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CEYLON  
AND  
THE CINGALESE.

"—— It is a goodly sight to see  
What Heaven hath done for this delicious land!  
What fruits of fragrance blush on every tree!  
What goodly prospects o'er the hills expand!"

BYRON.



COLOMBO.

# CEYLON AND THE ~~CINGALESE~~:

THEIR  
HISTORY, GOVERNMENT, AND RELIGION,  
THE

ANTIQUITIES, INSTITUTIONS, PRODUCE,  
REVENUE, AND CAPABILITIES

OF THE ISLAND;

WITH  
ANECDOTES ILLUSTRATING

THE  
MANNERS AND CUSTOMS  
OF THE  
PEOPLE.

BY  
HENRY CHARLES SIRR, M.A.,  
OF  
LINCOLN'S INN, BARRISTER-AT-LAW,  
AND  
LATE DEPUTY QUEEN'S ADVOCATE  
FOR THE  
SOUTHERN CIRCUIT IN THE ISLAND OF CEYLON.

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TO  
THE MOST NOBLE AND RIGHT HONORABLE  
JAMES BROWNLOW WILLIAM GASCOIGNE CECIL,  
MARQUIS OF SALISBURY, K.G., D.C.L.,  
LORD LIEUTENANT OF THE COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX,

&c.            &c.            &c.

*This Work is, by permission, respectfully dedicated,*

BY HIS LORDSHIP'S  
MOST OBEDIENT,  
HUMBLE SERVANT,  
THE AUTHOR.

## P R E F A C E.

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FROM the extraordinary interest created by recent events in Ceylon, and the desire for information evinced by all classes upon the subject of the late Rebellion, we have been induced to prepare the following pages for the press, some portion of which appeared in a leading periodical shortly after our return from the Colony.

Our object has been to unfold the capabilities of this beautiful island, and call attention to its undeveloped resources : amongst the former may be classed the proposed emigration to Newera-Ellia, and amongst the latter the long talked of, and essential undertaking—the restoration of the ancient tanks—the whole credit of which last-named proposition, a recent writer, who has never visited the Colony, has most unjustly claimed for himself, although the greater number of, *if not all,*



authors who have sojourned in the "Cinnamon Isle" have referred to the subject.

In the performance of our task, we have endeavoured to notice, and believe that we have considered, every topic of interest, described the general features of the country, its glorious antiquities and literature, and illustrated the character and habits of its mixed population.

As a book of reference, we have essayed to render these pages useful, by the classification of chapters, each devoted to a particular subject.

The ancient history of Lanka-diva has been glanced at, and its modern, or that portion thereof which is connected with European rule, has been fully entered into, and, being brought down to the present period, it includes A COMPLETE ACCOUNT OF THE LATE KANDIAN REBELLION, ITS ORIGIN, AND CONSEQUENCES, *together with an exposé of the supposed grievances of our fellow-subjects, and the critical position of the colonial government.*

We have also ventured, from personal observation and facts, to show the inefficiency of death, as a punishment, or example, amongst a population professing the tenets of Buddhism.

April, 1850.

1, New Square, Lincoln's Inn.

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