

in Seyllan; but there were innumerable elephants. And these though they be most ferocious monsters seldom hurt a foreigner. I even rode upon one once, that belonged to the Queen of Saba! That beast really did seem to have the use of reason—if it were not contrary to the Faith to think so.

CONCERNING THE FOOD OF OUR FIRST PARENTS.

Our first parents, then, lived in Seyllan upon the fruits I have mentioned, and for drink had the milk of animals. They used no meat till after the deluge, nor to this day do those men use it who call themselves the children of Adam. Adam, you know, was set down upon the mountain of Seyllan, and began there to build him a house with slabs of marble, etc., as has been already related. At that place dwell certain men under religious vows, and who are of surpassing cleanliness in their habits; yea of such cleanliness that none of them will abide in a house where anyone may have spit; and to spit themselves (though in good sooth they rarely do such a thing) they will retire a long way, as well as for other occasions.

They eat only once a day, and never oftener; they drink nothing but milk or water; they pray with great propriety of manner; they teach boys to form their letters, first by writing with the finger on sand, and afterwards with an iron style upon leaves of paper, or rather I should say upon leaves of a certain tree.

In their cloister they have certain trees that differ in foliage from all others. These are encircled with crowns of gold and jewels, and there are lights placed before them, and these trees they worship.¹ And they pretend to have received

¹ These were doubtless Peepul trees representing the celebrated tree of Buddh-Gaya, of which a shoot has been cherished at Anurajapura for twenty centuries (see *Tennent*, i, 343; ii, 614). Such trees are maintained in the courtyard of nearly every *wihara* or temple in Ceylon as objects of veneration (*Hardy's Eastern Monachism*, p. 212; *Knox*, p. 18). It is diffi-