Adigar. Until the ramparts were demolished the Fort was close and deprived of the sea breeze. The 'punkah', which preceded the electric fans, was introduced from Calcutta by Lieutenant-General Hay Macdowall, the Commander-in-Chief in 1799. It was operated by a rope which ran over a pulley fixed at the top of a door in the centre of the hall, on the outside of which stood the servant who kept the ventilator in motion. Maitland took steps to obtain a more commodious house for the Governor in the centre of the

Fort and rented the "largest and best dwelling house in the fort of Colombo It is situate in the principal street and composed of two regular storeys. From the upper balcony on one side is an extensive view of the sea, the road and shipping. On the other is a rich prospect, comprehending the lake, Pettah, cinnamon plantations, and a wide range of the inland territories bounded by Adam's Peak, and many lesser mountains".

The house had belonged to the former Dutch Governor, Gerard Van Angelbeek. The Angelbeek mansion, which had been occupied by Major-General Hay Macdowall and in which Lord Hobart, Governor of Madras, had stayed during his visit to Colombo in 1797, ultimately became the property of the Government under somewhat strange circumstances.

Angelbeek's niece, Jacomina Gertrude Van der Graaf, married an English Civil Servant, the Hon. George Melville Leslie. When a shortage of over £10,000 was discovered during his sixteen months' tenure of the office of Paymaster-General, his wife's family rallied round and generously offered to hand over the house to the Government at its own valuation of 35,000 rix dollars, and this was accordingly confirmed by a deed dated 17th January 1804.

The house was renamed Queen's House with the accession of Queen Victoria to the English throne. Alterations and additions were made in 1831 and 1838. It was practically rebuilt in 1852 at a cost of £7,000. Very serious defects in the structure were discovered in 1928 and a further overhauling was carried out. At the time it was estimated that the 5.75 acres were worth Rs. 4 million.

Near to Queen's House were situated the various military and civil offices, an Anglican church, the military hospital, the medical museum and library and various British commercial establishments. There was a circulating library in Colombo as early as 1801. It was run by a Mr. Michael Loughlin, a merchant who had come from the Madras Presidency and set up business, owning 'Loughlin's Auction Rooms'. Among the European merchants who had business establishments in 1817 were F. B. Montcur, John Pierre Jumeaux, L de Bussch and an English watchmaker. Many of the earliest merchants were retired master mariners, e.g., George Steuart, James Steuart, W. C. Gibson, George Winter and George Boyd.

The Law Courts were in the Fort until the year 1804. In that year a serious quarrel developed between General Wemyss, Officer Commanding the Troops, and the Supreme Court, over the use of the Parade Ground for administering floggings on the order of the Court. The military objected; whereupon the Supreme Court bound the Commandant of Colombo to keep the peace. General Wemyss retaliated by locking the gates of the Fort, on the ground that there were Kandyan spies about, and one of the Judges found himself locked out one day.

General Wemyss was brought before the Court on a charge of Contempt and bound to keep the peace. The much-harrassed Governor, Frederic North, wrote the following letter, dated 26th September 1806, to the Judges :—

My Lords,

In addition to the various inconveniences which must attend your Lordships' permanent residence in the crowded garrison, I have the honour to inform you that I expect in a very short time the arrival of a regiment of Negroes from the West Indies, whose habits of life are so little known, and probably so little analogous to that of the natives of this Island, that it is equally desirable for the department over which you so worthily preside as for their own discipline, that they should be quartered within the Fort.

And as the Government house which I have offered for that purpose cannot be rendered habitable, I am compelled to request your Lordships to give up the buildings you now occupy as you can conveniently remove.

In fixing your new residence without the Fort, your Lordships may be assured that I shall be happy to comply with your wishes and to approve the high esteem with which I have the honour to be, my Lords.

Your Lordships' Most Obedient Faithful Servant

sgd. Frederic North

There were houses with verandahs both in the Fort and Pettah. While they excluded the glare of the sun from the houses during the day, they afforded a cool apartment for enjoying the evening air. They were often divided by wooden balustrades to the annoyance of pedestrians. The houses in general had one floor. When the occupant of one of the smaller houses kept a horse, the horse often entered at the same door with his master. In many houses there was no ceiling but the roofs were lofty. When the English took possession of Colombo, all the houses had glass windows. The Dutch and Portuguese were presumably able to bear the heat with greater patience than the English who replaced the glass with Venetian blinds.

“In those days there were not many European residents outside the Fort”, writes John Capper. “A straggling few in the near portion of Colpetty; one or two in Slave Island and at Kew Point, and Captain's Garden; and about as many in Mutwal. The majority by far dwelt within the city walls. High military officials resided in those times within walls which form today a tailor's cutting room in Hospital Lane. Merchants resided in one half of a house whilst they carried on their business in another portion; and when the day's work was over, the verandah in front formed the family sitting room to which military and civilian neighbours resorted as a matter of course. Queen Street looked in upon Prince Street whilst hospitalities were exchanged between Baillie Street and Chatham Street.

“ A stroll through the Fort after dinner was a pleasant mode of passing the time, dropping in first on one neighbour and then on another, until the evening round was completed. The sound of music and of mirth resounded within the old, grim, grass-grown walls ; and if in those days society were small and amusements few and simple, there were rarely complaints of dullness. Early hours were the rule, though there were a few roystering mercantile or military spirits, men of stamp that have long since passed away, who too often for their health's sake held revels towards the hours of the morning ”.

The Fort and Pettah were, as now, connected by Main Street. To the south of Main Street, the land, as far as the Lake was a coconut garden, i.e. the Lotus Road and what was once called the Racquet Court and is now Chalmer's Granaries. Part of this area was an esplanade. Cordiner says that part of the Pettah “encroaches upon the esplanade and approaches too near the outworks ”.

Outside the Fort

THE term *Pettah*—an Anglo-Indian word from the Tamil *pettai*—was introduced by the British to designate what the Dutch called the *Oude Stad* or old town. The Sinhalese word *pitakotuwa* means the same thing, i.e., outside the fort.

In early British times the *Pettah* was a very much pleasanter place—less noisy, less dusty and less congested—than it is today. It contained many fine houses, trim gardens and shady walks. The houses were usually coloured bright yellow with bands of red or orange round the doors and windows. Many of these had white earthenware vessels fixed on the roofs or gables to draw off the ‘evil eye’. Most of the wealthy descendants of the Portuguese and Dutch lived in the *Pettah*.

The Rev. James Cordiner gives us a vivid description of Colombo at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The *Pettah*, he says, “is neat, clean, regular, and larger than within the Fort. Five streets, each half a mile in length, run parallel to one another; and the same number intersect them at right angles. Verandahs supported on lofty pillars shade the fronts of the houses but they want the additional ornaments of trees”.

Among famous Ceylonese who had lived in the *Pettah* was Sir Richard Morgan, Queen’s Advocate, and one of the most powerful men of his time. He was born on 21st February 1821, in Prince Street. He writes of a boyhood neighbour: “Old Mr. Run, who lived next door to us, was a fine old gentleman of what was even then looked upon as the ancient Dutch school. He sported Nankeen breeches, white stockings, and a correct white flyer. He used to sit every evening in the outer verandah taking his coffee and jaggery. We boys were much amused by his jokes, and were excessively tickled by his promise made night after night

that we should share his jaggery when the fruit was sufficiently ripe. He was the chief clerk of one of the Government offices, and was the first to keep his accounts according to the double entry of the Italians”.

Beyond the Pettah many straggling streets branched out in various directions, several miles into the country. Large houses were being built in the suburbs. The last Dutch Governor, Angelbeek, had a country seat at Grandpass. “ Besides a row of offices and a handsome farm-yard, there are two houses of one floor each for the accomodation of the family ”, writes Çordiner. “ These lie parallel to one another, and it is necessary to pass through the first to get to the second, which is raised on an embankment of the river. The stream is seen gliding along from the windows, and is broad, deep, and rapid. The opposite banks are closed with thick woods. The situation is pleasant, but low and flat : and the grounds about it are swampy, being employed in the cultivation of rice. In the morning they are covered with thick fogs, whence the place has been accounted unhealthy. General Macdowall and his staff, however, often lived there, for several months at a time, without experiencing any bad consequences. But it is not a situation where an Englishman would choose to build ”.

“ The street, or rather alley, which leads through Kenman’s (Kayman’s) Gate to the outer Pettah ”, writes Percival, “ is exceedingly narrow, and from the nature of the climate and its confined situation is of course excessively hot. Here the shroffs and money-changers have fixed their situations. The outer Pettah is very large, and branches out into a number of streets which extend some of them two miles. At the further end of one of them stands the church Wolvendaal, and behind it a large oblong stone building supported in front with pillars, and intended for the reception of the Kandyan ambassadors. A number of bazaars are here kept by the native men and women : they are abundantly supplied with vegetables, dried fish, and fruit.

“ In this part of the Pettah are vast numbers of carpenters, smiths and artificers of various sorts, particularly workers in gold and silver. Here are also a great number of black merchants, and *canopies* (kanakapullays), or black accountants ; as also manufacturers and traders in the different kinds of precious stones found in Ceylon.

“ Colombo taken altogether is, for its size, one of the most populous places in India. There is no part of the world where so many different languages are spoken, or which contains such a mixture of nations, manners and religions. Besides Europeans, and Cingalese, the proper natives of the island, you meet, scattered over the town, almost every race of Asiatics ; Moors of every class, Malabars, Travancorians, Malays, Hindoos, Gentoos, Chinese, Persians, Arabians, Turks, Maldivians, Javians, and natives of all the Asiatic isles ; Parsees, or worshippers of fire There are also a number of Africans, Caffres, Buganese, a mixed race of Africans and Asiatics ; besides the half-castes, people of colour, and other races which proceed from a mixture of the original ones. Each of these different classes of people has its own manners, customs and language ”.

The movement of population outside Pettah proper is indicated by the names of streets such as Old Moor Street, New Moor Street, Chetty Street, New Chetty Street and Chekku Street.

In early British times, Mutwal became a fashionable suburb. Gavin Hamilton, the Collector of Customs, had a house adjoining Tanque Salgado ('Lunupokuna'), now part of the graving docks. Sir William Coke, the Chief Justice (1808-18), lived in Rock House, which was built by H. A. Marshall, the Auditor-General, who also built Whist Bungalow and Modera House. Educated at Charterhouse and Christ Church, Oxford, Marshall was a good classical scholar. He had married "comfortably" but could be petty. P. A. Anstruther, another high official, was building Elie House at the same time that Marshall was building his houses. The latter secretly bought the property on the opposite side of the road to Elie House and built a two-storeyed house on purpose to spoil the view of the Fort from Elie House.

The Armitages lived at Modera House, the Duncans at Uplands (the home of the famous tortoise said to have been born in Dutch times), David Wilson, Member of the Legislative Council, whose daughter married Richard Cayley who became Chief Justice later, lived at Clive Lodge, Sir Samuel Grenier, Queen's Advocate, who was the first Secretary of the Municipal Council at Rock House; as did Sir Hardinge Giffard, another Chief Justice. Close to Rock House was De Saram House occupied in turn by David de Saram, Cecil Morgan and A. de A. Seneviratna. Mr. C. A. Lorenz lived at Elie House and Sir Richard Morgan at Whist Bungalow. Earnest Haeckel, the German scientist, resided at Whist Bungalow when he visited Colombo in 1880. He says that "starting from the Fort, it is a good hour's walk among the brown mud-huts of the natives, through Pettah and its northern outskirts, before reaching Whist Bungalow. Its isolated position, in the midst of the most luxuriant natural beauty, far from the business quarter of the town, and farther still from the fashionable southern suburbs of Kolpetty and the Cinnamon Gardens, was one source of the extraordinary charm I found from the very first in this quiet country retreat".

Haeckel gives us a bit of the history of this famous house gathered no doubt from his host, Herr Stipperger, Agent of the Austrian Lloyd Steamship Company. It was first occupied by an English officer who invited his friends to play whist on Sunday evenings. "Whist parties and drinking bouts in the isolated bungalow seem to have been uproarious in proportion to the satisfaction of these jolly comrades at having escaped the dreary tedium of an English Sunday and orthodox society". When Sir Richard Morgan bought Whist Bungalow, it was a small plain house, buried in its shrubbery. He enlarged it considerably, spending "a large part of his fortune in building and decorating this villa in a manner worthy of its beautiful situation". Although he was the most successful lawyer and most powerful official in the country, when he died it was found that Sir Richard Morgan had left an almost bankrupt estate and Whist Bungalow was sold under the auctioneer's hammer and bought by Mr. Louis Pieris. The ghost of Sir Richard was said to have haunted the house for many years thereafter.

Mudaliyadom was congregated around Wolvendaal and the vaults of many Sinhalese families are to be found in the small churchyard attached to the old Dutch church. In 1814, when he made an official visit to Colombo, Ehelepola, the Kandyan Minister, lived in a Dutch house at Silversmith Street. James D' Alwis, Member of the Legislative Council and well-known oriental scholar, who is buried there, lived at the Castle, in Silversmith Street. Sir Solomon Dias Bandaranaike's father, Udugaha Mudaliyar, lived at Udugaha Walauwa in the same street, where also there was Abeyasinghe Walauwa, later the residence of Sir Thomas de Sampayo. Sir Christoffel Obeyesekera, for long a Member of the Legislative, lived at Hill Castle. He was Sir Solomon's father-in-law. Barber Street, Green Street, Hill Street, Kuruwe Street and Messenger Street had many houses of the Sinhalese gentry. Colombo Chetty shroffs and merchants lived mostly in New Chetty Street while the Natukottai Chettiars who came from south India had their banking offices in Chetty Street. Mr. Susew de Soysa, uncle of Charles de Soysa, had a mansion at Grandpass which was later occupied by Mr. Selby, Queen's Advocate, and came to be known as Selby House. Selby Stores, owned by a Borah merchant, rose on its site.

Namasivayam Mudaliyar, father-in-law of Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, lived in Brassfounder Street. The home of Sir Ponnambalam's family was in Mutwal before he migrated to Cinnamon Gardens. Four members of the Legislative Council came from the Mutwal house, namely, Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy, Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam and Mr. P. Coomaraswamy. Lorenz moved from Elie House, Mutwal, to Karlshrue at Welikada near the present jail. He died here in 1871 at the age of forty-two. The Obeyesekera family owned "Summer Hill" opposite St Thomas' College. Sir Solomon Dias Bandaranaike lived here for a time.

Sir Philip Wodehouse lived in Darley House and Sir Anthony Oliphant at the "Alcove" in Captain's Garden. This was bought by Sir Harry Dias and renamed Maha Nuga Gardens, there being a large banyan tree in the premises. When the Governor, Sir Arthur Gordon, once sounded him as to his parting with the land for railway purposes, he replied : " Sir, let me die here ".

Before exploring the suburbs of Kollupitiya, Slave Island, Maradana and the Cinnamon Gardens, it would be convenient to return to the Fort and have a look at the Galle Face. Describing the scene in 1850, Mr. H. C. Sirr, who was Deputy Queen's Advocate, writes : " About half-past five o'clock, the Galle Face, or Hyde Park of Colombo, begins to wear an animated appearance, there being many vehicles and horses in motion. Every description of conveyance is seen driving round the Galle Face, from the Long Acre built carriage of the Governor and the dashing phaeton of the wealthy merchant, to the unassuming gig, the country-built palanqueen and the humble bandy. The horses, that draw these vehicles, are invariably attended by their keepers, (grooms being called horse-keepers in Ceylon,) who run by the side of the conveyance, when a gentleman or coachman drives ; at other times they lead the animal, accommodating their pace to that of the horse ".

Writing thirty years later, Haeckel says : "The gilded youth of Colombo exhibit themselves on horseback—some of them on miserable hacks indeed—the ladies, with bouquets in their hands, recline languidly in their carriages, in the lightest and most elegant toilettes. But no sooner is the sun gone down than all hasten home ; partly in order to escape the fever-laden evening air, partly to go through an elaborate process of "dressing for dinner", which is usually at half-past seven, and of course in the indispensable black tail-coat and white neck-tie, as in "Old England".

Governor Sir Henry Ward had the promenade which skirts the sea front built ; it was completed in 1859. As the inscription has it, he "recommended it to his successors in the interest of the ladies and children of Colombo". On the opposite side of the esplanade there was the Race Course until this was moved to Cinnamon Gardens. The inaugural meeting of the Colombo Club, which was housed in the Galle Face esplanade, was held on 5th April 1871. The amenities which the Club provided in those days were "cold tiffins, two billiard tables and card rooms". There was of course also a Bar.

The southern end of the esplanade led to Kollupitiya, a flourishing suburb. On each side of the road stood a number of beautiful villas shaded by lovely gardens. In the middle of the century the most imposing mansion on the Galle Road was Alfred House, the palatial residence of Mr. Charles de Soysa. It was here that Alfred Duke of Edinburgh and the Duchess were entertained by the de Soysas at a banquet at which gold plate was used. The grounds on which it stood stretched from Bagatelle Road to School Lane in the south and from Galle Road in the west to Thurstan Road. Earlier the de Soysa property was even larger and is said to have comprised about a hundred acres.

The southern suburbs were the healthiest part of the city as the refreshing sea breeze mitigated the enervating heat. "No climate in the world", wrote Cordiner, "is more salubrious than that of Colombo : and a person who remains within doors while the sun is powerful, never wishes to experience one more moderate". With the passage of time the city extended to Bambalapitiya and Wellawatte.

The Cinnamon Gardens too became a fashionable suburb with palatial houses, though there, with cinnamon plantations around, there was more of a rural atmosphere. In early British times several duels were fought in the Cinnamon Gardens. The best known was that between the Chief Justice, Sir Charles Marshall, and the General Officer Commanding the Troops, Sir John Wilson. It arose from certain remarks made by Sir John Wilson in a speech in the Legislative Council which were resented by the Chief Justice who was at the same time the legal member of the Council. At a subsequent meeting Sir Charles used unparliamentary language about the General in his absence. On the 7th January 1836 a letter appeared in the "Colombo Observer" from Captain Macready of the 30th Regiment (Sir John Wilson's Military Secretary and friend) stating for general information that Sir John Wilson had received full satisfaction from Sir

Charles Marshall for the expressions, personally offensive, delivered in the Legislative Council on the 29th ultimo, "and published in your number 48 of the 5th instant".

Maradana was the Sinhalese name for a sandy area. The best and most delicate cinnamon grew there. Slave Island was a tongue of land joined to the Fort by bridges and causeways. It was so called because slaves were segregated there by the Dutch. After their day's work they were rowed to Slave Island in punts from the sally-port which stood between the present Hemas Building and the Registrar-General's office. York Street was the rampart. In British times Slave Island became the home of a company of the Malay Regiment. Rifle Street is called *Kompanya Vidiya* in Sinhalese and *Kompanya Tervu* in Tamil, for this reason.

Slave Island contained a mud village, a bazaar, an excellent parade ground and "two gentlemen's villas". One of these had been built by the Dutch as a freemason's lodge. Kew Road, which connected Slave Island with the Fort, reminds us that the first botanical gardens of the British were on this road.

Cordiner writes : "There is a great variety of hill and dale in the vicinity of Colombo, and an equal number of delightful rides is probably not to be found, within so small a compass, in any other part of the world. Several pleasant rides, of from three to eight miles in extent, are formed by going out at one gate of the Fort, traversing the intermediate country, and returning by the other. These afford morning and evening recreation to the ladies and gentlemen of the settlement. One of the most frequented rides was 'round the Grand Pass'".

The greatest changes took place in Colombo with the development of the coffee industry in the island, the building of the south-west breakwater and the demolition of the fortifications. In 1869 Sir Hercules Robinson (later Lord Rosmead) got the permission of the authorities in England to demolish these fortifications which had become obsolete for defence purposes and required six thousand to man. The levelling of the walls and filling up of the moat made the Fort much more accessible and healthy. New barracks were erected, facing the sea, on the site of the old wall. The development of the Port, which began in 1864, is dealt with in a later chapter.

Birth of the Council

FROM the early days of British rule, the goal of self-government was rarely absent from the minds of the more enlightened administrators. In a memorandum presented to the Marquis of Londonderry, the Secretary of State, in 1809, Sir Alexander Johnston, Advocate Fiscal and later Chief Justice of Ceylon, urged that "a Constitution of Government, similar in principle to the British Constitution, but so modified as to suit the religious and moral feelings of the natives, and the peculiar circumstances of the country, be guaranteed to all the inhabitants of the island by an Act of Parliament".

In 1833 the Colebrooke Commissioners observed that Ceylon was one of the fittest spots in the British Empire to plant the germ of self-government.

The Legislative Council of Ceylon was established in October 1833. In that Council there were six unofficial members, three of whom were nominated by the British planting and commercial interests and appointed by the Governor. The other three were selected by the Governor from members of the permanent population.

Seventeen years later, in 1850, after the House of Commons had had ample opportunity to acquaint itself with conditions in Ceylon as the result of an inquiry by a Select Committee into the circumstances of the 'rebellion' of 1848, Colombo was offered a Municipal Council. Such at least is the impression one gains from William Digby's reference to the subject in his *Life of Sir Richard Morgan*, the famous Queen's Advocate. When, after an interval of years, such a Council was "accepted with eagerness", it was Sir Richard who prepared the necessary Ordinance and helped more than any other to launch the scheme.

The Governor, Sir Hercules Robinson, said, in his inaugural speech to the session of the Legislative Council of 1865, in which the Bill constituting the Council was passed :

“It is a source of peculiar satisfaction to witness the interest the public are beginning to evince in the Ordinance to establish the Municipal Council and which promises well for the success of the experiment we are about to try. I trust that this interest will not flag and that the care and discrimination with which the electors will select Councillors to represent them, and the moderation, fidelity and impartiality with which they will discharge their trust, will show that the inhabitants of Colombo and Kandy appreciate the privileges conferred upon them, and will operate as an inducement to the inhabitants of other towns to follow the good example set before them”.

The limits of the Colombo Municipal Council were fixed by a Proclamation dated 25th November 1865. On the 8th December a meeting was held at the ‘Cutcherry’ of a Committee to prepare lists of resident householders and persons eligible for the office of Councillors. Those present were : Mr. A. M. Ferguson, Dr. F. W. Willisford, Messrs. C. A. Lorenz, J. D’ Alwis, C. Dias, S. Sanmogam Ossen Lebbe and Abdul Cader Marikar.

The lists prepared by the Committee were left open, for inspection and amendment, at the Cutcherry for the prescribed period of 14 days, at the expiration of which time, separate meetings, for the election of Councillors for the respective districts of the Municipality were advertised in the *Gazette* and local newspapers. Election meetings were held on the 12th, 13th and 15th of January 1866 and were presided over by the Government Agent.

Sir Richard Morgan’s diary contains the following entries :

11th January, Thursday.—The excitement was great touching elections. G.A. told me that and myself came in for no end of abuse for advocating C’s cause. One (he would give no name) charitably prophesied that I should be dead before the year is out. May he himself be spared long to see his prophesy falsified ! It is a pity that the Burghers should carry class feeling so far. I think C. a better man than V for the native interest. The Burghers are predominant in the Pettah and should be duly represented, and there are already four Burghers, or rather will be besides V. C. is bad as respects English but his general information is great and his wealth, position and influence among natives supreme.

12th January, Friday.—Election at Colpetty and Slave Island went off quietly, C., F., and Dr. W. having been elected for places, respectively. The Fort place was contested for. I did not wish to attend it, but kept myself within reach at the Colonial Secretary’s Office if L. should want me. It went off with great spirit and V. was elected. The cheering was tremendous. The votes for L., 49 ; for A., 39. The military formed the majority of A’s voters. After election I returned to the office and replied to several letters from the Colonial Secretary.

13th January.—Attended office and worked till late on reports in Elliott’s cases. Was informed that the Pettah election was a stormy affair. I trust C. will be

elected. St Sebastian returned F de S. Sea Street was also severely contested for between E.D. and T. Went to congratulate the winner, T.

14th January.—No church today. Heard of V. being elected for the Pettah by majority of 69. T. also elected as against E.D. T. called and was full of the election. N. also called to relate result of election.

15th January.—Exciting elections. Attended Cotanchina held in St Thomas' school. It included Mutwal, and L. had offered himself as candidate. C.P. had got up arches and other decorations. The band of the 25th regiment was in attendance. C. was to propose L, but it was found that his name was not on the list. So I proposed him, saying a few words to indicate that he was the man and none better. C.P. seconded and the motion was unanimously carried. The band struck up and L. made a very neat speech. In the afternoon was the election at the railway terminus. A was for St Sebastian, Ellepattoo having retired. A. assured the electorate that, having examined the list, he was satisfied that he was the best man for the post! He went, with a flag, driven by V. and harangued the crowd at his house in a very self-congratulatory speech—so I heard—and at night walked in a ridiculous procession with fiddles and tom-tom, shouting at and for himself! L. was elected for Marandahn against M. The latter would have been better as : 1. It was desirable to secure more Europeans in the Council ; 2. the mercantile interest was not represented ; 3. there are too many lawyers in the Council and too many Burghers. L is, however, a good man.

Sir Hercules Robinson had emphasised that “ if ever the bulk of the population can be fitted for the right use of a large measure of political power, it can only be effected through the training which the exercise of Municipal functions afford. They can thus establish a right to claim further concessions by proving that they are prepared to make personal sacrifices for the public good, that they can exercise with fairness, moderation and self-restraint, the power and privileges conferred on them, and can carry on local self-government with justice to the contending interests and classes ”.

The Governor was not disappointed by the first year's results. The Council was composed of a team of high officials and nine leading citizens. It would have been surprising did it not live up to the Governor's expectations.

When he addressed the Legislative Council next, Sir Hercules Robinson said :

“ Prominent in the legislation last year was the Municipal Council's Ordinance. It came into operation at the beginning of the present year, and the excitement which the first elections gave rise to evinced the interest which the inhabitants of the towns of Colombo and Kandy took in the measure. The Council seem intent in their work and although, as might have been expected, individual acts have been complained against and the measures taken to enforce habits of cleanliness and to provide for the recovery of taxes have invoked opposition in certain quarters, I shall entertain hopes that these institutions now so successfully inaugurated here may be productive of all these advantages which, when right administered, they cannot fail to confer ”.

The First Meeting

THOSE elected to the first Council were :

C. L. Ferdinands (*Colpetty*)
Dr. F. W. Willisford (*Slave Island*)
J. W. Venn (*Fort*)
F. J. de Saram (*San Sebastian*)
Dr. J. W. Van Geyzel (*Pettab*)
S. Tambyah (*St Paul's*)
C. A. Lorenz (*Cottanchina*)
J. D'Alwis (*New Bazaar*)
F. C. Loos (*Marandahn*)

On the 5th January 1866, the Governor nominated the following :

C. P. Layard (*Government Agent, Western Province*)
Dr. W. P. Charsley (*Principal Civil Medical Officer*)
H. A. Evatt (*Acting Chief Engineer and Commissioner of Roads*)
T. Berwick, (*Deputy Queen's Advocate*)
J. J. Grinlington (*Assistant to the Surveyor-General*)

The Council met for the first time on the 16th January 1866. Mr. C. P. Layard was Chairman and Mr. Samuel Grenier was Secretary. (Mr. Layard was knighted later; so was Mr. Grenier after he had become a lawyer and risen to be Queen's Advocate).

The following offices were created under the bye-laws :

Office of Secretary to the Municipal Council

Office of the Sanitary Officer

Office of the Superintendent of Roads.

Provision was made for the appointment of a Storekeeper, Municipal Inspectors (not to exceed 6 in number), Clerks and Peons (not to exceed 12).

The following Standing Committees were nominated on the 12th of April :

Finance and Collection of Revenue

Sanitary and Police

Public Works

Law

General Business.

The sources of the Council's revenue were : the Assessment Rate, levied in respect of all houses, buildings, land and tenements situated within the Municipal boundaries ; Taxes on Vehicles and Animals ; Commutation Tax in lieu of manual labour on roads ; Tolls in streets, bridges and canals ; Licences to carriers, wine and retail dealers ; Gun licences ; Stamp duty on certificates of Advocates, Proctors and Notaries ; Market and Slaughter House fees ; Fines recovered by the Police and Municipal Magistrates ; Miscellaneous Receipts.

One of the first duties of the Council was to frame its bye-laws and submit them to the Governor.

“ These bye-laws, having been submitted to the Governor, were sanctioned on the 8th March 1866 subject, however, to certain amendments suggested by the Queen's Advocate, having the effect of disallowing the power to fine parties who might fail to attend, and cancelling a proposed rule of debate that no Commissioner should be permitted to read his speech ”, says the official report.

The famous engineer, Major Thomas Skinner, was appointed a member in the place of Mr. H. A. Evatt on the 5th of April 1866.

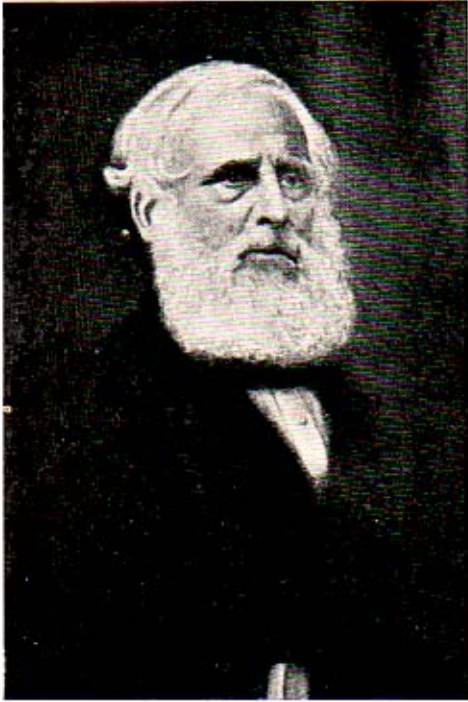
The Standing Committees were composed as follows :

Finance Committee : C. P. Layard, Major Thomas Skinner, Dr. W. P. Charsley, C. A. Lorenz and J. W. Venn.

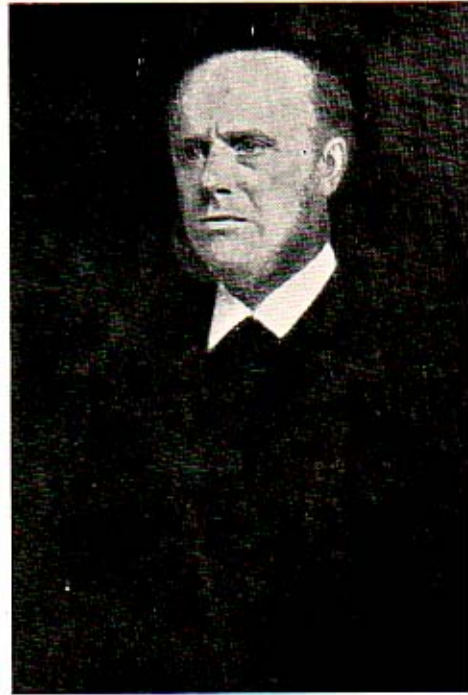
Sanitary and Police : Dr. F. W. Willisford, Dr. W. P. Charsley, T. Berwick, Dr. J. W. Van Geyzel and S. Tambyah.

Public Works : Major Thomas Skinner, J. J. Grinlington, C. L. Ferdinands, J. W. Venn, and J. D'Alwis.

Founding Fathers



Sir C. P. Layard, first Chairman of the Colombo Municipal Council (1866-1877)



Sir Hercules Robinson (later Lord Rosmead), Governor of Ceylon (1865-1872) who introduced legislation to create the Colombo Municipal Council

A hundred and sixty years ago



A view of the Fort of Colombo in 1805—an engraving by T. Medland, taken from
“A Description of Ceylon” by the Rev. James Cordiner

A hundred years ago



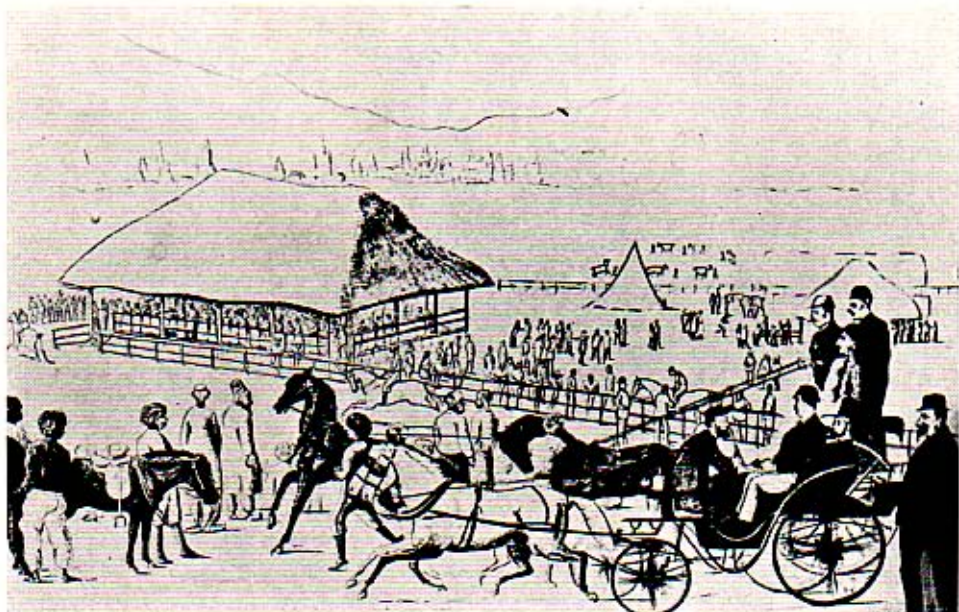
A view of old Colombo from the Lighthouse in the Fort in 1865

Promenade



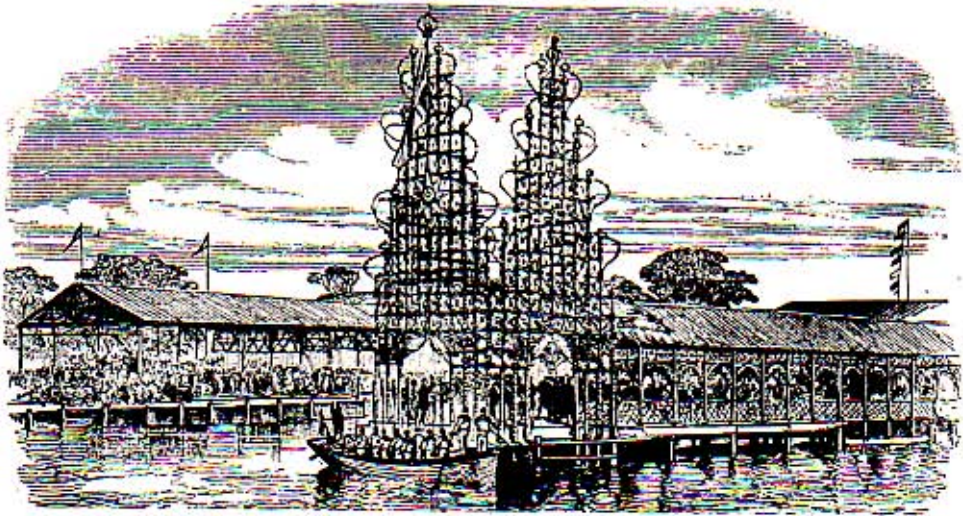
The Galle Face promenade at sundown in 1880. The Governor, Sir James Longden, is seen riding in his landau drawn by a pair of horses. A page from "Scenes in Ceylon" by Vereker M. Hamilton and Stewart M. Fasson

At the Races



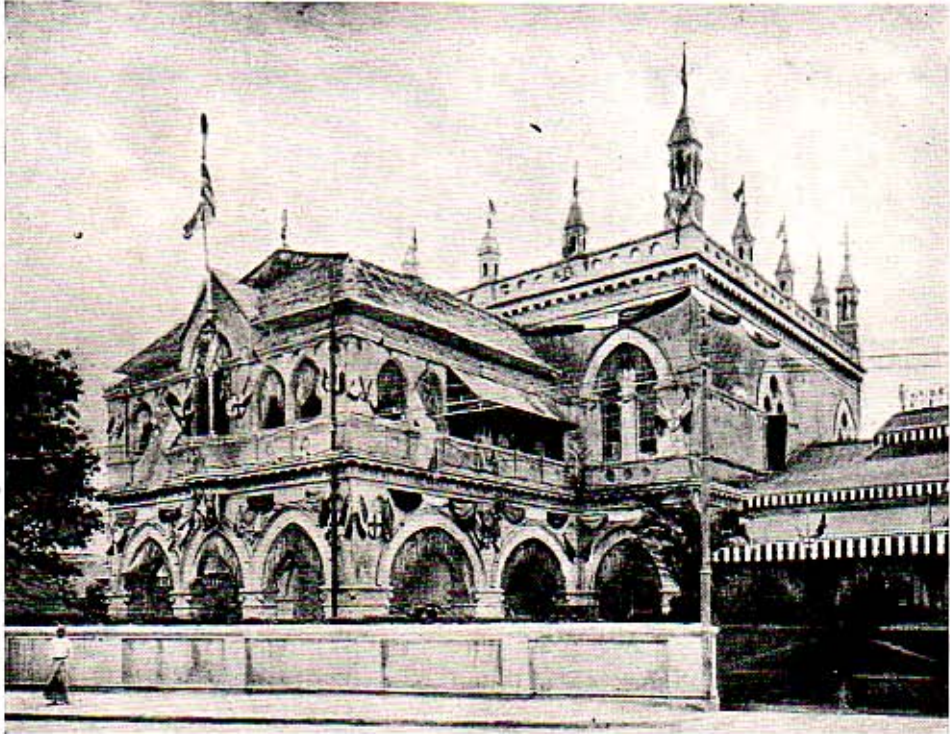
A Race Meeting at the Galle Race Course, from "Scenes in Ceylon" by Vereker M. Hamilton and Stewart M. Faxon

Reception for a Prince



Arrival from their ship of Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, and party at the landing jetty in Colombo in 1870. The Prince laid the foundation of the Colombo Municipal Council's Edinburgh Market in the Pettah

Old Town Hall



The old Town Hall in Main Street, Pettah, now used as a market. It was built to a design by Mr. J. G. Smither, the Government Architect, and was opened by the Governor in 1873

Dutch Gate



One of the gates of the Dutch citadel of Colombo demolished in 1870 by the British authorities when the fortifications were dismantled to make room for the expansion of the city

Law : T. Berwick, C. A. Lorenz, F. C. Loos, J. D'Alwis and Dr. F. W. Willisford

General Business : C. P. Layard, F. J. de Saram, F. C. Loos, Major Thomas Skinner and T. Berwick.

The Council showed a deficit of £ 6,429 at the end of the year which, in view of all the spade work that had to be done, was more a sign of frugality than of progressive legislation. But it was conscious of the problems that lay ahead and appointed a Select Committee on Water and Drainage in 1866.

The Constitution

THE Colombo Municipal Council has, broadly speaking, had five Constitutions successively during the past one hundred years. The first Council was constituted by Ordinance No. 17 of 1865. It enjoyed a large measure of responsibility for the administration of the city and was composed of men of high competence. The nine elected members were leading citizens and the five nominated members were high officials whose presence in the Council provided a degree of technical knowledge and experience which it could not otherwise command on its own resources.

The Council made a good beginning and the Governor was pleased. He entertained the hope that the democratic institutions "so successfully inaugurated may be productive of all those advantages which, when rightly administered, they cannot fail to confer".

The Council should have come of age in 1887 and reached years of discretion. But after twenty years of its life, something seems to have gone wrong either in the machinery of government or the quality of the elected members who formed the majority in the Council. A Commission of Inquiry, heavily weighted with Civil Servants of the old school, was appointed in 1886. It had as members :

Messrs. G. S. Williams, L. F. Lee, F. R. Ellis, C. W. Ferdinands, P. Coomaraswamy and Edmund Walker. The Commission was required to examine and report on the resources of the Council and the liabilities which it had to meet under existing circumstances, the methods of raising revenue and the cost and efficiency of its establishment.

The financial problem does not seem to have been a serious one. What irked many officials was the feeling that democracy was getting out of hand. They thought that it was necessary to curb the powers of the elected members. They

recommended the raising of the property qualification of voters and an increase in the number of nominated members. They also recommended the concentration of the executive and administrative powers in the hands of a full-time chairman, a senior Civil Servant, seconded for the purpose by the Government.

In making a sweeping condemnation of the Council's conduct, the Commissioners wrote :

“ With reference to this Constitution and the powers of the Council, the unanimous evidence of the ratepayers summoned as witnesses from all sections of the community proves beyond a doubt that the present Council has not the confidence of the people ; and, what is more, the light in which the Council is regarded by the more respectable and intelligent electors deters those very persons who should form the main support of Municipal institutions, from accepting seats in the Council, or taking a practical interest in its affairs.

“ It is difficult to assign a specific cause for the decline in the prestige of the Council. It is sufficient to state that we believe to be an indisputable fact that during the latter years of its existence, the Council has fallen immensely in the public estimation. This, in our opinion, is in a great measure the result of a policy which has attempted to apply, to a community wholly unprepared for them, the advantages of representative institutions. To put the matter in more homely language, the policy was an attempt to teach people to run before they could walk. Privileges were conferred on a body of men who were unable to value and therefore misused them.

“ As long as what was called a patriarchal influence kept these men in awe, and they did not exercise the powers entrusted to them, matters went on well but when interested people, beginning to see the use that might be made of dormant powers, called them into action, for their own ends, the natural results followed. The incompetent elector elected an incompetent candidate, and party spirit and personal aims rather than a sincere desire for the public weal frequently actuate the proceedings of the Council. The more respectable and intelligent ratepayers were reluctant to be in any way associated with proceedings of which they disapproved and thus ceased to exercise a check on the proceedings of a body which very rapidly fell in their estimation ”.

The new Constitution which was the sequel to the report of the Commission shifted the centre of gravity, in terms of power, but at the ensuing election the same members were returned.

Mr. P. Coomaraswamy, who represented the St Paul's Division in the Colombo Municipal Council, was one of the few who protested vehemently. He made the following statement which was recorded in the minutes.

“ The Council under the old constitution consisted of five members nominated by the Government and nine elected by the people, giving a clear majority of four to the elected element. But under the present constitution there are ten Government nominated members (including the Chairman) and nine elected

of the people, giving a majority to the Government members. The principle of self-government being thus wiped off, I have carefully considered whether it is my duty to tender my resignation. At the time I allowed myself to be elected I had no reason for thinking that the Governor would nominate ten members against nine elected. The Ordinance says that of the Councillors, one-half at least shall be elected, and that if there be nine elected members the Governor shall nominate at least three, who hold no office of emolument under the Government ; and the Attorney-General, in introducing the Ordinance in the Legislative Council, said, 'It is true that the Bill provides that the minimum number of elected Councillors shall be one-half, but that provision does not prevent the Governor in Executive Council sanctioning any number of elected Councillors, even although such number may be in excess of that of the official members.' Indeed, those who were anxious to hold a public meeting and decry the 10th clause were assured by some of the members of the Sub-Committee of the Legislative Council to whom the Bill had been referred for consideration, that that clause meant that under any circumstances there should be always a majority of one elected Councillor, and that even this narrow majority would not be forced on the Municipality unless grave reasons influenced the Governor to that course, and that therefore we ought not to throw difficulties in the way of the Bill. We trusted them, and abided by their advice. The Governor has apparently construed the meaning of the 10th clause in a different sense. He evidently thinks the Chairman is not a Councillor, and has appointed not only a Chairman, but also nine other members to the Council, and has thus made up ten nominated members against the nine elected. The principle of self-government therefore is, I say, at an end in an unexpected manner, but it is this unexpected result which weighs with me as one of many reasons why I should not resign my seat, lest it should be said that we, the elected members, are ever ready to increase the difficulties of Government, to take offence, and bring the administration of the city into danger or disrepute. I prefer to keep my seat, and to rely on the Government taking the earliest opportunity to have the 10th clause altered in accordance with the true intention of the Bill, that the elective element should be in power, if only by a majority of one".

The Select Committee of the Legislative Council appointed to consider and report in what respects the Municipal Councils Ordinance of 1887 required to be amended, said that "after four years of experience of the opinions of the members of the Municipal Council and the leading citizens of the Municipality of Colombo, and of the working of that institution, the Chairman (Mr. Cameron, c.c.s.) wrote as follows in his Administration Report of 1891 :

The chief feature (of the report of the *Special Committee* of the Municipal Council) is the proposal to revert to the principle of the old Municipal Law (No. 17 of 1865). I myself think that such a course would be infinitely preferable to the continuance of the anomalies resulting from the present

enactment. It will have been for a long time apparent to many that the dissatisfaction felt by the public in general and by the elected members in particular, in respect of the present constitution, has been daily becoming more pronounced ; and this being so, I think it behoves the Government to effect some radical change, either in the direction of enlarging the powers and responsibilities of the Council, or in establishing the independence of the Chairman upon a less ambiguous basis than that on which it now rests.

“It appears to the Committee, therefore, that section 10 should be so amended that the number of the elected members may exceed the nominated members and the Chairman by at least one. No danger need be feared, as it would be neither fair nor reasonable to suppose that *all* the elected members would unjustly or capriciously combine together against public duty and interest. The secession of *one* elected member would give the majority to the nominated side. In Bengal no less than two-thirds of the Commissioners of each Municipality have to be elected (section 14 of No. III of 1884)”.

On 5th December 1893 the Ceylon National Association submitted a memorandum to the Government on the reform of the Municipal Councils Ordinance.

It was signed by Mr. James Van Langenberg on behalf of the Committee. It said that one important feature in the Ordinance to which the Committee think exception should be taken is the vesting of all executive power in the Chairman, which renders him practically independent of the Council.

“The purposes for which Local Boards are established are almost the same as those of Municipal Councils, for they are to improve streets (section 37), to control the erection of new buildings within the district (section 43), order the removal of buildings in a ruinous or dangerous condition (section 45), &c. These powers are vested in the Local Boards themselves, whereas in the case of Municipal Councils they are vested in the Chairman.

Even the members of a Village Committee under the Ordinance No. 24 of 1889 are in a more favourable position as regards status. The Village Committee is composed entirely of elected members, six in number, presided over by the Government Agent or a subordinate Government officer, who in fact constitutes the only official element in the Committee. The Village Committee has power to make and enforce by-laws under sections 6 and 16 of the Ordinance, and to try breaches of such by-laws, its punitive jurisdiction extending up to a fine of Rs. 20 or imprisonment, simple or rigorous, for fourteen days ; while, as above noted, in the Municipal Council, as at present constituted, the official element not only predominates and has thus a commanding voice in the making of any by-laws, but the Councillors have no power to enforce them, or any jurisdiction to try breaches thereof.”

The position of an official Chairman was no doubt anomalous and the general opinion was that he was an instrument of the Government. But the Council has had very independent Chairmen, like Mr. H. H. Cameron and Mr. E. M. de Courcy

Short. Mr. H. E. Newnham, who was Chairman from 1923 to 1930, wrote in his last report :

“ Chapter II gives certain figures which show that in practice the elected members can have it all their own way. They form half the Council even when the full number of nominated members is present, which was the case, for example, only twice in 1930. Even so, of the ten nominated members only six, including the Chairman and the Commander Royal Engineers, are Government servants, the remainder being nominated to represent various branches of trade and other interests. None of them are under any sort of obligation to vote with the Chairman, and in practice they frequently vote against him. The old fable, therefore, that the Council is dominated by the votes of an “ official majority ” is not founded on fact, but that does not mean that the fable will lose any of its popularity.

“ The fact that the Chairman is nominated by the Governor from the Civil Service has also led to the popular notion that in some obscure way the Central Government controls the affairs of the Council. It is, therefore, not out of place to put on record the fact that the Council has by law entire control of its own finances, except that the Government fixes the salary of the Chairman and that certain votes for charitable and ceremonial purposes, *e.g.*, grants to the Vagrants' Home or for addresses to distinguished visitors, require the sanction of the Governor in Executive Council. Otherwise the Council can vote what it likes for what it likes within the provisions of the law. Neither its budget nor its other votes nor its appointments require the sanction of Government.

“ It is, however, at times suggested that the Chairman receives instructions, confidential or otherwise, from Government. It is possible for the present Chairman to state that during the past seven years at any rate, this has never been the case. Indeed during this period, except when he has been summoned to attend a conference or a meeting of the Executive Council to explain the wishes of the Council on some matter under correspondence with Government, the only occasions when Government has taken the initiative in even inquiring about the affairs of the Council have been so few that they can be readily enumerated and were as follows: His Excellency Sir Hugh Clifford asked whether the Council would like him to come to the Town Hall to invest Mr. C. P. Dias with the M.B.E. On two occasions Officers Administering the Government asked the Chairman to show them the arrangements for flood relief work, and in May, 1930, Government inquired what steps were being taken to prevent an epidemic. No other occasion can be recollected when Government has initiated any inquiry from the Chairman. It has given him no instructions, and he has sought none. He had derived all his instructions from the Council.

“On the contrary it has fallen to the Chairman’s lot repeatedly to press the Council’s case on the Government with the utmost emphasis and a large portion of his time has been taken up in conducting correspondence in regard to such matters as the prompt payment of water bills ; the implementing of the agreement to pay the equivalent of rates from October 1, 1927 ; the breaking of the Council’s sewer in Norris road ; the proposal to resume the site of the old Town Hall without compensation ; the cost of scavenging Military buildings ; the establishment of a Juvenile Court ; the copper-content of arrack ; the prompt refund of stamp duty on gun licences ; the protection of the city from floods ; and the provision of legislation desired.”

In 1896 a new Ordinance declared that the Chairman shall not act in contravention of any resolution of the Council. Subsequent legislation altered the Constitution of the Municipal Councils, and later on they came to be administered under the Municipal Ordinance No. 6 of 1910 which increased the number of wards in Colombo to ten.

In 1921 the Municipal Council appointed a Special Committee to report on the reform of the Constitution. The majority of the Committee declared in favour of the delegation to the Council of executive power and full executive responsibility subject to the controls then in force. The Council had been deprived of these powers by the 1887 amendment of the Constitution. The Committee also suggested that the members should elect their Chairman and that he should not have executive authority other than the control of procedure at meetings. The executive authority, it was proposed, should be vested in a chief executive officer to be appointed by the Council.

The majority suggested votes for women and recommended an increase in the number of wards from 10 to 16. They also proposed members to represent the Port Commission, the Chamber of Commerce, the Low Country Products Association, the Educational Association, and four other Colombo bodies or associations to be selected by the Governor.

The Colombo Municipal (Constitution) Ordinance No. 6 of 1935 introduced important changes. The City was divided into 20 wards. The new Constitution provided for an elected Chairman as Mayor, and for an elected Deputy Chairman. There was also provision for the nomination of four Councillors by the Governor.

In 1943 the Ordinance of 1935 was amended to abolish the nominated seats and for the increase of the number of wards from 20 to 30.

The Ordinance No. 53 of 1946 consolidated the law relating to the election of members of all local government bodies.

The qualifications of voters were laid down as follows :

- (a) He must be a British Subject.
- (b) He must be not less than 21 years of age.

- (c) He must not be a person adjudged by a competent Court to be of unsound mind.
- (d) He must not be serving or have served, during the preceding five years a sentence of not less than three months imposed by any Court in Ceylon.
- (e) He must not be a person convicted of an election offence, of bribery or impersonation.
- (f) He must not be a person who has been convicted under Section 5 of the Public Bodies (Prevention of Corruption) Ordinance.
- (g) He must not be a labourer or kankani in charge of labourers employed on any plantation.

The wife or husband of every voter was entitled to have his or her name entered in the Electoral List.

A Company which was a tenant of property within the limits of the ward, the rental of which was not less than Re. 1 or the owner of property of the annual value of Rs. 10 was also entitled to vote.

The qualifications of members were laid down as follows :

- (a) He must be a British Subject.
- (b) He must be not less than 21 years of age.
- (c) He must be able to read and write English, or Sinhalese or Tamil.
- (d) He must not be the holder of any public office under the Crown.
- (e) He must not be an officer or servant of such Local Authority.
- (f) He must not hold or enjoy any agreement or contract with the Local Authority.
- (g) He must not be a person of unsound mind.
- (h) He must not be an uncertificated or undischarged bankrupt or insolvent.
- (i) He must not be serving or have served, during the preceding period of five years, a sentence of not less than three months imposed by any Court in Ceylon.
- (j) He must not have been convicted of an election offence or of bribery or corruption.
- (k) He must not be a person convicted under Section 5 of the Public Bodies (Prevention of Corruption) Ordinance.

The qualifications of voters were amended by Section 10 of Ordinance, No. 25 of 1953, by which only citizens of Ceylon were declared to be eligible to be registered as voters both in respect of Parliamentary Elections and in respect of Elections to Local Bodies. By the same Ordinance it was provided that no person was entitled to have his name entered on the Electoral List of a Local Authority unless his name appeared in the list of voters of the same Electoral Area in respect of Parliamentary Elections. The qualification of voters was the same as at Parliamentary Elections.

Elections were held in December 1959 for the 37 seats after the delimitation carried out by Mr. P. O. Fernando (Sessional Paper III of 1959). The number of wards was increased in 1963 from 37 to 47 by the Minister of Local Government.

Parties and Personalities

FROM the outset, the Colombo Municipal Council attracted men of distinction and public spirit, and there has rarely been any time when one or more members of the Legislative Council, State Council or Parliament were not in the Municipal Council. A full list of members during the past one hundred years is published in this chapter, with comments on a few of them.

Sir Charles Peter Layard, the first Chairman (1866-1877), was a senior member of the Civil Service. He held the post of Government Agent of the Western Province for thirty years. The Layard family has had connections with Ceylon from almost the beginning of British rule and continues to do so. Sir Charles was the son of Charles Edward Layard, who had himself been a member of the Civil Service, and Barbara Bridgetina Mooyart, member of a leading Dutch family. He was the eldest of twenty-six children of their parents. His son, Sir Charles Peter Layard, was Chief Justice of the island (1902-1906).

The Hon. Mr. F. R. Saunders, who succeeded Sir Charles Layard as Chairman and continued in office till 1883, was also the son of a Civil Servant. Mr. Saunders was knighted on the occasion of Queen Victoria's Jubilee. It was to him, when he was Assistant Government Agent of Kegalle, that the notorious bandit of Uttuankande, Sardiel, surrendered.

Mr. H. H. Cameron, the first full-time Chairman, was a son of Mr. C. H. Cameron, one of the two members of the Colebrooke Commission which reported in 1833 on the constitutional and administrative problems of Ceylon. After his retirement in 1905, Mr. Cameron returned to Oxford in time for the 'Schools' and graduated.

Mr. E. M. de C. Short, who was Chairman for five years from 1905, was an uncompromising critic of the Lake Development Scheme. Short's Road was named after him.

Mr. R. W. Byrde, who was Mayor during the first world war, like several of his better known successors remained long enough in office to make an impression on the administration. He was succeeded by Mr. T. Reid, who had progressive ideas, considerable drive and power of leadership. After retiring from the Civil Service he entered the British Parliament as a Labour member and was regarded as an authority on Colonial problems.

Mr. H. E. Newnham was Mayor and Chairman from 1924 to 1931. He was a very capable administrator and a man of quick wit. He took a keen interest in the construction of the present Town Hall, one of the architectural features of the City. It was on his suggestion that the Colombo Municipal Employees' Union, then known as the Municipal Service Union, was started. He also organised a scheme, through the Mayor's Fund, to relieve Municipal employees of their indebtedness. He was responsible for setting apart for use as a Refreshment Club the building presently used for this purpose. This building was originally intended for the Architect's Office.

Mr. W. T. Stace, who succeeded Mr. Newnham, had held many judicial appointments as a member of the Civil Service. After his retirement he became a Professor of Philosophy at Princeton University in the United States.

Mr. W. L. Murphy, who was the last holder of the combined office of Chairman and Mayor before the latter came to be elected, remained the first Municipal Commissioner of the reformed Council of 1935. He presided over the first meeting to elect the Mayor, at which Dr. (later Sir) Ratnajothi Saravanamuttu was elected.

It was during the mayoralty of Sir Ratnajothi that the seeds of Party government were implanted. The members of the Labour Party, led by Mr. A. E. Goonesinghe, the pioneer of the trade union movement in Ceylon, formed themselves into a group. Mr. Goonesinghe himself was the third elected Mayor of Colombo, holding office in 1940. A splinter group of the Labour Party called themselves Independents. For the rest, members sought election on their individual claims of fitness to serve their constituents.

With the emergence of Marxist parties in national politics, several Left wing leaders were elected to the Council. They acted together on party lines, usually forming the opposition in a Council that was strongly dominated or influenced by the United National Party. An exception to the general trend occurred when Dr. N. M. Perera, leader of the Trotskyite Sama Samaja Party, was Mayor for a short period (August 1954 to February 1956).

In the early years of the Council the leading men of Colombo found the time to serve as members. Among them were members of the Legislative Council such as Sir Richard Morgan, Sir Samuel Grenier, Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy,

Charles Ambrose Lorenz, James D'Alwis, P. Coomaraswamy and A. de A. Seneviratna. Lawyers made the largest contribution. In addition to the above-named, there were Thomas Berwick, Dodwell Browne and J. C. Walter Pereira, followed later by M. T. Akbar, E. W. Jayewardene and F. J. Soertsz, all future Supreme Court Judges. Sir James Pieris was a respected member for ten years from 1898 to 1908. When Mr. Arthur Alvis, one of the senior proctors of his day resigned, the Chairman of the time wrote in his Administration Report : " Mr. Alvis was one of the busiest lawyers in Colombo, yet he found time to attend to the work of the Council and the Standing Committee on Finance. In addition he gave the Council, gratis, the advantages of his unique knowledge of conveyancing, just as if he had been a paid official of the Council. He combined independence of character, ability and culture with the wisdom of experience and a selfless desire to promote the welfare of the City."

Mr. Hector Jayewardene, eminent lawyer and forceful politician, was a member for fourteen years. Mr. F. R. Senanayake, a pioneer of the reform movement was a member from 1915 to 1920. Two men who served the Council for long periods, and made a solid contribution to its work, were Sir Henry de Mel (1908-1926) and Mr. N. H. M. Abdul Cader (1907-1938).

Two Councillors who were known for their sturdy independence were C. P. Dias (1891-1926) and Charles Perera (1884-1907). Many of Colombo's leading proctors were members of the Council, some of them for long periods. Among them were Messrs. F. J. de Saram, F. C. Loos (1866-1870), Sir Hector Van Cuylenberg (1878-83 and 1887-93), L. B. Fernando (1906-1920), Emanuel Jayewardene (1908-1919), J. A. Perera, W. E. V. de Rooy and John Wilson.

The Council has always had its quota of doctors. Sir William Kynsey was a member from 1876 to 1887. Other medical members include Sir Allen Perry (1898-1913), Dr. P. D. Anthonisz, Dr. Solomon Fernando, Dr. W. H. de Silva, Dr. G. Thornton, Dr. S. T. Gunasekera, Dr. W. P. Rodrigo (1912-1923), Dr. E. V. Ratnam (1912-1935), Dr. E. A. Cooray (1924-1946), Dr. S. Muttiah (1927-1937), Dr. A. Ratnapala (1937-1945), Dr. R. Saravanamuttu (1937-1946), Dr. V. R. Schokman, Dr. A. J. F. Casiechitty (1937-46 and 1960-62), Dr. W. D. de Silva (1949-56 and 1960-63) and Dr. Kumaran Ratnam (1947-1956).

Well known merchants who served as members included Sir Thomas Villiers, Mr. P. D. Khan, Sir Stanley Bois, Mr. David Gordon, Mr. T. W. Hockley, Mr. Walter Shakespeare, Mr. C. S. Burns, Sir H. Mohamed Macan Markar and Sir Ernest de Silva.

Some families have provided more than one generation to the membership of the Council. The three brothers, Hector, E. W. and T. G. Jayewardene were members and Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, the son of Mr. E. W. Jayewardene was a member. They all represented, at different times, the same seat (New Bazaar). The father of the three brothers was, in his time, himself a candidate for the seat, but was disqualified on a technical ground. Other fathers and sons include Mr. C. M. Fernando and Mr. C. H. Z. Fernando, Dr. Solomon Fernando and

Dr. C. W. S. Fernando, Dr. E. V. Ratnam and Dr. Kumaran Ratnam, Sir Richard Morgan and Colonel R. H. Morgan, Mr. J. C. Walter Pereira and Mr. Aelian W. Pereira, Mr. N. D. H. Abdul Cader and Mr. Jabir Cader, Sir H. Macan Markar and Mr. A. H. Macan Markar.

The three brothers, Dr. R. Saravanamuttu, Mr. S. Saravanamuttu and Mr. N. Saravanamuttu were members at the same time (1937-1943).

The Council has had only five women members during the past one hundred years, one of them filling the seat vacated by the death of her husband.

Many members of the Municipal Council have sat in the legislature : the Legislative Council, State Council or the House of Representatives. One of them was a future Prime Minister, the late Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike. After the last General Election two members became Ministers of the Government (Mr. V. A. Sugathadasa and Mr. M. H. Mohamed) and one a Parliamentary Secretary (Mr. R. Premadasa).

**List of Chairmen, Mayors, Deputy Mayors, and
Members of the Colombo Municipal Council
from 1866 to date**

Chairmen

<i>Name</i>	<i>Period of Service</i>
Hon. Mr. (afterwards Sir) C. P. Layard	January 1866 to June 1877
Hon. Mr. F. R. Saunders	July 1877 to December 1883
Hon. Mr. Allanson Bailey, Acting	May 1882 to September 1882
Hon. Mr. W. D. Wright	January 1884 to July 1886
Hon. Mr. R. W. D. Moir, Acting	December 1884 to May 1885
Hon. Mr. G. W. Paterson, Acting	June 1885 to April 1886
Hon. Mr. G. S. Williams	August 1886 to August 1887
Hon. Mr. R. W. D. Moir, Acting	October 1886 to March 1887
Hon. Mr. (afterwards Sir) G. T. M. O'Brien	September 1887
Mr. L. F. Lee	October 1887 to November 1887
Mr. H. H. Cameron	November 1887 to September 1893
Mr. F. H. Price, Acting	October 1889 to November 1889
Mr. C. E. D. Pennyquick, Acting	May 1892 to July 1893
Mr. C. E. D. Pennyquick	October 1893 to April 1895
Mr. F. H. Price	May 1895 to March 1901
Mr. W. E. Davidson, Acting	July 1897 September 1899
Mr. H. White, Acting	June 1900 to November 1900
Hon. Mr. F. R. Ellis, Acting	December 1900 to March 1901
Mr. A. S. Pagden	April 1901 to February 1905
Mr. C. D. Vigors, Acting	June 1903 to November 1904
Mr. E. M. de C. Short	March 1905 to May 1910
Mr. B. Horsburgh, Acting	April 1906 to March 1907
Mr. K. W. B. Macleod	May 1910 to April 1912
Mr. C. R. Cumberland	May 1912 to November 1912
Mr. W. E. Thorpe	December 1912 to January 1913
Mr. E. B. Alexander	February 1913 to October 1913
Mr. R. W. Byrde	November 1913 to September 1919
Mr. T. Reid	October 1919 to July 1924
Mr. B. G. de Glanville	December 1920 to September 1921
Mr. H. E. Newnham	August 1924 to July 1931
Mr. W. T. Stace	{ November 1927 to June 1928 July 1931 to March 1932
Mr. W. L. Murphy	{ March 1932 to March 1935 November 1935 to May 1937 Commissioner from May 1937
Mr. H. P. Kaufmann, Acting	March 1935 to November 1935

Mayors Elected Under Ordinance No. 60 of 1935

<i>Name</i>	<i>Period of Service</i>
Dr. R. Saravanamuttu	[May 1937 to December 1937 January 1941 to December 1942
Dr. V. R. Schokman	
Mr. A. E. Goonesinghe	January 1938 to December 1939
Mr. Geo R. de Silva	January 1940 to December 1940
Mr. R. A. de Mel	January 1943 to December 1943
Mr. R. F. S. de Mel	[January 1944 to December 1944 January 1946 to December 1946
Dr. Kumaran Ratnam	
Mr. S. Sellamuttu	January 1945 to December 1945
Mr. C. T. Grero	January 1947 to December 1949
Mr. T. Rudra	January 1950 to December 1950
Dr. N. M. Perera	January 1951 to December 1951
Mr. V. A. Sugathadasa	January 1952 to 11th August 1953
Mr. M. H. Mohamed	21st Sept., 1953 to 13th Aug., 1954
Mr. V. A. Sugathadasa	13th Aug., 1954 to 28th Feb., 1956
Mr. M. Vincent Perera	6th March 1956 to 1st Dec., 1957
	12th Jan., 1960 to 10th Jan., 1963
	10th Jan., 1963 to 10th April 1965
	10th April 1965 to date

Note : The Council was dissolved on 2nd December 1957 and reconstituted on 10th January 1960.

Deputy Mayors Elected Under Ordinance No. 60 of 1935

<i>Name</i>	<i>Period of Service</i>
Mr. Geo. R. de Silva	[May 1937 to December 1938 January 1941 to December 1942
Mr. M. Subbiah	
Mr. R. A. de Mel	January 1939 to December 1940
Dr. A. Ratnapala	January 1943 to December 1943
Mr. R. Doresamy	January 1944 to December 1944
Mr. K. Adamally	January 1945 to December 1945
Mr. M. F. Ghany	January 1946 to December 1946
Mr. T. Rudra	January 1947 to December 1947
Mr. V. A. Sugathadasa	[January 1948 to December 1948 August 1954 to 12th July 1955
Mr. M. S. Abu Bakr	
Mr. C. T. Grero	January 1949 to December 1949
Mrs. Aysha Rauff	January 1950 to December 1950
Mr. R. Premadasa	January 1951 to December 1951
Mr. E. Velauthan	January 1952 to July 1954
Mr. B. N. Cooray	5th Aug., 1955 to 31st Dec. 1956
Mr. M. D. Kitchilan	17th Jan., 1957 to 1st Dec., 1957
Mr. Jabir A. Cader	12th Jan., 1960 to 31st Dec., 1962
Mr. Vincent Perera	10th Jan., 1963 to 31st Dec., 1963
Mr. Harris Wickramatunge	Jan. 1964 to Dec. 1964
	Jan. 1965 to 10th April 1965
	10th April 1965 to date

Members of the Colombo Municipal Council, 1866 to date

<i>Name</i>	<i>Period of Service</i>
Capt. H. A. Evatt	January 1866 to March 1866
Dr. W. P. Charsley	January 1866 to November 1867
Hon. Mr. (afterwards Sir) J. J. Grinlinton	January 1866 to October 1871 November 1887 to December 1892
Mr. T. S. Berwick	January 1866 to October 1866
Mr. T. Venn	January 1866 to July 1870
Dr. J. W. Vangeyzel	January 1866 to December 1883
Mr. F. J. de Saram (Sr.)	January 1866 to June 1867
Mr. S. Tambyah (Mudaliyar)	January 1866 to September 1868
Mr. C. A. Lorenz	January 1866 to January 1870
Hon. Mr. James D'Alwis	January 1866 to March 1878
Mr. F. C. Loos	January 1866 to December 1872
Dr. E. P. Willisford	January 1866 to December 1867
Mr. C. L. Ferdinands	January 1866 to August 1873
Mr. R. Cayley	February 1867 to February 1870
Mr. C. A. Krickenbeek	January 1868 to April 1869
Mr. H. D. Gabriel	January 1868 to December 1877
Mr. M. Coomarasamy	March 1868 to February 1873
Mr. H. Byrne	September 1868 to February 1876
Mr. A. Andree	May 1869 to October 1873
Mr. W. W. Beling	January 1870 to December 1871
Mr. (afterwards Sir) G. W. R. Campbell	September 1870 to July 1890
Dr. Loos	November 1870 to September 1875
Major E. G. Tranchell	May 1871 to March 1876
Mr. (afterwards Sir) R. H. Morgen	September 1871 to October 1873
Mr. R. V. Dunlop	January 1872 to February 1876
Mr. C. Brito	January 1872 to December 1872
Mr. P. Coomarasamy	January 1873 to October 1879 November 1885 to December 1889
Dr. J. W. Margenout	March 1873 to August 1873
Col. A. B. Fyers	May 1873 to March 1881
Mr. (afterwards Sir) S. Grenier	January 1874 to March 1878
Mr. J. W. Vanderstraaten	January 1874 to December 1879
Mr. A. O. Joseph	January 1874 to December 1879
Col. J. G. Jarvis	September 1874 to November 1874
Mr. G. B. Leechman	March 1875 to June 1876
Dr. (afterwards Sir) W. R. Kynsey	February 1876 to December 1887
Mr. M. C. Abdul Rahiman	May 1876 to December 1877
Mr. J. R. Mosse	May 1876 to July 1877
Mr. J. N. Keith	August 1876 to December 1883
Mr. Churchill	September 1877 to June 1885
Mr. (afterwards Sir) H. Vancuylenberg	January 1878 to October 1883 December 1887 to October 1893

Hon. Dr. P. D. Anthonisz	May 1878 to July 1878
Mr. H. J. de Zoysa	August 1878 to April 1883
Mr. Louis de Alwis	August 1878 to October 1880
Mr. G. W. Stork	January 1880 to July 1881
Mr. C. E. H. Symons	{ January 1880 to September 1881
Mr. D. A. Dissanayake	{ November 1887 to February 1890
Mr. James de Alwis	January 1880 to September 1885
Hon. Mr. J. Stoddard	March 1881 to June 1882
Mr. R. W. McBride	April 1881 to September 1884
Mr. H. Ledward	August 1881 to July 1896
Mr. P. Perera	January 1882 to December 1883
Mr. S. J. Akbar	January 1882 to September 1885
Mr. V. W. Perera	February 1882 to September 1890
Mr. A. de A. Seneviratne	August 1882 to November 1890
Mr. M. I. M. Haniffa	August 1883 to April 1902
Mr. J. C. Walter Pereira	January 1884 to March 1900
Mr. Charles Perera	January 1884 to July 1885
Mr. C. W. Horsfall	January 1884 to November 1907
Hon. Lt. Col. F. C. H. Clarke	January 1884 to December 1885
Capt. A. Hansard	October 1884 to April 1893
Mr. C. W. Ferdinands	April 1885 to March 1886
Mr. E. Walker	September 1885 to October 1887
Mr. James Perera	January 1886 to February 1890
Mr. W. E. LeFeuvere	January 1886 to March 1890
Mr. R. D. Ormsby	November 1886 to November 1887
Mr. H. W. Green	May 1887 to January 1888
Mr. C. S. Hay	October 1887 to July 1890
Mr. W. Maitland	October 1887 to May 1890
Mr. J. S. Driberg	October 1887 to March 1889
Mr. Arthur W. Alwis	August 1898 to December 1891
Mr. F. Bailey	{ April 1889 to February 1890
Mr. W. Sangarapulle	{ December 1893 to December 1902
Mr. Dodwell F. Browne	{ January 1908 to April 1922
Mr. C. P. Dias	August 1890 to August 1896
Mr. J. C. Walter Pereira	August 1890 to October 1890
Mr. R. H. Morgan	November 1890 to May 1892
Major R. E. Ferminger	January 1891 to December 1926
Major L. F. Knollys	January 1891 to February 1899
Mr. C. M. Fernando	January 1890 to October 1902
Mr. M. Finlay	May 1892 to December 1893
Mr. T. Smith	October 1892 to April 1902
Mr. E. Creasy	October 1892 to April 1898
	{ June 1893 to December 1895
	{ November 1903 to May 1904
	May 1894 to October 1894
	June 1895 to January 1898

The Council in 1906

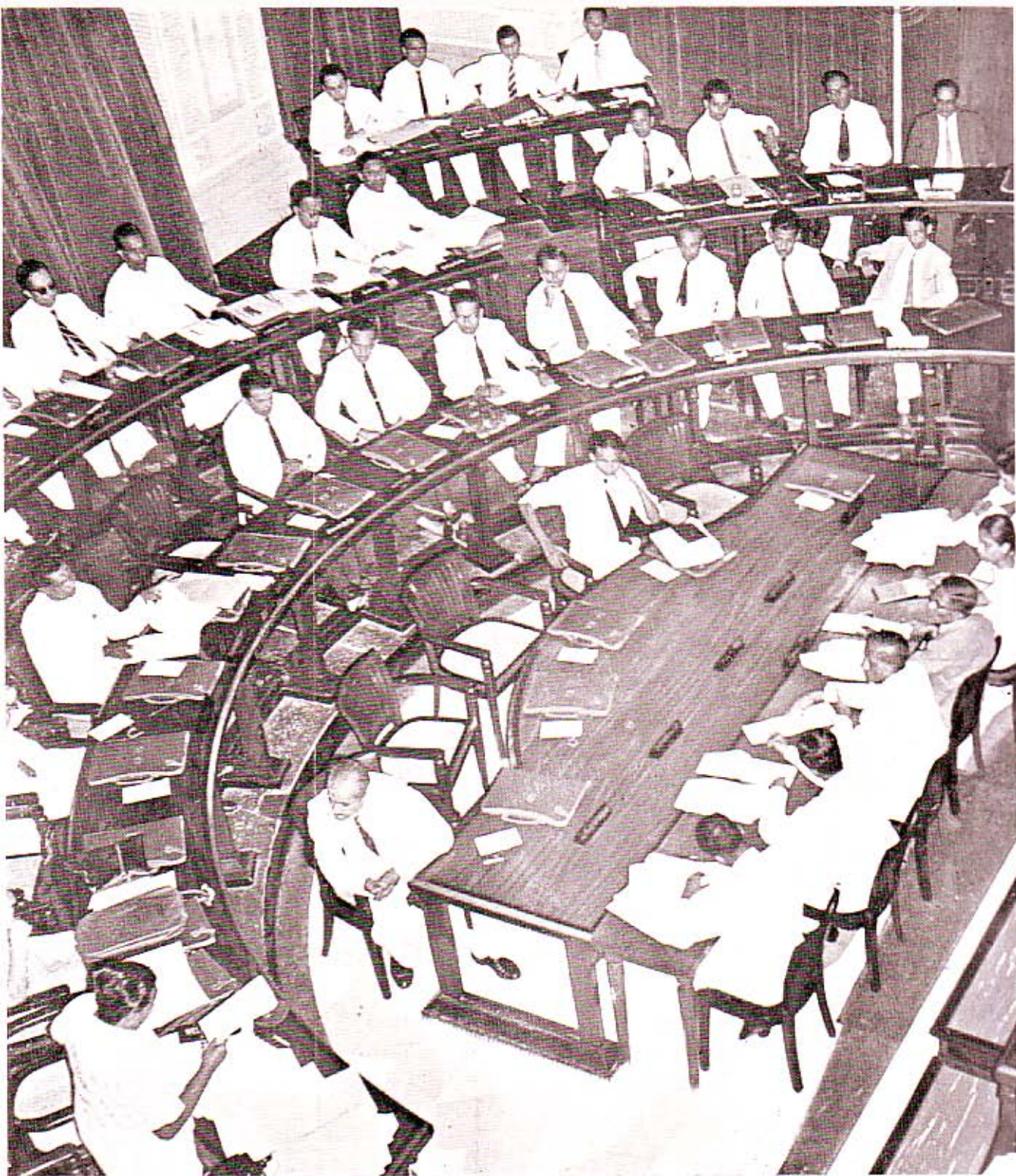


A photograph taken in 1906 of a meeting of the Colombo Municipal Council at the old Town Hall. (Left to right) : Messrs. Alexander Fairle, W. Shakspeare, P. D. Warren, M. L. M. Zainudeen (only fez shown), James Pieris, F. A. Cooper, Charles Perera, B. Horsburgh (acting Chairman), C. P. Dias, Dr. T. C. Griffin, Mr. Hector Jayewardene, Dr. C. W. Van Geyzel, Messrs. H. Tiruvalingam, M. F. Khan, and L. B. Fernando. (In the foreground) Mr. R. R. Dunuville, Secretary



The Colombo
Municipal Council
in Session
1965







Veterans of the past



Mr. Hector A. Jayewardene, Member of the Council
from 1899 until his death in 1913



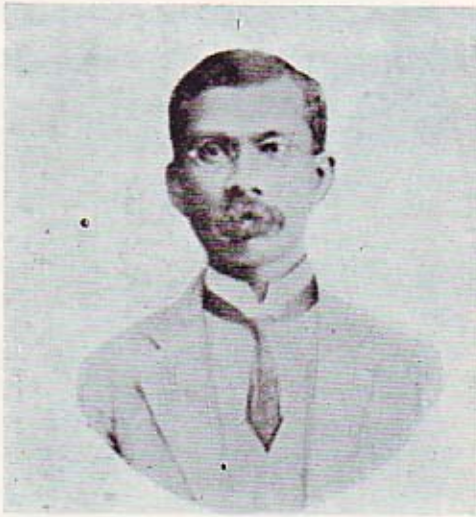
Mr. C. P. Dias, Member of the Council
for 36 years (1891-1926)

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Mr. (later Sir) H. L. de Mel, a member of the Council
for 18 years (1908-1926)



Mr. Arthur Alvis, a member of the Council
for 28 years (1889-90, 1893-1902 and 1908-26)



Dr. E. V. Ratnam, a member for 23 years
(1912-1935)



Mr. N. H. M. Abdul Cader, a member for
31 years (1907-1938)

Brig. Gen. A. W. Duke	April 1896 to December 1898
Mr. A. Forsyth	May 1896 to April 1897
Mr. F. Bois	February 1897 to January 1898
Hon. Mr. F. A. Cooper	October 1897 to March 1913
Hon. Dr. (afterwards Sir) Allen Perry	February 1898 to January 1913
Mr. J. D. Mason	November 1897 to July 1898
Mr. (afterwards Sir) Staley Bois	May 1898 to February 1901
Mr. (afterwards Sir) James Peiris	June 1898 to February 1908
Mr. H. A. Jayawardene	June 1899 to September 1913
Mr. H. T. S. Ward	July 1899 to January 1900
Mr. John Cadiraman	January 1900 to April 1900
Dr. Solomon Fernando	June 1900 to October 1905
Mr. M. L. M. Zainudeen	September 1900 to July 1907
Mr. F. H. Grinlinton	December 1898 to January 1904
Mr. P. D. Warren	April 1901 to August 1902
Mr. D. W. H. Skine	August 1901 to September 1902
Mr. G. F. Walker	December 1901 to July 1905
Dr. C. T. Griffin	May 1902 to February 1905
Mr. P. D. Khan	May 1902 to June 1904
Major A. W. de Wilton	October 1909 to March 1911
Mr. W. Shakespeare	September 1902 to March 1920
Mr. Robert Davidson	October 1902 to April 1908
Dr. W. H. de Silva	November 1902 to June 1906
Mr. G. H. Alston	January 1903 to March 1908
Mr. F. C. Allen	March 1903 to April 1904
Mr. H. Tiruvilingam	March 1903 to February 1910
Mr. L. Creasy	June 1903 to September 1911
Mr. M. F. Khan	July 1903 to February 1904
Mr. L. B. Fernando	August 1904 to May 1909
Mr. A. Fairlie	January 1906 to December 1920
Mr. C. A. Lovegrove	May 1906 to February 1910
Mr. T. L. Villiers	April 1907 to March 1908
Mr. N. H. M. Abdul Cader	June 1907 to December 1908
Mr. (afterwards Sir) H. L. De Mel	September 1914 to December 1920
Mr. E. G. Jayawardene	November 1907 to August 1938
Mr. R. S. Templeton	April 1908 to December 1926
Dr. P. D. Banajee	May 1908 to April 1919
Mr. William Moir	June 1908 to June 1915
Dr. W. P. Rodrigo	May 1911 to November 1916
Dr. E. V. Ratnam	May 1911 to December 1911
Lt. Col. M. L. Hearne	January 1912 to December 1923
Mr. T. Lease	January 1912 to December 1935
Dr. G. J. Rutherford	January 1912 to December 1913
Mr. T. Chapman	May 1912 to October 1913
	May 1913 to September 1924
	June 1913 to September 1916

Mr. G. L. Cox
Mr. J. A. Perera
Major W. N. Robinson
Mr. W. C. S. Ingles
Major E. P. Sewell
Mr. C. S. Burns
Mr. F. R. Senanayake
Capt. P. W. Mathew
Mr. C. H. Wellard
Mr. W. A. Cave
Mr. G. W. Waddel
Mr. Harold Creasy
Mr. J. K. Hormusjee
Mr. M. Cassim Ismail
Mr. W. Philips
Mr. W. Sutherland Ross
Mr. B. F. Khan
Dr. E. L. Hunt

Mr. B. W. Leefe

Mr. (afterwards Sir) A. E. de Silva
Lt. Col. S. Boylan Smith

Dr. G. Thorton

Mr. A. E. Caldicott
Mr. M. J. Cary
Mr. E. W. Jayawardene

Mr. C. H. Z. Fernando

Mr. R. L. Pereira
Mr. T. H. Tatham

Mr. J. S. Collet

Mr. G. Adamjee Lukmanjee
Mr. A. D. Prouse
Mr. W. E. V. de Rooy
Mr. A. F. G. Walker

Mr. G. W. Dodds

Mr. W. Geddes

Mr. A. H. F. Clarke

Mr. A. J. Wickar
Mr. L. Macrae

October 1913 to August 1914
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 November 1923 to March 1926

Dr. E. A. Cooray	January 1924 to December 1946
Mr. C. T. Young	March 1924 to July 1925
Mr. W. J. Thornhill	January 1925 to July 1929
	December 1930 to March 1932
Mr. A. H. Morgan	May 1925 to November 1929
Col. T. G. Jayawardene	September 1925 to December 1931
Mr. N. R. Blande	January 1926 to April 1934
	{ February 1926 to July 1926
	{ December 1926 to February 1928
Mr. A. H. G. Dawson	{ December 1928 to Nov. 1930
	{ August 1931 to August 1932
	April 1926 to May 1927
Mr. T. R. Mitchell	July 1926 to October 1926
Lt. Col. N. Dunbar-Walker	December 1926 to January 1930
Lt. Col. C. D. Nyles	January 1927 to December 1931
Mr. S. W. R. Dias Bandaranaike	January 1927 to May 1937
Dr. S. Muttiah	January 1927 to December 1943
Mr. M. L. M. Reyal	{ February 1927 to December 1930
Mr. H. L. Grocock	{ April 1932 to August 1932
	July 1927 to December 1927
Mr. G. R. Brown	July 1927 to March 1928
Mr. F. E. Jolliffe	{ September 1927 to March 1928
Dr. V. Van Langenberg	{ April 1929 to July 1930
	March 1928 to July 1930
Mr. C. R. Lundie	{ April 1928 to May 1932
	January 1933 to May 1936
Mr. T. C. Dyball	{ June 1928 to March 1929
	August 1930 to March 1931
Dr. R. G. Jayatilleke	August 1928 to December 1935
Mr. F. Dadabhoy	{ June 1929 to January 1930
Mr. H. J. Hutchins	{ June 1932 to December 1932
	October 1929
Mr. S. W. Dassanaiké	March 1930 to February 1931
Capt. E. G. Eastman	June 1930 to October 1931
Lt. Col. F. A. Ferguson	{ November 1930 to July 1931
	August 1932 to November 1933
Mr. G. K. Thornhill	{ July 1934 to June 1935
	October 1935 to May 1937
	March 1931 to March 1932
Dr. L. A. Prins	July 1931 to August 1931
Mr. H. H. Bartholomeusz	September 1931 to November 1936
Mr. F. J. Soertsz	November 1931 to November 1934
Lt. Col. Napier Clavering	{ January 1932 to September 1941
Mr. A. E. Goonesinghe	{ January 1944 to December 1946

Mr. (afterwards Sir) A. R. A. Razik	{ January 1932 to May 1937 January 1944 to December 1946
Mr. Aelian W. Perera	January 1932 to May 1937
Mr. T. A. Owles	{ January 1932 to June 1932 June 1933 to March 1936 November 1936 to May 1937
Mr. H. K. de Kretser	{ August 1932 to June 1933 February 1935 to March 1936
Dr. H. E. Lembrugen	March 1932 to June 1932
Dr. S. T. Gunasekera	June 1932 to May 1937
Mr. C. S. Richards	{ December 1932 to March 1933 March 1936 to November 1936
Mr. T. W. Hockley	March 1935 to October 1933
Mr. W. J. Price	{ June 1933 to February 1935 March 1936 to May 1937
Mr. D. Doig	October 1933 to June 1934
Mr. R. W. E. Ruddock	{ November 1933 to July 1934 June 1935 to October 1935
Mr. F. A. Bond	{ May 1934 to May 1937 January 1941 to December 1943
Mr. C. F. Whitaker	July 1934 to May 1936
Lt. Col. J. H. Stafford	December 1934 to May 1937
Mr. Geo R. de Silva	January 1936 to October 1947
Mr. A. Mamujee	January 1936 to May 1937
Mr. A. Duncum, A. C. A.	May 1936 to May 1937
Mr. D. Gordon	May 1936 to March 1937
Mr. K. W. Taylor	May 1936 to April 1937
Mr. John Wilson	November 1936 to May 1937
Mr. M. T. Akbar	May 1937 to May 1938
Mr. D. R. Bentara-Aratchi	May 1937 to June 1937
Dr. A. F. J. Casiechetty	{ May 1937 to December 1946 January 1960 to December 1962
Mr. J. R. Dharmasena	May 1937 to December 1943
Dr. C. W. S. Fernando	May 1937 to December 1940
Dr. S. D. Fernando	May 1937 to December 1943
Mr. D. S. Fonseka	May 1937 to December 1946
Mr. F. G. Hussein	May 1937 to February 1939
Mr. N. M. M. Ishak	May 1937 to December 1940
Mr. C. G. C. Kerr	{ May 1937 to April 1939 August 1939 to December 1940
Dr. A. Ratnapala	May 1937 to August 1945
Dr. (Mrs) M. H. Rutnam	May 1937 to October 1938
Mr. N. Saravanamuttu	May 1937 to December 1943
Dr. R. Saravanamuttu	May 1937 to December 1946

Mr. S. Saravanamuttu	May 1937 to December 1946
Dr. V. R. Schokman	May 1937 to January 1940
Mr. M. Subbiah	May 1937 to December 1940
Mr. R. F. S. de Mel	July 1937 to December 1949
Mr. V. R. Somanathan	October 1938 to December 1940
Mr. Merrill W. Pereira	November 1938 to December 1940
Mr. J. Thygarajah	June 1938 to December 1940
Mr. R. Doraisamy	April 1939 to June 1953
Mr. John A Pye	May 1938 to October 1938
Mr. J. R. Toussaint	January 1940 to December 1943
Mr. R. A. de Mel	January 1941 to July 1954
Sir Mohamed Macan Markar	January 1941 to December 1943
Dr. A. P. de Zoysa	January 1941 to December 1943
Mr. P. Givendrasinghe	October 1941 to December 1943
Mr. M. F. Ghany	January 1941 to December 1949
Mr. J. R. Jayawardena	January 1941 to December 1949
Mr. Justin Kotalawela	January 1941 to December 1943
Mr. Gilbert Perera	January 1941 to December 1946
Mr. K. Adamaly	January 1941 to December 1943
Mr. C. W. J. Abeyesundera	January 1943 to December 1946
Mr. D. E. Colonne	January 1944 to December 1946
Mr. A. M. de Alwis	January 1944 to December 1946
Mr. G. W. N. de Silva	January 1944 to December 1949
Mr. M. C. M. Ghouse	January 1944 to December 1949
Mr. N. M. M. Haniffa	January 1944 to December 1949
Mr. R. Bin Hassan	January 1944 to July 1954
Mr. D. W. Hapugalle	January 1963
Mr. S. S. Kulatilleke	January 1944 to July 1944
Mr. B. R. de Silva	September 1944 to December 1946
Mr. S. M. Moosajee	January 1944 to December 1946
Mr. H. Sri Nissanka	January 1944 to December 1946
Mr. F. R. Pius Silva	January 1944 to December 1946
Mr. E. Velayuthan	January 1944 to December 1946
Mr. W. P. Wickremasinghe	August 1954 to December 1957
Mr. Z. D. Musafar	January 1944 to December 1946
Mr. H. C. Abeywardene	January 1944 to December 1946
Mr. M. S. Abubakr	January 1944 to December 1946
Mr. D. de Souza	January 1944 to December 1946
Mr. G. A. P. Fernando	January 1944 to December 1946
Mr. J. M. Gnanapragasam	September 1945 to December 1946
Mr. C. T. Grero	January 1947 to August 1949
Mr. C. M. M. Maharooif	January 1947 to December 1957
Mr. M. G. Mendis	January 1947 to February 1953
	January 1947 to December 1949
	January 1947 to December 1949
	January 1947 to July 1954
	January 1947 to July 1954
	January 1947 to January 1948

Mr. M. H. Mohamed	{ July 1947 to December 1957 January 1960
Mr. K. Nagaratnam	January 1947 to December 1949
Mr. H. P. Perera	January 1947 to December 1949
Mr. T. Leslie Perera	January 1947 to December 1949
Mr. W. A. D. Ramanayake	{ January 1947 to December 1949 August 1954 to December 1956 January 1963
Dr. Kumaran Ratnam	January 1947 to September 1956
Mr. T. Rudra	{ January 1947 to December 1957 January 1960 to April 1960
Mr. S. Sellamuttu	January 1947 to July 1954
Mr. W. J. Soysa	January 1947 to December 1949
Mr. V. A. Sugathadasa	{ January 1947 to December 1957 January 1960
Mr. C. de S. Wijeratne	January 1947 to December 1956
Mr. B. N. Cooray	{ January 1950 to December 1957 January 1960
Mr. J. E. M. de Saram	January 1950 to December 1956
Dr. W. D. de Silva	{ October 1949 to May 1956 January 1957 to December 1957 January 1960 to October 1963
Mrs. Vivienne Goonewardena	{ January 1950 to July 1954 January 1960
Mr. B. S. A. Hamid	January 1950 to August 1957
Mr. D. Henry	January 1950 to July 1954
Mr. Pieter Keuneman	December 1947 to December 1957
Mr. M. D. Kitchilan	{ January 1950 to December 1957 January 1960
Dr. N. M. Perera	January 1950 to December 1956
Mr. S. Rajendram	January 1950 to December 1956
Mr. H. G. S. Ratnaweera	{ March 1948 to December 1957 January 1963
Mrs. Aiysha Rauf	{ January 1950 to July 1954 January 1957 to December 1957 January 1960 to August 1962
Mr. S. Y. Saripinu Silva	January 1950 to July 1954
Mr. Bernard Soysa	{ January 1950 to December 1957 January 1960
Mr. M. Vincent Perera	{ February 1950 to December 1957 January 1960
Mrs. Olive Perera	February 1950 to July 1954
Mr. R. Premadasa	{ February 1950 to December 1957 August 1961

Mr. D. P. R. Gunawardena	February 1951 to December 1956
Mr. Osmund Jayaratne	May 1953 to December 1957
Mr. M. Falil A Caffoor	{ December 1953 to December 1957 January 1960
Mr. A. Marcellus	{ August 1954 to December 1957 January 1960 to December 1962
Mr. R. A. Fernando	August 1954 to December 1956
Mr. M. Jabir A Cader	{ August 1954 to December 1957 January 1960
Mr. D. N. W. de Silva	August 1954 to December 1957
Mr. George S. Jayasuriya	{ August 1954 to December 1957 January 1960 to May 1961
Mr. J. F. Dewapura	{ August 1954 to December 1956 September 1960 to December 1962
Mr. D. S. Mallawarachchi	{ August 1954 to December 1957 January 1960 to December 1962
Mr. A. H. Macan Markar	{ August 1954 to December 1957 January 1960
Mr. M. D. Perera	June 1956 to December 1957
Mr. Andrew M. G. de Silva	January 1957 to December 1957
Mr. Douglas Dias	January 1957 December 1957
Mr. Charles Gandara	January 1957 to December 1957
Mrs. M. Ratnam	{ January 1957 to December 1957 January 1960
Mr. P. de S. Goonetilleke	January 1957 to December 1957
Mr. A. Edmund Samarawickrema	{ January 1957 to December 1957 January 1960
Mrs. Bianca Jayasuriya	January 1957 to December 1957
Mr. Charles Vethecan	October 1957 to December 1957
Mr. W. A. A. Fernando	January 1960 to December 1962
Mr. V. G. B. Perera	January 1960
Mr. A. E. J. de S. Goonetilleke	January 1960
Mr. A. A. Abeyagoonsekera	January 1960 to December 1962
Mr. J. G. Britto	January 1960 to December 1962
Mr. A. M. Nazeer	January 1960
Mr. L. W. Panditha	January 1960 to December 1962
Mr. A. K. Moonesinghe	January 1960 to December 1962
Mr. A. H. M. Fowzie	January 1960
Mr. N. T. Fernando	January 1960 to December 1962
Mr. D. C. Abeyewardena	January 1960
Mr. A. S. Ratnayake	January 1960 to December 1962
Mr. E. L. P. Mendis	January 1960
Mr. G. B. Perera	January 1960
Mr. M. B. Rodrigo	January 1960

Mr. P. de S. Jayasinghe	January 1960
Mr. S. C. Wanasinghe	January 1960 to December 1962
Mr. Ananda Premasinghe	January 1960
Mr. K. G. M. A. Dias	January 1963
Mr. H. Joe Perera	January 1963
Mr. W. Mallimaratchi	January 1963
Mr. R. A. J. Perera	January 1963
Mr. Harris Wickramatunge	January 1963
Mr. P. Kathaveloo Achary	January 1963
Mr. M. I. A. Ghouse	January 1963
Mr. S. M. Mohamed Mohideen	January 1963
Mr. H. C. Piyadasa Perera	January 1963
Mr. Muhamed Zain	January 1963
Mr. G. W. Abeyagooneratne	January 1963
Mr. Ananda Kaviratne	January 1963
Mr. L. A. D. Jayasena	January 1963
Mr. M. Halim Ishak	January 1963
Mr. M. Wagisa Perera	January 1963
Mr. P. Sumathiratne	January 1963
Mr. M. R. Rupesinghe	January 1963
Mr. R. Mahendra	January 1963
Mr. C. H. Fernando	January 1963
Mr. M. C. Salgado	January 1963
Mr. J. Niyathapala	December 1963 to May 1964 (Resigned)
Mr. Harischandra Mendis	August 1964

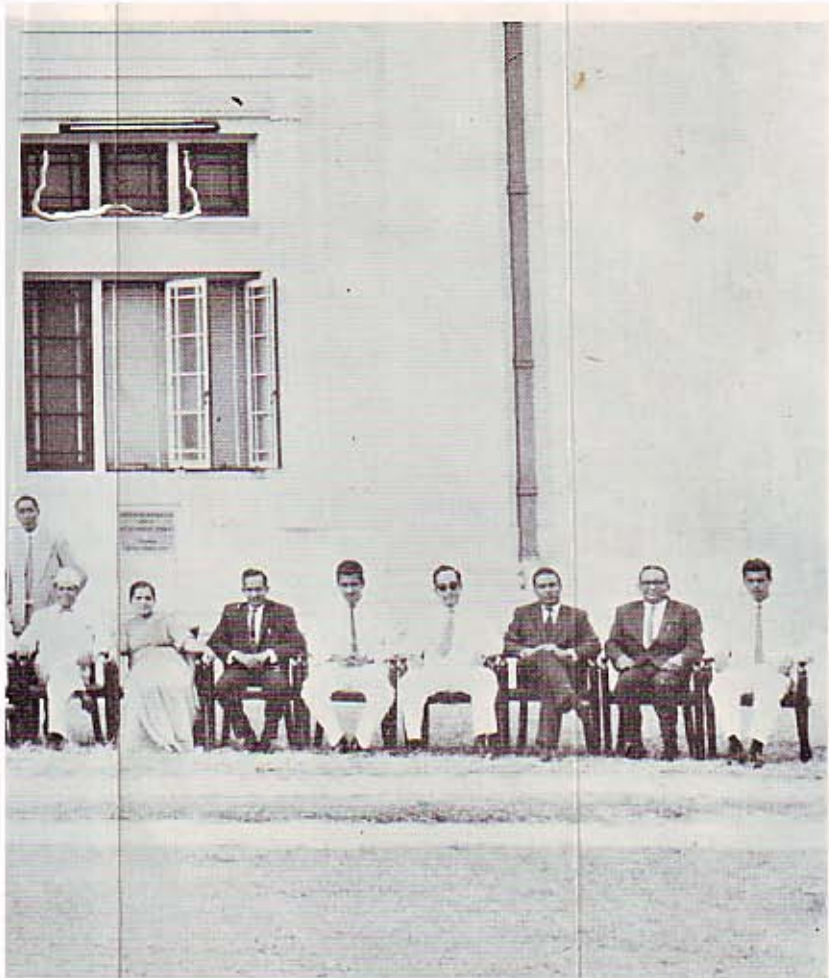
Members of the Council



Seated : Messrs. R. Bin Hassan, W. A. D. Ramunivake, Ananda Premasinghe, G. B. Perera, P. D. S. Jayasinghe, Joe de S. Goonellilleke, Edmund Samarawickrama, A. H. Macan Markar, M. Fa Wickramatunga, M. Vincent Perera (Mayor), V. A. Sugathadasa, M. H. Mohamed, B. N. Cooray, Bernard Soysa, M. Jabir A. Cader, M. Zair, Mrs. Vivienne Gunawardene, Messrs. A. H. M. Bertram Rodrigo.

Back row : Messrs. M. Halim Izhak, H. Piyadasa Perera, G. W. Abeygooneratna, M. Reggie Rapesinghe, L. A. D. Jayasena, R. Mahendra, S. M. M. Mohideen, H. Joe Perera, W. Malimattatchi, / Ghouse, R. A. D. Perera.

Absent : Messrs H. G. S. Ratnawera, P. Katharavello Achary, Lal Salgado, P. Sumathiratna and Harischandra Mendis.



alil A. Caffoor, Mas D. Kitchilan, R. Premadasa, Mrs. M. Ratnam, Messrs. Harris
I. M. Fowzie, D. C. Abeyewardena, E. J. P. Mendis, A. M. Nazir, V. G. B. Perera,

Ananda Kawiratna, M. Wagisa Perera, Augustine Dias, C. H. Fernando, M. I. A.

Elections

In an earlier chapter entitled "The Birth of the Council", Sir Richard Morgan's impressions of the first elections to the Colombo Municipal Council were given, extracted from his diary.

Five out of the nine seats that were filled by election were contested. Six of the elected members were Burghers, which led Morgan to say that "there are too many lawyers and too many Burghers" in the Council.

The first election meeting was called by the voters of Maradana and Mr. Dundas Mouat, a well known Fort merchant, was billed to speak. The meeting took place in Kelaart's garden, Mr. Achibald Andree presiding. Mr. Mouat said that had Messrs. Mackwood and Loos come forward earlier he would have left the field to them. There were no rotten eggs in the air, and great order, we are told, prevailed, but the meeting was slow work as the speaker had to be interpreted.

There were several other meetings held. We read of Mr. Venn addressing the electors of the Fort at a meeting held on the esplanade (Gordon Gardens); and of an open-air meeting in the Supreme Court yard in favour of Mr. James D'Alwis, Messrs. Lorenz, Harry Dias and C. L. Ferdinands, all legal friends, addressing the voters. Mr. D'Alwis's opponent was Atapattu Mudaliyar Dias.

Morgan records a vain-glorious speech by Mr. James D'Alwis. Addressing his constituents he assured them that having examined the list he was satisfied that he was the best man for the post! He was driven by Dr. J. W. Van Geysel and carrying a flag harangued the crowd in a very self-congratulatory speech.

Here is an account of the Fort election :

The election began with an excited but good-tempered meeting in the Council Chamber for the election of a representative for the Fort. The room was crowded, and the partisans of the two candidates cheered or hissed everything that was said with a hearty goodwill.

Mr. R. Dawson proposed the name of Mr. J. W. Venn. Mr. Richmond seconded. Mr. W. W. Mitchell proposed Mr. J. S. Armitage. Mr. J. H. Davidson seconded.

Mr. A. M. Ferguson, said the "Times" report, was not satisfied with the excitement. He thought that before a show of hands was taken the candidates should have an opportunity of explaining their views (cheers).

Mr. Venn then addressed the meeting. He stood before them a fellow townsman of nearly a quarter of century's standing. He wanted to be of service to his countrymen (cheers and groans). Mr. J. S. Armitage could not boast of Mr. Venn's experience but . . . (cheers and groans).

The Government Agent, Mr. Layard, then proceeded to poll the electors, and as each one named his candidate that party cheered vigorously and the other groaned as lustily.

The polling occupied three-quarters of an hour, and Mr. Venn was declared elected by a majority of ten votes. The military formed a majority of Mr. Armitage's votes.

The Pettah election was the most exciting of the series. The place generally wore a holiday appearance. People drove about with flags and placards. The meeting took place at the Kachcheri at 11 o'clock, there being an excited crowd of about two thousand people. Dr. J. W. Van Geyzel's name was proposed by Mr. H. E. Hingert and seconded by Dr. T. Garvin. Mr. Cowarjie Eduljie's name was proposed by Mr. Abdul Rahiman and seconded by Mr. Ossen Lebbe Marikar, the Turkish consul. The calling in of the votes lasted till 7 p.m. and Dr. Van Geyzel was elected with a majority of 60 votes. He drove in a carriage and pair amidst a great babel. The night was spent in social gathering and receiving congratulations. The Pettah was brilliantly illuminated, and there were fireworks, there being evidence of rejoicing in all parts of the district, especially Bankshall Street and the bazaar. The popularity of the election was undoubted, for Dr. Van Geyzel was well known among all classes.

In the Maradana election Mr. Dundas Mouat was declared unqualified and the fight was between Mr. F. C. Loos and Mr. F. Mackwood.

It is interesting to note that among the first batch of elected members, Dr. J. W. Van Geyzel served for 17 years, Mr. James D'Alwis for 12 years, Mr. Ferdinands for 7 years and Mr. Lorenz for 4 years.

The elective principle was not introduced to the Ceylon legislature till 1910 when there was a spirited contest for the so-called Educated Ceylonese Seat between Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan and Dr. Marcus Fernando, the chief champion

of Ramanathan being Mr. Hector Jayawardene, a leading member of the Bar and of the Colombo Municipal Council. Till then the appeal to the people was confined to Municipal Council elections. The elections to the Council were never dull. Among the most exciting elections during the past fifty years were the one in which Mr. A. E. (later Sir Ernest) de Silva defeated Mr. W. P. D. Vanderstraaten in 1919, and that in which Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike had the better of Mr. Goonesinghe, then the unchallenged trade union leader, in 1927.

The elections for the Council whose term was to begin on 1st January 1944 were declared void by a Special Commissioner (Mr. W. S. de Saram) appointed by the Governor to inquire into certain alleged irregularities. One of the objections raised to the elections was that some candidates had made their deposits with the Municipal Treasurer instead of with the Returning Officer as the law stipulated. The Commissioner recommended that all Municipal elections should be taken entirely out of the hands of the officers and employees of the Council, from the Commissioner downwards. The elections are now conducted by the Commissioner of Elections who organises the parliamentary elections.

The Population

At the first enumeration of Ceylon of which there is a record, in the year 1824, the population of the City of Colombo was given as 31,188, made up of 734 persons in the Fort, 4,979 in the Pettah and 25,475 "beyond the Pettah".

Since 1871 the Decennial Census has supplied a more accurate figure. In that year the city's population was 98,843. A hundred years ago when the Colombo Municipal Council came into existence the population was about 80,000. At the Census of 1963 it was returned at 511,639.

The following table shows the Area, Population and Density of the City of Colombo since 1881 :

<i>Census Year</i>	<i>Area in Square Miles</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Density</i>
1881	9.45	110,502	11,693
1891	9.45	126,825	13,350
1901	10.50	154,691	15,469
1911	11.93	211,274	17,698
1921	12.93	244,163	18,872
1931	13.00	284,155	21,858
1946	13.27	362,074	27,852
1953	13.87	425,881	30,694
1963	14.32	511,639	35,729

Mrs. I. Kannangara, Deputy Director of Census and Statistics, shows in her interesting and authoritative monograph entitled a "Demographic Study of the City of Colombo", that Colombo was in 1953 ninety-five times as densely crowded as the rest of the Island. It had greater density than London, New York, Montreal, Birmingham and Liverpool, as is shown by the figures given below :

<i>City</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Density</i>
London ...	1951 ...	28,979
Bombay ...	1951 ...	31,201
Colombo ...	1953 ...	30,694
New York ...	1950 ...	25,014
Montreal ...	1951 ...	20,268
Birmingham ...	1951 ...	13,904
Liverpool ...	1951 ...	18,361

Mrs. Kannangara also publishes a table showing the intercensal increase and percentage increase for Colombo and the whole Island :

<i>Period</i>	<i>City of Colombo</i>		<i>Ceylon</i>	
	<i>Actual Increase</i>	<i>Percentage Increase</i>	<i>Actual Increase</i>	<i>Percentage Increase</i>
1871 to 1881 ...	14,654 ...	15.3 ...	359,358 ...	15.0 ...
1881 to 1891 ...	16,323 ...	14.8 ...	248,051 ...	9.0 ...
1891 to 1901 ...	27,866 ...	22.0 ...	558,165 ...	18.6 ...
1901 to 1911 ...	56,583 ...	36.6 ...	540,396 ...	15.2 ...
1911 to 1921 ...	32,839 ...	15.6 ...	392,255 ...	9.6 ...
1921 to 1931 ...	39,992 ...	16.4 ...	808,266 ...	18.0 ...
1931 to 1946 ...	77,919 ...	27.4 ...	1,350,468 ...	25.4 ...
1946 to 1953 ...	63,807 ...	17.6 ...	1,441,298 ...	21.6 ...
1953 to 1963 ...	85,066 ...	19.9 ...	2,526,612 ...	31.2 ...

Colombo is a multi-racial city. The percentage distribution of the population by race for the years 1921 and 1963 is given below :

<i>Race</i>	1921	1963
All persons ...	100.0 ...	100.0
Low Country Sinhalese ...	45.2 ...	47.2
Kandyan Sinhalese ...	1.7 ...	3.9
Ceylon Tamils ...	6.0 ...	17.2
Indian Tamils ...	16.2 ...	6.6
Ceylon Moors ...	10.4 ...	17.4
Indian Moors ...	5.8 ...	1.4
Burghers and Eurasians ...	6.1 ...	2.6
Europeans ...	1.2 ...	0.3
Malays ...	2.4 ...	2.2
Others ...	5.0 ...	1.2

The distribution of races in the city deviates slightly from the Island pattern. The following table shows the comparative percentage distribution for the Island and for the City :

<i>Race</i>	<i>Colombo Town</i>		<i>Ceylon*</i>	
		1963		1953
All persons	100.0	...	100.0
Low Country Sinhalese	...	47.2	...	42.9
Kandyan Sinhalese	...	3.9	...	26.5
Ceylon Tamils	...	17.2	...	10.9
Indian Tamils	...	6.6	...	12.0
Ceylon Moors	...	17.4	...	5.7
Indian Moors	...	1.4	...	0.6
Burghers and Eurasians	...	2.6	...	0.6
Europeans	0.3	...	0.1
Malays	2.2	...	0.3
Veddhas	—0
Others	1.2	...	0.4

* 1953 Figures are given here as the comparative 1963 data is not yet available.

The Numerical and Percentage Distribution of the various religions in the City of Colombo in 1963 was as follows :

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
All religions...	511,644	100.0
Buddhists ...	221,047	43.2
Hindus ...	78,737	15.4
Muslims ...	109,771	21.5
Christians ...	100,999	19.7
Others ...	1,090	0.2

Area, Density and Population by Wards of the City of Colombo, 1963

<i>Ward</i>	<i>Total Area in Acres</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Crude Density per Acre</i>
Mattakkuliya ...	412	11,484	27.9
Modera ...	169	11,113	65.8
Mahawatta ...	205	12,896	62.9
Aluthmawata ...	153	11,973	78.2
Lunupokuna ...	251	10,390	41.4
Bloemendal ...	247	13,109	53.1
Kotahena East ...	81	8,507	105.0
Kotahena West ...	88	11,654	132.4
Kochchikade North ...	69	12,226	177.2

<i>Ward</i>	<i>Total Area in Acres</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Crude Density per Acre</i>
Gintupitiya	49	11,206	228.7
Masangasweediya	58	10,050	173.3
New Bazaar	122	9,684	79.4
Grandpass North	106	10,510	99.1
Grandpass South	140	12,641	90.3
Maligawatta West	121	7,502	62.0
Aluthkade East	63	12,216	193.9
Aluthkade West	31	8,381	270.3
Kehelwatta	71	8,503	119.8
Kochchikade South	52	11,095	213.4
Fort ...	441	17,458	40.4
Kompannaweediya	161	12,098	75.1
Wekanda	139	8,877	63.9
Hunupitiya	189	8,802	46.6
Suduwella	268	9,680	36.1
Panchikawatta	64	11,133	173.9
Maradana	64	8,106	126.7
Maligakanda	43	9,275	215.7
Maligawatta East	142	10,986	77.4
Dematagoda	168	11,276	67.1
Wanathamulla	137	10,938	79.8
Kuppiyawatta East	135	9,439	69.9
Kuppiyawatta West	90	8,243	91.6
Borella North	233	12,788	54.9
Narahenpita	436	10,084	23.1
Borella South	152	9,187	60.4
Cinnamon Gardens	846	15,303	18.1
Kollupitiya	230	12,132	52.7
Bambalapitiya	339	11,283	33.3
Milagiriya North	250	11,712	46.8
Thimbirigasyaya	438	12,952	29.6
Kirula	425	11,907	28.0
Havelock Town	287	10,854	37.8
Wellawatta North	219	11,942	54.5
Kirillapone	241	10,083	41.8
Pamankada East	220	10,448	47.5
Pamankada West	154	9,630	62.5
Wellawatta South	167	9,888	59.2
Total ...	9,166	511,644	55.8

The Town Hall

ONE of the first tasks of the newly-constituted Municipal Council was the building of a Town Hall. The Council adopted a design by Mr. G. Burton of the Survey Department who was awarded fifty guineas for it. The design provided for store-rooms on the basement floor ; for a museum, library, hall, court house and magistrates' room on the ground floor and for a council chamber, committee rooms and offices for the Secretary and Superintendent of Works on the upper floor. The roof was to be covered with slate.

The style of architecture suggested was Domestic Gothic and the design was attached to the first administration report of the Council. The estimated cost of the Town Hall and Market was £15,400. The block plan indicated that both structures could be erected on the proposed site in the Pettah, leaving 12 feet for the widening of Fifth Cross Street. The Government thought that Mr. Burton's plan was extravagant. A design by Mr. J. G. Smithers, the Government Architect who later built the Colombo Museum, estimated to cost £7,000 was accepted. The new building was opened by the Governor in 1873.

Thirty-four years later, the Chairman of the Municipal Council, Mr. E. M. de Courcy Short, stated in his report for 1907 that the requirements of the City had completely outgrown the accomodation which the Municipal offices, stretched to the utmost capacity, were capable of providing. He urged that the question of a new Town Hall had become one of pressing importance. Expansion of the Pettah site was impossible and the Municipal Council, by a resolution passed on 13th December 1907, recognised the necessity of erecting a new building on a new site.

The Commission appointed in 1914 by the Governor to inquire into "The Affairs of the Municipality of Colombo" went fully into the question and made its own recommendation which fortunately was not carried out, or the Town

Town Hall



The Town Hall in Vihara Maha Devi Park, Cinnamon Gardens, was begun in 1924 and completed in 1928



Mr. B. A. Jayasinghe, Municipal Commissioner in the Centenary Year



Mr. (later Sir) Samuel Grenier, the first Secretary of the Colombo Municipal Council (1865-1875)



Mr. K. J. L. Perera, Secretary in the Centenary Year

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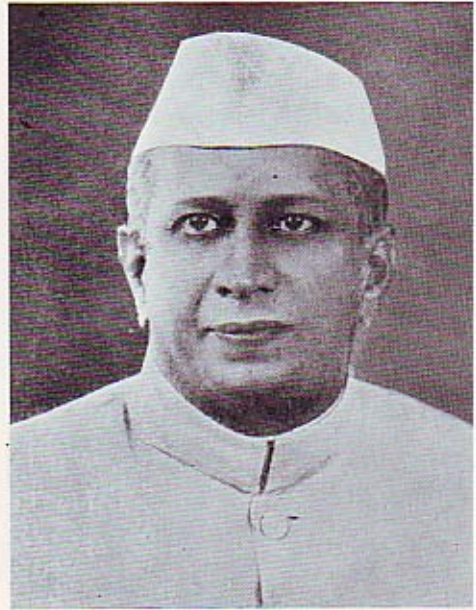
Colonel E. H. Joseph, Secretary (1913-1932)



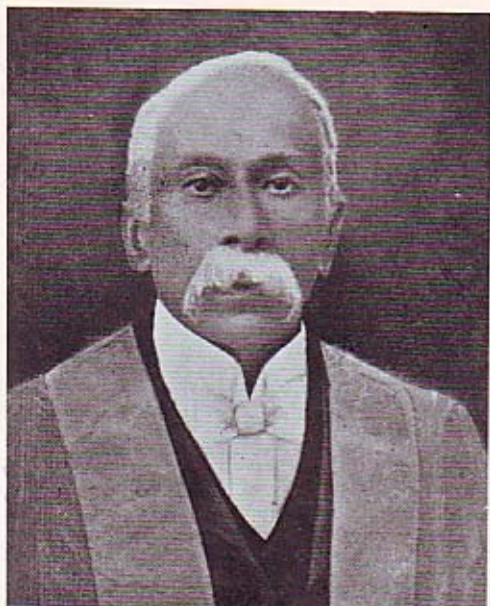
Mr. H. B. Kannangara, Secretary (1938-1950)



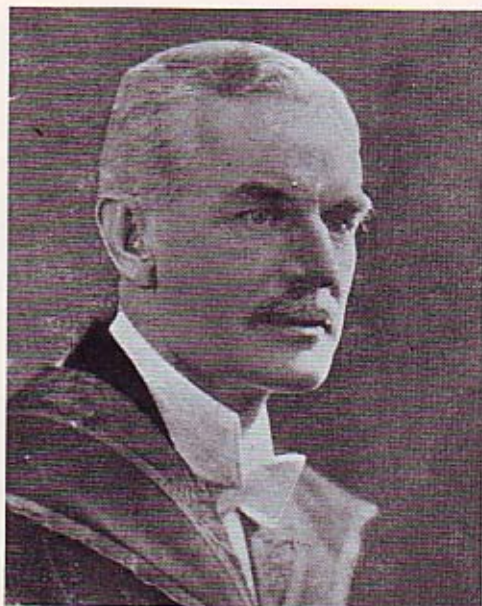
Mr. James Mansergh, the engineer
who planned and started the Colombo
Drainage Scheme



Mr. S. P. Wickramasinghe, Municipal
Commissioner (1938-1949)

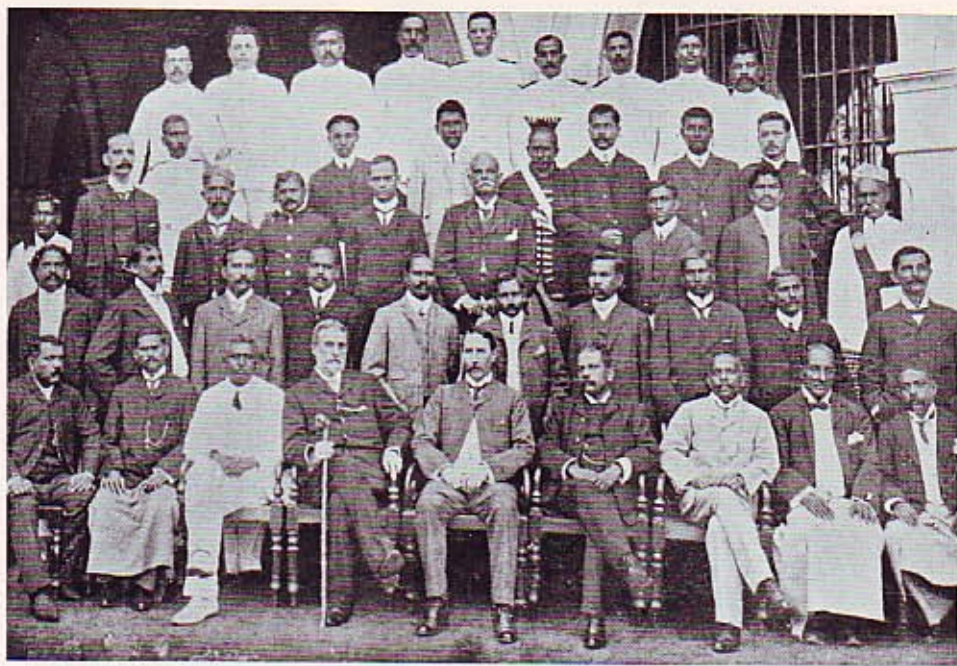


Dr. Simon de Melho Aserappa, the Council's
first Medical Officer (1875-1891)



Dr. W. Marshall Philip, Medical Officer of Health
(1902-1927)

Council staff 60 years ago



The staff of the Colombo Municipal Council in 1905 with the Chairman and Mayor, Mr. E. M. de Courcy Short. (Front row, third from left): Mr. W. A. de Silva, Veterinary Surgeon, Mr. Charles Arndt, Head Clerk and Accountant, Mr. Short and Mr. R. R. Dunuville, Secretary

Heads of Departments with Commissioner (1965)



(Left to right) Mr. K. J. L. Perera, Secretary, Mr. D. C. Kodisinghe, Chief Ayurvedic Physician, Mr. C. T. Perera, Chief Officer, Fire Brigade, Dr. G. A. R. Perera, Chief Medical Officer of Health, Mr. S. Thangarajah, Legal Officer, Mr. M. S. J. Akbar, Waterworks Engineer, Mr. D. W. G. Ranasinghe, Municipal Assessor, Mr. B. A. Jayasinghe, Municipal Commissioner, Mr. R. Canagarayer, Municipal Engineer, Mr. A. C. de S. Abeyasuriya, Municipal Treasurer, S. Dissanayake, Chief Engineer, Workshops, Dr. D. W. Amarasinghe, Chief Municipal Veterinary Surgeon, Mr. P. W. R. de Silva, Charity Commissioner, Dr. A. R. M. Waffarn, Chief Dispensary Medical Officer, Mrs. Ishwari Corea, Librarian of the Public Library

Hall would now be in Price Park. In the course of his evidence, Mr. R. Skelton, the Municipal Engineer, said that the building of a new Town Hall was a matter of urgency. He said that the Chairman, the Secretary, the City Sanitation Engineer and the Accountant occupied the Town Hall. The Assessor was down the street in a little boutique. The Waterworks Engineer was in an office on the top of Maligakande Hill, the Works Engineer in another and the Medical Officer in a third. There were three different systems of keeping accounts of much the same class of work. The Pettah site was quite unsuitable for a Town Hall. It was a valuable site and if sold would not only pay the cost of a new Town Hall but provide a residue.

Mr. Skelton said that about six or seven years earlier the proposal was adopted by the Municipal Council to place the new Town Hall on San Sebastian Hill, near the Royal College (now the Police barracks). If they were putting up a building of any architectural merit, the site should be carefully selected. The Town Hall should be a very prominent building in the town. Mr. Skelton said that the whole project would cost about a million rupees.

The recommendation of the Commission referred to above (it was presided over by Mr. R. E. Stubbs, Colonial Secretary and included Mr. J. G. Fraser, Government Agent of the Western Province, Mr. T. B. L. Moonemalle, Kandyan member of the Legislative Council, Mr. B. W. Bawa K.C., Mr. William Moir and Mr. E. H. Lawrence, Manager of the National Bank) was, to say the least, pusillanimous. It was set out as follows: "We suggest that the heavy cost (Rs. 1,000,000) of the proposed new Town Hall, a work which for reasons already given we consider to be highly desirable, may be greatly diminished. We are of opinion that instead of a site for this building being purchased it should be erected in Price Park. The land comprising this park was transferred by Government to the Municipality in 1893, subject to the condition that it should not be built upon at any time without the consent of Government. We recommend that the required consent should be given in respect of so much of the land as will be sufficient to afford a site for a satisfactory building. There will no doubt be some opposition to the idea of building over part of one of the recreation grounds of Colombo, but we are of opinion that the importance of providing the Municipality with a central building at an early date is so great as to outweigh any considerations of this kind. If this proposal is adopted, the sale of the site of the existing Municipal building—or rather of such part of it as is not desirable for use for the purposes of street improvement—should go far to provide for the cost of the new building".

The question was in abeyance for some time, with the outbreak of the first world war, but was taken up again after the cessation of hostilities.

In 1921 Professor Patrick Geddes, the distinguished town-planner, suggested a more spacious site. He wrote in his preliminary report: "The proposed removal of the Government Factory gives a great opportunity (in fact, the best situation I can find in the entire city, and this after going over every other situation I have heard suggested) of the needed large, central and dignified

position required for the Municipal buildings, and with the large space needed for housing even its present too scattered Departments, as well as for the future extensions which time cannot but bring, and which would otherwise have to be scattered once more. There may still be some space over, but in the block plan herewith for this area, I also indicate a Town Hall in the old sense, that is, for large meetings of all kinds. This should be big enough to hold at least two thousand, or better three ; and, with a large platform, suitable also for musical recitals, instrumental and choral.

“ A large public Library is obviously needed by Colombo ; and here is evidently the place for it. It might well make a specialty of civic literature, now so rapidly growing, and so increasingly important, not only to city fathers and their staff, but to their public as well. Finally, a first-rate Municipal Theatre should and will in time arise. I therefore, indicate this as well ”.

The site ultimately selected, namely the present one, was almost at the geographical centre of the city although not in the heart of the populous area. It overlooked Victoria Park (now Vihara Mahadevi Park) and the Cinnamon Gardens residential area.

The plans for the Town Hall were put out on competition and the first three designs were from :

1. Mr. S. J. Edwards of the firm of Ralph Booty & Co. of Singapore.
2. Mr. W. H. Bourne of Allahabad.
3. Mr. F. Lishman F.R.I.B.A. and Mr. Ram Rup Sharma of Allahabad.

Mr. A. Woodeson, the Ceylon Government Architect, wrote about Mr. Edwards' winning design (i.e. the present Town Hall) as follows :

“ The buildings are admirably laid out on the site ; the outbuildings are well secluded, but very accessible. The main building stands out prominently and would command pleasing views from all angles. The connecting roads are well laid out. On the ground floor the corridors are straightforward, direct and well lighted. The general disposition of the departments and rooms is excellent and most convenient for access, circulation and intercommunicable both for the public and staff. On the upper floors, the offices are admirably arranged. The accommodation asked for has been given almost precisely in every detail, and yet the design is not pinched. The Council chamber is a magnificent apartment, with ample accommodation for the public provided in an elevated gallery. This provision gains many favourable points for this design. The elevations are very dignified and refined. The perspective view shows a very impressive group of buildings crowned by a dome and tower of fine proportions. The details and plans are excellently drawn, and illustrate in an artistic manner a most striking and effective design. ”

Mr. T. Reid laid the foundation, and the construction work was commenced in 1924 by Messrs. A. A. Gammon & Co. and the building was occupied in May 1928. Mr. H. E. Newnham, the Mayor during this period, was largely

responsible for the smooth and expeditious completion of the work. The cost was largely met out of revenue without resorting to any loan from the Central Government. The Town Hall, when completed, was regarded as the best building of its kind in the East and helped to give a new look to the municipal administration of the City. Coming from the Pettah, the busiest centre of Colombo, the Municipal offices at Victoria Park seemed, at first, isolated and out of reach of the ordinary ratepayer, there being no bus services or other mode of public transport around the area at the time, but in the long run the choice of the site was fully justified.

Administration

THE Municipal Council is by law “ charged with the regulation, control and administration of all matters relating to the public health, public utility services and public thoroughfares, and generally with the protection and promotion of the comfort, convenience and welfare of the people and the amenities of the Municipality ”.

As soon as convenient after an election, the Council elects a Mayor and Deputy Mayor. They hold office until the expiration of the term of office of the Councillors then in office, which happens on the thirty-first day of December of the third year.

The Council meets at least once a month for the transaction of business. No business can be transacted unless one-third of the number of Councillors are present.

At its first meeting in each year, the Councillors elect by ballot a Standing Committee on Finance and other standing committees as it considers necessary. There are now, in addition to the Standing Committee on Finance, standing committees on Law and General Subjects, Sanitation and Markets, Municipal Works, Housing and Town Improvement, Planning and Development, Establishment and Welfare and Traffic, respectively.

The Council also has a Public Library Committee and Public Assistance Committee both of which include several members of the public.

The Mayor is ~~ex-officio~~ Chairman of the Standing Committee on Finance which has five other members. The Mayor is not eligible for election to other standing committees. He may be present and speak but not vote at a meeting of any of the standing committees other than the Standing Committee on Finance.

Every standing committee exercises such powers and performs such duties and functions as are delegated to it by the Council. No financial matter can be finally dealt with by the Council unless it has been first dealt with and reported on by the Standing Committee on Finance.

After consultation with the several standing committees, the Mayor, on a date fixed by him submits to the Council every year a budget containing an estimate of the available Municipal income and details of the proposed expenditure for the ensuing financial year. The budget is circulated among the members at least seven days before it is tabled, and is open to inspection by the public at the Town Hall for seven days prior to the date of the meeting at which it is presented. The Council finally considers the budget at a special meeting held in the last month of the financial year.

After the close of every financial year, the Mayor prepares a detailed report of his administration during the previous year, with a statement showing the nature and amount of receipts and disbursements on account of the Municipal Fund, to which all moneys received by the Council, by way of rates, taxes, fees and from other sources, are paid.

The Mayor, or in his absence, the Deputy Mayor, presides at meetings of the Council. If both are absent, the Councillors present may elect one of their own number to preside.

The Municipal Commissioner is appointed by the Local Government Service Commission. He is, next to the Mayor, the chief executive officer of the Council, and all other officers and servants of the Council are subordinate to him. He "shall exercise, perform and discharge all the powers, duties and functions conferred or imposed upon, or vested in, or delegated to him" by the Municipal Councils Ordinance or any other written law. He may, with the consent of the Council, delegate to any officer of the Council any of his powers or functions as Commissioner.

The Ordinance lays down that "the Commissioner, in the exercise and performance of the powers, duties and functions delegated to him under this (the Municipal Councils) Ordinance, shall not act in opposition to, or in contravention of, any resolution, decision, direction or order of the Council, except with the permission in writing of the Mayor, in case of extreme urgency, when there will not be sufficient time to call a special meeting of the Council".

Under the Ordinance, the Minister of Local Government may for sufficient reasons dissolve the Council and place the Municipal Administration under a Special Commissioner.

In November 1957 there was a strike of the Council's employees involving about 6,000 workers. On 2nd December, the Minister of Local Government and Cultural Affairs dissolved the Council by publishing the following Order in the *Government Gazette* :—

Whereas it appears to me that the Colombo Municipal Council is not competent to perform the duties imposed upon it, I, Jayaweera Kuruppu, Minister of Local Government and Cultural Affairs, do, by virtue of powers vested in me by Sub-section (1) of Section 277 of the Municipal Councils Ordinance, No. 29 of 1947, as modified by the Proclamation published in *Gazette Extraordinary* No. 9,773 of September 24, 1947, by this Order direct that the said Council shall be dissolved and superseded on the second day of December 1957.

Thereupon, the Governor-General, Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, appointed Mr. B. A. Jayasinghe, the Municipal Commissioner, "to be Special Commissioner to have, exercise, perform and discharge all the rights, privileges, powers, duties and functions conferred or imposed upon, or vested in that Council or the Mayor by that Ordinance or by any other written law".

The Mayor who had been superseded (Mr. V. A. Sugathadasa) applied to the Supreme Court for writs to invalidate the dissolution of the Council and to have the appointment of a Special Commissioner declared void. The application was not successful.

The Special Commissioner administered the Council for two years. The Council was reconstituted on 1st January 1960 after elections held in December 1959. The new Mayor, Mr. M. H. Mohamed commented in his Administration Report :

"On my assumption of duties I found that I was not at any disadvantage as the Municipal Commissioner, who was functioning as the Special Commissioner during the interregnum, had done much to safeguard the finances of the Council and to reorganise sections of the administration. In fact I felt that the Special Commissioner had done everything to prepare for a smooth take-over by the duly elected Members of the Council. On behalf of the Members of the Council I would here record my appreciation of the excellent work that was done during the two years of administration by the Special Commissioner".

The departments under the Commissioner, who is, next to the Mayor, the Council's chief executive officer, are in addition to that of the Secretary of the Council, those of the Municipal Engineer, the Municipal Treasurer, the Chief Medical Officer of Health, the Waterworks Engineer, the Municipal Assessor, the Chief Veterinary Surgeon, the Chief Officer of the Fire Brigade, the Charity Commissioner, the Legal Officer, the Chief Physician in Indigenous Medicine, the Librarian and the Chief Playground Instructor. The Secretary of the Council is also the Secretary to the Municipal Administration and as such is the co-ordinating and establishment officer as well.

Uneasy Partnership

THE Colombo Municipal Council was established by the central Government because the Governor and his Executive Council felt that a semi-autonomous body, with popular representation, would be able to provide efficient machinery for managing the affairs of a fast-growing city.

The very first Council had a majority of elected members while the Chairman and chief executive of the Council was the Government Agent of the Western Province. The first signs of a rift between the central Government and the Council came to the surface in 1886 whereupon a Commission was appointed. The Commission's recommendations neutralised the unofficial majority, and curtailed some of the powers of the Council. As noted in an earlier chapter, this impairment of the democratic character of the Council did not pass without vehement protest. Even the full-time chairman appointed by the Governor, Mr. H. H. Cameron, thought that the Government had gone too far.

Colombo being the metropolis, trouble between the central Government and the Council was probably unavoidable, especially as some of the municipal services had to be financed by the Government. For many years the finances of the Council were crippled by the cost of the Drainage Scheme. The Government also made substantial contributions towards the water schemes of the Council and the improvement and maintenance of the trunk roads. The Government had the whip-hand because the Council was not permitted to raise its loans in the open market.

For example, we have Governor Sir Henry Mc Callum writing to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1909: "With the advice of the Executive Council a letter was addressed to the Council on October 16. Your lordship will observe

that this takes the form of an ultimatum intimating that, unless Government was satisfied that steps would be taken to develop the Municipal resources, when necessary, the item in the forthcoming Loan Bill for the grant-in-aid for drainage extension would be struck out”.

Much of the trouble between the Government and the Council centred round the respective financial responsibilities of the two authorities. This was the subject matter of an inquiry by and recommendations of a Committee appointed by the Governor in 1915 and also of a Commission in 1924. The Commission of Inquiry on Local Government of 1954 again reviewed some aspects of the same problem.

There was much tension during the forties, and we find the Municipal Commissioner complaining in his report for 1942 that “there is an increasing tendency on the part of the central Government to regard local authorities as its agents in carrying out the central Government’s policy. There appears to be no serious objection to the central Government exercising control over the local authorities in matters involving national interests, and it was on this principle that the Council agreed to enforce certain health provisions contained in the Shops Regulation Ordinance of 1938. The Executive Committee of Local Administration, however, was of opinion that it was entirely contrary to the principles of local government that local bodies should be utilised as mere servants of the central Government to carry out work for the central Government under the orders of the central Government. There has since been a revolutionary change of opinion on this question as evidenced in the new Rating Ordinance which proposes to vest in the central Government a certain administrative control over the finances of local bodies. . . . Members of local bodies are responsible to the electors of their respective areas, and it is to the electorate that the members are answerable for the policy adopted by them, but if the exciting vogue of defining policy by ordinance and regulation is to become an established practice, local authorities will soon find themselves functioning as mere sub-departments of the central Government”.

In his next year’s report the Commissioner wrote : “The procedure adopted by the Minister and Executive Committee clearly violates the elementary principle of local democracy which is rightly regarded as the root and foundation of national democracy”. And again : “This Council rejected the proposal for the very good reason that this particular drive at the centre would sound the death knell of local government”.

The setting up of the Local Government Service, which deprived the Council of the right of appointing its own officers, was regarded as a reactionary measure by the Council. At the Conference of Mayors and Deputy Mayors of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon in Karachi on the 12th and 13th of April 1947, the following resolution was passed :

“This Conference of Mayors and Deputy Mayors of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon, protests against the provisions of the Ceylon Local Government Service Ordinance No. 43 of 1945, which brings all officers and servants of the Local Authorities in Ceylon within the control of the Local Government Service

Commission and makes them servants of the said Commission although they are employed under the Local Authority and notwithstanding that their salaries are paid out of the funds of that Local Authority, as this is a retrograde step and contrary to the growth of democracy and, therefore, a negation of self-government, and declares that the Municipal Councils of Colombo, Kandy and Galle should be exempted from the provisions of the said Ordinance”.

When the Poor Law Ordinance was introduced in 1939 there was a difference of opinion between the Ministry of Local Administration and the Council over the Council's contribution and the loan for the duplication of the 30-inch main from Labugama was held up till this was resolved.

The latest instance of a serious difference of opinion arose when the Government, on its own, decided to raise the number of members of the Council from 37 to 47 by a delimitation of the wards. On 27th February 1962, the Commissioner of Local Government wrote to the Mayor of Colombo to forward the views and suggestions of the Council on the following notice published in the newspapers :

“In view of representations made to the Honourable the Minister of Local Government and Housing that the present demarcation of electoral areas within the Colombo Municipality is not adequate having regard to population, area and amenities, it is proposed to increase the number of Municipal Wards within the City. I am directed by the Honourable Minister to invite the views of the public as to the manner in which the present wards numbering 37 should be demarcated to provide for an increase in the number of members. It is requested that all suggestions in connection with this proposal should be sent to me on or before the 5th March 1962 ”.

After a long discussion, the Council adopted the following motion :—

“This Council resolves to protest vehemently against the undemocratic manner in which the Honourable Minister of Local Government proposes to re-demarcate the Wards and further resolves to request that—

- (a) an accurate voters list be prepared.
- (b) an independent commission be appointed to re-demarcate and to decide whether or not to increase the number of Wards.”

Notwithstanding this motion, the number of members was increased from 37 to 47.

Finance

THE revenue of the Colombo Municipal Council in its first year was £6,429, and, in the year 1872, when Ceylon changed over from sterling to a decimal currency, the Council's income had risen to Rs. 296,494. Today it is around Rs. 42,500,000. The main sources of the Council's income in 1866 were the assessment rate, taxation on vehicles and animals, the commutation rate, tolls in streets, bridges and canals, licences of butchers, carriers, wine and retail dealers, gun licences, stamp duty on the certificates of proctors, advocates and notaries, market and slaughter house fees, fines recovered by the Police and Municipal Magistrates and miscellaneous receipts.

Lighting of the town with gas commenced in August 1872 and a 'rate' of 4½ per cent. for gas was sanctioned by the Governor in Executive Council. In his annual report, the Chairman of the Municipal Council said that "the desiderata now are a system of drainage and, intimately connected with it, a water supply."

The Council in its early days was always trying to work within its income. Whenever the revenue showed a decline it restricted its activities. The Government, for its part, adopted a helpful attitude, at any rate at the beginning. "That the Municipal Council has been able to steer clear of difficulties and show any balance at all", wrote the Chairman in his report for 1874, "is entirely owing to the liberality of Government in relieving the Council of the cost of trunk roads between the Bridge of Boats and Wellawatte and between the Fort and Maradana."

In the next year the Council "was able not only to meet many extraordinary expenses for the sanitation of the town but to evince, by suitable preparations for his reception, the general sentiment of gratitude and joy felt by the Community

on the occasion of the visit of H. R. H. the Prince of Wales." In the following year too "the prosperous condition of the Municipal revenue enables the Municipality to add largely to the previously existing establishment for the conservancy of the town of Colombo." The revenue was Rs. 447,452 and the expenditure Rs. 428,762. "This happy state of things", wrote the Chairman in his Report for 1876, "has favoured the reduction of the Municipal debt to Rs. 40,000 and it is hoped will render the total reduction of the debt possible within the present year."

From 1877 the revenue began to decline. In 1879, when receipts from "fines" showed a decrease, the Chairman wrote: "The result has been not only loss of revenue to the Council but a large increase in both petty and serious crime." An arrangement was made with the Government in 1889 whereby civil (Government) and military buildings were exempted from the lighting and police rates and the Municipal contribution to the Police was reduced to Rs. 60,000. The new arrangement was to be in force for seven years.

The era of heavy capital expenditure began with the contract for the Waterworks dated May 1882 for Rs. 1,413,142, the work to be completed in three years. The Council was given the power to borrow £291,000. Yet costs in general were low by modern standards. For example, a contract was entered for the construction of a new market at Kollupitiya for Rs. 2,800. In 1880 two iron boats for the Bridge of Boats at Kelaniya were purchased at Rs. 3,400; and two iron buckle-plate bridges erected at Parsons Road and Norris Road cost Rs. 1,199 and Rs. 748, respectively.

In 1885 arose a dispute between the Government and the Municipal Council over the contribution of the Council to the Waterworks. In a memorandum by the Acting Colonial Secretary, attached to the Governor's despatch to the Secretary of State on the subject, it was pointed out that "the Colony has borne the whole cost of constructing these works: it has paid from the general revenue the whole of the interest on the loan during the construction: it has agreed to contribute such sums as may be necessary up to Rs. 95,000 to supplement the contribution of Rs. 110,000 which has been fixed as the minimum annual payment by the Municipal Council." The Government suggested that the Council should raise its rates by $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. making a total of $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

The question was not resolved until the Commission of 1886 (to which reference has already been made in the chapter dealing with the Constitution) was asked to examine and report on the resources of the Municipal Council and the liabilities which it had to meet annually under existing circumstances, and on the methods of collecting revenue and the cost and efficiency of the establishment. This was the first stock-taking of the Council's work and appropriately it was at the end of the second decade of the Council's existence. The Commission, as stated in an earlier chapter, was heavily weighted with bureaucrats, and its report and recommendations will today be adjudged reactionary.

The Commission first examined the sources of revenue. The income for the year 1885 was Rs. 348,055 made up of the following :—Assessment Rs. 150,084 ; Tolls Rs. 73,878 ; Commuted tax Rs. 25,580 ; Licences Rs. 22,973 ; Taxes on Animals and Vehicles Rs. 18,722 ; Slaughter house fees Rs. 19,416 ; Markets income Rs. 16,262 ; Judicial fees and Miscellaneous receipts Rs. 14,203. They reported that the scope of misappropriation was almost unlimited in the collection of the Commutation tax from males between the ages of 18 to 55. Between the year 1880 and the end of 1885 there were 51,503 defaulters against whom summons or warrants, either of distress or arrest, were issued. They were of the opinion that the Commutation tax should be abolished.

As regards the taxes on animals and vehicles, it usually happened that more money was collected than was warranted by the animals and vehicles registered, which was proof that the registers were filled in an unsatisfactory manner. The Assessment Rates had been on the whole been well collected, but, said the Commissioners, “we view with some concern the large amount of arrears outstanding for the last three years.”

Colombo property had been re-assessed in 1885 and the rateable value had dropped from that of 1879 by Rs. 8,558 due to the value of property and rents having fallen. Judicial fees were fines levied by the Bench of Municipal Magistrates and a portion of the fines recovered by the Police Magistrate of Colombo. “We observe very great fluctuations in the amounts forwarded by the Police Magistrate, but we have been unable to discover the cause”, states the Commission’s Report. The income from tolls came from collections at the Bridge of Boats at Grandpass, the Mutwal Ferry and the Lock-gate, and Bambalapatiya and branch tolls. The Municipal markets, from which fees were levied, were the Edinburgh market, St. John’s market, Grandpass market, Dean’s Road market and Kollupitiya market.

The Council’s expenditure during 1885 (the year under review by the Commission) was as follows : Salaries Rs. 51,554 ; Commissions Rs. 8,369 ; Scavenging Rs. 43,356 ; Sanitation account Rs. 7,379 ; Public Works Rs. 97,370 ; Police Rs. 60,000 ; Gas Rs. 70,084 ; Miscellaneous Rs. 32,438.

The Commissioners were of the opinion that the system of nominating the Government Agent, Western Province, an official already burdened with the work of an important department, also to administer an annual income of Rs. 330,000 cannot possibly conduce to true economy. They recommended the appointment of a full-time Chairman of the Council on a salary of not less than Rs. 12,000 a year. The Commissioners, on the whole, took a poor view of the quality of unofficial elected members and recommended the concentration of the executive power and responsibility in the hands of the Chairman. They suggested that the budget deficit should be bridged by a 2½ per cent. increase in rates, to produce 37,500, a profit on the sale of water Rs. 40,000 and a tax on coal of 25 cents per ton, to produce Rs. 50,000, making a total of Rs. 127,000. They also felt that

by a judicious increase in other taxes and a diversion of a part of the rents of arrack taverns to the Council by the Government the Council would be able to raise a further Rs. 27,500.

In 1887, a full-time Chairman and Mayor (Mr. H. H. Cameron, of the Ceylon Civil Service) was appointed on a salary of £1,500 per annum.

The new Municipal Ordinance of 1890 gave power to the Council to borrow money repayable in 50 years instead of 20. The revenue for the year 1890 was Rs. 608,774 and the expenditure Rs. 531,437. In 1891 the Council committed itself to pay Rs. 8,000 per annum (i.e. the average amount spent on the maintenance of the Bridge of Boats) towards the cost of the new iron bridge over the Kelani river, namely, Rs. 429,072. The receipts from miscellaneous taxes and levies in 1892 were as follows: Animals and Vehicles Rs. 18,429; Tolls Rs. 84,766; Opium Licences Rs. 26,600; Judicial fines Rs. 11,689; Markets Rs. 17,515; Slaughter houses Rs. 22,718. The Consolidated Rate was 11 per cent. The Council spent Rs. 58,000 on scavenging and conservancy of the Lake. A new dredger cost Rs. 9,320. It also resolved to buy its first steam roller. That used by the Public Works Department had been found to effect a great saving in time in consolidating road metal. A new Fish Market was built in 1892 at St. John's Road at a cost of Rs. 17,500 and Rs. 4,421 was spent on the upkeep of Victoria Park which had been handed over to the Council by the Government.

Work began in 1902 on the Drainage Scheme. Starting with a first estimate of Rs. 2,600,000, by 1922 it had cost the Council Rs. 20 million. The Council agreed to contribute Rs. 600,000 annually on condition that the toll over the Kelani Bridge continued to be paid to the Council.

The turn of the century saw the revenue of the Council exceeding a million rupees. The revenue in 1899 was Rs. 1,088,519 and the expenditure Rs. 927,229. In 1902, Messrs. Boustead Brothers, who had been given a contract for the tramways were permitted to construct electric lines for the distribution of light and power. In 1905 the Government handed over to the Council the property and control over the Water Scheme and in 1906 the Council incurred considerable expenditure in acquisitions connected with the Drainage Scheme. In the same year plans were ready for the Colombo Lake Development Scheme on the initiative of the Government.

In 1908 the consent of the Government was obtained for a re-assessment of Government property within Municipal limits. In 1909 the Government arrived at an understanding with the Council on the Drainage Scheme. Governor McCallum wrote to the Secretary of State as follows: "With the advice of the Executive Council a letter was addressed to the Council on October 16. Your lordship will observe that this takes the form of an ultimatum intimating that, unless Government was satisfied that steps would be taken to develop the Municipal resources, when necessary, the item in the forthcoming Loan Bill for the grant-in-aid for drainage extension would be struck out."

Mr. C. M. Young, a Chartered Accountant, was appointed in 1909 as Financial Assistant to the Chairman. He reorganized the arrangement for the collection of revenue and created a new Department. His duties included that of conducting an audit and advising the Chairman on financial matters. Early in 1911 the Council realised the enormous amount of work to be done in the financial sphere that it decided to appoint, Mr. R. N. Watkins, also a Chartered Accountant, as assistant to Mr. Young. The Council's revenue in 1911 was Rs. 2,662,823 and its expenditure Rs. 2,466,953. But it had undertaken heavy commitments in connection with water, drainage and other services and the general financial situation was serious.

In 1912 Governor McCallum addressed the Secretary of State (Mr. Lewis Harcourt) as follows :

"I have the honour to inform you that the financial position of the Colombo Municipal Council has been lately engaging serious consideration I belong to the school of Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Elgin that a Municipal Council must be allowed to finance its own schemes. On the other hand there is another school whose members consider that a city like Colombo is a central capital which has claims on direct Government assistance in the form of grants in aid towards the improvement of its amenities You will see that my Colonial Secretary belongs to this latter school. His opinions and views have been expressed in a very lucid manner and will be of considerable assistance to you when considering the whole question. Needless to say, the ratepayers whose pockets are concerned also belong to the latter school, and considerable pressure will shortly be brought to bear on the Government both in the Legislative Council and from the public generally.

"I do not think we should adopt an uncompromising attitude. There is no doubt that—although more revenue might be raised—the Municipality would still be in a tight corner, and this has been brought about by the action of the Government in forcing upon it a much larger and more expensive drainage scheme than was contemplated. To this extent I consider that the conditions are abnormal, and that the Municipality has a moral claim beyond the grant of Rs. 1.25 million towards the Harbour series of works, which it will be difficult to resist."

The Secretary of State in his reply said : "I would add that in view of the facts revealed in these papers, and the new works now undertaken with funds lent by the Government, I consider that it is most desirable that the question whether the Municipal Council conducts its public works and general administration efficiently and economically, should be examined by a Commission which would afford valuable information to the Government with regard to the working of the present Municipal system, even if it has no drastic changes to propose. I would therefore suggest the appointment of a strong Commission (not necessarily numerous) to inquire into this question, which should meet early in the new year and should preferably be presided over by the Colonial Secretary."

The Committee appointed by the Governor (Sir Robert Chalmers) on the affairs of the Colombo Municipal Council consisted of Messrs. R. E. Stubbs (Chairman), J. G. Fraser, T. B. L. Moonemalle, B. W. Bawa, William Moir and E. H. Lawrence, with Mr. M. A. Young as Secretary. Their report stated that the position of the Council confessed insolvency, it being unable to discharge its liabilities to the Government, owing as it did Rs. 270,000 in respect of rent and sinking fund charges and the Police bill.

The Committee held that the Council could not fairly be saddled with the whole responsibility for what had happened, which was due in great part to the endeavour to carry out a drainage scheme, the cost of which its resources were inadequate to meet. The original Mansergh Scheme had been estimated to cost Rs. 2,605,000. With the various extensions the estimate had risen to Rs. 24,497,000 and the expenditure incurred up to August 31st 1914 was Rs. 11,973,000.

The Committee was of the opinion that there was no evidence to show that the Council had been extravagant in its expenditure or that the money of the ratepayers had not been spent to good purpose. The Committee's recommendations included co-ordinating the different engineering departments under one head : Works, Sanitation, Water. The Committee urged that the law should be amended so as to admit of the adoption of the practice in force in Bombay of assessing buildings on their annual value and bare land on its capital value. It recommended an entertainment tax of 5 per cent. on receipts and a Rs. 60 tax on a billiard table. Suggestions for taxes on insurance and Afghan money-lenders were rejected. The Committee thought that a tax on the increment value of land could be considered only after a complete valuation of property in town. The Committee noted that the total revenue from tramways was only Rs. 7,340, little more than what the Council received from registration fees on dogs.

The Committee stated that : " There are three cases in which we consider that it would be reasonable that the Government should relieve the Municipality of expenses, either at present existing or admitted as a liability for the future : the upkeep of the Police, the establishment and maintenance of the infectious diseases hospital and the provision of elementary education. The Municipality pays Rs. 71,756 for the Police (out of a total of Rs. 373,692)."

From 1865 up to 1873 the Government had paid rates on assessed value of property belonging to the Crown. In 1872 it was replaced by a commuted payment of Rs. 12,000. In 1879 it was laid down that the Government was not liable to pay assessment on a Government building. But in 1900 the Government agreed to contribute Rs. 65,000—13½% for 7 years. This did not come into force till 1905. The Government consented in 1908 to revalue Government property. The annual value of it then was Rs. 892,608, the assessment rate current being

16 per cent. The Council asked for Rs. 142,721. The grant was fixed at Rs. 130,000 and raised in 1912 to Rs. 146,250. The Government gave effect to the main recommendations of the Commission from 1st October 1915 :—

1. The cost of the city Police to be borne by the Government.
2. The Government contribution in lieu of Rates to be Rs. 130,000.
3. The repayment by the Government of the cost of the maintenance of trunk roads.
4. The Government to pay the Council compensation in lieu of tolls.
5. The exemption from Customs duty of articles imported by the Municipal Council.
6. The Government to contribute Rs. 6 million for drainage works.
7. The Council to borrow only from the Government.

“The result is a most satisfactory one”, said the Mayor. With the beginning of the 1914-18 war, a policy of rigid retrenchment was practised.

The year 1920 saw the appointment of Mr. T. Reid as Mayor of Colombo and the initiation of a progressive policy. While on leave in England, Mr. Reid selected Mr. G. H. N. Saunders for the post of Financial Assistant. The revenue for the year 1921 showed an increase of 22 per cent. but the expenditure exceeded the revenue by about Rs. 300,000. The works undertaken included the raising of the Labugama dam by 10 feet, the building of a new Town Hall and the closing of the modified Drainage Scheme. The Chairman wrote in his Report : “These figures bear eloquent testimony to the work of the Finance Department during 1920 and 1921 and to the wisdom of placing at the head of the Department officers of the type of Mr. Maybin”. The services of Mr. Maybin had been borrowed from the Civil Service for two years.

In 1925 the collection was 97.54 per cent. of the rates due.

An important Commission was appointed by the Governor in 1924 to consider, and report on the financial relations between the Ceylon Government and the local government bodies generally, and to advise *inter alia* which public services were of a purely local character, and which were partly of a local character and partly of a national character, and to make recommendations concerning the maintenance of such public services. Mr. (later Sir) Wilfred Woods was Chairman, and other members were : Mr. J. G. Fraser, Government Agent of the Western Province, Mr. L. Macre, Director of Education, Mr. (later Sir) Herbert Dowbiggin, Mr. (later Sir) T. B. Panabokke, Mr. T. Reid, Mayor of Colombo,

Mr. N. H. M. Abdul Cader, Mr. H. A. P. Sandarasegara, Mr. G. H. N. Saunders, Municipal Treasurer, Mr. A. H. F. Clarke, Director of Public Works, and Mr. (later Sir) Hilary Blood as Secretary.

The Commission classified the public services as follows :—

- (a) “ National ” services, carried out entirely by the State in the interests of the nation as a whole, and not directly for the benefit of particular localities ;
- (b) “ Local ” services, carried out and controlled almost entirely by local authorities in the interests of their respective localities and not to any marked extent for the benefit of the nation as a whole ; and
- (c) “ Semi-National ” services, whose main characteristic is that while they are administered by local authorities, the State has at the same time so marked an interest in their efficiency as to justify a claim to the supervision of their administration.

The Commission contented itself with laying down the broad principles on which the responsibility for the administration of public services should be assigned and on which the cost of such services should be met. “ Our counsels ”, it said, “ may in certain cases be counsels of perfection, but we have endeavoured to proceed to logical lines and to avoid adding to the entanglements which already encumber the financial relations between the Government and local bodies.”

The recommendations of the Commission were summarised as follows :—

- (a) The Police should be considered a national service, and all expenditure on this account should fall on the Central Government.
- (b) Education should be considered a semi-national service. An Education Rate should be levied in the case of all local bodies which have rating machinery, and this rate, subject to certain alternative proposals, should be paid to the general revenue.
- (c) Public Health—
 - (1) Preventive measures should be considered a local service, and paid for entirely from local funds with the exception of expenses connected with general supervision of sanitary measures.
 - (2) Infectious Diseases : The present arrangement should continue.
 - (3) Curative measures should be left entirely in the hands of Government and paid for from general revenue.
- (d) Communications : Water and road thoroughfares should, if considered trunk thoroughfares, be paid for from general revenue ; if not considered trunk thoroughfares, should be paid for by local bodies.

- (e) Certain revenues at present accruing to local authorities should be surrendered, namely :—
- (1) Compensation in lieu of tolls ;
 - (2) Compensation in lieu of opium revenue ;
 - (3) Licences for foreign liquor shops ; and
 - (4) Refunds of, or compensation for, Customs Duties on articles imported for the use of the local body.
- (f) All Government lands and buildings, with certain exceptions, should be assessed and Government should voluntarily pay as its contribution in lieu of rates a sum equivalent to what it should have to pay had it been an ordinary ratepayer.
- (g) Naval and Military buildings should be rated.
- (h) The Colombo Municipality should supply free to all Government buildings water for domestic purposes.
- (i) Consideration should be given to the following possible sources of new taxation :—
- (a) Advertising hoardings.
 - (b) Amusements.
 - (c) Betting.
 - (d) Stamp Duty on transfer of lands.
- (j) The limit of 6 per cent. and 5 per cent. placed, respectively, on the rating powers of Sanitary and Local Boards should be abolished.
- (k) Government should reserve full liberty to make grants to such local bodies as are considered deserving, regard being had to the financial difficulties of such bodies and to their own efforts to meet those difficulties.

In 1926 the Council's indebtedness was Rs. 13,382,049 ; Drainage Works Rs. 10,452,705 ; Waterworks Rs. 2,831, 949 ; and part cost of Victoria Bridge capitalized at Rs. 97,394. No less than 98.67 per cent. of the rates due were collected in that year. By far the most important work undertaken in the early thirties was the widening of the Galle Road to a width of 78 feet.

In 1935, prior to his retirement as the Council's Waterworks Engineer, Mr. W. M. Thyne, reported on the proposed scheme for bringing water to Colombo from the Kalatuwawa Valley adjacent to the Labugama catchment.

In 1937 the long-expected reformed Constitution came into being. It provided for an elected Mayor as the chief executive. In the ensuing years there was a good deal of tension between the Council and the Ministry concerned as to their respective financial responsibilities in regard to the City of Colombo. In 1939, after the Poor Law Bill was passed the Government expected the Council to undertake the burden of poor relief which the Council felt it could not do in view of its own financial situation. The Government agreed to lend the money needed for the construction of the new 30-inch water main " on condition that the Council would continue its contribution towards unemployment relief ".

During the second world war (1939-45) the Council's revenue exceeded Rs. 10 million and a budget surplus was occasioned by the suspension of all the major extraordinary works. But the financial relations between the Council and the Government showed no improvement. The Council on 6th March 1940 recommended that a Commission be appointed by the Government to settle the dispute and received the following reply from the Minister of Health and Local Administration : " I have the honour to inform you that, in communicating the Council's resolution to His Excellency the Governor, I informed him that I propose to deal with the question in consultation with the Financial Secretary and to present a report to the State Council in due course. His Excellency now directs me to inform you that in view of the action I intend to take, he does not propose to take any action in the matter ".

The Report of the Municipal Commissioner for 1943 contains the following passage on the financial relations between the Council and the Government : " Every member of the Board of Ministers is opposed to any settlement which might seem advantageous to this Council and in these circumstances, it is not understood how a satisfactory solution of this question can be obtained in what must necessarily be an adverse report."

In 1944 the Colombo Electric Tramways became the property of the Council, on the payment of Rs. 3,663,443 to the Company. The Arbitration proceedings cost the Council Rs. 212,746 which included lawyer's fees of Rs. 25,000.

The population of Colombo in 1952-53 was returned at 425,881 and the income of the Council showed a steady rise ; so did its expenditure. The revenue exceeded Rs. 20 million for the first time. In the financial year 1953-54 the revenue rose to Rs. 23,816,411, which included the Government grant of Rs. 6,099,587. The total rateable value of property in Colombo was Rs. 35,957,741. The Council's debt was Rs. 9,862,427. The Kalatuwawa Water Augmentation Scheme was estimated to cost Rs. 23,763,787 including Rs. 1,802,741 for land acquisition.

The Council, which had replaced its ancient tram cars with modern trolley buses, requested the Government permission to run the trolley buses throughout the city but was denied the permission. The trolley service in consequence became a running liability.

In his report for the year 1955 the Municipal Commissioner (Mr. William Gopallawa) said that the Council spent an average of Rs. 18 million out of an average income of Rs. 20 million on the care and maintenance vote alone. Thus Rs. 2 million was all that was available to provide even the minimum improvements that the Council was obliged to provide. About 60,000 persons received poor relief. The block grant from the Government was a meagre Rs. 246,478.

The Council did not enjoy the full revenue accruing from licensing of motor vehicles. Any revision of the system of taxation raised the question of a parallel income tax for local government purposes.

In 1956 the Mayor, Mr. V. A Sugathadasa, submitted a slum clearance scheme to the Minister of Local Government. He asked the Government for a grant of Rs. 50 million in ten instalments. The Minister thought it was too ambitious a scheme but the Mayor replied that tinkering with the problem would not provide a solution.

In the year 1959, during which the Council was suspended, the revenue was Rs. 31,290,120 (including the Government grant of Rs. 8,751,151). The expenditure was Rs. 28,811,921.

The following statement indicates the fluctuations of the surplus during the ten years 1945-1955 :

Year	Income	Expenditure	Surplus or
	Rs.	Rs.	Deficit
1943	7,180,676	7,474,121	- 293,445
1944	8,052,278	8,240,042	- 187,897
1945	8,637,386	8,804,283	- 166,897
1946	9,684,591	10,740,266	- 1,055,675
1947	13,840,061	12,565,839	+ 1,275,222
1948	15,914,832	13,424,082	- 2,490,750
1949	16,697,424	14,958,781	+ 1,738,643
1950	20,958,038	16,454,408	+ 4,503,630
1951-52	26,071,577	22,315,723	+ 3,255,853
1952-53	21,196,510	21,023,845	+ 172,665
1953-54	23,816,411	23,081,486	+ 734,925
1954-55	20,661,390	22,846,965	- 2,185,574
1955 (April to December)	17,403,314	18,289,513	- 886,199
1956	24,493,986	28,782,104	- 4,288,118
1957	25,785,279	29,352,562	- 3,567,283
1958	28,825,465	27,402,270	+ 2,423,195
1959	31,290,120	28,811,841	+ 2,478,279
1960	32,329,249	29,558,643	+ 2,770,606
1961	33,553,301	32,645,301	+ 908,560
1962	36,845,251	37,453,436	- 608,185
1963	39,106,239	34,406,369	+ 1,699,870

The increase in Rates had been as follows : 1870 .. 5% ; 1885.. 8½%
 1892.. 11% ; 1910.. 16% ; 1913-20.. 18% ; 1921-46.. 20% ; 1947
 (1.7.47).. 30%.

Revenue from the Consolidated Rate has been the largest source of income to the Council. The following shows the annual value of premises in the City of Colombo as at the end of 1961 :—

	<i>Total No. of premises</i>	<i>Annual Value Rs.</i>
Private properties	72,080	52,877,393
Crown properties	3,240	7,075,841
	<hr/> 75,320 <hr/>	<hr/> 59,953,234 <hr/>

For the year ending 31st December 1965, the estimated revenue was Rs. 32,465,440 which, together with Government grants of Rs. 10,103,350 provides an income of Rs. 42,568,350. The estimated expenditure for this period is Rs. 37,464,426 and the estimated excess of revenue over expenditure is Rs. 5,104,364. There is an estimated deficit of Rs. 1,571,636, when provision is made for re-votes and extraordinary works. The latter include capital works estimated to cost Rs. 5,332,000.

The Consolidated Rate of 30 per cent. contributes 75 per cent. of the Council's revenue other than Government grants. They are estimated to bring in Rs. 24 million during the year 1965. The other main items of revenue are : Licences Rs. 2,749,410 ; Sale of Water for non-domestic purposes and meter rents Rs. 2,557,320 ; Rents Rs. 679,380 ; Markets Rs. 607,200 ; Slaughter House and Cattle Market Rs. 571,880 ; Taxes Rs. 47,5000 ; Drainage Rs. 30,600 ; Miscellaneous Rs. 872,150.

The Government grants are as follows : Trunk Roads (maintenance) Rs. 600,000 ; Cost of Living allowances to Municipal employees Rs. 7,251,600 ; Block Grant Rs. 422,330 ; City Ordinance Rs. 10,000 ; Drugs (western) Rs. 350,000 ; Drugs (ayurveda) Rs. 214,010 ; Harbour Assessment Rs. 255,410 ; Sewerage Rs. 10,00,000. The Council is no longer the licensing authority for motor vehicles and a grant of Rs. 798,000 is paid by the Government in lieu of licence duty.

The Health Services

ONE of the main functions of a City administration is that of safeguarding the health of the citizens. It is towards this end, as well as for the convenience of the public, that vast sums are spent on ensuring a supply of pure water, an adequate sewerage system, maternity homes and child welfare centres and the supervision of markets, dairies, slaughter houses and refuse disposal.

The Government performed these functions in the City before the Municipal Council was established. In 1813 the Government framed regulations enforcing cleanliness of the Fort and ' Town of Colombo ' (the Pettah), and the Four Gravets. When the Government's Civil Medical Department was established in 1859, the only form of public health work it concerned itself with was the control of communicable diseases. The Principal Civil Medical Officer, in conformity with the already existing regulations, performed the duties of Sanitary Officer of the Fort and its vicinity, reporting to the Commanding Officer of the Fort who had the power to see that what was necessary was done.

The Local Health Board of Colombo was established under the provisions of the Nuisance Ordinance No. 15 of 1862. It consisted of two or more members appointed by the Governor, with the Government Agent, Western Province, as Chairman. By-laws were published by the Board in 1862 and were the first to be issued by any local authority in Ceylon. In the main they provided for inspection of public or private premises with a view to detecting cases of infectious diseases, abatement of nuisances, sanitation of public and private premises, and legal proceeding against persons who violated the requirements of the by-laws. An " Inspector of Nuisance " was appointed to enforce the by-laws.

In a despatch addressed to Major General O'Brien, Officer Administering the Government and Officer Commanding the Forces in Ceylon in 1864, the Secretary of State expressed grave anxiety about the sanitary conditions of the barracks in Colombo. After citing statistics showing the high rate of mortality among the military personnel, the despatch stated : " Taking this evidence as it stands, including the condition of the drainage, cesspits and shallow wells dug in the same soil, the sensitive qualities of the water, so far as these are described, and the occurrence of so high a rate of mortality from diseases which are the known consequences of using impure water, it seems hardly possible to evade the conclusion that an improved water supply should accompany improved drainage ".

The Governor, Sir Hercules Robinson, in 1864, decided that the provisions for the proper administration of the metropolitan city were grossly inadequate and framed legislation for the establishment of the Municipal Council. In this despatch to the Secretary of State, the Rt. Hon. Edward Cardwell, he said : " Owing to the absence of Municipal institutions in this colony, a great many duties devolved on the Central Government, which were entirely beyond their province, and the necessity of some Local Agency for undertaking these duties, especially during the prevalence of epidemic diseases, has been felt long before my assumption of the Government, and it was forcibly impressed on me by the filthy condition in which I found some of the principal towns after my arrival here. I trust that this measure would have the effect of remedying these defects, and that it will lead to the introduction of various local improvements which are much needed ".

The Municipal Councils Ordinance 17 of 1865 dealt *inter alia* with :

1. Conservancy of streets and bridges.
2. Provision of dust boxes and disposal of night soil.
3. Housing.
4. Legal action to prevent overcrowding considered injurious to the health of inhabitants.
5. Making of main and other sewers, drains and water courses by the Council or Government.
6. Cleansing and maintenance of above so as not to be a nuisance or injurious to public health.
7. Cause construction of privies.
8. Bathing places.
9. Elimination of breeding places of insect vectors.
10. Bread, meat and fish supplies.
11. Licensing of slaughter houses.
12. Registration of dangerous and offensive trades.

The history of the Health Services during the past one hundred years is largely a record of the way in which these functions of the Council were performed.

It is not without significance that the very first Municipal Council of Colombo, elected in 1866, had two Doctors of Medicine (M.D's) among its membership of fifteen. One of them was Dr. W. P. Charsley, the Principal Civil Medical Officer of the Government, and the other Dr. F. W. Willisford, elected member for the Slave Island ward. The responsibility for the health of the city remained in the hands of the Government but the Council appointed its special committee on Sanitation and Police, consisting of the two doctors and Mr. Tom Berwick, the Deputy Queen's Advocate, Dr. J. W. Van Geysel, the member for the Pettah, and Mr. S. Tambyah, the member for St Paul's.

The Committee acted promptly in bringing the slaughtering of sheep and goats under Municipal supervision. Among the functions of the Committee was that of acting as a Referee to decide upon the propriety of issuing licences to establish offensive trades in given localities, and on the expediency of seeking the interference of the Government for prohibiting burials taking place in particular churches and cemeteries within the town.

The Chairman of the Council, in his first Administration Report stated that "it will be bare justice to record here that the earnest interest and prompt action displayed in the working of the Committee have been mainly due to the personal efforts of its Chairman, Dr. Willisford".

Owing to a difference of opinion among the Councillors as to the necessity for a Health Officer, no separate Health Department was established at the start, but the Superintendent of Works was charged with the scavenging of the Municipality, which he effected at the following cost : 1866—£ 2,318 ; 1867—£ 2,004. In 1867, Mr. Alfred Payne, the proprietor of a coffee estate in the Kurunegala district offered to contract for the scavenging of the town, for a period of three years, at £ 1,960 for the first year and £ 1,440 for each of the two following years. His object was to secure large quantities of manure by utilizing the refuse. But the negotiations did not succeed and Mr. W. Rudd, the Inspector of the Slave Island and Colpetty wards, was given the contract. The night soil was conveyed in covered carts under the direction of the Superintendent of Scavenging to the Cinnamon Gardens and deodorised in pits opened for the purpose.

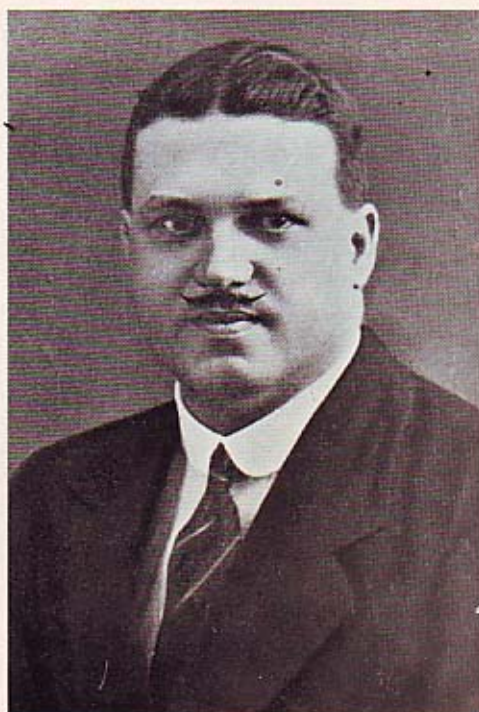
The need for the appointment of a Health Officer was recognized by the Sanitation Committee and the proposal to appoint one was placed before the Government after a small-pox epidemic had occurred in Colombo. But the Governor replied that "so long as the Government Medical Department were responsible for the medical service of the town, the appointment of a Municipal Health Officer was undesirable".

In the face of this opposition the Council's attitude was expressed thus : "If, by the expression of this opinion, the Governor intended to guarantee all necessary professional advice and executive aid which a Health Officer might be expected to afford, the Council cannot be too thankful to His Excellency for so generously removing the necessity for the creation of a new office for which they are totally unable to provide a suitable salary".

Elected Mayors



Dr. (later Sir) R. Saravanamuttu,
first elected Mayor of Colombo
(1937 and 1941-1942)



Dr. V. R. Schokman, Mayor (1938-1939)



Mr. A. E. Goonesinghe, Mayor (1940)



Mr. George R. de Silva, Mayor (1943)



Mr. R. A. de Mel, Mayor (1944 and 1946)



Mr. R. F. S. de Mel, Mayor (1945 and 1947-1949)



Dr. Kumaran Ratnam, Mayor (1950)



Mr. S. Sellamuttu, Mayor (1951)



Mr. C. T. Gero, Mayor (Jan. 1952 to Aug. 1953)



Mr. T. Rudra, Mayor (Sept. 1953 to Aug. 1954)



Dr. N. M. Perera, Mayor (Aug. 1954 to Feb. 1956)



Mr. V. A. Sugathadasa, Mayor (March 1956 to
Dec. 1957 and Jan. 1963 to April 1965)



Mr. M. H. Mohamed, Mayor (1960-1962)



Mr. Harris Wickramatunga, Deputy Mayor
(April 1965 to date)

Notable Chairmen



Mr. T. Reid, Chairman and Mayor (1919-1924)



Mr. H. E. Newnham, Chairman and Mayor
(1924-1931)

In 1875 a Sanitary Officer in the person of Dr. F. de Melho Aserappa, M.D. (Edin.), a private medical practitioner of Colombo, was appointed by the Council. Meanwhile, the Sanitation Committee was responsible for both the 'health and the decencies' of the City. Public bathing places were provided in the Lake opposite the Racket Court and (said the Chairman) "passers by are now saved the indecent and unpleasant sight which previously it was impossible to avoid in the course of a walk or drive round the north side of the Lake".

With the appointment of Dr. Simon de Melho Aserappa the organisation of the Health Department proceeded apace. The Sanitary Officer was responsible to the Chairman of the Municipal Council for the control of communicable diseases and other public health functions. He was required to submit quarterly reports on the health and sanitation of the City as well as on special problems when they arose. He was assisted by ward inspectors. Dr. Aserappa was succeeded in 1891 by Dr. John Driberg.

When an epidemic of plague raged in Bombay in 1896, the Governor of Ceylon appointed a Commission consisting of Mr. W. H. Taylor, Mr. L. F. Lee, Sir W. R. Kynsey, Lieut-Colonel Mr. R. W. Duke and Mr. F. H. Price to consider what steps should be taken to prevent the introduction of the disease to Ceylon. The Commission was required to inquire into and report on the sanitary conditions of Colombo and the quarantine arrangements to deal with an outbreak of plague if it occurred.

The Commission reported, *inter alia*, that "the Sanitary Inspectors of the various wards had hitherto been slaves of every department. They did duty for the Works Department in reporting of breaches of building by-laws, and for the Revenue and Secretary's Departments in preparing lists of Councillors and voters, inspecting licensed vehicles, prosecuting for the recovery of dog tax, enforcing warrants for vehicles and animal tax, and for water rate and other miscellaneous duties. In fact their duties were almost as general as those of village headmen". By a reorganization of the Works Department and the creation of a cadre of Revenue Inspectors, the Sanitary Inspectors were thereafter released for their legitimate duties.

In 1899 a scheme was launched to exterminate rats. For eighteen years Ceylon was free from plague after the disease had become a health problem in India. Plague made its first appearance in Colombo in 1914. Of the total of 1,114 infectious diseases notified in that year, 413 were cases of plague with 381 deaths.

In 1902 the Council established the Public Health Department and designated the former Sanitary Officer as Medical Officer of Health. Dr. W. Marshall Philip, who was appointed to the post, held the office for twenty five fruitful years and can be rightly called the father of public health in Ceylon. In his time he reorganised the inspecting branch and placed it on a more efficient footing. He set up maternal and child health services manned by medical officers, public health nurses and midwives, having trained the nurses and midwives as he had had

the Sanitary Inspectors. In 1911, he inaugurated a Bacteriological Laboratory under Dr. L. Fabian Hirst, an eminent scientist. He established the food inspectorate, a pest control bureau, an ambulance station, a disinfecting station, general cemeteries and many other public health innovations.

Dr. Fabian Hirst's work has been recognised internationally. "It was not long after plague broke out in Colombo that the first evidence of the invasion of a purely Asiatic territory by the foreign flea *X. Cheopis* was obtained. *P. Pestis* was first isolated by Castellani on 24th January 1914 from a human corpse, and from rats by Hirst on 9th February in the first specimens he had an opportunity to examine on returning from a Sanitary conference in Lucknow. In March, Hirst observed what appeared to be a *X. Cheopis* among a batch of 200 fleas and sent them to Rothschild (London) who reported that there were 16 *X. Cheopis*, 183 *X. Astia* and one fowl flea, one of the most striking examples of the appearance of a disease and its specific carrier ever recorded".

The major communicable diseases in Colombo were brought by immigrants from India. "Immigration", said Sir W. R. Kynsey, the Principal Civil Medical Officer, "is intimately connected with the coffee industry and the material progress of the colony. It is equally connected with and, I am sorry to state, answerable for, the introduction and dissemination of no small amount of such infectious diseases as cholera and small-pox throughout the Island". In 1876, it is recorded, as many as 60,089 persons arrived in Colombo. In 1877 the Government appointed two Port Health Officers in Colombo as well as other officers at other ports. In 1878 there were 397 cases of cholera and 317 deaths in the Island. There were severe small-pox epidemics in 1877, 1882 and 1891 and the number of cases reported in those years were 1,055, 1,727 and 1,401, respectively.

The question of what should be the Council's responsibility in respect of the health of the city as against that of the central Government was considered by the Financial Relations Commission of 1924. It said: "We came to the decision that sanitary measures, with the exception of general supervision, should be considered a local service, and should be paid for entirely from local funds We are of opinion that the control of plague, cholera, yellow fever and small-pox must, in Ceylon rest in the hands of the Central Government..... After consideration we came to the decision that in Ceylon it is necessary that medical aid should rest entirely in the hands of the Principal Civil Medical Officer. In this way the whole curative branch can be administered as a single service, thus making for economy and efficiency. We therefore consider that, although medical aid may be considered a semi-national service, it must so far as Ceylon is considered be regarded as a national service, and should continue to be a charge on the funds of the Central Government as at present. We are of opinion that work in connection with Maternity, Child Welfare, e.g., the provision of free meals, should be considered a purely local service and should be met from local funds".

Dr. Marshall Philip was succeeded by Dr. C. V. Aserappa in 1927. He was inspired by the ideals of his predecessor and expanded his work in several directions. He reorganised the midwifery service by training all midwives employed by the Council.

Stray cases of cholera had been recorded annually till 1907. There was a sudden outbreak in that year. The last outbreak of cholera occurred in Colombo in 1938. The origin was traced to workmen returning from India.

In 1938 the Mayor was able to say that "not a single case of either human or rat plague was reported in Colombo or anywhere in Ceylon since August 1938". By then the arrangements for the fumigation of food cargoes were working efficiently.

There are 17 Municipal Dispensaries with an average attendance of about 1,600,000. These well-equipped and well-manned dispensaries help to lessen the congestion at the Outpatients' Department of the General Hospital. Patients with serious ailments are referred to the General Hospital from Municipal Dispensaries, while the Outpatients' Department refers patients with minor ailments to the Municipal dispensaries. There were 9 Maternity Homes and 8 Child Welfare Centres.

The Council has established 18 Ayurvedic and Unani dispensaries under a Chief Physician. The number of patients treated during the year 1961 at all dispensaries was 339,409.

The Council has a Health Education section under the Medical Officer of Health. It has a Publicity Officer with responsibility for all publicity and public relations aspects of health work of the Municipal Health Department and three Assistant Health Education Officers. Provision for health education material production was made in 1956 on the recommendation of the World Health Organization Education Officer to the Government of Ceylon (Mr. P. L. Riley). The Mayor in his report for 1961 said : "This unit is being developed and will be housed in Vihara Maha Devi Park. With this additional staff, it has become possible to develop Community Development in several wards, a process which has been successfully employed in other countries while at the same time continuing such measures as staff training and health education activities in connection with regular health work. Various international organizations have shown their appreciation by supplying materials worth about Rs. 20,000 during the year (1961) with a promise of more for the next year.

"The results of these activities could only be realized in the years to come yet it is encouraging even at this stage to note some indication thereof in the 97,000 voluntary vaccinations which were done in the city..... It is no exaggeration when I state that we have the best Health Education service in this country, including the only Audio-Visual Centre, the Public Health Library, the Public Health Information Office, and the Public Health Educational Field Programme of this kind in Ceylon".

The cadre of the Health Department is today a good long way from the first years of the Council's existence when the Governor thought that a Health Officer was superfluous. The results achieved in the improvement of the health of the city have been spectacular despite the congestion of the slums, the migration from the country to the city and the eruption of shanties in many parts. The death rate for Colombo has come down to 7.3 per thousand, the lowest so far recorded. The rate of infant mortality is 56.4. Small-pox, cholera and plague have been wiped out. Diphtheria, typhoid and whooping cough show a downward trend. The death rate from pulmonary tuberculosis was .18 in 1961. The principal causes of death in Colombo, as in many advanced countries were ailments of the heart. These accounted for 25.5 per cent. of all deaths. Those dying of heart disease came in the majority of cases from the higher economic group. "There is strong evidence", says the Medical Officer of Health, "to suggest that the stresses and strains peculiar to this economic group are largely responsible for heart disease. These trends are significant in that they provide directions of the type of health services that should be developed in the future".

Dr. Aserappa was succeeded by Dr. C. H. Gunasekera (1940-47), Dr. F. N. Jayawardene (1947-52) and Dr. V. Nadarajah (1952-64). The last named has been appointed to reorganise the health services of Ghana. He is the author of comprehensive 'History of the Development of Health Services of the Colombo Municipality' which has supplied some of the information contained in the present chapter.

The Port of Colombo

THE Port of Colombo was an open roadstead until a little less than a hundred years ago. The Portuguese writer Barros said that there was no harbour at all except the hook off Galle Buck which was "so small that a stone could be thrown across its breadth".

Exposed to the fury of the monsoons, all but the smallest vessels of any size were compelled to anchor from one to two miles from the shore. These were the conditions under which, in the sixteenth century, "many ships from Bengalla, Persia and the South and Red Seas used to assemble to take on board cinnamon and elephants". There came a time when the larger sailing vessels preferred to call at Galle, which had a natural harbour, rather than at Colombo, although the Galle harbour was not very safe because of submerged rocks and the hazardous approach. This they did in the early days of British rule despite the importance attached to the metropolis as an administrative and commercial centre.

The rapid development of the coffee industry and the increase of shipping traffic made the construction of a safe harbour in Colombo, one of the most urgent needs of the Colony. The completion of the Colombo-Kandy railway was an added reason. Yet it took many years before a decision was taken on this. The first proposal to build an artificial harbour in Colombo was made in 1864, just over a hundred years ago. In November 1866 the Earl of Carnarvon, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, invited the attention of the Governor, Sir Hercules Robinson, to this matter and suggested the development of Galle.

The discharging and loading of cargo was a slow and laborious process: barrels of coffee and bales of cinnamon and spices had to be hoisted and lowered by hand with the aid of slings and pulleys. Owing to the increasing despatch of coffee,

Colombo as a port was then steadily rising in importance, but the insecurity of the roadstead was recognised. On the other hand, the natural harbour of Galle with its dangerous reefs and risks was unpopular.

In 1864, during the administration of Major-General Terence O'Brien, Lieutenant Governor, in the interregnum between the departure of Sir Charles MacCarthy and the arrival of Sir Hercules Robinson, proposals for a breakwater or for docks at Colombo were first discussed. A professional harbour engineer named Franklin put before the public a scheme for converting the Galle Face Cemetery and the Barracks into a dock for ships, having an entrance from the sea through the Galle Face Road, about the position of the Galle Face spill, with two long projecting piers running out westward with deep water.

It was the ventilation of this scheme, and the conviction that it was not sound, which induced Captain Donnan—whose name was so long associated with Colombo as Master Attendant of the Port—to bring forward a scheme he had long thought over, for the building of a Breakwater. His first convert was Mr. Franklin.

Sir William Gregory, on May 17, 1877 in his closing address to the Legislative Council said : " I take a most sanguine view of the effect which the establishment of such a harbour, vast in space, secure in anchorage, with every appliance for the immediate discharge of cargo, will have on the prosperity of the island, and I firmly believe that many who are present will live to see Colombo a vast commercial city ".

Improvements to the Galle Harbour were recommended by an official Committee at an estimated cost of £250,000. The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, which had already protested against an increase in the rate of postage for letters carried by sea, pointed out in a petition to the House of Commons that : " The mail steamers call at Galle for the purpose of coaling and not for the convenience of Ceylon, for the proper port of Ceylon would be Colombo, the metropolis and the principal sea port, and not Galle which latter station is maintained by the Colony at great actual cost for which it receives no adequate compensation ".

Although the Suez Canal was opened on the 19th November 1869, greatly adding to the volume of shipping traffic in Eastern waters, the debate in Ceylon as to whether Colombo or Galle should have primacy continued. On the 21st December 1869, the Chamber of Commerce sent a memorial to the Governor in which it stated :

" Your memorialists therefore pray that the said Ordinance (for a modern harbour in Galle) may not be passed by your Honourable Council, and that your Honourable Council will secure that the revenues of the Colony are not made chargeable with the outlay or the risk of the enterprise at Galle Harbour, a work of uncertain cost and success, and will further secure that the Colony is not placed in any other position with regard to the work than that of " Agent " of the Imperial Government, as laid down by His Excellency the Governor in his opening Address and as carried out in the case of the Light House on the Basses' Rocks ".

In the Report of the Chamber of Commerce for the year 1870, Colombo is described as "the emporium of nearly all the Export and Import Trade of the Island excepting Coals" and the Committee visualised the provision of docks and a protective breakwater placing Colombo in the first rank of Eastern ports. It was recorded at the same time that the proposed improvements to Galle Harbour "which if carried out would afford only very inadequate provision to shipping and not benefit the trade of the island" were in abeyance.

Meanwhile the fortifications of Colombo had been demolished and a new commercial city was springing up in the Fort. Many foreign business houses had established themselves and the exports were increasing in volume. Further development of Galle Harbour was not proceeded with and attention once more was turned to Colombo.

The following resolution was passed by the Chamber of Commerce on the 29th November 1871 :—

"That the thanks of the Chamber be conveyed to His Excellency for the promptitude with which he responded to the request of the Chamber to have the feasibility of constructing a harbour at Colombo reported upon.

"That this Chamber views with satisfaction the efforts of Government in procuring the services of an Engineer to report on the scheme for Docks at Colombo, and having considered the able report of Mr. Townshend on the sites put forward for Docks, and the breakwater suggested by Captains Fyers and Donnan, respectfully urge on Government the carrying out of such a scheme as will provide sufficient Dock or Harbour accommodation for the growing requirements of the trade of Colombo, within the limits of the ability of the Colony to provide for the cost of the same".

The preliminary designs of Mr. Townshend were submitted to Sir John Coode, the eminent consulting engineer, and detailed plans were prepared. Coode's first plan was for the construction of a breakwater and jetties and reclamation of the foreshore. An extent of $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres was reclaimed and the foundation of the south-west breakwater was laid by Edward Prince of Wales (later King Edward the Seventh) when Sir William Gregory was Governor of Ceylon. The original design was to moor ships to the breakwater from the site known as Galle Buck but this was modified on grounds of expense.

The work took nearly ten years to complete and cost £705,000. The total length of the breakwater was 4,212 feet ; 50 feet wide for 1,350 feet and 40 feet wide for the remaining 2,862 feet of its length. Concrete blocks of 21 tons each were laid resting on a rubble mound. The blocks were "sloped, bonded and joggled together". The completion of the breakwater in 1885 changed the former open roadstead into a harbour sheltered on the most exposed side, namely the south-west.

In June 1882 the P & O ships abandoned Galle as a port of call and transferred to Colombo, the first vessel to use Colombo being a ship named "Rome". Between 1883 and 1889 the shipping increased by 60 per cent. and the Government

was already thinking in terms of a further scheme, involving the construction of a north-east breakwater 1,100 feet long and a north-west breakwater 2,670 feet long. Designs were again prepared by Sir John Coode. On his death the work was taken over by Mr. (later Sir) William Matthews. The scheme was sanctioned in 1893 and Mr. J. H. Bostock was appointed resident engineer.

Almost all the lines of steamers running to the East and Australia now begin to call at Colombo for loading and discharging of goods as well as for bunker coal. The total cost of the above works, which were completed in 1906, was about £500,000.

In 1897, the Legislative Council voted £318,000, to cover half the cost of the construction of a Graving Dock, the British Admiralty having offered to pay the other half. The first sod was cut on 1st March 1899 by Governor Sir Joseph West Ridgeway and the dock was opened for traffic on 31st October 1906 by Sir Henry Blake, the Governor. The first vessel to enter the dock was the ss "Monseaton", an iron-screw three-masted steamer 325 feet in length and with a draught of 17 feet. The foundations for the dock and entrance were carried to rock level everywhere and vessels up to 29 feet were dealt with. The value of the protective breakwaters is shown by the fact that from the day Sir Hercules Robinson selected Colombo to be the Port of Ceylon, the tonnage of the port had risen from almost nothing in 1871 to 606,200 tons in 1877 and to 12,740,421 tons (excluding sailing and coasting vessels) in 1937.

The area enclosed in the harbour is 643 acres, forming one of the largest artificial harbours in the world. Its capacity and usefulness were strikingly demonstrated as early as 1908 when an American Fleet consisting of 16 American war vessels, 4 auxiliaries and 3 colliers aggregating 228,585 tons, was moored within the breakwater, along with the ordinary merchant shipping and sailing vessels, and remained for several days without the slightest interference with the mercantile shipping.

Early in the 20th century it was found that the harbour could be improved and further protection afforded during the south-west monsoon, when the water in the harbour was still too rough to permit the safe use of coaling jetties and the handling of the cargo in the northern area. A sheltering arm breakwater, 1,800 feet long at 3,150 feet from the shore bearing in a direction of about three degrees east of north was therefore constructed in consultation with Mr. William Matthews during his last visit to Ceylon. This arm is 36 feet wide and its footings were protected by a "wave breaker" of concrete blocks laid in pell-mell form. It was completed in May 1912. The completion of the breakwater, begun 38 years before, was celebrated by a ceremonial function at which Sir Henry McCallum laid a memorial stone recording the event. The harbour had by this time the Patent Slip of 1,200 tons capacity, the Barge Repair Basin, the Block Jetty, 18 Coaling Jetties and the Guide Pier 800 feet in length.

Between the First World War and 1923 a considerable programme of improvement was carried out, including the construction of the Bagdad Warehouses,

Oil Facilities Scheme including the Kolonnawa Oil Depot, the Inner and Outer Bunkering Jetties, Rail Connections and Fuel Oil, Kerosine, Petroleum and Water Pipe Lines between Kolonnawa and the Port.

No important alteration of the Port took place thereafter until after the Second World War. The construction of the Inner Dock in the period 1936 to 1938 was the only major improvement. Plans were, however, in hand soon after the war for a far-reaching scheme of modernisation and a contract was signed for this purpose in 1950, exactly seventy-five years after the first stone was laid to construct the Colombo Harbour. The works comprised :

The Prince Vijaya Quay : 1,200 feet long at the north-east end of the harbour with two berths for cargo boats each equipped with transit shed served by road and rail.

The Queen Elizabeth Quay : 3,000 feet of quay wall with a depth of 36 feet throughout to accommodate four large ships whether they be passenger vessels or cargo ships.

Delft Quay : with two berths for coasters each approximately 300 feet long.

An Oil Dock that accommodates two large tankers.

An additional berth on the Guide Pier for the loading of bulk coconut oil and latex to ships.

The Scheme which cost over Rs. 100 million was completed in 1956.

The Lake

THE Beira Lake is one of the principal features of the city of Colombo, and it has received the attention in turn of the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British. One of the earliest references to the Lake is to be found in 'The Conquest of Ceylon' by Father Fernao de Queyroz published in 1688. He says that when Vijaya Bahu laid siege to Colombo in 1521, the Portuguese captain Lopo de Brito pursued the attackers, "killing and wounding them till they reached a brook, which was afterwards dammed into a lake for the better fortification of the city". Queyroz adds that, when large reinforcements arrived from Goa in 1555, they "built some houses giving rise to the city of Colombo which had within it the mound of Laurence and was surrounded by Capana (Sinh. kalapuwa), a lake of nearly three leagues and a half in length, which in summer admits of access to Colombo in some places with water to the waist".

During the siege of 1578, Mayadunne, seeing that the Portuguese boats were plying in the Lake, "determined to drain it, but without avail, as it was valorously defended". His son Rajasinha besieged Colombo several times and drained the Lake dry twice by canals, one of which is now represented by the San Sebastian Canal.

The Lake is described as full of crocodiles, whence the name Kayman's Gate. The word 'Cayman' was used for a crocodile both by the Portuguese and the Dutch. There were several islands in it, most of which have since disappeared. Slave Island had a cinnamon plantation and another island was large enough to have 600 coconut trees and a whole village.

In preparing the defences of Colombo against the Dutch attack in 1665, the Portuguese "made great use of the lake, by which they brought palm tree timber, and fascines, and a certain bark of a tree which they call *vedipara*, which made up for the lack of matches".

The Dutch in their turn, "launched on the lake many light and capacious vessels of extraordinary workmanship in which were 250 soldiers, to capture the houses of D. Jeronimo de Azevedo, where the wall of the rampart was three palms broad and little more than one fathom high". The Lake was the scene of some of the bitterest encounters between the Dutch and the Portuguese.

The Portuguese ramparts which were battered into rubble were temporarily replaced by a stockade extending to the edge of the Lake. Later the defences were withdrawn to a higher ground a couple of hundred yards back. The low-lying ground outside was flooded and a broad expanse of Lake flowed in as far as Kayman's Gate.

The Lake could have become one of the more pleasing amenities of the city but, for a long time, it was neglected and as the population increased it became a menace to the health of the inhabitants. Much of the sewage of the city found its way into it. Some effort was made to dredge the Lake but this by itself could not cure the unhealthy and obnoxious conditions arising from the presence in the midst of the city of a wide stretch of polluted and stagnant water.

Proposals were made from time to time to connect the Lake with the Harbour by means of a canal and a lock or locks. Closely allied with them was a scheme for draining the Lake or cutting canals through it to the various stores and the proposed lock. In 1904 the Governor appointed a committee composed of the Director of Public Works (Mr. F. A. Cooper), the Principal Collector of Customs (Mr. W. H. Jackson), the Chairman of the Colombo Municipal Council (Mr. E. M. de Courcy Short) and a member of the mercantile community, Mr. J. G. Wardrop, to report on proposals to connect the Lake to the Harbour.

The Committee reported on the 8th of November 1905 that, owing to the depth of the Lake, the construction of a canal from the Harbour to the Lake would by itself be of little practical advantage. The construction of such a canal therefore necessitated the canalization of the Lake or extended dredging over the whole area.

The Lake at the time had an area of 400 acres and a volume of 83 million cubic feet at top water level surface. Proposals for a development scheme to cost Rs. 4½ million, part of which was to be recovered by the sale of reclaimed land, was referred to the Consulting Engineers, Messrs. Gregory Eyles and Waring. One member of the Committee, Mr. Short, the Chairman of the Municipal Council, strongly dissented from the other members. He said of the proposed scheme that it "favours only the confirmation and perpetuation of such private rights as may have been already acquired over the foreshore of the 'eastern' lake but also

the alienation of much of the lake frontage as has hitherto remained open to the public. It in fact practically excluded the public from the lake frontage altogether.

“ It advocates an expenditure on the lake of nearly Rs. 4½ million in such a manner as will secure to Government less than half the lake frontage and leave the larger part in private hands. This private frontage will have the same facilities of water transport enormously enhanced in value at the public expense, such enhancement becoming a barrier to future operations in this part of the Lake.

“ Its benefits extend only as far as Skinner’s Road bridge and leaved untouched the large busy sections of the town lying north of that bridge as well as the traffic by the Kelani river. It largely destroys the amenities of the ‘western’ lake without advantage to any section of the community”.

Some European firms said that their interests would be adversely affected, but the majority welcomed the scheme which was carried out and which added much-needed land for development. It cannot be denied, however, that the best use of the Lake has not been made for ornamental or utilitarian purposes. Professor Patrick Geddes who submitted a report on “Town Planning in Colombo” in 1920, wrote :

“ At sunset especially, looking over the Lake to the palm forest of the lakeside bungalows, this is by far the finest park view in Colombo, and only second to the totally different seascape of Galle Face. Hence I cannot too strongly emphasise the plea that, though the great Lake and the north of this one are now being completely commercialized, this one portion of the city’s old beauty should be spared for the future. The economic return from spoiling this end of the Lake can, after all, be but small, but the loss to the city is incomparably great. No one I imagine proposes to commercialise the narrow bit of the Lake channel further up, where it runs along the east avenue of Galle Face ; but to destroy this will be an even more serious loss to the beauty and character of the city”.

There is still much to be done to make the Lake one of the most charming features of the city.

Place Names

COLOMBO has over a thousand streets. Most of the older streets bear names which are links with the past. The Portuguese often gave the names of saints to whom the churches and convents in the vicinity were dedicated. Thus we have San Sebastian Hill or St James' Road.

The Dutch adapted many Sinhalese and Portuguese names but they sometimes commemorated one of their Governors, like Hulft, or recalled places in their native land, such as Leyden and Delft. The British named their streets after monarchs and famous men of their home country and Governors and other senior officials. They also had a small quota of Christian saints.

Here are some of the better-known Portuguese names still in use or only recently changed for names with a national flavour: Tanque Salgado (translation of 'Lunu Pokuna'), Grandpass (from Grande Passo), Liveramentu (the site of the church dedicated to the virgin of Good Deliverance: 'Liveramentu'), Milagiriya (church of our Lady of Miracles—'Nossa Senhora dos Milagres'), Main Street (Roa direto).

The Dutch names include Hultsdorp, after Governor Hulft who died during the siege of Colombo; Kayman's Gate ('kayman' meaning a crocodile—the Kolon rivulet entered the sea at Kayman's Gate and there were sometimes crocodiles in the stream); Wolvendaal (dale of wolves—named after the Portuguese Church of our Lady of Guadalupe by the Dutch, imagining that 'Guadalupo meant 'dale of wolves'); Maliban Street (Maliban, meaning the Mall, the fashionable promenade in the Pettah); Pas Betal Road ('pas betal': the pass at which you pay); Leyden and Delft gates; Racquet Court (named after Bartholomeusz

Petrus Racket); Bloemendaal (vale of flowers); Korteboom (short trees); and Vuystwyke Road (after the Dutch Governor Vuyst, 1726-1729, who was recalled for misgovernment); Keyzer (Caesar) Street and Prince (Prinz) Street.

Nearly every British Governor is commemorated by a street or other place name. Frederic North, who succeeded to the viscounty of Guilford, has given his name to Guilford Crescent. We have Maitland Crescent after his successor, Sir Thomas Maitland. Sir Robert Brownrigg, 'the conqueror of Kandy', is commemorated by Brownrigg Road. Paget Road, in the same area where Government bungalows for senior officers are situated, is named after Sir Edward Paget.

Governors Sir Henry Ward, Sir Edward Barnes, Sir Hercules Robinson (afterwards Lord Rosmead), Sir Robert Wilmot Horton, Sir Charles MacCarthy, Sir William Gregory and Lord Torrington gave their names to some of the best roads in the residential area of Colombo 7. Campbell Park and Campbell Place are doubtless named after the Governor Sir Colin Campbell, and Mackenzie Road after Governor Stewart Mackenzie. Torrington, one of the less successful British Governors, has given his name to Torrington Square, Torrington Place and Torrington Avenue, and Sir Arthur Havelock to Havelock Road and Havelock Park. Longden Place and Longden Terrace commemorate Sir James Longden. His successor, Sir Arthur Gordon, was raised to the peerage as Lord Stanmore; hence Stanmore Crescent. There are also the Gordon Gardens which he inaugurated. Sir Charles MacCarthy, who was Colonial Secretary and later Governor, gives his name to MacCarthy Road. Ridgeway Place and the Ridgeway Golf Links are so called after Sir Joseph West Ridgeway.

Sir Henry Blake and Sir Henry McCallum are commemorated by Blake Road and McCallum Road, respectively. The Chalmers Granaries, built during the first world war, were named after Sir Robert (later Lord) Chalmers. The Manning Markets and Manning Place recall Sir William Manning. Anderson Road in Havelock Town is named after Sir John Anderson, the only Governor to die in Ceylon. Clifford Place, Stanley Place and Stubbs Place are named after Sir Hugh Clifford, Sir Herbert Stanley and Sir Edward Stubbs.

The practice of naming streets after Governors seems to have stopped during the second world war, so that we have none named after Sir Andrew Caldecott, Sir Henry Monck-Mason Moore, and Lord Soulbury.

With the proliferation of streets, naming them has become a problem. In 1930 the Municipal Assessor complained in his annual report that the Council had no power to name any private street. "The present lack of power", he wrote, "to name all roads or streets in the City, irrespective of whether they are privately or publicly owned, is causing endless confusion, and unless powers are speedily obtained it will be impossible, in a few years' time, to manage our work".

Ten years later, the Council commissioned Mr. John M. Seneviratne, to investigate the naming of streets. Mr. C. Stewart Orr, the Municipal Assessor, commenting on Mr. Seneviratne's Report, writes: "Mr. Seneviratne's report is very

similar to a report I submitted on the same subject some years ago, the material difference being that, while I suggested the use of English flower names, Mr. Seneviratne suggests Sinhalese names of flowers and names of historical significance Whether his or mine are accepted, it is time the Council laid down a policy to be followed in street naming. In the absence of a Town Planning Ordinance, streets may and do spring up in all sorts of corners and, unless names can be given which will ensure identification, confusion is bound to result. As a matter of fact a large number of ratepayers seem to like their surnames to be perpetuated in street names, and I have sometimes wondered whether the easiest way of dealing with the problem may not be to take the Directory and use the surnames in it as and when necessary”.

Be that as it may, in recent years the names of more Kings of Ceylon have been given to the streets of Colombo, among them : Dutugemunu, Devanampiyatissa, Gajaba, Patiba, Upatissa, Prakrama, Seevali, Abhaya, Kirthi, Kassapa, Rajasinghe, Sri Wickrema. Other historical names commemorated by the streets of Colombo include : Asoka, Mihindu, Sangamitta, Krishna, and Indra.

The “ Sri ” names are also becoming more common. There are Sri Dhamma Mawatha (former Campbell Avenue) Sri Dharmakeertiyarama Road (former Albert Road) Sri Gunananda Mawatha (former Santiago Road) Sri Sangharaja Mawatha (former New Bazaar) Sri Pannananda Mawatha (former Vine Street) Sri Vijaya Road (former Muhandiram’s Lane) Sri Jinaratana Road, Sri Siddhartha Path and Sri Katirashan Street. Other roads of similar derivation are Dharmaraja Mawatha (former Ripon Road) Dhavala Singharama Mawatha (former Daniel’s Road) Matha Road, Perakumba Road, Randoli Lane, Ransivi Lane, Rasavalli Lane and Walukarama Road. Both Swami Vivekananda and Swami Ramakrishna are commemorated by roads in Wellawatte.

Many well-known Ceylonese of the past are remembered. There are streets named after Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, Sir James Pieris, Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, C. A. Lorenz, Sir Richard Morgan, D. S. Senanayake, The Anagarika Dharmapala, F. R. Senanayake, Arthur Alwis, C. P. Dias, Sir Ernest de Silva, S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, N. H. M. Abdul Cader, Sir Mohamed Macan Markar, Sir Baron Jayatilaka, Mr. T. B. Jayah, The Ven. Pelene Vajiragnana, W. A. Silva (the novelist) and Sir Chittampalam Gardiner.

The large garden of the late C. H. de Soysa’s residence, Alfred House, where he entertained Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, in 1870, is now a built-up area intersected by several “ avenues ”, “ places ” and “ roads ”, e.g. Alfred Place, Alfred House Avenue, Alfred House Gardens, Alfred House Road, Queen’s Road, Charles Circus, Charles Way, Charles Drive, Selbourne Road, Bagatelle Road and School Lane. The premises of other large houses, like Glenaber, Balcombe, Rheinland, Sigiriya, Sukhastan, Rotunda, Elie House and Whist Bungalow have generated streets named after them.

Most of those who held office as Chairman of the Colombo Municipal Council are remembered. Among them are : Sir C. P. Layard, the first Chairman, H. Hayes Cameron, F. R. Saunders, F. H. Price, C. R. Buller, C. E. D. Pennyquick, W. E. Davidson, K. W. B. MacLeod, E. M. de C. Short, B. Horsburgh, R. W. Byrde, T. Reid, H. E. Newnham, W. L. Murphy, W. T. Stace.

Among the Ceylonese Mayors commemorated are A. E. Goonesinghe (Goonesinghe Park—former Price Park), George R. de Silva, C. T. Grero, T. Rudra, Dr. Kumaran Ratnam, V. A. Sugathadasa (Sugathadasa Stadium) and M. Vincent Perera (Vincent Square).

Sir Samuel Grenier, the first Secretary of the Colombo Municipal Council has given his name to Grenier Road in Borella.

Many Municipal Councillors, in addition to some already included in the list of distinguished Ceylonese, have had streets and parks named after them. Among these are : Dr. W. P. Rodrigo, Dr. E. V. Ratnam, Dr. S. Muttiah, Messrs. Charles Perera, R. L. Pereira, M. R. Akbar and Sir Razik Fareed. De Saram Place was so called out of compliment to the Council's lawyers, the founder of the firm of F. J. and G. de Saram having himself been one of the earliest members. Sutherland Road took its name from Mr. J. M. Sutherland, a former Pussellawa planter, who established himself in Colombo as Manager of the Railway Company. In 1868 he lived in a house known as "Sherborne". Laurie's Road was named after the first Superintendent of Works of the Council.

Several engineers were commemorated though some of the streets named after them have other names now. Among them were Major T. Skinner, F. B. Norris, F. A. Cooper, R. Skelton, A. H. Dawson, R. E. Tickell, and N. M. Ingram.

Two well-known medical men connected with the Council who are remembered are Sir W. R. Kynsey and Dr. Christopher Elliott. George Wall (Wall Street) and E. J. Darley (Darley Road) were prominent in commerce and public affairs of their day. Darley Road has been renamed T. B. Jayah Mawata.

British royalty is associated with Queen, Duke and Regent Streets, Victoria Park (now Vihara Maha Devi Park), Prince of Wales Avenue, Edinburgh Crescent, Albert Crescent, Alexandra Road, Alexandra Place and Alexandra Terrace, Cambridge Place and Terrace, York Street, Edward Lane, Fife Road, and the roads named after Alfred Duke of Edinburgh in Colombo 3.

Other British notabilities commemorated are : Stafford, Hampden, Nelson, Chatham, Melbourne, Ripon, Haig, Buchanan, Trelawny, and Tichborne. The last-named may or may not refer to the Tichborne claimant.

Pendennis Avenue is no doubt named after Colonel Pendennis in W. M. Thackeray's novel and Gitanjali after a poem by Rabindranath Tagore.

There are a number of streets called after some well-known places in the United Kingdom, e.g. Ascot, Epsom, Aintree, Balcombe, Belmont, Sumner, Stratford, Mayfield, Kent, Glenaber, Kensington, Kew, Perth, Avondale, Coniston, Kinross, Deal, Hyde Park, Kew, Vauxhall.

As in every large city, public works, landmarks, and institutions have given their names to streets : Reservoir Road, Graving Dock Road, Dam Street, Kachcheri Road, Quarry Road, Commissariat Street, Court Street, Flagstaff Street, Hospital Street (after the military hospital of the Dutch period), Dispensary Lane, Magazine Road, Lake Road, Mart Place, Market Street and Market Lane, Cattle Mart Lane, Castle Street and Castle Lane, Canal Row, Canal Bank and Canal Lane, Lockgate Lane, Chekku Street, Breakwater Road, Bankshall (Bangasala or storehouse) Street, Sea Street, Sagara Road, Beach Street, Hill Street, Ash Tip Road, Ambalama Road, and several temple, church, chapel and mosque streets. Mutwal is from the Portuguese and Dutch corruption of the Tamil word for the mouth of a river, 'Muhatuvaram' (in Sinhalese Modera or Muvadora).

There are several streets named after trades which were presumably carried on in their precincts : Barber Street, Butcher Street, Brassfounder Street, Silversmith Street (now Bandaranaike Mawatha), Shoe Road, Oilman Street, Cork Road, Lascoreen Street, Cafferman's Lane, Kuruwe (relating to elephants) Street, Rifle Street (in which a Rifle Regiment used to be stationed).

When a road was built to join Slave Island with Cinnamon Gardens it was called Union Place.

Areas whose names end with 'watte' (garden) are : Wellawatte, Polwatte, Kurunduwatte (now Cinnamon Gardens) Mahawatte, Kehelwatte, Kitulwatte, Kuppiyawatte, Kopyyawatte, Rajamalwatte, Koswatte, Galkapanawatte, Maligawatte, Ambagahawatte, Molawatte, Andarawatte, Urugodawatte, Panchikawatte, Kanatte, Ra-watte, Fransewatte and Bosangwatte (so named probably from the garden of a ship's officer—boatswain—who lived there).

It is believed that Maligawatte was so called because the Royal troops encamped there during the attacks on the Portuguese Fort. Rajasinha may have lived in Maligakande during these operations—Maligawa being a royal palace.

Names ending with 'pitiya'—plain—are : Bambalapitiya, Kollupitiya, Hunupitiya, Narahenpitiya, Madampitiya and Gintupitiya (formerly 'Santunpitiya' from St Thomas' Church).

There is a Galpotte (the flattish rock outcrop is still there), Wanathamulla and Ketawalamulla, Galle Buck : the rock-bound coast behind Queen's House is derived from the Sinhalese 'Galbokka' (stony gullet). 'Bocca' in Italian means 'mouth'.

Roads are often named after trees, flowers and even the life hereafter, e.g. Flower Road, Shady Grove Avenue, Aloe Avenue, Messenger Street (from Masangas Vidiya—the 'masang' tree street), Madampitiya (the plain of 'madan' trees), Dematagoda ('demata' trees), Gorakagaha Avenue, Timbitigasyaya, Kotahena (Cottanchena) and Paradise Place.

Streets are also named after countries and communities : China Street, Chetty Street and New Chetty Street, Old Moor and New Moor Streets, Java Lane, Jawatte, Arab Lane, Kochchikade. Whether Maria-Kade was named after a St Mary's Church or a humble person is not known.

There is a whole communion of saints giving their names to Colombo streets : St. Lawrence, St. John, St. James, St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Andrew, St. Joseph, St. Anthony, St. Michael, St. Kilda, St. Alban, St. Elmo, St. Lucia, St. Mary St. Wilfred, St. John the Baptist de La Salle.

The Roman Catholic Archbishops are commemorated : Bonjean and Zaleski. Armour Street, Grandpass, is named after the Rev. Andrew Armour, the Anglican Chaplain of St. Paul's Church, Pettah, since demolished and Glennie Street after an Anglican Archdeacon. Turnour Road is named after the distinguished oriental scholar, the Hon. George Turnour. Chief Secretaries who are commemorated are the Hon. John Rodney, Mr. R. Arbuthnot, Mr. W. Boyd, Mr. H. A. Marshall, Auditor-General, Sir Alexander Ashmore, General Wilson. Other Civil Servants who gave their names to Colombo streets were H. W. Greene, P. W. Braybrooke and John Deane.

There is a nice mixture of Eastern and Western names of women after whom Colombo streets are named. Among them are : Siripina, Mary, Lily, Frances, Chitra, Sriya, Suriya, Siripa, Aurelia, Maheswari, Somadevi, Anula, Swarna, Mallika, Frederica, Sunethra, Vijitha, Rohini, Iswari, Mayura, Chandra, Zavia, Daya, Dilenia, Nimal, Sameera, Luckshimi, Arethusia, Mumtaz Mahal.

Quite a number of landowners have had their names or some adaptation of their names given to streets on which they own property : Apart from the Marikars, de Silvas, Fernandos, Pereras, De Fonsekas and de Soysas, there are : Adam, Adamjee, Cosmas, Hamer, Umbichy, Kotalawala, Siebel, Sellamuttu, Austin, Ohlmus, Piachaud, Drieberg, Sanchiarachi, Van Rooyen, Nathanielsz, Rockwood, Rajapakse, Fareed, Shaffee, Hewawitarne, Pedris, Gomes, Peer Saibo, Pepin, Pinsii, Somasunderam, Jayaratna, Jayasinghe, Lukmanjee, Sulaiman, Ebert, Don Carolis, Puvalingam, de Vos, de Waas, Stork, Ramaswamy (Ramsay Road) and Lucas. We have also Gabo (Gabo's Lane), Mitcho, Hamza, Martie, Sameera, Eksamuttu.

The following streets have been re-named in recent years :—

1952-53		
<i>Ward</i>	<i>Old Street Name</i>	<i>New Street Name</i>
Wellawatte South	43rd Lane	Vivekananda Road
Wellawatte South	—	Inner Rajasinghe Road
Wellawatte South	44th Lane	Ramakrishna Road
Wellawatte South	44th Lane A	Ramakrishna Place
Wellawatte South	44th Lane B & C	Ramakrishna Avenue
Timbirigasyaya	Tannery Path	Kassapa Road
Timbirigasyaya	—	Sulaiman Terrace
Timbirigasyaya	—	Sulaiman Avenue
Maligakande	Floor's Passage	Zavia Mosque Road
Kotahena West	Santiago Street	Sri Gunananda Mawatha
Mutwal	—	Mill House Gardens

1953-54

<i>Ward</i>	<i>Old Street Name</i>	<i>New Street Name</i>
Maligakande Kuppiyawatte Grandpass	Paranawadiya Road	Dharmapala Mawatha
	Layard's Broadway (part)	Jetawana Road

1954-55

Timbirigasyaya	—	Kalinga Place
Cinnamon Gardens	—	Arunachalam Avenue
Madampitiya	Vine Street South	Sri Pannananda Mawatha
Kuppiyawatte	—	Vidyamandira Place
Bambalapitiya	32nd Lane	Charles Drive
Kotahena West	—	Keragala Avenue
Dematagoda	Cork Lane	Aramaya Passage
Dematagoda	—	Albion Place
Dematagoda	—	Abhaya Place

1955

Kollupitiya	—	Clifford Avenue
Kuppiyawatte	—	Campbell Avenue
St. Paul's & Kochchikade	Hill Street	Vivekananda Hill
Wellawatte South	43rd Lane 'A'	Vivekananda Avenue
Wellawatte South	—	Ramakrishna Terrace
Bambalapitiya	Ripon Road	Dharmaraja Mawatha
Wellawatte North	—	Harischandra Mawatha
Maradana, Aluthkade & New Bazaar	Skinner's Road South	Sri Sangaraja Mawatha
Dematagoda	—	Aramaya Place

1956

Cinnamon Gardens	Circular Road	F. R. Senanayake Mawatha
Cinnamon Gardens	Garden 109, Kynsey Road	Kynsey Terrace
Cinnamon Gardens	Garden 90, Horton Place	Horton Terrace
Maligakande	Paranawadiya Passage	Dharmapala Patu Mawatha
Kotahena East	Pansala Road	Paramananda Mawatha
Kotahena West	15th Lane	Sumithrarama Mawatha
Kotahena West	Ambalama Road	Jinananda Mawatha
Madampitiya & Grandpass	Bloemendhal	Arthur de Silva Mawatha

<i>Ward</i>	<i>Old Street Name</i>	<i>New Street Name</i>
Kochchikade & Kotahena West	Greet Street	Sangamitta Mawatha
Dematagoda	Cattle Mart Road	Baseline Avenue
Dematagoda	Cattle Mart Lane	Baseline Place
Dematagoda	Mart Place	Veluvana Place
Suduwella	Rudds Lane	Vinyalankara Mawatha
Kochchikade	Kochchikade Street	St. Anthony's Mawatha
Pettah	First Fishers Lane	First Rohine Lane
Pettah	Second Fisher Lane	Second Rohine Lane
Pettah Michos Lane	—	Mayuri Lane
Pettah	Kaffirs Lane	Kosala Lane
Pettah	Kafferman's Lane	Kirthi Lane
Maradana	Piachaud's Lane	Mohideen Masjid Road
Slave Island	Shorts Road	Kumaran Ratnam Road
Modera & Madampitiya	Daniels Road	Dhawala Sinharama Mawatha
Modera	Konggaha Place	Peiris Mawatha
Maligawatte	—	Mallikarama Mawatha
Kirillapone	Garden 39, Kirillapone Avenue	Somadevi Place
Kirillapone	Garden 57, Kirillapone Avenue	Atula Place

1957

Kirillapone	—	Mugalan Road
Kirillapone	—	Mahindra Place
Kirillapone	—	Gajaba Place
Kirillapone	—	Lakshman Place
Kirillapone	—	Mahawela Place
Kirillapone	—	Sena Square
Kirillapone	—	Suranimala Place
Kirillapone	—	Nandimitra Place
Kirillapone	—	Taxila Place
Kirillapone	—	Rajawatte Terrace
Kirillapone	—	Sangabo Place
Kirillapone	—	Balapokuna Place
Kirillapone	Part of Balahenmulla Lane	Andarawatte Road
Alutkade	2nd Lane	Abdul Majeed Street
Maradana & Maligawatte	Vincent Street	Maligawatte Jumma Masjid Road
Maligawatte	Maligawatte Road	Sri Saddharma Mawatha
Kollupitiya & Cinamon Gardens	Ingram Road	Sir Ernest de Silva Mawatha
	Flower Road	

1958

<i>Ward</i>	<i>Old Street Name</i>	<i>New Street Name</i>
Cinnamon Gardens	—	Flower Avenue
Timbirigasyaya	—	Jayaratne Avenue
Suduwella	Stanley Place	Piyadasa Sirisena Mawatha
Bambalapitiya	—	Nimalka Gardens
Kirillapone	—	Nugagahawatte
Maradana & Maligawatte)	Maligawatte Jumma Masjid Road	{ Maligawatte Road Maligawatte Jumma Masjid Road
Aluthkade	Silversmith Street	Bandaranaike Mawatha

1959

Timbirigasyaya	Greenlands Road	Isipatana Mawatha
Timbirigasyaya	—	Park Circus
Timbirigasyaya	—	Park Drive
Timbirigasyaya	—	Esther Place
Timbirigasyaya	—	Park Place
Maradana	Lockgate Lane	Sri Piyadasana Mawatha
Cinnamon Gardens	} Turret Road	Dharmapala Mawatha
Kollupitiya		
Hunupitiya		
Maradana	} Dharmapala Mawatha	Ananda Mawatha
Kuppiyawatte		
Bambalapitiya	—	Bagatelle Terrace

1960

Suduwella-Maradana	Forbes Road	Devanam Piyatissa Road
New Bazaar-Grandpass	Chapel Place	Kettarama Mawatha
Borella South	35th Lane	Castle Avenue
Timbirigasyaya South	G 17 Pathiba Road	Daniels Avenue

1961

Panchikawatte	Piachaud's Passage	Mohideen Masjid Lane
Kuppiawatte West	Dharmapala Patu Mawatha	Ananda Patu Mawatha
Kotahena South	Kuruwe Street	Hussainiya Street
Grandpass	Galkapanawatte Lane	Gemunu Patu Mawatha
Kirillapone	} Kirillapone- Nugegoda Old Road and Nuge- goda-Kirillapone Road	} Poorwarama Mawatha
Pamankade		
Kotahena South	} Siripina Lane	} Central Road
Kochchikade South		
Wellawatte South		
Pamankade	Dehiwala Canal Bank	Veluwanarama Road

<i>Ward</i>	<i>Old Street Name</i>	<i>New Street Name</i>
Wekande	} General's Lake Road	Sir James Peris Mawatha
Kollupitiya		34th Lane
Wellawatte South	} High Street	W. A. Silva Mawatha
Kirillapone		
Wellawatte North		
Pamankade	} Chekku Street	Sri Kathirashan Street
Kochchikade		
Commercial	} Church Road, Galle Face	Sir Mohamed Macan Markar Mawatha
Kollupitiya		
Kochchikade North	Kopiawatte Lane	Bodhirajarama Patu Mawatha
Suduwella	} Darley Road	T. B. Jayah Road
Maradana		
Commercial	Reclamation Road	N.H.M. Abdul Cader Road
Borella North	Arbuthnot Street	Chandraleka Mawatha
Cinnamon Gardens	} Kanatte Road	D. S. Senanayake Mawatha
Borella South		
Mattakkuliya	Pasbetal Road	Sri Wickrama Mawatha
Panchikawatte	} Drieberg's Avenue	Jayantha Weerasekera Mawatha
Maligawatte		
Kotahena East	} Skinners Road North	George R. de Silva Mawatha
Kotahena West		
Kotahena South		
Wellawatte South	Sri Wickrema Road	International Buddhist Centre Road
Timbirigasyaya North	} Narahenpitiya Road	Elvitigala Mawatha
Timbirigasyaya South		
Borella South	} Kettarama Mawatha (Part)	Vincent Square
New Bazaar		
Panchikawatte	—	Badiriya Lane
1962		
New Bazaar	} Armour Street	Sri Sumanatissa Mawatha
Kotahena South		
Aluthkade North		
Aluthmawatte		
New Bazaar		
Timbirigasyaya		
Timbirigasyaya		
Timbirigasyaya		
Timbirigasyaya	Church Lane	
Timbirigasyaya	Dr. Britto Babapulle Place	
Timbirigasyaya	Gunaratne Place	
Timbirigasyaya	Park Garden	
Timbirigasyaya	Park Avenue	
Timbirigasyaya	Esther Avenue	

<i>Ward</i>	<i>Old Street Name</i>	<i>New Street Name</i>
Timbirigasyaya		Goonetilleke Avenue
Timbirigasyaya		Goonetilleke Garden
Timbirigasyaya North	Training School Road	D. S. Fonseka Road
Kirillapone	Kirillapone—Narahenpita Road	Polhengoda Road
Grandpass	} Destructor Road	Maha Kumarage Road
New Bazaar		
Mahawatte		
Commercial	} Parsons Road	Chittampalam Gardiner, Mawatha
Hunupitiya		
Maligakande	Dematagoda Road	Sri Vajiragnana Mawatha
Cinnamon Gardens	—	Rajapakse Mawatha
Narahenpita	} Govt. Dairy Road	Milk Board Road
Kirula		
Kirillapone		
		Kalinga Mawatha

The Municipal Councils Ordinance provides that the Council shall determine the name by which any street shall be known, and may at any time alter the name of any street. Before any private street is given a name or before the name of any private street is altered, the Council causes notice of the proposed name to be posted at either end of such street, and to be given to the owners of the land abutting such street ; and any such owner may, within fifteen days of the posting of the notice or the date on which the notice is given, whichever is later, object to the proposed name, by sending to the Council a written statement containing the grounds on which his objections are based. After considering the objections, if any, the Council will determine the name by which such private street shall be known.

Some years ago a lane recently " taken over " wanted a name. The Chairman of the Council consulted the residents. One said that he owned all the land in the street and wanted it to be Perera Lane. Another, de Silva, said that Perera was an undesirable person and wanted it to be called de Silva Lane. The Chairman gave it a good Aryan name which ran into three words so that senders of telegrams had to pay for three words instead of one. Temple Lane was suggested for a street which had a temple in it. But there were already four Temple Lanes. The roads engineer (a Ceylonese) suggested a typical English name. When he was asked the origin of the name, he said that it was the name of the road in Bloomsbury (Gower Street ?) in which he had ' digs ' when studying in England. It was approved. General Lake's Road was named after a General called Lake who lived in Braybrooke Lodge. It was not named after the Lake along which it runs.

The Roads

COLOMBO has about 200 miles of classified public roads, including 22 miles of trunk roads. The Commission of 1924 which considered the financial relations between the Government and the Council said that it would be necessary to classify trunk roads so as to ascertain what part of the financial burden should be fairly borne by the Government.

“ Obviously, a road carrying a large amount of through traffic combined with purely local traffic should not be maintained wholly at the expense of a local authority ”, said the Commission.

“ On the other hand, roads which carry purely local traffic in the main, also carry as a rule some through traffic. Roads leading to Railway Stations and Harbours from a through traffic road are obviously not carrying purely local traffic. The amount of traffic on a road is a matter to be considered, but the traffic may be heavy and yet of a purely local nature as in the case of many Colombo streets, which should not be classified as trunk roads merely because the traffic thereon is heavier than that on many rural through roads.

It seems to us that if the Government is to classify as trunk roads those which carry through traffic mainly and thereafter to bear the whole cost of the same even though theoretically local authorities should bear part of the cost, this fact should be borne in mind in making the classification. On the other hand, the fact should not be forgotten that the local authorities are to bear the full cost of other main and minor roads, even though they carry some through traffic.

We would define a trunk road to be "an important public road mainly carrying through traffic and leading from or through one large centre of population or industry to or through another, or leading from such a road to a Railway Station or Wharf."

We put this forward as a guide to classification rather than as an exact definition ; and all things considered, we recommend that the classification should be left in the hands of the Director of Public Works. We surmise that the process of classification may in a few instances result in the transfer of roads from the Government to local authorities, but we have little doubt that it will result in relieving many Road Committees of roads now in their charge. . . .

"Where a local authority maintains a trunk thoroughfare on behalf of and at the expense of the Government, expenditure should be approved beforehand by the Government. Maintenance should include the cost of improvements, such as widening. A road must be maintained to take the traffic it has to carry and at certain stages, as traffic increases, it cannot be economically or efficiently maintained unless it is widened. Widening is as essential at times as is the superseding of a gravel by a metal surface as traffic increases, or the superseding of metal by a tar macadam, asphalt, or paved surface."

The Municipal Engineer's Department has always been engaged in widening and improving roads, and when we recall the state of the roads sixty years ago, it has to be admitted that the achievement up to date is impressive. Mr. N. M. Ingram, who joined the Engineer's Department in 1905 recalled, in a paper he presented to the Engineering Association of Ceylon, what the roads were like when he first entered the Council's service :

"The most imposing building in the Fort was probably the Victoria arcade. There were no five storey buildings such as Harrison & Crosfields, Lloyds Building, the National Mutual, the Hong Kong and Imperial Banks, the new Grand Oriental Hotel, and so on. There was no Central Telegraph Office or Public Works Department Head Office in lower Chatham street. Messrs. Cargills present building was in course of erection and the greater part of one side of Prince street was taken up by the Scots Kirk and its compound.

"The area now occupied by the canal joining the lake to the harbour and by the Customs Wharf alongside was covered by what was very politely named the 'Lotus Pond' which had however long ceased to allow anything of the kind to grow, and was even then merely a stagnant and not inoffensive pool. The area now covered by the Rice Stores or Chalmers Granaries was an open space called the Racquet court for the reason that although the enclosure was rectangular, it had a drive in from Main street round a small oval, which was then the cricket ground of the famous Colts Club. This drive was more or less in the shape of the outline of a tennis racquet. In one corner of the Racquet court was a small building which was then the Headquarters of the Young Men's Christian

Association. In the Pettah and Maradana and all to the north of these areas the general change of aspect as regards buildings is not striking. But in the southern half of the city, the western or sea side of Steuart place, Kollupitiya, was then nearly all one large bare open space with a very few coconuts on it, and the only areas built up to any extent were what was then regarded as the Cinnamon Gardens proper (roughly the area covered by Flower road, Turret road, Ward place, Kynsey road, Gregory's road, Maitland crescent), both sides of the Galle road, and between the Galle road and the sea, but only as far south as Wellawatta Station, also what was known as Wellawatta High Street and of course Havelock town. The rest consisted of coconut gardens and grass fields with odd houses here and there. There was, for instance, no Government town off Buller's road, and Alfred House was one vast garden; there was nothing in Havelock road between Laurie's and Vajira roads, the west side being a rubber plantation, and Wellawatta south of the station was almost uninhabited. The two storey bungalow was then practically unknown.

“ During early morning visits of inspection round the outskirts of the residential areas it was by no means startling to meet and exchange greetings with a passing cobra.

“ Bullock carts, private horse carriages, and private and hiring rickshaws monopolized our roads, and it was a very much more picturesque scene to watch the influx and exit into and from the Fort with quite a good display of horse flesh and horsekeepers and rickshaw coolies in gay and smart get up. In this respect we have certainly, though quite unavoidably, gone backwards, for processions of cars and lorries are not exactly pleasing to the eye. If the writer's memory is not at fault there were when he arrived only two small steam cars in the Island, one of which frequently had to run on tyres stuffed with coir fibre when spare tubes were not available.

“ Two thirds of the road mileage was then surfaced with red gravel which was to be found even in the Fort and Pettah. Practically the whole of the residential area was served with gravel roads, even Turret road for example. There were no set tracks for carts and no set paved roads, no bituminous carpets, and no surface painting. Roads were mainly mud or dust for which there was no alleviation save by the totally inadequate bullock water cart. The city was plagued with local dust storms both red and white for which there was then no remedy. This caused endless complaint and repeated reference in the Chairman's Administration Report. The Galle Face was a good place to watch the swirling dust clouds moving rather like water spouts, red on the sea side drive and white on the Centre Road.

“ It is impossible for those who did not experience it to have any conception of the discomfort and damage then suffered from dust. Road surfaces were then not maintained in good order. It was impossible under the then conditions to do so.

“ The only roads with what could be described as adequate width of reservation were a few in the Fort, such as Queen, York, and Chatham streets, with Union place and certain reservations set out by the Crown long ago in the Cinnamon Gardens area such as Flower road, Ward place, Horton place, Buller’s road.

“ Union place had only been made up to a width of about 16 feet between rows of tulip trees and had no footways.

“ Norris road was then more or less a narrow lane ; McCallum road had not been dreamt of ; the Parsons road exit from the Fort was over a narrow congested level crossing nearly always closed at the busiest hours, and then by way of Kew road, which was then all as narrow and tortuous as the part near the Slave Island Police Station is now. This is now a by-road. Short’s road did not exist ; Darley road was little more than 20 feet wide; Panchikawatta and Skinner’s roads were $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles of about 16 feet carriageway lined with Madras thorn trees. Prince of Wales avenue did not exist, and the only exit to traffic to Kandy, Negombo, &c., was along the Grandpass tram route, entirely occupied by double tram lines. The central bus stand between Gasworks and Fifth Cross streets was then the Municipal Stores and Workshops. Thurstan and Havelock roads and the Galle road were as narrow as the rest.

“ The lake then covered an area of 416 acres as compared with 270 now. The Beira lake possessed an island used by dhobys and had a steam ferry across it. It then stretched up to the edge of a single line of railway along the edge of the old Norris road. The old Main Line was in what is now the road. This reminds one that the then terminus station was just opposite the Technical College and that the present Maradana and Fort stations did not exist. The stench from the lake was at times inconceivable in these days. It was in fact just a cesspool. It caused the sudden closure and abandonment of the then Royal College in Norris road. Lake flies were so bad that it was impossible to travel along roads round or near the lake at dusk.

“ There was no flood protection scheme and large areas suffered yearly from river inundation and its dangers and discomforts and from the nuisance and stench following on the receding of the flood water.”

Some of the trunk roads have an early history. For example, we find Mr. R. Skelton, Municipal Engineer, writing to the Chairman of the Council on 18th February 1907, asking for “a definite project for the widening, improvement and extension of Maradana Road” and recommending “a uniform width throughout of 100 feet”. Even after fifty years, the work goes on. Mr. Skelton was a man of vision and had his recommendations been accepted, the road system of Colombo would today be more suited to the demands made on it. It is interesting to know that his successor, Mr. N. M. Ingram was writing in September 1923 : “I am directed by the Chairman, Municipal Council to inform you that it will in my opinion be many years (if ever) before the Council would undertake the widening of this portion of Maradana”. Ultimately all trunk roads get widened even if delays add vastly to the cost.

Prince of Wales Avenue was formerly a road called Mansergh Avenue, named after the builder of the Colombo drainage scheme. In January 1922, the Municipal Engineer submitted to the Chairman an estimate for Rs. 70,000 for making it a fast traffic road only. It was renamed 'Prince of Wales Avenue' when Edward Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII and Duke of Windsor) inaugurated it.

Havelock Road was taken over as a trunk road in response to a resolution by the Municipal Council passed in July 1938.

The result of an enlightened policy of road widening is obvious but experts think that with better planning, more could have been achieved. Mr. R. Skelton had recommended that Galle Road should be 100 feet wide but the unofficial members thought at the time that this would be an unnecessary extravagance.

Mr. Holliday thought that although there are several fine roads within the city's limits, generally roads in Colombo had been planned irrespective of a comprehensive traffic system.

With the breaking up of large gardens there are always a number of private roads. The Council's policy has been to take them over when they are sufficiently developed upon the frontage owners paying certain dues.

Transport

THE first mail coach in Asia began to run from Colombo to Kandy in 1832. The first train left Colombo in 1865, a hundred years ago. The first rickshaw was imported to Colombo by Messrs. Whittall & Co. in 1883. The Electric Tramways were opened for traffic in Colombo on the 13th January 1900 by Messrs. Boustead Brothers. The first motor car was imported to Ceylon by Mr. E. G. Money in 1902. And the first aeroplane landed at Ratmalana in 1935.

What was the mode of travel in Colombo in early British times and before? Those who lived in town hardly needed a vehicle because distances were short, but there were doubtless bullock-drawn hackeries, racing carts, gharries and travelling carts of various sizes and degrees of comfort.

The Dutch, according to Schweitzer, had a fine stable full of Persian horses. In British times, those who could afford it were carried in palanquins, or drove in curricles. The palanquin was like the Roman litter, but was covered. Percival says that it was essential for a European of position to own a palanquin, which meant thirteen bearers costing £200 a year. The thirteenth acted as a cook to the rest, and carried the cooking apparatus. Before the roads were fit for wheeled traffic, long journeys were made in palanquins. Percival Acland Dyke, the Government Agent who was known as the rajah of the North, always travelled in a palanquin.

When Governor Sir Robert Brownrigg travelled he used a tom-john or Indian palanquin. "Brownrigg's procession was led by a tusked elephant with swinging bells and an escort of mounted dragoons; he and his wife were borne on tom-johns—comfortable arm-chairs with hoods, each with four bearers; these were much cooler than the heavy palanquins, which were impossible on the track, with the further advantage that the passenger could observe the surrounding country by drawing back the front and side curtains."

A curricule was a fashionable two-horsed, two-wheeled carriage. There were also bandies and the 'one-horse chaise'. The bandy of the period (1814-23) was a very stiff and straight-backed conveyance containing two seats for people facing ahead at the back, with a box for the driver. There was a 'boot' or 'well' enabling the occupants to put their feet forward under the driver's seat.

Governor North had a coach and six. Bishop Heber and his wife had, when they were in Ceylon, the use of Archdeacon Glennie's 'sociable' and also Governor Barnes' carriage "drawn by four beautiful English horses". Mrs. Heber noted in 1826: "Where coachmen are kept they are invariably Europeans, who do not appear to suffer from the sun; the Sinhalese have not the slightest idea of driving, and know very little about a horse, and the 'horse-keeper', as the syce is here called as well as in Bombay, is invariably from the coast. The persons who have not European coachmen have the horses of their palanquin carriages and 'bandies' or gigs led by these men, and the pace at which they run is surprising. Gigs and hackeries all go here by the generic name of 'bandy'. The Calcutta 'caranchie' and the Bombay 'shigrum' are alike unknown". The bullock carts included hackeries and travelling carts which were drawn by a pair of sleek white bulls with long horns, usually imported from India.

In 1856 Henry Ward reported to the Secretary of State that a railway was "an absolute necessity". The Legislative Council passed a resolution in July of that year authorising the Government to guarantee the interest on a loan of £ 800,000 to the Ceylon Railway Company, a private concern. Work was started in 1858 and the first sod of the Colombo terminal was turned by Sir Henry Ward amidst much jubilation, the festivities costing something like £ 2,000.

The Company fell down on the job, and a contract was awarded to Favielle, a London firm. From the start the railway was profitable and proved to be an increasing source of revenue. Indeed, it used to be called the best-paying railway in the world.

The train from Colombo to Ambepussa started in 1865 and to Kandy in 1867. In his address to the Legislative Council on 12th December 1873, Sir William Gregory, the Governor, said that for some time he had contemplated the construction of a line from Colombo to Kalutara as offering great advantages for the improvement of rich and prosperous districts. The route of the railway as marked out by the surveyors ran along the sea beach at Kollupitiya while the Government, with a view to sparing valuable private property and avoiding interfering with existing roads, planned to take the route through the Galle Face.

This led to strong public protests. Messrs. R. V. Dunlop, T. Helmer, H. Cross Buchanan and David Wilson formed themselves into a deputation "in the name of the ladies and children of Colombo" and waited on the Governor on 24th February 1875. They reminded him that "the Galle Face was specially dedicated to the Ladies and Children of Colombo by Sir Henry Ward" and refused to allow it "to be desecrated and rendered unsafe by the snorting and rattling and smoking vapours of a railway train".

The railway from Colombo to Moratuwa was opened on 1st March 1877 and the extension to Kalutara was completed on 22nd September 1879. The construction of the narrow gauge railway from Colombo to the Kelani Valley was started in 1899.

In 1886 a system of tramways for the city of Colombo was on the point of being started but was abandoned. But in 1892 the Colombo Municipal Council called for tenders for the construction of tramways in the city. Nothing happened till 1895 when a contract was signed with Messrs. Boustead Brothers. The Colombo Electric Tramways were opened for traffic on the 13th January 1900, the Grandpass route being completed about six weeks before the Maradana route. During the last month of the year, the number of passengers carried on both routes was 14,529 daily. Only one fatal accident occurred, the primary cause of which was the breaking of a section insulator which allowed the trolley wire to drop so as to be within reach of passengers. A Commission was appointed to investigate the circumstances in which the accident occurred and to consider what should be done to prevent similar accidents in the future.

The tramways became the property of the Municipal Council as from 1st September 1944 on the payment of Rs. 3,663,443 to Boustead Brothers, which was the amount settled upon by the umpire after an arbitration in which both the Council and the firm were represented. Rs. 2,203,630 were awarded for tangible assets and Rs. 820,160 for goodwill. In 1947 the revenue from the tramways was Rs. 2,203,630 and working cost Rs. 1,609,793, leaving a gross excess of Rs. 610,658. Colombo was the first city in south Asia to own a tramway. In the fifties the Council changed over to a trolley service to prevent congestion on the crowded roads. In 1951 it passed a resolution asking the Government to amend the Motor Traffic Ordinance so as to restore to the Council the legal right to maintain a trolley bus service in the City as the Council had already committed itself to an expenditure of Rs. 5 million for the purchase of trolleys. But permission was given to run trolleys only on the tram routes, and in no other part of the City.

The Council's transport system thereafter began to show a chronic deficit. The Municipal Commissioner gave the following reasons for the loss on working the trolleys : the high tariff charges made by the Government for traction, which had been increased from 6½ cents to 10 cents ; restriction of the routes ; misappropriation by conductors ; and the withdrawal by the Government of the cost of living allowances to staff which had previously been paid by the Government. In 1959 the Commissioner pointed out that the Council had in 1944 undertaken a colossal liability when it replaced the obsolescent trams with trolleys on the understanding that the Government will permit their operation in every part of the city. But to no avail.

The Council decided to close the trolley bus service with effect from 1st January 1965.

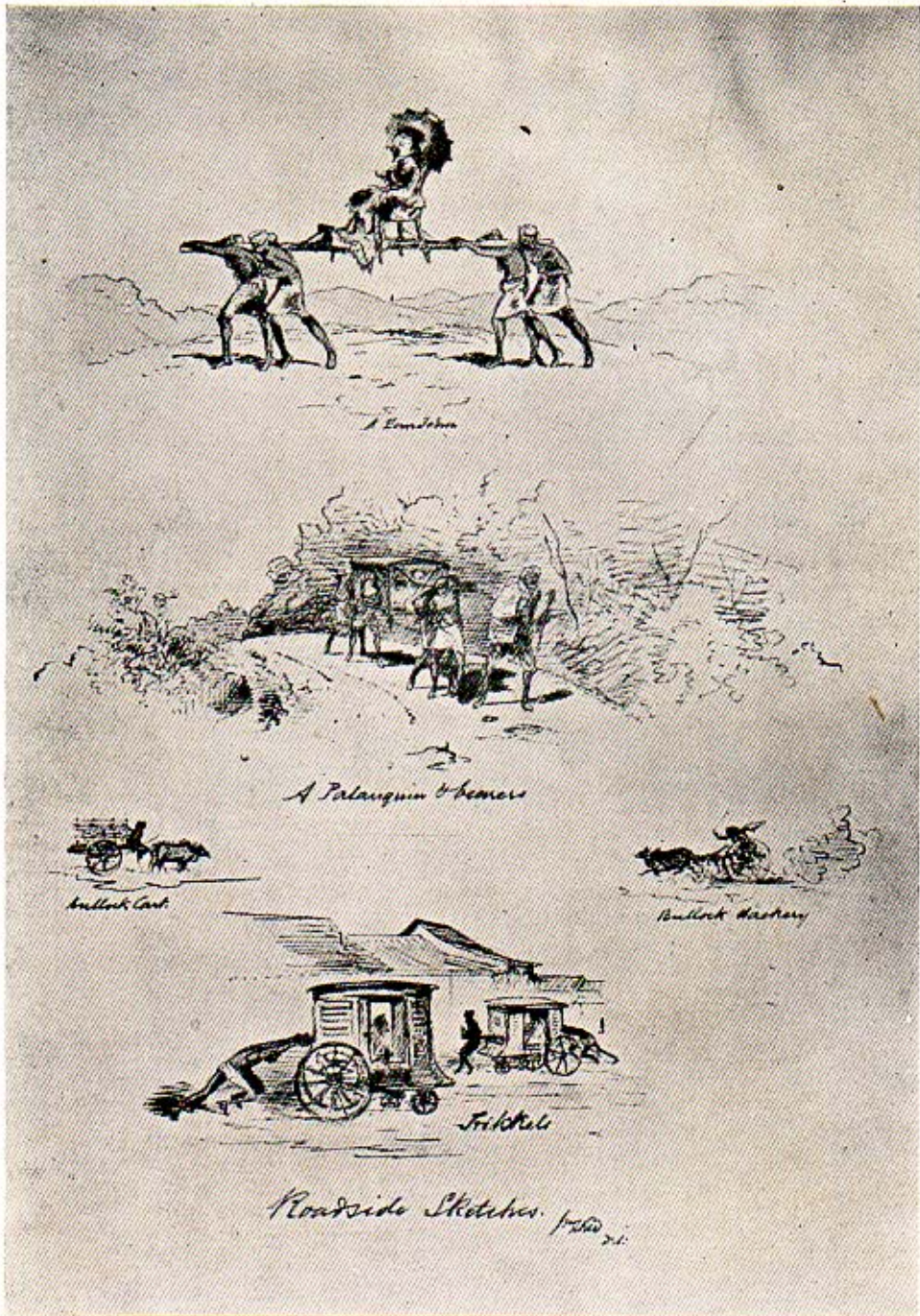
Water

COLOMBO gets a supply of thirty million gallons of water daily from three sources and through five trunk mains. The Labugama reservoir, which is situated 28 miles from the city, has a catchment area of 2,500 acres and is formed by impounding the Wak Oya, a tributary of the Kelani River. The adjoining catchment of Kalatuwawa has an area of 3,320 acres, rising to an altitude of a thousand feet above sea level. The Kelani River has been tapped by a pumping scheme to augment the supplies from the gravitational schemes and this will now be a permanent feature of the water supply which also helps to serve the needs of the suburbs of the city.

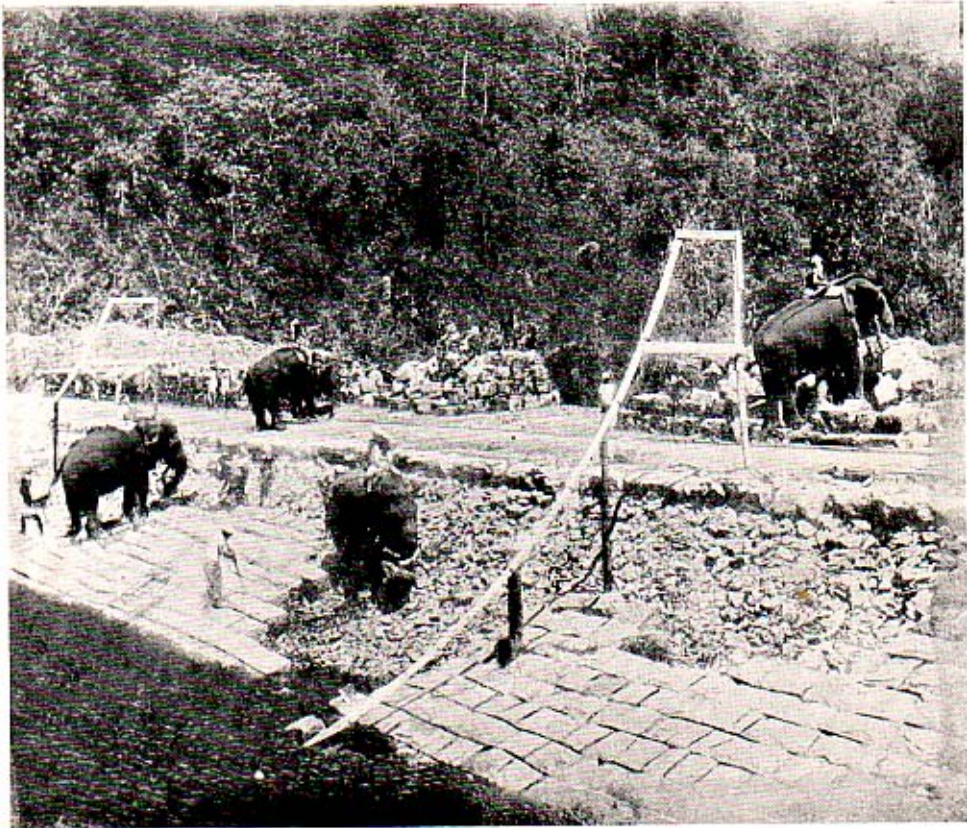
One of the Select Committees appointed during the first year of the life of the Colombo Municipal Council was requested to examine ways and means of providing water and drainage to the city. Water had up to that time, and until the first gravitation scheme was begun in 1881, come out of wells ; and as the greater part of Colombo is low-lying and close to the sea, the supply of drinking water was never satisfactory.

Robert Percival, writing in 1804, says that behind the Dutch Government House, part of which is the present St. Peter's Church, was "an excellent garden, originally intended for a tank or reservoir, in the event of a siege, for though every house has a well plentifully supplied with water through the whole year, yet it is of a brackish quality, unfit to drink. On this account the Europeans belonging both to the civil and military establishment, are supplied with water from springs about a mile from the fort. It is brought by means of bullocks in leathern bags, called here puckally bags, a certain number of which is attached to every regiment and garrison in India. Black fellows, called puckally boys,

Transport



Before the Bull-dozers



Labugama Reservoir—Elephants transporting rocks for the building of the dam across the Wak Oya for the Colombo Water Scheme in 1882

Old Colombo



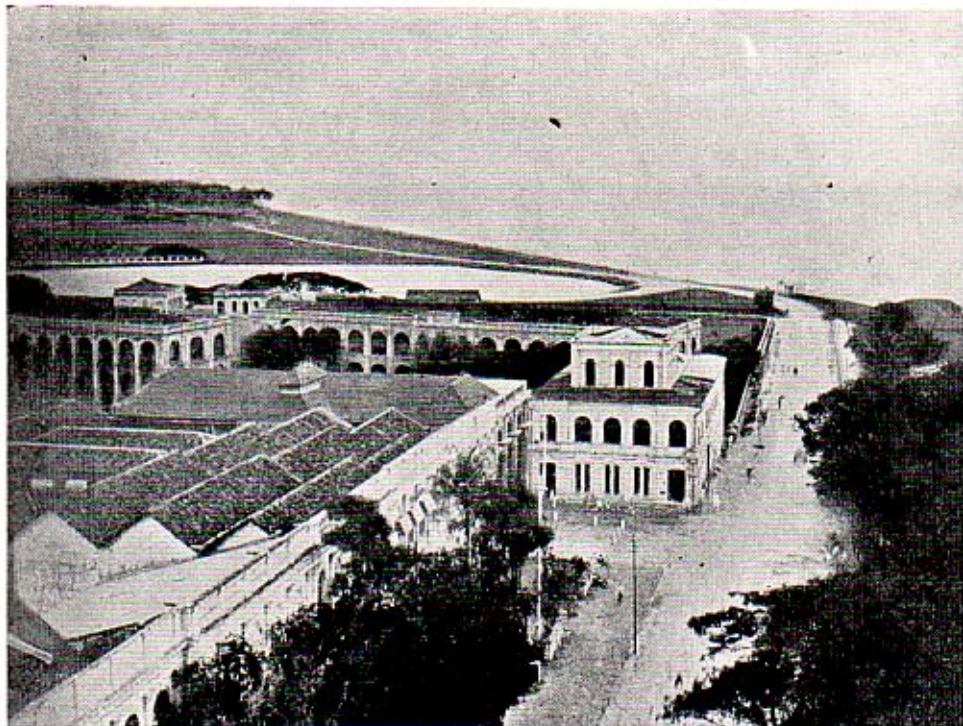
York Street, Fort, Colombo, at the beginning of the century

The Port



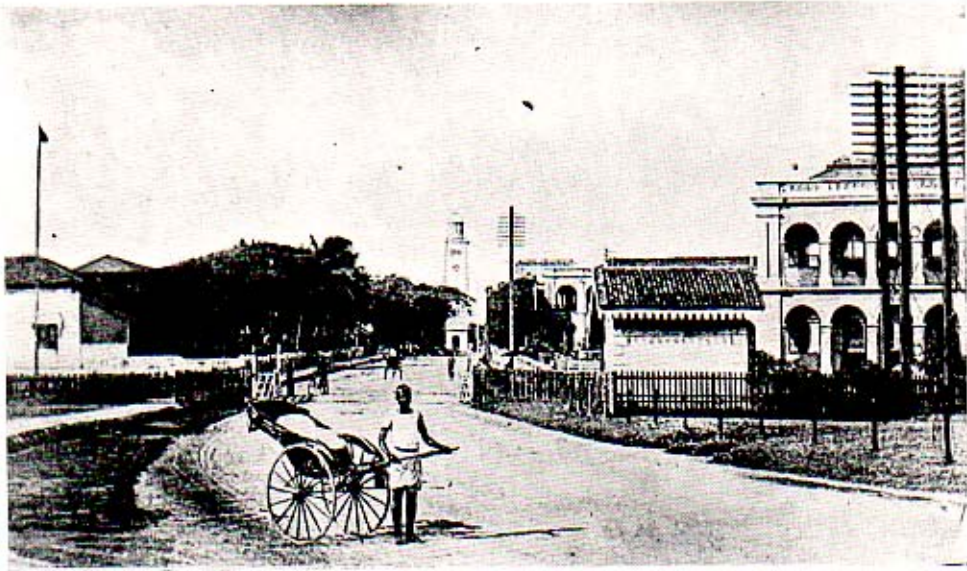
Port of Colombo : The old jetty and the wharves

Sixty years ago



A view of old Colombo, in 1905. The building in the right foreground has been replaced by Ceylinco House. The Barracks are seen in the background

Old Colombo



Queen Street (south) at the beginning of the century with the Barracks on the right

New Colombo



Queen Street South (today). The Central Bank on the left and Ceylinco House on the right with the Barracks in the foreground

