

in a room adjoining us was a lady with her child. One evening she was trying to sing it to sleep, the thin partitions separating the rooms enabling us to hear her very distinctly. Her song was, of course, the common Spanish lullaby; but the baby was apparently wakeful, and she repeated twenty or thirty times the same stanza—

"A-ro-ró mi niño,
A-ro-ró mi sol," &c.

How tired we were of listening to her! And she was probably no less weary of the repetition, for by-and-by she varied it thus—

"A-ro-ró ro ró ro,
A-ro-ró ro ró," &c.

The tiresome *A-ro-ró* turned at length into a *Tra-la-la* just as tiresome; then followed the words of the first stanza once more; then a repetition of all the wearisome changes on them.

"This lady," exclaimed my husband, "is evidently paying the penalty of the indolence or stupidity which prevented her getting a dozen or twenty stanzas by heart, for the constant repetition of that one stanza must be just as irksome to her as it is to us. But had she taken the pains to commit several stanzas to memory, however familiar with them she might be, some slight mental exertion would be requisite to recall them, in their proper order, as she sung. Again, each stanza would bring up its little picture or fancy to her mind, contributing to her amusement, and preventing that lassitude she must now experience to a painful degree.

"I really think," said he in conclusion, "a lullaby should have as many verses as a ballad, and, for the

singer's sake, that it would be all the better were it as long as 'Chevy Chase.'"

There is another reason for several stanzas being known, on which my husband did not touch. It is that they will be sung with ease, and continuously, as they should be sung to induce drowsiness; whereas when but a line or detached stanza is here and there remembered, there will be breaks, long pauses, and sudden changes of intonation; and this way of singing will put sleep to flight, for it irritates the baby, or fills his mind with curiosity to know what is going to follow.

But my husband was wrong when he said a lullaby should be as long as "Chevy Chase;" to be perfect it must not have more than eight to a dozen stanzas. And let me remark in passing that the stanzas should be very short, like mine, for then but a brief pause is made after each one. Long stanzas involve long unexpected breaks, and startle an infant like a sudden inflection. Any memory can retain eight or ten stanzas, and if the babe is not sleeping when they are finished, they can be repeated without a diminution of interest in them on the singer's part. But if there are many stanzas, they will never be all got by heart, consequently the singer will not take the same pleasure in singing them; moreover, the mind is never so tenacious of fragments as of an entire piece, if there is any unity in it.

One more hint and then I have done. There can never be too many expressions of endearment in a lullaby; a mother delights supremely in lavishing them on her babe, and she is never weary of repeating them.

MAUD MERRYWEATHER.

A CITY OF THE DEAD.



MORE than two hundred years before the first Roman galley touched the sandy beach of Britain — when the existence of such an island as Albion was doubted by the geographers of Greece and Rome — when the secret of the Phenicians' trade in tin was well kept, because they carried the prized metal, the skins, and slaves they obtained from our woad-painted

ancestors, across Gaul for shipment at Marseilles—at the period when the history of Britain was as hazy as the mists and fogs encircling its stormy shores, there was a bright and sunny island in Eastern waters, clad in the verdure of eternal spring, known in later years

to the traders of imperial Rome as "the utmost Indian Isle Taprobane," in the native chronicles as Lanka, and in modern times as Ceylon, the land of cinnamon and pearls.

When British kings dwelt in huts of mud, the sovereign of Lanka kept regal state in towering palace and temple, for in those early days royalty and the priesthood were often found beneath one common roof. Commerce was all but unknown to the people, who looked to the fruits of the earth, to their flocks and herds, as their sole means of support and enrichment. At long and rare intervals, some Arab trader, more daring than his fellows, appeared upon the northern coasts from the Red Sea shores, to traffic in the few things produced within the island, that might attract attention in the bazaars of Rome, such for instance as ivory, pearls, precious stones, and peacocks. Money was scarcely known to the Sinhalese of that period, and all trade was carried on by barter, all services paid for in grain. Yet the country was rich in the fruit of the people's toil, and the monarch, sole owner of the soil, held in that right the key of real wealth, the claim to his subjects' labour. If was thus that, without the use of coin, in the absence of any royal treasury,

the sovereign of the land had reared for himself and the priesthood a city of palaces and temples of vast extent, conceived in exquisite taste, and executed with such consummate skill and admirable finish as to be incapable of reproduction in later times.

The capital of Ceylon of that remote age is to-day a city of the dead. Anarajahpoora exists but in ruins; for although there is a small station of the same name, in which are a few officers of the Ceylon Government, it is a mere collection of modern buildings of small extent, at a short distance from the site of the ancient city. The actual extent of the first capital of Lanka is not easily determined. A thousand years of ruin have obliterated a thousand years of splendour. Where the king's daughters once walked in royal flower-gardens, bright with many blossoms, and sweet with the breath of orchids, is to be seen a forest growth of many centuries, a safe refuge and shelter for the elephant, the leopard, and the bear. Beyond the long miles of shattered cornices and fallen pillars, outside the wilderness of ruined palaces, lie forest tracts submerged in foetid, stagnant water, once held back by earthen embankments full twenty miles in length, now the haunt of the crocodile and the bittern.

The vast irrigation works of Ceylon are a marvel even in their decay. So stupendous were some of those in the vicinity of Anarajahpoora, that they must have absorbed the labour of a million Sinhalese for many years in succession. The storage of such a vast body of water was no doubt necessitated by the requirements of a dense population for drinking and bathing—wants far more urgent in a tropical than in a temperate climate. The poorest among an Eastern people is bound to attend to his ablutions once daily at least; whilst the extensive public and royal gardens must have needed a large supply of water to maintain them through the rainless months of the hot season. But, beyond all this, there were the far-stretching tracts of rice-land, requiring flooding more than once during their cultivation, without which their crops would languish and die.

Within the ancient limits of the city the forest growth has been cleared away by the Government, sufficient to admit of a partial exploration of the principal buildings; some of these have been carefully examined and photographed, the limits of the city have been nearly defined, a plan of the ground committed to paper; and with the results of the exploration now being carried on, a tolerably accurate conclusion will no doubt be arrived at as to the contents and character of that portion occupied by the king and the priesthood. Of the larger sections in which dwelt the people, no vestige remains. None but king or priest were permitted the use of stone or brick in the construction of their dwellings. The shops and houses of the populace, whatever their rank or office, were of sun-dried mud and thatch, materials which rapidly fell to decay when once neglected, and which the rains of but one monsoon would suffice to convert into a heap of dust. Of the size of some of the Buddhist monasteries we may form a just estimate, not merely by their remains, but by the stone inscriptions,

some of which furnish details of their establishments amounting in certain instances to five or six thousand persons. These priestly establishments were, apart from the temples, often of considerable magnitude, and richly ornamented, besides which were the dagobas, bell-shaped structures erected over some relic of the founder of their religion, and usually, though not necessarily, near a temple dedicated to Buddha. Some of these relic-shrines were of gigantic proportions, constructed entirely of bricks so hard and durable as often to defy the strokes of the sharpest tool. One of these, according to native chronicles, occupied a period of twenty years in its construction, consuming in the formation of its lowest course, upwards of a hundred millions of bricks, a number which modern calculations have shown to be tolerably accurate.

In this city are still to be seen the remains of what is no doubt the oldest structure in India. Thuparama Dagoba was constructed upwards of three centuries before the Christian era, by King Devenipiatissa, to whose pious zeal the capital was indebted for some of its more prominent buildings. It is insignificant in size compared with other dagobas in the vicinity, one of which in its original state stood upwards of four hundred feet high, whilst this one measured not more than seventy feet from base to summit. These structures must have been objects of considerable beauty in their original state, towering high above surrounding buildings or the loftiest trees, richly ornamented, covered to the summit with snow-white lime, and surmounted by a golden ball. One of those dagobas, glittering in the bright sunshine of a tropical noon, cannot but have filled the beholder with admiration.

The temples set apart for the devotions of pious-minded Buddhists were executed with consummate skill; the shrines, the vestibule, the approaches—nay, even the doorsteps, were all more or less elaborately carved in stone, with a degree of skill that defies all attempts at imitation. One or more gigantic figures of Buddha were to be found within, sedant or reclining; whilst outside, the statue, forty feet in height, was usually in the attitude of exhortation. Along both the inner and outer walls of these temples were frescoes in brilliant colours, describing, by life-size figures, the chief incidents in the career of the great teacher, and often of passages in the Malabar invasion of Ceylon.

It was in Anarajahpoora that the famous tooth-relic of Buddha was first enshrined on its arrival from India, whence it was brought with all the pomp of an Oriental pageant. It is at Anarajahpoora that still may be seen the original Bo-tree brought from the parent stock long since disappeared, beneath the shade of which Gotama is said to have attained his Buddhahood, by dint of years of meditation and prayer. This venerable and venerated tree is now upwards of two thousand years old, and is without doubt the oldest tree in the world of which there is any authentic record. Strictly guarded by a bevy of priests, and surrounded by a lofty wall to keep away sacrilegious intruders, none but a few may approach, and these dare not lay a finger on it. Not a fallen leaf is allowed

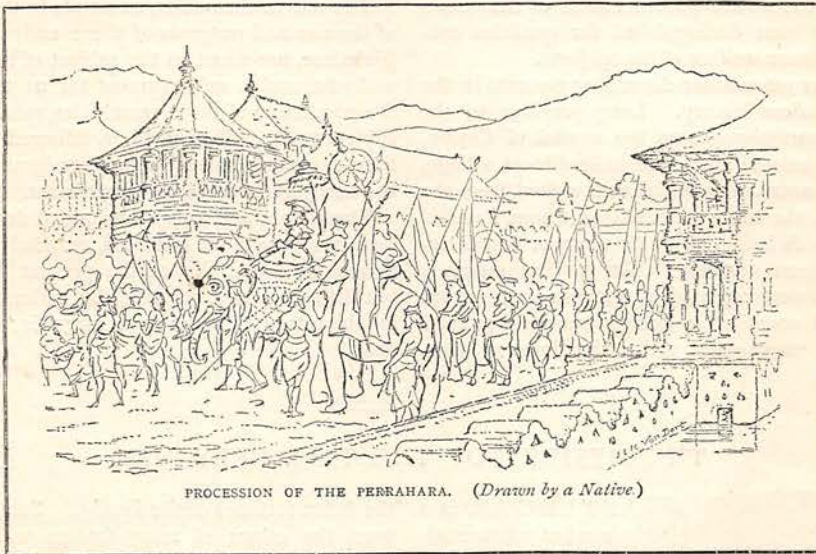
to lie idly beneath its branches—each one is carefully treasured and bestowed on pilgrims who visit it from all parts of the island, with offerings which they consider well bartered for a single withered twig or leaf. The custody and care of this most ancient tree is vested in the direct descendants of the same parents who guarded it two thousand years ago from Nepal to Ceylon; and there can be no doubt that this humble Sinhalese family is the most ancient in the world.

A glance at the ruins of the Brazen Palace, with its thousand pillars of stone, and its nine storeys of state rooms, reception halls, refectories, dormitories, and private apartments—a stroll up the avenue of lofty trees which mark with many a fallen column and shattered doorway the site of the once royal road along which the king's chariot drove in state on great festival days, and the traveller may picture to himself something

the light of myriad torches and burning braziers was reflected on the waters of the lake, paling the soft moonbeams.

In keeping with the social customs of the people from the earliest times, no females took part in these observances, save as spectators. One wing of the royal palace was specially set apart for the use of the queen and the ladies of her court, whence, unseen, they might look out and witness the splendid spectacle presented by this and other festivals.

Eastern fête-days are not marked by pageants alone—the temples are busy within and without. At day-dawn the shrill pipe and the sonorous drum give notice to the world without, that the priesthood within the temple-gates are up and busy at their early orisons. From entry to corridor, from courtyard to shrine-room, the busy hum of temple-followers re-



PROCESSION OF THE PERRAHARA. (Drawn by a Native)

of the ancient glory of this "city of the dead." The chief religious fête-days were those of the "Perrahara," observed at the full moon in August, on which occasion the "Dalada," or tooth-relic of Buddha, was carried in great pomp through the city to the waters of the lake, and back to the Dalada Maligawa, or Temple of the Tooth, where it was guarded with religious care. Pilgrims from long distances came to be present at this national holiday, when a hundred temple elephants marched in grand and gaudy array, with long files of native chieftains in their curious muslin robes, and still more curious hats of white and gold embroidery, with trains of temple-dancers, jugglers, musicians, and standard-bearers. Marching through the city after nightfall, past the king's palace, and down the two-mile avenue of stately houses, and past the thronged bazaars, the public gardens, and so on by the city baths, and the great gold-tipped dagoba, and round the banks of the far-spreading lake, this long procession must have formed a dazzling and attractive spectacle to the millions of Buddhist lookers-on, as

sounds, all eager to show their pious zeal and skill in garlanding the walls, the pillars, the doorways, the shrines, with floral devices rich in tropical hues and fragrant perfumes, and woven and interlaced with such delicate taste as to give the place the appearance of a fairy bower.

At evening time, as the long streaming procession winds its slow way through leafy avenues, and down thickly thronged bazaars, beneath these bright trophy-arches, every foot of ground packed densely with the people dressed in their holiday attire, the scene is such as to be long remembered. Not until the early streaks of daylight struggle upwards from the hills beyond, do the last holiday-makers struggle away to snatch a little hasty slumber.

The history of the kingly race whose capital we have endeavoured to describe, was not one of such peaceful prosperity as the national character might have led a reader to expect. It was not all ploughing and sowing and Buddhist holiday. Much of those annals were written in blood, and the long reigns of

pious and just rulers were too frequently followed by violent convulsions, the fruit of domestic feuds ending in murder or suicide. During a period of nearly a thousand years, there were upwards of ninety occupants of the throne in Anarajahpoora; of these twenty-nine were murdered, eight were simply deposed, whilst five committed suicide. The explanation of much of this may be found in social customs of the Sinhalese, which permitted not only a plurality of wives, but a plurality of husbands. The jealousies and heartburnings consequent on this state of things, the rivalries of various families in their aspirations after power and fortune, are not difficult to understand under such circumstances. The dagger, the poisoned cup, the block, or the rope too frequently played a conspicuous part in the domestic history of the sovereigns of Ceylon, either before or immediately after the decease of the reigning monarch, and thus it not unfrequently happened that the throne passed to one of the numerous family the least distinguished for qualities conducive to the future welfare of his subjects.

But there was yet another disturbing element in the course of Sinhalese history. Long previous to the founding of Anarajahpoora as the capital of Ceylon, when indeed it existed but as an insignificant village, the island was overrun by Malabar invaders from the coast of India, the more powerful of whom founded the dynasty which held sway with more or less interruption for fifteen centuries. At varying intervals these invasions were repeated, sometimes successfully, and on several occasions a foreign usurper occupied the throne for many years, whilst the deposed mon-

arch wandered a fugitive in the mountain fastnesses, until able to collect a sufficient force with which to drive out the intruder.

These struggles for the throne, often bloody, were sometimes of long duration, and, if we may place reliance on the native chronicles, were occasionally distinguished by acts of great bravery.

These frequent inroads upon their territory became at length so harassing and so intolerable as to induce the sovereign to remove from Anarajahpoora, and fix the seat of his government at Pulastapoor, at that time (A.D. 729) a flourishing town situated in a fertile part of the island, about sixty miles in a south-easterly direction from the abandoned capital, and where a line of kings held sway until early in the fourteenth century, when similar disastrous invasions compelled a second abandonment of the capital for a locality still further to the south.

The native chronicles, so ample in their description of the rise and progress of these early capitals of the Sinhalese, are silent on the subject of their utter decay and ruin, and it only remains for us to surmise that the population of those great cities, reluctant to remain subject to the will of invaders, followed the fortunes of their departing sovereign, and emigrated *en masse* to the newly-chosen seat of government.

These wars and migrations, aided doubtless by sickness consequent on privation, reduced the population to such an extent that at the present day it numbers but little over two millions, the estimated number of inhabitants within the once magnificent "city of the dead."

THE MYSTERY OF THE TALL GREY MAN.



CASTLEGAR is a plain but substantial-looking house, standing in a moderately well-wooded park on the banks of the Shannon.

Somehow Hugh Macdermott, the owner of Castlegar, managed to live. From the lawyers, who were eternally bothering about mortgages and bills, he

managed to extract something; and when his money failed him, he used his credit.

But the style of the former Macdermotts was a thing of the past. Castlegar was no longer the haunt of gay squires, fair ladies, and dashing officers. That ended with Prince Roderick, Hugh's father; and so too did all hopes of restoring the property to the family.

It was the dream of Hugh Macdermott's life that his daughter should make a grand match, and retrieve

the fallen fortunes of the family. Such dreams have been the solace of many fathers with encumbered estates and pretty daughters. But Rosie Macdermott, at nineteen, took it into her charming head to fall in love with the heir of the Martins of Martinmount, a family as venerable, proud, and poor as her own.

Martinmount was on the other side of the river, and Barry Martin used to row across the stream oftener than there was any real necessity. The two families were not particularly good friends, and Hugh Macdermott was not over-fond of the son of the man who had been his successful rival at school, at college, and in love. But Rosie and Barry were not at all concerned at the cold glances and studied politeness which greeted the young man on his daily visits. They were too much occupied with each other to heed whether Hugh Macdermott was civil or not.

But one day the old man, standing at his window, saw Barry Martin put his arm round Miss Rosie's waist, and then the storm, which had been gathering for some time, burst in full fury.

"Go and tell Miss Rosie I want her," said he to the butler, "and say to Mr. Barry Martin I'll be glad of a few minutes' conversation with him in my study."

Miss Rosie received Roger's message with a very