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Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland / Volume 3 / Issue 05 / January 1836, pp 161 - 164

DOI: 10.1017/S0035869X00014210, Published online: 14 March 2011

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0035869X00014210

How to cite this article:

W. M. G. Colebkooke (1836). Art. VI.—Account of a Ceremonial Exhibition of the Relic termed “the Tooth of Buddha,” at Kandy, in Ceylon, in May 1828. Translated and abridged from the original Singhalese, drawn up by a Native Eye-witness. Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland, 3, pp 161-164 doi:10.1017/S0035869X00014210

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ART. VI.—*Account of a Ceremonial Exhibition of the Relic termed “the Tooth of Buddha,” at Kandy, in Ceylon,¹ in May 1828. Translated and abridged from the original Singhalese, drawn up by a Native Eye-witness. — (Communicated by Lieut.-Colonel W. M. G. COLEBROOKE, M.R.A.S. &c. &c.)*

ON the full-moon day of the month Wesák (Thursday, the 29th of May, 1828), the principal chiefs and other Kandyans, zealous professors of the Buddhist religion, celebrated the festival Dalada Pin-káma, when the following arrangements were made.

The *mandapa*, or pavilion, erected for the reception of the relic and its attendant priests, measured 229 feet by 60; and that part assigned for the place of the relic was adorned with valuable stuffs, embroidered with gold and silver. In the centre of the pavilion was a silver seat, on which was placed a *ransiligey*, or golden frame, containing an artificial flower of gold, of dazzling lustre, and intended to hold the relic; on the right was a large golden *karandu*, or case, set with precious stones, and on the left a smaller one similarly ornamented.

These two cases were ornamented with precious stones, such as rubies, sardonyx, &c. of great value. In front of this was the offertory, decorated with silk and embroidered cloths; and before it were nine veils of various cloths of gold and silver, and rows of frills made of fine cloth. The part of the pavilion appropriated to the priests was decorated with white cloths, and white cocoa-nut leaves.

The pavilion erected for the Europeans was sixty feet by thirty; that for the Singhalese chiefs of the high and low countries, one hundred feet by thirty: both of these were, also, decorated with white cloths and white cocoa-nut leaves.

These pavilions were erected on a plain near the palace, and surrounded by fifty-three arches of honour, ornamented in various ways; besides which, on the arches were erected flag-staffs, designated as follows:—One for each of the *desavoni* of the four Korles, and of Matelle, and one for the *maligáwa*, or temple. These flags were of red, white, and various colours.

¹ The relic consists of a piece of bone which is believed by the people to have been a tooth of Buddha. It is preserved in a gold casket in the temple at Kandy; and, when the relic is exposed, the believers are expected to flock from all parts of the country to worship it and to make offerings. A considerable sum was thus collected on the above occasion from the assembled multitude of devotees.

A proclamation having been made by beat of *tom-tom* for decorating the streets in Kandy, many devout people, with a view of surpassing each other in the beauty of their decorations, embellished the streets most elegantly, and anxiously awaited the first day of the festival. On the morning of this day soldiers were ordered on guard at the corners of the streets and at watch-stations.

At half-past ten, A.M. the officers, chiefs, and *Desaves*, clothed in silk, and decorated with golden chains, proceeded to the temple in which the relic was kept in grand procession, as follows:—

First, a flag belonging to *Gajanaïke Nillame*, *Lekams*, and *Desaves*; then *tom-tom* beaters; next musicians; then whip-crackers;¹ then the *Mahá Nillame*, having in his hands a *Katupulle-rattan* worked in gold; the *Matelle Desave*, and *Mahá Gabuda Nillame*, each with a silver dagger in his hand; then followed drum-beaters, trumpeters, and chank-blowers;² next, officers in palanquins, attended on each side by public singers; and then the Singhalese chiefs and head men on foot. From the gate of the pavilion to that of the temple, head men of the *Desavonis* and *Rátas*, armed with daggers, and the *Múdeliars* and *Mohándirams* of Kandy, dressed in their respective uniforms, were ranged in two ranks. In this order, the procession came to the gate and stopped; when the chief priest of the shrine of the relic brought it forth, and all kinds of music and firing of cannon began, with shouts of the thousands of people assembled there, exclaiming *sádú! sádú!* corresponding with our “amen.” These three different and united sounds echoed through the air like thunder. Amidst the rejoicings, the case, or shrine, containing the relic was borne under a canopy towards the elephant trained to carry it; when the many Buddhist spectators of this splendid object were transported with joy, and, with tears trickling down their cheeks, gave a shout so tremendous that the simultaneous discharge of twenty-five pieces of ordnance was inaudible.

Thus the shrine was conveyed with great pomp to the elephant, and handed to the *Mahá Nillame*, who gave it over to the hands of the *Desaves* of *Matelle* and *Udapolata*, who were on the back of

¹ In Ceylon, it is customary for persons of rank, when going into public, to be preceded by a number of men bearing whips, with which they keep up a constant cracking. The lash of the whip is very long, curiously twisted, and tapering to a point; the handle is short and thick. Specimens of these whips are to be seen in the museum of the Royal Asiatic Society.—ED.

² The chank-shell, *sankha*, or conch (*voluta gravis*), used by the priests all over India instead of a trumpet. They are esteemed sacred; and there is a regular fishery for them off the north-west coast of Ceylon.—ED.

the elephant, and who, having placed it in the case intended for its reception, dismounted.

The procession was again arranged in the following order :—

1st. Two state elephants; then a flag bearing the device of an elephant, and hand-flags; and then a chieftain and his people.

2d. The great flag, accompanied by a chieftain, with a silver dagger in his hand, and his people.

3d. The sun and moon flag of the great chieftain of the four Korles, hand-flags, a silver cane worked in gold, and the people of that chieftain.

4th. The lion flag and hand-flags of the seven Korles, accompanied by their chieftains and people.

5th. The white flag and hand-flags of the chieftain of *Matelle*.

6th. The silk flag and the hand-flags of the chieftain of *Suf-fragám*.

7th. The flag and hand-flags of the chieftain of the three Korles.

8th. The peacock flag and hand-flags of the chieftain of *Wal-lapone*.

9th. The lotus flag and the hand-flags of the chieftain of *Uda-palata*.

Then came, in order, the flags of the *Maligáwa*; *tom-tom* beaters; musicians; drummers and trumpeters; chank-blowers; men bearing torches of various descriptions; an elephant covered with a sheet embroidered in gold; a silver umbrella; a silver shield; an elephant covered with a sheet embroidered in silver; a silver umbrella; a silver shield; an elephant of state covered as the last; a silver umbrella; a silver shield; whip-crackers, followed by officers of state; torch-bearers; then the elephant conveying the relic, over which was spread a flowered canopy; the officers of the temple parading on foot around the elephant, each having a worked *talapát*,¹ or leaf, in his hand.

On the right and left of this elephant were the several great officers of state, mounted on elephants covered with scarlet, embroidered in gold and in silver, with flags, bearing devices, worked on the richest and brightest embroidered silks, with shields of gold, and umbrellas of silver.

Thus the procession, leaving the gate of the temple, proceeded through several streets, and returned to the pavilions on the plain, when the two chiefs who placed the shrine on the elephant took it

¹ The leaf of the great fan-palm (*corypha umbraculifera*), used as a parasol or screen.

off, and handed it back to the *Mahá Nilláme*, who conveyed it to the pavilion. No sooner was this done than different kinds of music, shouts, and the discharge of cannon recommenced. The shrine was then given over to the hands of the chief priest, who carried it to the seat before described; removed the relic from the thirteen gold cases in which it was deposited, and placed it on the golden flower.

The relic was exhibited first to the English ladies and gentlemen, and then to the priests, who, like a poor man finding a precious stone, beheld it with ardent looks and the most inexpressible joy, crying aloud, *sádú! sádú!* and worshipping it. After these and many other ceremonies were performed, the relic was again deposited in the case about the tenth hour of the night.

On the following day, about one o'clock, all the chiefs, clothed in white, proceeded to the place where the relic was. It was then taken out of the case, and the chiefs worshipped it, and offered money, cloth, &c. Vocal and instrumental music, with dancing, then followed. After this, people of the high and low countries worshipped the relic seven days, and made offerings to it; during which time it was guarded thus:—

First, the chief priest, and seven other priests, kept near the seat on which the relic was; these were enclosed with a row of veils; outside of these veils were seven chiefs armed with silver daggers; then another row of veils and guards; then a third row of veils and guards; then a company of Malays; then guards; and, lastly, police officers.

On the night of the third day, about ten o'clock, there were fire-works, rope-dancing, and fencing with swords and shields, &c. &c.

On Thursday, the 3d of June (till which day the relic was exhibited and offerings made), at ten o'clock, the case containing the relic was carried back, with the same procession as before, from the pavilion to the temple, and the celebration ceased.

All the ceremonies that were performed by the chief priest when the relic was taken out, were repeated when it was brought back from the pavilion to the temple.

Kandy, 15th July, 1828.