

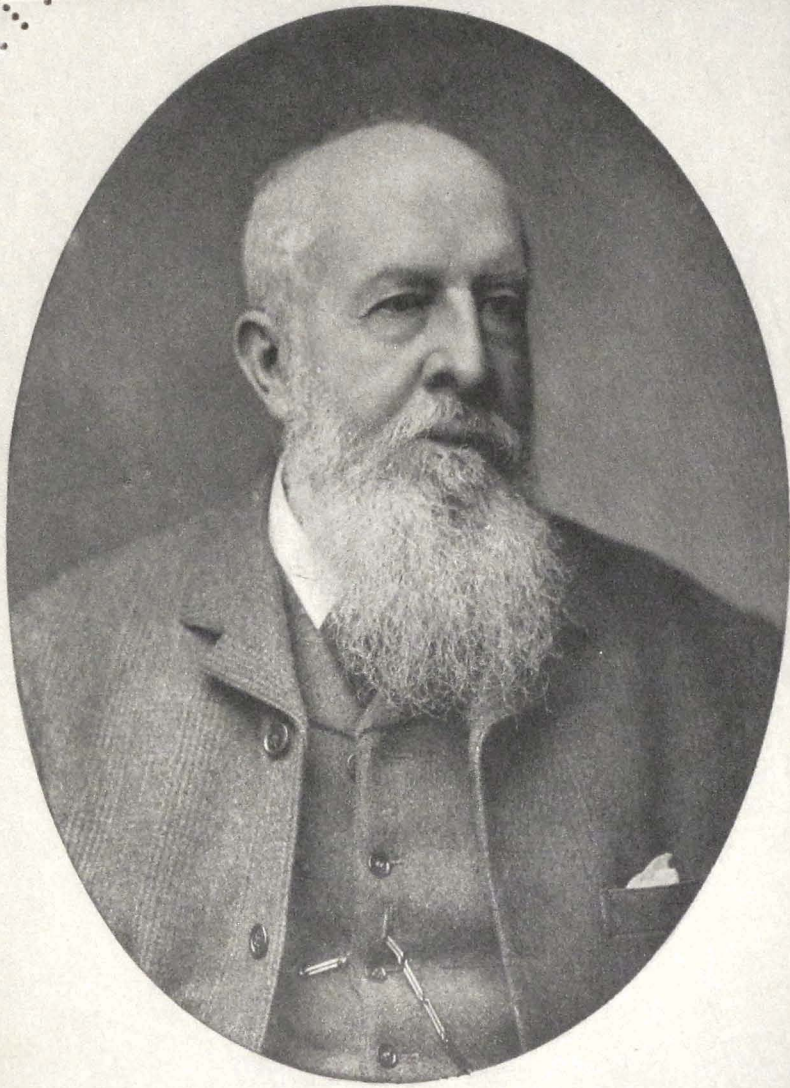
# SIXTY YEARS AGO

WANDERINGS OF A STONYHURST  
BOY IN MANY LANDS

BEING THE RELATION OF SOME OF THE  
TRAVELS AND ADVENTURES OF  
ALEXANDER HILL GRAY

LONDON  
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## PREFACE

WHILST looking at the collection of strange and quaint curiosities I had brought from foreign countries, and which at the request of the late Dowager Duchess of Atholl were being exhibited in the City Hall of Dunkeld, the secretary of the late Lord Brougham thought to remind me that I was holding my light under a bushel.

The compliment was intended as a delicate hint to induce me to write my Memoirs ; a like request being often made by my friends and neighbours from time to time.

Acting in those days as Captain of the Birnam Highlanders, I had a pleasant duty to perform, and also found a most agreeable occupation in my garden, in which, also, my dear wife took a great interest.

Fascinated by Dean Hole's *Book about Roses*, I lent the same one day to an Elder of the Kirk of Scotland, and so great was the impression made upon him, as to draw forth the remark that "Naebody tell me," said the good old man, that "ony ane who devotes himself to Roses like yon maan, can attend to his flock !"

The effect upon myself was simply to increase the Rose fever, more especially for Tea-roses, a variety which Dean Hole, "President as well as Founder of the National Rose Society," particularly admired ; his brochure "On the protection of Teas in winter time" impelling me to make a pilgrimage to Newark in the depth of winter, to find his beloved Teas at rest. The reader will kindly pardon me for referring here to the death of my dear wife, which occurred a few weeks later, after but a few days' illness.



Then followed those long winter days, when animated Nature wants rest, and it became necessary to find occupation for both mind and body, but the true Wanderer's love for Travel never long lies dormant, Nature refusing to be trammelled, well-nigh to one's ninetieth year. One early winter, after journeying through the frozen lands of Denmark and Norway, found me endeavouring to arrange if possible at Gefle in Sweden for a passage across the frozen ocean to Finland, a distance—if my memory serves me—of over 80 miles, but the charge of £50 for even such a lengthened icebound promenade appeared to me prohibitive.

A second winter I devoted to old Ireland, surely the land of mingled joys and sorrows !

A third winter given to the southern provinces of France, and a pilgrimage to Lourdes ; Spain and Portugal next year following on. Nextly, Madeira, Teneriffe, and the Grand Canary, followed by repeated visits to various Islands in the Azores, Santa Maria and St. Michael's, more especially, and occasionally to Fayal, Terceira, and others. As if these winter visitations were not sufficient to satisfy even a Vagrant, after the Rose Shows in summer were over, a journey to the Centennial in Philadelphia, another to the exhibition in Saint Louis, and to those of Paris and Vienna—all of course in different years—only helped to increase the appetite for further activity, more or less satisfied by touring as well England and Scotland. Surely all these " Wanderings "—sufficient for nearly a lifetime—afford some justification for not having put pen to paper until my old age.

Now let me return to my Highland home in Dunkeld. Repeated visits made to English and Irish gardens had convinced me that a more southern climate than that of the Scottish Highlands would prove beneficial to rose-growing in general, more particularly to Tea-roses. I decided, therefore, to exchange the romantic land of my forefathers and the rugged climate of Scotland for that of

the southern part of England, preferring the neighbourhood of Bath for this reason.

Selecting a beautiful site, with sloping ground with a south-western exposure, I employed well on to one hundred men to convert the same into terraces; these terraces being supported by high walls which I found to be best adapted for climbing varieties of Roses more especially. Experience in the first few years proved to me also that virgin soil was second to none, and I have never seen, *before or since*, Maréchal Neil more at home than on these walls.

To the Teas of course I gave my best attention, and with the help of Alfred Young, who has been my faithful gardener for over forty years, I am indebted, as well for being assisted by an army of Tea-roses (principally on standards), for having carried off the Tea-rose Trophy for Amateurs 14 times at the National Rose Society's Show in London, previous to the Great War. Let me, however, at once acknowledge that had the Great Dean, enthusiast as he was, as also were Mr. Orpen and the Rev. R. Burnside, himself the Founder of the Tea-rose Trophy for Amateurs, and Dr. C. Lamplough and others, grown anything like the number of Teas I possessed, or had they had time to devote to the cultivation of Roses which I enjoyed, I am well aware that, on several occasions, I should have been obliged to play second-fiddle.

Before parting, I must refer to the Shah of Persia's visit to the N.R.S. Show in the Crystal Palace but a few years ago. The last time I had seen his Majesty was when having an audience in Teheran, in company with the British Representative, on which occasion, owing unfortunately to an attack of jaundice, I was obliged to make a hurried exit from his august presence. The Persian soldiery on guard outside, no doubt amazed at my sudden apparition, at once exclaimed, "The mere sight of the King of Kings has nearly killed the Infidel."

On learning, therefore, that the proud owner of Shiraz

—immortalised for its Roses by the renowned Persian poet Hafiz—had vouchsafed to acknowledge that the Roses of the Infidel were immeasurably superior to his own, any prejudice for Persians I may have had at once evaporated.

Let therefore Poets and Travellers continue to belaud the Roses of Shiraz and Cashmere if they will though at the risk of being sent for a pis-aller to Jericho. May we not presume that Solomon too in all his glory sent to Jericho wherewith to decorate his harem, though had he lived in our day—and with a more limited number of Fairies—he could have overwhelmed fairy-land with the resplendent gorgeous blooms, propagated and introduced by our famous Irish Rosarians, or better still, with the angelic Teas annually exhibited by Mr. Alfred Prince of Oxford.

ALEXANDER HILL GRAY.

BEAULIEU, NEWBRIDGE, BATH,  
1925.

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EDITOR'S NOTE.

IT has afforded me much pleasure to have assisted in the publication of this interesting book, and in seeing the proofs through the press, Mr. Hill Gray's absence in the Azores having made this necessary. I have purposely retained the old orthography of proper names, *i.e.* Cashmere, etc.

GEORGE GREGORY.

BATH, MARCH, 1925.

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# SIXTY YEARS AGO

## CHAPTER I

### CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL DAYS

I WAS born on the 17th of May, 1837, at No. 5, Hastings Street, Calcutta, formerly the Government House of Warren Hastings. When not quite four years of age, accompanied by my parents, sisters, and younger brother, I made the voyage from Calcutta to England round the Cape of Good Hope—a voyage lasting, at that period, about six months. As she was leaving Calcutta, my mother was warned by her great friend, Mrs. Pittar, that a Portuguese Catholic family, the Pereiras, were to be among her fellow-passengers and that they would endeavour to convert her on the voyage. To this, my mother gaily replied: “I shall have them all Protestants, long before they reach England!” But that which Mrs. Pittar had predicted came to pass, for my mother’s conscientious desire to impress her own sincere belief upon her fellow-passengers created instead an upheaval in her own mind; and upon her arrival in Edinburgh, she was received into the Catholic Church by Bishop Gillies, greatly to the annoyance of my father’s relatives, amongst whom

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were four Presbyterian ministers, and I know not how many elders. In later days, my father often told his friends that on this account his visit to Scotland had been sadly embittered by his own relatives, even so far as to curtail his visit.

My mother was permitted to send my sisters to New Hall Convent in Essex, but the education of my brother and myself presented a more difficult problem, as I was just five years old and my brother not quite four. It was therefore with very great difficulty that my mother prevailed upon the Provincial of the Jesuits to receive us at Hodder Place, a preparatory school to Stonyhurst College in Lancashire, and one mile distant from it. When I look back on those days, I feel some pity for those two poor little mortals snatched from a mother's care and from all female society at so tender an age. Even at Stonyhurst College, in later years, boys sometimes would get momentary glimpses of matrons—unthankfully known to us as "Hags"—but at Hodder Place lay brothers took the place of "Hags" to supply the wants of tender olive-branches.

During our first years there, my brother and I were taken for many a stroll along Hodder river by the lay brothers, one of whom nearly frightened me out of my wits on one occasion when crossing a bridge, by holding me suspended over the rushing waters. Young as we were, the boys at Hodder began to learn football from the time they entered the school. The game had been peculiar to Stonyhurst a century, and was somewhat akin to the Association game of to-day. Every winter's day we played; and, with rare

exceptions, on Sunday afternoons, nor did I cease to play it up to my seventieth year !

So fascinated was I by football at this time, that the ruling passion of the day even trespassed upon my dreams, wherein, trying to arrange a super-match, I not only would choose masters and boys, but would enlist the ranks of Heaven itself ! I remember that our national saints, St. George, St. Patrick, and St. Andrew, were delighted to join in the game, whereas "foreigners" like St. Peter and St. Paul were a little dubious about giving their consent until won over by my telling them that on the occasion of the Grand Matches at Shrovetide, a pancake was awarded to any who shot a goal !

### A GLIMPSE OF SCHOOL LIFE

Next to my passion for football was my love of mischief, and this was strong enough to lead me, when coming straight from the Confessional one day, to play with a chance pail of lime and paint lying in a passage, with the result that the white-washed wall soon began to look "uncommon odd." An invitation to Brother Goodge's bedroom, however, soon sobered me, especially on finding myself *in puris naturalibus* with a birch-rod flourished above me. As a forlorn hope I dashed under the bed where my enemy could not reach me, and from this vantage point warned him over and over again "that he would suffer at the day of judgment for hurting me" ! Considering the state of mind and body I was in, I think it must have been a somewhat ludicrous scene.



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My mother dying when I was but seven years old, and my father being still in India, he was advised by a friend to send my younger brother to Mount St. Mary's College in Derbyshire.

This was really a branch of Stonyhurst but with far fewer boys, and it formed an excellent mean between the quiet life of Hodder Place and the rough and tumble of Stonyhurst, to which the elder boys proceeded. As for me, at nine years old I was sent to Stonyhurst College, and little did I realise the bullying I should have to endure. Boy-nature seems ever the same, and I suppose it will always be the lot of the "small brats" (as we were called) to obey the orders of their lordly superiors, the bigger boys.

I recall one, in particular, of the many rowdy scenes in which we small fry were forced to participate. Under the threat of a good kicking, every "brat" was forced to come to the third lower line play-room (allotted to the youngest boys) after supper with his pockets filled with waste paper. An iron post in the middle of the room supported the roof, and round this was quickly heaped the contents of our pockets; at the same time a wedge was driven below the door to prevent the untoward entrance of Mr. Booker, the third Prefect, who had charge of the play-room. A light was set to the huge heap of paper, and as it roared and crackled it revealed the faces of a swarm of small boys yelling, howling, and stamping round the room like some company of imps and devils. Great as was the uproar, we soon heard a determined assault being made upon the door outside, and by the time it was burst open we were sitting

like quiet and grave-eyed cherubs round the remnants of the miniature hell. Father Speakman was brought from the Mission to restore much-needed order. Years afterwards I met him at Lincoln, and we laughed over this and other episodes of Stonyhurst days.

Shortly after this, the same kind friend who had advised my father to send my brother to Mount St. Mary's, suggested that I should join him, and I remained there until again returning to Stonyhurst in 1853—this time, however, as a “man.”

#### WISH TO BECOME A PRIEST

During these later days I had frankly informed my father that I wished to become a priest. This was hardly to be wondered at, as I was accustomed to see very many of my school-fellows enter the noviciate for the priesthood, and amongst them several members of the oldest Catholic families of Britain, the Arundels, Cliffords, Herries, and others. My mother being dead could not take my part, and my father, who had never become a Catholic, did not give me an encouraging reply: “You want to belong to a lazy profession; consequently you must be a very lazy fellow.” Thwarted in this direction, I next earnestly begged that I might be allowed to enter a Highland Regiment, as from my infancy I always had an intense love for Scotland. But this only elicited a still more disagreeable answer: “I thought, when you wished to become a priest, you were a very lazy fellow; now that you wish to enter the army I am certain of it.”

At this period, my father had come under the

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influence of his Free Kirk relatives in Scotland, and they now advised my removal from Stonyhurst to some quiet retreat where Catholicism was non-existent, St. Andrews in Fifeshire being selected to effect the desired transformation.

But, from the first, matters refused to run smoothly, for there was not even a Catholic church in St. Andrews. We lived at first with Mr. Armstrong of the Madras College, who, on the Sunday morning, gave all of us boys the sum of one penny each to put into the Church plate. Calling Mr. Armstrong aside, I told him that as there was no Catholic church in St. Andrews, we desired to say our prayers quietly at home. He replied that Dr. Park, the minister, was a fine preacher, and we should hear a good sermon. I persisted in my objection, however, and this quickly brought Mrs. Armstrong upon the scene inquiring, "What is all this noise for on the Sabbath Day?" And the lady continued to remonstrate with me, though told by her husband that she might just as well talk to the stone wall. Threatened with expulsion on the Monday if I still persisted, I asked Mr. Armstrong whether he would not admire a Protestant boy who refused to attend Catholic worship if ordered to do so? The morrow found us again in Edinburgh amongst our Presbyterian relatives, who, I was not surprised to find, considered that Mr. Armstrong had only done what was justifiable.

Before the week was over, however, we were welcomed by an old gentleman in St. Andrews one of whose sons had gone abroad, and he had no scruples about receiving Catholics, even

permitting us to attend church at Dundee occasionally.

As for my school-fellows, having held my own in the games at Stonyhurst, it did not take me long to make friends among my new companions in spite of my religious tenets. The only time I heard something apparently intended as a "No Popery" cry was when I won a prize in a skating race when one boy shouted: "Three cheers for the Bible!"

As regards studies, it has always appeared to me that mathematics, rather than the dead languages, were considered the more essential in Scotland; whereas at Stonyhurst a considerable amount of time—I think too much—was devoted to Greek and Latin authors, and not nearly sufficient to the useful and lucrative subject of mathematics.

#### A TILT AT PRINCIPAL TULLOCH

During this time, I well remember Principal Tulloch being pointed out to me, and when introduced to him some years later, I took the opportunity of putting this question to him: "Were a leading Presbyterian Divine to be seen in Edinburgh walking up and down Princes Street on half a dozen consecutive occasions with the most insignificant Roman Catholic priest, why is it that the world of Edinburgh would jump to the conclusion that the Presbyterian was going over to Rome, and not that the priest was going to become a Protestant?"

"And what do you infer from that?" asked the Principal.

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“ That it appears to be an acknowledgment of a weak cause,” I answered.

“ I will allow that,” said the Principal ; “ but who puts trust in public opinion ? ”

He evidently regarded the saying “ *Vox Populi, Vox Dei* ” as a delusion.

It was during the two years I was at St. Andrews that the foundation stone of the Wallace Monument at Stirling was laid, at which ceremony I was present. Among the speakers on that occasion was the celebrated Rev. Dr. Gilfillan of Dundee, who, to my great astonishment, informed us that Wallace, the great hero of Scotland, was a Protestant!

### TEACHING FOOTBALL TO THE SCOTS

One day I caught sight of a game of football which was being played in a corner of the now famous golf-links of St. Andrews, and my thoughts immediately went to Stonyhurst. The players were some thirty students of the University of St. Andrews—Lowlanders *versus* Highlanders. Remarkable players as the Scotch are to-day, these University students knew absolutely nothing of the game, plunging and tumbling over each other without science, method, or discipline. The Highlanders consisted largely of “ Macs,” and, in the rough and tumble of the game, were easily superior to the Lowlanders, and evidently about to win.

This was too much for me. I had played football from my infancy, and, my father being a native of Edinburgh, I accounted myself a Lowlander. Apologising to “ Purdy,” the Lowland chieftain, for my officiousness, I explained to

him in a very few words that, if allowed to pick out a few of his best men, and place them in certain positions the result would be apparent in a few minutes, and we should undoubtedly win the game. No sooner said than done ; and, goal after goal being scored, the Lowlanders easily won.

This was more than "Roy," the Highland chieftain, could silently put up with ; and addressing "Purdy," by whose side I was standing after the game was over, he said, pointing at me : "Maan, if ye had na had that Englishman on your side, we would have licked you a' to sticks !" On being told that I was a Scot, he at once apologised to me for calling me an Englishman !

In later years I told Mr. Buckle that in consequence of the long and scientific practice of football at Stonyhurst, I would willingly wager that a picked fifteen from the Jesuit College would beat any fifteen that England could at that time produce. My friend whimsically replied that he thought mathematics would have been preferred to football by Jesuits !

## CHAPTER II

### THE INDIAN MUTINY

#### CALCUTTA

IN the year 1857 I went to India at the wish of my father, little thinking, when arriving in August, I should find the country in a state of rebellion, the King of Delhi a prisoner, and the Government anxiously awaiting reinforcements from England. To make the acquaintance of a parent one has not seen from one's earliest infancy is a common experience to Anglo-Indians and Colonials, and my father and I were comparative strangers to each other, except for a slight correspondence; yet his forty years' residence in India had made for him so many friends that I soon found myself at home with him, and with them. At this time business was at a standstill. The firm of Burn & Co., of which my father was the senior partner, had taken a large railway contract in the country lying between Benares and Calcutta; but, owing to the Indian Mutiny, his partner and most of the European staff had been obliged to come down to Calcutta.

Principally on account of its climate, Europeans in India very much prefer "Otium cum dignitate" to out-of-door pleasures; but as people, country,

and everything here were new to me, I was glad of this opportunity of seeing Calcutta. The far-famed Botanical Gardens are, to many, the most interesting sight of the city. It, and the Museum, with its Eastern objects, are not easily forgotten, and were the favourite resources I had whilst in Calcutta.

I was also much interested in the mixed races, and the Hindoo processions taking place during this month of August. Meeting with an old school-fellow on one occasion, curiosity led us to follow in the wake of a Hindoo god, highly ornamented with tinsel, which, to the beating of tom-toms and incantations, was being carried through the bazaars, accompanied by a concourse of people, a Bengalee Baboo, who spoke English, acting as Master of Ceremonies. After journeying through many parts of old Calcutta, a halt was made by the riverside, and the god was carefully lifted into a boat, to be rowed, so we were told, into the middle of the Ganges, our English-speaking Hindoo now taking sole charge. Most anxious to see this last ceremony, I quickly hired some Mahometan boatmen to overtake the Baboo (thinking that Hindoo boatmen might object to take strangers to a Hindoo festival), and was gratified to notice that he seemed pleased rather than offended at our apparent intrusion, even waiting until our boats were alongside one another before endeavouring to perform the final obsequies.

At last the crucial moment came, and the Baboo strove to lift the recumbent god preparatory to plunging it beneath the waves—but in vain he pushed and pulled and wrestled! The god stoutly



refused to be moved an inch, much less submerged, by his devoted worshipper, whose lack of muscle gave me the unique opportunity of assisting in the last rites of Brahminism in the sacred waters of the Ganges itself; for I was now permitted to lend a helping hand, and giving a good push, more full of vigour than of reverence, we toppled that Hindoo god into his watery bed. His crown of glory, made of mica, was given me as a memento by the Baboo, much to my astonishment, and upon reaching home with my new-won trophy, my father (as much surprised as alarmed) felt it his duty to chide me, particularly as his Hindoo servants asseverated that they had never heard of such sacrilege!

During my stay in Calcutta, Sir Colin Campbell and three regiments of Highlanders arrived; and the sensation created among the Hindoostanees at the review was something to be remembered; the wealthiest of the wealthy left their carriages and took to headlong flight to escape from Highland bayonets at the moment the order to charge was given.

#### REMOVE TO MOFUSSIL

But my two months' holiday in Calcutta had now come to an end, my father's partner and his staff considering it their duty to return to the Mofussil, for the purpose of carrying out the railway contract. My father regarding this journey as a good opportunity for me to learn civil engineering, for which, however, I had no bent, although it afforded me an excellent and welcome opportunity of seeing the country, my only regret being that

in lieu of having to travel about three hundred miles only, the distance did not extend to thousands. Leaving Calcutta in the autumn, my first experience in the Mofussil was at Dinapore, where I arrived just before the execution of two Sepoys took place.

They had been tried by court martial, and one was sentenced to be transported to the Andaman Isles, the other to be hanged. Through a mistake on the part of an official on guard, the man sentenced to transportation was brought out and hanged, and his body at once thrown into the Ganges. I had been told that the few Europeans then in Dinapore were expected to be present at the execution; and this, my first appearance at anything so disgusting, nearly made me collapse, though, thanks to the aid of a kindly official, no scene occurred. On the following day the right man was hanged, and his body likewise consigned to the Ganges; but whereas the body of the first man at once sank when cast into the river, that of the second man floated, the natives all regarding this as sure proof of the innocence of the one last executed.

At this period, owing to the excited state of the country, it was not surprising that alarms were often raised from trivial causes. On one occasion, at Dinapore, the rumour went round that the rebels were near at hand. A great noise was proceeding from the native bazaar, and, approaching nearer, I caught sight of a valiant Irish lady, who, with upraised dagger in hand, was stepping out into her veranda, her defiant look expressing the sentiment "Let 'em all come!" For some

time I watched her threatening terrible things, until a servant told her that an elephant, breaking loose in the bazaar, had caused all the tumult !

At Arrah, on another occasion, I attended, not an execution, but a pastime, which was the order of the day at that place ; namely, Sikh cavalry competing for prizes—the prize to be awarded to the cavalier who, with drawn sword, and riding at full speed, could cut an orange suspended in the air. The first three galloping past, one after the other, at full speed, failed to cleave the orange. Then there came an alarming pause, created by the fourth man's hesitation in following on. Meantime, the first competitor, naturally concluding that no other was going to follow, sword in hand, charged again with terrible speed, encountering the fourth cavalier who had taken too long to make up his mind, the result being that both horses fell and lay apparently dead, and their riders were seriously injured. Of course every one hastened to subscribe for the families of the injured warriors.

Notwithstanding the continued disturbed condition of the country, and the excitement caused by the sudden arrival of passing Sepoys in the immediate neighbourhood, I must allow that my eighteen months' experience in the Mofussil was more of a holiday than aught else, affording me the opportunity of acquiring a knowledge of the Hindoostanee language.

After all, a boy of twenty does not take life or politics very seriously, and coming fresh from England I did not realise the gravity of affairs in India. To me everything seemed, just then, a glorious "rag," and the dangers and excitements

of those weeks did but add zest to a life which always hankered after adventure.

Most of the time I had the great good fortune to be located with Mr. Michael Fox, also of Edinburgh, and a Civil Engineer, beloved both by Europeans and natives. Together we shared whatever dangers were going, at one time being forced to encamp in the little Fort of Zemaneah for weeks together, our companions being gallant Sikh Cavalry, whose duty it was to keep watch in the country around. With these young warriors I enjoyed scouring through the Mofussil, little dreaming that I was later to become not only a volunteer, but also Interpreter to the Military Train.

### SNAKE-CHARMERS

Amongst my many experiences of life in the Mofussil, one that remains most clearly in my memory is my first acquaintance with snake-charmers. My kind friend would sometimes be called away to superintend work at a distance, and on these occasions had to leave me to my own resources, which chiefly consisted in managing the natives as best I could, and learning their language.

One afternoon a man came from some little distance begging me to prescribe medicine for a little boy who had been bitten by a snake. As, previous to this time, I had never seen a snake outside a museum, and had nothing with me to cure snake bites, I was forced to fall back upon brandy as a stimulant and possible restorative; and hurrying away on horseback to the village,

found a little boy, perhaps ten years old, in a very helpless and dazed condition, surrounded by a number of women crying and lamenting loudly and dismally. As it was impossible to induce the child even to taste the brandy, I rubbed a little on the part of the leg bitten, but hardly had I done so, when he died in my arms ! Thereupon the women, who had been collecting dried faggots, lost no time in hurrying away with the corpse to burn it, and cast the ashes into the Ganges.

Not many minutes elapsed before two snake-charmers made their appearance, exhibiting a live snake inside an earthenware vessel, the snake having been found by them (so they said) in the house where the boy had been bitten. Thinking this a favourable opportunity for getting rid of any snakes there might be near to my bungalow, I invited the men to come there, offering them a reward if they should find any snakes. This they promised to do, and arrived on the following evening. My servants accompanied me in the search for snakes, and one of the men, playing on a flute, warned us to keep a sharp look out because the sound of music attracted snakes, and if one were to spring out of the ground it might prove dangerous. Needless to say, after this we all kept close to the flute-player. Meanwhile the second man, leaving us a good many yards behind, continued to walk warily. Suddenly he stopped, eyeing something on the ground, and then, waving his hands up and down, he gave vent to a cry of apparent terror and surprise. At once we left the flute-player, and, running up to his companion, we saw a sluggish-looking snake at his feet. The

man was engaged in probing a sharp instrument into the snake's mouth, for the purpose, we were told, of destroying the poison gland, and this done, the snake was put into an earthenware vessel.

I was particularly anxious to be present at the capture of a snake, and I now asked the two men to keep together and find another ; but on their reminding me that it was near nightfall, I had to be content with a promise that they would return in a few days. On the next occasion, the snake-charmers brought with them two earthenware vessels containing many snakes, but as my chief object in asking the men to come was to see snakes caught, if possible, in the bungalow, I told them to put aside their collection for the time being, which they at once did. Before starting on this second search I was anxious to be assured that neither of the men had a snake concealed about his person ; in order to verify this, the delicate request had to be made to allow one of my servants to search their persons before proceeding. To soften this discourteous proposition, I reminded them that hundreds of people, wearing no clothes whatever, could daily be seen bathing in the Ganges at Benares.

In reply, whilst expostulating with a nonchalant air that only fools would expose their bodies to be bitten by snakes, one of the snake-charmers conceded my request. Forthwith, a smart youngster, standing by, entered the bathroom with the men, and confided to them in a loud whisper : " Of course, only a stranger who does not know our language well could believe us fools enough to carry snakes about us ! " And this address (worthy

of a custom-house officer) evidently threw the men off their guard, for, on carelessly removing their clothing, they enabled the youth to catch a glimpse of a small bag worn by one of them. On asking for what purpose it was worn, the snake-charmer became agitated, and said in a loud voice : “ Son of all that is vile ! Do you want me to display my nakedness ? ” The loud tone in which these words were uttered naturally attracted my attention ; and standing outside the bathroom, I asked for an explanation of the disturbance, the youth replying : “ One of the men has a bag fastened on his person, and refuses to take it off ! ” On hearing this I ordered the boy to open the door, and the snake-charmer, holding out the bag to me, exclaimed : “ It is my salt !—it is my salt ! ” signifying that it was by means of this deception he gained his living. In the bag was a snake, apparently semi-torpid, doubtless from having been kept in confinement. Chiding the snake-charmers for earning their salt by false pretences, and making them a present in exchange for the snake and bag (which I have kept to this day), I told them to clear out, with all the belongings they had brought in the two earthenware jars.

It was soon evident that, before leaving, they had considerably alarmed my servants, for these, headed by the youth who had searched them, now implored me to return both snake and bag. Otherwise, they said, from no matter what distance, the snake-charmers had it in their power to send a snake to kill me. And it availed me nothing to remind them that, although the British were at that very moment besieging Lucknow, snake-

charmners were not being employed by the rebels to send snakes to bite our generals !

Snake stories could fill a volume in themselves, but I think the incident which remains most vividly in my memory was my encounter with a cobra one dark October night in Shahabad. I had been invited out to dine with some friends and on my way I rested for a few moments against a tree, waiting for my servant to join me. I had hardly leant against the tree when a loud hiss warned me that I was disturbing a snake of some kind. As may be imagined, I pursued my way hurriedly to join my friends at dinner, and mentioned the incident to them, taking good care not to go near the tree when returning to my tent that night. Early in the morning I set out, anxious to discover my enemy of the previous night. I found him fast asleep in a hole at the foot of the tree, and it was easy to see how I had disturbed his peaceful slumbers. Procuring a good lance, I left him pinned to the tree, until I returned with a large bottle filled with spirits of wine.

Sixty years have passed, and that cobra, and the mark of his wounds, may still be seen, with my other trophies from far-off lands at my home in Bath.

#### SAVED FROM A WOLF'S JAWS

The months of March and April in the Mofussil, though in the daytime excessively hot, are followed by nights so agreeable as to tempt one sometimes, even in the proximity of tigers, to risk sleeping in the open air. One night in March, when thoroughly enjoying the cool, balmy air, an agonised



cry as from a child awoke me, and, thanks to Indian night-wear (*not* night-mare), it was only a minute before I found myself in a mango grove, with two grown-up wolves and their two young ones not many yards from me. The cry I had heard proceeded from a little naked girl, perhaps five years old, who had been snatched up whilst endeavouring to pick up some unripe mangoes, by one of the full-grown wolves. I had come without gun or revolver, but a roar and a rush caused the wolf (probably on account of its young) to drop the child, who in a moment was in my arms, crying bitterly, owing to three or four nasty gashes she had received. Returning at once to my bungalow, the inevitable Holloway's ointment of those days was applied to the wounds, while the cries of the little one continued unceasingly. Upon the dining-room table stood a basin of sugar; would it be possible to stop those cries by sugar? The very first spoonful succeeded; and, making a bed upon the table, the poor little girl, notwithstanding her plight, was soon fast asleep.

With morning dawn I endeavoured to discover her parents; but soon was told that an aunt was the only relative left to the poor orphan. Upon the arrival of the aunt, I chided her for neglecting the child, to which she merely answered that she had enough to do looking after her own children, and had no intention of troubling herself about those belonging to others. On my telling her that I would send the child to an orphanage, she seemed perfectly satisfied, and added that she did not wish to see the child again. In a few days' time the ugly wounds appeared somewhat better, and I was

glad to learn from the Catholic Bishop of Patna (whose letter I still have) that he would be pleased to receive my little protégée. Unfortunately, that poor Hindoo orphan never did recover, but was baptised a Christian, and died before she was six years of age.

Hoping that the same wolves would repeat their visit to the mango grove on the night following the rescue of the child, I had a small bed fixed under a tree there, and a goat tethered to the same tree. I then found a night watchman, who, on the approach of the wolves, would pull a string tied to my big toe, and hand me my loaded gun. Thus accoutred, my sleep was left undisturbed until my big toe felt the tug of war. Then I heard the goat rushing first here, and then there, but could see neither goat nor wolves owing to the darkness. Begging the night watchman to fire the gun himself, that donkey told me he was frightened. I, too, was frightened that I might shoot the goat instead of the wolves, but, seizing the gun, I made for where the wolves ought to have been at that moment. They had retired, however, and I soon after followed their good example, and went to rest also.

Encamped, on another occasion, close to an Indian jungle, just before retiring to rest, I was alarmed at hearing, as I thought, the cry of a child : the natives increasing the excitement by their shouts of " Butcha puckeragiya ! " that is, " Young one seized." For some time, one native only was ahead of me, the direction from which the cry came being our only guide. At length, completely exhausted, and the cry having died away, I remarked to my companion that the victim seized must have been

the child of some poor carter I had seen about during the day. "Sahib! it was not the child of a human being, but the young of a goat," was the reply. "Why, then, did you not tell me that before?" I asked in considerable wrath. "Sahib, 'Butcha puckeragiya' was correct, for the word *butcha* in Hindoostanee is a word applied either to the *child* of a human being or that of an animal!" And so, to save a poor little kid, I had nearly collapsed, and had almost tumbled into a deep well *en route*. Surely, after this, I was entitled to a refresher!

I often used to watch the natives catching the wild duck, which would come down, of a summer evening, from the Himalayan ranges, and plunge recklessly into a pond five or six feet deep near my bungalow. Provided with a good round earthenware vessel, sufficient to cover head and neck freely, and perforated with two small apertures for the eyes, a man, or boy, whilst lying quietly under the water (always lukewarm), could with his hands pull below duck after duck, as they were swimming around him.

Generally, after a few had been captured, the remainder would take alarm and fly away, but I have more than once succeeded in catching a good larder-full of wild duck in this manner in the Mofussil.

It is well known how strong are Hindoo prejudices to this day, particularly as regards food, which Hindoos consider to be polluted if touched by any of an alien faith or even a fellow-Hindoo if of low caste. So far is this prejudice carried, that on one occasion when I asked some Hindoo

friends in a village for a drink of milk they brought me a generous pailful, out of which I drank a very small quantity. When, however, I replaced the pail upon the ground, half a dozen naked boys standing near whistled for the village curs to come and drink all that was left. Another time I chanced to pass a Hindoo who was cooking his food in the open. I stopped for a moment, and my *shadow* fell upon his dinner, which he immediately threw away!

The engaging of servants was generally an anxiety, and never more so than in the case of the self-styled native "convert." I received once a letter from the Italian priest of Ghazeepoor, requesting me to find employment for the bearer, who could speak English and read and write Persian, and whom the priest had just received into the Catholic Church. On interrogating the man I learnt that he had been for fourteen years a Protestant in Allahabad, and had only been in Ghazeepoor for two weeks, during which time he had become a Catholic!

I knew that a friend of mine, Mr. French, a Civil Engineer, was in want of some one who could read and write Persian, but as I found on inquiry that the "convert" had brought no letter of introduction to the priest at Ghazeepoor and I myself knew nothing of his antecedents, it was highly risky to recommend him. However, knowing Mr. French's need, I at length sent the man to him with a letter, warning him that I knew nothing of the bearer, nor probably did the priest who had sent him to me. Mr. French informed me afterwards that on reading my letter he said

to the man : “ If you steal anything I’ll punch your head ! ” To which the “ convert ” replied in a hurt and dignified manner : “ Don’t speak to me like that. I am not a thief.” Thereupon my friend opened a drawer, made the man count out the 500 rupees which it contained, gave him the key, and told him that he was now responsible for the contents.

Two days later, Mr. French came storming over to me. “ Why did you send me that black-guard ? ” he cried. “ He has stolen 500 rupees and my best horse ! ” Nor was the “ convert ” ever heard of again.

#### THE MUTINY DEEPENS. I ACCOMPANY THE PUNITIVE FORCE

After the capture of Lucknow, mutineers from Shahabad and the adjoining districts hurried down to regain their native homes, closely pursued by our own troops. An important land proprietor in Shahabad, as well as a leading rebel, was Baboo Koer Sing of Jugdispoor, a well-known village in the very heart of Jugdispoor forest. Scarcely had Koer Sing, accompanied by Nishan Sing, Secretary to Nana Sahib of Cawnpore, gained the south side of the Ganges, when they and their retainers were fired upon by the pursuing artillery, at that moment approaching the northern side. A bomb, striking the howdah upon which the two were seated, seriously injured Koer Sing, who died shortly after his arrival in Jugdispoor, and wounded Nishan Sing, who was eventually captured when taking shelter in the hills south of Sasseram.

Not until the rainy season was over was any serious attempt made to attack the rebels who had gathered in and around Jugdispoor. At a village named Keeree Mookrah, some distance from Buxar, where the rebels were becoming troublesome, it was resolved to send a force against them, and I was given permission to accompany it as a volunteer.

Accordingly, before midnight a body of infantry was embarked on board a steamer which, leaving the Ganges, in a couple of hours entered the Karamnasa river. Dawn found us marching upon Keeree Mookrah, though, as we passed through several small villages, word had doubtless been given to the Sepoys of our approach. Before the enemy was sighted the heat had already become oppressive, and towards midday it was especially trying to our English soldiers. I chanced to come upon two of these latter who had thrown themselves under a tree for protection from the sun, and, noticing at the moment some rebel cavalry careering around at no great distance, I begged the prostrate fellows to make an effort to rise. "If you ever did a kind act in your life," said one, "do it now, and put a bullet through my head." "And put a bullet in mine also," groaned his companion. The words were scarcely uttered, when two palanquins, filled with the necessary articles for a soldiers' mess, appeared, and I took it upon myself to order the bearers to stop and turn out all the contents of the palanquins; next, to place a soldier in each, and then replace as best they could all the articles. This, to my great delight, was speedily done. I never had the satisfaction, however, of seeing these two poor fellows again.

The expedition to Keeree Mookrah was successful, though at the cost of some few killed and wounded, Captain Douglas and another gallant officer, a Captain Mason, both being among the former.

For the coming Shahabad campaign the principal forces selected were the Military Train—here employed as cavalry—and the Third Sikh Cavalry, under Captain Ryall. With some of the latter I was personally acquainted, but not with the former, who had only recently arrived from England. When, therefore, Major Wyatt invited me to act as Interpreter for the Military Train, I was only too pleased to accept the offer, remaining with them until the end of the campaign, and until reaching Sasseram, on the Grand Trunk Road. The rainy season ended, and all being ready, we set out, and passing the Rajah of Dumraon's possessions near Buxar, it was not long before we found traces of the enemy's presence. When passing a village called Chougaien, shots were fired at the Military Train, and returned by them effectively. I requested the Major to dismount some of his men, but his reply was that to dismount his men would cost him his commission.

Seeing the Sikh Cavalry, also mounted, on another side of the village, I made bold to ask a like favour of their commander, Captain Ryall, who at once ordered a Subadar with a number of his men to come to my assistance, and we worked our way round to the house which the Sepoys had barricaded. Once there, not content with firing at each other whenever opportunity afforded, both Sikh and Sepoy now surpassed each other in

abusive language, the Sikhs defying the Sepoys to come out and fight, and the Sepoys boasting that they fought with swords, their favourite weapons.

As this hubbub was but wasting time, it occurred to me that by setting the house on fire our work would be quickly ended: so, requesting the Subadar to keep the Sepoys engaged, I slipped round to one end of the building, and setting fire to three armfuls of straw and rubbish I had piled against the side of the wall, anxiously watched the crackling flames ascending, to set fire also, I trusted, to the overhanging roof of the house itself. Whilst engaged in this interesting occupation, and laden with one more load to achieve my object, the Subadar and my beloved Sikhs came rushing to inform me that, at that very moment, the bugle was sounding the "Retire." Incredible as such an order appeared to me, and at that moment too, it still had to be obeyed. It was caused, we were told, by a despatch from Colonel Turner, ordering the Military Train and Sikh Cavalry to join forces with him, on the south side of Jugdispoor without delay.

On reaching the camp at nightfall, Major Wyatt informed me that he purposed sending an immediate reply to Colonel Turner, and I at once offered to take the letter, explaining that if written upon thin paper I could hide it in the hole of a decayed tooth. At first the Major apparently acquiesced in my offer; but, after writing the letter, he distinctly gave me to understand that it would have to be delivered by a native messenger. A second time I made my offer, but this time it was sternly declined, notwithstanding my expressed



belief that any native forced to take a letter would not prove trustworthy. Finally I suggested that a father and his two sons be taken prisoners and one of the sons should take the letter, and as it appeared, from local information, quite feasible for an active man to reach and return from Colonel Turner's camp before sunrise, the messenger should be given to understand that his failing to return before sunrise with a reply from Colonel Turner, might cost his father and brother their lives. My proposal was adopted, and, on learning the possible fate of his father and brother, the messenger chosen burst into tears, and nothing was gained by my telling him that I would gladly go with him, if permitted to do so. As I had surmised, no message or letter arrived from Colonel Turner the following morning; and not being desirous of shedding innocent blood, I suggested that probably the messenger himself had been killed if found in possession of the letter. Of course father and brother were at once released, and a second letter was given to me to deliver to Colonel Turner, four of the Military Train being now sent with me as my escort.

After covering some nine or ten miles, we passed through a village where I was informed that notice had been given the previous night of the arrival of English Cavalry in the neighbourhood we had just come from, whereupon three hundred Sepoys from the country around had hastened to plunge into the Jugdispoor forest. We duly arrived at Colonel Turner's camp, where a day or two's delay occurred before orders were given for the Military Train to proceed to Eir, a village outside

the forest and not many miles from Jugdispoor, situated in a thickly wooded country : one much better adapted for infantry than for cavalry, as, indeed, the events that followed quickly proved.

After a long day's journey, we halted just beyond the village of Eir in the midst of a clump of trees, and within a few hundred yards of dense shrubbery. I remember, as if it were yesterday, seeing our stout Dr. Jackson enjoying a refreshing bath, when a shower of bullets passed suddenly through the branches over our heads. Previous to this there had not been a vestige of anything to remind us of the proximity of Sepoys. Now, suddenly, the air was rent with cries of : " Gunga mai kee jey " (" Long live Mother Ganges "), " Kali mai kee jey " (" Long live Kali Mother "), " Mahadeo Kee jey " (" Long live Mahadeo "). Though taken by surprise, the Military Train lost not a moment in sending out skirmishers to attack the Sepoys hidden amongst the dense brushwood where concealment for infantry was easy. But what a trap for cavalry to be caught in ! I don't wonder that I heard a despairing voice exclaim : " Would to God we had fifty infantry ! "

#### A VOLUNTEER FOR HELP

It was impossible to ignore such an appeal, and I at once volunteered to try and get the necessary help from Brigadier Douglas's camp at Biheea which lay beyond the forest. Upon my volunteering to go for the requisite infantry, four of the nearest mounted men were ordered to accompany me, and in a very few minutes, we were tearing

hard through the high sugar-caned fields, singing merrily : " Cheer, boys, cheer," as we plunged through swamps and ditches, whilst skirting the long twenty odd miles of forest about Jugdispoor. The country was new to me, but the forest itself was some guide. At the same time, it was necessary to obtain information as soon as possible as to where we were, and as the forest was in the enemy's possession, it behoved us to go warily. At nightfall, I caught the gleam of a fire within the forest, and suggested to the corporal that it would be advisable for him to hold my horse whilst I went alone to discover the nearest way to Biheea, and how far we were from it.

Creeping cautiously towards the fire, I came to a mud wall separating me from a number of people seated around the fire. To leap over the wall and make for one of the crowd would be but the work of a moment ; yet, were I not to single out one individual, I feared to lose the lot, and so, intent upon that one alone, I slid gently over the wall. My sword clashing against my side, however, gave the alarm, and a general flight instantly took place, all escaping except the one I had fixed my eye upon, and whom I seized triumphantly. Imagine my chagrin when the frightful shriek which followed revealed that I had become the proud captor of an old black hag ! To my great relief the corporal instantly joined me, and I found that whereas I had seized an old woman, he had secured a fine specimen of a Rajpoot, one of the fighting caste of India, who, on entering the forest in the dark night, had stumbled unexpectedly into the arms of my four Britishers.

I ordered the Rajpoot to show us the way to Biheea, and for a moment he demurred; then, apparently making up his mind, he suddenly made a plunge into the forest, and led us in a direction which I felt sure would bring us to Jugdispoor, the head-quarters of the enemy. So, showing him my revolver, I let him understand that he would be the first man shot if he misled us, whereas, by guiding us at once to Biheea, I would mention his name to the Commissioner of the District, with the request that he would give him a "Jagheer," or grant of land. The word "Jagheer" acted as a charm, and, telling us there was perhaps a shorter way, he turned right round, and set off this time in what I felt sure to be the right direction. "Put a bullet into the brute," said the corporal, angry at the glaring attempt to deceive us, but I replied: "Certainly not: you have been most fortunate to have captured him."

Riding through endless fields, sometimes deep in water, and constantly swimming the horses, we were glad to reach Brigadier Douglas's camp about 10 p.m., without being challenged by our sentries. The Brigadier was astonished to hear that we had reached him without trouble, as he informed me that there had been fighting the same day in the direction from which we had come. I at once gave him the message I had received from Major Wyatt, and was asked whether I had been ordered to come that night, or had volunteered. I replied that I was a volunteer with the force, whereupon he wished to learn whether I was a Scotsman. Learning that he had guessed my nationality correctly, he honoured me by entering my name in a book he had in his hand

and was about to send the relief asked for, when our conversation appeared to awaken an officer who was sleeping with his head on the table, and who, it transpired, was the son of the famous Havelock.

Said the Brigadier: "Tell Sir Henry the news you have just brought." I did so, and was asked whether the Military Train had swords. "Of course," was my reply. "Then let them fight for themselves," was the response, which drew from me one equally curt: "Had you, Sir, come from where we have, you would have been as glad of a relief of Infantry as I know the Military Train will be." "Perhaps I should," was the peculiarly irritating response vouchsafed by Sir Henry Havelock. Thereupon the Brigadier, interposing, informed me that the next day he purposed attacking Jugdispoor, adding, that I and the men with me had better be present.

#### DISASTER TO THE MILITARY TRAIN

Early the next morning came the news of the sad catastrophe which had befallen the Military Train. The relief expected the previous night not having been received, they were compelled to retire slowly on Arrah, pursued by the now triumphant mutineers: their horses were obliged to swim a swollen river, causing the loss of a quantity of the baggage which, as I have already remarked, was considerable. But worse than this, the loophole created at the village of Eir, close to Jugdispoor, by the departure of the Military Train, left nothing to impede the retreat of the rebels to the Cheynpore hills, evidently their next place of refuge. I chanced to be with the Brigadier when

this bad news reached him. Sir Henry Havelock, with apparent nonchalance, remarked : " Depend upon it, we shall hear more of this some day ! " as if he himself were not in some degree responsible for the catastrophe.

With the fall of Jugdispoor fighting in Shaha-bad was at an end, the Sepoys, under Nishan Sing, losing no time in endeavouring to reach the Cheynpore hills, south of Sasseram. They were followed in a day or two by Sir Henry Havelock, now in chief command of the Military Train, the Third Sikh Cavalry, and a few of the Tenth Infantry. Getting word, on the afternoon of the second day, that he was closing upon the rebels, Sir Henry, galloping up to Major Wyatt, hitherto commanding the Military Train, forbade him in a loud voice to allow the Military Train to charge the enemy without his permission. The Major politely acquiesced. In less than two minutes, galloping back furiously, with a great split in the left knee of his trousers, Sir Henry, in a stern voice, repeated the same order, and again a third time, all within five minutes, no doubt causing the Military Train to bless the man who appeared to take a delight in treating their Commander as if he were a child ! The day passed without any further sign of the rebels, except one Sowar (native cavalry), who was brought in a prisoner to Sir Henry at nightfall. Telling the prisoner that he would hang him to a tree the next day, and giving him in charge of a soldier, Sir Henry rolled on the ground to sleep. In the course of the night we were roused again, and, entering a hut along with others, I lay down upon some straw to get

a wink of sleep, but was immediately startled by a cry from below the straw. No wonder! Underneath lay an angry Briton, upon whose stomach I had been unconsciously treading! There were still no rebels to be seen on the following day; so, going in search of last night's prisoner and his keeper, I found that the latter, a cavalry man, had tied a rope round the prisoner's body, which, lying on the roadway, was being dragged anyhow over rocks and stones, and this at a distance dangerously far behind the force under Sir Henry Havelock. The soldier informed me that he had been compelled to drag the prisoner along the ground for a considerable time, and that the unfortunate man was, in fact, being dragged to death; but what could he do under the circumstances, as he had charge of the prisoner? I reminded the soldier of the last words addressed by Sir Henry to the prisoner, adding that it would be true kindness to put the prisoner out of pain at once. This the soldier then did with one shot.

Later in the day, Sir Henry inquired for the prisoner, and upon learning that he had been shot, he at once threatened the soldier with a court martial. I begged to be allowed to give evidence in his favour should such an event take place, but I heard no more on the subject.

Before this day's journey was ended, I found my faithful horse, "Bruce," was unfit for much more work, and when passing through a large village I requested the principal proprietor to take charge of him, making all arrangements for requiting him for his trouble. Within a month "Bruce"

was returned to me in perfect health. The next and last night of the campaign found me riding on a camel, still on the track of the Sepoys, who, by dint of forced marches, succeeded in retiring into the Cheynpore hills before being overtaken by the British.

Nishan Sing was still their leader, though suffering from the effects of the bomb-shell which had killed Koer Sing. It was his custom to send a follower into Sasseram to procure relief for the wound, and this eventually led to his capture. The servant, being caught and imprisoned, was promised freedom if he would give information to Captain Nolan of the Sasseram Police, and this being done, Captain Nolan bravely volunteered to capture the wounded rebel, who was then brought into Sasseram and tried before the judge for his complicity in the Mutiny. He was ordered to be blown away from the guns, which sentence was duly put into effect, and thus ended the Shahabad Campaign.

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My father died in 1859, and I returned to Scotland, staying there over a year. After a visit to France I set out in August 1861 on what was to prove the first of my long journeys.

The following testimonials speak for themselves :—had Mr. Hill Gray been in the regular army he would undoubtedly have received the Victoria Cross.—[EDITOR.]

Buxar, January 14th, 1858.

MY DEAR GRAY,

I have much pleasure in testifying to your gallant conduct in our little affair near Chougien on the morning of the 14th October last, and consider that had you been in the Military



Service the Victoria Cross would undoubtedly have been awarded to you.

I sincerely hope you may succeed in obtaining a commission.

Believe me,

Yours very truly,

H. W. RYALL,

Commanding 3rd Sikh Cavalry.

A. H. Gray, Esq., Buxar.

Mr. Gray was attached to the Military Train during the Jugdispoor campaign, and on one occasion volunteered and brought intelligence through great dangers; I have much pleasure in giving this testimony to his gallantry.

JOHN DOUGLAS,

Brigadier.

Arrah, January 17th, 1859.

This is to certify that Alexander Gray, Esq., accompanied the Military Train through the Jugdispoor campaign and including the pursuit under Major Sir H. Havelock, and rendered me great service as Interpreter.

J. H. WYATT,

Captain Commanding 2nd Batt. M. Train.

Arrah, January 11th, 1859.

Brigade Office, M. Train,  
Woolwich, Feb. 6, 1862.

I certify that Mr. Alexander Hill Gray served as Interpreter to the Military Train which formed a portion of the force under Sir J. Douglas, K.C.B., during the operations in Shahabad (East Indies) in 1858-59, and that he rendered great service to the Corps—and was several times under fire—I commanded the Military Train during the time Mr. Alex. Hill Gray served with it as Interpreter.

J. H. WYATT,

M. Train,

Brigadier and Major.

Certified that Mr., now Captain, Alexander Hill Gray served with my sanction as a volunteer in the attack on the Balu stockades in the Bhootan campaign of 1865.

Bg. FRASER-TYTLER,  
Major-Genl., late Commanding in Bhootan.

## CHAPTER III

### ITALY AND THE HOLY LAND

IN these days of universal travel, when a multitude of books describe the continental countries and their sights and treasures, there is no need for me to give an account of the many places I visited in 1861. Yet some few incidents out of the ordinary run which befell me on my way through Germany and Italy at that time may perhaps be of interest to this later generation. Among notabilities of the time was Garcia, the Spanish gambler, whose exploits at Frankfort, Hamburg, and other important cities, caused his arrival there to be somewhat dreaded. When it became known that he purposed visiting Baden Baden at the height of the season, it helped considerably to swell the list of visitors expected. At nightfall, the Assembly Rooms were so crowded with the fashionable world, that it was more agreeable to remain seated than to stroll about. On his arrival in Baden, Garcia chanced to put up at my hotel, and naturally attracted considerable notice, first in the hotel, and later on in the Assembly Rooms themselves. But in the course of the evening, the rumour ran that Garcia was losing heavily, and that an English friend by his side was advising him to cease play for the day. An irate Frenchman, probably

interested in the game, told the Englishman to mind his own business, and the latter replied by giving the Frenchman a box on the ear. Immediately there was an uproar, with a rush to the doorway. In the end Garcia lost £25,000, and the combatants agreed to fight a duel on the morrow, but peace was probably concluded between them, as no duel took place.

At the Opera House in Bologna, perhaps a quarter of an hour before the performance, every one noticed a gentleman, whose breast was completely covered with medals, walking up and down in front of the stage, assuming such an air of affectation and conceit that one would imagine his object was to be hissed, rather than cheered. It was difficult to understand such mannerism, or to approve of this ludicrous way of introducing himself to the audience. Yet from the moment that the great Silvani (for he it was) drew his bow across the strings, the house was hushed into such enraptured silence that any late-comer immediately brought down upon himself the anger of the "gods." To hear him was to experience the whole gamut of the human emotion, and to feel the mysteries of nature—the sweet singing of the birds and anon the fierce howling of the winds, as in a storm at sea.

No wonder, then, if he who shortly before had been hissed by many of the audience now felt himself amply revenged when these same mockers by their vociferous "encores" were beseeching favours at his hands.

On the 7th December, 1861, I left Bologna in a diligence, for the purpose of travelling to

Florence, a somewhat fatiguing journey, especially in winter time over the Apennines.

My fellow-travellers were principally Italians, two of them Garibaldians, who had accompanied their leader through his late campaigns. One of them, Dr. Sarda Maggiore, a Sicilian, became *en voyage* the soul of our party, leading off with one or other of Verdi's favourite airs, and joined by pretty well all of us. Fortunately for me, the Doctor spoke French, and acted as my interpreter with his fellow-countrymen. Singing continued far into the night, and little or no sleep was to be had much before dawn. Shortly after daylight came, a succession of talking and singing followed, until we stopped at a country inn for breakfast. Here we found a cavalcade of oxen waiting to drag us over chain after chain of the wearisome Apennine mountains, now partly covered with snow. Our progress was so slow as to invite troops of little boys and girls—as merry as they were poor—to follow us for long distances, usually singing, when not begging for alms.

Shortly before sundown, we rested for half an hour at a little inn, where our driver informed us there would be a stay of half an hour's duration. As my companions preferred to rest, I took a stroll along a roadway, which in a few minutes led me up to a cemetery. At once I recalled to mind the many silly stories I had heard respecting ghouls, devils, and whatnot! And here I was, on the eve of night, standing at the entrance to an Italian cemetery! Asking myself what there was to fear, I tried the gateway and found it unlocked. The next moment I was gazing at numberless skulls

which had been set in the entire face of the interior of the cemetery walls, in order to leave ground in the cemetery itself for other bodies, it being apparently the custom to disinter bodies every few years. The ramble did me great good, for, from that day, goblins of this sort have always been at a discount with me ! On our arrival at Florence, Dr. Sarda Maggiore wished to know at what hotel I purposed stopping, as he was anxious for my company. I mentioned *Albergo dell Europa*, recommended by Murray, and as we entered it, we found a number of my countrymen enjoying a very inviting dinner. Along with one or two new-comers, the Doctor joined us at a side table shortly afterwards.

#### GARIBALDI AND PIO NONO. A COMEDY

Everything went on merrily until the dinner was nearly over, by which time my Garibaldian friend, whose uniform and loud conversation had attracted general attention, rose to propose a toast. "Certain," as he said he was, when raising his glass, "that all present will be delighted to drink the health of the greatest man alive, I rise to propose the health of *Garibaldi*." The last word had barely escaped his lips, when I, too, rising quickly, agreed that it was right and proper to drink to the health of the greatest man living and proposed that "the name of '*Pio Nono*' be substituted for that of '*Garibaldi*' !" The English who were present evidently regarding this as a joke, laughed outright, thereby agitating exceedingly Dr. Sardo Maggiore nell Escrato Meridionale, who appeared dumb-

founded, the more so, as I had requested the waiter, "*to bring coffee and pistols for two,*" which only increased the mirth of the English.

"But I am not joking!" shouted the now excited Doctor, to which I replied, "I, too, am in earnest." "Are you not a Protestant then?" asked Dr. Sardo. "No, I am 'Catholico, Apostolico, Romano,'" was my reply.

"But are you not an Englishman?"

"No! greater than an Englishman: a Scot!" This especially tickled the Englishmen, who continued laughing the while. "Then you are really in earnest?" "Of course I am," I replied. "Then give me your hand," said the Doctor; "I like the hand of a brave man," and he gave me a hearty shake of the hand.

Thus ended a comedy which might easily have become a tragedy. When things had calmed down Dr. Sardo remarked that he thought all English were Protestants! I replied that I thought all Italians were Catholics! "No!" said Dr. Sardo, "my religion is that of Garibaldi." "And when he dies?" I asked. "Then my religion will die with him," said the Doctor. Finally, I proposed that we should drink to the health of Italy, and we parted the best of friends!

#### CHRISTMAS AT ROME. THE POPE'S BLESSING

Hitherto it had always been my custom to keep a little record of my journeyings whenever I had visited places of any interest. But I think the most conscientious traveller and industrious recorder would break down under the strain of that amazing

treasure-city of Rome, with its endless wonders belonging to all centuries, and its wealth of associations both with the Christian and the Pagan world. I arrived in Rome only a few days before Christmas, and had made up my mind to spend it there, intending to reach Jerusalem in time for Easter.

One of the sights on Christmas Eve is that of the Midnight Mass in the Chapel attached to St. Peter's. Strangers who wish to attend are expected to come in evening dress, and as some of my Scotch friends in Rome had asked me to bring my Highland dress with me, I wore this. I was accompanied by two friends, but the Swiss Guards, whose duty it is to act as officials in the Chapel, were evidently captivated by my dress, and, obstinately refusing to allow me to remain with my party, persisted in planting me just behind the seats allotted to Ambassadors. The Chapel, not being large, was fairly filled, and the service was a Low Mass only.

My Highland dress was to render me a greater service than I ever expected. On the 6th of January every year an entertainment is given in the College of the Propaganda in Rome to the students there, from all parts of the world; on which occasion a recitation is made by each student, in the language of his country. A Scotch student, kindly handing me an invitation, informed me that it was particularly requested that I would wear the garb of Old Gaul. In the course of the evening I received a request from the Cardinal of the Propaganda College to call upon His Eminence, to allow him to inspect the Highland dress. Accompanied by several Scotch students I

accordingly went to satisfy his curiosity, and explained to His Eminence the use for the sporran, skeandhu, etc. The Cardinal appeared very gratified, and when thanking me for my visit, asked me if there was any favour he could do for me. I explained that after three days I purposed leaving Rome for the Holy Land; but before doing so would very much like to have an audience with the Holy Father, and receive the blessing of His Holiness. At first the Cardinal demurred, saying that the time was brief, but on second thoughts, he asked me to call on Monsignor Talbot at the Vatican the next morning, who no doubt could arrange an audience for me. Two days later I had the audience, and received the Pope's blessing; and on the third day left for the Holy Land, reaching Egypt in the spring of 1862.

### THE PRINCE AT CAIRO

On reaching Cairo in 1862, I found the city in a state of pleasurable excitement owing to the presence of our late King Edward, who, it will be remembered, visited the Holy Land in 1862 accompanied by Dean Stanley. I saw the Prince (as he then was) riding on a donkey in the bazaars of Cairo with Major-General Bruce, who caused much amusement in the royal circle by being pitched off his "moke."

Constantinople has by no means the monopoly of strange Dervish performances, as a party of us found one day on entering a small mosque in Cairo, where we saw a Dervish with long flowing hair standing in the centre of a ring of devotees.



Bowing low and gracefully first to one side of the ring and then to the other—his long hair swinging to and fro the while—with much unction he cried out “Allah!” at first slowly, but gradually both louder and quicker, the onlookers joining in with frenzied gusto. Satisfied at length with this part of the performance, the Dervish suddenly rushed out of the circle and with arms and hands uplifted, eyeing the wall like a wild bull, charged it with his head, falling backwards flat on the ground. Scrambling to his feet, he again charged the wall with a similar result, but when apparently about to repeat the performance, some of his devotees—initiated, no doubt, in their part—shouted “Enough! Enough!” as if to signify that the Dervish had done sufficient for the glory of God and—incidentally—for his own holy reputation. During this spectacle I was not surprised to see some of the English ladies present clinging terrified to their husbands’ arms. After this exploit was over, I put my fingers into the hole in the wall made by the Dervish. It was heavily plastered, and had evidently suffered more than the aggressor!

Shepherds’ well-known hotel in Cairo was filled with British and American subjects, preparing to travel in all directions. Four different parties anxious to cross the Great Desert to Jerusalem—visiting Petra *en route*—had arranged to travel together for mutual protection, as for several years few travellers had visited Petra, owing to its situation in the heart of Arabian Petræa, the hotbed of Bedouin conflict.

The four parties comprised some sixteen souls. First of these was Mr. Henry Thomas Buckle, author

of *The History of Civilisation*, who, with the two sons of Mr. Henry Huth, was accompanied by Mr. John Stewart Glennie, barrister, and author of *Pilgrim Memories*. A Mr. Byron of New York with his sons and daughters formed a second party, whilst the third consisted of an Oxford clergyman, a German Lutheran minister, Sir Capel Molyneux, and a Mr. Seaman. Finally, there was Mr. Bosworth, a Baptist minister from Boston, U.S.A., with his nephew, and myself. Each party had their own Dragoman, who acted as interpreter, and contracted to supply each with food, tent, and transport throughout the entire journey—I think the price was £1 5s. per diem.

A day or two after crossing the desert we fell in with an enterprising Scot, a Major Macdonald, and his nephew, engaged in mining for lapis-lazuli, i.e. *turquoise*. Unfortunately, the specimens found by them in the desert proved to be of an inferior kind, without the rich glow of the Persian stones, and as the samples sent to England were not appreciated the Major found the work unprofitable.

The weather being delightful, we gladly ascended Mount Sinai, and reading that the well-known traveller, Burckhardt, had failed to ascend "Um Shaumer," 9030 ft., Mr. Bosworth and I resolved to make the attempt. Starting at 2 a.m. with Arab guides, we reached the summit about mid-day, and returned to our tent at 6 p.m., none the worse for our climb. Near the foot of Mount Sinai is a well-known Greek monastery, and within the walls a Mahometan mosque built there for the purpose of pacifying Mahometan fanaticism—a purpose apparently achieved, since neither

monastery nor people seemed in any way interfered with.

A four days' journey brought us to the head of the Gulf of Akaba, where we had to part with our peaceful Towara Arabs, who had been our guides since leaving Egypt.

### ILLUSTRIOUS TRAVELLING COMPANIONS

From this point the Allahween Arabs—a very warlike race—claim to be the rulers of the desert to Jerusalem, and any one desirous of travelling through this country must first of all obtain permission from their Sheik. From the beginning of our journey there was very considerable doubt as to our being able to reach Petra, and Major Macdonald's experience in the desert had rather increased these misgivings. After our arrival at Akaba, we had a wearisome detention of five days, owing to Oriental sluggishness and procrastination, but at last we were told that all had been arranged, and that the Sheik had signed the necessary agreement with his seal, such signature being equivalent, we were told, to the word of honour of an Englishman. But, on the following day, after covering six miles only, a halt was called, and we were informed that the Sheik had received some information of difficulties to be met with, which would prevent him from taking us to Petra unless each one of us paid him an additional sum of money.

As the Sheik had had, during our five days at Akaba, more than enough time to obtain all necessary information, and as we had not met a

soul on our journey from Akaba, so that he could have received no news since, on hearing this demand for money, I made bold to say, "I would rather throw the money into the sea than yield to this demand of the Sheik, who only yesterday signed his agreement with his seal."

This drew from Mr. Buckle, who was standing by, the remark that "I was the most uncharitable young man he had met with." Fortunately, I had not to wait many hours before evidence was brought to Mr. Buckle that the "*young man*" had not spoken without reason. It appeared that my Dragoman had overheard my conversation with Mr. Buckle, and came at night to explain that Mr. Buckle's own Dragoman, Abdulatee, was alone responsible for what had occurred. Knowing how anxious we all were to see Petra, Abdulatee felt assured that we should all be willing to pay whatever was demanded of us. Of that amount Abdulatee would appropriate for himself one half and give the other half to the Sheik. My Dragoman admitted that he personally had had no objection in joining Abdulatee in his proposal to make us all expend money, on condition that he himself should receive one half of the money contributed by his own party. As Abdulatee had objected to this, intending to keep the one half for himself, my Dragoman preferred to fall out with his brother thief; and therefore called upon me to make a clean breast of the proposal. Having, during my stay in Akaba, enjoyed Mr. Buckle's society, and played draughts with him, this little *contretemps* was soon forgotten.

We now looked forward still more eagerly to

our visit to Petra ; and the weather being nearly perfect (though rather warm) we were able to ascend Mount Hor on the 4th of April. As Mr. Buckle was making the ascent, constantly wiping his forehead from profuse perspiration, he amused every one by exclaiming, " No wonder poor old Aaron died, when they dragged him up here ! " Mr. Stewart Glennie and myself were endeavouring to get a better glimpse of some cavity adjoining the tomb itself, when a fanatic Arab interfered, and rather than create trouble, we had to allow him his own way. Mr. Glennie, a countryman of mine, had mentioned to me that the main object of his travelling in the desert was the opportunity it afforded him as a fellow-traveller of studying Mr. Buckle, and all of us were witnesses of his assiduity in doing so. Though sixty years have elapsed since those days, I well remember Mr. Buckle, riding on a donkey, and Mr. Glennie, mounted on a camel, by his side. A perpetual flow of conversation passed between the two of a morning and never seemed to cease.

A remark was made many years ago that John Stuart Mill was too clever for the House of Commons ; and I often thought that the two philosophers of our party were too clever for the rest of us, the English clergyman regarding Mr. Buckle (as he once told me) as a " mere book-worm." What was said of Macaulay, I think might have been said of Mr. Buckle—that he too was " a Library in breeches."

When the morning's discussion was over, Mr. Buckle used to much enjoy the society of the two Huths, to whom he was exceedingly attached,

and one of whom was to give to the world in later days a valuable biography of this accomplished scholar. At these times, with bowed head, and wrapt in reverie, Mr. Glennie would turn over in his mind all the pros and cons of the philosophical themes he had been discussing with his fellow-traveller, most of which are to be found in *Pilgrim Memories*, published some few years before his death.\* That Buckle had a very high opinion of Glennie is obvious from the fact that he told me on one occasion that he considered his fellow-traveller to be one of the cleverest men of England.

### A LITTLE JOKE

It was after one such weighty and philosophical discussion between these two learned men that I yielded to my constant love of boyish mischief. Our Bedouins constantly rode past us, howling rather than singing in a way calculated to torture any one's nerves. Selecting one of them who possessed a particularly whining, falsetto voice, I induced him to strike up *fortissimo* just as he was passing the peaceful Mr. Glennie. Little did my good friend know that I alone was to blame, as, rebuking the Arab, he exclaimed: "Good Lord! You have the whole desert before you, and the whole desert behind you, and you must needs come up to me, to howl in my ears!" Neither did Mr. Buckle get off scot free, for, catching a snake one day, I immediately placed it

\* *The Life and Writings of Henry Thomas Buckle*, by Alfred Henry Huth. 2 vols., 8vo. London, 1880. *Pilgrim Memories; of Travel and Discussion in the Birth-Countries of Christianity with the late Henry Thomas Buckle*, by J. S. S. Glennie. 8vo. London, 1875.

in front of his tent. "Take that away, if you please," he said, "for if it is not removed its mate will probably take up its abode here." Needless to add, I relieved his fears immediately.

I am glad to remember that, notwithstanding these youthful frolics, I was ever on the very best terms with these wise men. When asked in later years, by Mr. Alfred Henry Huth, to give him some memories of our mutual friend, I was only too happy to send him the following lines, which I now take the liberty of abstracting from his *Life and Writings of Henry Thomas Buckle*.\*

"Notwithstanding his anti-Christian opinions, one would have thought that in the desert of all places, our fellow-travellers would have availed themselves of the opportunity afforded them of studying such a man as Mr. Buckle. Yet all, with the exception of Mr. Stewart Glennie—himself a Freethinker—and myself, kept out of his way. During many years' wanderings throughout the world, I have never met with any one whose general knowledge and conversational powers could be compared for a moment with that of Mr. Buckle; whether botanising up Sinai, or geologising at Petra, in astronomy, medicine, chemistry, theology or languages—every thing and every subject appeared to me to be handled as if by a professional; and yet, however much one differed from him, his kindly mode of reasoning against what he believed to be erroneous views, was always so pleasant and even fascinating, that I could not resist turning again and again to his arguments.

\* Vol. II., pp. 201-210.

“ Singularly enough, there were three clergymen in the combined parties—a Church of England, a German Lutheran, and an American Baptist ; and I remember, because it struck me so forcibly, that one day when the German was defending some point of religious doctrine, Mr. Buckle pointed out to him that he had omitted one or two stronger arguments in his own favour, which he proceeded to give forthwith. It was quite evident to me that there were few priests or parsons existing who were better qualified to defend their own respective creeds than was Mr. Buckle himself to defend any one of them. I took an early opportunity of letting Mr. Buckle know that, both as a Scotsman and a Catholic, I had read with much interest his accounts of Presbyterianism ; adding that, as Catholics were accustomed to stripes, his castigation of Catholicism was only one of many wounds we had received ; whereas Royalty itself coquetted with the former in Scotland, and Presbyterians were astounded at his presuming to lecture them for their misdeeds. While discussing Scotch intolerance, I remember asking Mr. Buckle whether, were he living in Scotland, he would expect to be more repugnant to Presbyterians as a Deist, or as Catholic, and he replied at once, that he would be least objectionable to them as a Deist. My asking him one day which, in his opinion, were the strong and the weak points of Catholicism and Protestantism, led up to the following memorable remarks. ‘ I understand,’ he said, ‘ the Catholic Church is making great progress in America, but it must do so, for what has it to contend against there ? Only Protestantism, which is inconsistency



itself. I too was brought up a Protestant, and taught to regard my private judgment as my birth-right, of which no one could rob me. But when, in making use of my private judgment, I was led to reject Christianity, an outcry was raised against me for exercising this undoubted right.' Then, turning towards me, he said, 'Your Church is at least consistent, for it does not profess to allow the right of private judgment. But then it starts from false premises, for it assumes that Christ is the Son of God! *Prove to me that Christ is the Son of God, and I, too, at once become a Catholic.*' "

These words made so great an impression upon me at the time that I took the first opportunity of repeating them to Mr. Glennie, and I remarked that it was curious Mr. Buckle should never have made this avowal public in his published book. Mr. Glennie acquiesced, adding that, six months before, he himself was very nearly received into the Catholic Church, but was glad he was not, as he believed that "*Humanitarianism*" *would yet be the religion of the future.*

This gentleman prided himself on his tolerance, saying that his great objection to the Catholic Church was its intolerance, and we had more than one discussion on this subject. I remember remarking to him: "Let us suppose that an entirely new island were to be discovered by you and your humanitarian friends, and that you all settled down to live there quietly by yourselves. And suppose, one day, the Catholic Archbishop of Westminster were to call on you, saying that he had heard of the discovery of this island, and, as in duty bound, he

had come to try and win the inhabitants to the Catholic Faith, what would you do ? ”

“ Well,” said Mr. Glennie, “ I should just explain that we were a little group of people with tenets of our own, and I should courteously request him to go away and not interfere with us.”

“ But suppose he persisted, and said that it was his solemn duty to stay, even in the face of opposition ? ”

“ Then,” said Mr. Glennie, “ I am afraid that I should have to compel him to leave the island.”

“ No doubt,” I said ; “ and where is your ‘ tolerance ’ now ? ”

#### ARRIVAL AT PETRA. A CURIOUS CUSTOM

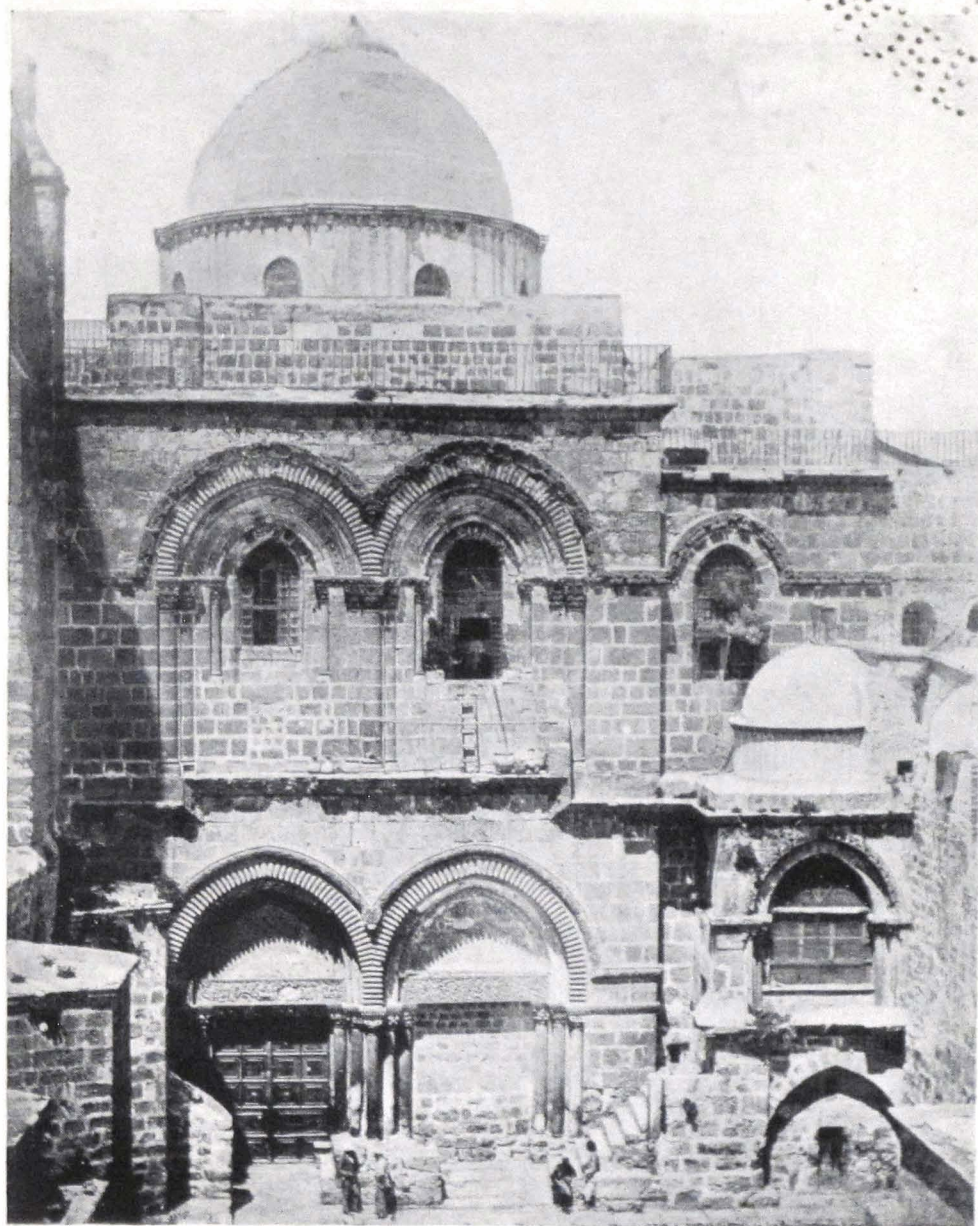
At length we arrived at Petra, both romantic and picturesque, where prodigal Nature has supplied beautiful variegated sandstone rock wherein the ancients carved out for themselves dwellings, ornamental pillars, and splendid rock-tombs, the admiration of travellers to this day. Near by is a small running stream bordering which are pretty wild flowers, a welcome change indeed from the desert. Yet, where all seemed peaceful, ugly rumours were prevalent that there might be trouble at any moment with the turbulent Allahween, with the chance of involving other tribes. Talking over these matters with Mr. Buckle in his own tent, he whimsically remarked that if any Sheik was desirous of proving to him that he had no right in the country, he would be happy to offer him a chair for the purpose of discussing the matter with him ; but if instead, weapons were to be used in order

to convince him, he should feel inclined to get under his bed ! Fortunately, beyond these threatening rumours, we had no troubles in Petra. During our journey the alarm was sometimes given that an enemy was coming down upon us—such alarm being caused by the sudden appearance of a dust-storm, the usual forerunner of danger in the desert by day.

After the day's journey was ended, our Arabs usually collected in the open air, where, forming a ring, they would sing songs and indulge in sword exercise. A translation of a few words of their favourite song is : “ When you see a pretty girl, sing a pretty song.” Towards the end of the song the singer imitates a sound I noticed the camel invariably makes when a slight pull of the rein bids him rise, as if all the water in his stomach was rising up into his throat. The song ends with a loud cry to Allah. (At the Paris Exhibition of 1867, I greatly amused and surprised some Syrians from Jerusalem by inflicting my version of this Bedouin song upon them !) The sword exercise was particularly fascinating, the swordsman having such perfect command of his weapon that, although he cleaved the air with full force and lightning-like rapidity as he advanced nearer and nearer to each of his companions, they seemed to have no doubt of his skill, and did not move their heads in the slightest degree.

#### HOLY WEEK IN JERUSALEM

Nothing especial occurred during our journey to Hebron, the Dead Sea, and Jericho, and we were



THE HOLY SEPULCHRE (FAÇADE).



all glad to reach Jerusalem in time for Holy Week, taking up our abode in a hotel in the principal street. Although half a century has since passed, and the Great War has occurred, the sights and traditions are much the same, and I will only note the impression left in our minds by what we heard and saw at that time in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. A portion of it belongs to the Catholic, and a portion to the Greek Church. Some of the latter believe that on every Good Friday at 3 p.m. fire descends from heaven into the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, and the consequence is that, on the afternoon of Maundy Thursday, a crowd collects, and before nightfall fills the part of the church adjoining the Holy Sepulchre, remaining there all night.

On the afternoon of Good Friday we went to an Upper Gallery belonging to the Franciscan Monks, overlooking the enormous crowd gathered below. The crush and the noise of struggling was something never to be forgotten ; not to mention the sight of Turkish soldiers with fixed bayonets, endeavouring to keep Christians in order and at the same time to pacify the Turks, shouting the while, " Long live the Sultan ! " All this inside a Christian church !

About 3 p.m. an opening in the crowd was made for the Greek Bishop of Petra, to allow him to enter the doorway of the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre (enclosed in the church itself), and at once lights appeared through the two small openings in the wall adjoining, facing the centre of the church. Immediately men with lighted torches hurried off to give lights to the Greek churches for the coming

year, probably going miles in some instances with them. My fellow-travellers had been present with me and witnessed all that had passed, not unnaturally making facetious remarks at what they had seen.

The impression made upon my two agnostic friends during and after the services of Holy Week were particularly interesting to me. Kinglake, after witnessing these services, wrote in *Eothen* that the Catholic Church was of all nations and of all times that wonderful Church of Rome, and this reminds one of Macaulay's well-known passage, wherein he says : " And she [the Catholic Church] may still exist in undiminished vigour when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's." In his *Pilgrim Memories*, my agnostic friend, Mr. Stewart Glennie, has given us an account of his innate pleasure in being able to join in the Catholic Procession of the Crucifixion in Holy Week, wherein we walked side by side, and for this (as he informed me) he was chided by our non-Catholic fellow-travellers. On the other hand, in spite of Mr. Buckle's remark to me previously quoted, he was yet unedified by the most religious services in the world, nor could they prevent his mind from being distracted by what he still regarded as the buffoonery of the Franciscan monks' dress—the late Father Ignatius notwithstanding—and it was this which led up to the following incident.

At dinner time on the next day, giving free play to his eloquence respecting some of the sights he had witnessed in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Mr. Buckle was making merry over the

Franciscan monks' dress, and to let him know that I was listening to his oration, I coughed audibly ; on seeing me he at once exclaimed : " Really, Gray ! I would not have said what I did, had I thought it could possibly hurt your feelings ! " I replied that I only coughed to let him know that I was listening to his *bon mots*, as a Catholic ; whereupon, turning the conversation, he remarked : " You know, I do not think as you do, but after all there are many things difficult of belief which Protestants accept. "

" Pray, " said the Lutheran clergyman, who sat just opposite, " what may those things be which you find so difficult of belief ? "

" That Jonah lived three days in a whale's belly, and then came out still alive ! "

" Oh, " said the German, " that was a miracle. "

" That is an assertion on your part, " replied Mr. Buckle, " not a proof that it really occurred. "

" Then you don't believe in miracles ? "

" If you mean by a miracle, a reversal of the laws of nature, then I do not ! "

Whereupon all three clergymen, our fellow-travellers, fled from the table as from the plague, Mr. Buckle observing : " See how they flee ! "

I may be pardoned if, before leaving Jerusalem, I mention a little incident that occurred in the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre. Having served Mass hundreds of times as a boy at college, I naturally desired to have the good fortune to be able to serve Mass in the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre. Rising very early on Easter morning for this purpose, I found a priest robing, previous to saying Mass ; and on asking his permission to be



allowed to serve his Mass—as no one else had previously asked—he at once gave it, but had scarcely done so before a Belgian Count arrived, requesting the same favour, which could not be granted owing to the very limited space inside the chapel itself. In the evening the Count called on me, mentioning that the priest whose Mass I had served wished me to call upon him. I went to his small room in the monastery, and after conversing with him for five or ten minutes thinking that I had met him in some part of the world (he had only just come from New Orleans), I asked him whether he knew a French family named Carron, in the Place Vendôme, Paris ; and whether he had met there a young Scotsman wearing the Highland dress ? whereupon he replied that he had. “ Then you do not remember me ? ” I asked, whereupon, suddenly recognising me, he exclaimed : “ Oh, mon Dieu, to think we should meet again in the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre ! ”

### THE PLACE OF WAILING

It was an interesting though sad sight to see on a Saturday numbers of Jews bowing to the ground, waiting in a narrow side street before the “ Wailing Wall,” where Solomon’s Temple formerly stood. As Jews had come from all parts of the world, one was not surprised to hear that seventy-five different languages were spoken in Jerusalem. The endeavour to convert Jews to any form of Christianity has hitherto proved an almost thankless task. Some years ago the English and German governments agreed to nominate

alternately the Protestant Bishop of Jerusalem ; but this arrangement ceased after the nomination of Dr. Gobat, a German, who had formerly been a missionary in Abyssinia. Shortly after Dr. Gobat's arrival in Jerusalem, a Jew only too well known to the English community, begged to be received into the Christian Church. Accepting the man's statement that he had long wished to become a Christian, the Bishop admitted him into the Church and gave him a Bible, bidding him to attend service regularly. This the new convert did, but in too *outré* a manner to impress the congregation favourably, one and all doubting his sincerity. After the lapse of a few months the congregation were startled to hear the " Banns of Marriage " proclaimed by the Bishop himself between the new convert and a young girl in the English Orphanage of Jerusalem. This unexpected step so overwhelmed and dismayed the entire congregation that two or three leading members immediately called upon the Bishop, and, apologising for the apparent intrusion upon his spiritual jurisdiction, begged him not to permit the marriage between a young Christian orphan girl and a man so notorious in his conduct before the arrival of the Bishop. The Bishop's reply was that he believed the convert like another Mary Magdalene was turned from his former ways, and consequently the marriage should take place. A few days after the marriage, it was announced that the orphan had been sold to an Arab Sheik, and that the Jew had left Jerusalem.

By the time we left Jerusalem at the end of the week, our party had diminished, as Mr. Buckle

and his party had preceded us by a couple of days.

### THE BIRTHPLACE OF CHRIST

Bethlehem, where we broke our journey far too briefly, lies about a couple of hours' distance from Jerusalem. Adjoining the spot where once stood the Stable of Bethlehem there is to-day a large Christian village in which stands the grand old Church of the Nativity, built in A.D. 330 by the Emperor Constantine, and said to be the oldest Christian church in existence. Entering a narrow passage cut in the solid rock near to the church, we were shown the Altar of the Magi, and the tomb of Eusebius, with that of St. Jerome hard by. He spent the greater part of his life in the monastery here and in his little cave-oratory, working at his translation of the Bible. It is St. Jerome who is quoted as the authority for the tradition that the altar standing in the Chapel of St. Joseph marks the burial-place of twenty thousand children massacred by Herod.

We now journeyed north towards Nablus (Shechem), and on leaving the desert we exchanged camels for horses. The gentlemen of the party left me to escort the ladies, and I found their brother, Mr. Byron, junior, with the baggage near a half-ruined village called "Khurbet-el-Tell" on the way to Shiloh (or, as the Arabs call it, Seilon), some ten miles south-east of Nablus. Here, I was told, the rest of the party had made a detour in order to see Shiloh, leaving the young man to await us, as he expressed the opinion that he had seen enough ruins to last him his lifetime,

and had no intention of going an inch out of his way to see more.

### A STIRRING ADVENTURE AT SHILOH

To this I replied that, as I saw no probability of revisiting the Holy Land, I intended whilst there to see all I could, and that I should take the same route as the others in order to see Shiloh. At that moment it struck me that my revolver had been loaded for over a month and required cleaning. I fired it off then and there, but as it was old-fashioned and not a breech-loader, I feared to lose any more time, and started off to overtake the party without reloading.

In a few minutes I passed some houses, the inmates apparently being surprised to see a stranger, and alone ; but holding on my way in a short time I found myself in a grove-like, secluded spot containing the ruins of an old church, and, not far from it, a cave in the rocks adjoining. This was the Shiloh of the Scriptures. From here I caught sight of my party in the distance beyond, and hurrying on, joined them at a fountain called to this day, the " Fountain of the Three Robbers."

I at once took the opportunity of reminding the gentlemen that, by taking the guide with them, neither the ladies now left behind with their brother, nor I myself, had had the opportunity of seeing Shiloh, and that I now purposed returning alone to look at it. One of the gentlemen thereupon warned me that it would be dangerous to do so, seeing that, on his arrival at the Fountain, an Arab (whom he now pointed out to me) had without any hesitation seized his horse, another Arab also

seizing that of his companion, who was immediately following him. When, however, the Arabs discovered that the two first arrivals were but the forerunners of a large party, their insolence quickly changed to obsequiousness. Doubtless the advice my friends gave me was meant for the best, but I found it difficult, especially at the moment, to take it, so back I went to Shiloh alone, and no doubt the Arabs at the Fountain were watching me. The ten minutes I spent looking around me at Shiloh I very much enjoyed, and nature's hermetically enclosed surroundings emitted a fine echo to the song, which, in my exuberance of spirits, I began to sing,—that old favourite of Verdi, “*La Donna è mobile.*”

In the midst of my enjoyment the enemy made his appearance, in the person of the three Arabs I had seen a little while before at the “*Fountain of the Three Robbers.*” Evidently, as I was alone, they thought they had secured a prize, as they made straight for me. Had I stopped singing the moment my horse was seized by them, they would have ascribed it to fear: but because I continued to sing until the end of the second verse, they probably merely thought I was eccentric as I saw them eyeing each other with a grin. Not until the song ended did they say a word, but that word, “*Feloos,*” meant “*money.*” My reply was, “*Ma feech*” (“*No money*”). Yet, unfortunately, the ordinary gold chain attached to my watch, and a solitary Scotch charm, representing a sporrán, had already revealed to them that I had the gold they so much coveted.

One of the Arabs had a gun across his shoulders,

and the weapon reminded me of my unloaded revolver. *En passant*, I may remark that I have often been thankful that my revolver was not loaded ; for had I made use of it at Shiloh, I might, or might not, have killed the three Arabs, but the noise would certainly have attracted their would-be avengers to the spot. As I would then have had to run the gauntlet of the Fountain, noted for its robbers, not to mention the village of Kuriyût beyond—one of the most notorious villages in the country, according to the Rev. G. Porter—God only knows what the result would have been. According to recent information, it has a very bad reputation to this day.

The Arab with the gun, confronting me with a savage look, endeavoured to thrust the weapon upon me, but as it got entangled in his robes, I had a moment's respite in which to collect my wits. Recollecting Napoleon's ruse on meeting the soldiers sent to seize him after his escape from Elba, I wrenched every vestige of apparel from my breast ; then, seizing the gun, and pressing it against my breast, I said in Arabic, " Thaib Kateer " (" Very good "), and looked the ruffian full in the face. His reply was " Baksheesh " (" Present ")—a great come-down from the demand for " Feloos " (" Money "), but I answered : " I will give you nothing here." Then, pointing to where he well knew I had just left my countrymen, I said to him, " Hassan Tergeman ente Baxshish " (" Hassan, the Dragoman, over there, will give you baksheesh "). " Thaib " (" Good "), said he, and, addressing the other two men, who evidently looked upon him as their superior, he bade them go their way. Then

facing to the right-about with a dejected look, he led the way to the Fountain of the Robbers. I could by this time see that my friends had left it; and at that moment I had great doubts as to whether I had gained much by exchanging the three men of Shiloh for the fellows still washing sheep at the Fountain.

I had noticed that the Fountain itself lay rather above the rough pathway—for it could not be called a road—which led to Nablus, so that to reach it, it would be necessary to go slightly out of one's way. Yet rather than let the Arab think I was afraid to face more of his fellow ruffians I made up my mind to make the detour, in spite of the awkward predicament in which it was likely to land me. On mounting the path, however, the Arab shouted to me to keep down below, and I thus found myself preceding him instead of following him as before.

As I neared the fellows, I suddenly heard my guide shout again "Baksheesh," but in a defiant manner, and my only answer was to hold up my favourite stick with a dog's head on it.

Immediately a stone flew by me, and I felt that the time had come to dismount and die fighting. Close beside the pathway were many deep holes in the ground, where, I have since learnt, many bodies had been buried in past times, and these grave-like openings seemed to invite me to select one of them wherein to recite my last "Nunc Dimittis." Looking behind me, I saw my whilom guide pointing his gun at me, and, for the first time in my life, I fancied that the bullet would probably enter that which I once heard a Scotsman describe

as "the sma' o' the back." Another shout from the fellow attracted the hostile attentions of a man and two women coming down the pathway towards me, while the Arab ran off to the Fountain, presumably to get help.

My poor animal was by this time completely tired, and when stopped by the man and two women on the side of the hill was glad to remain perfectly still. I at once addressed the new-comers in good plain English, and raising my stick told the man he would get it over the knuckles if he did not let go the horse. He threatened me with a stone, but hitting him over the wrist with my stick, I produced my unloaded revolver. The sight of it made the women scream, and they endeavoured to drag away the man who was now trying to pull me off my horse. In one or two minutes the tussle was over, and the bluff had succeeded ; in response to the women's exhortations the man retreated, nursing his bruised and bleeding wrist, whilst I displayed my revolver, remarking that it was "Thaib Kateer" ("Very good"). Thus I was allowed to pursue my journey in peace for the time being.

Pursuing my way up the hill, just before reaching a plateau I met a solitary old woman. Inquiring of her if she had met the "Feringees" (Franks), she pointed in the direction of Kuriyût, and it now became my one hope to reach this notorious place before my party had passed it. Before five minutes more had elapsed, I saw a concourse of people who had come out (as I supposed) from some little distance to see my friends pass by, and were now returning to their village, which lay well to my left and out of my way.



My position was a difficult one. Whether to face the rabble, who now saw me, and be stopped and probably robbed if not killed, or put on a bold face, and enter their village, as if anxious to see some one ! I had to decide quickly, and did so by galloping straight into the village. Fortunately, my month's journey in the desert had accustomed me to see many strange Bedouins, as well as to pass salutations with all and sundry. To each of the first half-dozen stragglers I came across in the village, I put the inquiry : " Thiobeen ? " (" Are you quite well ? ") Each one in reply said : " Allhum Dolillah ! " (" Thanks be to God ! "). I cannot honestly avow that at that moment I, too, really thanked the Lord that these people were in good health !

It mattered not to me that my salutations to each and all as I passed were similar, and naturally caused a smile. But meeting a more venerable party, whom I guessed to be a Sheik, and saluting him with the title of " Howagee," I inquired of him, too, if he were well, his reply also being : " Thank God " ; my addition in his case being : " Sukkur Allhum Dolillah " (" Thrice praise be to God that you are well "). Then pointing in the direction in which I believed my party to be proceeding, I offered the old gentleman backsheesh if he would show me the way to my friends. This he courteously agreed to do, and was about to set out, when a man accosted him, whispering in his ear that which I knew meant trouble for me, *i.e.* not to show me the way without being *first* paid. A second repetition of " Howagee " sufficed to let my would-be guide understand that I regarded

him as a gentleman, and a second time he set out with me, but now accompanied by the new-comer.

I was naturally anxious to move on a little faster, as I feared some word might have reached the village of my encounter with the man I had struck in self-defence at the Fountain ; for any such information would of course have proved fatal for me amongst this people.

Within a few minutes of rejoining my party there still remained the difficulty of getting rid of the uninvited guide, who had only come for what he could get. With the "Howagee" I had no difficulty : he accepted the backsheesh with at least apparent thanks. As I had not yielded during the whole day, I did not intend to surrender to this sturdy beggar, and on his refusing in the end to let go my horse, he was introduced to my knuckles. To the bad language he used I replied in the first words of the Koran : "Allah ! Allah ! Illillah ! Bismillah Allhum Dolillah" ("Oh God ! Oh God ! praise be to Thee, oh God !")—words which—although I must allow were said in an angry tone—caused my friend the "Howagee" immediately to interpose, saying : "Let him go ! let him go ! He is a good man."

On rejoining my companions, the first words I heard from the Dragoman were : "Not for all the money you are worth would I go into that village alone !" Thus I realised my good fortune in escaping, and was fortified against the loss, which I now discovered, of my revolver, and the Scotch sporran from my chain, which must have gone during the scuffle with the fellow and the two women at the Fountain of the Three Robbers.

## AVENGING THE INSULT

I have previously mentioned that our late King Edward—then Prince of Wales—was travelling, accompanied by Dean Stanley, at this time in the Holy Land. Only the week previous to my arrival he had passed through Nablus, *en route* for Turkey, and whilst there the Governor of the village had paid the Prince and suite great attention (a promise being made to him that the Sultan would be informed of this fact). As we arrived so shortly after the Prince, it was not to be wondered at that the natives thought we formed a portion of his suite, and consequently paid us more than usual attention.

Calling upon the Governor immediately after my arrival, of course attended by my Dargoman as interpreter, I found him in the open air, surrounded by a crowd of—to say the least of it—very uncanny and repulsive-looking creatures.

I told him in a few words of my adventures, remarking that I was astonished to have come out alive from such a den as that of the “Three Robbers,” whereupon he began to make inquiries from the people standing by, and had no difficulty in obtaining information respecting the places named by me, the people at the Fountain, and other matters relating to my adventures. I told him also that I had had a gun presented at my breast, stones thrown at me, and had lost my revolver and a gold locket, and he asked for a description of each and everything, and inquired how long I purposed staying in Nablus. Informing him that, as tomorrow was Sunday, we did not purpose leaving before Monday morning, he promised to lose no

time in sending out people to gain all the information necessary for full justice to be done to me.

Exactly at 4 p.m. on Sunday I was sent for, and, accompanied by my interpreter, shown into a large hall, where I found quite a number of the venerable Samaritan priests gathered to hear, and, I suppose, to be entertained, by all that was said and done. Nablus is, so far as I could learn, the only place where any Samaritans are to be found to-day. These occupied one side of the hall, with the judge on another side, I taking my place opposite him with my interpreter.

Refusing a Turkish pipe, which was offered to me, a cup of coffee was brought me, and, whilst enjoying it, a man was led in at one end of the room between two soldiers. Asked by the judge, if I would swear that he was one of the men who had attacked me, I refused to do so ; but, all the same, the man was made to lie flat on the ground, and was thrashed unmercifully with whips made of rhinoceros' hide. A second man was brought in, and in his case also I refused to swear, but he too was dealt with in the same way. I had seen far too much of the third man, who next appeared, to have the slightest hesitation in swearing that he was guilty, as he was the one who, with gun in hand, had presented it to my breast, and my eyes had been fixed too firmly upon his to forget them. His only defence was that he had never fired the gun at me, when he held it at my breast : my reply being that, had he then fired, I should not be living at that moment. Whilst the punishment was being inflicted, he repeated over and over again : " I read the same book : I read the same book "—a

way of reminding the judge that he too was a Mahometan !

The judge now asked what time I purposed leaving on the following morning, and I mentioned 8 a.m., whereupon he requested me to stay a little longer, promising that he would give me an escort to Galilee, where our party purposed stopping on the following day. At 8 next morning I was sent for, and, on entering the court-house, the judge, holding out the little gold miniature sporran in his hand, asked me if it was the one I had lost. "As for the revolver," said he, "that cannot be found, but I will pay you whatever it cost you." At this, my interpreter hurriedly said to me—of course in English—"Don't you tell him what you paid, but say £50." I was so disgusted, that I replied: "Before you say another word, tell him that I am an Englishman, and speak the truth; tell him that I paid £7 for that revolver." All the Samaritans (who were again present) immediately cried out: "The English never tell lies; God is great." Thereupon the Governor handed me seven pounds, and then ordered the prisoners of yesterday, and the man with the two women, since captured, to be brought in, and all were again treated Turkish fashion, my interpreter requesting me to give a pound to the executioner who had whipped the men. My adventure had not cost me a wound or a scratch !

During the following year (1863) I was in the Island of Cyprus, and a monk there informed me that a few months after my adventure at the Fountain, three monks of Mount Carmel who were passing the same spot were attacked, two of them

being killed and the third blinded for life. Nor would this notorious place appear to have lost its evil reputation in sixty years, for when I visited the Wembley Exhibition in August 1924, a Jew in charge of the Jerusalem Section informed me that the neighbourhood of Nablus is still considered the most dangerous in the Holy Land.

### GALILEE AND NAZARETH

Leaving Nablus for Galilee escorted by the two men on horseback promised me by the Governor, I found my fellow-travellers resting in Galilee, strolling round the lake. As there was no boat to be had, we were deprived of the pleasure of having a row upon the lake. The country round, once teeming with villages, appeared deserted, and a few wandering shepherds, well armed, were about the only people to be seen. Strolling along the borders of the lake, I picked up a quantity of small shells as souvenirs. A small church at one end of the lake had been built by the Franciscans, in the form of a boat, its prow slightly overhanging the water itself. One of the monks returning my visit, found me with the Lutheran clergyman in his tent, and mentioned that the Jewish inhabitants of the village adjoining the lake had recently been visited by the English Bishop of Jerusalem who had presented them with English Bibles, which he had had placed under their doors ; it being customary in many places to leave a space under the doorway for receiving articles, instead of opening the door, for fear of wandering characters whose visits were not desirable. The result had been that the Jews

had accepted and retained the portions of the Bible containing the Old Testament, but had torn up the portions containing the New Testament and had thrown it into the streets. As the Lutheran clergyman was dubious of the story, the Franciscan thought we might still find portions of the Bible left outside the doors, and indeed by his guidance I was able that same day to pick up some portions.

A couple of days' very interesting journey through certainly one of the most fruitful parts of the Holy Land had to be traversed before reaching Nazareth, which is situated on the top of a hill. A traveller\* who visited Nazareth in the year 1432 found the church which had been built upon the site of the Annunciation had been completely destroyed. Visited by Henry Maundrell in 1697, he described the later church as resembling a cross, and to-day upon its marble pavement is written: "*Verbum caro factum est*" ("The word was made Flesh"). From Mount Tabor, a short distance away, there is a glorious view of the many places around mentioned in Holy Scripture, which is well worth the rather arduous ascent.

In Nazareth we found Mr. Buckle's party, but heard that he himself was lying ill in bed. I had a long conversation with him, and he mentioned to me that he was anxious to travel in Persia during the following year, and invited me to accompany him. He listened to the story of my encounter with the robbers at Shiloh with great interest; Mr. Glennie who was also present remarking "that he would be willing to pay a good sum of money to have passed safely through a like adventure."

\* *Travels of Bertrandon de la Brocquiere in 1432-33.*



THE DRUSES (SYRIA).





Although Mr. Buckle was obviously very ill, I little thought that this would be my last conversation with him.

Damascus, the next city of importance we visited, is undoubtedly, after the sacred places, the most interesting to the stranger, as well as to those interested in Oriental industries, more especially silks, muslins, Persian carpets, Cashmere shawls and swords, "Damascus steel" having been world-famous since the days of Mahomet. Rae Wilson in 1831, writing on Damascus, relates that George IV, who was a competent judge of the superiority of Turkish swords, informed an Irish nobleman that perhaps he was not aware that a Mameluke could distinguish the temper of a blade by the smell of it, upon which the Irishman replied: "Please your Majesty, I was not aware of it, for it is different in my country; there we know it by the taste!"

Baalbeck or Heliopolis, the last place we visited, is noted for the wonderful ruins of the huge Roman temples of Jupiter, Baal, and Bacchus, and for the great blocks of stone used in its structure. The western wall supporting the terrace of the Great Court of the Jupiter Temple rises to the level of the bases of the columns, some 50 ft. above the surface of the ground, and in it occur the three enormous stones, or megaliths, so justly celebrated. One of these is 64 ft. long, another 63 ft. 8 in., and the third 63 ft., and their thickness is about 13 ft. They are 20 ft. above the ground, no one knowing how such an engineering feat was accomplished, and below them is a layer of seven others of like thickness.

## THE MASSACRE OF MARONITE CHRISTIANS

At this time the terrible massacre of the Maronite Christians, which had taken place near Damascus but two years before, was still fresh in every one's memory, and our last encampment before reaching Beyrout being near to Mount Lebanon itself, I took the opportunity of visiting a small Maronite church wherein the massacre had taken place in 1860. The account of this tragedy, as related to me both at Damascus and in the Lebanon district, was short and horrible.

The ever-growing feud between the Maronites and the mysterious sect of the Druses at last resulted in the latter besieging the Christians in their own church in the Lebanon district. Accompanied by their wives and children, the Christians made a brave resistance, but the Druses were reinforced by Turkish troops, and their numbers were overwhelming. The Turkish governor then promised that if the Maronites surrendered, the Druses would not be permitted to injure them, but upon the surrender of the Christians on these terms an immediate massacre of men, women, and children took place, principally within the church itself, where the dried blood was pointed out to me on the ground floor.

In Damascus and its neighbourhood are some 15,000 Christians of various races and creeds; yet, at the time of which I am speaking, it was not safe for a Christian to journey alone in this vicinity, particularly after nightfall.

The day following my visit to this church was a Sunday, and hearing that higher up in the



MARONITE BISHOP AND PRIESTS (SYRIA).



Lebanon there was to be a Maronite Mass in their own language, the Syriac (some authorities assert that our Saviour spoke in the Syro-Chaldaic language), I found my way up to the church, and, to my astonishment, it was filled with stout mountaineers, every one armed with a gun, which they placed on the ground in front of them during the service ; in these parts, evidently, a very necessary although exceptional weapon to carry to and from church, but such was life under a Turkish Governor.

On arriving at Beyrout, we heard of the death of my good friend Mr. Buckle, who had proceeded from Nazareth to Damascus, and after a few days' illness, died on the 29th May, 1862, aged 40. In p. 269 of *Pilgrim Memories* Mr. Stewart Glennie was good enough to write that Hamilton (my *nom de plume*) had a feeling of as sincere respect and almost affection for Mr. Buckle as he himself had ; and indeed, although I had known him but so short a time, I felt that by his death England had lost a truly great man.

## CHAPTER IV

### GREECE AND CONSTANTINOPLE

AFTER a few days' rest, as we were all desirous of seeing Greece on our way to England, we took the first Austrian steamer touching at Smyrna, and a day or two afterwards were landed in Athens. As we proposed to make the tour of Greece, we thought it advisable to call first upon our Consul in Athens, and he at once dissuaded all of the party, except the German minister and myself, from attempting the journey on account of the dangerous fever prevalent around the Copaic Lake, in the neighbourhood of which it would be necessary to pass a night in order to visit certain of the historical places in Northern Greece. But the two of us, come what might, resolved to undertake the journey.

A couple of days later, when making preparations for the trip, I came upon my German friend deeply engrossed in extracting from the hotel keeper all the information he could obtain respecting the Copaic Lake and its notorious reputation, and seeing that he too had evidently taken alarm, I begged him not to attempt the journey if he had a dread of fever.

He at once acknowledged that such was the case,

and regretted that he, too, must back out of the expedition.

The following day, therefore, I set out on my lonely route with a guide, and crossing the plain of Mantinea, famous as the site of no fewer than five Grecian battles, reached the dreaded Copaic Lake just before nightfall.

The jaundiced appearance of the few miserable people in this vicinity showed plainly enough the result of perpetually breathing an atmosphere vitiated by decayed vegetation, bogs, and pestilential gases. What effect it has upon the animal world is hard to say, though I noticed that many wretched-looking and worn-out horses had been turned loose into the rank herbage, also numbers of geese, which were intended, no doubt, to supply the market of Athens with delicacies for coming festivals. But, worst of all the evils of this plague spot, were the myriads of insects of every kind, invading eyes, ears, nostrils, and mouth, when one attempted to speak. These were the assailants whose incessant attacks upon the exposed parts of the human body, in conjunction with the bad atmosphere, created that fever for which the lake had become notorious. Fortunately I found an immediate remedy for the plague in a simple green veil, such as it is customary to use in the great heat of the desert to protect one's sore lips. By tying the veil so as to cover the entire face, head, and neck I was able to breathe with the pestilential atmosphere so purified that I actually enjoyed a good night's rest, and after my journey in the north of Greece, returned to my friends in the best of health.



Strolling, some days later, amid the beauties of the Acropolis, my reverie was disturbed by the sudden appearance of my former fellow-traveller, Mr. Stewart Glennie, who had followed our party to Athens, and was now declaiming within the walls like another Demosthenes, "Oi Anthropoi" ("O fellow-citizens!") He informed me that he intended to leave for Constantinople in a day or two, and it was arranged that we should journey together, the remainder of our desert party having preceded us without waiting to visit Northern Greece.

It was during this time that I heard two anecdotes which are so characteristic of modern Greeks that I cannot forbear relating them.

A famous numismatist was once commissioned by the late Emperor of Austria to purchase some rare Grecian coins in Athens. Shortly after his arrival, a Greek dealer called upon him with three gold coins, for which he demanded an exorbitant sum. As there was no other collector in Athens at the moment, the Austrian was advised to make a tour of Greece to see whether he could not pick up similar coins at a more reasonable figure.

On reaching the battlefield of Mantinea, what was his joy to find a labourer who showed him some dirty coins he had found on the battlefield itself, one of them being the very kind he wanted! True, the price was even higher than that mentioned by the Greek dealer, but the Austrian felt that the site of its discovery justified the additional expense.

Proceeding to the Pass of Thermopylæ, our numismatist was again fortunate in finding in a humble home a village visitor, who, on hearing

that the Austrian was searching for rare coins, volunteered to go off to his own home and fetch some for inspection. On his return, an hour later, the numismatist was overjoyed to find, amongst many inferior and ordinary coins, another of those he was seeking, and the fact that it came from Thermopylæ made him cheerfully pay a still higher price for it.

Nor did the Austrian's luck desert him yet, for on reaching Delphi, he happened to attend a country dance, and there what should he see but the third variety of coin he was in search of displayed upon the person of an attractive young girl. This, too, he purchased at a higher figure than the previous ones, and returned to Athens well pleased.

Some days later he chanced to meet the Greek dealer in the street, and told him triumphantly of his good fortune in finding specimens of the three rare coins in such historic and out-of-the-way spots, without, however, mentioning the prices paid for them. The Greek permitted himself to smile. "I know those coins," said he, "and I also know the prices you paid for them, for they are the three identical ones I offered to you on your first arrival here!"

### STORY OF THE THREE GREEKS

There were once three Greeks who, living on the frontiers of Greece and Turkey, constantly bewailed their sad lot in being accounted the subjects of Turkey. After much pondering they met together and agreed that they would rouse their fellow-countrymen and take possession of the local

fort, and they swore eternal fidelity to one another by the Holy Virgin. As two of them were going homewards, however, their natural cupidity suggested to them that, by breaking faith and betraying the third man, they might make their fortunes.

They rose early next morning, therefore, and set off to reveal the plot to the Governor. What was their horror to see their fellow-countryman himself coming out of the Governor's house ! The same idea had occurred to him also, and by his greater promptitude he received his reward ; whilst his would-be betrayers were hanged ! Is it any wonder they say in Smyrna that it takes an Englishman three years to deceive a Greek ?

### MIRZA KHAN

A Mahometan Prince, Mirza Khan, who published his *Travels in England and Turkey* about one hundred and twenty years ago,\* thought Constantinople a beautiful city, when viewed from the Straits, and this, too, is the opinion of very many to-day, until they enter the city, when the dirty streets, mangy dogs, and crowds of beggars make a very different impression. The grand old cathedral of St. Sophia, founded in 532 by Justinian the Great, and replacing the original building of Constantine, is far and away the principal sight. When the Sultan Mahomed took Constantinople, he converted the cathedral into a mosque. "So well constructed was St. Sophia," wrote Mirza Khan, "and the workmanship so well executed,

\* *Travels of Mirza Abn Taleb Khan in Asia, Africa, and Europe during 1799, 1800, 1801, 1802, and 1803.* Translated by Chas. Steward. Calcutta, N.D.

that, notwithstanding its antiquity, it has all the appearance of a modern building to-day."

The city consists of three towns, Istamboul, where the Sultan lives; Galata, the principal habitat of the Christians, who, according to Mirza Khan, are not allowed to grow a cypress tree within their own grounds, such being a privilege permitted to Mahometans only, to denote the residence of one of the faithful. Scutari, the third town, is on the Asiatic shore, and can only be approached from Istamboul by water.

This latter place I shall not easily forget.

Accompanied by my friend, Mr. Stewart Glennie, we were permitted to enter a mosque, and sat down upon a long, plain wooden bench, not far from where an old, whiteheaded Moolvie was praying. Immediately upon a wall in front of him was a collection of weapons, a formidable-looking bludgeon being particularly conspicuous. My whole attention was taken up watching the Moolvie at his devotions. Presently I saw him rise, and going to the wall, seize the bludgeon, raising it menacingly as he slowly approached us. I was puzzled to know what ceremony was about to be performed with such a weapon, but not many moments elapsed before I found myself in Donnybrook Fair! It appeared that my good friend, as absent-minded as he was good, being wrapped in one of his reveries (such as I had often witnessed in the desert), had altogether forgotten that he was in a place of worship and unthinkingly had thrown his legs up behind him upon the bench, whilst resting his head upon his right hand and arm. All this the old Moolvie had noticed, and hence

his fierce desire to introduce us to his bludgeon. Fortunately, immediately behind the bench where we were sitting were some Nubian and Abyssinian slaves who had also witnessed the approach of the enraged Moolvie, and no doubt understood the reason for his wrath. Some of them must have seized both of us completely unawares, for the next moment found us both sprawling outside the mosque upon the ground floor! When I had recovered from my fit of laughter, which, notwithstanding the humiliation of our position, it was impossible to resist, I found my friend, barrister, philosopher, and member of the Athenæum, with his forefinger erect, endeavouring (unsuccessfully, I fear) to impress a lot of black devils that he was the last man in the world to scoff at any one's religion; and he never said a truer word in his life.

After what had happened, I told my friend that it was necessary to ask permission to re-enter the mosque again, even for one minute, as otherwise the next batch of visitors would probably not be allowed to enter on account of our misbehaviour; and should any energetic reporters obtain our names at the hotel, there would be nothing to prevent the evening papers at home from mentioning us as examples of Britishers who do not know how to conduct themselves in foreign places of worship. Mr. Glennie agreeing, we immediately asked one of the darkies to intercede for us, who, upon peering through the curtain, pressed his finger to his lips, with a comical grimace and told us that "*Bludgeon was 'still invoking.'*" A minute later, however, permission was

granted, and we re-entered the mosque, remaining perhaps a couple of minutes, and glad to make way for other people.

## DANCING DERVISHES

I suppose one of the most extraordinary sights in Constantinople is that of the dancing dervishes, a performance I witnessed in 1871, which was similar in every way to one described by Mr. T. R. Jolliffe as far back as 1817.\* The performance began by some dozen dervishes crossing the arms on the breast, and each bowing reverently to their leader. The hands were then gradually raised above the head, and as the music commenced, the whole company began turning round, slowly at first, but afterwards acquiring such an extraordinary speed, as to render their features blurred. In this attitude, with the arms extended upwards, the slender waist compressed by a girdle, and the drapery below inflated by the circular motion, they appeared like an assemblage of animated hour glasses. The speed then gradually lessened, and the performance ended in the same way as it began.

It was doubtless from having witnessed the dancing dervishes, that the owner of a garden in Betia, near Antioch, has a fountain in his garden, which is made to represent a dancing dervish spinning round and round, thirty feet from the ground. Perhaps some day the same idea may be carried out at home. It would at least be a welcome change from the conventional and sadly inferior

\* *Letters from Palestine*, by T. R. J[olliffe]. Dedicated to Thomas Samuel Jolliffe, of Ammerdown. 2nd edition, 1820.

copies of classical subjects which has been the lot of English garden statuary in the past.

My journey home was not devoid of interest. During a pleasant voyage up the Rhine, I made the acquaintance of a fellow-passenger and his wife, whose conversation interested me greatly. We sat next each other at dinner, and on our arrival at Cologne arranged to put up at the same hotel. I was as yet ignorant of their names, but the evening of our arrival in Cologne, a waiter presented me with the cards of "Prince and Princess Gortschakoff," and a note inviting me to spend the evening with them. A delightful time followed. Prince Gortschakoff was the son of the famous statesman, Prince A. M. Gortschakoff, and on my departure presented me with a handsome sword-stick (which I have to this day), in return for which I gave him a halfpenny to avert any possible ill-luck !

From Cologne I went to Brussels, where, strange to say, I nearly came to an untimely end. I was enjoying a bathe in one of the large public baths, when a troop of Belgian boys arrived, and I presently overhead one of them say : " Voyez cet Anglais là, il a peur ! " (" Look at that Englishman, he is frightened "). This was too much for me, and though I could only swim a short distance on my back I started off in this fashion, meaning to seize on to a stanchion on reaching the deep end. Having arrived there, however, I failed to grasp the stanchion when I grabbed at it, and down I went. How often I performed this feat I do not recollect, but an angel in human form from South America, who was enjoying his swim, seized me

and took me out of Purgatory, and he was as much pleased to receive a souvenir of his opportune bonhomie as I was to find myself once more a Scot free. At the table d'hôte that day I met Mr. Laurence Oliphant, who, whilst attached to the British Embassy in Japan, had been nearly murdered by a Japanese. I told him of my adventure, and on my return to Scotland a few days later I was surprised to read an account of it in the *Edinburgh Courant*.

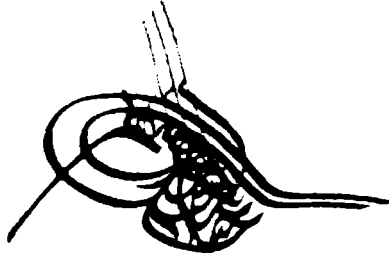


## CHAPTER V

### SMYRNA TO ALEPPO AND BAGDAD

AFTER a few months' rest at home, affording me the opportunity of preparing for my next long journey, I took steamer from Marseilles to Smyrna, with the intention of going from Smyrna to Bagdad by the overland route. By a piece of good fortune one of my fellow-passengers was an attaché going to join the British Embassy at Constantinople, and on learning of my proposed journey through the Turkish dominions, kindly offered to obtain for me a Turkish passport, which proved invaluable, especially in the more dangerous parts between Adana and Alexandretta, and the desert thence to Bagdad.

Some ten days were spent in Smyrna, during which time—through the assistance of the British Consul—I found a dragoman who had acted as servant to Lord Raglan in the Crimean War, and who was apparently willing to accompany me to the world's end. His name was Hussein, and by his advice I provided myself with a horse and two mules, for ourselves and for impedimenta, including a sporting gun and a Westley-Richard rifle, among other things. Thus accoutred we set out, intending first to make a tour of those places well known but little visited—the Seven Churches of Asia Minor.



Handwritten text in Ottoman Turkish script, likely the original firman, written in a cursive style. The text is arranged in several lines across the middle of the page.

TURKISH FIRMAN

*Translation of an Imperial Firman.*

SULTAN ABDUL-AZIZ-KHAN.

SON OF SULTAN MAHMOUD-KHAN.

Ever Successful!

To the "Caïmmakams" or Governors, "Cadis," "Muftis," heads of districts, and the Mayors of those places in which the bearer may travel from Smyrna to Arabistan or Bagdad.

The British Embassy having, by an official note, stated that Mr. Alexander Gray, an English gentleman, is going to travel from Smyrna to Bagdad, and demanded my imperial order that he should have on his way every kind of attention.

Consequently, you the above-mentioned officers, are requested to show to the said traveller, in every place he may visit, every kind of attention, and to give him all assistance which may be required; so as to procure him, at his expense, the necessary horses for travelling and to see that he is accompanied, if he desires, in the dangerous places, by a sufficient number of guards, in order that he may travel safely.

This is my command. You must act upon it, and put faith in this noble symbol.

Done at Constantinople, the fortified and protected city, the end of "Rebi-ul-akher" 1279 (about 20th October, 1862).



Of these Ephesus is the most interesting, but Smyrna is by far the most important, and has recently become only too familiar on account of the terrible events which have taken place since the apparent rejuvenescence of Turkey. The neighbourhood of Smyrna was formerly notorious for brigandage, and in later years has always been troubled with lawless characters ; consequently, I was not surprised on one occasion when meeting with a body of mounted police, at being asked by them whether I had encountered a number of vagabonds whom they described to me ; for this very band had been seen by my party only a few hours before, having mistaken me (so Hussein informed me) for the British Consul. In the early part of the journey we put up at few caravanserais, as Hussein preferred to rest in private houses where he had friends. I soon found out, however, that I had made a mistake in purchasing a horse and mules, instead of hiring animals accompanied by their owners from place to place ; because, early of a morning, whenever Hussein wished to enjoy a holiday in the company of his numerous friends, he would appear with a very solemn face, to inform me how sorry he was to have to stop for the day, as the animals had lamed each other during the night. Later on, I adopted the alternative plan of hiring, which I found much more satisfactory. Experience likewise taught me, when resting in a Turkish house for the night, to examine the interior of the roofing carefully, before selecting a place for the bed, as rain leaking through the rotten branches disturbed my sleep on several occasions.

## SMYRNA TO BAGDAD

At an easy day's journey from Ephesus, I was welcomed by a Scotch family, Mr. and Mrs. Boyd of Dundee, who were engaged in liquorice planting, and who were well known to the leading Europeans and native families in Smyrna. From them I received every kindness, and long remembered the luxury of sleeping between sheets after roughing it with Hussein's friends in primitive dwellings. My kind friends naturally asked me whither I was bound, and I told them India. When they inquired what steamer I should take I explained that I purposed travelling overland to Bagdad. They then wanted to know where I should put up after leaving them, and I airily pointed out that I had a tent. This appeared to them so unsatisfactory a solution as to elicit a prophecy that I should certainly be back with them in a couple of days.

The very next night (one of the most uncomfortable of my life) found me sleeping with Oriental gipsies, though nearly driven out of their tent by smoke. It was Hussein who manœuvred this masterpiece of strategy, his philosophical, if hardly reassuring, reason being that " 'Twere better to shake down with even the scum of the earth as bosom friends for a night than to be plundered and mauled—maybe for life—by double-faced neighbours ! " The experience of that night cured me of all hankerings after the so-called joys of gipsy life, and it seemed a treat by comparison to shelter once more in Greek or Turkish dwellings.

I now availed myself of an invitation extended

to me the previous summer, when returning to England from the Holy Land via Hungary. At Pesth I had met a Greek gentleman who had been made Governor of the Island of Samos by the Turkish Government (who thus allowed the islanders to enjoy autonomy, even in those days). On learning that I purposed later to travel in Asia Minor he invited me to visit him at Samos. Accordingly, finding myself now not far distant, I took a Greek boat, and a few hours' sail brought me to the island.

On the second day after my arrival, my friend asked me whether it would interest me to be present when the Senators were electing a President. Thanking him for the offer, I accompanied him to the church, where we found the Senators waiting before proceeding with the election. Presently we heard a tremendous hubbub—which seemed to threaten a riot at least. When I inquired the cause of the uproar, however, the Governor merely smiled and answered, “ Nothing particular ! ” Still the noise increased, and at last my friend took pity on my obvious astonishment and explained matters.

“ You see,” he said, “ there are only *thirty-five* Senators and they have put *forty-five* voting papers into the cap for the purpose of electing a President ! ”

I could not help asking, “ If they do these things in the greenwood, what will they do in the shade ? ” to which he shrugged his shoulders and replied : “ Oh, we are used to these things here ! ”

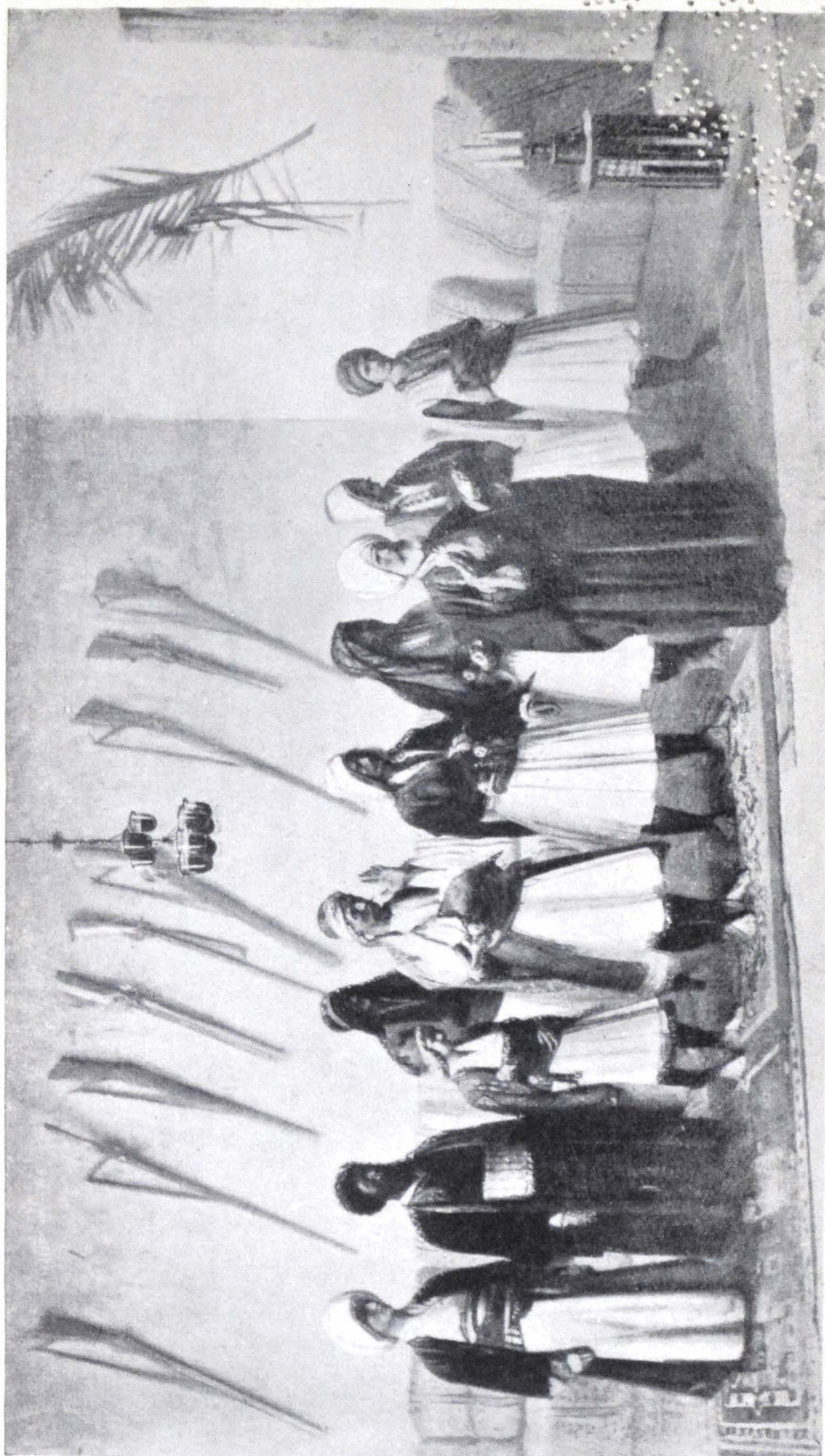
As the Island of Patmos is adjacent to Samos, it seemed a good opportunity of visiting this famous

land of St. John's exile. Two Russian engineers who were superintending some work at the local harbour asked permission to join me, which, of course, I readily gave. I soon repented, however, as before we had proceeded far these gentlemen, thinking that the wind was increasing, begged me to return, and very much against my will I had to do so.

Here I may remark that there was no love lost between the Russians and the Samiotes. Just before I arrived, a Greek Senator, who was speaking to the engineers by the sea-shore, told them that they did not understand the work for which they had contracted. Whereupon, one of the enraged Russians seized the Senator round the waist and hurled him into the sea! The Greek swam ashore and made off for his home, nor did he attempt any reprisals for this violent action.

Upon making a second arrangement to visit Patmos (this time alone), the Greek sailors refused to sail unless they were paid in advance! I offered to pay the money to the Governor himself before starting in order to satisfy them, and was then told that these men were often so troublesome that even after receiving payment they would decline to fulfil their agreement. After this, I no longer wondered that, to this day, "Samiot" is a term of reproach in Greece.

I now parted with Hussein, who returned to Smyrna, and engaged a very intelligent servant named Billiotti—half Italian and half Greek. From him I soon acquired a colloquial knowledge of Italian, finding it the easiest to pick up on account of my groundwork of Latin and French. Then,



ARABS AT PRAYER, SYRIA.





bidding a grateful farewell to the Governor, I returned once more to Asia Minor.

Here I was given the opportunity of learning even more about Mahometanism than India had taught me. It must be admitted by Christians that the Turks are thorough in their acceptance of the religion of Mahomet, and are not ashamed to avow and practise it before mankind. They are compelled to fast in the forty days of the Mohorum, and during this period not a particle of food, not a drop of drink, passes their lips from the rising of the sun until sunset, nor is smoking permitted during those hours. But the instant the sun disappears they rush to their pipes, take a few whiffs, and then run to their prepared meal. They profess to be fatalists, but despite this Turkish Governors, at least, take care (when it suits their purpose) to warn one against danger. I believe in their hearts they regard Christian foreigners in particular as "paur cratures," because on one occasion I showed them an English knife with eighteen blades, and they exclaimed, with a quaint mixture of envy and unction: "True it is that in this world the 'Giaour' [Infidel] has all he wishes for; but in the world to come, the True Believer goes to Heaven and the Infidel to perdition!" A consolatory reflection to them, no doubt, when tempted to break the Christian's Tenth Commandment!

When one Christian nation attacks them and another comes to their help, they not unnaturally conclude that this is owing to the intervention of Mahomet (Christian politicians, please note!), and they do not recognise any debt of gratitude

to allied Christian nations. On one occasion when I reminded an audience that the Turkish Government had been lent the money to defend their country by the English Government, I was told "that the Giaour ought to be thankful that the God-anointed Sultan would condescend to touch their filthy lucre."

On one occasion a Turk who had seized a beautiful Jewess in Tiberias was put on his trial for the crime. In his defence he told the Mahometan judge that he had taken pity on the maiden, whose charms would add fresh delight to Paradise after her conversion to Mahometanism! The judge, entirely in sympathy with this charitable deed, merely remarked: "It is the will of Heaven, and Fate is not to be resisted!"

Yet with all their prejudices, it must be allowed that some of their virtues are resplendent; nowhere will you find a more hospitable people than the poor Turkish peasantry; nor would it be easy to find at the same time (always excepting those in power) a more honest race than are these rural inhabitants of Asia Minor. Not alone in one house, but in many at which other travellers arrived at the same time as myself, all have been invited to partake of the simple fare provided for the few occupants only. At their meals no knives or forks are used, but upon the centre of a small rustic table, a dish is placed with little pieces of meat cut up in it; and with a small piece of unleavened bread, betwixt thumb and forefinger, each guest extends his hand, appropriates a piece, and continues to do so until some one, acting on behalf of the family, and seeing that there is only enough left for one or two,

snatches up the dish and bestows it elsewhere. Nor is water ever drunk between meals. When I asked on one occasion for water during the dinner, my host reminded me that of water there was abundance, but of food a scarcity, and requested me to drink when the dinner was over.

### JOHN BULL'S APPETITE

In the early part of my journey I endeavoured to fall in with the customs of the country where practicable, but soon found that no John Bull could keep body and soul together under such homœopathic treatment. To avoid insulting the well-intentioned and hospitable host, and at the same time to retain my bodily health, I ordered Billiotti, during the morning's journey, to purchase a fowl and to prepare it upon our arrival at our resting-place, for the evening meal. As I expected, the host objected, informing me that he had already prepared food for us ; whereupon I told him that in England we had a saying " that one good turn deserves another," and if he wished me to dine with him, I would do so with pleasure, on condition that he would also dine with me. My Turkish friend smiled, but regarded this as reasonable, and everything thereafter was agreeably arranged.

When inquiring from any Turk how long a particular journey would take, no matter how near nor how well-known to him the place might be, his reply would invariably be : " God knows ! " Becoming a little weary at length of this pious indefiniteness, I finally put the question in this form : " God willing and weather permitting, if

I leave this place to-morrow morning at 6 a.m. with a good horse, and meet with no impediment on the way, when ought I to reach A——?” The answer came: “God knows!”—and after that I gave it up.

The Greek population of Asia Minor is very numerous along the sea-coast, and doubtless regard it as an asylum (refuge) from their Turkish masters in troublesome times. To-day these conquered Christians for many reasons do not compare favourably with their Mahometan neighbours; yet it is hardly to be wondered at. Crushed as they have been for centuries, it yet makes one's blood curdle to see respectable Christian merchants trembling in the presence of venal judges and fanatical Moslems, their very lives oftentimes at the mercy of Governors from Constantinople, generally appointed by bribery and corruption. And yet when they have the example of educated and brave Christian nations who resort to casuistry and legal quibbles in order to war with one another, can we be amazed that lying and deceit are to-day the favourite weapons resorted to by the semi-enslaved Greeks of Asia Minor?

Before entering a village where Greeks are numerous, one is usually welcomed by a pig or two, the Turks kindly tolerating the presence of this unclean animal. Wild boars and wolves are found in various parts of Asia Minor, and the Turks occasionally find sport in hunting them with dogs which are under-fed previously. European clothing attracts these animals especially, and I have found it advisable to get up a rock or tree on the approach of these wild half-fed brutes. More

than once I have heard it said in Asia Minor that wolves are boldest when led by a dog, and if wolves occasionally adopt children in India, why should they not bring up Turkish puppies in Asia Minor?

On one occasion, before reaching a certain village, a small but rapid river had to be crossed, and it appeared impossible to do so without half immersing ourselves and drenching the baggage. Fortunately, I was able to find a camel or two, and of these I was glad to avail myself, notwithstanding that it was almost nightfall. This was my first and (I am glad to say) last experience of crossing a river on the back of a camel.

#### SEARCHING FOR THE DEVIL'S CAVE

Whilst searching for information respecting this country I came upon a book written by a seventeenth-century traveller named Maundrell,\* in which he mentions that the natives declared there was a cave inhabited by the Devil near to Laodicea; but that the author had not been permitted to enter it. Armed as I was with a passport, I determined to make the attempt to enter this notorious cave, and accordingly rested a night in the house of the chief inhabitant and Governor of Laodicea. He inquired my reason for visiting his village, as it seldom attracted strangers. I told him it was partly for the purpose of viewing the cave inhabited by the Devil. At once he told me that he could not allow me to

\* Henry Maundrell, *Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem*, 1697. Also R. Clayton, *Journey from Cairo to Mount Sinai*. Edinburgh, 1810.

enter it, whereupon I produced my passport, which like a good Turk he kissed, as it bore the Sultan's name, then he said gravely : " This permits you alone to visit it, but none other, and to-morrow I will send a guide with you, who will show you where it is, but who will not enter it." True to his word, about 11 a.m. the following day, a guide accompanied me to point out the cave. After wending our way, in and out of many sand-stone ravines, he pointed to an opening in the rocks, exclaimed, " There is the Devil's Cave ! " and sat down about fifty yards on the opposite side of the ravine, whilst I prepared to enter it. Taking off my sun helmet, I handed it to the guide, in exchange for a small cap, which would be less of an encumbrance to me when moving about in a cave ; and with a lantern and a box of matches, a revolver and a ball of string, I entered the cave, groping my way hither and thither for more than half an hour ; the string, a most necessary equipment, I fastened firmly at the entrance and then unwound as I moved from one tunnel to another, like a second Theseus seeking my infernal Minotaur.

I came upon a dried well in which were bones, but owing to the dirt upon them it was impossible to judge their age or whether they belonged to animals or men. Attracted by the light, a few bats flew round my head, but no other living object did I see. I could easily believe that such a cavern, hidden in this out-of-the-way spot, might well have been regarded with awe as the dwelling-place of an oracle in days gone by, after which it probably became a haunt for robbers—a sufficient

explanation for its popular connection in later days with his Satanic Majesty.

I had told my new Interpreter and Dragoman (synonymous functions in the Levant) to find a general handy man to help with the baggage and other necessary duties, and he had only been with me a few days before discovering, in a café, a stout, well-built Greek, well armed and well clad, who professed himself to be willing to go anywhere, especially with an Englishman, as he declared. His story was that he was a native of Crete, and that the only crime he had committed—*until he had shot a Turkish soldier*—was that of having been enamoured of a Greek girl, also a Christian, belonging to the same island. A neighbour who was a Turk had fallen in love with this girl, and in order to remove his rival, had charged him with robbery. The judge before whom he was brought, anxious naturally that a Mahometan should marry the girl, put the Christian into prison, where he had remained for months. One fine day the sentry who had charge of him left his loaded gun for a few moments, and the prisoner promptly seized it. The Governor of the prison, witnessing this, shouted to another soldier to shoot the "Giaour," but the prisoner fired immediately, killed the soldier, and at once fled across the island. A boat leaving for the mainland opposite, next day, gave the man an opportunity of leaving Crete, and two days later *the murderer was in my service!*

Billiotti was more than pleased with the appearance of the new recruit, for when mounted on a mule at the head of our party, with the bravado of a Greek buccaneer, he looked the personification



of a "Devil me care," and attracted much attention from passers-by. Fortunately they knew nothing of his history, because from time to time questions were put to me by Turkish patrols, who were on the look-out for such runaway characters, of which doubtless Turkey has more than its share.

Much as Billiotti liked to see our recruit perched up in front, and leading the way, he confided to me that when paid up at the end of the journey to Aleppo, he would take good care not to return with the Greek for fear of being robbed by him. Yet I found my murderer very faithful, and he accompanied me to Aleppo as arranged, covering some of the most difficult regions of Asia Minor. Billiotti on one occasion complained that when he was unable to sleep (probably from fright) the Greek snored so loud that he evidently knew not fear. This happened at a time when we were near the spot where an American missionary had been murdered, of whom more anon.

#### SLAVE OR DOMESTIQUE ?

An interesting event occurred one evening just before reaching a habitation close to the sea-coast. A boy with one shoe only on his foot rushed out of a thicket, stopping my horse, and seized me by the knee, imploring me to protect him. His forehead was scarred with three marks, such as are found on slaves in the interior of Africa. In his hand he held a paper written in French, which he handed to me to read, and I was interested to find that where, from his appearance and the

mark on his forehead, one might have expected to see the word "Eselave"—"Slave," the word "Domestique"—"Servant," was distinctly written.

Now, I knew very well that although, after the Crimean War, Turkey, at the request of her allies, had promised to abolish slavery, she had yet managed by every shift and subterfuge to evade her obligations, permitting the conditions of slavery to continue under another name—as likely enough it does to this day—and it seemed clear enough that here was a case in point. The boy, too, explained that he had left Egypt as a servant, but that on landing in Turkey he had been sold as a slave by his employer. The certificate he held entirely corroborated his tale, and the three diabolical marks upon his forehead spoke for themselves, so that I was at once seized with the desire to help the poor lad as far as I was able, and I told him that with that paper in his possession, he could remain with me as long as he liked, and leave me when he wished. That the poor boy had been treated as a slave was evident, for without being told to do work of any kind he at once spat upon the side of my horse and began to wash the animal down with his spittle. The Greeks living near at hand, evidently regarding him as a runaway slave, began to jeer at him, but I at once interfered and told them to leave him alone. During the next day, for fear of being suddenly seized, he never ventured, even for a moment, to leave my side.

On the morning of the second day, Billiotti hurriedly informed me that the owner of the slave, along with two more men, also on horseback, had just arrived. It was easy to see that Billiotti was

dreadfully frightened, and I begged him not to appear so alarmed, because the slave-owner would immediately take it for granted that I too was frightened of him. At this time the boy was holding my wash-hand basin, which was shaking in his hands. Presently a heavily built man, wearing a burnous, with arms visible below it, came to the few steps leading to my quarters, and Billiotti informed me that the man was coming up to see me. Again I implored Billiotti not to look so frightened, whilst at the same time I told the boy that if the man took him he would have to take me along with him. Then, turning to the man, I asked him what he wanted, and pointing to the boy, he replied, "That boy." My answer was, "If the boy wants to go with you, he goes at once, but if he does not want to go, *you* go at once."

During this time the slave-owner paid little attention to me, but reminded me irresistibly of a dog looking round and round for a comfortable place to lie upon, and I told Billiotti not to let the man sit down ; but without saying a word the man, seating himself on the floor, refused to move. By this time it had become a matter of utter indifference to me whether or not I might be killed in defending the boy, as my blood was up, and I never felt more willing to sacrifice my life for any one. Again I ordered the slave-owner once, if not twice, to be off, but received not the slightest attention. I was wearing at this time a splendid pair of English-made shoes, the very best variety for football, and the temptation was too great. Stepping back the three paces a good goalkeeper takes, I gave that slave-owner the hardest kick in the very lowest

portion of his back that I had ever given a football during my school and college days !

The effect was excellent. Limping to the staircase, the fellow drew my henchman aside and, glancing in my direction, whispered : “ He wants money. The boy cost me more than twenty pounds, and I will give him half that sum for him.” But Billiotti shook his head. “ Were I to tell him that,” he said gravely, “ he would perhaps kick me downstairs.” Within half an hour of this comedy we continued our journey to Adalia, a small town pleasantly situated on the coast, which was taken by the Italians after the Great War and later vacated.

Assuming that the same three men who had tried to take the boy from me were likely to be dogging our steps, we occasionally made inquiries on the road from passers-by, and learnt that such was the case, and that they were following us to Adalia. On my arrival there I went straight to the Governor and explained that the boy in question had a certificate from Egypt stating that he was a servant, and not a slave ; that he had come to me of his own free will and might leave me when he liked ; that I had a passport from Constantinople (which I showed to him), and that I wished protection for the boy as my servant.

The Kaimakam or Governor promised to do all that he could to give me satisfaction, and also to punish the slave-dealers, but added that of course it was necessary that the boy should point out to him the men themselves, without which nothing could be done. Carrying out all the Governor's wishes, I sent the boy immediately to him, but two days elapsing without his returning to me, I

sent to ask the Governor for an explanation, his answer was "that the boy did not wish to return to me!"

Anxious to hear this from the boy's own lips, I called again on the Governor, who ordered the boy to be brought in. He appeared between two soldiers, and when asked whether he wished to return to me, he answered: "Why should I wish to serve a Giaour (Infidel)?"

As it was only too evident after the kindness the boy had received from me that he had been compelled from fear to say that which (I was certain) did not come from his heart, I told the Governor I should report the matter to Constantinople; but, remembering what had been told me by British officials of the rotten state of the Law in Turkey, especially in the Sultan's capital, I thought it best to let the matter drop. Doubtless the Governor of Adalia pocketed more than the ten pounds the man had offered to give me, and the boy had received a sound thrashing. Moreover, had I been killed by the fellow upon whom I practised football, the verdict no doubt would have been, "The Infidel had no right to interfere in the business of True Believers!" The undoubted existence of slavery at that time explains a statement made to Billiotti that a Greek Bishop had only shortly before sold two girls for twenty-five pounds!

Leaving Adalia, I now journeyed towards the Plains of Tarsus, notorious for fever, and here we heard from travellers of the massacre of an American missionary the previous year, near to Alexandretta.

As regards fever, the only attack I had of it

(and that very slight) was at a place called Limyra, no doubt once an important Christian town, but at this time "sylvan" jungle and swamp almost uninhabited, yet giving the title of *Bishop in partibus* to Dr. Gillies, the Catholic Bishop of Edinburgh. I found, however, that a day's ride sufficed to throw off the fever I had picked up in this unhealthy jungly neighbourhood.

Here I met with no less personages than the local King and Queen of the Gipsies, and as I chanced to be enjoying luncheon when their Majesties were passing near, I invited them to come and partake. The King, nothing loth, consented at once, and did full justice to the meal; but nothing could persuade her Majesty to eat in the presence of her lord and master.

The bare, uncultivated, and sparsely populated Asia Minor of to-day forms a dreary contrast to the busy and flourishing country upon which Greece imposed her civilisation in the zenith of her power. The ruins of amphitheatres which one comes across are alone sufficient to indicate the strange combination of culture and barbarism which must have existed at that period.

Returning one day after a long ride to the ruins of one such amphitheatre, I found a very miserable and barefooted man surrounded by Greeks, who were making great efforts to converse with him principally by signs, evidently to find out whether he was a Christian. But making the Sign of the Cross on their foreheads and breasts did not avail the Greeks, as the stranger shook his head to everybody and everything. Neither English nor French had any better effect, but on trying my

small stock of German, I was rewarded by an eager "Ja! Ja!" His story was different from that of the Greek who had shot a soldier in Crete. This was a Pilgrim on his way—as he hoped—to Jerusalem; and he gave me to understand that a shoemaker in his village in far-off Pomerania, had made the journey to Jerusalem on foot, returning in safety, and he wished to do so likewise. Shoeless, with only one or two dirty rags on his feet, and covered with vermin, he made it difficult—poor pilgrim though he was—to approach too close. Yet when my dinner was ready, how could I do less than what the poorest Turk does for every one, be he a Christian or otherwise, and ask this poor dirty soul to take pot luck with me in this semi-Oriental country? But, dinner over, I chose for him a promontory ten yards distant from where I hoped to rest, and suggested to "Pomerania" that he should rest his weary bones there. After giving him breakfast and food for his journey, poor "Pomerania" fled, but nothing less than a good Turkish bath for several days afterwards could exterminate all that he had brought with him from the Seven Churches of Asia Minor!

Hearing that a Greek boat was taking passengers from a point further along the coast to the Island of Cyprus, three or four days' journeying brought us in good time to secure a passage with a very nondescript lot—an Afghan amongst the number, and the last man in the world I would have expected to meet with in Cyprus. Wind and weather being favourable, we reached Famagusta about ten the next morning. Being obliged to take with us all our "impedimenta" from Asia Minor, we were

fortunate in finding mules in Famagusta to take us first to Limasol, and thence to Larneca, the principal seaport.

I ought to mention that England at this period had not “Cypressed”—to coin a French word—but did so some years later, viz. after another war between Russia and Turkey had taken place (in 1878). In Larneca I found another Scotsman, a Mr. Hamilton, whose knowledge of Cyprus proved invaluable to Britain (before the island was under British administration), and for which he was afterwards knighted.

Our Consul, Mr. White, and his family also made me welcome, Mr. White being of opinion that I was the first Britisher to cross over in a native boat to Cyprus. An English steamer gave me the opportunity of purchasing in Larneca a real *Yorkshire ham*, no small treat to me after travelling over Asia Minor with nondescript Greeks and Turks and Gipsies *in partibus infidelium*.

After enjoying a whole month in Cyprus, as there was no easy means of returning to Asia Minor by the way we had come, I took passage to the Island of Rhodes; and the few days in it and its pleasant climate I remember well to this day, as well as the kindness received from our Consul there. After three days in Rhodes, a steamer bound for Mersine—the port of Adana—afforded me the means of returning to Asia Minor. Later on, a letter from my friend the Consul in Rhodes, informed me that had we been detained there one day longer we should have witnessed a serious earthquake, which occurred the day after we had left the island; the natives, indeed, informed the



Consul that the reason for my hurried departure from Rhodes was that I was well aware that the earthquake was approaching !

I shall not forget the couple of days spent in Tarsus, only a short distance from the port of Mersine.

### HINDOOS IN ROUMELIA

Seeing in the street, the first day after my arrival, a Moolvie\* from India, I addressed him in Hindoostanee, wondering what had brought him all the way from India to Tarsus, and he informed me that there were many others there also from India. Accepting his invitation to come upstairs to his house to have a sherbet, I found perhaps a dozen old Mahometan Indian Sepoys there. I could scarcely believe my eyes, yet feeling sure that they must have been some of the Sepoys we had fought with in the Indian Mutiny, I turned to them, saying in Hindoostanee : “ You are a nice set of fellows ; you rebelled, fought against us, were beaten, and then fled the country, and are now hiding here in Turkey ! ”

“ True, Sahib, true ; but what could we do ? Our regiments broke up ” (the word he used in Hindoostanee was “ biggerguia ”), “ and then what could we do, but go along with the rest ? ”

“ I understand all that,” I said, “ but hearing that pardon was promised after the Mutiny to all except those who had murdered women and children, why did you fly the country ? ”

Of course they replied that the latter crimes could not be laid to their charge. Then

\* Mahometan priest.

remembering that when in India I had heard much of the people of "Room" (this is meant to apply to Roumelia) being so very clever, according to Indo-Mahometan ideas, I asked: "Now that you are in 'Room' what do you think of these people?" One and all answered, "Truly, Sahib, now that we are here, we think they are *donkeys*." As the Mahometan peasantry in Asia Minor are simple, truthful, and honest, I do not wonder that these Indian Sepoys called them donkeys, the Indian character being the reverse of that of the Turkish peasantry.

Hearing that I was on the way to India, they were very anxious to give me advice, and warned me not to go by the coast of Mekram, for there (said they) the people are witches, and during the day turn people into donkeys and ride them, letting them go at night to find food as best they can. I told them that they were talking rubbish, but one and all vociferated that it was the truth they were telling me.

### THE MURDER OF THE AMERICAN MISSIONARY

From Tarsus to Adana is an easy day's journey through the plains of Tarsus, and we now heard a good deal about the dangers ahead. We were also told in more detail the tragedy of Mr. Caffin, the American missionary, to which I have previously referred. He was murdered near the Pass of Issus, some miles from Adana, because he had not provided himself with a passport, and the British, American, and French Ambassadors immediately brought the crime before the notice of the Sultan.

In order to induce the principal malefactor to go to Constantinople, the Sultan promised him *preferment*, and when the criminal was brought before him made him a Pasha! He was then requested not to interfere in future with priests or others who came armed with passports and letters from high authorities, but at the same time it was made abundantly clear to the newly-made Pasha that, if he would confine his iniquitous attentions to unknown and unprotected travellers they would be winked at, with the result that the neighbourhood of Adana to this day bears so notorious a reputation that even the Governor requests travellers to journey by sea rather than by land.

I replied that I had not come to see the sea, but the land, more especially the country lying between Adana and Alexandretta at Issus, the scene of the great battle between Alexander the Great and Darius III, King of Persia. The Kaimakam was interested enough to inquire how long ago that was, and when I told him it was some 2200 years, he was filled with astonishment and exclaimed: "Think of any one coming to see a battlefield more than two thousand years after the battle was fought!" My explanation was that as a little boy at school I had read of it, and for that reason I was anxious to see the battlefield.

Seeing that I was not going to accept his advice, and thinking he might succeed by adopting other tactics, the Governor now called a Zebeque, one of the half-military messengers employed in Turkish courts, and whispered something not intended for me to hear.

Aware that dilatoriness is the rule rather than



ARMED MESSENGERS (SYRIA).



the exception among semi-oriental nations, I lost no time in sending Billiotti to the Kaimakam of Adana, the very first morning after my arrival, but the only information he brought back was that the Governor was unwell. On the following morning he received the same information. On the morning of the third day, my Dragoman had orders to let the servants of the great man know that on the afternoon of that day I purposed continuing my journey by land to Alexandretta, whether the Kaimakam was well or otherwise. The answer now returned was that, "Please God, he would see me at ten o'clock." Arriving with my interpreter at the time mentioned, we were ushered into a fairly large hall, where—judging from the number of green turbans worn—a larger number of descendants of the Prophet were present than I had yet seen. Immediately the Kaimakam or Governor began talking to me about the war, then going on, between North and South America, asking me for any information I could give him. Instead of satisfying him then, I reminded him that I had been three days waiting to see him, and wished to continue my journey that day, and would be happy to talk to him about the war if he would oblige me first by rendering me the assistance I needed, and which my passport authorised him to give me. The messenger left the court hurriedly, not returning for nearly twenty minutes, during which time my conversation with the Governor turned upon the American War. When the messenger did return, his theatrical attempt to show (whilst giving the information he brought) that he was exhausted from his exertions, was too

obvious to deceive, although the Governor himself seconded his story by ejaculating: "You hear, you see, not a man will lend a horse or risk his life by venturing through such a dangerous country, where you are sure to be killed."

To these remarks I paid little attention, merely saying that at all events I could walk it. "And what about the baggage?" asked the Governor. "Oh, that can go by steamer," I answered. "Then you will be killed," he said decidedly. I replied in the true manner of the East: "If it is the wish of the Almighty that I am to be killed, I shall be killed." At this the Governor exclaimed: "God is great! But of all peoples the English are the most obstinate!" Then he turned to me and said: "I will give you all the help I can, but before leaving you must sign a paper to that effect"—here came a pause—"but you will be killed."

At three o'clock a handsome young Turk, well mounted, accompanied by several mounted followers, led the way in the direction of Alexandretta, but we had not covered more than a few miles before we met with one of the sons of the robber Pasha himself escorted by a riff-raff lot, several of them likewise on horseback. Each of the leaders now dismounted, and the Governor's letter was handed to the Pasha's son. Whilst the contents of the letter were being digested, I took out a piece of paper and attaching it to a tree, invited the most ruffianly member of the Pasha's rabble to fire at it, at the same time handing him my revolver. Of course this piece of eccentricity created a smile all round; yet it served the purpose of introducing us one to another, and if he had so

wished, for sending me into eternity. The letter having been read, two of the rabble were told off to take charge of us, and to conduct us to a certain makeshift shelter for the night, where we found it necessary to barricade the door with dried cowdung, to prevent too enterprising people from entering. Our guests had come unprovided with food, and on seeing Billiotti preparing a *pièce de résistance* for me from the York ham, inquired what meat was that, and Billiotti from sheer fright replied: "English beef." I scolded him for deceiving our guests, but one of them expressed a desire for a portion, and after eating, both assured me it was the best beef they had ever tasted. This "English beef" had to do duty for several days and was thoroughly appreciated by the other rascals, but I was afterwards informed by our Consul in Aleppo, that had they discovered the mistake and killed me for giving Mahometans (who usually expectorate at the word "pig") the unclean animal, it would have served me right!

As desired by the Pasha's son, I gave certificates in the first place to the two sent to conduct us to the "Dried Cow Dung" resting-house, and also to the others on the two following days, to prove that all went well with me, thus far, on the journey. There remained two more "rests" before reaching the Pasha's house, and (owing to some little doubts in my mind as to what the future had in store for me, and on account of the apparent terror of both Governor and people of my coming host) on the two last certificates I wrote: "I, Tom Long Smith the Doctor, declare that I am at this moment alive and kicking, but God only



knows whether I shall be in ten minutes." These, like the previous papers, were kissed and embosomed by their possessors, who went away perfectly pleased, and for all I know may have given these souvenirs to the Pasha.

The sun was setting when I reached the house of the dreaded Pasha, and only half an hour elapsed before I was banqueting with him. Only once did I make reference to the American missionary, but that proved more than sufficient to rouse the hidden fires, and my host at once demanded silence on that topic. In order to speak upon a more agreeable subject, as I had heard the Muezzin calling the Faithful to Prayer from the summit of the mosque, only half an hour before, I congratulated the Pasha upon possessing a Muezzin with such a voice, and thereafter all went well. The following morning all were roused early, and, accompanied by another son of our host, we rode to the ruins of a Genoisi Fort of bygone years. Here, whilst I was still riding hither and thither like a young boy fresh from school, a man galloping up to my side informed me that from that time I must not ride in front but allow all others to precede me. Of course I understood what this denoted.

We now came to the battlefields of Issus, of which I have now but a vague recollection, though I remember the Tarsus range of high hills which here skirts the plains and circles round towards the sea, shaping the extremely narrow entrance to the Pass where a handful of Greeks succeeded in stemming the progress of tens of thousands of Persians over two thousand years ago.

Whilst riding through the battlefield I had a nondescript lot forming my escort, and had to beware of attracting any uncalled-for attention. Whilst crossing and recrossing numerous dried nullahs or ravines, I noticed one of our bodyguard who struck me as a simple fellow, and asked Billiotti, when opportunity afforded, to show the man a piece of silver, telling him that he should receive it if he would only cough at the actual place where the American missionary was murdered ; nodding his head, the man promised to do so. Within a very short distance from where the sea strikes the battlefield itself (if I recollect rightly) is the entrance to the Pass of Issus, with a dense thicket on the upper side, providing shelter for any evil-disposed person to waylay a passer-by. Within ten yards of this I heard the promised cough, and at the same moment saw two men spring out of the thicket and salute the son of the dreaded Pasha. Both were armed with guns, and no doubt were there to guard the entrance to the Pass, allowing none to pass without orders from the " Monster " of Issus. After all, the Governor of Adana had some cause to lecture me, as he did ; and assuredly without the passport which a friend had kindly obtained for me, my bones would be lying to-day beside those of the murdered American missionary.

In Mr. F. A. Neale's book on Syria and Palestine\* reference is made to a place called Byass, which lies on the opposite corner of the Gulf of Iskenderun amidst almost inaccessible mountains whose passes

\* F. A. Neale, *Eight Years in Syria, Palestine, Asia Minor*, 1842-50. 2 vols. London, 1851.

are known only to the inhabitants of the adjacent villages. Here, says this author, there still exists the nucleus of a Banditti, and it was whispered that they received indirect countenance from the Governor of Byass, himself a subject and employé of the Turkish Government. From this account it seemed to me more than likely that he and the "Monster of Issus" might be one and the same person, as the passes of Byass appear to be no less formidable and dangerous than those of Issus, and are not situated any great distance from the latter.

From the battlefield of Issus to Alexandretta is an easy day's ride. Whatever Alexandretta may be to-day, it possessed almost no attractions at this time, and I was glad to leave it the day after my arrival; the inhabitants informing me that I was the first stranger to reach it by land since the murder of the missionary.

*En route* to Aleppo one passes through Antioch, also a quiet but far more interesting place than Alexandretta. Meeting two American missionaries there, they were more than astonished to see any one who had passed through the "Plains of Tarsus" without fever.

From Antioch to Aleppo was a two days' journey. Never having been troubled with custom-houses when coming by land from Smyrna, it was somewhat of a novelty to find myself asked to oblige a Custom House officer by allowing him to examine my goods and chattels. The collector of Aleppo, a somewhat important personage, ordered Billiotti to produce our goods quickly, but being himself impatient to see what one basket contained, plunged his hand into it, asking what was that hard article

he was endeavouring to pull out? Billiotti, courageous now because our Consulate was near by, let the Turk understand that he had his hand upon a pig's bone, being all that was left of the *ham* I had bought in Smyrna. Disgusted beyond measure, the collector ordered all our belongings to be turned out of the Custom House, and hot water and soap immediately to be brought to him.

As Aleppo was a foreign country to both my servants, who were also anxious not to wander too far from their homes, I had to part with them here, after they had gone through dangers with me both by land and sea. The two formed a great contrast: Billiotti by nature timid, and the Greek as bold and courageous as he looked. Of the Greek I never heard again; but for services rendered by Billiotti to the British Government during some troubles in Candia, he was knighted. He was the most faithful and honest servant that I have had in my wanderings in far countries.

I was fortunate in finding in Aleppo a Hindoostanee who had long been resident in Bagdad and was anxious to return to it, glad of the opportunity of doing so as my interpreter and servant.

### THE ALEPPO BUTTON

Before reaching Aleppo I had often been told that not only the natives of the place, but also every visitor, became afflicted with a boil known as the "Aleppo Button," lasting ten months: a somewhat similar ailment being known in Bagdad as "The Date Mark." Some ascribe it to the water; others to the fruit—hence the name given to it in Bagdad. Believing in my own mind that

water was probably the cause, I resolved, from the time I reached the neighbourhood of Aleppo until leaving Turkish Arabia, never to drink water which had not first been boiled. Although I had been warned that the boil might make its appearance after I had left the country, I am glad to say that I have never had it, though I cannot remember meeting other visitors to the country who have passed through without taking it. Nor can I recollect meeting any resident in the country who had not been afflicted with it at some time or other. Nor does the disease confine its attacks to the body, as I have seen many Syrian ladies with scars on their faces, as a result—so I was informed—of the boil.

Aleppo, although an important city with a large population, does not rank with Cairo, Damascus, or Bagdad ; nor are its bazaars nearly so attractive as those of the other large cities in Turkey. It is nevertheless famous for its horses even in this land of equine fame, and it is well known that several royal houses have acquired the pick of their studs from the district round about.

From our Consul, Mr. Skene, I obtained a good deal of information respecting portions of Turkey lying outside the beaten track of travellers : more especially of the country between Aleppo and Diarbekr. Between these two important towns is Urfa, where I made the acquaintance of a Spanish priest, who, after a residence of nearly forty years in Urfa, had made a visit to his native country, from which he had recently returned, chiefs of the Bedouin Arabs coming from the desert to welcome him on his return. To con-

vince me of the difficulty of converting Mahometans to Christianity, he told me that two families were the only fruits of his labour during all those years. Between Urfa and Diarbekr one sees some singular-looking structures, more akin to those of the period when the Pyramids were erected, and, in fact, reminding one somewhat of them ; but for what purpose these were intended to serve, unless as monuments commemorative of the founders, it would be hard to say.

At this stage of the journey there were few dwellings where one could put up for the night, unless mangers, similar to the Stable in Bethlehem, could be regarded as such. Of course caverns, or grottoes, are by no means uncommon throughout Mesopotamia, Kurdistan, and Turkish Arabia : they have served for man and beast for generations, and no doubt will continue to do so for many years to come. I can well remember being wakened of a morning by the tinkling of bells, as a herd of goats passed by my bedside on their way to the open air, the entrance to our habitation being closed at night, to keep out unwelcome visitors.

At Diarbekr the land journey ceases, but, if one is so disposed, a voyage on the Tigris will carry the traveller down by way of Nineveh and Bagdad to the Persian Gulf.

Having met at Rome the General of the Franciscan Order, he had kindly given me a letter of introduction to any of the same Order I might meet with in my wanderings. I therefore called upon the Superior at Diarbekr, and it so happened that during my visit the announcement was made to him that a representative body of Greek or

Armenian schismatics wished to see him and be admitted as members of the Catholic Church. The Franciscan, naturally curious to learn why they had come to him in a body for such a purpose, was told that their own Bishop was desirous of taxing them for some purpose considered by them unnecessary, and hence their reason for wishing to be received into the Catholic Church. The Franciscan advised them to return to their Bishop, as their reason for changing their Faith was a dishonourable one.

This was only one of several very agreeable days spent at Diarbekr preparatory to my voyage, and Mr. Taylor, our Consul there, was kindness itself, making for me all the necessary arrangements. I finally embarked upon a novel raft, made up of 110 bullock skins, blown up and fastened together in the form of a square : a light covering above was our only shelter, allowing our pilot to watch fore and aft for the rocks which we might encounter as we were carried swiftly down the Tigris by the melting snows of the Armenian mountains.

As we sped swiftly down we passed but few dwellings, and fewer villages. Now and again the sound of waters dashing over the rocks warned us of dangers ahead ; but so quickly did our raft surmount them that, excepting on two or three occasions, there was barely time to see the rocks, before we had already passed and lost sight of them altogether.

The appearance of the few inhabitants we occasionally saw did not reassure us as to their friendly intentions, and our pilot evidently was of the same opinion as ourselves. On one occasion,

huge rocks were hurled down upon us, but mercifully failed to upset the raft. My Indian servant hereupon asked me to fire at the miscreants, whose heads could just be seen above the rocks, but as the meanderings of the Tigris enabled our aggressors, if they were so inclined, to make repeated attacks, I thought it more canny to leave them alone.

At one place where, for some reason only known to the pilot, we were compelled to anchor, he suggested my sleeping not far from the raft in a cavern, from which men were seen issuing, as if from the bowels of the earth itself.\* On entering, I found some thirty Kurds, and others, seated in a circle. One of them at once took hold of my left boot, with intention to pull it off, and it at once struck me that, by entering the cave with my boots on, I had committed a breach of Oriental etiquette. So, as I sat down with my new acquaintances, I quickly handed my right boot to my right-hand neighbour, and, by way of distracting all of them from the breach of etiquette committed, began to entertain them by pointing to an opening in the heels of the boots for wearing spurs. As the boots were handed round from one to another for the purpose of being examined, I heard the individual seated on my right hand ordered to ask me whether I was a "Giaour," *i.e.* unbeliever. As a Christian, nothing was easier than to reply in Arabic: "Allah! Allah! Ishallah!" ("Oh God! Oh God! Praise be to

\* I think it probable enough that the pilot, knowing too well the character of the wild Kurds, thought it safer for me to throw myself on their hospitality for one night rather than, whilst sleeping on his raft, tempt them to attack it and me.



God !"). On hearing these words all exclaimed : " That is a good man."

As I picked up my boots and made for the exit, intending to get my evening meal on the raft, I overheard an Armenian remark : " You see, he wants to go back to drink his wine." The Armenian was wrong, for all through my journey I had never touched wine (except once, when an unlucky notion made me act on Lord Byron's advice and " Fill up the cup with Samian wine." I greatly regretted doing so, and took very good care never to drink Samian wine a second time !) No ! my penchant was for an Indian curry, which my Indian servant excelled in making. But, on this occasion, in order to keep my reputation of being " a good man," and not having sufficient food on board the raft to be able to extend an invitation to all, I perforce shook down with them for the night—without my dinner !

### NINEVEH

With morning dawn, we bid adieu to our companions of a night, and sailed for Nineveh, our next landing-place. At Mosul, as Nineveh is called to-day, my pilot, taking with him his 110 bullock skins, returned by land to Diarbekr, leaving me in the hands of the English Consul, Mr. Rassam, who helped me to obtain another pilot and raft to take me on to Bagdad.

When one thinks of Nineveh as it once was, and of Nineveh as it now is, one cannot but exclaim : " How are the mighty fallen ! " The Nineveh of to-day, covered with the sand of ages, is hardly

an inviting spot wherein to spend a holiday ; unless for the antiquarian or the archæologist. On the one side of the river, it is comparatively easy to verify certain ground, where ancient Nineveh stood ; for, though gigantic portions of mighty palaces have been demolished by the weight of time, yet their very foundations, even now, refuse to be overwhelmed by the sand of ages, unmistakably pointed ridges of sand distinctly outlining where buried glories of the past may still be discovered.

Modern Mosul has, as I say, but few attractions. One not easily to be forgotten was that of having to enter one particular church on all-fours ! Asking for an explanation of this dog-in-the-manger policy, I was informed that it was owing to Kurdish fanaticism, these savages being glad to have the opportunity of thus converting a Christian church into a stable !

A real Turkish bath in Mosul was a luxury after living on a raft ; and, when one remembers that time is moonshine to the Turk, whereas it means money to the Briton, one understands why in the leisurely East the massage is thorough, while in the West the commercial aspect is emphasised, and so-called " Turkish bath " becomes a comparatively hurried and unsatisfactory affair.

In the days of which I am speaking the discovery of petroleum agitated nations, and I remember, shortly after leaving Mosul, finding a spring of naphtha issuing forth almost on the very edge of the Tigris, and I have kept a sample of it to this day. Near to the place is the grave of a Mahometan prophet, and I was informed that, owing to his

miraculous power, an English steamer was wrecked when endeavouring to make headway against the force of the Tigris waters !

### RIVER EXCURSION TO BABEL

In travelling from Mosul to Bagdad one has to pass through the great Desert of Arabia, where Bedouins to-day are much the same wild race as they have ever been, warring with one another when unable to find extra-tribal enemies willing, as Paddy would say, " to tread on the tail of their coat." My new pilot thought it prudent for us to slip down the river by night, resting when necessary by day behind some deep sand-bank, where we could only have been espied by any one coming very near to us. In Kurdistan, lying on the opposite side of the river, we occasionally saw a few houses, but passing it, as we did during the night, we saw little of people anywhere. As for the Bedouins between Mosul and Bagdad, I don't remember to have seen one.

Strolling one day a short distance on the Kurdistan side of the river, I saw a gathering of people evidently interested in something, and, on going to see the cause, I found they had made a large hole in the earth into which they were sweeping the locusts lying around. A similar plan is adopted elsewhere to get rid of these pests. Here, too, from the expressions of the people, it was easy to see that the stranger was regarded as an intruder. Our only other encounter with the inhabitants was when nearing Bagdad, when a beggar came out into the middle of the stream

in a coracle, such as the early Britons might have used.

On arriving at Bagdad, I called at the house of the only British resident in the city, from whom I met with great kindness. Mr. Lynch was a merchant who had lived many years in Bagdad, and was well known throughout the country, and far beyond it.

Acting on his advice, I made an excursion to Babylon, now called Hillah by the natives. An easy day's journey on a camel brought me to the ruins of that which, in former days, was one of the Wonders of the World, but, in our time, contains but a few ruins, along with the remains of the once famous "Tower of Babel." Wandering in the ruins, I found a fellow-countryman, who had just arrived from Bagdad, and who, being a mariner, rejoiced in clambering up the debris forming all that remains of the antique Babel. Not far off is a small village containing a few inhabitants; and here I rested for the night, and took the opportunity of purchasing a few semi-precious cut stones, found on the spot, and evidently belonging to a period long since gone by.

#### FATHER WILLIAM GIFFORD PALGRAVE

Returning to Bagdad, I heard of the arrival of Father Palgrave, who had just returned from a most interesting journey through parts of Central Arabia unvisited by any missionary. When in Rome during the previous year, my friends, thinking it possible I might meet Father Palgrave in my travels, had provided me with a letter of introduc-

tion to him, so I now hastened to call upon him at the house of the local French priest in Bagdad. Dressed like an Arab, and surrounded by natives, he was telling his beads, Mahometan fashion, perpetually repeating the word "Allah," and I found it difficult to distinguish the Christian from the Arabs with him. Presenting my letter of introduction, to my surprise he spoke to me in French, and wondering at his doing so, I said: "But why should we not talk to each other in English?" to which he replied: "Comme vous voulez." Afterwards, speaking in English, he gave me a most interesting and brief history of his travels which the curious may read for themselves in his delightful book.\*

Father Palgrave was brought up as a Protestant and sent to Oxford University, afterwards becoming an officer in the Indian army. He was then received into the Catholic Church, and being desirous of becoming a Jesuit priest he returned to England, passing two years of his noviciate at the Jesuit seminary near Stonyhurst College. His noviciate ended, he was at his own particular request attached to the Jesuit Mission in the Holy Land. He became a perfect Arabic scholar, and, on hearing that, in the heart of the Arabian Desert, there existed a body of Christians whose ancestors were supposed to have been converted by St. John, he became eager to discover if any such Christians still existed in the desert.

Finding it hopeless to obtain permission of his Superior, the General of the Jesuits, to go in search

\* W. G. Palgrave, *A Year's Journey through Central and Eastern Arabia* (1862-3). 2 vols. 1865.

of these people, he hit upon a plan of gaining his wish perhaps unheard of in our day. Obtaining leave to have an audience with Napoleon, he informed the Emperor that he was attached to the French branch of the Jesuit Order ; that he would be glad of the opportunity of upholding the prestige of the French nation, and wished to obtain the time he thought necessary for making the discovery he was in search of. A letter from Napoleon to the General of the Jesuits gained for him at once the favour he asked. Father Palgrave informed me that, on the occasion of this audience, the Empress Eugénie was present, and told the young Prince Imperial to sit on the Père's knee, and she herself, being a good Catholic, fervently hoped that the Père might return some day to Paris, and report to her the happy result of the mission so near to her heart. The Father also told me that he had been accompanied by an Armenian priest on his journey, who had been of considerable help to him. Medicine of sorts, which he carried with him, had enabled them to impress the natives. Living, on one occasion, with a chief who had long been ill, and whom he had helped to restore to health, the latter wished to know how it was Father Palgrave never entered the mosque to pray ? His reply was, that all men are not *Sunnis*, leaving the other thus to suppose that he belonged to the other sect of Mahometans, termed *Shiahs*.

The French Consul in Bagdad, like Father Palgrave himself, was a good Arabic linguist, but as Father Palgrave, when preaching, had wearied the Consul by too long a sermon, he was requested by the latter to cut down the next sermon to one

of half an hour. The last Sunday I was in Bagdad, Father Palgrave—folding his arms akimbo—stood at the altar, just before beginning his sermon, and looking at the French Consul, said: “Maintenant, Monsieur, c’est sept heures et demi!”

In a day or two, however, Father Palgrave’s star had fallen! The French priest with whom he was living came, with tears in his eyes, to complain to the French Consul that Father Palgrave (who was a stranger to him), in return for the hospitality he had received, had spread scandalous tales about his host, who mentioned to one or more people that he, the French priest, had been known to Mr. Lynch and the French Consul for thirty years. Sending for Father Palgrave, the Consul inquired whether he had been informed correctly, and the delinquent admitted the justice of the priest’s complaint. The Consul thereupon gave Father Palgrave twenty-four hours in which to quit Bagdad, a fact of which I was not aware until a day or two later.

But the strangest part of this curious man’s story was yet to come. Instead of returning to France or to the Jesuits, Father Palgrave went to Berlin and re-entered the Protestant Church. From there he proceeded to London, became the lion of the season, and was sent out as British Consul to Trebizond and other places. He married, had three children, and on his death-bed was received once more into the Catholic Church at his own request.

A brilliant linguist with a career of extraordinary interest, it seemed to me that Father

Palgrave's *faiblesse* was a somewhat unbridled tongue.\*

## FAREWELL TO BAGDAD

It fortunately happened for me that just at this time the Commissioner of the Province of Sind in India arrived by steamer from Karachi, intending to return to India with his fellow-officials after a few days. Learning from my kind friend, Mr. Lynch, that I, too, hoped to return shortly to India, the Commissioner kindly invited me to accompany him—an opportunity for which I was most thankful. Expressing my gratitude to Mr. Lynch, by no means the least of many friends I had made between Smyrna and Bagdad, I left Bagdad towards the end of May, after journeying some seven months, and reached Karachi in India after a most agreeable voyage, thanks to the kindness of the Commissioner of Sind.

\* "Francis Turner Palgrave was the grandson of Myer Cohen, in his day a well-known member of the Stock Exchange. Sir Francis Palgrave, the famous historian, was the son of Myer Cohen, and became a convert to Christianity, adopting the name of Palgrave as a substitute for Cohen."—*London Observer*, Oct. 5, 1924.

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Father W. G. Palgrave (1826-1888) was the second son of Sir F. Palgrave (1788-1861), who, in 1823, took the name of Palgrave, the maiden name of his wife's mother.



## CHAPTER VI

### INDIA AND THEREABOUTS

SHORTLY after my arrival in Calcutta in July 1863, it was reported that the Government proposed sending an Embassy into Bhootan, owing to some trouble having occurred on that frontier. Thinking it a good opportunity of seeing a country but little known, I requested a friend to obtain permission for me to accompany the Embassy, but this being declined, I waited until war was declared ten months later, when I took the opportunity of entering the country, with the permission of the Commissioner of the district adjoining Bhootan.

Meanwhile, as I purposed visiting Central India during the winter months, I was glad to return to Shahabad, where I could revisit old friends, obtain servants for my next trip, and arrange an outfit for my coming journey. I was especially delighted to see again my good old friend Michael Fox and my friends of the Indian Mutiny; and I found that where in 1857 and 1858 the troubles of war had existed, all was now peace and quiet.

Once more I met one who was deeply influenced by spiritualism, and who continued, as formerly, to cover sheet after sheet with hieroglyphics, persisting it was not he who was writing, but spirits;

though when asked to close his eyes to let it be seen that the spirits knew when the edge of each sheet was reached, his invariable reply was, that faith on his part, too, was necessary. I met again another friend whom I remembered during the Mutiny as having ascribed certain false communications imparted to him at that time to the agency of an evil spirit. An Eurasian, brought up by natives, was still convinced of being able to cure any snake bite by simply pressing a leaf of the Nimmo tree, with his right-hand thumb pressed on the palm of his left hand, as he ejaculated a Hindoo prayer to "Ram-Ram!" During my present visit, when crossing the Ganges one day in company with Mr. Toogood and this Eurasian, the river was swollen and the boat rolled considerably, so that the Eurasian was unable to control his timidity and lisped the name of his favourite god, "Ram," repeatedly, but all to no purpose, as on this occasion, at all events, Ram was not sympathetic; his next appeal was to Mahomet, who likewise turned a deaf ear; until finally, as Mr. Toogood assured me, he heard the name of "Our Saviour" appealed to, and on landing safely at Benares, he inquired of the Eurasian: "Who, of them all, have we got to thank for a safe voyage?"

The province of Shahabad in which I was now staying, and in which I had lived during the Mutiny, was only too well known for Thuggism in days gone by. One village alone only a few miles from "Biheea House" was a "hush-warning" far beyond the province of Shahabad, and the saying ran: "If you go to Bhojpoor, don't eat; if you eat, don't sleep; if you sleep, don't

cry out in your sleep, for if you do, you will never awake again.”

Long before railways were thought of, the country lying between Patna and Benares, as well as between Patna and Calcutta, appears to have been a stronghold of Thuggism, the river Ganges affording facilities for robbing and murdering untold hundreds. Hindoos and Mahometans were alike guilty, and as case-hardened to their fiendish occupation as are the Dyaks of Borneo to head-hunting ; and to think that all this organisation of crime should be propagated on a religious basis !

One writer mentioned that in the jail of Patna, a Thug acknowledged that he had assisted (previous to 1852) in forty-five murders between Patna and Calcutta ; and in 1845, Von Orlich, in *Travels in India*, tells us that in the jails of Lucknow he met a man sixty-five years of age who boasted to him that he had killed several hundred persons. Another Thug, when asked whether he had felt any remorse for his horrible occupation, replied : “ Does any one feel any ‘ remorse ’ for carrying on his business or trade ? ” When one looks at the photographs of murderers, one expects to see countenances of hardened wretches ; yet photographs of Thugs usually remind one of Khitmurgars, or table servants in India.

After a few days’ pleasant visits, I bade farewell to my friends at Biheea ; and, accompanied by two of my former servants, set out for the Central Provinces. Our first stop on the railway was at Agra, famous for the most beautiful edifice in India, the “ Taj-Mahal,” built by the Emperor



GROUP OF THUGS.



Shah Jehan in honour of his beloved consort "Mumtaz Mahal." It is a lofty dome, surrounded by four minarets 120 ft. in height, and as one writer describes it, from the dazzling whiteness of the marble, looks like an enchanted castle of burnished silver in its wonderful lake-like setting. The architect is supposed to have been an Italian who was buried in the Catholic cemetery at Agra.

After leaving Agra, we came to Futtehpoor Sikra, famous once as the residence of Akhbar the Great. To-day the ruins of palaces, harems, and other great buildings alone testify to its former magnificence ; in a large square can be seen the ruins of a block of buildings which was the royal stable, housing hundreds of horses and elephants ; Akhbar possessing, it is said, no less than 6000 elephants.

I had been told in Agra of a feat constantly performed in Futtehpoor Sikra by an acrobat who was in the habit of jumping down from a great height into a dark deep well, and sure enough on my arrival this local celebrity came forth at first ready enough to perform his feat for me. As I thought it an opportunity of learning from this professional how to perform less dangerous feats, possibly helpful in one's future travels, I was anxious to know the exact position in which he held his arms, legs, and feet when jumping. Everything having been explained to my perfect satisfaction, I left the professional, now surrounded by his friends upon his giddy promontory, and went down to the mouth of the well below to welcome the famous gymnast after his descent. After waiting over a quarter of an hour, in company

with a number of the villagers, the thought struck me that the man perhaps wanted more money than he had stipulated, so I let it be known that he would be paid what he wished. Now came the rumour that the poor gymnast was actually trembling, and for the first time in his life afraid to perform his customary jump ; whereupon I at once trusted he would not make the attempt on this occasion, as it was apparent that I had unnerved him by the various queries put to him.

The famous Fortress of Bhurtpoor is little more than eight miles distant from Futtehpoor Sikra. To the natives it is remarkable for having withstood four memorable attacks made by the British under General Lake. Upon a fifth attempt being made, Runjeet Singh abandoned Molkar to his fate, and the fort was then surrendered to the British. The country around it is beautiful, and was once celebrated as abounding in game ; antelopes, partridges, and peacocks being numerous. As one travels further into Rajpootana, which, though under our protection, is not a part of the British Dominions, the influence of Hindooism is much more apparent in the abundance of animal life, as the slaughter of peacocks, flamingoes, pigeons, etc., is opposed to their religious teaching. I remember well the first time I saw peacocks quietly feeding inside a village, asking a native to whom they belonged. " To nobody," he replied. I thought he was mistaken until he explained that no one would think of injuring them, and therefore they wandered where they liked. Mahometans, however, are not by any means so indulgent to peacocks, for, according to a Mahometan tradition,

“Peacocks opened the wickets of Paradise to let the Devil in,” and where there is an opportunity to kill pigeons also and other kinds, as well as to strike Brahmani bulls in localities where Hindoos do not predominate, Mahometans gladly avail themselves of these chances.

After leaving Bhurtpoor, our next stopping-place was Alwar, where I at once called on the Resident. Here, as in all principal cities in Rajpootana where the Rajah of each independent state resides, a British Resident is appointed to assist the Rajah to govern the people he rules over, with strict justice, so far as lies in his power. By this means the despotic government of the Rajahs and the degenerate morals of their courts are moderated. But before obtaining such a “Staff Appointment” as it is called, the resident officer has to pass an examination in both Persian and Hindoostanee.

I found the Resident extremely obliging in every way, and the day after my arrival he introduced me to the young Rajah, who, if I remember rightly, showed me Indian jewellery, rubies, diamonds, and other treasures. As a hunting party had been formed for chasing antelopes with a leopard, I gladly accepted an invitation to join it. On this occasion the leopard was hooded and lying down in a country cart in which the huntsmen were seated, the antelope apparently unheeding the approach of the cart. At a distance of something like fifty yards from the antelope, the cap was removed from the eyes of the leopard, and its head turned towards the antelope. Immediately the leopard made three successive bounds towards



its quarry, but the antelope changed its course by striking off at a tangent, making a series of wonderful leaps, at which the dispirited leopard immediately lay down on the ground.

When travelling on all the principal roads in India, one finds what are called Dak Bungalows every twenty miles, in which for one rupee per day there is accommodation and attendance, as well as a bath to refresh oneself. The Khitmutgar salaaming the new arrival inquires whether he wants dinner, and if asked what food can be supplied is certain to say " Moorgee curry," *i.e.* Fowl curry. Thereupon the servant shouts to a small boy to catch a fowl, which as likely as not takes a short cut through the bungalow, is caught, and served up in about twenty minutes ; this being called " sudden death."

Sixty years ago in Rajpootana no such " Rest houses " existed, but on several occasions, principally in country places, some empty palace sufficed for the same purpose. In the roof above numbers of wild pigeons had taken up their abode, and my Mahometan servants would make balls of their turbans and throw them at the pigeons, invariably bringing down far more than were needed to make an excellent curry, the feathers being carefully swept up so as not to shock Hindoo sentiments. Roads throughout the Native States being primitive, our journeys were made on camels, to which we soon got accustomed, two or three camels sufficing to carry my servants and a moderate amount of baggage and myself. Riding on a camel permits one to see a long distance, especially when one is on the look-out for game.

I remember once shooting a deer a long distance off, both servants running quickly to pick it up; then a discussion ensued as to whether the animal was, or was not, perfectly dead; evidently a very knotty point for Mahometans who are forbidden to eat meat if a very brief word of prayer has not been uttered before the animal expires.

On arriving at Jeypoor, the Rajah at once sent word to say that a very comfortable house was at my disposal whilst staying in his capital, but not content with this, he overwhelmed me by sending a carriage and four horses, a luxury I had never indulged in. I requested the coachman to allow me to disport myself with a carriage and pair only, but from an Oriental point of view I made a great mistake, which I later discovered when calling upon the Rajah to thank him for his kindness, as he asked me why I had sent back the two horses, apparently feeling almost insulted at my having done so. At this moment I thought of the contrast to all this Oriental parade offered by the sight I have already mentioned of the Prince of Wales and Major-General Bruce amusing themselves on donkeys in Cairo, but had I mentioned it to the Rajah, I doubt if he would have credited it, and as an Oriental potentate he would certainly never have approved of a Prince debasing himself so far as to ride on a donkey!

Whilst travelling through Central India I cannot call to mind a more imposing sight than the Fort of Gwalior, celebrated for its exceptionally commanding position and for its apparent "impregnability." Two great victories gained

in its immediate vicinity brought about its immediate surrender, not without costing the lives of many of our brave fellows, under Sir Hugh Gough and General Greg, in 1843 and 1844. It effectually put an end, however, to serious troubles which had disturbed the Indo-British Empire, Lord Ellenborough, then Governor-General, setting a noble example to our soldiers by going through the campaign with them.

A winter campaign in India is no doubt child's play compared to one in the north of Europe, yet in Central India, such are the vagaries of climate during midwinter that a thin coating of ice may be seen in the morning and yet the heat of the sun takes the skin off one's face before midday.

Under such conditions it made me shiver to see, early in the morning, when starting upon our day's journey, some Faqueers standing in excessively cold water, then falling on their knees in the middle of the road, creeping, rather than walking along.

I again had an encounter with two snake-charmers whom we met one afternoon. During the Indian Mutiny I had explained to my servants the deception practised by snake-charmers—an illusion, curiously enough, of which Europeans in India are ignorant. I had only just time to tell my servants (both mounted on one camel) to keep watch upon the man who played the flute, whilst I, mounted upon another camel, would keep an eye upon his companion, who apparently carried nothing to attract attention ; though I was certain he had a snake concealed within his clothing, and was trusting that every one's attention would be

drawn to the flute player. At that moment the snake-charmers offered to find a snake for us, and much to the amusement of my servants, the performance commenced with desperate efforts on the part of the flute player to clear away from them ; but they, upon their camel, always followed on, whilst I, from mine, remained stoically keeping guard over the man with the hidden snake. This entertainment must have lasted well-nigh ten minutes before our entertainers announced " that there were no snakes to be found there." To the astonishment of the snake-charmers one of my servants, pointing to the man I had been watching, exclaimed : " That is the man who has the snake hidden upon his person, and if the Sahib gives us orders, we will take it from him." Both snake-charmers looked dreadfully confounded.

The day before reaching Dodeepoor, one of our camels died from falling upon slippery ground, the only loss sustained during our long journey from Agra. As Palgrave well remarks, the popular notion respecting camels and dromedaries is wrong, the former being heavily built and slow, like a carthorse, but able in exceptional cases to carry 500 to 600 lbs. or even more ; whereas the dromedary is highly bred, like a race-horse, and Von Horlich mentions that one travelled about 150 miles from Hyderabad to Sukkur on the Indus in a couple of days. It would be easy to quote the experiences of Chinese, Abyssinian, and other travellers respecting the patience and long-suffering of camels the world over ; Major Skinner assuring us that one has been known to go twenty days without water ; the Abbé Huc asserts that

young camels, unlike all other young things, are not playful.

The Rajah of Dodeepoor is believed to trace his ancestry further back than any other native ruler in India. Within the grounds of his dwelling is a small *chef d'œuvre* of a palace built on a charming little island and presenting a most picturesque appearance. It was one of the beauty spots shown to Prince Edward on his Indian tour.

As by this time winter was far advanced, I was advised to go round by Mount Aboo, *en route* for Kurachee ; and thence by steamer to Bombay. Our way lay through a very hilly and most picturesque country, where one heard more stories respecting the depredation of tigers than in any part of Rajpootana ; and where, too, thieves at nightfall would untether the camels and make off with them. The Hindoo temples here particularly struck me, wonderfully rich as they are in sculptures and curiously carved figures, and I felt that photographs of these would give Europeans a very fair idea of Hindoo architecture at its best.

A pleasant voyage from Kurachee landed me again in Bombay, which I had left only six months previously *en route* for Calcutta, *via* Ceylon, after my long journey through Asia Minor and Mesopotamia. So many interesting accounts had already been written of Bombay and Poonah and of the wonderful Caves of Elephanta, Ellova, and Ajuntah, all of which I visited, that I now longed to make for the lesser-known Himalayan mountains and traverse them as far as the Chinese Government should permit.

Having sent on my servants to Agra, with some

difficulty I managed to reach Ajmere on Easter Sunday morning, although delayed a few days *en route*. Whilst resting in a village near I saw several alligators sleeping peacefully upon a submerged wall on the edge of a small lake and within fifty yards of a house. I drew the owner's attention to the reptiles, and expressed surprise that he should permit them to bask so comfortably close to his house instead of shooting them, but he replied: "No one will injure them, for they contain the spirits of our forefathers." This uncomfortable belief is closely akin to that of the Dyaks.

Once, on the occasion of a festival, I saw a number of people entering a rich man's house, and being invited to follow them I found to my surprise a Brahmin bull, lying on a heap of clean straw, chewing its cud on the top of a staircase, with a man holding a white yak's tail over its head to drive the flies away lest they should disturb the animal's rest.

From Ajmere to Agra I had no difficulty in obtaining a conveyance, and awaiting the arrival of my servants, accompanied them by train to Delhi, and there communicated with my friends in Biheea in Shahabad. At my request, my old friend Michael Fox sent two more of my former servants to me at Delhi, which thus became my starting-point for the Himalayas.

As we gradually approached Simla, I recognised a plant common enough in England but unknown in the plains of India, and, tempted to have a little play with my servants (who of course had never seen a nettle), holding one up, I promised a rupee

to whoever collected the most in three minutes' time. The moment the word of command was given, a plunge was made into the midst of the nettles, followed quickly by invocations to Allah, varied by Hindoo references to the holy water of the Ganges, owing to stings and pains in arms and legs. A judicious distribution of baksheesh, however, soon pacified everybody. Another plant, unknown in India, which I was glad to find growing in the Himalayas, was rhubarb, and we were sometimes able to collect and enjoy a dish of it.

Simla, reached on the following day, lies about 7000 feet above the level of the sea, and is the summer residence of the Governor-General of India, and the chief resort in summer of military on furlough. The snows had hardly yet melted on the higher mountains, and consequently I had leisure to make the necessary preparations for my long journey; in the first instance to the valley of Cashmere, from thence to Ladak, and finally into Chinese territory, if feasible.

I was fortunate in obtaining here three hillmen, one of them a fair sportsman, and the two others most excellent carriers, and well versed in the multifarious duties of coolies, for which I was often thankful during the journey, which eventually exceeded 1000 miles. My previous travels had been made on camels or on horseback, but on this occasion the greater part had to be done on foot, and I calculated that I had already walked 835 miles into what was actually a sea of mountains, ranging from 15,000 ft. upwards, where, on account of the rarity of the atmosphere, walking at such heights was a great labour—before I



VIEW IN ZOJJI-LA-PASS.





mounted a yak, which I did only on leaving Leh in Thibet.

A day or two before reaching the Rotang Pass, I remember seeing a poor fellow whose legs were confined in the "stocks"—because he had refused to help some local tyrant to marry a third wife, so a neighbour stated. However, I was glad to see that a passer-by, believing the truth of this story, released the man and cast the stocks into an adjoining stream.

We left Simla at the period of the solstice, when the periodical rainy season extends all over India as far as the southern slopes of the Himalayas, though it does not penetrate into the interior of Thibet, so that after our first journeys we were not troubled with rain until we reached the neighbourhood of Ladak.

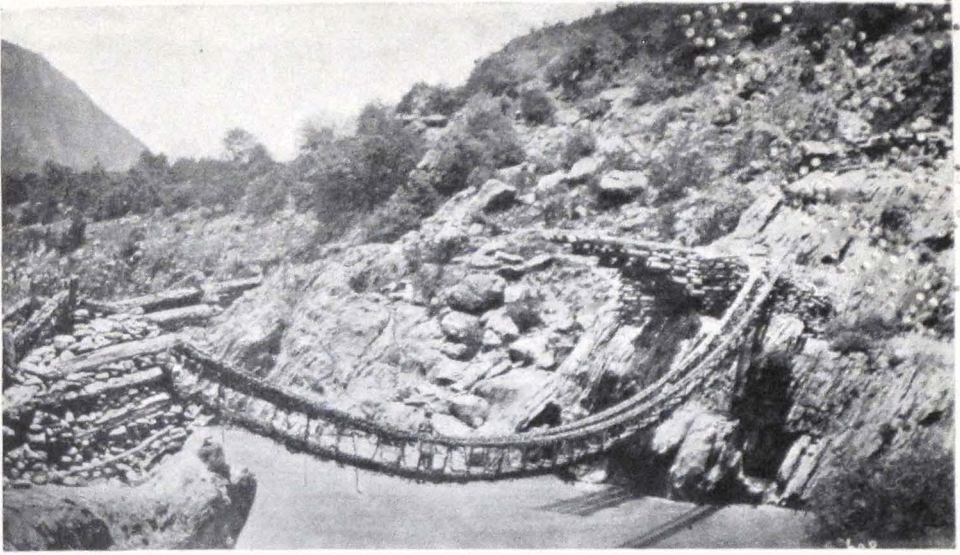
One of the first novelties met with in the Himalayas are rope bridges. Attached to the rope by means of a stout swivel is a cradle, upon which the passenger sits and is hauled across the river. Another kind of bridge is entirely composed of birch twigs, and I had a model made of one to bring home with me, substituting stout woollen cord for the twigs. Before, however, reaching any twig bridges, we had to pass the well-known Rotang Pass (13,000 ft.), which we found still covered with snow, and here we met men returning who had crossed on the previous day who were pitiable to see owing to their inflamed and weeping eyes. As my Hindoostanees had never seen anything of the kind, they wanted to know if they too would have to suffer like these poor fellows, but I explained to them that the sore eyes were

entirely owing to lack of protection against the snow. Fortunately one of my servants had a green turban, which, cut into strips and distributed amongst the lot, helped them considerably; for while their eyes were thus protected against the glare upon the snow, perfect freedom was allowed to nostrils and mouth, the most important points to be remembered in the rarefied atmosphere of the Himalayas.

A certain amount of amusement was obtained in descending the mountains, as my men were all eager to show the way, yet of course quite unable to race down. Fortunately we all descended without injury, except to my trousers, which were not improved by the friction of the hard frozen snow, upon which we all slid, in batches of threes and fours, to the foot of the mountain. On the following day everybody and everything were the better for a rest.

Two officers had preceded us, waiting a whole fortnight for the snow to melt before attempting to cross the Rotang. As they were sportsmen and intended settling down for several days to shoot bears, we moved on so as not to disturb the game. In fact, my love of travelling so far outweighed my love of hunting, that I kept straight on my way without turning aside for any sport, so that I did not see any big game until reaching Chinese Thibet.

The mountaineers we met proved to be a very quiet, peaceable lot, but cleanliness was not one of their strong points, as their homes are snowed up in winter. At one small village near to which we encamped, noticing a poor fellow sadly requiring



TWIG THULA BRIDGE ON THE CHAWAB NEAR KISHTWAR, HIMALAYAS.



VIEW IN THE HIMALAYAS FROM DARJEELING. (See page 174.)



a bath, I asked his friends how long it was since the man had washed himself, and after a grave discussion among themselves, they concluded the great event had taken place on the occasion of somebody's marriage some three years before.

Pulling out the infallible "baksheesh" I told three or four of his friends to take the man down to a stream close by and give him a good scrubbing, promising them a rupee after doing so. Delighted, all went down to the stream and returned with the newly-scoured, looking very happy. On another occasion, on inquiring the age of a villager, his friends endeavoured to calculate it by the number of coats he had worn, coming to the conclusion that as he had outlived five coats the probability was that thirty years would be very near his age.

It was sad to see the prevalence of goitre, though not surprising, as the disease is usually ascribed to snowy water; still more startling and dreadful was the appearance of an unfortunate man, the skin upon whose face had been completely scalped off by a bear—a sight even more appalling if possible than that of a martyr to leprosy.

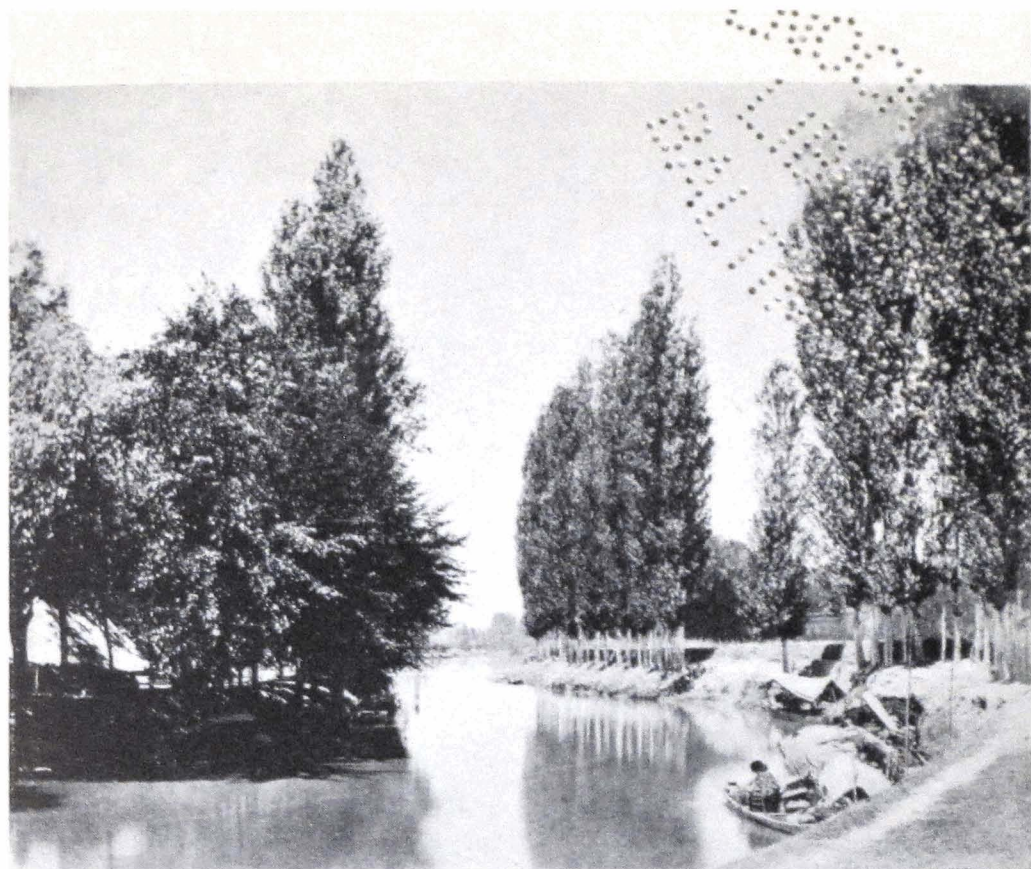
One day the cry was raised that one of the baggage carriers had fallen down a precipice, whereupon one of my carriers asked anxiously: "Is the baggage all right?" which certainly sounded most cold-blooded and inhuman. Mercifully, a rock had checked the fall of both man and luggage, and I was glad to hear thankful "Allahs" ascending from his precarious perch. But so extremely hazardous had it become crossing pathways which had been intercepted by avalanches, that more than one of my men were taken ill from sheer fright.

The mountaineers have a peculiar mode of explaining distances from one place to another. When we asked how many miles we had to go, they would reply, so many "pipes," signifying the number of times they had been accustomed to stop on a journey, five pipes, or stoppages, being usually regarded as a good day's journey. Their tobacco mixture was original, and their "pipe" still more so; it consisted of two small round holes, one slightly above the other, a few inches apart, upon a fairly hard and sloping bit of ground; the interiors of the holes were carefully scooped out and no detritus left in it, and these served as a ground pipe, the smokers, each taking turns, lying flat on the ground, to smoke or inhale the substitute for tobacco which was lighted, after being plugged into the upper hole, just as tobacco is plugged into an ordinary pipe. As these mountaineers are usually accustomed to make their halts in exactly the same spots, say on the side of a mountain, or a sheltered place, the probability is that the one "pipe," once made in the ground, and cleaned out from time to time, will last them for years.

At Narkundah, one of the principal villages we passed, a fair was in progress, and I purchased some pretty feathers of the lovely Monali pheasant, which were made up in Paris into a beautiful plume. At the same fair I saw high-heeled boots, and supposed they must have come from Chinese Thibet, little thinking that similar high-heeled boots would come to be worn in Europe by fashionable ladies.

The birch tree appeared to grow as high up in the Himalayas as either pines, firs, cedars, or oaks,





VIEW DOWN THE JHULUM FROM THE ISLAND (CASHMERE).



ON THE DHUL CANAL, CASHMERE.





but low down near the waters of the Sutlej, vegetation consisted principally of creepers, shrubs, and other undergrowth. Occasionally we had to cross bridges constructed entirely of birch twigs, and although not alarming to mountaineers, these were a source of dread to the men from the plains of India. A suspension bridge made of birch twigs, say 100 ft. in length, has a rude pier leading up to it : the bridge hangs like a cradle attached to ropes, and is constructed of birch twigs laid side by side, with large gaps between them, revealing the rushing waters dashing over the rocks below.

But to my mind, far worse dangers than these were certain walls with vertical escarpments, frowning down upon the yawning gulf below, and worthy to be described, in Chinese phraseology, as "claiming the life of travellers." At one point we met an English officer who had ventured to bring his horse with him from India, but the animal of course had fallen down a precipice, and no wonder, for in some places it was as much as man could accomplish *to turn round on a plinth of an escarpment, less than six inches in width*. I had just returned to my tent once, after enjoying a refreshing bath in a mountain stream, when I heard the report of a landslip, and saw an avalanche sweeping down the torrent where I had been bathing a few minutes before.

We were extremely fortunate in obtaining excellent carriers from the different villages we passed, and once obtained four men with a woman. My Mahometan servants, anxious to know whether her husband was one of the four, were astonished to learn *all four were her husbands*. Jealousy was

unknown, and she found it very convenient, so she told me, to be able to employ her two husbands at home whilst the others were attending either to outdoor or other work elsewhere.

Occasionally we met large numbers of sheep laden with borax, salt, and the soft down of the goat of Thibet, called pushum. On account of the intense cold, nearly all animals north of the Himalayas may be said to have pushum, which, purchased in Thibet, then converted into cloth, is in Cashmere made up into shawls, caps, ties, and an infinity of articles, suitable for gifts or souvenirs.

As we daily approached the Vale of Cashmere, mountain pathways gradually improved ; and from the time of entering the mountains I hardly ever remember a single night, when, on retiring to rest, I failed to hear the murmuring waters of some passing stream near by : a music which I think is a luxury, and only known to those who live in sweet country places.

As we were resting one day by the Sutledge river we heard some one vociferating like a madman on the opposite side of the river ; it was a fanatical Moolvie, who was consigning to *Jehannum* both Christ and Christians. My Mahometan servants perfectly understood, as I did also, all the furious hatred which the fanatic's actions and language denoted, and they looked at me to see what effect it had upon me. On the spur of the moment I leapt to my feet, remarking : " The Moolvie thinks that because the river divides us he is safe, but I will let him see whether a bullet won't undeceive him," and snatching up my Westley Richards, I held it for a moment in a threatening position.

My servants, however, at once besought me not to fire, and in yielding to their wishes to not even frighten the man, no doubt I acted rightly ; but owing to the injurious effect the recent Indian Mutiny had left upon the minds of Europeans, I am inclined to think that nine out of ten Englishmen at that time would have taken a pot-shot in order to give the Mahometan Moolvie a fright, if nothing else.

Although I had brought with me no lack of ammunition for the journey, thus far there had been little opportunity afforded for shooting any big game at least, it was difficult to wander away from the rocky pathway near to the riverside. True, we sometimes caught sight of little marmuts guarding their small burrows, but not until we got far into the grassy slopes of Middle Thibet did we come across the kiang, or wild horse of Thibet.

Long ere this too, it was evident that we had lost sight of Hindooism, Lamas everywhere being more numerous, and more complaisant, too, than Faqueers, particularly in allowing us to enter their temples. In one temple where I saw a very fine specimen of a yaktail suspended, the Lama kindly made me a present of it, together with a praying wind-mill, which wafted prayers to heaven night and day both Sunday and Monday, this latter gift not being in the temple but suspended from a tree close by.

After our long tramp from Simla, it was indeed a joy to reach Srinagar, the capital of Cashmere, and to find ourselves in a valley unsurpassed—as Moore rightly believed—for its beauty. Described by writers as the most enchanting spot in all Asia, the difficulty would be to find such

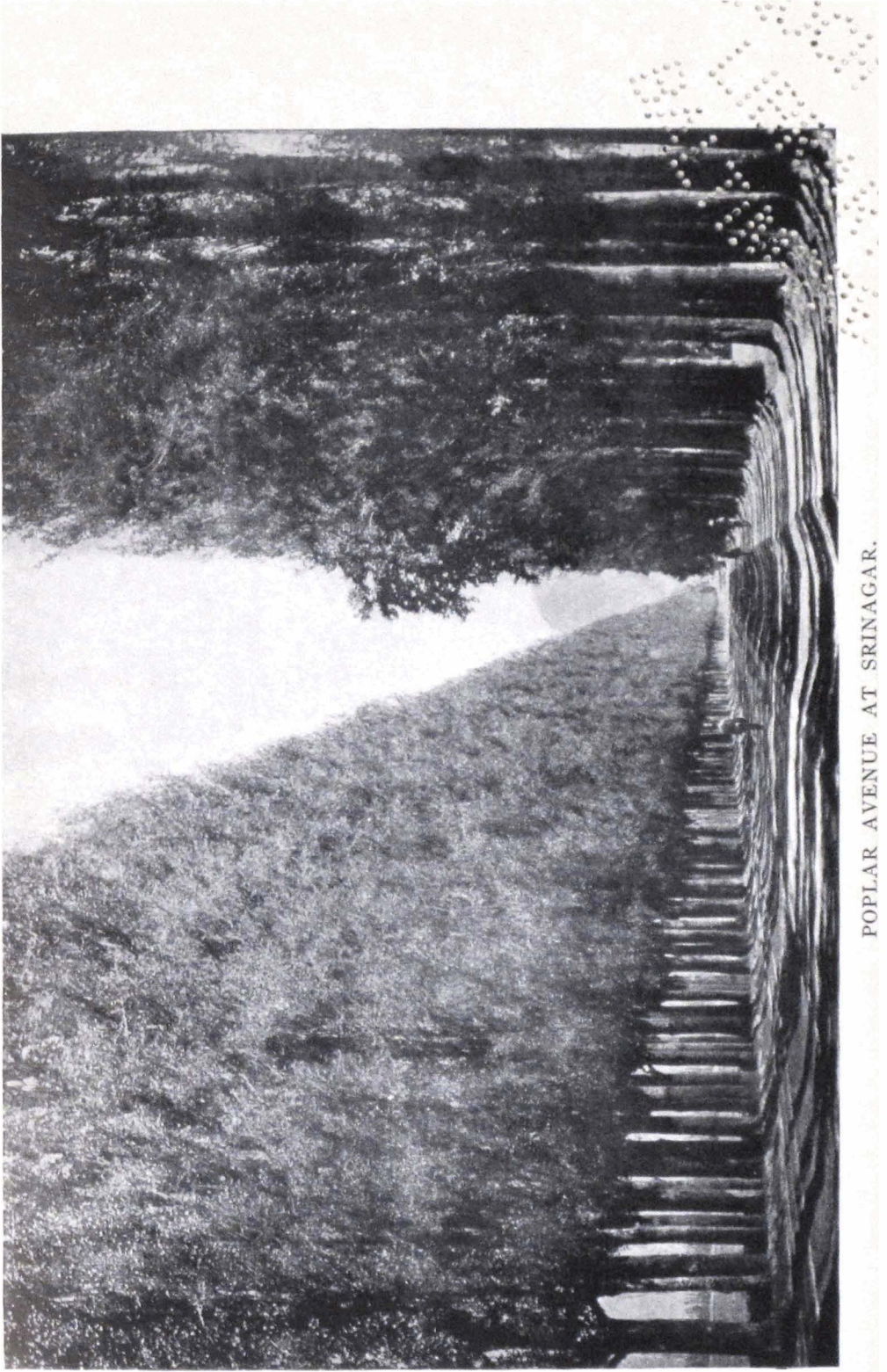
another Paradise anywhere in the world. Search through the most fascinating and world-famed beauty haunts of Europe, such as the "Lago Maggiore," the "Lago di Como," "Killarney," or the Swiss and Scotch Lakes, where can you find such resplendent snow-clad mountains gazing down upon such a lovely fertile valley, with its avenues of gigantic poplars and limes entwined with vines, the grand Himalayas towering above all and keeping an eternal watch over this masterpiece of the Almighty—the Vale of Cashmere?

It was not long before the *Box-wallahs* \* came round to try and do some business, but as I purposed visiting Leh, the capital of Middle Thibet, and a part of Chinese Thibet if possible, I postponed making purchases before again returning to Cashmere. One exception I made in favour of an expert in papier-mâché work, to whom I gave a design on the understanding that any articles made with it should not be disposed of, but kept for me until my return to Cashmere.

The end of the week's rest found us again starting on our travels, now bound for Leh. Another range of the Himalayas had to be crossed before reaching the Indus, in which we found parties working for gold. The mountain paths were a decided improvement upon those along the Sutlej, and from time to time we met more droves of goats and sheep laden with borax, pushum, and Thibetian goods.

So clear was the sky at night that we seemed to see the moon and stars as through an opera-glass. The electricity in the atmosphere is so great that a

\* Merchants and traders.



POPLAR AVENUE AT SRINAGAR.



thunderstorm in the Himalayas is awe-inspiring and quite unforgettable.

Since entering the mountains, sheets for one's bedding were a superfluous luxury and blankets alone sufficed. We arrived usually a couple of hours before nightfall at our encampment, when my bed would be made up and I noticed that electricity played between my blankets the moment they were moved in any way about a couple of hours after being put together. By the time we had got thus far into the mountains my Hindoostanees thought I was fast taking them into a land of ghosts and goblins, particularly on being told to open my blankets carefully, to see if they could discover anything to alarm them; seeing and hearing, also, the play of electricity, they started back wild with fright, and were not easily reassured by the explanation I gave them of the phenomena.

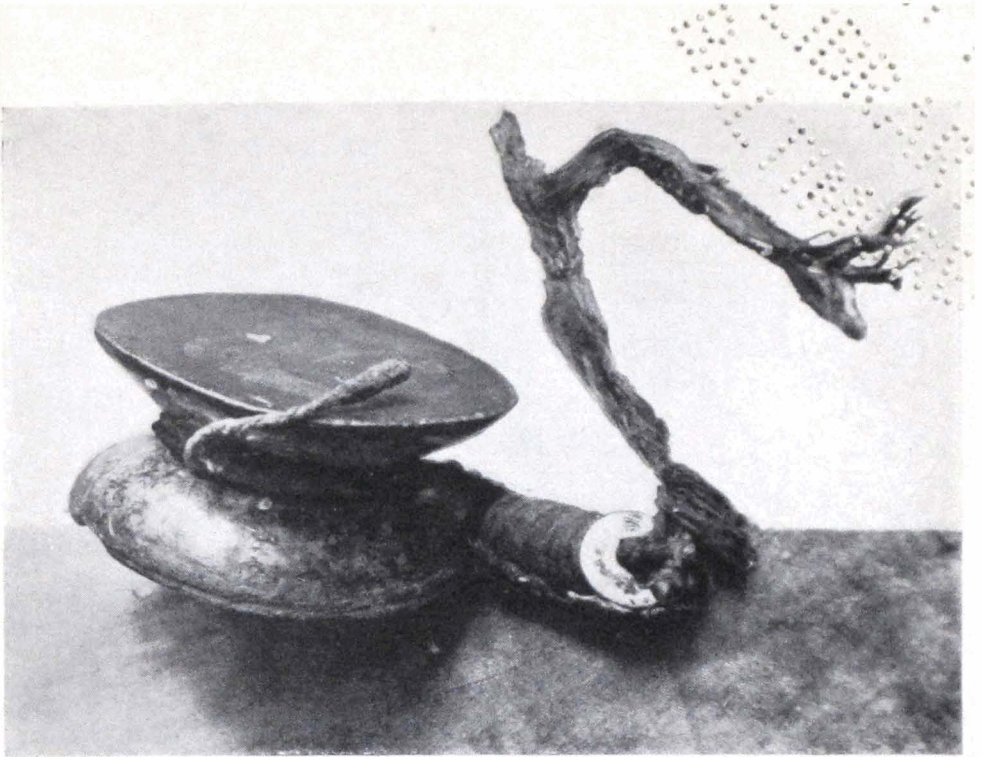
Hearing of a holy man (so called) who lived alone in a cavern in the mountains, curiosity led me out of my way to see this hermit, known as the "Monk with the long hair." In a very small cavern, quite remote from mankind, I found the hermit seated as Buddha is usually represented, but wearing his long black hair wound up as a turban on his head. One of my servants mentioned to him that I was a white man, and he acknowledged that I was the first he had seen. Hanging from the roof of his little cell was a piece of bear's meat, which had been immersed in snow preparatory to being eaten. Curious to know the actual length of the hermit's hair, he unrolled it at my request, and as he himself stood 5 ft. 5 in., I think his hair measured 6 in. more. At that moment I irreverently



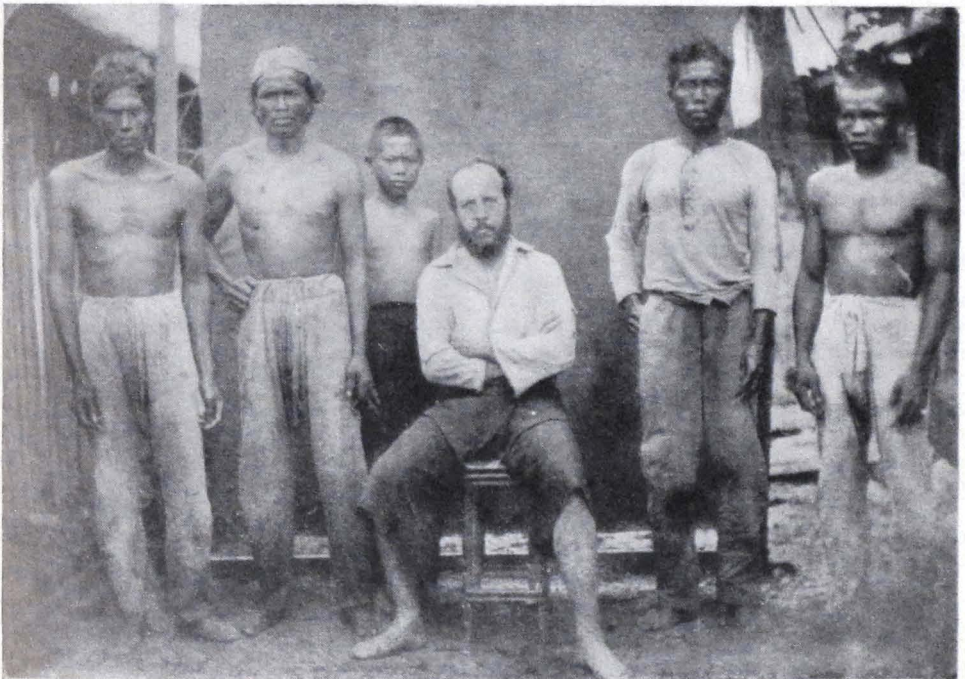
remembered that when leaving England, "Give us a lock of your hair, my boy," was the popular song of the moment. Acting on the suggestion of the words, through my interpreter I requested the monk to oblige me with a lock of his hair, but he unhesitatingly refused, saying "that his hair was holy" and that he "would never part with a lock of it."

Remembering the story once told me by a half-caste of how he had threatened to die at some one's doorway unless he was granted a particular favour, my love of mischief provoked me there and then to try this truly Oriental method on the hermit, and at once ordering all my servants to go back to India I threatened to lie down and die there and then unless the monk gave me a lock of his hair. On receiving this order all my servants (who entered into the joke with great spirit) started a professional howl, every one pretending that he was leaving there and then for India, and very sorry to leave me to my self-chosen fate. But that holy man was obdurate! I can still see my little army retiring to India and hear their piteous cries, which, however, did not appear to affect that hard-hearted unholy man in the least. Now left alone for ten minutes with "Long Hair," how was I going to pass my time?

Another bit of mischief prompted me to eat him out of house and home, and so snatching down the dried bear's flesh, my teeth made so many ugly plunges into it that my unwilling host must have wished me at Hong Kong! The howlers who had left were still howling, but now returning gradually, making supplications for me once again



TWO HUMAN SKULLS, WITH SKIN STRAINED OVER, USED AS A DRUM, THIBET.



THE AUTHOR AND NATIVES WRECKED IN BORNEO. (See page 287.)



to Buddha's representative ; and not in vain, for just as my people were on the point of " leaving for India " a second time, my semi-repentant host remembered that he was in the habit of using one long sample of his holy hair—already cut—for tying up the remainder, and this he generously offered me, though I fear from having been long cut it had probably lost its holy properties. This prized relic I took to England, but one of my relations, unaware of its sanctity, burned it, and thus did Providence punish me for my very unchristian treatment of that " Long-haired monk."

As we arrived near Leh, the monasteries increased in number and size, and were generally perched upon some precipitous promontory overlooking the Indus flowing below. Anxious as I was to gain information from the Lamas of their religious customs and habits, I was obliged to be content with one whose knowledge both of the language and of Buddhism was limited, and consequently he was not able to explain to me the meaning of the various articles venerated by them.

In the Abbé Huc's most interesting *Travels in Tartary, Thibet, and China*, he describes a so-called sanctifying instrument called a *Tortché*, which appears to be a special object of veneration, and he mentions that on the occasion of the New Year's festival in Lhasa it is presented for adoration to the people. It is a small instrument of bronze, resembling a pestle in shape, and it is held by the middle, which is cylindrical and in one piece ; every Lama must possess one made on the model of that which is said to have come through the

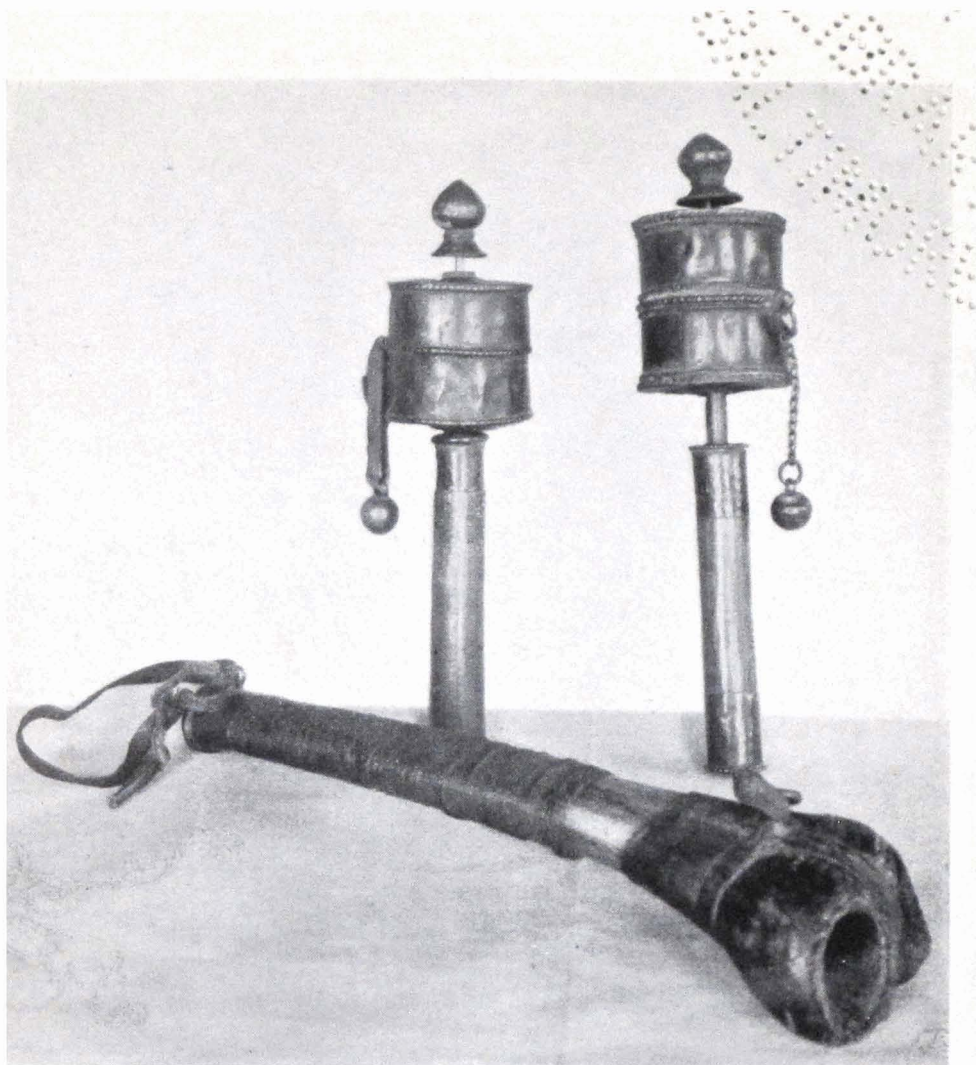
air from India. I secured a Tortché without, unfortunately, being told its special sanctity amongst objects which are all holy, and horrible to confess, I had it carefully cut in two pieces to ornament the large pointed horns of the skull of a sheep I found on the summit of a Himalayan mountain, the remaining parts of the skull being covered with Buddhist or Thibetian rings, amulets, coins, knives, etc.

Every picture, amulet, or object of any kind which you obtain from a Lama you are warned *not* to let fall or place upon the ground.

I succeeded also in collecting a number of Buddhist curios, amongst them a thigh-bone of a holy man used as a trumpet, a skull of another, which I found a monk using as a tea-cup; the crowns of two inverted skulls, used as a drum in the temples; and praying-wheels used for wind, water, and hand, to say nothing of pictures and figures of Buddha, bells, amulets, and other objects.

On entering Leh, I met a Lama suffering from toothache who asked me to heal his pain. Seeing that he had a small god encased in a locket I asked him whether he had applied to the god for help? He said he had, but with no result. Telling him that perhaps he and the god had fallen out with each other, and asking if he would part with the god if I cured him of the toothache, he at once consented to do so. Thereupon I applied "Bunter's Nervine" to the nerve and the miracle was wrought! The next day the god was mine, but in order that the monk himself might work miracles, I gave him a little of the wondrous remedy.





BUDDHIST PRAYING WHEELS AND HUMAN THIGH BONE USED AS A TRUMPET IN BUDDHIST MONASTERY, THIBET.



RUPEES OF CASHMERE. (See page 156.)



Finding Lamas cutting the sacred prayer, "Om mani padme houn" (which the Abbé Huc translated as "O the Gem in the Lotus, Amen"), upon stones by the river-side, I collected several which might serve as paper weights to give to my friends with their names cut upon them after I had carefully written the letters, and I have some of the stones to this day. So great faith have the Lamas in the power of Buddha, that the same Abbé tells us that in various parts of Chinese Thibet the monks draw pictures of horses and scatter these pictures to the winds, trusting they will be turned into real horses for travellers through Buddha's help. I have with me a small piece of wood upon which are figures of birds, fowls, etc., likewise brought with me from Thibet, and possibly when the age of Faith comes round again, with the help of Buddha and these figures I may succeed in bringing down the price of poultry in my neighbourhood.

In British India it is characteristic of the white man to associate with the natives as little as possible, and doubtless owing to what is ascribed as hauteur, the Englishman is regarded pretty well everywhere as the proudest of mankind. In countries where British rule does not exist, I have always found that *suaviter in modo* renders travelling more agreeable. In the neighbourhood of Leh, a number of Lamas, some dressed in yellow and some in red robes, came asking me one day for alms. I knew of course that one colour designated "reformed" and the other "non-reformed" monks, but telling them that I supposed they were all good friends and finding they were so, I



suggested their having a little play with one another and with me. So I taught them how to box in a friendly manner, but I found it first of all difficult to get them to close their fists, until I offered a reward to the one who succeeded in punching the other head over heels. Perhaps for the first time since Buddha was Buddha, two Lamas tried to learn the "gentle art," but much preferred "Soccer" to "Rugger" methods, immediately seizing and rolling each other over like two bears, at one time the yellow ball being uppermost and the next moment the red, to the intense amusement both of the combatants and the Lama audience. As I had seen two ungainly-looking nuns among the audience enjoying the fun, I endeavoured to teach them to dance the Highland fling, but their attempts to accomplish what a Lancashireman would call "shaking a leg a bit" were so clumsy, that no one asked for an "encore."

Leaving Leh without much regret, in the course of a week we had already reached the territory of the Chinese empire, and were drawing near to Rudok on the western borders of Thibet. My servants getting constant notice of this from various sources, calmly informed me that they supposed the British had not annexed this part of the world owing to fear of the Chinese. I replied that as I was not frightened to enter Chinese Thibet alone, how could they imagine that a thousand of my countrymen would be afraid? After pondering this awhile the conclusion they came to was, that I had a screw loose owing to being too fond of travelling anywhere and everywhere!

As we were gradually ascending mountain after

mountain, the effect of the rarefied atmosphere destroyed my appetite for dinner and gave me, for the time, a pain in my temples, but otherwise did not injure me in any way. When passing 15,000 ft., I was asked to enter a hut where a poor sick Lama was lying ill upon the ground, suffering from cholera. As I always took with me Dr. Collis Browne's Chlorodyne I gave the poor man about twenty drops, which I trust did him good. In return, my grateful patient allowed me to bring to England his tea-cup, which consisted of the small skull of some holy man long since departed, out of which many a Somerset man has had a drop of porter on a wet day.

When the stormy winds were blowing on these Himalaya mountains it was not easy to prevent our tents from being blown down, as even strong pointed iron pegs did not suffice, and we had to allow the flaps of our tents to lie on the ground, keeping them in position by layers of heavy stones placed upon them. So regularly had the order for selecting stones been given day after day that the Thibetian words, "Chick chick hurdwar keean" ("Each one bring a stone"), I remember to this day.

A Lama overtook me one day who asked me to buy some red woollen cloth such as the red Lamas wear in contradistinction to their yellow brethren. I told him that my difficulty was to get some one to make up a Lama dress for me, and as he kindly offered to do so himself with the cloth he had, I purchased it, and have it still. In the course of conversation, my new friend inquired whether I knew what I was to be transformed into in the next world, and when I acknowledged my

ignorance on that most important topic he quickly enlightened me. "You are a good man," he said, "and when you have thrown off 'the skin of this envelope,' \* you will become a great big elephant!" This was distinctly cheering news for me, because a Mahometan only a few months before had warned me that I was to be severely punished in the next world for having given Turkish Mahometans pig to eat, and I thought as an elephant I could at least stand a good deal of whacking easily!

One more incident of note occurred on the journey to Rudok. When ascending a mountain nearly 17,000 ft. up, the luggage being in advance and only two of my servants with me, we suddenly stumbled upon a skeleton, upon which we found a leather purse containing a comb and three coins, two out of the three having the letters I.H.S. distinctly engraved upon them. Having just come from Cashmere where similar coins are still current, it was easy to understand that some poor creature returning home from Cashmere had been frozen to death on this spot. But how I.H.S., *i.e.* "Jesus Hominum Salvator," came to be engraved upon coins of Cashmere is a difficult matter to explain, and I can only conclude that some Christian, in years remote, had been in the service of a former Rajah of Cashmere and had suggested that these letters symbolical of Christianity should be engraved upon one of the Cashmeeri coins. Delighted to come upon these relics, I at once gave my servants the equivalent in more modern money, and brought these and others home with me.

By this time, three Thibetans had been sent

\* A Chinese expression.

to stop me, and had informed me that, owing to my having penetrated thus far they would be sure to have their heads cut off when it was known in Lhasa. Of course I knew this was mere Oriental jargon, nor was I any more impressed the following day when on passing close to a small lake, one of the three, pointing to the lake and then to his own head, remarked: "As this has to be cut off, you had better do so at once and throw it into the lake." I retorted: "The Almighty has put your head where it is, and as far as I am concerned I intend to leave it where He has placed it, and not to disturb the peaceful waters with it." Then one of the three seized my horse, as if about to stop me, whereupon I reminded them that my people could kill all three of them and eat them up, and no one would be any the wiser.

Finding this Asiatic balderdash unavailing, two of the three men now hurried off to the Governor of Rudok. The same night there was a high wind and very heavy rainfall, and I found next morning that the third poor fellow had been left outside the tent all night by my servants to shift as best he could for himself. On my taxing my Hindoostanees with this act of barbarism, they answered that "the Thibetan had upon his person animals intended only for the Zoological Gardens!"

A day or two later, the Governor of Rudok, along with a leading Lama and thirty or forty men and a troop of Thibetian dogs, arrived during the night and pitched their tents within a hundred yards of mine, so that on awaking in the early morning, the first thing I saw was the encampment of the new-comers. I was not surprised, and in

one way even glad to meet them, as my own servants had recently been threatening to stop—from fear, no doubt, of losing their own heads !

Aware that all Orientals are impressed by display, I gave my head carrier my gun and bade him remain on guard at the entrance to my tent, with orders to allow only the Governor of Rudok and the Lama to enter. A few minutes sufficed to arrange the interior in order to impress the visitors. Amongst other articles calculated to excite their curiosity and wonder were a knife with eighteen blades, a revolver, barometer, thermometer, magnifying glass, and a railway rug, mauve on one side and black on the other.

Presently, the Governor and Lama preceding, the remainder were allowed to enter. Acting as spokesman, the Lama informed me first of all that I was a great man, but that there was one above greater than myself, the "Gooroo Narein," who had stopped me in my career, for otherwise I should have reached Rudok. Then followed a repetition of the wail about losing their heads, such being the fate which he assured me awaited them at Lhasa, very similar to the rubbish I had heard from the three messengers sent to stop me.

Of course I knew that for some years past orders had come from Lhasa to prevent Europeans from entering Thibet, but I reminded the Governor that commerce existed between Europe and China, and that I would promise not to proceed further provided he would send into Rudok for various Thibetian articles I wished to purchase ; but that failing this I would make no promise whatever. I mentioned certain articles which I had noticed

during my journey, such as amulets, turquoises, and other trinkets worn by the people, as well as merchandise, and horns of wild animals ; also curios, such as yak-tails, Buddhist praying-wheels, sacred trumpets and drinking-vessels made of human thigh-bones and skulls. The Governor's first reply was that many of the things I had named did not exist, but my interpreter reminded him that during my journey I had noted down their names and sometimes their prices, and as the Lama agreed with me, a list was made out on the spot and a copy kept by the Governor, who immediately ordered two of his people to return to Rudok and bring everything obtainable which I had asked for. At the same time the Governor presented me with a half brick of tea, and though at first the taste seemed strange, I later grew to like it well enough.

The next couple of days, while waiting for the return of the men sent to Rudok, I spent in amusing myself and the Thibetans in various ways. As they had never seen a large magnifying glass, there was no difficulty in mystifying them with mine. Placing the glass in the Governor's hand, I let him see first the small effect of sun-power on my skin when the focus was not adjusted, and then the strong effect upon his skin with the focus converged. The Lama and the rest of their company were greatly amused, and nothing would satisfy them but to try the experiment for themselves. Nor were they less entertained by the discovery of certain "furrin' bodies" upon their none-too-clean persons—a use of the glass for which I had not bargained!

After a couple of days, two pony loads con-

taining practically all the articles I had asked for arrived, for which I at once paid, and at a very reasonable rate. Everybody, from the Governor down, was more than pleased, and told me that if all white men were like myself they would be glad to see them. This notwithstanding Lhasa's demand for heads !

We returned to Leh by another route, and there was now abundance of small game, both hares and quail ; in a more or less open country I shot a "kiang," or wild horse of Thibet, and missed a second ; when these animals get together, they set to kicking each other so violently as to provoke laughter, so that it is difficult to take a steady aim.

From Leh, the capital of "Middle Thibet," I had decided to return to Cashmere by Iskardo, the capital of "Little Thibet," named after Alexander the Great, who is known in Turkish as "Secunder," in Arabic as "Iskender," and in Little Thibet as "Iskardo." Our route lay not far from the Indus river, and the nearer we advanced towards Iskardo the more fruitful the country appeared. The people, too, were decidedly more lively in this less rigorous and emaciating climate, and perhaps owing partly to the same cause children were far more numerous and less solemn. Mahometanism began again to predominate instead of Buddhism, though both the Governor of Iskardo and the Rajah of Cashmere were Hindoos.

On reaching Iskardo the Governor was particularly civil and kind, greatly assisting me in my journey to Cashmere, and presenting me with horns of the "Markhor of Middle Thibet,"

which are exceedingly rare, and also skins of the very uncommon "white leopard."

But of far more importance was his most interesting information regarding the Abbés Huc and Gabet, the *Governor of Iskardo being himself a prisoner in Lhasa on the 29th January, 1846, when the two French priests arrived there.*

It will be remembered that previous to the above date there had been fighting between the Cashmeeris and Thibetans, and on this occasion the Governor, who was a Hindoo, was taken prisoner. He informed me that a number of Mahometan Cashmeeris had settled in Lhasa, and it was they who had visited the priests under the pretence of friendship, but in reality to get them ordered out of Lhasa; subsequently preventing Europeans from reaching Lhasa at all. Even up to the eve of the expulsion of the French priests, these Mahometans continually called upon them, offering them presents which, though declined, the priests believed to be offered in a friendly spirit. The Abbé Huc evidently was not acquainted with the Indian proverb :

"When the world grows scarce of men  
Beware ye of the wily Affghan :  
Avoid ye likewise the Merchant of Mooltan ;  
But of all scoundrels, eschew the Cashmeeris !"

Had the Governor of Iskardo been a Mahometan, doubtless he would not have imparted this information, which would have reflected so little credit upon his co-religionists. But then, had he been a Mahometan it is unlikely that he would have been a prisoner in Lhasa and a witness of these things, as the Mahometans at that time



were a powerful faction in Lhasa, even possessing a mosque in that stronghold of Buddhism.

As a boy of fifteen at Mount St. Mary's College, I used to read aloud to my school-fellows in the refectory the travels of the Abbés Huc and Gabet, but how little did I then think that I should ever meet one who had seen these two renowned travellers in Lhasa, or indeed that I should find myself in so out-of-the-way a place as Iskardo in Little Thibet !

As the season was getting somewhat late and I had still a high mountain to cross I only remained a few days in Iskardo, during which time the Governor for my special benefit arranged a game of polo on horseback. It was the first time I had seen polo played, and I shall never forget the sight of perhaps a couple of dozen men all wearing long pig-tails, riding on active little ponies, both men and ponies apparently entering into the spirit of the game, as they sent a small wooden ball cut out of the root of the birch tree flying hither and thither without injuring either man or beast. The players kindly permitted me to make one of their number, but I felt I was *de trop*, as must every Griffin who plays polo on horseback for the first time. I brought back with me a wooden ball and club as a memento of the game, which I have to this day. The Governor had now provided me with twenty men, owing to my baggage gradually increasing from day to day. I ought to mention (as the reader will surmise) that these men were all Mahometans.

Leaving Iskardo with regret, the first day's long journey brought us to the foot of a high

mountain ; though not so lofty as those we had crossed when going towards Rudok in Chinese Thibet.

Awakening about two in the morning, I noticed a large threatening halo around the moon, so arousing everybody, I bade them get ready in order to lose no time in crossing the mountain before a snow-storm should gather. Ascending slowly and steadily, daybreak found us upon an excessively steep peak which we had scaled with difficulty ; my Hindoostanee servants and half a dozen picked mountaineers being with me, the remainder of the baggage carriers still behind. Both in front and around were the lofty peaks of some half a dozen mountains frowning down upon us, and to my horror, one of the guides now declared he did not know between which of these peaks our path lay, the other men being equally at a loss. A carrier, still in the rear, was considered the best guide, and I ordered a man to lose no time in returning with him.

For full three-quarters of an hour the snow was falling, at first gently, then more and more blindingly, and the cold became intense. We dared not move owing to the slippery nature of the rocks everywhere around us. At this depressing time I called to mind the words of one of my old masters at Stonyhurst, Father Richard Payne, who on seeing any one in low spirits would exclaim : “ Brush up, boys ! ” instead of “ Cheer up ! ” I asked my Hindoostanees if they did not think the gently falling snow reminded them of the beautiful white veil which “ Miss Babas ” wore in India when going to get married, but my simile failed to pro-

duce a spark of cheerfulness in the frozen climate of that Himalayan morning !

Those three-quarters of an hour are not easily forgotten. But at length relief came with the guide, and the storm which followed that night found me in a cavern counting my men, when I discovered that three were missing. Asking their leader to account for them, he replied that they had grown exhausted, and though he had divided their share of the baggage amongst the remainder of the men, they had refused to move ; then he added : “ As it was their fate to die on the top of the mountain, I left them there to freeze to death.” These last words were uttered in such an unfeeling manner that it provoked me to tell the fatalist that it was *his* fate to get a good kick, but his religious scruples did not prevent him from trying to avoid it, and in my endeavour to inflict it I collapsed from trying to run at that high temperature. Even my Mahometan servants agreed that had we had our Buddhist carriers they would not have left their companions as these Mahometans had done in their cruel fatalism.

Reaching Cashmere without any further troubles, and being permitted to have my former bungalow, I decided to rest there for another fortnight. By this time there were more Europeans there, principally officers on leave of absence. Amongst others the nephew of the famous Landseer was engaged in painting portraits of the Rajah of Cashmere, and the story went that the Rajah had asked an English officer what amount he ought to pay Landseer. The officer replied that her Majesty, the Queen, had paid so many

thousand pounds to the eminent painter, Landseer, for painting some *animals*; and consequently his Majesty the Rajah must judge for himself what price to give for a painting of *himself*!

It will be remembered that before leaving Cashmere for Leh, I had given a papier-mâché merchant a design for making in my absence samples of various articles. I was now informed that after one article only had been made, the maker had shown it to the first officer he called upon, who at once purchased it; but a rival maker of papier-mâché work offered to make some other fancy article for the same officer if the original pattern were lent him for a day, and then copied the pattern and started supplying the public on his own account, so that I found my design being sold to various visitors. The result was a lawsuit, and the Rajah's Baboo \* now called on me to ask me to whom I had sold the original design. I pointed out the man who had copied the design, for he had not only altered it somewhat, but had not had the ordinary civility to let me have a sample before thrusting it upon the public. At the Paris Exhibition of 1878 I found that a facsimile of my design in papier-mâché from Cashmere had gained the first prize!

I had returned from Ladak † with a superfluity of Pushmina cloth which I wished to have made up for my friends, and being anxious to leave Cashmere in a fortnight, it was necessary to put on a good many hands to get the work done quickly. In those days in Cashmere an apprentice tailor who could do elementary work was paid threepence per day,

\* Clerk.

† The district of Middle Thibet.

a master hand probably double that amount; and with a little difficulty I arranged with a master tailor to put on forty hands at threepence per day per man, he himself to superintend the entire work and to receive sixpence per day. Adjoining my bungalow a tent was pitched and allotted to the tailors only. Looking into the tent the second day to see how the work was proceeding, I noticed a number of them plunging one hand hurriedly under a part of their dress, but in several instances not fast enough to conceal the whole piece they had been at work upon. Subsequent investigation revealed that all the strips, thus hurried away, were the embroidered edgings usually adorning Cashmere shawls; in reality, so much work done by those tailors on their private account, when the eye of the employer was not upon them.

I found Cashmeeris quite ready to betray each other, and on one occasion one who had noticed another just leaving me, hastened to inform me that the individual was his brother who had just come out of prison. It seemed to make no impression when I told him that he himself ought to be sent to prison for defaming his own brother in such a manner.

In dealing with people of this character, it is scarcely to be wondered at if Europeans sometimes vent their language too freely, and this is perhaps the especial failing of the British. A friend of mine on arriving in India went to call on a priest, who particularly warned him against the easily-acquired habit of using abusive language to the natives. A servant in the room who was pulling the punkah ceased work for a moment, whereupon



COLONEL ALEXANDER GARDNER.



the priest turned round on him with : “ Pull the punkah, you pig ! ”

But in my own experience, I found a more amusing and satisfactory method. In Cashmere a Box-wallah endeavoured to impose upon me, and persisted in asking ridiculous prices for his wares, whereupon I suddenly let loose at him a word of formidable length and more ferocious-sounding than any expletive. It was merely a hotch-potch in Hindoostanee of names of mountains, rivers, and people, but said quickly and forcibly it completely deceived the Box-wallah, who, in a shocked tone, bade my carrier lift my goods and go ! My servants, who were used to my ways and understood the construction of the word, thoroughly enjoyed the joke, and asked the Box-wallah why he wished to get rid of me ? “ Because of the abominable language that the Sahib is using,” he replied ; and on my servants asking him what it meant, he said it was far too shocking to express ! A dismemberment of the terrible word, however, convinced him that there was neither insult nor abuse in it, and lifting up his hands in admiration, he exclaimed : “ Khodawunda ” (“ My Lord God ”), “ you know our language so well and the true worth of my goods, that if you will give me for them what you think just, I shall be content ”—and, needless to say, so was I.

But a man who called upon me in Srinagar, living not far from me, was undoubtedly the most singular character I ever met with, a Colonel in the Rajah of Cashmere’s Army ; and of perhaps sixty years of age. It was to a plaided Norfolk jacket (made especially for the Himalayas) to which



he had taken a great fancy, that I was indebted for the acquaintance of Colonel Gardner, who made known to me some parts of his most extraordinary life. Of American extraction, he with two other adventurers had offered their services to more than one princeling in Central Asia, before entering the service of Runjeet Singh, the King of the Punjaub, with whom he had served not only against the Affghans, but against many petty Rajahs inimical to him.

Speaking of the Affghans, Colonel Gardner considered that the British ought to have followed Runjeet Singh's mode of fighting with that race. Mahometans, as he said, believe that if the body of a man is burnt, his soul is damned. Consequently, after a fight with the Affghans, it was customary for Runjeet Singh to allow two or more of his prisoners to witness the burning of their fellow-countrymen; so that the few who were spared could return and announce to their fellow-countrymen the fate that awaited them in the next world, if they fell into Runjeet Singh's hands in this.

Any one who has read the history of this Prince must have remarked that a favourite brutality of his was ordering a prisoner's nose to be cut off. A Brahmin prisoner was brought before him on one occasion, and knowing the dread Hindoos possess of being punished in the next world, for any injury done to a Brahmin in this, Runjeet Singh asked in open court if there was no one among his courtiers (who were Hindoos) ready to cut off this man's nose? Whereupon Colonel Gardner, as he himself told me, immediately

offered to do what was wanted, and with his sword cut off the Brahmin's nose on the spot.

On another occasion some Rajah in the Himalaya having provoked Runjeet Singh by not paying his annual tribute, a volunteer was required who would be willing to undertake his capture. Colonel Gardner immediately volunteered, but stipulated that he might marry the captive Rajah's daughter if he were successful. Runjeet Singh consented, and the Colonel informed me that the girl duly became "one of his wives"!

He bade me warn the officers who were at that time doing Cashmere not to break into his abode, as he kept a ferocious dog that was dangerous (his seven wives were there)!

Of course during these years Gardner passed as a Mussulman, and used to carry a Koran on his breast.

When narrating to me his extraordinary life, I ventured to ask him if he would re-embrace Christianity again, but he put me off by muttering something like "Oh, I don't know."

This remarkable man had, as he himself says, "a maggot in his brain"—even when I met him in 1864, when he was 79 years of age.

On his asking me whether I had heard of a country called Gilgit, I replied that I understood it was somewhere beyond Iskardo on the frontiers of Baltistan. "Well," continued the Colonel, "people who are sent to Gilgit as a punishment never get there, for this reason: a few soldiers, well armed, take some prisoners with them and notice is given to the villagers *en route* that the prisoners are being taken to Gilgit. Of course, the soldiers

are fed at the expense of the villagers, but now and again at suitable localities one or more of the prisoners are dropped, generally at night, into a well or a deep hole, until all are disposed of, and then the escort returns to report they have been to Gilgit—but they never get there.” This the Colonel assured me was true. He also mentioned Baltistan, a country lying between Gilgit and Iskardo, famous for a race of savage dogs, the value of a dog being equivalent to that of a man; sometimes one or more prisoners, bound for Gilgit (taken with their eyes bandaged so as to prevent them knowing the road in case of attempting to escape), would be exchanged on reaching Baltistan for the well-known dogs of that country.

The Colonel likewise told me that when formerly the Cashmeeri were fighting against the simple Thibetans, the latter used to tie ropes around the prisoners they managed to capture! This shows well enough the sort of fighting which took place before Cashmere took possession of Ladak, or Middle Thibet.\*

By this time my assortment of curios was fairly large, especially from Chinese Thibet, and the principal French shawl merchant called to see them, congratulating me on obtaining, as he said, in one single trip to the interior of Thibet more than friends of his own had obtained for him in several years. Mr. Landseer likewise called to see more especially the variety of horns I had obtained, kindly making me a present of a couple

\* *Memoirs of Alexander Gardner: Colonel in Service of Ranjit Singh.* By Major Hugh Pearse. 8vo. Blackwood, 1898:

of pair of " Bara Sing " horns of Cashmere, and he was delighted with a specimen of the rare Markhor, given to me by the Governor of Iskardo.

At this season of the year fruit was particularly abundant, melons, peaches, apricots, almonds, water melons being in season. But it was near the time for British subjects to be leaving Cashmere, owing to an order issued by our own Government to prevent disputes arising between ourselves and the Rajah of Cashmere. Whether in these days a similar order exists, I do not know. As my most enjoyable wanderings in this part of the world were now coming to an end, I had to make arrangements for returning to the plains of India, the most suitable route being by Jummoo, where the Rajah of Cashmere lives, and from thence to Umritsur, Lahore, and Peshawur, not far from the Khyber Pass of ominous fame.

Leaving both my Simla and Shahabad servants in the Plains, I returned to see this famous Pass, renowned for all time in our annals, and permission being granted to enter it for a limited distance, I accompanied other visitors as far as it was allowable. How little did I think, when accompanying the Military Train from Jugdispoor to Sasseram under Sir Henry Havelock in the year 1858, that he (who I believe was at that time suffering from a sunstroke) would eventually be shot down in the Khyber Pass whilst recklessly leaving the British Force, and striving to return to Peshawur alone—an act ascribable, as I believe, to the illness he had suffered from for years.

I rested for a day or two at Umritsur and Lahore on my way to Shahabad, where I paid

another pleasant visit to my friends ; after which, knowing that war had been declared with Bhootan, I travelled thither, and inquired of the principal Civil Officer of the District whether there was any prohibition for civilians entering the province. Hearing there were no restrictions, I at once proceeded to head-quarters and called upon General Fraser-Tytler, who made me most welcome. Although at this time our preparations for attack were not quite completed, it was generally believed that in a few days an assault would be made upon Bala Doar, where the Bhootean had erected a stockade on the summit of a hill. A little later definite orders were received, and on the evening previous to the attack the son of the Honourable Ashley Eden, on the Commissioner's Staff, suggested to me that I should accompany him on the morrow instead of going with the main body. Nothing loath I acquiesced, and next day we allowed the troops to precede us ; then, starting by ourselves, we took what we imagined to be the nearest path to join them, but unfortunately it proved to be such a short cut that we suddenly found ourselves in front of one of the Bhootean stockades on the opposite side of the stream to our own troops, who had not yet appeared.

The Bhooteas are a race comparatively little known to Europeans except those living in Darjeeling and the tea-planters in the Cooch-Bihar district. They are a very simple race as the following incidents will show.

At one of the conferences between our authorities and the Bhooteas, the latter brought with them a couple of sacks of cowrie shells, these being

their currency, as I found almonds were in the neighbourhood of Mount Aboo. As little or no notice was taken of these cowries by our people, by way of impressing the latter with the great wealth and importance of the Bhooteas, one of them remarked that they still had more cowries than those they had brought with them !

On another occasion, a Bhootea made a remark which caused much amusement among his countrymen. We asked the interpreter to explain the joke, and it appeared that the Bhootea had noticed that one of the Europeans present at every conference (*viz.* the Doctor) never spoke a word, and so the native had wittily inquired of his confrères whether they supposed he had a tongue in his mouth !

Here we stopped for a minute or two, but hearing no noise and seeing no one in the stockade, we naturally thought the Bhooteas had vacated it, and, crossing the stream, we took possession of it. Scarcely had we done so when we saw our Sikhs advancing, and realising at once that they would take us for the enemy, we made a hurried attempt to take shelter on one side. Fortunately for us a shrewd Scotch officer, Captain Gibson, was in command, who, rushing up to us, exclaimed : “ God Almighty ! you have never in your lives been so nearly shot as you were this moment ! Seeing you in front of the stockade,” continued the Captain, “ my men naturally thought you were the enemy, and some were on one knee to fire, when I shouted to them to stop.” There was no doubt we were deeply to blame for our foolhardiness, and greatly indebted to Captain Gibson for not having been shot then and there.

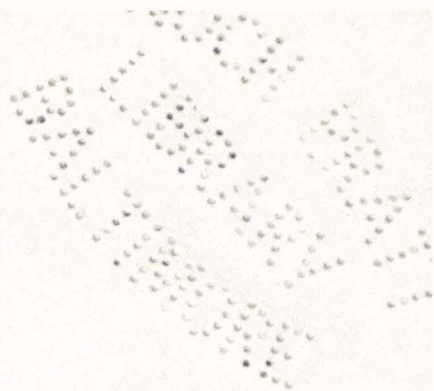
This time accompanying the troops, we advanced upon the principal stockade held by the enemy, which was on the edge of a steep hill and sheltered by trees to a considerable extent. The welcome we received when immediately below it consisted of loads of stones discharged from a catapult, and they came clattering down against the trees behind which we momentarily took cover. It was evident that the days of Julius Cæsar and his heavy artillery were returning ! But the poor Bhooteas little knew that civilised warfare would at one coup annihilate both themselves and their antiquated catapults.

Whilst we were engaging the attention of the enemy, a small force had made a flank movement unperceived, and was now attacking them in the rear. The ensuing conflict was soon over and Bala Dooar surrendered. One of the officers among the new arrivals was Captain Loughnan, an old Stonyhurst school-fellow, who had been wounded in a previous engagement by a poisoned arrow which fortunately had lost its properties.

In an expedition next made to Buxar Dooar, a more important stronghold of the Bhooteas, the mountaineers were far from conciliatory, after which the little war ended.

Among other trophies I found on a dead Bhootea was a deity enclosed in a copper locket ; a more curious though a slightly cumbersome article, was a cylinder-shaped barrel used in the Himalaya for mixing together tea, salt, and fat, which is a usual drink, fat being especially assimilating in cold climates.

A trip to Darjeeling, from whence can be seen



SUNSET ON THE BRAMAHPOOTRA.





that monarch of mountains, Kinchinjunga, affords a view of well-nigh one hundred miles, with the giant itself in the background—a superb landscape scarce to be equalled in any other part of the world.

From Bhootan to the great tea-growing country Assam is no great distance; thence a pleasant voyage on one of the steamers sailing up the Brahmapootra brings one to Deebroghur, where are more tea plantations. Hundreds of coolies from the plains of India were being sent here at this period, but cholera was very prevalent amongst them; the bodies were thrown into the river, where I noticed that alligators seemed more numerous than in the Ganges even. (When boating on the latter river, I remember seeing a crow feeding on a corpse on the river-side; the crow was disturbed by a pig, it, too, being immediately driven away by a dog.)

Owing to sand-banks in the Brahmapootra, steamers are obliged to anchor at night. Hearing early one morning a rifle shot, I ran up on deck in time to see that the captain had missed a huge black buffalo swimming the river alone (probably one driven away by its own herd and hence called a "Rogue"). As the steamer was only just starting, I asked the captain to stop for a few minutes, and he did so. Both of us then jumped into a boat and rowed towards the shore on which the animal was now resting after its long swim. At a distance of about one hundred and fifty yards, the captain fired from the boat, but the shot missed. Jumping out of the boat, and running about one hundred yards in the heavy sand, and kneeling on

one knee, I gave my "Westley-Richards" a chance and evidently wounded the brute as the animal made for me, but not before I had time to fire a second shot, which also took effect, and the captain firing a second time, the animal fell; on which I jumped on to its back and called out: "Three cheers for Old England, boys!" The captain was good enough to let the boatmen cut off the animal's head and hoofs for me, which I have to this day as my last souvenir of India.

## CHAPTER VII

### PERSIA AND RUSSIA

RETURNING from Deebroghur to Calcutta and thence to Bombay, via Madras, Bangalore, the Neilgheries, and Calicut, I was fortunate enough to find a steamer on the point of sailing for Bushire in the Persian Gulf. On board the same steamer was Captain Moore, whom I had met in Cashmere, and who had been interpreter to Sir Hugh Rose in the Indian Mutiny, and he also intended to return to Europe by Persia and Russia. Mr. Walton in charge of the telegraph in Persia, along with one or two assistants, were likewise passengers, and also a good many Persian Hajees just returning from Mecca.

One of the telegraph assistants who had his wife with him, assuming on one occasion that one of the Hajees had rudely pushed against her, immediately gave the man a blow with his fist. In an instant, all was confusion on deck, all the Hajees apparently anxious to get at the man who had struck the blow. I do not recollect ever seeing the imprudent assailant again, as he and one officer of the steamer immediately disappeared, and then I heard Mr. Walton shouting out to me to look behind, because there was a man brandishing a dagger, immediately behind my back. Fortunately Captain Moore at once set himself to quell

the disturbance, but notwithstanding his perfect knowledge of Persian, he found it no easy matter, as the enraged Hajees were not inclined to allow a dog of an infidel to strike a Pilgrim just returning from holy Mecca! The Hajees were told that they were in the right and that the man ought to be punished, but that it was not for them to take the law into their own hands, for on his arrival at Bushire the man would be tried and punished. After much ado peace was established, but the telegraph assistant was never seen again, though I heard that on our arrival at Bushire he was allowed to go quietly ashore at night.

During our two or three days' stay in Bushire, we found no difficulty in obtaining servants to accompany us, and the Persian Government supply horses at the expense of travellers. We found that the principal merchants of the town were Armenians—in fact, about the only European we met there was a Swedish doctor who had been medical attendant to the Persian Generalissimo before and during the recent war between England and Persia. He mentioned that before the arrival of the British troops, the Persian soldiers were boasting that one Persian was equal to seven Englishmen, and early in the battle the English cavalry had been ordered to charge. It was the Doctor's duty to accompany the General everywhere, and at the very moment the English charged the General himself with his entire suite were the first to fly, never halting until a dozen miles distant from the field of battle. Then, dismounting, the General requested the Doctor to feel his pulse, wishing to know whether it was not beating

calmly. "Were you at this moment in your palace at Ispahan, General," replied the Doctor, "your pulse could not be more even!" "Exactly," replied the General; "if I am not frightened, why do my men run?"

Across the coast of Mekran, which I now reached, Alexander the Great had marched his army when returning from his conquests in India. The intense heat which he must have had to contend with, and the scarcity of water, make it a perpetual marvel to the present-day traveller that he should have accomplished such a feat. From Bushire to Baloochistan the desert is barely inhabited, and the Sepoys I met at Tarsus believe the few people who are there to be witches who turn travellers into donkeys and let them loose at night to find food for themselves! The heat everywhere is intense, and in Bagdad the thermometer registers  $120^{\circ}$  in summer.

The opposite side of the Gulf is famous for its great pearl fisheries which it is calculated yield annually twenty lacs of rupees. That of Bahrein is the most famous, where the best yellow and white pearls are found, the former being preferred in the Indian market, and the pure white in the European. Before diving, the precaution is taken of oiling the orifices of the ears and placing a covering over the nose, to prevent the water from entering; yet, notwithstanding, the divers break out in sores, and their eyes become blood-shot and weak. The depth they usually dive varies from 5 to 15 ft., and they remain in the water from two to five minutes at a time. Experience has taught them that they usually do best after

heavy rains, and that the largest and finest pearls are found in deep water.

In the southern parts of Persia, owing to the great heat the houses have openings at the top, called wind-catchers, to allow the cooler air above to descend. On account of its climate the southern part of Persia is more or less sandy and barren; the centre again enjoying a more temperate climate, and therefore more fruitful; the north being colder and barren, with snow in the far north.

As we were travelling in Persia in summer time, we were forced to rest in the heat of the day, and start the journey after 4 or 5 p.m., riding the whole night and arriving at about 6 a.m. at the Serai, usually large and fairly clean with accommodation for animals inside the open space, the door always being kept closed at nightfall. By this time we were usually glad to throw ourselves down to rest upon our rugs, sleeping on until after mid-day. Our regular meals consisted of a spatch-cock cut in two, and this we had twice a day, but our great trouble was the brackish water, even the clearest river water proving useless for making tea or coffee, so water-melons, when we could get them, had often to serve as meat and drink.

At almost every place we came to inquisitive people wanted to know where we came from and where we were going, apparently taking a pleasure in warning us over and over again that we were likely to meet with dangerous robbers on the road, especially at night, with other tales of a similar character. As I had brought with me a good supply of revolver cartridges, both my companions

and I amused ourselves for some time almost every afternoon by firing shots at a paper target—this to let the onlookers know what we had in store for any of their friends who might be disposed to waylay us on our journey. This reckless waste of good powder and shot convinced them that if we were a little mad, it was a peculiar form of madness which would make it dangerous for other people to meddle with us! Never once, however, in the whole journey did we meet with any serious trouble, although, on our arrival at Teheran, we heard of a party which had been attacked on three occasions, between Bushire and Teheran—a district where police are few and roads bad.

Four days of travelling from Bushire brought us to Shiraz; and I remember well the reception Captain Moore and I met with just as we were entering the bazaar of Shiraz. There we found that, although protected from the hot sun, we were exposed to the insults of the shopkeepers we had to pass, who on seeing us began spitting immediately in a loud manner, which at once attracted the attention of others. It was the first and last time I have met with such a reception, although I know it is not unknown in parts of Turkey.

In religion the Persians are Shiah, and the Turks Sunnis, the two religions which divide the Mahometan world; the former believe that Hussan and Hussein, sons-in-law of Mahomet, were likewise prophets, but the Sunnis accept Mahomet only as a Prophet. Owing to this disagreement of religion, the enmity existing between



the two is great ; the Shiahs being somewhat more fanatical, so much so, as refusing to allow an infidel to bathe in a public bath with them.

The bazaar of Shiraz is both large and well furnished with much the same goods as in Bagdad. To a stranger, bazaars generally seem to be very dark, owing to the heat outside, but one is only too pleased to escape from the terrible glare and find oneself in shade, even if it be comparative darkness.

Here, too, there are openings in the tops of the houses to catch any passing breeze.

The inhabitants of Shiraz are nearly all Shiahs, and Sunnis are few in number.

What Stratford-on-Avon is to Shakespeare, Shiraz is to Hafiz, the great poet of Persia who lived in the time of Timour or Tamerlane. From all parts of the world, as well as from Persia, strangers who have admired his poems flock to his tomb. Once there was chained to it a copy of his works written by his own hands, but this was carried off by an Affghan monarch, and is now said to be in Candahar. Near to his tomb stood a tree regarded as sacred, but it was blown down some years ago and a portion only of the stump left.

About a mile from his tomb is that of another poet, Sadi (1184-1292).

The plains around Shiraz are extensive and fertile, surrounded by mountains on every side, forming ideal settings for the beautiful and far-famed gardens dear to the heart of the Persian. One such garden in Shiraz, I remember, had the charming name of Dil-i-gushah or "The Heart-Opener."

My fellow-traveller and I received an invitation to dine with two Persian princes, and this afforded us an opportunity of enjoying the society of some of the upper classes in Shiraz. As Captain Moore was a good Persian scholar, I soon felt quite at home with our new friends. During the course of the dinner an observation was made to me by one of the hosts—he was surprised that I was not a Freemason ; at once I asked Captain Moore if he had not noticed a great fumbling on the palm of his hand when shaking hands with the two princes, and he acknowledged he had, now that I had drawn his attention to it. Years afterwards, at a séance in the City Hall in Dunkeld, knowing very well that a number of those present were Freemasons, I mentioned that the two Persian princes when shaking hands did so very much as a man might grub in the ground for potatoes, and this at once brought the house down !

Leaving Shiraz late on the following day, an all-night's ride brought us to the ruins of the far-famed Persepolis the next morning. Upon a magnificent plateau formed by nature and art, still stand three dozen lofty slender pillars, in the midst of which are the scanty ruins of ancient days. But so little remains of Persepolis that it would appear impossible to point out to-day where the foundations of ancient glory may still lie hid ; differing in this from the ruins of ancient Nineveh, where, above the foundations of ancient walls, the sands of ages unmistakably point to where another Layard may, in time, excavate a yet earlier page of history.

It had been my good fortune to pass through many countries without an illness ; but within a small ruin in Persepolis an attack of jaundice, whilst not preventing me from travelling, turned me as yellow as a Buddha. No doubt brackish water and the want of rest all night, coupled with the intense heat by day, had done its work ; yet, strange to say, it did not prevent me from joining my companion a little after 4 p.m. in an hour's ride to see a cavern which we were told had never been entered.

Taking some brackish water (all we had to quench our thirst) in a leathern bag, and riding through an uninteresting country, we reached the cavern, the ascent to which was short and steep, leading up to a very narrow opening at the top ; and only to be attained by clambering with one's hands and feet until the opening was reached. I alone seemed inclined to try this uninviting entrance, so reclining and pushing, feet foremost, I at length entered the cavern, where my light revealed stalactites hanging from the small rocky roof above, and deliciously cold water falling into a little circular pool below. By the side of the pool were the impression of very small deer's feet ; and I found also the dung of panthers. Thinking to frighten any of the latter which might be hidden I fired off my revolver, and Captain Moore, hearing the report and expecting to see some animal rush out, got ready to fire, and nearly brought my exploration to an untimely end. Telling the servants to give me the leather water bags, I threw away their contents, and replenished them at the cavern. So far as I could learn, it

had never been explored, and no one had an idea that water was to be had there.

From Persepolis to Ispahan, the former capital of Persia, took us the best part of a week, and beyond occasionally seeing some of the telegraph company we met no Europeans. At one place close to our camping-place, we were shown a mosque with two minarets, these having a connecting gallery at some distance from the ground, and on ascending or descending one minaret vibration was naturally set up in the other, causing a perceptible movement. Of course, the local explanation was that a holy man was buried at the bottom between the two minarets, and was angry at Infidels desecrating the holy place by their presence.

At length we reached Ispahan, renowned in Eastern song and legend, to-day the second city in Persia. So rich is the soil in its neighbourhood that it is said to produce three crops of grain annually. There is a saying in Persia that "if the soil of Ispahan, the fresh air of Herat, and the water of Khorassan were united in one place, the inhabitants of that place would never die." Yet notwithstanding all that nature and wealth has done for the upper classes, their one idea of happiness is to endeavour to perpetuate the memory of themselves at the cost of those who have gone before them, utterly unmindful of the beautiful distich of one of their own poets, "The spider weaves its web in the Palace of the Cedars, and the Owl keeps his watch upon the ruined towers of Afrasiah." Seeing a palace being erected adjoining two other palaces in good condition, and inquiring what need there was for a new one, the answer I received was,

“ Why perpetuate the name of my father or grandfather instead of my own ? ”

Buckingham, a modern English traveller, after speaking highly of mosques he had seen in Cairo, Damascus, Aleppo, and other places, considers the Royal Mosque of Ispahan the most magnificent he had ever seen. Sir Thomas Herbert, who visited Ispahan in 1627, gives a very interesting account of the city called “ Spawhawn ” in those days, and of the burials performed by hired women, “ who for five hours scratched their ugly faces, howled bitterly, tore their false hair, and swooned and counterfeited sorrow abominably.”

In the time of Shah Abbas, the Armenians had great privileges granted to them, but were deprived of them on his death. In the Palace of Futteh Ali Shah were pictures of himself, his wives, and his one hundred and five children. His wives, in his lifetime, were admitted into court, and provinces were found for his sons to govern, and rule over.

Every one has heard of the Towers of Silence in Bombay, wherein the Parsees to this day place their dead and permit birds of prey to devour the corpses, after which the remnants are swept into a deep pit in the centre. The Parsees originally came from Persia, and the Guebus, who are natives of Yezd, still allow birds to eat the dead bodies of their relatives. Lieut.-Colonel Steward says that when a Gueber dies he is carried by his brother into the open country and exposed for daws to peck at random, his happiness in the next world depending upon whether the left or the right eye of the dead man is first pecked out !

Some of our European customs are regarded by

Persians as unintelligible, such as walking up and down in a garden. One is not surprised to find also that, like the natives of India, they regard our music as absurd. But even in our own islands the Scotch love to hear the bagpipes, whereas the Sassenachs barely tolerate them !

The journey from Ispahan to Teheran, the present capital of Persia, takes perhaps three days longer than that from Persepolis to Ispahan. As we journeyed continually by night, it is not to be wondered at if I remember comparatively little of the country we came through. Shortly after starting one evening we met dead bodies being carried on mules to Kurbulah near Babylon, two bodies on each mule. We were told that on reaching Kurbulah the carriers rest at the Khan of Keerunda ; the bodies are then let down into the courtyard without name or numbers, and mixed with one another, the drivers standing beside them. Some corpses are packed in narrow cases, and secured with matting and cordage. Mirza Khan, writing of his visit to Kurbulah, says that though he had four attendants supporting him, he trembled like an aspen leaf from religious fervour, but our principal Persian servant told my companion that the sight of the corpses which were being carried close by us made his hair stand on end !

Shortly after our arrival in Teheran, Mr. Alison, the British Representative, informed Captain Moore and myself that as he had to pay a visit to the Shah, he would like both of us to accompany him. As I had never got rid of the attack of jaundice, I asked to be excused, not feeling up to the mark, but had to give in in the end. Perhaps it was owing to this

that the sight of the renowned Peacock Throne made little impression on my mind.

Before coming to Persia, I had seen enough of Rajahs, and, rightly or wrongly, regarded the Shah as another Rajah only, although history abundantly testifies to their power and importance in former days. Ushered into the presence of the "King of Kings" and "Lord of Lords," our Representative leading the way, we found the Shah seated upon his throne at the end of a large hall; our Minister, after making his obeisance, was invited to sit alone on the right of His Majesty, whilst we poor mortals had to remain like statues at the far end of the hall, and fortunately for me, as it turned out, I found myself close to the doorway. Anon, I heard Mr. Alison declaiming that the roads of a country are to that country what the arteries are to the human frame, this being no doubt a suggestion for the Shah to devote more attention to his roads. More I never heard, as at this juncture I felt so ill that notwithstanding the august presence of the Shah I had to hasten out of court, to the delight of the Persian soldiers, who exclaimed, "The sight of the King of Kings has nearly killed the Infidel!"

Either the present or the last Shah had ordered an Italian artist to paint a picture of His Majesty reviewing his troops. Upon showing the finished picture to the Shah, he pointed to a small figure on horseback, wishing to know whom it represented. "Your Majesty," was the reply. Then pointing to a crack regiment, he asked, "Who are they?" "Those are the élite of your army, your Majesty." "But why have you made me so small and my men so big?" "This is not the picture your Majesty

ordered, only a small picture," was the artist's skilful rejoinder. "The one your Majesty ordered has still to come." The artist was not slow to learn his lesson, and when the second picture was shown, the Shah had grown prodigiously and was well in the foreground, while his soldiers had shrunk to mere dwarfs on the horizon. No doubt this picture was a great success.

I had wired to Teheran whilst *en route* to have some pictures painted for me, and I found these ready upon my arrival. I also bought a dagger from a Persian whom I met at the house of two French ladies, discovering later that the seller was himself a Persian prince!

These two French ladies were the wives of two Persian princes who had been sent to Paris by their father, the Shah, to learn the art of Gobelin Tapestry. Alas for the poor ladies! They had thereafter to veil their charms with the hateful yashmak.

An extravagance created by Eastern etiquette when sending any telegrams is the necessity for writing a volume of complimentary phraseology which precedes everything appertaining to business, or anything else, this, of course, adding considerably to the cost. The transmission of letters to Europe was effected by couriers who rode relays of horses between Teheran and a port on the Black Sea, the time occupied being two or three days during which time the riders hardly had a wink of sleep. Another form of labour which also shortens life is that of riding long distances on dromedaries; after ten years of such employment I think a retiring pension is given in India.



The skin known in Europe as the Astrakan really comes from the Oxus in Bokhara, and is taken from the new-born lamb. In Persia it is used for making long caps, somewhat resembling the shape of a Bishop's mitre, and also for coats.

As regards hammams or baths, there is a distinct difference between the Persian and the Turkish variety ; in the former, the operator uses a rough glove made of camel hair, followed by a good sousing of hot water ; whereas in a Turkish bath, the attendants twist the limbs, mould the muscles, and use perfumed soap and a glove for removing the dirt.

One more stage in our journey remained for us to make, from Teheran to Resht on the Caspian Sea, and as the last Russian steamer of the year was shortly due there, we were anxious to catch it. By so doing, there would only be Baku to reach, famous for petroleum, and lastly, Astrakan, where we should enter Russia.

Bidding farewell to our friends in Teheran, we travelled north, the weather quickly becoming more agreeable, and the country more wooded, whilst we found wild grapes growing as we neared Resht.

A couple of days' stay at this port gave me an opportunity of purchasing various articles in embroidery for which Persia is famous. We were in good time for the last Russian steamer, but it lay some way out, and I found every one opposed to risking life by rowing out to it in such a surf as was then dashing against the little harbour. My companion in particular refused to run the risk,

and there were a mixed lot of Rusians, and semi-Russians, from the countries bordering upon the Caspian, each one asking the other what he purposed doing.

I suggested to Captain Moore that we should double the crew and pay each of them twice the usual fare, but for some time he refused to be persuaded, and it was only when I had collected a crew, and was on the point of jumping into the boat, that he yielded, saying : “ I won’t let you go alone.” Then the *oi polloi* \* caved in, and in a very little while our boat was half filled.

But to navigate the first breakers and shoals was the real difficulty, and as crash followed crash the more timid stood up from sheer fright as if they were going to cry, or pray, or do both. Fearful that the boat would soon be upset by these antics, I hastily cried “ Shabash ! ” (“ Bravo ! ”), and some others took up the cry, giving such encouragement to the sailors and passengers alike that the most timid plucked up heart and began to think they were really very fine fellows, and so we finally pulled through the breakers into calmer waters. As we reached the Russian boat we heard the captain shouting in good English : “ I never thought any one would put out to sea in such weather ; ” and I shouted back : “ Had you ridden across Persia from sea to sea in the middle of summer, you don’t know what you would not do ! ”

Once on board the Russian steamer my jaundice vanished, and what with sea air and good food (*caviar* amongst other things), I soon found myself well again.

\* The crowd.

On the following day we reached Baku, so famous for petroleum that in some places it is to be found issuing near the shore, but under the sea, and a flame can be made to play upon the waters by attaching a light to the surface. As for Baku itself, there is nothing whatever attractive in its outward appearance.

The *dolce far niente* life on board the steamer was an agreeable change, and we met two or three Russian gentlemen who spoke English fluently. One of them, a nobleman, near to whose residence we had passed on the second day of the voyage, had invited me to break my journey by spending a fortnight with him, which invitation, however, I was obliged to decline. There was a Russian General on board, so I was confidently informed, who made use of his position to give an infinity of trouble to the owners of the steamboat company by ordering from time to time some big stack of firewood (used instead of coal on the Volga) to be removed from near the riverside to some place where it was not needed ; but when a *quid pro quo* was quietly handed to the General, such order was invariably countermanded.

With the exception of Kazan, the other small towns we passed on the Volga were of little importance, nor were the views on the banks either beautiful or striking.

Before reaching Nijni Novgorod, Captain Moore had decided to hurry on to England without stopping to see the fair, and a German Jew who had accompanied us all the way from Persia became my companion for the time being. Going ashore at Nijni Novgorod in search of an hotel, after much

difficulty we met an Englishman at one of the hotels who could speak Russian and kindly acted as interpreter for us. I informed the stranger that my companion and I had just arrived from Persia and were anxious to obtain two bedrooms ; one, however, was all that could be offered us, and this we were glad to accept. Whilst I was still speaking the German had gone on to our bedroom, and the Englishman told me that he would be very pleased to conduct us through the fair ; staring very hard at me, he informed me that his name was " Hume," at the same time rolling his eyes, as if he wanted to impress me thereby with awe, or hypnotise me in some way. This attitude at once made me connect the name of Hume with that of a table-turning spiritualist, and the moment I entered the bedroom I told my companion that a man of the name of " Hume " was in the hotel, and was said to have wonderful occult powers.

The German replied that he had a dread of such men, and begged me not to have anything to do with him should he turn out to be the individual I referred to ; finding the German impressionable, I went so far as to say, jocularly, " Should he be the ' Hume ' I refer to, if he once puts you on your head, you will never get on to your feet again."

When leaving the hotel for the purpose of seeing the fair, we found Mr. Hume waiting for us, and he offered me his arm—as I supposed at the moment—on account of the crush of people there were in the street. Plunging into the midst of the fair, he made straight for the quarters of a Count from the Crimea, who was selling samples of wine.

Mr. Hume hurriedly introduced both of us to the Count, and then leaving the German talking to him, asked me to go with him aside as he wished to show me something ; but as it turned out, this was only to allow the Count to make known to the German the séances that Mr. Hume was giving every night during the fair. The moment the German rejoined me, he took the opportunity in the midst of a crush to whisper to me, " That is the very man you thought he was."

Acting as our guide, Mr. Hume led us to a stall from Siberia, wherein the dealer was displaying a collection of beautifully cut stones of topaz, rock crystal, amethyst, malachite, etc., and Mr. Hume requested leave to inspect them, and received permission to do so, after which we thanked the dealer, and left him to see others parts of the fair, Mr. Hume immediately returning to the hotel.

The following day I suggested to my companion that we should have another quiet look round at the fair by ourselves, and in due course we again came across the dealer with the beautiful stones. This time our reception was the reverse of pleasant, the man at once turning his back upon us, and saying : " Yesterday there were three of you, and I missed various articles immediately after you left." This irritated my companion, who said he did not like to be called a thief, but I was amused, and could only remind him that his own conscience was his best witness. On returning to our hotel, we mentioned the circumstance to Mr. Hume, and also the information imparted to my German friend by the Russian Count.

Speaking of séances, Mr. Hume told me that

my friend Mr. Buckle, with whom I had been lately travelling, had been present at one of his séances, and was much impressed with spiritualism. Referring to the visit mentioned by Mr. Hume, it may not be amiss to quote what Mr. Buckle's fellow-traveller, Mr. Stewart Glennie, says in *Pilgrim Memories*.

“ Under the presidency of Mr. Hume, a séance had been held to which Mr. Buckle had been especially invited, and such he said had been the effect on him of what he then saw in his overwrought state, so shortly after his brother's death, that he expressed himself in the most sanguine manner as to the possibility, nay, probability, of the most revolutionary discoveries in the thorough investigation of the phenomena of spiritualism. Mr. Buckle admitted that the large circular drawing-room table which he averred he had seen floating in the air, was a phenomenon not due to the spirits, but to a development of some new force.”

I saw little more of Mr. Hume during my stay at Nijni Novgorod, nor did he invite either my companion or myself to his séances. I had told him I had read in one of the English papers that a monseigneur had requested him “ to bring good spirits into Rome, as such would be most welcome.” The last I saw of Mr. Hume was when he was walking arm-in-arm with two Russian princes in Moscow, where I spent a few days.

From Nijni Novgorod I returned home via Poland and Germany, after three years' absence from Scotland.

After the heat of Persia and the cold of the Volga, I thought it prudent to travel first class in

Russia, notwithstanding the saying that only Englishmen, princes, and fools travel so in that country ; so at St. Petersburg I entered an empty first-class carriage, and was joined by a Russian General, the haughtiest man I ever met. I proceeded to enjoy a sandwich, the warrior glaring at me as if I was committing a sin which cried to heaven for vengeance. Fully aware that I had committed many rash acts before, I dared to offer the exalted one a sandwich, which he instantly declined, as I expected. After a long silence he asked me in English, "Where *do you come from?*" I replied, "India." After a geographical description the proud general was transformed into an amiable fellow-traveller. At Wilna the great man ordered the authorities at the station to render me any assistance I needed, and yet but a few hours before he had even declined to break bread with me.

It was difficult to contemplate a quiet life after all these wanderings, and when advised by a kind old friend to settle down and get married the advice came as a shock. Yet finally it proved irresistible, and a home in the Scottish Highland in Dunkeld found me at anchor for two or three years, until want of strenuous occupation both for mind and body tempted me once more to roam afield.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE DIAMOND FIELDS

READING in the *Times* in 1868 that Mr. Harry Emmanuel of New Bond Street had interested himself in a recent discovery of diamonds in South Africa, I took the liberty of calling upon him to learn his opinion respecting this discovery, and whether there appeared to be any hope for any one going out to prospect for diamonds there. He frankly told me that he had sent out some time previously a professional mineralogist, a Mr. Gregory, to examine the land in order to be assured that it was diamondiferous ; if so, he was to keep his own counsel, and by taking a gun with him to lead others to suppose that he had gone out to hunt for game.

“ Had Mr. Gregory known his business,” continued Mr. Emmanuel, “ I should now have been a multi-millionaire ; because hardly had I received word from him that the country was volcanic and consequently no diamonds could be found, when additional news reached England by the next mail that in a place called Klipdrift on the Vaal River, diamonds were being daily discovered.”

The fact was, that not only Mr. Gregory, but all the professional mineralogists, had held the same opinion up to that time, forgetting the distance between the place where the volcanic action had



taken place and the locality where the diamond crystals had been found. The mines of De Beers, Kimberley, and Dutoitspan are good proof that volcanic action is necessary, though it must be at a great distance ; here, outside the mouths of extinct craters, no diamonds are found, whereas inside workings have been successfully continued to a great depth.

Before this period, when I ceased to be a bachelor, I had been captain of a volunteer corps in Dunkeld, the Birnam Highlanders, which had afforded me some little occupation. But having spent several years previously in travelling, the "Wanderlust" seized me once more and made me desirous of seeing a new part of the world—and I also hoped to have the pleasant occupation of finding diamonds.

My wife was anxious to accompany me, as was also my brother, and when it was known that I had decided to go to the diamond fields, several persons in the neighbourhood of Dunkeld wished to join us. My gardener, housekeeper, and an assistant lad all caught the prospecting fever ; then a lawyer, who was also ensign in my company, and a private, whose father was a local bank manager.

It did not take long to purchase all the necessities for camp life—tents, cooking utensils, ammunition, medicine, etc., also a waggon for travelling in Africa (which was to serve as a dwelling when we were not on the move), and after a pleasant but uneventful voyage in one of the South African steamers we reached our destination, Durban, the port of Natal.

Among our fellow-passengers was a party also



MRS. HILL GRAY.



bound for the Diamond Fields, and with them we had a pleasant journey to De Beers—a mine which was then comparatively new, and a short distance from the famous one of Kimberley discovered later on. Carefully selecting a good site for our encampment at De Beers, we settled down in what proved to be a convenient and central place, the three mines, Dutoitspan, Kimberley, and De Beers, being comparatively near to each other in open country, known in Africa as the veldt.

What with our fellow-passengers encamped not far from us, and Africander arrivals from various parts of South Africa, we soon found a bigger camp gradually extending around us. The ground where the diamond diggings were belonged to a Boer Dutchman called De Beers, and by paying him the sum of ten shillings a month, one was permitted to dig for diamonds in a claim measuring 30 square feet.

Our first diamond was one of perhaps 10 carats, not perfect in shape, and somewhat blemished, and we found that other prospectors working near us were not then making good finds. At this very time the “new rush,” originally known as Colesburg, and later, Kimberley, was just taking place, and it has since turned out to be the richest mine ever known. Hearing of a digger who had taken out three claims I offered £50 for the centre one, which he had not worked; but as the other two were promising well, I concluded the centre one would be equally good. It was steadily worked for fifteen months, and rarely a day passed without finding one or more diamonds, two of 40 carats and many from 5 to 10, or thereabouts, and any number of smaller ones.

Curiously enough, among the very first diamonds found shortly after the work commenced was a 40-carat yellow, good-shaped stone, which at the time was worth between three and four hundred pounds; the Caffres who found it asking for a sheep as their reward for the discovery. Unfortunately for the diggers, too many of the diamonds found when they were not superintending matters were carried off by the Caffres, who sold the stones to dealers, and spent the money in buying guns and oxen when they returned to their homes. Of course, the value of ground rose steadily owing to the success of the workings; so much so that a few months later the price of ground at that mine was such that few cared to sell.

The greatest trouble was from one's own Caffres, who, on leaving at the end of the week, commenced working on their own account elsewhere on ground of no value, and then exhibited diamonds (which they had really stolen from their former masters) in order to tempt prospectors to buy the land.

In Dutoitspan I had bought a claim for £25, but we found very few little diamonds there, although large ones occasionally, and this suggested to me the advisability of using a larger sieve to overtake the amount of unproductive ground in it. A man named Abraham had the mesh I required, and evidently had found difficulty in disposing of it, for when I showed him a lot of small diamonds passing through it, he remarked: "You may have that cheap, I wish I had never had the sight of it." Later on, I put a man on to work the claim at



GROUP OF BASUTOS.





Dutoitspan for me with this larger-meshed sieve, and he found several large diamonds in it. But as I have remarked, the number of stones stolen by the natives made one feel that the white man had come to the African Diamond Fields to supply the natives with guns and oxen, and as my brother was satisfied with the result of the Kimberley claim, I suggested to my wife that it would be better to sell the claim, take a trip into the interior of Africa, and then return to England. To this she agreed, and we had no difficulty in disposing of the claim for £1000.

As my old gardener was anxious to get back to the old country again, he and my brother left for home just before my wife and I started upon our expedition to the interior. Before, however, saying adieu to the Diamond Fields, let me recall one or two incidents of life there.

When passing a crowded diggers' meeting, where a speaker was orating, I found a fight taking place, and some one remarked, "Let us see fair play on both sides." Sure enough, an Irishman, who was the sole representative of the "Orange Free State Police," was hard at it, giving as good as he got, and everybody seemed satisfied with both parties. "Both have done well; let us liquor them up," was the cry.

An old Frenchman present told me that upon another occasion when a fight was about to take place between two Boers, they, believing him to be better educated than themselves, asked him to intercede for them. This he gladly did in the following very unorthodox terms: "O Lord, Thou art the God of the English as well as the



God of the Dutch ; but do Thou stand neutral this day and Thou wilt see a jolly good set to!" at which the crowd begged him to stop *quoting scripture* and let the combatants get on with their job.

As there were rogues who induced the natives to bring them stolen diamonds for sale, besides illicit diamond buyers, the diggers used to resort to different ways to punish these individuals. For instance, they would mark initials upon a flat diamond, and then send a native into a suspected shop to dispose of the stone, the owner with a friend or two waiting at a little distance until his return. When the native returned, he would show money, or perhaps a weapon of some kind, which he had received in exchange for the diamond, and the parties outside would thereupon rush into the illicit dealer's hovel, search the man, and on finding the marked diamond, would probably smash his goods if they did not set fire to everything in the place itself.

One individual I must not forget—our hard-working and most obliging postmaster. Once after finishing a hard day's work, he shut up his office and crossed over the road to get a mouthful of dinner. On his return to the post office the post-bags with the letters and diamonds had vanished, and not a vestige of any one connected with their disappearance was heard of for days. But from Cape Town came the news of a man spending money freely, who had taken a passage for England, and had sent his goods on board. These were promptly examined, and among other things was a gun, the barrels of which were found to be stuffed with

diamonds. His luggage in the hotel was also searched, and the truth was out. Asked where he had put the letters he had stolen, he replied : " Under my bed at Dutoitspan." Of course the man was sent to prison. It was said of him " that he had gone to the diggings, and to the dickens as well."

Before starting on our journey, we were fortunate in obtaining a good driver with the necessary assistants, and a span of eighteen oxen, and making use of the waggon I had brought from England, our first day's journey found us in the Transvaal, and outside of the Orange Free State. Between Klipdrift and Potchefstroom I can recall nothing of importance.

What few buildings there were in Potchefstroom seemed to be so far apart that whoever planned the sites for the post-office or church, or prison, or the ordinary municipal buildings, must have had large ideas and any amount of space, because it seemed a real walk to get from one place to another. I thought distances in Philadelphia, U.S.A., pretty great, but Potchefstroom certainly beat it. Nor was there anything striking in the scenery between Potchefstroom and Pretoria, until gradually nearing the latter town, where the Magaliesburg range of hills make a picturesque setting.

Before reaching Pretoria, I entered a well-known cavern called Wonderfontein, where a rivulet flows for a long distance underground, the greater part being unexplored by the Boers ; but by offering my men a pound, they accompanied me far beyond what they considered to be a safe distance.

As we waded up to our waists in the mysterious, icy-cold water, holding up our candles, it seemed strange to see numbers of fish which had been bred in that blackness and had never seen the light of day. It was only by making chalk-marks on the winding wall above the stream that we were able to retrace our way.

At Pretoria, a man from the diamond fields had been put in the little prison for creating a disturbance. A day or two later a second white man reached Pretoria, and seeing a black soldier guarding the white prisoner, shot the black man on the spot; the Boers then released the first white man and imprisoned the new-comer in his place. On seeing me pass, this prisoner shouted out, "I must be a very great man, for I have nobody but Generals to guard me." It appeared that the "Commandeer" had ordered first the Postmaster-General, next the Solicitor-General, and finally the General of all the forces to keep guard over him! How the matter ended I never heard, but it gives some idea of the state of affairs at this time in South Africa.

The Magaliesberg range of hills is often quoted as being the most beautiful scenery in this part of the Transvaal, and very lovely we found it, after the rather dull and monotonous country through which we had been passing.

Some days after leaving Magaliesberg we arrived at Kuruman in British Bechuanaland, where Dr. Livingstone, and his father-in-law before him, had laboured for years endeavouring to Christianise, as well as to civilise, the native heathen. Any one who has read Dr. Livingstone's book, *South*

*Africa*, will recollect the enormous difficulty he experienced in instilling into those heathen minds anything beyond a mere veneer, either of Christianity or civilisation; and here I must record the deep regret I have always felt that, in a life singularly fortunate in so many ways, I was denied the privilege of meeting that intrepid missionary and explorer.

On our arrival at Kuruman Secheli immediately called upon us, and I made him a present of a "Skeindhu," which pleased him greatly, and he sent me in return a handsome leopard skin. Our stay in Kuruman only lasted a couple of days, and Mrs. Moffat, the clergyman's wife, wished that we could have seen Secheli's wife rigged out on Sunday in a variety of coloured dresses, worn one above the other, in order to display her wealth, as Africans judge each other by the quantity as well as quality of what is worn. Secheli, knowing that we were hoping to return to Scotland in a short time, asked me to request Dr. Livingstone (who was then in the heart of Africa) *to send him some money.*

As one knows how despotic kings can be when only half civilised, I was not surprised to hear the following both in Kuruman and neighbourhood. The year previous to my arrival, a European had lost some gunpowder and complained to Secheli that one of his people had stolen it. Calling them together, Secheli informed them that if the sun went down without the powder being returned, some one would lose his head. The powder was found, and given back to the owner, the thief being pointed out to him, Secheli telling the owner to punish the

culprit as he thought fit ; but the latter replied : " He is your servant, not mine," whereupon Secheli ordered the man's fingers and toes to be chopped off, which so disgusted a white man who was passing at the moment that he turned his back on Secheli, and walked away. This so irritated Secheli that he ordered the white man to be brought back, and asked him which of them was King. " Of course you are," said the stranger. " I will show you that I am King," said Secheli, and he immediately ordered the culprit's head to be cut off.

We had brought a couple of horses from the Diamond Fields, but shortly after leaving Magaliesberg, one of them fell a victim to the deadly tsetse fly, so fatally prevalent in the Transvaal ; the second horse only survived a fortnight or so more, dying from the same disease, for which, I suppose, no cure has been found to this day.

As we journeyed, we found the Boers everywhere very civil and willing to give us information and help. I was warned not to call at one Boer's farm without some kind of introduction, because a white man had recently made use of the hospitality afforded him to steal during the night some of the oxen belonging to his host, hurriedly exchanging them for some others, in order to dispose of them quicker.

As the Boers generally know something of their neighbours, they think we likewise are more or less acquainted with one another. In one place where we rested on a Sunday, my housekeeper was busy cooking near our tent, when a Boer kindly

invited her and myself to come and have some grapes, which we gladly did, the man later returning with me to our camp. Spying my wife, who was looking out of the waggon, he exclaimed: "Oh, I see you have another wife for the Sunday!" and on learning that my servant had very much enjoyed his grapes, he kindly invited my wife to come and have her share.

At another place a Boer who spoke English and was the owner of a considerable tract of arid veldt, pointed out the land to my servant and said to her: "Leave Mr. and Mrs. Gray and come with me; I am the owner of all that land." To which the canny Scotch woman replied: "Maan! I'd be ashamed to ca' that my land!" Whilst referring to this most excellent servant, I shall ever remember the escape she had from being killed by a venomous snake, when cooking in the open air, one dark night. Our principal driver, whilst watching dinner being cooked, was standing very near to the cook herself, resting his hand upon one of those long bamboos which serve for whip handles, and to which are fastened whips longer than the handles themselves. He noticed a poisonous snake moving from under the woman's dress and begged her not to move. "But did you not move your whip?" asked the cook. "No," said he, "I never moved my hand at all." "Then," said the cook, "that snake has been round my leg for some time, for I felt it moving, but I thought your whip had got wound round my leg."

Fortunately, we never had more trouble with snakes on our journey. Nor were we ever in want of fresh meat, as I shot many guinea-fowl and other

birds. In the Boers' houses, too, as a rule, we had no trouble in getting them to sell us butter, potatoes, etc.

This was not always the case, however. Once a very stout woman told me she had nothing she could sell us; being in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem at the time, I told an Africander who was seated near me that I had been to Bethlehem in the Holy Land. He at once called out "*Tanta, Om, Nikku*" (Aunt, Uncle, Cousin—usual forms of greeting in Boers' houses), "have any of you ever seen any one who has been to the Holy Land? because here is an Englander who has visited the holy places." The effect was instantaneous, and my stout lady opened a *sanctum sanctorum*, and immediately produced both butter and potatoes! This afterwards induced me to send a boy ahead sometimes to let the Boers know that a man who had been to Jericho was coming, and that he wished to buy various comestibles.

Hearing my waggon driver talking aloud whilst having his breakfast alone on the veldt one day, I asked him with whom he was conversing. He pointed to a bird he called the honey-bird, which was fluttering its wings as if anxious to draw his attention, and said that it was trying to indicate where honey was to be found. Up to this time, I had not heard of such a bird, and thought the man was mistaken, but as he was anxious to follow it, I told him I would go with him. The bird, a small one with nothing striking in its appearance, flew slowly from one tree to another, waited for us, and then led on again for several minutes. By this time I began to think we were being fooled, and said

so. But the man asked me to have more patience, and we followed on. In a few minutes the bird perched upon a smaller tree, chirping, and fluttering its wings in an unmistakable manner, and pointing with its beak to where a swarm of bees were coming out of a nest from inside the trunk of another tree. Having appropriated the larger part of the honey, we left a small modicum for the honey-bird itself (as it doubtless expected a "tip" for its services!), and I have often since thought of this curious creature and its wonderful natural instinct.

A day or two afterwards when sauntering along the banks of the Limpopo, the terrific roar of a hippopotamus pulled me up just as a honey-bird, with its peculiar chirp, had again attracted my attention, but as I had seen a crocodile basking in the sunshine, I was obliged to tell the honey-bird that I could not attend to it at the time. Owing to brushwood, it was somewhat difficult to get near to the crocodile without disturbing it. Fortunately, I succeeded, and the first shot broke its back, the second giving it the *coup de grâce*. The following day I sent some of the Caffres down to clean it thoroughly and preserve the skin, and several washings were necessary before a thorough cleansing had been effected. Finally, I took it home and nailed the skin to a trunk of a tree in my garden in Dunkeld, and there a bird built its nest in the ugly mouth of that Limpopo crocodile.

By the time we had got half through our trip, our oxen, from constant wear, began to give out, and I was glad to obtain fresh ones, which we had no trouble in doing as we had not been near to where tsetse prevailed.



From time to time we had difficulty in getting pure water, and had to put it through three tiers of calico ; in fact, this method of purifying the water was adopted all through our journey.

A day after shooting the crocodile, I had the good fortune to kill a fine gnu. Whilst my men were skinning it, a carrion bird, coming apparently from a great distance, flew heavily by, and settled upon the branch of a big tree near at hand. Then came more and more, until the branches of the tree were covered with them. When the work of skinning was done, and we had gone a short distance from the carcase, it was completely covered with these revolting scavengers. I contented myself with firing a couple of shots and left them. The skin of the gnu was taken to Dunkeld, where a Highland trunk-maker made it into a portmanteau which he guaranteed would last a hundred years. As fifty years have since elapsed, and the portmanteau is as strong as ever, I think my Highland friend must have been a good judge of leather.

We had outspanned one day near a chief's kraal, and it was amusing to listen to the natives shouting to each other during the night from their respective kraals. They had an unexpectedly ceremonious and flattering mode of addressing one another, such as : " O you killer of a Lion, are you asleep ? " To which the other would reply : " No, Champion Slaughterer of Leopards and Buffaloes, I am awake. "

I remember several natives assuring us that their King Khamanani was the mightiest of Kings, because when he ordered his people not to return without bringing him a living lion, they knew it

would cost them their lives if they did not execute the order. But this feat did not require such bravery as one would imagine. I saw in Khamanani's country an enclosure constructed for ensnaring wild beasts, generally known as a hopo. Hundreds of natives will drive a lion, or other animal, into this trap, and there it is left until, weakened by wounds or hunger, it requires no very glorious exhibition of courage to tether and drive it triumphantly before the King.

I think I cannot do better than give Dr. Livingstone's description of this trap or "hopo": "The hopo consists of two hedges in the form of the letter V, made very high and thick near the angle where they do not touch, and at the extremity is a pit 6 or 8 ft. deep and 12 or 15 in breadth and length. Trunks of trees are laid across the margins of the pit and form an overlapping border, so as to make it almost impossible for the animals to leap out. The whole is carefully decked with long green rushes. As the hedges are frequently about one mile long, and about as much apart at the opening, a tribe which makes a circle round the country adjacent and gradually closes up, is almost sure to sweep before it a large body of game. It is driven up with shouts to the narrow part of the hopo, where men are secreted who throw their javelins into the affrighted herds. The animals rush to the narrow opening presented at the converging hedges and fall into the pit. Some escape by running over the others as a Smithfield market-dog runs over the back of sheep. It is a frightful scene."

As every one knows, the Caffres purchase their

wives for so many oxen. One day I saw two "Queens" standing near to my waggon, watching my wife (who at the moment was reading a book), and I was not a little amused when one of them came across to me and asked: "How many oxen did you give for your wife?" Jokingly I put up three fingers, but one of the "Queens" (who had an appraising eye) answered gravely, pointing to her companion: "*She* says you paid six oxen, but I think you must have paid seven; which of us is right?" Of course, I could not resist letting my wife know that she was not worth more than seven oxen at the outside!

Going into a Boer's house one day to buy some food, I found a lady supervising two black women who were cleaning coffee berries. As they appeared to me to be slaves, I asked the lady if I was right in my surmise? "No," she said, "we are not allowed to have slaves, but we are allowed to keep the women until they reach the age of seventeen." Glancing at the women, I said: "These women are more like thirty-seven than seventeen." To which she promptly replied: "They never get beyond seventeen with me!" She also told me that her husband was in the habit of travelling in his waggon to the Zambesi, and sometimes a chief there would *lend* him a man, whom he was obliged to take back, but that he occasionally made her husband *a present* of a woman or two!

On one occasion we met two waggons returning from the Zambesi with several Boer women in them. Some of them spoke a little English, and one cried: "Without even leaving our waggons, we have seen every animal God Almighty has

created." There was a particularly nice quiet-looking man, who had a little grey-white ostrich feather stuck in his cap ; he told me he had shot altogether 288 elephants, one of his hunting stories being particularly interesting.

He was on the point of shooting an elephant on one occasion, when it rushed into the Zambesi to drink. Whilst there, its trunk was seized by a crocodile, which, refusing to let go, was hauled out of the water. The elephant then plunged into a thicket adjoining, where the numerous branches striking against the crocodile forced it to relinquish its hold, whereupon its opponent turned round and trampled it to death. As the elephant had good tusks (he never shot one otherwise), he fired at this one, and it fell dead on top of the crocodile.

I well remember once arriving at nightfall at a place where, according to the map, there should have been a stream, but where no vestige of water was to be found except a small pool, fouled by the footmarks of animals. With this dirty water we had to be content to make our tea, but directly it was over, I determined to explore the surroundings in search of something better. By my wife's advice I put a dozen cartridges in my belt, and started out across a small ravine, which was probably the dried-up bed of the stream itself. Nine, ten, and eleven o'clock found me on the veldt with wild beasts roaming at their leisure, and lightning playing on the horizon, as is usual in hot countries. As I passed inviting openings in the rocks, I felt tempted to lie down and rest, but knew that any one might be the lair of some animal, in which case my fate would not be enviable or uncertain.

Of course I had long since lost sight of the whereabouts of the waggon.

At last, about 12 p.m., I saw a crowd of hartebeests approaching, the leader greeting me with something between a grunt and a snort; on they came, and so down I went on one knee and gave them a welcome which made them fly.

This was the first shot I had fired, and I naturally expected to hear a response to let me know where our camp lay. I saw a flash, and counted eight or ten seconds' interval before hearing the report of the gun fired in reply. Walking in the direction of the flash, I fired into the ground to prevent injury to any one, and found that the next report was heard in five or six seconds. Thus I found my way by degrees to the camp itself, but my journey was fruitless, as I had found no trace of water anywhere. The sound of my firing had led my wife to think that I had shot some big animal. Fortunately, no harm had come to any one from this my last adventure in South Africa.

My wife and I, and all with us, had thoroughly enjoyed our trip into the interior of South Africa, and although unable to say with the Boer women we had met, "We had seen from our waggon every animal God Almighty had created," we had nevertheless seen such endless swarms of wild animals in their own veldts, that, with a little play on words, it was easy to believe that if we rightly claimed that a large part of the world belonged to us *Brit's*, yet a great portion still belonged to the *Brut's*!

In a few days we had returned to the Diamond Fields, where we bid adieu to our South African friends; thence travelling to Cape Town, we took



TOMB OF MY WIFE.



steamer, to return again to the land of Sir Walter Scott.

### WIFE'S DEATH

Eighteen months after my return from Africa my dear wife died three days after my only child Alister was born. She was buried at Little Dunkeld (Perth) Cemetery, on February 5, 1877.

I erected a white marble cross with a figure of an angel in front to her memory—*Requiescat in Pace.*



## CHAPTER IX

### RAJAH BROOKE'S CAPITAL

RAJAH BROOKE of Sarawak had arrived in England just previous to the return of my wife and self from South Africa, and on communicating with him, I received a very kind letter offering to give me any help he could in Sarawak. Consequently, on my arrival in that country I received a welcome, both from Rajah Brooke's officials and the members of the Borneo Company, that soon made me feel at home.

On the voyage from Liverpool to Singapore we encountered some rough weather, particularly at the beginning, and, except during our passage through the Suez Canal, the chief officer of the ship never showed his face from the time we set out until our arrival at Singapore, his duties falling heavily on his subordinates, of whom the fourth officer showed extraordinary energy and exertion.

Truth to tell, the first officer came on board at Liverpool "sick," and went straight to his cabin, where he remained practically throughout the whole voyage, and I was consequently not a little surprised to find that the young ship's doctor (who was on his first voyage) had handed in to the captain at Port Said his report on the sanitary conditions on board, etc., without mentioning the "illness" of the first officer. I strongly represented to him that it was his duty to mention this fact, for his own

and every one else's sake, and on second thoughts he handed in a revised report to the captain, who, however, did not seem very pleased, and asked the doctor to leave the matter in his hands.

During our passage through the Suez Canal, the first officer made his only appearance on deck, leaning up against the mast as he repeated manually the directions of the pilot. On retiring to his cabin again, he sent for the doctor, and exclaimed: "You're a nice doctor, *you* are! Fancy allowing me to work all through the canal, when I was ready to drop at any moment!" "Pardon me," replied the doctor, "I reported you as *unfit for work*." This staggered the other for a moment, but his lurid reply showed the doctor how little gratitude he would have received had he left his first report unaltered.

\* \* \* \* \*

Within a few days of my arrival at Sarawak, I had met the few Malays who represented the diamond diggers of the country, and they had shown me their finds, which were few and very small. On exhibiting the diamonds I had brought with me from South Africa, they opened their eyes in astonishment, telling me, however, that the diamond mines in Dutch Borneo were superior, both as regards the size and the quantity of stones, to those of Sarawak. Anxious, nevertheless, to give the Sarawak territory a fair trial, I lost no time in erecting, with the help of the Chinese and Malays, a tolerable wooden hut in the heart of the jungle close to the Malay workings. For several weeks not a single diamond was forthcoming, and indeed, those obtained by the Malays were occasional

and smaller than any I had seen in South Africa. This, combined with the fact that food had to be brought from Kuching (I never saw bread for the time being), made me determined to travel on to the diamond districts of Dutch Borneo. The rain, too, fell in torrents part of each day, for in this part of the world the floodgates are open for the best part of nine months annually.

Before leaving, however, I became better acquainted with the terrible Dyaks, and went through some strange, if not unique, experiences.

Two of the Dyak chiefs I visited lived far within the depths of Borneo's forests, in the territory of Rajah Brooke.

One of them, named Mingat, had formerly been a notorious head hunter, and had given much trouble to the late Sir James Brooke. He had now come to Kuching, the capital of Sarawak, not merely to purchase a supply of earthenware pots, requisite for the harvest feast which Dyaks delight in after their harvests of paddy and rice are gathered, but likewise to pay to Sir James Brooke's successor the annual tribute.

For this reason the chieftain had invited Mr. Innes, Prime Minister to Rajah Brooke, to witness a harvest feast near to his own residence, some three or four days' sail, by Dyak boat, from Kuching; Mr. Innes declined, but suggested myself as a substitute.

The opportunity of seeing something of the home life of the Dyaks was too good to miss, and Mr. Innes at once introduced me to the old head hunter, Mingat. My first impression of him was that he looked every inch a gentleman, if a savage;

and undoubtedly he had been a wild and fierce-looking savage in his younger days.

He was rigged out in a piece of tanned bark (called in Dyak a *kawat*) wound round his loins, and this being all he wore, I suggested to Mr. Innes that I should like to offer the Dyak chief some clothing.

It so happened that a pair of bicycle breeches had been packed in my trunk, and my friend thought with me that no garment would be more highly prized by the chief, as indeed it proved. The first glimpse of my "inexpressibles" afforded him the greatest pleasure, but the brass buttons were the chief fascination, and these he turned over and over. Regarding his *kawat* as mere underclothing, he courageously invaded his new possessions, but trouble began when we tried to get Mingat to adjust the much-admired buttons *o modo Europeo*. Finally, we came to a compromise, and the "braw breeches" were meanwhile put aside, only to be worn on especially grand occasions.

I now went down to inspect my Dyak boat, and it was certainly one of the most primitive craft I had ever encountered. It was perhaps 20 ft. in length, and so very narrow that there was only just sufficient room for me to lie in the space allotted me by the captain, and even then he repeatedly requested me to shift my position from side to side during the night, owing to the effect which the smallest weight had on the balance of this "Pride of the Ocean."

Leaving Kuching at nightfall, we put out to sea, and I now had plenty of time to inspect Mingat

and his crew of wild-looking Dyaks, whose whole dress consisted of a bit of tanned bark, such as their captain wore. I found no nails had been used in the construction of our barque, but some adhesive substance was made to serve instead. The roof, with which my head came in contact whenever I sat upright, consisted of a single mat made of palm leaves ; the sails were also made of mats, and the ropes of the rotan cane.

Most fortunately the weather was favourable at starting, although later on, occasional squalls forced us to take shelter in some of the numerous creeks, where clouds of mosquitos began their hellish feast upon the white man's blood.

As I had studied Malay shortly before coming out to Borneo, and had also acquired in my younger days a fair knowledge of Hindoostanee, I had sufficiently mastered the language to be able to converse with the natives, whether Sea Dyaks or Malays ; for although the former have a language of their own, they are also familiar with Malay. Many little chats, therefore, I was able to have during our voyage with Mingat, respecting Englishmen, Dyaks, and other subjects.

A Hadji, who had recently returned from Mecca, had informed him that the Sultan was the mightiest monarch of the world, and that Constantinople was paved with gold ; and Mingat wished to know whether I had been to Constantinople and could corroborate the Hadji's tale. It surprised him to learn that not only had he been misinformed, but that I remembered Constantinople as being very dirty, and the resort of the mangiest of mangy dogs.

During our three days' voyage, and whilst still a long way from Kalaka, the port for which we were bound, our captain coolly suggested that every one should go to sleep, rather than pull against the tide, and forthwith he himself set the example, his crew quickly following it, and I alone kept watch !

At length Kalaka was reached about 4 p.m. ; and the Resident Magistrate, Mr. Chapman, hearing of the arrival of a white man, hastened to greet me, asking by what steamer I had come, and he was more than surprised to learn that I had voyaged with Mingat in his barque. " No one," said he, " but a man fresh from England would have risked his life in a Dyak boat." On hearing that I had been invited to the harvest feast, Mr. Chapman very kindly offered to accompany me ; although, of course, Dyak festivities were no novelties to him, as he had had considerable experience of Dyaks during several years' residence in Borneo.

It took us a day and a night's pull up the Kalaka river to reach Mingat's dwelling, where the chieftain and his tribe gave us a hearty welcome. Mingat's wife was well prepared to receive her visitors, and beckoned us to a table, placed at a little distance from the house, inviting us to partake of the dainties spread out upon it. Not feeling tempted, however, by the appearance of Mrs. Mingat's cookery, I contented myself with a plantain, which looked by contrast both safe and simple.

I was now the unwilling participant in a most unpleasant ceremony. Several live cocks were brought, swung around our heads three or four

times, and the unfortunate birds then had their heads cut off, their bleeding necks being immediately rubbed upon our chins, leaving a ruby-like stain upon them. We were now pressed to drink arrack, a liquor made from rice, and I endeavoured to satisfy my hostess by merely raising the cup to my lips. But in vain did I adopt this subterfuge; drain, drain to the very nauseating dregs, first one cup and then another, was the order of the day, the first, as Mr. Chapman informed me, being the arrival or welcome cup, and the second a pledge of sworn fidelity on the part of both host and guest.

Mingat's long house, adjoining the river, was perhaps 100 or 150 ft. in length, and built upon piles rising 10 ft. from the ground. The roof was made of the palm leaf, and the flooring of bamboos split in two and covered with coarse mats; mat partitions, serving the purpose of walls, divided some twenty rooms, all in a row, with as many facing them, and a broad passage ran up the middle of the house.

As it is the usual custom for two or three families to huddle together in a Dyak room (the unmarried men having to sleep in a crazy loft overhead), we may suppose each room to have contained some ten or twelve souls; this, with the unmarried men, would give some four hundred as the approximate number representing Mingat's tribe.

I was taken to one of the centre rooms reserved for Mingat's own family, which I had to share with them for the night. Immediately above my head were forty or fifty human skulls, hideous and sooty, grinning down upon me as I lay upon my bed, yet



DYAK CHIEF IN WAR COSTUME.



DYAK HEAD HOUSE WITH SCALPS, PANGAU.





dangling sufficiently low to be within reach when I stood up. During the night, a perpetual grunting and squeaking reminded me that a number of porkers had quarters allotted to them immediately below our bamboo flooring.

This was my first night in a Dyak's dwelling, but I have since then both enjoyed and endured several weeks' wanderings among Dyaks, and *notwithstanding their embarrassing craze for heads*, I shall always remember them as good-natured and polite savages; they were certainly more companionable and sociable than most of the native races it had been my lot to meet with in South Africa. The men are active, and well formed, not handsome nor powerfully built, but small if compared either to Europeans or Zulus. I consider 5 ft. 4 in. to be about their standard height.

Some of the younger boys struck me as noble and high-spirited little fellows. The women could not be termed pretty, but some of the younger girls had pleasing faces. The less said about their very broad noses the better; though sparkling eyes and a profusion of the blackest of black hair are common enough, both among Malays and Dyaks.

As the harvest feast was to be held at the home of another chief named Dampa, we only remained one night in Mingat's house. On the following morning, attended by a little army of his savages, Mingat accompanied Mr. Chapman and myself to Dampa's dwelling, where great preparations had been made for the coming feast.

As we ascended the Kalaka river, numerous canoes belonging to various tribes shot by, filled with the most strikingly gorgeous and resplendent

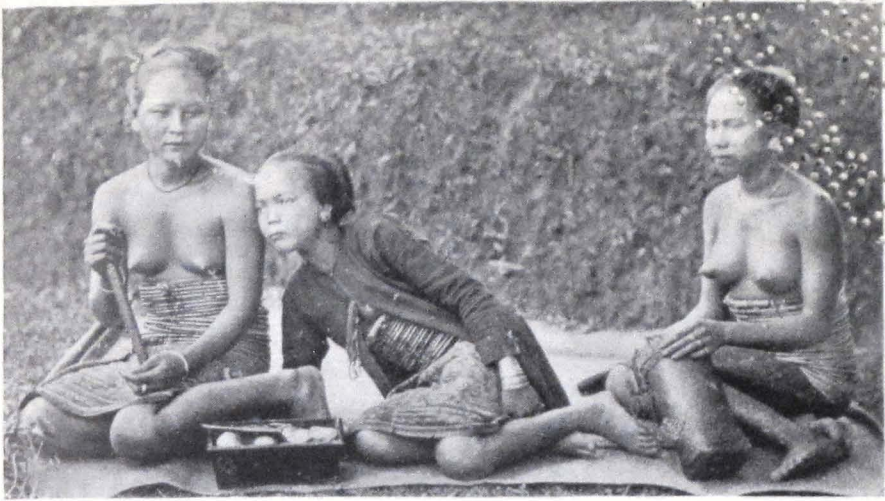
savages one could wish to behold. Feathers of the Argus pheasants and Rhinoceros Hornbill, and other birds, were carelessly stuck in their hair, and kept in position by fancy coloured scarves wound round their heads. Some of the men had the beak of the hornbill, which is of a carnation tint, split in two, hanging round their necks. Others wore a necklace of claws, and some the teeth of animals.

The women were got up for the occasion regardless of Dyak expense (which, however, is not very deadly). The kilt worn by a Dyak girl is exceedingly becoming, particularly to those with good figures, which many of the youngest among them enjoy, and the brass rings encircling their waists serve admirably the double purpose of a support and ornament, lighting up their swarthy skins. I noticed several of them wearing a loose cloak, or rather a sort of half cloak, on their backs; and to this they had attached as many thin Indian and other coins as they had been able to collect.

While we rested for a space by the side of a gravelly bed, several of the men seized the opportunity to search for a clayish slate stone, which they immediately began to chew, but upon my pointing out to them a hard stone, they most unsportingly declined to make the experiment.

To reach Dampa's house we had to walk about a mile from our boats over a hilly country, and here we saw yellow streamers in the distance, hanging around the house. As we approached, a bevy of young girls came down to welcome us, as is the Dyak custom. Then guns were fired off, both by Mingat's men and from the house.

In the meanwhile, every one had been completing



DYAK WOMEN AT SKARRAN.



DYAK WOMEN AT BALAW, PADUNGON VILLAGE.



their toilet, and now appeared in the full glories of their costumes. Mingat, without disrobing himself of his *chawat*, donned my bicycle breeches, brass buttons and all, and proudly displayed the truly amazing result to the delight and the admiration of assembled Dyakdom, both male and female.

At this juncture was repeated the ceremonial slaying of the cocks, which I have already described. Of course, the inevitable arrack followed, and I was compelled to sip oftener than I wished. Sundry mysterious dishes were now served up to all the men who were regarded as the "braves" of the various tribes present, and these speedily gorged themselves to their hearts' content. Here were the cream of past Dyak head hunters of the neighbourhood—savages who, after performing terrible deeds, had returned home triumphant with their horrible trophies wherewith to decorate the home of their tribe.

The personal appearance of several of the "braves" present was particularly remarkable. I have already spoken of Mingat as being nature's own gentleman-savage, fierce and determined, with a noble bearing. His eagle eyes were characteristic of his family, his son sharing largely in the paternal legacy.

Another chieftain was pointed out to me, a regular bull-dog of a fellow, with a face like that of a prize fighter. On one occasion he had signalled himself by plunging into the midst of the enemy, shouting as he rushed upon them: "Here comes the Rajah's Prize Cock!"

The one intellectual, yet weird, countenance

was that of the high priest and doctor, which reminded me strangely of Dante's well-known portrait. Never shall I forget the numberless times I watched that grand old savage marching, with staff in hand at the head of his priesthood, round and round the various wooden posts which acted as supports to each of the rooms ; whining always a plaintive yet wild lament, which to my European ears sounded like " Ooch, Heeh, High, Malung, Burung," followed by " Hey, Hey, Burung, Malung." Doubtless these were so many appeals or supplications to birds, who play an important part in their rites. There must have been some deep mystical meaning attached to that shuffling of the feet, performed not merely by the high priest alone, but by all who joined in the procession ; at every *alternate* step the heel of the one foot was made to strike against the side of the instep of the other, continuing thus for a wearisome period.

Then followed a feast, after which came a procession of priests imploring the Spirits who are supposed to inhabit the mountains and impenetrable fastnesses of Borneo, to send them always good harvests, plenty of heads, and male children in abundance.

On the top of long poles were fastened tit-bits from every dish, and the Spirits were told to eat and be filled. On behalf of the latter, I ventured to remark that the Spirits could not get fat upon the limited amount of food allotted to them, but I was told that they were easily satisfied !

The Rev. G. M. Gomez, a missionary in Sarawak, mentions that certain Dyaks, by way of feeding the Spirits, place the heads they have

captured into large dishes, and stuff food into the mouths ; but I have not heard of or met this custom myself.

During a procession which now took place, the married women came round bringing arrack in small cups, and kept up these rounds for hours and hours. When it became almost obligatory to drink, I did so, but the hundredth part of a sip was more than enough for me !

A war dance was next performed by as many men as could be provided with heads. The dancers whirled round and round, each with a skull dangling at his side, and these poor semblances of mortality were made to kiss and strike each other in truly gruesome mockery. As we cultured folk of Europe have assimilated so many dances of savage extraction, I wonder how long it will be before we introduce this, the latest thing in *Danses Macabres*, into our cabarets and ball-rooms.

There followed then a sham-fight between two warriors, and when one at length succumbed, his opponent pretended to chop off his head amidst yells of delight, chiefly from the younger members of the community.

Meanwhile, arrack flowed on all sides, and its effects could be seen in the prostrate figures of Dyaks undergoing the happy pangs of the roaring drunk. Fortunately, there were enough sober savages always at hand to keep the obstreperous ones submissive.

Regretfully I contrasted this horrid pandemonium with the more decorous effects of a drinking-bout on one of my own countrymen, the Laird of Baamachie, who, coming home after



a convivial evening, found himself in a ditch. His servant anxiously sought him with a lantern, and at length to his repeated cries of "Baamachie, Baamachie, whaur are ye?" there came the faint reply: "Ah'm here!" "Whaur's here?" asked the man; and still fainter came the answer: "Ah dinna ken, but Ah ken Ah'm no in hell, for there's watter here!"

When night came on, drinking ceased for a while, and hundreds gathered in the central passage leading from one part of the house to the other. When a little quiet prevailed, I thought the time favourable for disclosing to the various groups a clockwork bear which I had brought with me from England; and great was the commotion created by the sight of Bruin running along the ground, bowing first to one side and then to the other. But great as was the furore created by Bruin, it was as nothing compared to the impression created by my false teeth, no Dyak ever having heard of, much less seen, such things. Astonishment is a mild word to express the wonder produced when, by apparently pressing first on the stomach, next on the chest, I made it appear that I was thereby able to bring up an entire brigade of teeth from my inner man, at one time the upper jaw appearing only, and at another time the lower; this being done, of course, whilst the mouth was momentarily kept closed!

After these diversions, deputations came from different parts of the house, requesting me to proceed to such and such an apartment so as to allow the men and youths there to see the performing bear. Then a message would come asking

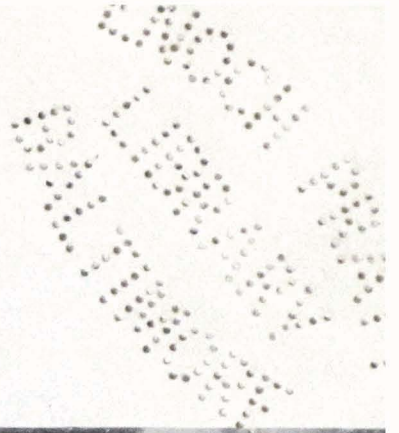
me to permit the women to see the performing teeth, a novelty which completely astounded them. Next, whilst a procession of the priests was passing by, the Devil himself must have tempted me to distract the holy men during their devotions ; for, waiting the moment when " Dante " was passing at their head, I let my upper jaw protrude down, until hanging but a little above my chin ! This was too much for the reverend witch-doctor and his companions, and all praying ceased for the time being whilst " Dante " stood waggling, not his teeth, but his head, with astonishment. And as if that were not enough, during another procession, I wound up the bear, and released it ! Delighted apparently at its freedom, away it scuttled in front of and around " Dante," with such effect that it was proposed to postpone devotions until all had witnessed the gambols of Bruin !

It now seemed about time for the bear and his master to be retiring to rest, and I endeavoured to make my way to the apartment allotted to me for the night. One half of it, I found, had been made over to the ladies Mingat had brought with him. Among these belles was Mingat's daughter-in-law, the most distingué Dyak woman I had met with in Borneo. She was not pretty, yet was intelligent and even queenly in her bearing, and most reserved until introduced to my toy ; when Bruin completely abolished her dignity for the time being. Her attendants were constantly engaged in replacing upon her person any ornaments shaken from their proper position by the movements of her graceful body. She wore her hair after the manner of the Dyak women, fastened crossways on the crown of

her head, very much in the shape of a Glengarry bonnet. Like so many of her countrywomen, this queen had luxuriant black hair, and remarkable sparkling black eyes.

I verily believe that she slept through all the din of that most awful night, notwithstanding the drinking never ceased. The braves and others constantly left and re-entered our room (as the doors of every room were left wide open), and by the light of the torches I witnessed a series of what I took to be Dyak flirtations.

If I refer too often to the incessant drinking, it is because it is impossible to describe the horrors of a Dyak feast without doing so. On these occasions, etiquette demands this outward demonstration on the part of the guests to prove that they appreciate the hospitality of their host, just as among the Turks, belching is regarded as a proof that a guest is satisfied with his host's entertainment. That Dyaks regard drinking on these occasions as a positive duty is certain, as numbers drank to provoke immediate sickness, repeating this disgusting act over and over again. Most unfortunately for me, there was an empty floor-space at the very foot of my bed, with the result that Dyak after Dyak during the greater part of that terrible night came there to repeat their drinking and its beastly consequences. To add to my miseries, the inevitable pigs quartered below serenaded everybody after their fashion. As a matter of fact, however, the sandflies pestered me more than did either pig or Dyak, as by this time my eyes and ears were fast becoming habituated to all kinds of fiendish scenes and sounds.



SIAMESE PRINCESSES IN SCOTTISH DRESS.



The chants of the witch-doctor and his priests never ceased throughout all that long night, and the next morning was ushered in by a procession of all the unmarried girls, dressed in their neat kilts, their bodies being decorated with little bells and beads. Then came the laying-on of hands upon each girl in succession, to the accompaniment of that eternal lament, "Heeh, Ooch, Huma," as before. First the forehead, then the head itself, next the knees, and finally the feet were all blessed by priestly hands; each girl looking the very pink of modesty. The instant the ceremony had ended the youngest of the priests, a man perhaps thirty years of age, stepped forward in front of me, and seizing a large bowl of arrack, emptied the contents down his throat, making immediately a hurried rush towards an opening in the floor. Returning to me, he picked up a second bowl, its contents disappearing in like manner.

Next came cock-fighting, each bird having a miniature razor fastened to one of its legs, immediately above the spurs. Death followed, of course, whenever a bird plunged its razor into the body of the other. Bird after bird was killed in this manner, to the great amusement of the youngsters, who greeted each death with acclamations of delight.

This item ended, twenty young pigs were dragged to where I was seated, and the massacre of these innocents speedily followed in order to consult the entrails—a proceeding which reminded me of Xenophon and school-days. I was informed that the entrails of one pig were found to be unpropitious, portending some calamity to the

tribe, but when I inquired whether its flesh could be eaten, I was told that though the auspices were unfavourable, the flesh was good ; some portion of the liver being out of its natural position, disturbed the consulting priesthood, though not sufficiently to prevent their eating the meat !

Owing to my having witnessed the examination of the entrails, I was now forced, much against my will, to become an unwilling participator in one further ceremony. The principal executioner informed me that it was his duty to rub my chin with a heart taken from one of the newly killed pigs.

This ordeal over and the feast ended, I felt that I had participated in quite enough heathenism to satisfy even my exotic taste, and so I bade adieu to Mingat and Dampa (who escorted me to the doorway themselves), thanking them for all the abominations I had witnessed. That was sixty years ago now, and I have had many strange experiences since ; but shall I ever forget that Dyak harvest feast ?

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The Dyak head hunters believe that the owner of any head taken will serve him in the next world.

No man may marry until he has taken at least one head.

## CHAPTER X

### DUTCH BORNEO

As related in the previous chapter, the disappointing nature of the Sarawak diamond mines made me desirous of inspecting the much-talked-of diamond areas of Dutch Borneo, and thanks to a letter of introduction to the Dutch authorities, kindly given me by Mr. Rodway, the Acting President of Sarawak, I received so much assistance and hospitality everywhere, that it will be long before I can forget my two months' wandering in that country.

Leaving Kuching on the 24th of August, 1875, in a Chinese *prahu* bound for Sambas, we slipped down quietly to Santubong at the entrance to the Sarawak river. A couple of days' delay occurred here, the *prahu* (which I had named the *City of Sambas*) requiring some repairs to render her seaworthy. I was glad, however, of the opportunity to make a second purification, as I now discovered that her cargo to Kuching had consisted of forty pigs, which must have been sorely pressed for trotter accommodation. A space 6 ft. by 4 ft., called by the Chinese a cabin, could only be entered on all fours, an achievement constantly repeated by myself and a couple of rats who shared the cabin with me and watched me during my meals.



In the village of Santubong I fell in with a vagrant-looking Hindoostanee, whose reasons for leaving his own country were unsatisfactory. His story was that, after wandering over many islands in the Archipelago, and travelling through a great portion of Dutch Borneo, including its gold and diamond fields, he had discovered a means of keeping body and soul together as a travelling tinker-silversmith ; going the rounds of out-of-the-way Dyak houses, where he managed to pick up odd jobs, more or less in his line. The man's wild looks and haggard appearance strongly backed up his tale of woe and vagabondage.

A pleasant breeze brought us in the course of the day to the entrance to the Lundu river, and a few more hours with the tide in our favour found us at Lundu itself. Here we had to wait for a cargo of bilion shingles (used as a substitute for slates for roofing houses), ordered for a firm in Sinkawang. The three days' delay which this necessitated I shall always recollect as the prelude to one of the most enjoyable journeys I have made, notwithstanding its eventful finale !

Having official duties to attend to at Simatan, Mr. Nelson, the Resident of Lundu, very kindly invited me to accompany him there, and also to take a run over to the island of Talong Talung, some few hours' row from Simatan ; but owing to the unfavourable wind, it took us nearly nine hours to reach this little village, which is near the frontier of the Rajah of Sarawak's territory.

In front of the Residence were the jaws of an alligator lately killed. The alligator measured 15 ft. in length and was accused of having devoured

a man and a woman. As a memento, I carried off with me two of his grinders, which were unusually large.

Dinner over, we started for Talong Talung, reaching it about midnight. Both this and an adjoining island have long been the breeding-place of turtle, for here they are allowed to lay their eggs in peace, without the dread of being carried off bodily to satisfy the cravings of gouty aldermen or dainty epicures. As we reached the shore we slightly disconcerted an old lady shovelling her way back to the sea. She was within a few paces of the water, into which she hastily scraped a path, and then quietly disappeared.

Most of the turtle lay their eggs about a stone's throw from the sea, as here the sand is particularly soft and deep, and exceedingly fine. Here were turtle by the dozen, thirty-five having been counted that same night, and new arrivals reported hourly, the total number for the previous night being eighty-three.

We found half a dozen men on the island who watch where the turtle lay their eggs and quietly approach them, inserting a stick in the sand immediately behind them. The direction given to this stick points to where the eggs lie buried; these are unearthed during the course of the following morning, and at Kuching fetch about thirty-six cents, or one shilling and sixpence, per hundred.

To pay attention to all the creatures was out of the question, so singling out one of larger dimensions we watched her proceedings. She had been busy for some time near us, unheeding and unheeded.

Presently the sand began to fly right and left behind her, and we saw that she was engaged covering up her eggs. She paused after her exertions, then raising her unwieldy form from the sandy mould in which it had been ensconced, she began a round-about march towards the sea.

The temptation now to have a ride upon the uncouth, slippery, scaly, and ill-shapen mass became irresistible ; so watching for a favourable moment, I threw my legs astride the *Chelone midas*, but my impertinence seemed beneath her contempt. Our united travels now went on apace, not agreeably, but steadily, until suddenly reaching a big dip in the sand my legs were too far apart for me to effect a retreat. Without any hesitation dame turtle went below, whilst I went off at a tangent.

The laughter which followed broke in upon the stillness of that mild tropical night, but my charger, heeding it not, continued her progress. A second attempt at "turtlemanship" proved slightly more successful, although those horny flanks sadly bruised my shin bones. It must have been in the interest of science, and in order to discover what weight a turtle was capable of bearing, that I induced my companion to mount up behind me ; but something intended for a grunt was all the protest made against this truly outrageous heaping up of labour. Allowing ourselves to be carried as near the water as it was prudent to permit a sea monster to take us, we seized an opportunity for dismounting afforded by a very brief halt, and then bidding our salt-water friend a long farewell, we saw her off into the deep.

The Malays, professedly learned in most things

appertaining to connubial bliss, assured us that the gentlemen turtle patiently await the return of the ladies, at a short distance from the land, evidently of the opinion that

“ Like rabbits and hares,  
Turtle, too, go in pairs.”

It is well for the poor turtle that they have found a friend on land like the Rajah, for if the Malays speak truly they have many enemies by water in the sharks of Sarawak, and when (as is sometimes the case) a three-legged turtle is seen, it is the shark which gets discredit for the amputation.

To satisfy my curiosity as to the number of eggs a turtle lays, one of the marked places was opened, and at a distance of nearly 3 ft. from the surface exactly one hundred eggs were found. According to our informants, the turtle lay every other night, but during the boisterous monsoon they remain in deep waters, and only return to these islands during the monsoon or rainy season.

Having satisfied my curiosity by my visit to this interesting, though solitary spot, we returned to our boat, and before dawn of day had once more reached Simatan.

We failed in an attempt to put out to sea on the last day of August, and as the elements looked treacherous, some four and twenty hours were spent within sight of the hills looming beyond Lundu. A fine breeze then sprang up, and the *City of Sambas* began to plough her way merrily enough until we rounded the promontory of Datu, and came into Dutch waters. Here we

had to hug the land during the two following days, and progress was slow and tedious.

Now and again the cry of an Argus pheasant would reach us from the awful recesses of the Borneo forest, surely the very monarch of woods. That eternal evergreen forest, struggling for conquest with the ocean, bristling upon every island, darkening each distant mountain, here threatening to retain possession of what hard-earned toil had converted into a field of industry, there climbing and frowning over precipitous rocks, plunging into gorge and glen, invading the precincts of town and hamlet, fearlessly taking up its stand upon the very verge of each swollen river, and though oftentimes uprooted by the angry current, even then refusing to die : this boundless expanse of nature's prodigality exultingly proclaims the universal reign of Borneo's triumphant Queen !

The last time I had seen the Hollander was in his own promised land of South Africa. There his language had become the language of the negro. But in Borneo the Dutchman is an exotic, for Borneo does not treat the European race generously. Here are no colonists—the fruits of a second and third generation of European descent—with brawny arms able to provide the daily bread ; men to whom the Fatherland is but a dream—a cherished yet unknown land.

At length we reached Pamangkat, which may be called the port of Sambas, the latter town being situated ten hours' distance from the sea, yet easily reached, as the Sambas river is one of the largest and deepest in Borneo. I found the Controller had gone to Sambas where he had duties also,

but the harbour-master at once made me welcome ; the first of many welcomes I afterwards received from the hospitable Dutchmen.

The situation of Pamangkat is decidedly pretty, with hilly country close by. Wonderful to relate for Borneo, a little way off may be seen an extensive rice-plain, which, of course, has been created by Chinese industry alone. Unfortunately, these hardy tillers of the soil are by no means so numerous as they formerly were, for at one time, trusting to their numbers, they defied the Dutch, who very speedily crushed out the seeds of their rebellion, though not until many thousand Chinese had scattered themselves over the country.

On the summit of a pretty hill, overlooking the sea, I saw a monument erected to the memory of a Lieutenant-Colonel who fell fighting with the Chinese.

If there be any place in Western Borneo entitled to be called " the land of plenty," I am inclined to think it is Pamangkat, as from it are sent to the neighbouring countries supplies of pigs, poultry, rice, and other produce.

A post-boat left monthly for Sinkawang, and by the good offices of the harbour-master I obtained a passage. The jaunty air and smart appearance of the Javanese sailors was refreshing to my eyes, accustomed to the slovenly methods of a Chinese crew. Gone, too, were those whining falsetto notes of Chinese song ; though only to be exchanged for plaintive discords, reminding one of Father Ganges.

By three o'clock we had cast anchor in the little river of Sinkawang, and a two hours' row, upon

what looked not unlike a canal, with numerous Malay houses dotting its sides, landed us at the town itself. There I was the guest of the one enterprising European merchant of Western Borneo. His firm had branch establishments at far-off Sintagong on the Kapuas, at Montrado and Pontianak. Drove of oxen were yearly brought over for him from Sumatra and Penang at great cost and risk. His boats, laden with European stores, might be seen doggedly opposing the united efforts of a hundred swiftly-flowing streams.\*

But why the Dutch should have pitched upon a slow swampy place such as Sinkawang, I cannot understand. All the same, a neat little fort and compact, though somewhat sombre-looking, cantonment now occupies what nature must have intended for the frogs. The bazaar adjoining is well laid out, and the roads good.

It was a great treat to hear a military band on the following morning. Europeans seldom appear to advantage in hot countries, but the Dutch soldiers struck me as being below mediocre. They were uncomfortably thin, and without the martial air and bronzed appearance of our Indian veterans. Moreover, that tunic of theirs would give an effeminate appearance to the finest of men.

On the 12th of every month, one of the Java steamers calls at Sinkawang, from which place she

\* The Kapuas river passes through the coal region and is navigable for 450 miles. The Kyan Dyaks on the Kapuas eat their enemies and carry spits in the scabbards of their swords. The Jangkang Dyaks are also cannibals—they eat the tongue, brain, and leg muscles of their enemies. They are the most warlike Dyaks. Some cannibal Dyaks consider the palms of hands best eating.

proceeds to Pontianak. I was introduced to the captain, who spoke English well, and obligingly offered to take me with him on board (the steamer lay off at a considerable distance from the shore). On accepting his offer, I discovered on board the inevitable Scotch engineer, so we talked of the old country and of Java, his adopted home.

I had often heard of Malays running amok. Upon my noticing a deep gash across the captain's face, I was informed by my fellow-countryman that a Malay parang had left that mark, after cutting down two other Europeans, who will carry the wounds then received to their graves. The fellow who ran amok is now in prison.

Ten or twelve hours' steaming carried us to Pontianak. A small steamer from the town brought us a crowd of the most gaudily-dressed Malays I had yet seen, forming the retinue of the Sultan of Pontianak, who was on his way to Java to pay his respects to the Governor-General.

As the pleasant-faced Sultan came on board, the cannons thundered forth. And now, how sudden the transformation scene upon that deck! Was there ever such a display of yellow? First of all was borne that distinguishing mark of greatness, an umbrella, a right royal gilt umbrella; then came a courtier bearing a spear as yellow as gilt ever made spear. Next followed a dignified individual, holding a parang. Its scabbard was of embossed gilt, and the hilt of ivory, cut into the form of a half moon. The Sultan's state barge, towed by the steamer, was a mass of yellow, with oars of the same colour; the boatmen, of course, were in



yellow livery, as were also the musicians, who performed only too vigorously upon instruments what I could only suppose to be the Sultan's march. One little thing was not yellow ; by far the most curious of the many strange sights before us—a perfectly white monkey, a gift from the Sultan to the Governor-General.

This very original scene was terminated by our steaming three times round this galaxy, no doubt a peculiar form of compliment to the Sultan, after which we proceeded on our way to Pontianak.

A low, uninteresting country leads to Pontianak, which is situated on the junction of the Landak and Kapuas rivers. There are a good sprinkling of Malay and Chinese craft in front of the town, which is the second largest in Borneo, with a population not far short of 40,000 souls. The different races inhabiting Pontianak have divided it pretty equally among themselves. The Dutch quarter enjoys what in Borneo is called a promenade. It and the other few roads have been made under great difficulties, owing to the very marshy nature of the soil. As the Dutch houses are close to each other and regularly laid out, one has only to step outside to be seen by one's neighbours.

The Chinese, bearing in mind that their object in coming to Borneo is to make money, have planted themselves either in or as near to the bazaar as they can get. A few enterprising Klings (native dealers), full of faith in the source from which dollars flow, are edging their way as near to the European locality as building space permits.

On the opposite side of the river, where the Sultan lives, is a dense population of Bugis islanders.

There a mosque stands sentry over a neighbourhood which is peopled solely by Islamites.

The mosques of Borneo are unworthy of Islam, and while the eye rests only momentarily upon their inferiority, the mind is unconsciously carried back to the splendid buildings of Damascus, Delhi, or Cordova.

Nature's own gentleman, the amphibious Malay, perfectly alive to the value of money, yet resolved not to make it at the expense of his thews and sinews, is never to be found far from the river. A model of cheapness is the Malay. Ushered into this world at a trifling cost to his parents, his education begins and ends with a smattering of his mother tongue, and an extremely sketchy synopsis of the Koran. Spices, rice, fish, and fruit, varied with sweets, form his diet.

Like that other born gentleman, the Spaniard, he, too, is fond of finery, and his one act of extravagance, if he be a Mahometan enthusiast, will be to travel to Mecca, returning a Hadji and a dandy—dandy in all the glory of Arabic livery. Thus, too, he attains the acme of respectability, for in Borneo Mahometanism spells respectability.

The poorest Malays have comparatively little means, yet, owing to their frugal mode of living, they manage to support their families; and though their climate is by no means bracing, it is yet not so scorching as that of India. The Malay houses are cheaply and hastily run up, and the ground costs but little.

The hotel at Pontianak is small, but comfortable, and calls of formality are held and friendly visits paid by Europeans generally between five and

seven of an evening. My first visit was paid to the Resident, to whom I presented the letter given to me by Mr. Rodway. He received me courteously and invited me to attend a reception he was holding the same evening. I was the more glad to do so, as it gave me an opportunity of meeting the principal Europeans of Pontianak, and the commander and officers of the Dutch man-of-war, the *Madura*, with whom I afterwards spent several pleasant days. There were also some Malay princes, and a few select Chinese, who all enjoyed the gaiety after their own fashion.

As there is no military band in Pontianak, some Malay musicians had to do duty, and with the assistance of a violin, flute, and one or two other instruments, certainly succeeded in throwing great enthusiasm into the dancing, which was kept up beyond midnight. Though Pontianak is situated on the Line, it does not prevent the Dutch from enjoying themselves—as much, that is, as is possible in a country which not one of them like, but would gladly exchange for Sumatra, Java, or almost any one of the many islands belonging to them in the archipelago. Every one's heart seems far away from Borneo. A spirit of resignation, coupled with a hope that before long he may be ordered elsewhere, pervades the soldier, no matter whether he may be at Sintang, Pontianak, or Sinkawang. The young civilian's friends, if they have interest at headquarters, will use it to send him to the highlands of Padang, in Sumatra, or to some other attractive place, but not to Borneo. He is a necessity to the country, and he knows it, as do also the powers that reign in distant Java.

For who but he who has served his time among the Dyaks can hope to influence and hold in check those complex savage natures, which can be driven distracted by the flight of a bird, and yet will undergo heroic sufferings and privations for that *memento mori*, a disgusting, sooty cranium? He, and he alone, can hope to understand the customs and superstitions of this people; the amount of *pate* demanded as payment for a head; the invocation to *Antus*; the significance of the beating of the *tatawak* upon their return from a sanguinary expedition; the mysterious bird-cult; and a thousand other practices.

Sarawak has only two such men, the Rajah of Sarawak being one, the Resident of the Rejang the other. In the present Resident of Pontianak, who has lived twenty-six years in Borneo, the Dutch have another; Sultans, or Chinese captains, Penimbahans or Orang Kayas of Dyak tribes; nearly every man, if he knows but one European in the country, has heard of and respects the Resident of Pontianak!

My first visit to this town was only one of three days, but, thanks to Dutch civility and kindness, I enjoyed it greatly. Had I not come armed with a letter of introduction to the Government, the Resident informed me that he would not have allowed me to remain in Dutch territory, much less to have travelled through Dutch Borneo. As it was, every place was thrown open to me. I expressed a desire to see the gaol, and was shown everything and everybody in it.

I was then invited to the court house to witness the annual farming out of arrack and pork, which,

together with opium, are Government monopolies, and are put up to public auction separately. The court was filled with respectably dressed Chinamen and a few Malays. The monopoly of arrack in one or two divisions was purchased by a shrewd old Malay. The Chinese had the "unclean animal" all to themselves. The sale of opium did not come off for a fortnight later, when it was eventually disposed of to a Chinamen from the island of Biliton, at 135,000 guilders a month.

In Western Borneo, the Dutch on the one side, and the Sultans and Malay princes on the other, are merely two contracting parties, and the Dutch recognise the right of the Malay princes to collect the revenue from the Malays and Dyaks in their respective countries.

The Chinese everywhere are directly under the Dutch Government, to whom they have to pay a nominal tax yearly, with the single exception of one elderly gentleman, who was present at the reception. He was the only Chinaman, I was informed, whose independence was recognised by the Dutch, and, if I remember rightly, lived at Montrado, which is the principal head-quarters of the gold diggings in Borneo.

The chief object of my journey being to visit the diamond mines of Landak, the Resident suggested that I should accompany the Controller (whose acquaintance I had recently made) to Tayan, which is within three days' journey of the diamond district. The Controller very kindly invited me to share his fine long-boat, with its complement of twelve rowers, and took me down to see it.

A new arrival from Sumatra once asked of a

Controller who had been stationed at Pulan Majang what there was to see going up the Kapuas river? "Only mud banks, trees, and water," was the discouraging reply, "and if you fix your eyes upon some tall tree near the river, you will find that it will take you nearly half an hour before your boat is abreast it, so strong is the current against you."

There was a good deal of truth in both remarks, for certainly the sterile wadies of Arabia Petrea are not more monotonous than is a voyage up some of Borneo's big rivers. Even crocodiles are few in number, and notorious as are the man-eating crocodiles of Borneo, I have seen more in the course of one day's steaming up the Brahmapootra in Assam than during the whole of my wanderings in Borneo. The population is everywhere scanty, even by the river's side, notwithstanding that the Malay is as strongly attached to it as the Dyaks are to the seclusion of the forest.

Not many miles from Pontianak are some large plantations of sireh. Those indefatigable Chinese had been at work here also. What Saxon energy has done for the United States, Chinese perseverance can, in some measure, accomplish for Borneo. The Chinese alone are both willing and able to struggle with that rampant vegetation which is the curse of the country, and which must be conquered to a far greater extent if Borneo is to hold that place in the scale of Asiatic nations to which she would be entitled were the resources of so vast an island once fully developed.

We passed a few small Malay villages and some boats coming down the river, and it was pleasing to see even these. Of monkeys we saw plenty,

most of them making off, as monkeys know so well how and when to do, though a few philosophers sat on—or were they perhaps fatalists?—placidly as our boat passed close to them.

A European ordinarily associates birds and trees together. He must get rid of this notion in Borneo as the infinity of trees is out of all proportion to the scarcity of birds, which must either, like the Dyaks, be very fond of the depths of the forests, or else—which is much more likely—do not exist.

In certain parts pigs and deer are met with, and a small kind of bear is found in the hilly country. The rhinoceros is well known on the Malawi, and a Dutch civilian who had been stationed on that river told me of the ravages done to their crops by the unwieldy brutes. *Batok* is the Malay for rhinoceros, and hearing a Sarawak missionary in the course of conversation using this word, on asking for the meaning of the expression, it was explained that “*Batok*” denoted also “alarm” to Dyaks, on account of the fact that the brute frequently rushes wildly through their crops.

A kind of bison is found in the interior, and the monster boa, or python, is occasionally seen. I was not treated to the sight of an orang-utan in his native wilds; these, too, are more “Dyaky” (to coin an adjective) in their habits than even Dyaks themselves. The only specimen I saw was being trotted out for sale at Sintang; his owner, a Chinaman, would have been glad to have got quit of him for fifty dollars. He had lived for one year in captivity, and, so his owner said, was a well-behaved fellow; but the animal must have regarded this as a libel, as he threatened to bite his master before

me, and the bribe of a plantain had to be given him to make him return to his cage.

Though man and bird and beast be scarce, the vegetation is outdone in profusion by the insect world, of which Borneo may be said to be the capital. Myriads of insects of every form, colour, and size which eccentric nature has been able to devise, help to swell the one long confused hum which never ceases during the livelong night. One involuntarily recalls the words of the Psalmist, calling upon every created thing to "Praise Him Who created all." The shrill screeching and chirpings produced by various insects and reptiles are such as to defy description. The melodious notes of a tree-frog (which, on hearing on the Kapuas, I took to be those of a bird), I can only compare to the chiming of old church bells. A winged trumpeter visited our table d'hôte at Pontianak, and the speed and noise of his wings was so wonderful that he very quickly became an object of curiosity to every one.

One so often has heard or read of mangrove swamps and their terrible fevers, that it seems strange to associate them with beautiful memories ; yet I can never forget the mangroves of Borneo, superior to anything of the kind in India, looking like so many Christmas trees with their myriads of little fire-flies which illuminate them like drops of molten gold.

Four days of hard pulling upstream brought us to Tyan, situated upon an island. Here the Kapuas\* is nearly two miles in width and a small frontier fort has been made. To-day the fosse is levelled,

\* Navigable for 450 miles : see p. 240.



and some old cannon with their embouchures fixed into the ground are the only souvenirs that remain of the day of military occupation.

I did not expect to find a European lady in so remote a spot. She and her husband kindly asked me to prolong my visit, but the rainy season was approaching, and compelled me to be once more *en voyage*.

Leaving Tyan, we speedily entered a small river which might well be called the Meander, from its tortuous progress, though engineering had got rid of numerous zig-zags by cutting a channel through them, to the saving of much time and labour. Yet engineers were not the only conquerors on this river, mosquitoes also being triumphant, and our boatmen were glad to redouble their efforts to escape from the swarms of their merciless tormentors.

The Rajah of Tyan lives four hours' pull from Tyan itself. "Misery let loose" will perhaps best describe his neighbourhood. As if to mock at and increase the wretchedness around, I was informed that the present Rajah refused to live in the house built by his father; nor would he suffer it to be inhabited, hoping rather to perpetuate the memory of his miserable self by living in a house which he himself had built. But the older dwelling built of honest bilian, as if despising the contemptible freak of vanity which would convert it into a wreck, still bravely faces the gusts and storms of this the rendezvous of floods and tempests.

This selfish and barbarous notion of uprooting a father's memory is even more common in other parts of the East than in Borneo. I have more

than once heard a man in Rajpootana say, that he did not see why he should keep up the memory of his father rather than himself by repairing the "Ghaut." But the Shahs of Persia are perhaps the most extravagant adherents to this deep-seated folly, as witness the many magnificent palaces built by various Shahs (at Ispahan, in particular), and now mouldering away through lack of any attention.

In the dark corner of a dismal, empty house, I found the groaning Rajah, looking very like an animal that had been disturbed in its sleep. His foot was swollen and he was otherwise in pain, which partly accounted for the distance which every one seemed anxious to keep ; indeed, his grown-up son told me that even he, for some days, had not ventured into the house of his fond parent. The unfortunate patient was suffering from *untut*, an excruciating pain which first of all attacks the groin, and then travels down into the foot. Many Europeans who have had to rough life in Borneo, have also had to suffer from it severely.

The Controller of Tyan who had been kind enough to accompany me thus far, here gave me a couple of guides to take me on to Ngabon, the capital of the Landak district. The Rajah's son accompanied me in his own boat to a Malay village, from which I would have to walk to the Landak river. Overshadowing the small stream were the branches of many fine trees from which were hanging graceful orchids of various sizes. Upon a branch, high above our heads, we noticed that a large green snake had entwined itself, and was fast asleep. Our first shot did not appear to disturb it in the least ;

but the second brought it tumbling into the water by the side of our boat.

Five Dyaks arrived next morning for the purpose of carrying my baggage. The inventor of the small conical baskets fastened to their back had surely never intended them to take European impedimenta. In other districts the Dyaks used knapsacks, which admitted my cases readily enough, but now the contents had to be emptied into the baskets. My bearers then divided out the remaining pots, pans, bedding, and finally the empty cases themselves so equally, that each one of them must have had something of everything.

Hitherto my travels had been by water only, but I was now to try more amphibious procedure, consisting of a well-watered path—a *terra infirma*. A heavy shower wetted us through at starting, and owing to the clayey nature of the soil, every one appeared to be suddenly seized with a fit of humility, as all our eyes were cast fixedly downwards, though always a little ahead. Yet I remember getting a glimpse of some tall bare trees, from which every single branch had been cleanly lopped off for the purpose of allowing both rain and sunshine to benefit the ground around ; but so speedily does Nature here recover herself, that I was told it required the eye of a Dyak to point out where trees had been cut down only a few years before. These were the happy hunting ground of the Dyaks, although from the appearance of the farmers themselves, they did not appear to be very prosperous, as a strip of tanned bark girt about their loins was all the garments they wore.

In about a couple of hours we arrived at a Dyak

house which, of course, was on stilts, as every habitation should be in such a climate. Its elasticity would have been thought surprising if one had not remembered that we were in the land of rubber. Still, that did not account for the fumigated appearance of everything. Twelve doors, all in a line, looked out upon a regular *omnium gatherum*.

Here were dingy-looking feathers and parangs, wild boar tusks and sumpitans, sleeping dogs and old women. Lots of naked youngsters were gambolling about outside upon an aerial boulevard.

I was invited to sit down on a clean shining mat, and noticed several women hurrying off to report to others, as I supposed, the arrival of a white man. A supply of "sireh"\* was produced, and my wearied porters quickly regaled themselves with it. Being anxious to lose no time, however, I obtained new recruits, and was soon buried in the forest again.

Three hours of hard climbing brought us to a Dyak's nest, into which I was glad to clamber. I was again told that I was the first white man who had ever come to sleep there. The good-natured savages did all they could to make me comfortable, and I spent a very enjoyable evening with them—in remarkable contrast to those nightmare nights with Mingat and Dampa.

From the nest itself I had next morning a distant view of that very verdant country which lay at our feet. The following day found us better sliding, as they say in Scotland, down the opposite side of the hill. I looked in at a Dyak's dwelling and obtained some feathers of the Argus pheasant.

\* A pleasant sort of chewing gum.

Seeing a collection of Dyak houses at a place called Saratok, I thought it a good opportunity of getting another peep at Dyaks and Dyak customs, so I called a halt for the day.

An improvised target, slightly bigger than a man's head, was put up, and at a distance of thirty paces from it a savage with sparkling black eyes and flowing hair, raising a 6-ft. blowpipe to his lips, discharged arrow after arrow into the target itself, or close to it. A little tube carried by his side contained sufficient poison to tip a hundred arrows! Monkeys and pigs were his favourite sport, so he told me, a wounded pig quickly succumbing to the effects of the poison.

I had a splendid gathering of savages that evening. They put all manner of questions to me. One wanted to know whether the Dutch were afraid of the English. I replied that the Dutch did not fear the English, nor did we fear the Dutch. One complained that a Chinaman had brought a false complaint of theft against his relations, and in consequence some of them were under lock and key. I explained that if they proved to the satisfaction of the Dutchman that I had stolen a pig from them, he would place me too in *durance vile* if I refused to compensate them for the loss of the pig. They had no idea that white men treated each other so liberally.

I bought some fine boar tusks from them. As in several the mouth was larger and more pointed, and the formation of the teeth different from that of the "Babi-utan," while a smell of musk proceeded from the head, I believe I have reason for thinking

that the tusks I obtained were those of a species of *Babirusa*, or pig deer.

The Dyaks told me that their stock of rice had run out previous to my arrival, but as a wild pig had been killed the day before, the tribe was then in clover. A concoction of roots I saw them eating would have looked more *recherche* if served up at *Les trois Frères*.

On leaving next morning, the "Orang Kaya" (head man) put his arms around me quite affectionately. It was enough to make one think of "Home" if not of "Beauty."

Against the branchless trunk of a lofty tapang tree, upwards of 80 ft. in height, I saw an ingenious ladder, which had been constructed by fixing stout bamboos parallel to each other within a few inches from the trunk itself; wooden pins to serve the purpose of steps had been driven through the bamboo and into the outer part of the trunk, just sufficiently to unite bamboo and trunk firmly without material injury to the tree itself. Splicing one bamboo above another, and uniting them to the tree in this manner, the agile Dyaks are enabled by this simple contrivance to mount up into the royal branches aloft, where they usually find both honey and wax.

Both on this and the previous day I saw a species of palm, from which the Dyaks extract a sweet sugary drink, by no means unpleasant to the taste. By boiling the juice, which I watched them doing in several Dyak houses, a kind of coarse treacly sugar is made, which I also tasted.

In three or four hours, continuing our journey, we arrived at a small stream, where we procured a

somewhat leaky canoe. Jumping into it we were quickly carried by the strong current into the Landak river, and just as the sun went down, Ngabon, the capital of the Landak district, was reached, every one glad to have escaped a thunderstorm which had been brewing for some time.

The Controller, who was absent in the interior of his district, did not return until the following evening. I gave his wife a letter of introduction from the Resident of Pontianak. It was certainly a most agreeable pleasure to meet—in so out-of-the-way place as Ngabon—with a lady who had been brought up in the lap of luxury, familiar too with several European languages, and with many parts of the Continent I had had the good fortune to have visited. I forgot for the time being that I was in the land of Pannimbahans, and in our conversation enjoyed again many half-hours' rambling amid the charming valleys of Switzerland and the Rhine. The kindnesses I received both from that lady and her husband were such that where my motto ought to have been *comme à la guerre*, I knew not the meaning of "roughing it."

One of the first things arranged was a visit to the Pannimbahan of Ngabon, the ruler of Landak, and the happy possessor of many diamond mines extending over a large extent of country. But as an Englishman, and from Sarawak (also a diamond-producing country), how was I to be received, for what could be my object in coming to Landak? Had the English Rajah of Sarawak sent me to report upon these mines? Or, in the event of my being pleased with what I saw, was it not likely that I

might wish to buy some ground and settle in Landak? I do not pretend that any of these very alarming ideas crossed the mind of the worthy Pannimbahan, but I do know that the suspicions of Malay princes are only too easily excited, and I can imagine no more likely occasion for creating such suspicions than the arrival from a remote part of the world of the first European desirous of examining the diamond mines belonging to a Malay prince in Borneo.

Whatever the Pannimbahan may have thought of my visit, however, he was far too much of a Malay diplomatist to show anything but civility and cakes and diamonds, when the Controller, at my request, asked him to be kind enough to let me see his large gems. Two uncut diamonds were brought for our inspection, the first, 45 carats in weight, the second 40. Both were white stones of good shape, though imperfect octahedrons. The larger one had a bad crack near the middle of it; the smaller a slight flaw near to the surface. It is impossible to say what value would be given for these diamonds in Borneo, as in the East weight atones for much blemish. In Europe the larger of the diamonds would fetch comparatively little, as Europeans have the reputation of preferring *quality to quantity*!

I made particular inquiry about green and other fancy coloured stones, and was shown a green stone about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  carat in weight, which was mounted in the rough. On expressing surprise at the stone not having been cut in Borneo (although aware of a similar objection existing in Europe), I was informed that every green diamond lost its greenness in the



cutting, generally turning yellow and rarely white, my informant adding that he once had a green diamond of 6 carats, but had lost it !

Whilst on the subject of diamonds, I will refer to the most interesting ones I have seen in Borneo. Decidedly the most singular one was a diamond shown to me in Pontianak belonging to the independent Chinese chief, who was good enough to let me examine it closely. It was something under 30 carats, tolerably sound, but of a dirty black tint. From the very middle of it, towering like a miniature lighthouse above a rock, was a white flawed diamond of nearly  $3\frac{1}{2}$  carats. Only the white diamond was translucent, the black—circular in its formation—being probably boart, used for cutting and polishing diamonds. I heard that four thousand dollars had been offered for this stone, and had been refused. The same chief showed me a diamond similar to the above in shape, but barely over a carat in weight.

The one found in Schian nearly two years ago is the largest I have seen in Borneo, and is at present in Kuching. It is off colour—a straw colour—an irregular octahedron in shape, and weighs 75 carats. Most African diamonds of a similar size are yellower than this one, which, when cut, promises to be a valuable stone.

One of the princes of Ngabon showed me several diamonds, all more or less curious, as specimens. I know there are mineralogists who maintain that there is no such thing as a “water-worn” diamond. A dirty-white one of 20 carats was so rounded and rubbed that few diamond diggers even would have recognised it as a diamond.

There was another diamond, under 15 carats,

of a half-sea-green, half-cowslip tint. In Europe its value would have been much greater than in Borneo, as I found that this kind was here classed as a yellow stone. I saw also a cut diamond, slightly under 3 carats, a perfect model of purity. After all, there are few things so rare as a perfectly flawless steel-white diamond of the first water.

At Djomboe a Chinaman had an uncut black glossy diamond, about a carat in weight. It was the only black diamond that had the real glitter of the gem. I had always thought the others I had previously seen were a "half and half," half boart, half diamond. The big diamonds I have here alluded to are in fact almost the only large ones I have heard of in Borneo.

I saw the Rajah of Matan in Pontianak, and through a Malay scholar, spoke to him about the far-famed Matan diamond of 360 carats! Alas for worldly vanities! That once celebrated stone had been tried in Java, and found wanting. It proved to be only a piece of quartz, and the Chinese chief—to whom I have more than once referred—used to say that he never would have given a dollar for it. The Rajah of Matan himself told me that he believed the big stone was no diamond, but added that he was not at home when his father died, and that he did not know what had become of the so-called "greatest diamond of those days." It is only fair to add that the Rajah bears his loss with more than Moslem resignation.

Also in the Landak district I was shown by different people rough roundish black little diamonds, *i.e.* boart, the size of a small pea. This little fellow fetches not so much a "fancy" as a

“ faith ” price, as the Malays believe that it shields the wearer from all bodily injury, and it is valued accordingly. The Rajah of Sarawak (so the princes of Ngabon assured me) had swallowed one of these life-preserving pills, and lo ! infidel though he was, he had become invulnerable !

When the trip to Djomboe was arranged, the Controller desired the Prince of Djomboe to request some relative of his to act as our guide and to arrange for Dyak carriers, boatmen, and anything we might require. For a few hours our twelve rowers struggled hard against the Landak current, but in the end were obliged to succumb to it. We had to leave our boats and take to the Dyak paths. Talk about the bogs of Tipperary ! What greater variety of delights could man sigh for than these truly co-operative leeches and slippery batangs, semi-submerged trunks, and entirely submerged paths ; streams innumerable, and highly popular Dyak bridges, all more or less experienced and appreciated by us during the four days' march to Djomboe ?

Once we reached a swift-flowing stream perilously near to the swollen Landak river. “ They are going to *send* us a tree,” said the Controller. The idiom was somewhat literal, but the meaning was perfectly clear when a newly-felled tree came tumbling into the stream, close to where we stood, then another tree, “ sent ” from the opposite side of the river ; the two submerged, and embraced each other, holding out their branches to support us as we cautiously crossed over them.

I think it highly probable that the diamond-

iferous ground extends over a hundred miles in this part of Borneo, from Schian on one side to the west of Gnabon on the other. The Chinese element predominates throughout this country, and I was glad to see it, for if patient endurance and long-suffering can disembowel the riches of Mother Earth, the Chinese are the ones to accomplish it.

There are two kinds of mines, which the words "deep" and "shallow" will best describe; the former are invariably cut on the side of a steep declivity, the latter in ground more or less shelving, as is most of the country hereabouts. In the former, the "areng" or gravel varies in thickness from 3 to 5 ft.; in the latter, from 9 in. to 2 ft.

A Chinese digger died at Djomboe shortly before our arrival. He left no money, but a wife whom he had purchased at Sinkawang for fifty dollars. Chinese diggers are no believers in sorrow-stricken widows, and ladies at Djomboe being in the great minority, an enterprising fellow was at once found willing to pay seventy-five dollars for the disconsolate widow, who then found herself the property of a second lord and master. With this valiant speculator we found her living as happy as celestials could wish to be, doubtless consoling herself with the thought that, like good old port wine, age could but increase her value, and that should her seventy-five-dollar husband predecease her, no one would be found to insult her by offering less than one hundred dollars for her wrinkled affections!

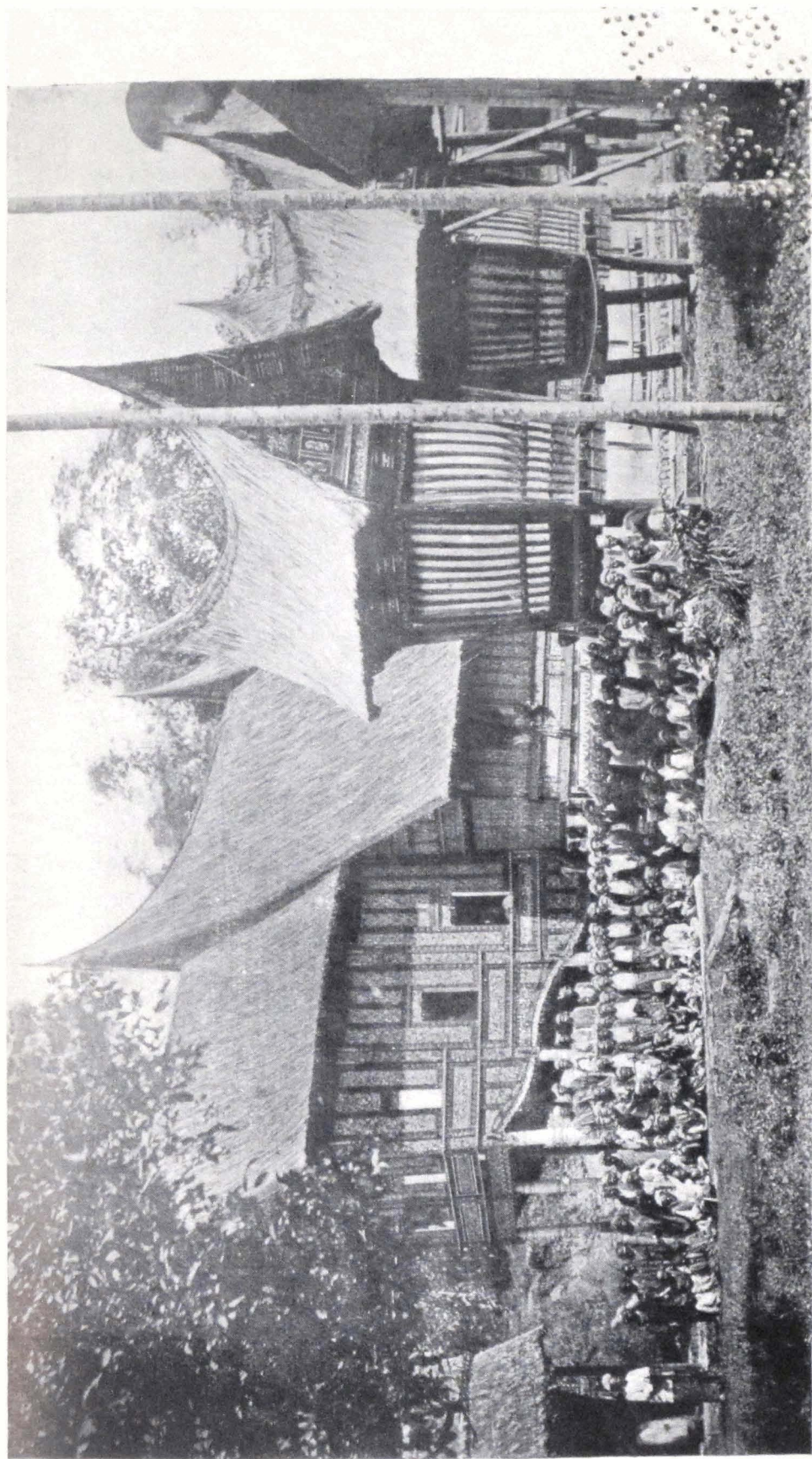
But both the woman and her second purchaser showed so little respect for the memory of her first love, that the undertaker who had buried him could

get no one to defray his expenses. The lawsuit which this entailed gave me an edifying spectacle of Chinese affection. The final verdict was, that he of the seventy-five dollars had acquired, along with distressed beauty, the privilege of alleviating her sorrows and of sharing her burdens and liabilities—to wit, the interment of “the dear departed.”

We shot down the Landak river at a glorious speed, though sometimes we had to get out owing to rapids and take to the Dyak paths, our carriers shouldering the impedimenta. A very heavy shower driving us into a Goosti's house, he took the opportunity of telling us a story which a loud crash of thunder, at the moment, had recalled to his memory.

Some years ago a Malay found a big diamond, but at the very moment of finding it, a flash of lightning accompanied by a loud peal of thunder so terrified him, that he hastily threw the valuable gem into a basket by his side, in order to take shelter. When the storm subsided the basket was there, but no gem in it. Had I heard of such a thing before, or could I account for it? I told him not to believe in such fairy tales, but the narrator insisted that the incident had happened to his father, who had sworn to the truth of this piece of conjuring.

A sergeant in the Controller's service showed me a dagger, so rusted and wavy and forming so great a contrast to the watering upon a Damascus blade, as to make me inquire the purpose of this Burgis weapon. Its greatest utility, I was told, lay in a perpendicular crack 6 in. long in its very centre, which introduced the daylight freely.



GROUP AND VILLAGE OF MALAY PEOPLE.



This, the owner assured me, was typical of the daylight he could knock into any forty-six men who dared to challenge him to mortal combat, as by merely holding up the weapon in front of himself it sufficed to prevent that number of his foes even catching a glimpse of his august presence! His friends standing by joined in extolling the virtues of this weapon. "Such being the case," I could not help remarking, "why need your employer keep so many of you, if one man can do the work of half a hundred?"

Still descending the Landak river, we shot rapid after rapid, although on two occasions our barque had to be relieved both of passengers and baggage, only a very few Dyaks being left to man it. These standing erect, joined their yells to the noise of the rushing waters, and bravely faced the fearful descent. Only the most perfect steering prevented them from being hurled on to the rocks below. There were other rapids, not so dangerous, yet sufficiently exciting to make us happy when we had done with them.

Our complicated European clothing harboured leeches, as we soon discovered. So was it surprising (accustomed as I had been to the freedom of the kilt) that I should adopt the playful suggestion of my Dutch friend, who now made me the present of a *kawat*, remarking that I might be better off in it than in more sophisticated attire? To say that my first appearance in the garb of a head hunter amazed my brother savages is less than the truth, and their wonder was considerably increased when I seized a lance and charged them through the forest!



“They are asking me,” said the Controller, “whether all Englishmen are like you, because they say you are not like me, but like themselves, only that you are white.”

I had not long to wait before I had the first opportunity of testing my cherished *kawat*. Reaching almost at nightfall a small river, which was dangerously near to the swollen Landak, some more “sending” of trees, as my Dutch friend called it, was necessary before a semi-submerged bridgeway could hastily be thrown across. This was quickly accomplished by a single Dyak swimming the river and felling a good-sized tree, which was then *sent* by him into the middle of the stream, whilst from our side a second large tree was *sent* to embrace the other. I now plunged into the river, and clinging to the branches, I had no difficulty in crossing, thanks especially to my firm hold of a Chinaman’s pigtail; the Son of Heaven crossing in front of me being too much engaged in attending to the more honourable portions of his limbs. Meanwhile, my friend the Controller, after getting semi-immersed in his passage, had hurried on to a rendezvous where a gathering of Dyaks eagerly awaited him, and where too I speedily followed. Ignorant of the fact that the official was surrounded by a concourse of Dyaks, and delighted as I was at having crossed a Borneo river whilst wearing the *kawat*, I rushed into the middle of that awe-stricken assembly, giving vent to a stentorian yell, and then with “Kawat ‘an’ a’ an’ a’,” treated the Controller in the centre of his savages to the “Highland fling”!

Most likely the audience regarded the per-

formance as a kind of worship offered by the performer—not to the birds they are constantly invoking—but to my kind friend, the Dutch Controller, the representative of the Dutch nation ruling over them. *En passant*, I may be pardoned for recalling to mind my friend's remark anent this youthful piece of eccentricity. "Not till the last day of my life shall I ever forget your sudden apparition in the *kawat* that night, when you treated the astonished natives to the Highland fling." Would that I had been able to have had my photo taken then and there as a souvenir!

On going for a stroll the following morning, I found a Chinese woman outside the doorway, engaged in the very revolting occupation of emasculating fowls, whilst her two daughters sat beside her eagerly learning this branch of their education.

Arriving at Ngabon the following morning, I met a diamond merchant from Pontianak. His boat had been attacked by pirates halfway between Ngabon and Pontianak, and some of his party wounded. It turned out that Malays, and not Dyaks in this instance, were the perpetrators, and not merely instigators of the act.

Here I may mention that there are about three hundred European troops in Western Borneo, and perhaps twice that number of Javanese soldiers.

Though Ngabon is considered both by Europeans and Malays to be a den of fever, I was most fortunate not to have been troubled with it, either there or elsewhere.

Some idea of the expenses and hardships Europeans have to put up with in the interior of

Borneo may be realised, when a moderate-sized village, such as that of Ngabon, is unable to supply the wants of even *one* European family. Rice and the very ordinary requirements there certainly are ; but otherwise every European article of food has to be brought from Pontianak, and the expense of carriage may be guessed when it takes five or six days to make headway against a river which can be hardly less than two hundred miles in length.

Amongst other things, salt is a Government perquisite, each Controller being responsible for the amount supplied to him. A Controller who had charge of a store made his servant responsible for it, and on one occasion the servant made away with a large amount. Fearing to be found out, he loosened one of the biliang ataps on the roof, so as to admit a little rain. Of course the salt was missed, and the blame laid on the elements ; but the shrewd Controller, who had to make good the loss, immediately discharged the unfaithful servant.

Practically the only difference between a voyage down the Landak and one up the Kapuas is, that the latter is in every respect a much larger river. Otherwise, it is a case of muddy waters and muddy banks over again, with the ever-prevalent Borneo paradise for locusts, abundant enough to feast all the winged armies of South Africa and Egypt.

Accompanying my friend, we left Ngabon, and following the route advised by the President of Pontianak, thirty hours of actual rowing with a strong breeze in our favour, brought us again to Pontianak.

Upon my meeting the President, he kindly

informed me that the Dutch man-of-war, *Madura*, was leaving next day for Sintang. "You know the commander," he said, "so ask him to accommodate you with a passage in her, as far as he goes."

I accordingly called upon the commander, and he at once told me that the Resident had informed him of my desire to return to Sarawak, and very kindly invited me to accompany him; one of his officers immediately afterwards inviting me to the tri-monthly ball which is usually given by the Pontianak Club. There I met, in addition to the principal Europeans, a relay of Malay and Chinese magnates, decked out in Oriental finery. Sparkling wines, of France and Germany, and *bonnes bouches* of many sorts, helped nature to perform the scarcely "Blondinian" feat of dancing "on the Line." Some men from the *Madura* and a Malay band played alternately, and one of the former, with a remarkably thin waxy face and calm sad expression, reminded me forcibly of the picture of Our Saviour.

Fancy steaming hundreds of miles in a man-of-war into the heart of savage Borneo! But European surroundings have now destroyed much of the romantic atmosphere of the Kapuas, for on board the *Madura* are bright polished guns, bells ringing, and officers on the watch. Yet what need is there for those two soldiers, with fixed bayonets, to keep watch over that hatchway?

The doctor is now descending and has beckoned to me to go with him. Twelve or fourteen Dyaks are here; three of these are to be hanged, the remainder are sentenced to transportation for

twenty years. Miserable-looking objects, with sallow complexions, glaring black eyes, and long dishevelled hair. There is one exception, a white Dyak—an Albino—who was one of their ring-leaders; a strong, thick-set fellow, like a Russian Tartar, with high cheek-bones and reddish hair. He is one of the three condemned to death for murdering four innocent Javanese, whose sole crime was that of being living men, whose heads were consequently required to adorn Dyak homes.

The jury had found them all guilty, but had petitioned Java for a remission of the sentence of death, excepting in the case of the three ring-leaders. A favourable reply had just arrived, and the criminals removed from the prison of Pontianak were now on their way to Sintang, the principal station in their part of the country, where their sentence would be read to them and the condemned executed.

Pontianak is four hundred miles distant from Sintang, and had I travelled by boat, it would have taken twelve men twenty days to have taken me there. Nothing could have exceeded the watchfulness displayed to prevent any accident to the *Madura*, as the Kapuas, like most Borneo rivers, is notorious for its rocks and shoals and ugly snags, just peering above the water, lying in wait for the heavily laden prahus, who find swift destruction and disaster in their rough embrace.

A few days' delightful voyage brought us to Sintang. All the ship's officers spoke English so well, that it was sometimes difficult to remember that I was on a Dutch man-of-war. I have already had so often to allude to Dutch hospitality and

kindness, that I will only add that my memories of life on board the *Madura*, thanks to the kindness and civility of her commander and officers, will always remain amongst the most agreeable recollections of many happy days spent in Borneo.

Again I met with kindness at the hands of the Resident of Sintang. Here was a man who had spent twelve years in what might be called the Botany Bay of Borneo, and to those who have visited it, there is little wonder that civilised nations find it difficult to get men to remain for any length of time in the depths of such barbarism !

Amongst other sights I was permitted to see in Sintang was that which I have always remembered as the "Black Hole of Sintang"—a den of skulls gathered together neither for craniological nor phrenological purposes, nor as one sees them in Italy built up into the form of a mortuary chapel. No ! for want of a better name, let me call it a "Cloak Room," as it is hard to say what such places do or do not contain. The one I saw in Sintang housed a variety of neat little bags made of tanned bark, containing one or more skulls belonging to various tribes from whom they had been taken, and who were then longing for their restoration every bit as much as a school-boy longs for his Christmas box. Here I must not forget the kind present of three skulls the Resident made me, and which I then hoped to bear in triumph back to England.

The day after our arrival in Sintang, the sentence passed upon each of the Dyak prisoners was read to them, and the trio condemned to death were informed that after three days they would be

executed. Rabbing, the Albino, was the only one who spoke. He said that his grandfather was a Dutchman, and that had his father not come into the country the white man would never have possessed Borneo ; in consequence, he asked for pardon, adding that his only reason for killing the Javanese was to restore to life again the bodies of his forefathers. Rabbing's wife and the wives of the other prisoners had each plunged a *parang* (dagger) into the dead bodies of the murdered men. When asked how it was that their sex at least had not kept them from such revolting acts, their reply was, " Had we not done so, the bodies of our grandfathers would never have returned to us again." I reflected that, much as one very naturally regrets the loss of friends and relations, a very serious inconvenience might be occasioned by a visitation from a shoal of departed grandfathers, each one claiming perhaps a share in that patrimony which he himself had bequeathed.

It is customary among the Dutch to grant prisoners condemned to death any ordinary wish they may express forty-eight hours before their execution. Rabbing again acting as spokesman had but one favour to ask—that they might have pig to eat ; so these savages had as much pig as they could eat up to their very last hour.

Early morning ; the fort bell strikes seven, and as the last stroke is sounding, a trumpet blast is heard, and forty-five European and Javanese soldiers are seen marching from the fort to the prison gates. Exactly in front of the gaol, a substantial gibbet has been erected. How terribly significant is that bright red ochre with which it has been painted,

and those three ropes dangling in the air! Excepting the places made for the poles to slip into, everything has been brought here, driven in, and fastened together after nightfall, and during a night of most tempestuous weather, as I well remember.

Behind the gibbet, and at a short distance from the land, a well-appointed boat from the *Madura* is on the *qui vive*, in the event of any attempt at rescue or escape being made. Soldiers are drawn up in three sides of a square, the fourth remaining open for a few moments, until a group of wild, emaciated, and unhealthy-looking spectres are led into it.

These are the terrible head-hunting Dyaks—the Thugs of Borneo. They are to be present at the execution of their chiefs, and afterwards to hear again their own sentence read to them (and to see it enforced). Whilst looking at them, as they stand in a line with downcast features, the very picture of wild misery, it is most lamentable to reflect that hundreds of savages, such as they, are still running wild through the fastnesses of Borneo, a terror to everybody and a curse to the land that gave them birth.

In front of them are three figures dressed in white clothes, evidently made for the coming awful ceremony. Only the face, hands, and feet are visible, the death clothes they now wear completely covering their usually naked bodies. They are the doomed, who have but a few minutes to live, and in their centre is the Albino Dyak, whose wren-like eyes have never enjoyed the light of day. His arms, as well as those of his two com-



panions, are pinioned in front; the ropes, too, bind their legs, only permitting them to move with difficulty. The Albino's enemies, knowing that he has been sentenced to death, have long since asked the Government for his head, but this mild request has not been granted.

A momentous pause betokens the arrival of the President of Sintang and the Aspirant Controller, both in the uniform of Dutch officials. A Malay, who follows close behind the Resident, is striving hard to hold over his head that insignia of dignity, an umbrella, but it is evident the Resident feels that this is no occasion for semi-regal display, and wishes his sad task were ended. As he enters the square, the officers and soldiers receive him at the "Present." Unfolding a paper he reads in a loud, if tremulous voice, the crimes committed by these men, and the command issued by the Governor-General of Fatherland India for their execution. At each repetition of that name, stentorian lungs give the order to "Present Arms," this being the only other sound which breaks the monotony of these terrible moments. The Dutch proclamation ended, it is read aloud in Malay, and finally in the Dyak language.

I observed the outward emotion visible in the countenances of the wretched Dyaks. The right-hand prisoner is now led in front of the gallows, and as he slowly ascends the high ladder leaning against it, an awful silence prevails among those assembled to witness the scene.

But the Malay hangman and his assistants are far from skilful. No allowance has been made by them for the space between the ladder and the

short dangling cord they are now striving to draw over the head of their victim. They push him up one step more ; a foot is gained ; the noose is more carefully adjusted round that thin yellow neck ; the legs are lifted off the stage, and without a sigh or a sob, the poor savage is swung into eternity.

He on the left hand is next taken to the scaffold, and mounting slowly, sees the convulsive body of his friend twisting round and round ; but now the executioners do their dirty work more quickly. One single groan is all that is heard, and a second corpse is seen dangling in the air.

Meanwhile Rabbing, looking neither stolid nor defiant, appears simply resigned to his fate, and patiently awaits his turn. A slight twitching of the fingers is all that betrays any sign of nervousness on his part. He calmly mounts the ladder and the Malays slip the fatal noose round his neck ; but his well-knit frame only prolongs his sufferings ; trembling and quivering, the poor Dyak battles hard with death, those violent throbs becoming gradually weaker and weaker, until he too yields to the conqueror, and the lifeless bodies of the three Dyak head hunters are seen swinging side by side, lamentable victims of heathenism and superstition !

After a short half-hour, the bodies are cut down. As four men are hurrying off with that of poor Rabbing's, his thick rich cluster of long, rough, sandy hair, swinging to and fro, reminds one of the superb mane of some noble old lion. After the doctor has examined the bodies and certified them to be corpses indeed, the Dyaks are interred on the

very spot which but a few years ago was a veritable field of blood.

As Borneo is slowly passing through a state of transition I was not surprised to hear that the Dutch had trouble in another direction. Some months ago, some of the Dyak tribes had crossed the Sarawak frontier and had "taken heads," returning to their own forest fastnesses triumphant and happy. The Assistant Resident of Sintang, who is not a man to be trifled with, speedily visited the savages of Batu Bangkai, and ordered them to give up the heads of their victims and pay the *puti* (tribute) customary for one tribe to pay another for each head taken, a sum amounting to one hundred dollars, more or less; such being all the value of life here.

Speaking to the Resident of Sintang respecting the tribes on the Upper Kapuas, he told me that he had been some time stationed at Brunei, and had penetrated for some distance up the river. The only European who had gone farther into the interior was a German named Muller, who had never returned and was certainly killed. He added that the Dyak tribes in that direction were reputed to be a fierce race, whose country produced a large quantity of gold, some nuggets of which he had himself seen brought from there.

There is a large rock in the Upper Kapuas, which the Dyaks call the "King of Gold." They do not, however, wish people to visit them, and the Malays have never been to that country, nor any white man. Here is an opportunity for the Dutch themselves to show enterprise, which for a nation with a population about half that of London, is able to dictate laws to many islands.

Various Dyak chiefs visited the *Madura* as we ascended the Kapuas. One who came on board pointed out a new long house we were passing, which had been built for the head-quarters of his tribe. Noticing that it was not inhabited, nor any one left in charge, I asked the reason, and was told that before it has been inhabited a bird had entered it, uttering an "ominous" cry, which was quite enough to condemn the house, and the chief had consequently commenced the building of another.

Hardly had this chief and some others left the *Madura* when a letter from the Rajah of Bunut was handed to the Assistant Resident, the contents evidently annoying him greatly. It was to the effect that Sarawak Dyaks inhabiting the upper part of the Rejang river belonging to Rajah Brooke, and therefore outside of Dutch Borneo, had crossed over into Dutch territory and surprised a party of twenty-six Dyaks in search of gutta. Two only of that number escaped death, and had succeeded in returning with the above information. The letter went on to say that the same party of Rejangs had next surrounded a Dyak house and taken twenty-six heads, making a total of over fifty, returning with these bloody trophies to their own country of Sarawak.

As I was on the point of leaving for Sarawak, the Assistant Resident asked me to take a letter from him communicating this sad news to the Committee in Kuching, which, of course, I said I would gladly do.

This terrible news reminded me that I had once purposed, instead of making the voyage to Pontianak

by a Chinese pig-boat, to journey overland from the Upper Kyang into Dutch Borneo, in which case I should have passed close to the spot where this horrible massacre took place. On my telling the Resident of Pontianak of this, my former intention, he unhesitatingly affirmed that I should never have succeeded, adding jocularly, "If you are anxious to be killed, please go and get killed somewhere else, for it will save us a Dyak War."

I was now returning to Sarawak by the route the Resident had advised, but at some little distance south of the upper parts of the Rejang river. On the following day I had to leave all my kind friends on the *Madura*, who paid me the compliment of coming on deck to wish me farewell as I got into a small boat at midday to sail through the innumerable waterways of this locality, where, for the first time in Borneo, I found water triumphant in its struggle with the unrivalled forests.

For a short half-hour we did not lose sight of the *Madura*—our last link with civilisation—but on leaving the Lake of Seriang (the first of many), we suddenly plunged into a region, half swamp, half lake, which extends for many miles round. Numberless islets are scattered over this area where land and water seem on equal terms, and these we had to pass, the boatmen constantly stopping to cut a way through the branches of the ever-growing trees.

Towards evening we rowed out of this lake-land, and I found myself close to a Dyak nest whence a number of nimble, cheerful youths came tripping down to the boat, and shouldering my baggage led the way up to their "rookery."

The name of this place was Pulan Majang. As I thought this would be the last night I should be likely to spend among Dyaks, having some few creature comforts with me, I resolved to share them with my fellow-savages.

Of all the nights I spent in Borneo, not excepting those spent with Mingat and Dampa in Sarawak territory, the night I spent with the Dyaks of Pulan Majang is the one I most often remember.

Of course, the roof over our heads was liberally adorned with skulls, and I was immediately informed that I was the first white man to sleep in their house. This time I took the trouble to ask the reason why? A smart youngster, one of very many who had surrounded me, at once answered, "*Takot*," *i.e.* "fear." Notwithstanding the good advice and serious conversation I had with the Resident of Pontianak respecting Dyaks, I at once boasted that *I* could frighten *them*.

This was more than the "Orang Kaya" could believe; and he at once asked me to let him see the weapon which could so alarm himself and all his clan. I thereupon opened my mouth, and he and those around him declared it to be quite empty. Then, pressing with my two hands upon either side of my *embonpoint*, I appeared to be energetically forcing something upwards by degrees almost to my throat, when the lower jawful of teeth began to protrude out of my mouth, wagging playfully at the audience to their great amazement; these in turn made way for the upper or "Highland" jaw, which, after grinning at everybody, suddenly disappeared as it were into the limbo from which they had come. Not one word did

my brother savages utter ; the excited clicking of their tongues against the roof of their mouths alone betraying their intense amazement.

Later, I overheard one whispering to another : “ What was it you saw ? ” “ Did you not see the white man bringing up a mouthful of teeth from his stomach and eating them again ? ” was the reply. “ Don’t you think he had them in his mouth ? ” asked one. This question was answered by the “ Orang Kaya,” who, noticing that my mouth had been filled, very pertinently asked : “ And who can talk with his mouth brim full ? ” The unanimous reply came : “ Nobody.” “ And,” continued the “ Orang Kaya,” “ if my wife does not see what we all have just seen, she will never believe it.” Then turning to me, he said : “ Will you please let her see what you have shown us all ? ” Of course, there was no resisting this appeal, and after a second equally satisfactory display, the “ Orang Kaya ” besought me to stop and live with them and choose a wife—any girl in the tribe I liked. On being informed that I was already married : “ Marry again here,” was his rejoinder, “ and when our enemies learn that we have a white man living with us who has teeth in his stomach they won’t be able to fight from fear, and then we shall take as many heads as we like ! ” This amicable conversation brought to an agreeable close my last night spent in a Dyak house.

Bidding adieu to the “ Orang Kaya” and his clan, I began my journey in the direction of a range of hills which shut out Sarawak territory, the first glimpse of which was obtained after again entering the Lake of Seriang.

After leaving the *Madura*, and with it civilisation, I had donned my *kawat* again ; and it was fortunate that I did so, for on the following day I had a seven hours' tramp over endless *batangs* or submerged trunks before reaching Lubok Antu, the first little frontier fort in Sarawak.

The Assistant Resident of Sintang had kindly provided me with two guides, who had orders to see me safely landed in Sarawak territory. For the first time, a difficulty arose, owing to the carriers here wishing to be paid in cloth, in lieu of money, but this little matter was quickly arranged.

To my surprise I found a Dyak house almost every half-hour during the first three hours' march. In one long house, I endeavoured to purchase a pair of antlers, an eccentric work of nature, but the Dyak to whom they belonged was from home, and his wife would not take the responsibility of selling them to me in the absence of her husband.

The seven hours' walk to Lubok Antu over endless *batangs*, or submerged trunks, was the most tedious I have had in Borneo. The middle of the day found us at rest in another Dyak abode. My sudden appearance, attired as I was in a capacious Dyak *kawat* made of *Kulit Kayu*, or tanned bark, so astounded the first females who caught a glimpse of a white Dyak entering their house, that they screamed and ran off. The same occurred in another house. The long walk was somewhat tiring, but there can be no doubt that in walking over slippery *batangs* the naked feet afford a surer footing than can be obtained by the best shoes ever made, and if one does tumble below



the *batang*, the *chawat* is not much the worse for it.

We reached Lubok Antu about five o'clock, and I strolled up to see its little fort, built upon a hill as a protection against Dyaks inclined to be troublesome. Imagine my surprise at meeting in this out-of-the-way place with Sepoys who had been taken prisoners in the Indian Mutiny! Because of their good behaviour in the Andaman Islands they had been permitted to enlist in the Rajah of Sarawak's little army. Talking to them in their own language, I found that one of them had been in an engagement near Jugdispoor, at a village where I was then acting as Interpreter to the Military Train!

Truly, the world—not excepting the vast forests of Borneo—is a small place! The guides who had accompanied me thus far now returned to Pulan Majang, and I took the opportunity of writing to the Assistant Resident to thank him for the kind assistance rendered me, and to inform him of my safe arrival in Sarawak territory.

Proceeding down the Batang Lupar river, it was impossible not to be struck by the scenery through which this river flows, especially after weeks spent in the interior of Dutch Borneo. The hills were both higher and more natural than those very singular and isolated ones scattered along the Upper Kapuas river. Here, too, were numerous Dyak houses close to the river, giving the country a more animated and apparently settled look than I thought I had seen elsewhere.

As the river was swollen, we were carried down at a wonderful speed. One Dyak house we passed

looked so long that I stopped to have a peep inside. Such a huddling together of men, women, children, and dogs might possibly be seen at a grand rally of gipsies in some out-of-the-way part of England.

A little over sixteen hours brought us to Sima-gang, one of the principal stations in Sarawak, where we arrived on the following morning. Much as I had enjoyed my late rambles, I felt on reaching Sarawak as if I had returned to a second home, and this was no doubt largely owing to the welcome I received from my friend the Resident, Mr. Maxwell.

The fort is prettily situated upon a hill, which commands the river. Two months before, two women arrested for poisoning a relative and found guilty, were condemned to imprisonment for a period of years. The younger of the two, protesting her innocence, prayed that she might be swallowed by an alligator were she telling a falsehood. That same evening, going down to bathe with her fellow-prisoners, a faint scream announced that her prayer had already been heard !

Such an excellent exhibition of Dyak dancing as the Resident was kind enough to get up for my benefit, I never expect to see again. Among other presents the Resident gave me was one of which I had often heard, but had never seen, being a ball of hair nearly the size of a cricket ball, taken out of the stomach of an alligator. It was formed of a mixture of hair of both monkeys and men !

At the Resident's house I met a missionary of the London Society who spoke the Dyak dialect fluently. Owing to the want of vegetable food, his chest and limbs were covered with scurvy

disease such as Dyaks get from want of proper food. I could not resist telling him that were he to exhibit himself in England he ought to make his fortune from his austere appearance.

To enable me to return to Kuching, the Resident gave me his own boat, but in lieu of boatmen he was obliged to select some of his *prisoners*, one of them being a Dyak.

Leaving Simagang before midday, we reached Linga somewhat late in the evening. The Resident of Kalaka chanced to be returning to his district.

“ You seem to be taking things quietly,” he said. “ The ebb tide will be half over ; if you want to reach Kuching to-day your men ought to be up and doing.”

I requested him to tell Sadam, the chief of my crew, not to lose any time, and between half-past seven and eight in the morning we set sail. Nothing could have been more delightful than that early morning, and a stiff breeze bore us along swiftly. Passing one small village and then another, and leaving Pulau Burong on our right, three hours with the same favourable wind would have carried us into the Sarawak river. Suddenly, however, dark clouds began to gather on the starboard side, and Sadam, who remained at the helm, altered our course and ordered the others to take in sail, which two out of the three endeavoured to do, but in vain. The fourth man was on the broad of his back and complained of being too ill to move.

The warning given by the coming squall was a brief one, and there was time to reflect that our position now was not an enviable one, but I trusted that Sadam was acting for the best, though I wished that he would take in more sail and that quickly.

The time for either thinking or acting quickly passed. I saw the boat give a lurch to one side as a strong gust caught her ; the sea rushed in, and in a few seconds we had all disappeared. I remember hearing some one scream, then pots and pans and boxes knocked against each other with a loud noise, and joined us in the boiling waves.

Never having learned to swim, I had on the impulse of the moment clung to the edge of the boat, and after the first immersion found myself striving to clamber up its slippery bottom on to the keel, which was now uppermost and seemed to offer the only means of holding on to life.

Never shall I forget the miserable spectacle we presented to each other, on that keel, shivering and naked as we now were. In an instant, we seemed to have been cut off from the world, and found ourselves drifting out to sea with the ebb tide. The nearest land was Pulau Burong, seven or eight miles off, the heavens were obscured, and an angry sea surrounded us.

Prayers to Allah ascended loud and fast ; my servant boy was crying with fright, and I found it a relief to tell him that all would yet be well.

Then a big wave struck us, and the boat rolled over, everybody striving to hold on as best they could. Again we came to the surface, and again we strove to climb up those slippery sides. Sea-birds from Pulau Burong, or Bird Island, came hovering over us, searching for their prey.

If ever I had said an unkind word about Malays, I took it back then, for I owed a deep debt of gratitude to my shipwrecked companions, who, in the midst of ejaculatory prayers and distress of

mind and body, could yet try to assist me while they cried, "Tuan, Tuan" ("Master, Master"), "Tolong Tuan" ("Help, Master"). Poor "Tuan" was the only one amongst them who could not swim, and I can say without hesitation that it was due to their efforts that I was enabled to keep my hold on the keel.

Tossed round and round, like the paddle-wheel of a steamer, now under the water, now out, sometimes held down by ropes which got entangled in my legs, often gasping for breath, poor nature gradually weakened in the struggle for life, and after enduring this protracted agony for what seemed an age, I gasped at length: "Saya tida boleh naik lagi"—"I cannot get up any more."

But thanks to Sadam, the first portion of our sufferings now came to an end. Seeing that the weight of the mast and the heavy anchor fastened by a rope to the inside of the boat, prevented it from righting each time we returned from our submarine visits, Sadam watched his opportunity when the sea had calmed a little, dived beneath the boat, and after repeated failures, succeeded in pulling away, first the mast, and then the anchor, from the seat to which the latter was attached.

The next wave, which sent me flying, practically exhausted the little strength I had left in me; and the men afterwards told me, that twice all that they could see of me was one hand struggling to keep above the watery grave.

Once relieved of mast and anchor, the next wave made us perform a semicircle only, and oh! what a relief it was to tumble inside the boat, filled with water though it was! Whilst I lay there

exhausted, my wrecked crew held on to the sides of the boat, with little more than their heads and arms above water.

Though the sea still swept over and over us, the squall gradually subsided, and we succeeded at length in raising the boat to one side, so as to discharge one half of the water, and then all hands scrambled into the boat, to bail away for dear life again.

We had been undergoing this ordeal for some hours, and by this time it was about 2 p.m. As we were under sail when caught by the squall, we found our oars still tied on to the sides of the boat, to which they had been secured. The first necessity was to regain our mast, fortunately found floating at no great distance. Then we picked up our tattered sail, which under the circumstances was a decided boon. Finally, we saw floating our *kajang*, or palm matting, belonging to the little cabin, which had been washed overboard along with everything I had brought and collected in my travels. My notes, diamonds, and curiosities were gone, and excepting the tattered shirt upon my back and a *mosquito curtain attached to the ribs of the cabin*, scarcely a thing remained. And last, but not least, the three Dyak skulls from the Black Hole of Sintang were also washed overboard. A silk turban, which had got entangled in the boat, was saved, so the Malays at Tabulu said, because it came from Mahomet's land !

But I was too full of all I had gone through to think of aught else but those at home, and too thankful that I had cheated grim old Death once more to regret my losses. The efforts made to

cling to life had exhausted every one. Poor Sadam, with a big black-bluish eye—acquired by striking the rudder during his diving feats—now lay down and fell asleep, leaving the little breeze and tattered sail to look after the boat.

The sick man I distinctly recollect—when in the sea—had grasped me tightly by the leg, and had I not known that he could swim (as can every Malay), I might have thought he was holding on to me for assistance, instead of endeavouring to assist me. Now he too was down again, sick and vomiting, as indeed we all were.

We were slowly making for Pulau Burong, which looked many miles off, and another squall was brewing. Our miserable position gave rise to so many terrible thoughts that I induced the stout Dyak to seize an oar, and keeping him company, pulled along with him, stopping every now and again to rest. Fortunately, there had been no sunshine from the moment our sufferings began, otherwise the exposure to a tropical sun, and without a cap, would assuredly have proved fatal to me, though not to the natives.

Just at dark we were abreast of Pulau Burong, and by nine at night close to the little fishing village of Tabulu. Seeing a man moving about with a light near to the shore, he was hailed and told of our misfortune. Giving the news to his fellow villagers, they came down in a body to the sea-beach to draw our little boat over the surf into the small stream that flows through Tabulu.

The first woman, after shaking hands, told me that had I been a black instead of being a white man, she would have shampooed me from head to

foot. Two or three women, pitying my misfortunes, insisted upon shaking hands with me. *Enshrouded in my mosquito curtain*, I was led to the house of a Chinaman, who proved to be a good Samaritan indeed. For two days all that my Chinese friend possessed was at my service, but although the natives expressed sympathy, I noticed that they left the good offices to the Oriental.

Dressed as a Chinaman, I left Tabulu on the third day in my boat, which had now been repaired, and with a reinforced crew, reaching Kuching on the evening of November 5th.

My appearance naturally created a sensation at the hotel, the more so when my story was told. As a German Jew who had just begun photography chanced to be in Sarawak, I requested him to take a photo of my wrecked crew and myself.

Fortunately, I had brought with me from England coloured clothing of sorts to give to the natives, and my poor fellows, who had lost their little all, were only too pleased to receive them. To Sadam, naturally, I gave the lion's share, and I heard that both he and all the others were delighted with their presents. Nor did I forget the good Samaritan at Tabulu, to whom I sent, when returning his loose bags and bedding, a piece of silk for the swarthy lady of the house.

Before bidding adieu to Borneo, it would be ungracious on my part were I not to take this opportunity of thanking the Borneo Company for the many kindnesses I received from their officials, not only in Borneo, but likewise in her sister island, Java—the greatest jewel in the Dutch possessions—where I was introduced by their manager to a



diamond merchant, the results being profitable to both of us.

One might naturally suppose that after the narrow escape I had just had, my boating days were now over, but that that was far from being the case subsequent events will prove in the "Wanderings."

## CHAPTER XI

### JAVA, SIAM, AND COCHIN CHINA

DURING my travels in Borneo, I had frequently heard my Dutch friends extolling the beauties of Java, an island regarded by them as the Queen of the Eastern Archipelago, and undoubtedly the gem of the Dutch possessions. On this account, as well as my wish to visit the diamond merchant already referred to, I was glad to take an early passage to the capital of Java.

After the interminable forests of Borneo, the first *coup d'œil* of Batavia reminded me of the capital of British India. Here, too, were Europeans of many nations, and Asiatics from India, China, Arabia, and the Malay Straits. Everywhere I could see comfortable mansions, spacious streets, and well-kept gardens. Batavia is particularly noted for its Botanical Gardens, which, I suppose, are second to none in the world. Little wonder that my friends in Dutch Borneo longed to be stationed in this beautiful and luxuriant spot, instead of dragging out their existence in Pontianak or Banjermassin.

The climate of Java, though damp, is not nearly so oppressive as that of Borneo, on account of its hills and mountains, and deep gorges intersected by rushing streams.

I was advised to take a voyage to Samarang, an important seaport 385 miles east of Batavia, and there I found many Chinese merchants apparently very well off and enjoying all that wealth could give them, though I was surprised to see their children playing about the streets, some of them wearing genuine diamond bijouterie.

I had brought with me a 20-carat diamond and several small ones which I had found when diamond-digging in Africa, and I had no difficulty in finding a purchaser for these in Samarang. Fortune again favoured me when returning from Samarang to Batavia, for one of my fellow-passengers was a diamond merchant who had seen the diamonds I had just disposed of, and after a short conversation in Malay, he requested me to obtain for him a large consignment of diamonds from England.

The difficulty of our being strangers to one another was quickly overcome by the manager of the Borneo Company in Batavia, who unhesitatingly vouched for the merchant. The manager was also most kind in helping me to make the necessary arrangements, and the diamonds arrived safely within a few weeks.

So pleased was my merchant with the stones, that he repeated his order, and I suggested that he should return with me to London, where I would introduce him to one or two of the leading men in Hatton Garden, so that he might obtain information first-hand. But the merchant shook his head. "I have three wives," he informed me, "in three different towns; if I go with you to England, who will look after them?" This was, indeed, an

insuperable obstacle, and so the upshot was that for a few weeks I continued to forward diamonds to my "much-married" acquaintance. By then the dealers had discovered that Asiatics preferred the rough or uncut diamonds, which they could cut—though badly enough—for themselves, to the stones cut and polished in Europe, because these latter were considerably more expensive.

It had been my intention for some time to visit Siam and Cochin China, principally for the purpose of seeing the ruby mines near Chanterbong, and as several weeks would elapse before I received the consignment of diamonds from England for my merchant, I seized the opportunity of returning to Singapore, from whence I took a small steamer for Bangkok.

Few towns in the world can boast so curious an appearance as Bangkok, the capital of Siam, pleasantly situated near the mouth of the River Me Nam, for a large part of the city is built upon piles driven into the ground beneath the river itself. This method of building has much to recommend it, for it not only reduced the trials of house-removal to a minimum, but it also affords an easy method of escape, up or down stream, from uncongenial neighbours. As many of the shops are also built in this fashion, one may enjoy the unusual experience of shopping by boat.

During my first trip in search of curios, I noticed a small pair of deer horns in the veranda of a Chinaman's shop. Being unable to speak Chinese, and having no interpreter to help me, I took out my purse and pointed to the horns on the veranda—an action, however, which merely called

forth a cynical look on the face of the owner. An impasse would probably have resulted, had I not luckily remembered my Borneo trick, and, determined to see whether my teeth could help me where my tongue could not, I pulled out my false set in a somewhat supercilious manner. The effect was as great as it was sudden ! More amazed than any simple Dyak, John Chinaman immediately beckoned to me to leave my boat and enter his shop, which, it may be imagined, I did forthwith. Then, pointing to my teeth, he signed me to let him see them again. But it was now *my* turn to make him show his wares first, and this he did without further delay. Plunging into the dim mysteries of a side room, he brought out a magnificent specimen of Siamese deer horns, one branch having ten points, the other, eleven. With these I returned to my boat, leaving the Chinaman exceedingly pleased after a further exhibition, and reflecting that it is seldom one can give such pleasure by "showing one's teeth," or to do it to such profit !

I took this new trophy with me in the boat on the following day to serve, as it were, as a decoy, but not meeting with any other dealer I had perforce to return to my first acquaintance. On this occasion two friends were taking tea with him, and he had evidently told them of my marvellous exhibition, because he quickly invited me to enter his house. Before satisfying his curiosity on this occasion, however, I pointed to his *sanctum sanctorum* and then to my purse, upon which he gave me leave to enter the mysterious room from which he had brought out the horns on the previous day. Here, to my great delight, I found three

specimens of the "swamp deer" of Siam, a perfectly new variety to me.

Dining a few days afterwards with a doctor who had been thirteen years in the country, he informed me that he had orders to purchase horns of the swamp deer for various museums in Europe, but had found great difficulty in procuring them. Calling upon me later, and finding that I already possessed three specimens, he wished to know where I had obtained them, seeing that I had been barely three weeks in the country. I explained that I was no doubt indebted for this good fortune to my false teeth! To this he perfectly agreed, but added that he would give the dealer a good talking for not obtaining similar varieties for him as he had ordered.

Being in the land of the white elephant, I was naturally anxious to see this proverbial beast; after my guide had shown me a number of elephants, I reminded him that he had forgotten to show me the white one, whereupon he answered, "The first I showed you was the white one." Returning with him, all I could see was an elephant of a very dirty grey colour which looked as though it had been rubbing itself against a tree!

It was a pretty sight to see a small boy walking up the street followed by a number of young elephants, the boy, serene and confident, scarcely ever looking back to see that all were keeping up with him.

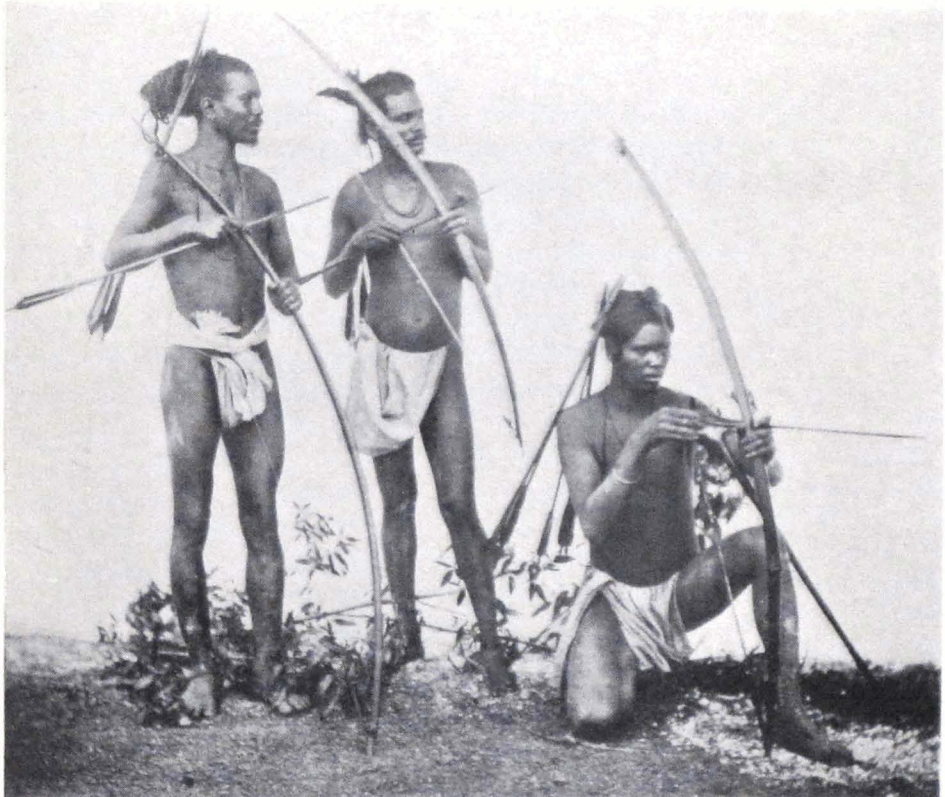
Not so charming but far more extraordinary was a dwarf man, who did duty as an "Offertory Box"—the most original offertory box I suppose ever known, and one worthy of Barnum. He was

able, apparently, to walk slowly without much difficulty, yet was born sadly deformed, his back being so completely bent down as to make his head appear to be very little above the height of his waist. In the middle of his back was a big round hole of perhaps 10 in. circumference, and this he would present as an offertory box to the crowds attending the performance of the Siamese band; if I remember rightly, some sort of soft lining inside the "box" served to break the fall of the coins.

Seeing in the house of a friend some small Buddhist statuettes, I inquired how they could be procured, and found that it was only necessary to make a present to any of the priests. Anxious to add to my museum, when next passing a temple, I looked in to find one of the priests, but not seeing any I examined some large statues, 8 or 10 ft. high, which guarded this secluded spot. Sure enough, at the feet of one were a number of the small statuettes which I wanted. To have pocketed one would have been as great a crime as to have stolen one of the jolly little French Devils I had bought in Paris, but the bright idea occurred to me of pocketing a few with the intention of showing them to the first priest I should meet. At the very instant, however, that I lifted my hand to appropriate a little Buddha, a small and repulsive snake darted out for an instant from behind the large statue. This at once put me in fighting mood, and having delivered myself of some plain English, I fetched a long stick, and thrusting it into the snake's hole, kept him a close prisoner whilst I leisurely helped myself to the four or five statuettes. A little



SIAMESE CHIEF.



SIAMESE WITH BOWS AND ARROWS.





later I met a priest, who, by virtue of a "present," soon gave me permission to retain my pocketings notwithstanding the apparent sacrilege I had committed in his temple.

With a favourable wind one may make a pleasant voyage to Chanterbong, in Cochin China, in some twenty hours from Bangkok by an ordinary coaster, there being no steam communication.

Unfortunately, the voyage is regarded as a dangerous one, owing to the Chinese pirates who infest these waters, and my friend of the Borneo Company advised me to make my will before leaving, which good advice I duly followed. Taking with me as a servant a man who spoke Malay fluently and had a smattering of Chinese, I once more embarked with a native crew, consisting of Siamese and Cochin Chinese, I and my servant being the only passengers. The voyage was an agreeable one, and the Siamese songs of the crew provided a decided novelty; they were akin to the Chinese songs, and though nasal, as is all Asiatic music, yet were not nearly so disagreeable as those of the Bedouins, whose music, to my mind, is the most purgatorial of all to my fellow-countrymen.

Reaching Chanterbong on Easter morning, I found on the following morning a church full of Catholics of three nationalities—Siamese, Cochin Chinese, and Chinese—seated respectively in the centre and side aisles, and during Mass, they each in turn sang a part of the service in their own tongue.

I at once called upon the two French priests in charge of the Mission to whom I had brought a letter of introduction. They naturally wanted to

know how I had come and who had accompanied me, and when I told them I had come in a small coaster, they remonstrated with me, reminding me that when going themselves to and from Bangkok they were always accompanied by some of their own people, owing to the danger from Chinese pirates.

Congratulating them on so large and well-built a church, especially *in partibus*, I was surprised to learn that with the exception of the architect—a Chinaman, but not a Christian—the building had been carried out by the voluntary work of the native members of the congregation.

In the course of conversation, my friends naturally inquired my object in coming to Chanterbong, and I mentioned the ruby mines—so-called—of which I had heard much in Bangkok. They immediately advised me not to go there, as, should I attempt to do so, I should either die of fever or be killed by tigers. I replied that I was a mad Scotsman, and that nothing killed mad Scotsmen !

“ Perhaps,” they answered, “ but you are not so mad as not to take our advice.” To this kind warning, all I could say was : “ If you want me to go to the end of the world I might do so ; but stop here—never ! ”

With much difficulty a “ *puir cratur* ” was found to act as guide, but he would not help my servant to carry so much as the weight of “ a tooth-brush and a smile ” ! I cannot recollect where we stopped for the first night, but in the evening of the following day I waded—with my trousers well tucked up—into a native hut, where my appearance afforded

much amusement to three young maidens, who could not restrain their laughter. Inquiring of my servant what had caused so much amusement, he said : " That girl in the middle allows that your face and legs are white, but is certain that your breast and body are black." I thought it only fair to undeceive her, and they all three informed me that I was the first white man they had ever seen.

The country through which I was then passing reminded me strongly of the beautiful parkland scenery of England, and formed a great contrast to Borneo with its interminable forests ; not that trees were scarce here, but their numbers did not almost swamp and overwhelm one as in Borneo.

About ten o'clock the following morning we arrived at an opening adjoining a small forest where some two or three hundred men were engaged in working the ground in search of precious stones. Spinel rubies were evidently the most numerous, but there were also carbuncles, moonstones, opals, cat's-eyes, and others. The true ruby colour of Burmah is apparently not found here, and indeed the term " ruby " is an exaggerated one for what are merely spinel and not true rubies. I purchased a variety of most of the stones, but had a difficulty in obtaining them at reasonable prices, though I had seen similar varieties in Ceylon.

As they told me that no European had visited the mine before, I thought it would be well to impress upon them the superiority of the white man, and accordingly told them that a " Transit of Venus " would occur that day, about 2 p.m., the daylight being for a short space turned into night.

The miners probably thought I was crazed, as they stared blankly at me and said nothing.

Just about 2 o'clock the power of the sun began to diminish, the light waxed fainter, and wild poultry in the adjoining forest began to crow. Wild with fright, the miners took up their guns and fired into the air, whilst others cried aloud as they beheld dreadful flames gushing forth as if from the bowels of the sun itself, which appeared in mortal agony. I can never forget that battle of heavenly bodies, reminding one forcibly that "eye hath not seen nor ear heard," etc. Most marvellous it was to see that conflict, which astronomers charitably call "a mere contact," but which a London bobby would doubtless have described more picturesquely as "a regular set-to" between Venus and the Sun!—in which the sun was getting very much the worst of it.

In the middle of the mine workings was a small hut, apparently empty, where I proposed to sleep for the night. Several of the men, however, immediately exclaimed that should I attempt to do so my slumbers were likely to end by being hauled out by a tiger. So I had, perforce, to shake down in a miner's hut, an even more difficult affair to reach than a Dyak house on stilts, though I had an uncomfortable feeling it would present little difficulty to an energetic and hungry tiger.

I returned to Chanterbong by a different route, and on the way my attention was caught by a wonderful creeper, most artistically shaped, growing under some exceptionally tall trees and clinging round and round to their topmost branches. Having no luggage on my own shoulders, I collected

a number of fine specimens, some of which I have to this day. When cut down fifty years ago they were green, but to-day they are dry and brown, and a long specimen wound up is generally taken to be a snake.

The remarkable part of its formation is that it is cupped from end to end, each cup being large enough to hold a wine-glass full of water, but they grow on alternate sides of the stem, thus ensuring a certain supply of water to the plant with every fall of rain, no matter from which direction it may come.\*

At Chanterbong, I went to the mission house, and found the priest reading his breviary. On seeing me he paused, and then, amazed at the amount of forest trappings I was hauling on my back, said: "Now I believe that you *are* mad, for why have you brought so much of what is common enough in the country here?"

"True," I replied, "but in Europe we have never seen any creepers like these." Since those days I must admit to having seen one small specimen in the British Museum.

Whilst dining with the French priest, I had the curiosity to inquire what we were eating, and was informed by a servant that we were partaking of frogs! I had already done justice to one-half of one, but now English prejudice made me call a halt. It appears that only the legs of the frog are eaten, and in Paris these are regarded as a luxury, particularly by foreigners, no doubt owing, in great measure, to French culinary art.

\* *Bauhinia*; so named after Caspar Bauhin (1550-1624). These lianas are of the order of Leguminosæ. They climb to the highest tropical trees. The most stately are the var. *Purpurescens*.

Bidding farewell to the kind *Père*, I left next morning for Bangkok in a boat laden with delicious pepper, whose true fragrant odour is unknown at home.

That our boat was a small one may be judged from our kitchen accommodation, consisting merely of a couple of stones with some firewood to help prepare the dinner—a tin of soup from England. When hot and apparently ready, I served it out, keeping (most fortunately as it turned out) only a small portion for myself. Even this, however, was more than enough to make me seriously ill, as we found that the green-painted tin had carelessly been cooked along with the soup! I am afraid my poor crew never forgot it, and doubt whether they have ever wished to sample English food since; but the weather was grand, and we all tried to laugh away our troubles.

As night came on, the wind grew fresh, and owing, no doubt, to the Levantine sails and the build of the boat itself, I found myself leaning, rather than resting, with my head almost erect, an experience I have never had before or since, in any boat. Hearing subdued conversation, I asked my servant to explain matters, upon which he told me that the captain declared that there were rocks ahead, but he did not exactly know where. Later on, there was a sudden quiet, and we found ourselves inside a narrow channel, where we were apparently anchored. The captain explained that his reason for stopping was on account of our now being in the favourite haunt of the Chinese pirates, and begged me to rest only with my gun loaded. Sleeping thus, I was

presently awakened by one of the crew, who implored me to get up as a pirate boat was in sight, and by lying flat it was easy to see that some kind of coaster certainly was coming down upon us. Every one was now convinced that a pirate was approaching, and besought me to fire, so that the stranger should think that there were several riflemen on board. I quickly fired some half a dozen shots at the midnight visitor, and whatever nationality he belonged to, he quickly retired into private life and troubled us no more.

Pursuing our way in the morning, with a delightful breeze still accompanying us, we made Bangkok before midday. Here I made a short stay, and then, bidding adieu to my friends, set out on a pleasant voyage to Singapore.

During my stay at Bangkok, I went on one occasion with some friends to call on one of the princes, where I saw an instance of the obeisance compulsory at the Siamese Court. An underling lying prone on all fours before the throne dared to look up for one moment at his Highness : “ Down with your head,” was the immediate sharp command of the prince.

When dining with some European residents I sang, for their amusement, a Siamese song which I had picked up from the sailors on the way to Chanterbong, and which I have since sung many a time to my Scotch friends. A Siamese prince who called at the house later in the evening, was informed that after only a three weeks' residence I had learnt a Siamese song and asked me to allow him to hear it. When I had finished he remarked : “ I don't wonder that you like our music, but why

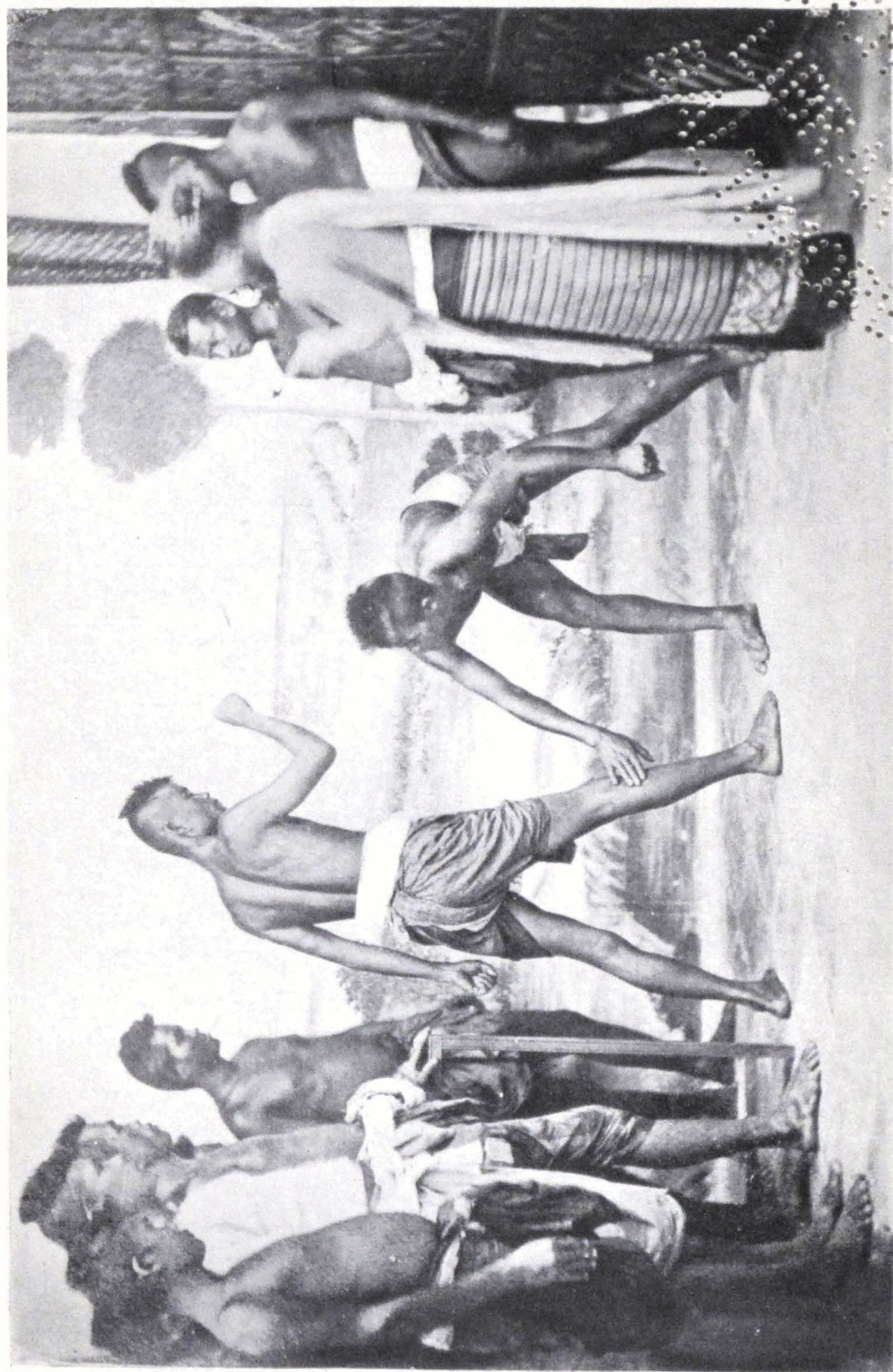


learn a song with such shocking bad language ? ” Rather crestfallen, my reply was that I had learnt the music but not the language, the meaning of which I am ignorant of to this day, as is every one else I have met since leaving Siam.

The time had now come when I was to say a final farewell to the East, but even my homeward voyage was not destined to be altogether without incident.

When embarking on the English steamer at Singapore, an elderly lady, who had come from Hong-Kong, cast such an angry look at me that I felt a positive intruder. Later, after lunch, I was chatting with the doctor when she passed and again glared at me before hurriedly running down the companion-ladder to her cabin. “ That lady will know me again,” I remarked, feeling somewhat nettled ; the doctor looked rather queerly after her, but made no reply.

Two minutes later, her daughter, a handsome woman of thirty, came up to us, and excitedly informed the doctor that her mother could not be found anywhere, nor was she reassured on our telling her we had just seen the lady descend to her cabin. The doctor thereupon ordered a sailor to tell the captain to stop the ship, without, however, mentioning any urgent reason for this unusual course. Not unnaturally the captain was indignant at the message, and it was a minute or two before the engines were stopped, the captain’s indignation increasing when he heard the reason of the message, which he rightly considered the doctor should have given him in person. The ship was searched from end to end for the elderly lady, but she was never seen again !



SIAMESE NATIVE GAME.



The captain asked me to bear the circumstances in mind in case of an investigation of this occurrence, and he growled at the agent in Hong-Kong for sending him a mad passenger. I now told him that she was not the only one, but that another lady who had been sitting at luncheon beside the captain himself was in a similar condition. The captain stared at me incredulously, and felt no doubt somewhat put out. "Nonsense!" he said shortly, "two of them would be too much on one voyage. You have got the other woman on the brain, and are now trying to saddle me with a ship-full of mad passengers! How do you suppose I can look after the ship and mad women at the same time?" I assured him that the conduct and general appearance of the lady in question pointed to the fact that she was far from normal, and proof of it was afforded that same day, for in the middle of dinner, to the vast amazement of all, this daft woman stalked up the dining-saloon clad in a long white night-gown, and coming up to me she asked me to show her the *road* back to Singapore!

Mercifully, this poor creature never attempted to jump overboard, but one night in the Red Sea (when the intense heat made me sleep out on the main deck), I caught sight of her making headlong for the machinery, and was only just in time to prevent a horrible "accident." Thereafter, she was carefully watched until we landed.

After a pleasant passage we landed safely once more in dear England. Adieu.

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