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QUEEN IN KANDY.

In solemn procession Her Majesty the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh drive through the streets of Kandy, the last capital of the Sinhalese kings. The city's population is normally about 57,000 but nearly a million people have come from far and near for a glimpse of the Queen, as, escorted by scores of dancers, she journeys towards the audience hall to receive the homage of Kandian chiefs.

At the hall, the chiefs gather for the ceremony. All wear magnificent colourful costumes, of blue, crimson and black, richly encrusted with gold braid, and with embroidered designs of flowers and animals. The chieftains welcome the Queen to the hall where, in 1815 the Kandyan Convention was signed, and there, six years ago, Ceylon's independence was celebrated.

Twenty High Buddhist priests are present for the occasion during which the assembly hears the Queen say that she is certain Ceylon will use her freedom for the happiness and well-being of all her people. During the Royal visit to the island, a journey is made to Sigiriya Rock at Polonnaruwa. In the fifth century King Kasyapa built a fortress city here, and several ruins are believed to be those of ancient Buddhist and Hindu temples. Most imposing of the carvings is a huge effigy believed to represent one of the Buddha's disciples.

The most vital moment of the tour to the people of Ceylon is Her Majesty's visit to the Temple of the Tooth. This is celebrated during the evening by a "Rajah Perchera" a mammoth procession past the Temple, the most venerated of the Buddhist shrines. Within is a tooth, believed to be of the holy Buddha himself. The royal couple enter a special octagonal tower to watch the procession, the biggest for about 150 years. 1,250 dancers and drummers keep up an incessant rhythm.

To their Queen and her husband, the people of Ceylon pay tribute with the customs and ceremonies that have survived from ancient times.



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