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THE EAST INDIA COMPANY'S CINNAMON TRADE (1600-1661)

By

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Among the various products of Ceylon which led the Europeans to resort to commerce, privateering and quasi-privateering, a most important place is to be assigned to cinnamon.

According to Father De Queyroz "Javira-Paracrama-Ban" "increase (ed) his treasures by trade, especially in cinnamon, which already in times past issued from Columbo to various parts of India and to the island of the Caiz in the Persian Gulf between Queixome and Cape Habaó on the coast of Lestan, whence it passed to Syria, now Suria, thence to Greece and the rest of Europe under the name of Caizligna".

Maetsuyker recommended that an extremely conciliatory policy must be pursued by the Dutch towards "the (Ceylonese) King" because, their "desire chiefly" was "that (they), should not be deprived of the cinnamon through which must come the payment of the great sum in which he is indebted to us".

Later on, Baldaeus says, "the Isle of Ceylon is very fertile in Rice and all sorts of Fruits.... It abounds also in Sugar-reeds, and Mulberry-trees, which produce a good quantity of silk; as in Ginger, Pepper, Cardamum tobacco, wild Palm-trees affording vast quantities of a kind of Sugar..... They are stor'd also with Calabass Trees, Cotton trees, Areck trees.....long pepper" etc. "But the Helen or the Bride in Contest of this Isle is the finest and purest Cinnamon which growing only in this Island, no wonder if we (the Dutch) have disputed the entire possession thereof for so many years with the Portugueses".

The cinnamon according to Father de Queyroz was found "in great abundance" in Ceylon, and was "in quality the very best in the known World". A carack which arrived from Lisbon under the captaincy of Sancho de Faria da Silva was attacked by the Dutch led by Matijs Henricus Quast. Da Silva lost his life in the engagement, and Quast died a fortnight later of his wounds. "Much treasure", says Fremlen, the English President, "was not (however) found for the Company, yet the saylors got good pil-lage". "The caracks self they intend to Battavia, and have removed her from Goa to Ceiloan, where they have a fleete of 10 or 12 great ships, with which it is thought they intend.....to assault and (if they can) surprise Columbo before the expected peace bee published". "The V(ice)Roy hath on a Dutch vessel sent a gentleman of good quality to the Battavian Generall, so desirous the Portugalls are even to beg peace; or a cessation of armes at least untill it come confirmed from Europe".

One of the reasons why Colombo rose to prominence during these days lay in her central position relative to the cinnamon growing areas. Negombo was also important in this connection, and she is said to be "the chief place of the Seven Corles where the best cinnamon on the face of the globe grows, and in very great abundance". The Dutch used to pack their cinnamon in leather. But Van Goens points out that attempts were also made during our period of packing the bark in gunny. The collection of cinnamon in Ceylon was made, by a special caste on whom thus devolved the marketing of one of the most important products of the island, in those days. "Without them, (the Chjalias)" "says Maetsuyker, for example, "no cinnamon can be procured which nevertheless must be obtained by the Honourable Company who would also greatly be embarrassed as regards the transport of the collected cinnamon without the help of those "castes who are yearly enrolled for this purpose".

Negombo, we must also remember, was noted for its fishing industry, and the sailing qualities of the local people were of no mean order. Van Goens wanted to fortify it strongly. "(Otherwise)", he says, "we might easily lose this valuable place in course of time or during a sudden war with a European power, whereby we would not only be deprived of the best quality and not far short of the half of all the Ceylon cinnamon, but yea, at one and the same time lose all our profits, projects and designs". Among the numerous other references to Ceylon cinnamon areas in the Dutch documents of our period we may note, in passing, a passage from the Dagh Register of 1643-44 which says that the most fertile districts in which cinnamon of the best quality grew were found round about the country "between Colombo and Negombo which with the 23 miles under the Galle jurisdiction consisted of 34 miles of cinnamon lands" from which "great profit (was) derived".

The Asiatic skipper who had been carrying Ceylon products including cinnamon century after century viewed with natural distrust and jealousy the advent of De Albegaria off Colombo, while the gods watched with cynical amusement the bestowal of various concessions by another Asiatic—the Simhalese king—to him.

An arrangement was arrived at by which in exchange for an offensive and defensive alliance, 124,000 lbs. of cinnamon were to be supplied to the Portuguese every year.

With the crouch of a tiger preparing for a spring the Dutch took stock of the mature Portuguese commerce with Ceylon.

Patiently and tenaciously, delicately and earnestly, Dutch captains and traders developed commercial intercourse with the rich island, the first Dutchman to visit her shores being the tactful Joris van Spilbergen. He was granted an audience by Vimaladharmasurya. "The King speaking with him of the negotiations regarding the Cinnamon and Pepper, the General was not willing to agree to the price that the King demanded, so they let the talk of negotiations drop and came to other discourses". Finding the price ex-

orbitant, the crafty Dutchman pointed out with all the suavity of a diplomat that his primary business was to arrange a treaty of friendship between Orange and the King. "The General", says the Journal, "answered that he had not come there for Pepper or Cinnamon but simply to obey the command of His Excellency, which was to offer the King friendship on behalf of his Princely Excellency". The King (true to oriental tradition and culture) "took the General in his arms and raised him up saying", "All the Pepper and Cinnamon that I have given is given to you." Spilbergen by that one stroke won the battle on all points, and the King subsequently asserted, "See I, my Queen, Prince and Princess will help to carry on (our) shoulders the Stones, Lime, and other materials, if the States and his Pr. Excellency be pleased to come and build a castle here in my land".

Spilbergen further impressed the King presenting to him one of the three vessels filled with arecanut, Pepper and Cinnamon which the Dutch captured from the Portuguese. It was a "Galiot of about 40 lasts new and well made."

At the same time, "the Stones he brought with him from Ceylon" (according to Cornelis Jolyt's letter of 18th, November, 1602) "were estimated high. Part of the money that paid for these was obtained by selling the lading of one of the Portuguese prizes.

Ultimately, in addition to precious Stones and other presents, the Dutch chief received "60 Canasters of Cinnamon, 16 Bales of Pepper, (and) 4 Bales of Turmeric". "There was more Cinnamon, but the road (was) long", and "we could not stay there longer."¹

It must also be remembered that not only did the inhabitants of other parts of Asia come to trade with Ceylon by this time, there were a good many who became settled in Ceylon. In spite of Portuguese efforts to the contrary their migrations continued, and the Portuguese official became sometimes compelled to obtain their help for collection of merchandise. When however in 1625 the Portuguese expelled many of them from their spheres of influence, they colonised divers parts of Sinhalese Ceylon.

Spilbergh (Spilbergen) also captured a Portuguese ship in the seas of Atjeh, being helped in his privateering exploit by the English under Lancaster. Leaving Conelis Specix to manage commercial affairs, Spilbergh returned home. The era of disorganised Dutch trading in the East closed with this voyage.

When the V. O. C. came into existence, the enthusiasm for Ceylon products in Dutch minds continued unabated, and De Weert, the leader of its first voyage, reached Ceylon with three ships. Two of these were sent over to Atjeh, and then De Weert sought an audience of the king at Kandy, intent on getting supplies of Ceylon silk, pepper, cinnamon etc. to the exclusion of all other competitors. The king was ready at the interview to grant him

1. Selections from the Dutch records of the Ceylon Government (Reimers); *Ceylon Literary Register*, Vol. VI; Anthonisz: *The Dutch in Ceylon*; Piers: *Ceylon and the Hollanders* etc.

many a concession on conditions that he drove the hated Portuguese (preferably without their bag and baggage) out of the island. Actually, bales of Cinnamon and Pepper were handed over to him as presents from the king. Galle and Colombo were to be wrested back, and then all the Cinnamon that the island could produce would be his nation's. Elated with the prospect, the Dutch commander, an able sailor, proceeded to the Archipelago, got hold of five more Dutch ships, and came back to Ceylon. But his crew shot down cattle for food, a royal ambassador who had been a passenger on the Dutch fleet, was used with discourtesy at table, and the command of the Sinhalese monarch. Consequently, in spite of a royal letter which arrived in the meantime providing for an annual lading of 1000 cwt. of cinnamon, and the same weight of pepper to the Dutch, the interview which followed between the Dutch commander and the king ended tragically.

It is said that the drunken Dutchman made some insulting remarks about the Queen. "Sebald de Wreet", says Baldaeus, "being somewhat heated with strong Liquor, reply'd undiscreetly, That certainly the Empress could not be in distress for a Man, and that he was resolv'd not to sail to Gale, or to fight against the Portuguese, before the Emperor had done him the honour of viewing his ships". The king thereupon ordered his arrest. While resisting these orders, he was killed. Some followers of his also met with the same fate. The king went back to Kandy and wrote (in Portuguese) to the Dutch officers off Batticaloa, "Que bebem vinho nao he boa, Deos fes justicia, se quiseires, pas, pas, se quires guerra, guerra". The terse message could not however for the moment keep the Dutch in Ceylon, and part of the fleet sailed to Patani, and the rest to Banten. The second act in the Dutch cinnamon drama was over.

In 1612, Marcellies de Bosschouwer, a servant of the V. O. C., came to Ceylon, armed with letters from "De Edele Groot Mogende Heeren", the States-General, and "Prince of Orange, Earl of Nassan, Catzenellebagen", etc. The letters announced the Dutch Truce with the Portuguese and solicited for commercial facilities. The letter from the Prince significantly pointed out, "We did not think fit to stipulate in the said Treaty, that (the Portuguese) should be excluded from the Traffick of Ceylon, but left the same to your Majesty's Discretion". Negotiation with the king led to an agreement which promised a supply of superior cinnamon at a fixed price to the Dutch who were also granted other trade concessions by Senerát. "His Majesty", records Baldaeus "engages to deliver yearly all the Cinnamon that is to be got to our Company, to be paid either in Money or in Merchandise, according to the usual Exchange". The envoy was created Migamuwe Rala and won a high place in the king's confidence. In 1615, he proceeded to Europe to conclude the alliance on behalf of the king against the Portuguese, and brought back, (as we have seen before) the Danes with him.

The Danish help however did not prove to be of much use in the war with the Portuguese who carried on a ding-dong fight with the Sinhalese, till Rájásimha came to the throne after Senerát's death.

Rájasiñha offered an offensive alliance against the Portuguese to Reyniersz, the Dutch Governor of Coromandel, to last as long as the sun and moon. This was a phrase which corresponds to the *ácandrárkasamakálina* of the ancient Hindu Royal charters, and reminds us once again of the survival of unadulterated Hindu-Buddhist documental phrases in Ceylon during our period. The message, it is also noticeable, was sent by a *Bráhmaņa*.

The Dutch Council of India eager for acquisition of Ceylon cinnamon jumped at the proposal, and Jan Thyszoon Pyaart was sent to the young and masterful king of Kandy. Reyniersz had provided his envoy with a letter pointing out that the Dutch were ready to aid the king with men and arms, if he would let them have a lading of cinnamon shortly, and promise them the monopoly later on. The letter further stated that Admiral Adam van Westerwold could be asked on the conclusion of a formal agreement to send ships to carry out the expulsion of the Portuguese and take away some cinnamon. "If your Majesty will be pleased", said the letter to the "Most Potent Emperor", "to allow us the Exportation of some Cinnamon, we oblige our selves to assist your Majesty with Musquets, Powder, Ammunition, and other arms; so that in case you will order two or more ships cargo's of cinnamon to be got ready for our use against May next, we either will pay ready Money for it, or exchange the same for Ammunition or other Merchandizes as your Majesty shall think fit".

The student must however bear in mind that this spice for a regular supply of which the European nations of our period were ready to go to any conceivable length, was not, as it has been fondly supposed to be by some scholars, the monopoly of Ceylon, in all senses of the term, during our period. It had certainly its competitors, for example, in the "cinnamon de mato" of the Malabar coast.

The cinnamon of Malabar did not escape the attention of Linchoten who says that it was known as "Canella de Mato or wilde cinnamon, and (was) forbidden to be carried into Portingale".

Cinnamon, according to a Swally Marine letter of 1648 was of two varieties,—the Ceylon product and "Coylon or false cynamon". The latter was also probably known as Trambone cinnamon, after the equivalent word *trampão* in the Portuguese language. The Surat Letter-Book says in 1660 that it was called "*canella d(e) matto*" at Cochin; "by us, cassia lignum or coarse cinnamon". Among Dutch documents, the Treaty of Westerwold with Rájasiñha mentions "*caneel de matte*". It was not to be offered by the king to the Dutch. Later on, van Goens also refers to it in the passage:—"inkopen ende dat den wilden Caneel wort ingehouden" etc.

Maetsuyker also tells us that care should be taken "to see that no coarse or otherwise inferior cinnamon is delivered".

Baldaeus, the "Minister of the word of God in Ceylon" who left the island by the close of our period, and whose work on Malabar, Coromandel and Ceylon saw light in Amsterdam a few years afterwards, says that there

were three "different sorts of Cinnamon" in "the East Indies", the first being the "Canel Fino" of "the Portugueses", "being the same that is taken from very young, or at least not very old Trees". The second was the "Canel Grosso", "taken from very thick and old Trees", and the third the "Canel de Mato" of Malabar. The last variety was very much lower in price, and "in no esteem".

"A voyage to Congo and several other countries chiefly in Southern-Africk" by Father Merolla da Sorrento "in.....1682", "made English from the Italian", again says, "Not many years since Cinnamon was first to be brought hither by the King of Portugal from the East-Indies..... (In) a Marsh belonging to" "the Reverend Fathers of the Society of Jesus" "about four Miles from the City of Baia" "it has thriv'd to a Miracle". Though the Ceylon Cinnamon was (as we have seen above) according to Father de Queyroz "the very best in the known World" "it (was) also found in Malvar and Birna, an island of the Archipelago". An inferior kind was also apparently cultivated in the country round Goa. "This is" however "the spice that made the Island of Ceylon famous".

Secondly, it is apparent from some of the above statements (and also from other records) that all the cinnamon which grew in Ceylon could not be categorised into a single class, because the inferior commodity (used both as a substitute and as an adulterating agent) was grown in the island itself. The Fergusons tell us that there are ten kinds of Ceylon cinnamon, though four only are usually barked. Maetsuyker apparently alludes to these when he says, "The cinnamon which is right, good and fine, is found only in these low lands of Negombo, Colombo and Gale...But the best and the finest quality is found in the Negombo district or the Seven Corles".

We need not go here into technical botanical distinctions and differences. From our present point of view, it will be sufficient to note that Chinese cinnamon (*cassia lignea*) is to be distinguished from Ceylon cinnamon. The so-called Chinese cinnamon however grows elsewhere for example in the hills of Bengal, east of the Padmá Bāngalá proper. The Malabar variety (the Karuwa which is the ordinary Tamil equivalent to cinnamon) has been sometimes taken to be the same as *Laurus Cassia*, and sometimes as little different from the Ceylon product.

Pridham writing in 1849 points out that Malabar produced *Cassia lignet*, and adds that "the external appearance of the two varieties of the aromatic laurel, viz. *Laurus cinnamoum* and *Laurus cassia*, is very similar, and cannot be distinguished when growing except by the leaf, and then only by an experienced eye".

But the finer qualities of Ceylon cinnamon have to be distinguished from the Indian product. According to Rev. Cordiner efforts made to grow these on the Coromandel Coast later on, failed.

This writer also extols the value of cinnamon as an article of merchandise "which has long rendered the island famous, and still forms the chief article of commerce".

Thirdly, even in ancient times Ceylon does not seem to be the only country which grew cinnamon.

Regarding the karuwa (Malabar) and the kurundu (Ceylon), the Fergusons say, "The prepared bark of the karuwa is, according to good authority, inferior to the best Ceylon cinnamon. It is, however, allowed to be superior to the produce of the cinnamon trees which is found on the northern and eastern part of the island".²

The greedy merchant of this period had no scruple to pass the other commodity or variety (or varieties?) off as Ceylon cinnamon, (which came to the market in large quantities) because the Malabar kind was about 70% cheaper than the Ceylon product. Adulteration must have been frequent. To take examples. The cinnamon procurable at Cochin is definitely spoken of as being adulterated with cassia in a Swally Marine letter of 24th October 1650. The same document adds that the English hoped to obtain a supply apparently of the better kind from the Portuguese Viceroy. In 1650 it was arranged to send Goodyear in the Expedition to Goa for fetching the spice. But he was also asked to purchase in course of his voyage a quantity of cassia lignum, perhaps for purposes of convenient adulteration. It may be argued that if the English wanted to export the adulterated product, they could have bought it from Cochin directly, without sending for it, to Goa. But Cochin was further off, (as they themselves say in the letter from Merry and others on 24th October, 1650) than Goa, and the proportion of adulteration there might have been higher than what the Company would have cared to tolerate. At the same time, some (comparatively) pure Ceylon cinnamon could be also kept separate for purposes of sale, if a supply of the better quality merchandise could be obtained from Goa.

Adulterated cinnamon is apparently referred to in the record of the Court dated 30th September, 1643. Hall, the owner wanted a concession rate from the Company, and in part payment offered some ropes and powder on this occasion. Ryder who purchased some cinnamon from the Company discovered "flags, dust and sweepings" present in the spice, and some reduction in price had therefore to be ordered by the Court in 1652.

In any case, an English trade in cassia lignum grew during the period under review. The Court Books say on 19th August, 1635 (for example) that the Swan brought 300 $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. of cassia lignum to Europe, on behalf of Richard Deane and John Pearson serving in that ship. Next year, one cwt of cassia lignum was allowed to be carried free on behalf of Mrs. Jennings. Another widow—Helen Pickering—was granted a rebate of 50% on the freight of cassia lignum carried on her behalf, the same year.

Fremlen's letter of 13th February, 1638 points out to the Company that cassia lignum and red-wood were sent out to Persia from India in the Blessing. The Persian markets were favourable to sale of these. "Here the markets at

2. Linchoten's Voyage; *Selections from the Dutch Records etc.*; O. C. 206; Baldaeus: *A Description of East India etc.*; Father de Queryroz: *The Temporal and Spiritual Conquest of Ceylon* (Father Perera); Ferguson: *All about Spices et*

constantly very certaine, and so the Dutch finde them, who of all sorts of comodities vend infinite quanteties". By his time, Weddell is thought to have laded 7,349 lb. of the "cinnamon de mato" in the Planter, which was admitted to be of an inferior quality. (His ship also carried among other commodities 150,000 lbs. of Malabar pepper).

John Weddell, a rather notable figure in the English commercial history of these days, had reason to be dissatisfied with the "Old Company." He left their service, and sailed to the East in 1636 with a royal commission. He commanded six ships, one of which was the Planter with Edward Hall as her captain. On arrival off Goa, he wrote to Methwold in a characteristic way:—"I must take the like out of my just vexation to advertize you that your sugar hereafter bee as much as your gall in all your letters; else I shall never hold your phisicke to bee well tempered." He was not pleased with Methwold all the more because Methwold's letter was "patched and cobled with Cobbes pranks, whome you likewise falsely taxe mee in your particular letters to have supplied beyond what was fitt". Cobb was accused as is well known, of some quasi-privateerings in Eastern Waters.

In 1647, it was proposed that the Hind should carry to Surat "black pepper, tortoise shells, cubebs, brimstone, long pepper, cassia lignum, and three parrots (which cost 26 rials of eight)". Cessia lignum and long pepper "received from Bantam" is also mentioned in a long letter of 6th January, 1648. It is not however to be preferred to piece goods for purposes of exportation. This letter also refers, we may note incidentally, to the declining trade of the Portuguese in cinnamon.

"From Goa there are this yeare designed three gallions for Portugall; but will not carry such quantitys of cynamon as formerly, the Dutch, by enhancing the price, haveing drawne the greater part thereof unto them." The "Adventurers in the Second General Voyage" were sent some cassia lignum as a sample, in 1649. The record of the Court of Sales dated 3rd October of the same year refers to the sale of cassia lignum, cinnamon and ginger in Europe. This ginger was received from Bantam and China. Early in 1651, Swally Marine wrote that it had obtained sixty-three bales of cinnamon from Goa; but cassia was not available, because the flotilla from Ceylon had not yet come in. Ceylon was possibly also exporting "cassia" at this time. Further on in the same document, the possibility of obtaining cassia lignum at Goa is referred to. Some of this commodity was sold in a damaged state in Europe, by this time, and Vendermarsh, the purchaser, had to be granted a reduction in price.

Cinnamon of course is a merchandise of first rate importance to the English trader throughout the period under review.

May in his, "Briefe note of a voyage to the East Indies begun the 10th of April, 1591" etc. says "We weyed anker in the moneth of November and arrived at Zeilan about the end of the same moneth. In this island groweth great store of excellent cinamonn, and the best diamonds in the world. Here our captaine meant to stay to make up our voyage; whereof he conceived

great hope, by certaine intelligence which wee had receiued ; but the company, which were in all but 33 men and boyes, being in a mutiny, and every day ready to go together by the eares... would not stay, but would needs go home”.

“The best cinnamon” according to Fitch came from Ceylon where it “is pilled from fine young trees”.

In “the Prices of Goods in India” of “Le 30 August, 1609” we find that “of Ceylon (cinnamon) a very great quantity might yearly here be had (at) about 7, 8 or 9 m. per maund”. Lawrence Femell and High Frayne writing to “Sir Henry Middleton, Knight, abroad the Trades Increase” again says on “Nov. 15th 1610”, “We told him” (a Turkish officer) “our cinnamon we fetch from Zelian, our Pepper from Acheen and Bantam where, we told him, we have our factories”.

The “Avizo from Hugh Frayne to Nicholas Downton, in the Red Sea” speaks of the island’s commercial possibilities thus, “At Ceylon you may buy cinnamon, pearls, rubies and some other stones ; for these you may sell fine calicoes, powder pieces, lead and tin”.

The Court Minutes of 20th January, 1614 refers to cinnamon sold to Mr. Garraway which was “not to be garbled”. Again on 31st of March the “request of Hugh Hamersley concerning the purchase of some cinnamon” was considered. Connock and Barker writing from “Jasquis” on 19th January, 1617, say that “for augmentation and increase of our capital in this place... we have writ to General Keeling, or to whomsoever shall be President at Bantame, to send us annually one ship’s lading (of the burden of 400 tons or more) of spices, whereof two-thirds pepper and the rest in nutmegs, clove, mace and cinnamon, of each is equal proportion, which we are confident will sell here almost to as good rates as in England”. Roe referring to “synoman” water, says that this essence (?) (of which he wants a “quart”), “two bottles of the oil”, “a little cheese” and “four or five bottles of sack and red wine” will not fail to cheer him up, even when he is not in the best of health. We may also notice that cinnamon was being sold at “thirteen rupees per maund” at Agra in 1617.³

A quantity of cinnamon was procured by Robinson from Cannanore, some years later. By that time, Methwold writes to the Portuguese Viceroy to sell him pepper and cinnamon in spite of the restrictions that officer sought to impose on English trade.

In 1638, the Company in their letter to Surat of 16th March prefers the export of cinnamon to that of saltpetre, for example.

The Court refers on 24th January, 1640 to forty-eight “skynns or fardles” of cinnamon which were to be handed over to Methwold, and twelve to Baily. On 27th January, 1644, an allowance of 20l. on account of freight

3. O. C. 2179; Ct. Bk. XIX; XXIII; C. M.; Ct. Bk. XVI; O. C. 1622; F. R. Sur. cii; E. F. 1646-50; Letter Books I; O. C. 1576; 2062; Ct. Bk. XX; O. C. 2115; 2204; C. S. P. 682; Ct. Bk. III; L. R. 437; 559; 581.

was ordered to be remitted to the Master of the Reformation, relative to the cinnamon he brought in as private trade.

William Broadbent was asked to pay freight for the cinnamon he had imported on his own account, in 1642. On 4th August, 1643, it was ordered by the Court of Committees that no private trade in black pepper, indigo, cotton goods and cinnamon was to be allowed. About a fortnight later, some special arrangements for sale of cinnamon and other commodities, effecting "a division" "of 20% in cinnamon at 3s. per lb." under certain conditions, were arrived at. A wholesale price (6m/s sight) of 3s. per lb. was fetched by this spice by the end of 1643. In the various Court of Sales records and elsewhere, many sales of cinnamon and pepper with their prices are referred to, that of 11th March, 1647, mentioning Jambi and Malabar pepper, mace and cloves. 1,900 bags of pepper were imported into England on account of the Fourth Joint Stock alone, by 1645.

We may notice incidentally that by this time (according to the Dutch Register) 12,570 lbs. of cinnamon, consisting of 290 parcels, 186 from Rájasinha and the rest procured from Negombo, were conveyed from Ceylon to the Archipelago by the Delfshaven and the Hasewint.

By the beginning of 1650, a meeting of several Committees comes to the conclusion that private trade in cinnamon, silk, cardamoms, pepper, mace, nutmegs, cotton goods, elephant's teeth, cloves etc. was to be discouraged. "None of us interd", they declared, "our private advantage before the general good". A few months later, it was definitely decided not to allow private merchants to export elephants' teeth and to import cinnamon, black and white pepper, cloves, cardamoms, indigo, etc. But facilities were to be given to the officers and crews of freighted ships to trade in cassia lignum, bezoar, diamonds, pearls, rubies, civets, ambergris etc., under certain conditions.

The same year, Jones was to be appointed to garble cinnamon and other commodities which would profit by such action. Cuttler who was a competing applicant was not given the employment. Cuttler, we may note, when faced with a demand for payment of a sum of money he owed the Company pointed out that the Company had not delivered him the cinnamon he paid for.

William Vincent bought some ungarbled cinnamon in 1650, and some concession had therefore to be made to him. Captain Ryder again had bought some ungarbled cinnamon for exportation. He was permitted to garble it at his own expense.

A General Court of Sales of 12th November, 1652, records the sale of garbled cinnamon (garbled), cloves (garbled), nutmegs (garbled) and white pepper.

Cinnamon was to be obtained by trade. But sometimes privateering and quasi-privateering as we have seen above, also supplied mercantile needs. The Portuguese were plundered of cinnamon, China roots and benzoin, for example, by 1619.

The Expedition seized two Portuguese vesels, and this cinnamon came very probably out of these. It was ultimately sent to Europe for sale. In this connection, we find a comment about the pepper trade also. "Pepper", says Surat to the Company, "is neathere so cheape as (some) factors wrote, nor quantity sufficient (if to bee had) to defray the charge in fetching" it from Calicut. "The Samorine of thatt country (was) so misserably poore as hee would be glad of occasion to eate on your stocke". President Bix of Bantam and others, again, point out on 20th June, 1628 that Slade succeeded in seizing two Portuguese ships with cargoes of cinnamon, "dried penang" (arecanuts) and cocoanuts.

In the period that followed the king of Kandy strove to attain his cherished aim, the expulsion of the Portuguese, with the help of the Dutch, and the bait that he held in his hand was largely made of cinnamon bark.

Even at the early age of about eighteen, as an Agarája (= agrarja = the first prince?) he made the Portuguese under DE SA feel the weight of his arm. The strategy of the Ceylonese prince was eminently successful, and the Portuguese decided on retreating from their positions in Sinhalese territory, for the moment. But the aggressors were not to be left off so easily. The Atapattu Guard stormed into them, and as the Sinhalese banners glimmered darkly in the forest, musket and bow took heavy toll of the enemy. The army of nearly 14,000 dwindled by desertion and panic-stricken by camouflaged attackers reeled, broke and fled, mostly to be cut down or captured by the forces of the relentless prince. The Sergeant Major and the Disawa (derived from deśa = country or territory) of the Seven Korales were made prisoners. But DE SA performed profigies of valour, and with a handful of followers who clung to him to the bitter end accounted for a number of the enemy. His life was sought to be saved by the Sinhalese. He however scorned surrender and died a soldier's death with three arrows in his body. This happened in 1630.

It was eight years later that Rájasiṃha wrote to Admiral Adam Westerswold (Westerholt, of Fremlen's letter, and Westerswold and Westerswoldt of others) who with Willem Jakobszoon Koster had left Batavia on 13th August, 1637, and was then before Goa, offering half of Bacticaloa in exchange for Dutch help against his inveterate foe. Westerswold jumped at the offer, and sent Koster with three ships and a couple of hundred men to Ceylon. He himself followed his "vice-amerall" (as Thurston, a newly appointed English officer calls him) soon afterwards. The Portuguese in the meanwhile decided to attack the Sinhalese. They burnt the capital with its palace and temples, and felt confident that they had cornered "the little black". But the Sinhalese king outgeneralled the Portuguese under Dom Diego de Mello, at Gannoruwa. Their retreat to Senkadagala was cut off, and again from behind the trees the Sinhalese soldiers played havoc in the ranks of their foes. The supply of water was virtually cut off, and the encirclement of the Europeans and their Asiatic auxiliaries became complete. "They were not only harrassed", says RIBEIRO, "by the continuous firing of guns and foot-muskets which

the enemy kept up all night long. . . . they also suffered from thirst". From under the shade of a tree the king directed operations in a masterly way. The jingals were brought to bear on the panic-stricken enemy, and De Mello sued for an armistice. No reply was however sent, and the Sinhalese attack went on in full swing. Many a Portuguese dropped down on their knees, crying piteously for mercy, but their solicitations fell on deaf ears. But Rájasingha's troops spared the Indian mercenaries and the king himself had given due warning to the Sinhalese in Portuguese service. It was another smashing victory, and scarcely a score and a half of the Portuguese were left alive as prisoners in the hands of the Sinhalese. Their poet sang gleefully and vigorously of the national achievement, and the Parangi Hatane (The Battle with the Foreigner) certainly deserves a passing glance.

The author in all fairness speaks in glowing terms of Portuguese bravery. "Like wounded wolves they stood at bay, those stout soldiers come from Goa, hemmed in and foodless but fighting still upon the mountain crest".

But the Ceylonese "cut and slash and stab and bind. . . . wrench the muskets and pedreneiros from their hands to smash their bones therewith". "Our two hosts stood on either side and cut off countless heads, piling them up like cocoanuts when they contend in sport".

(To be Continued.)