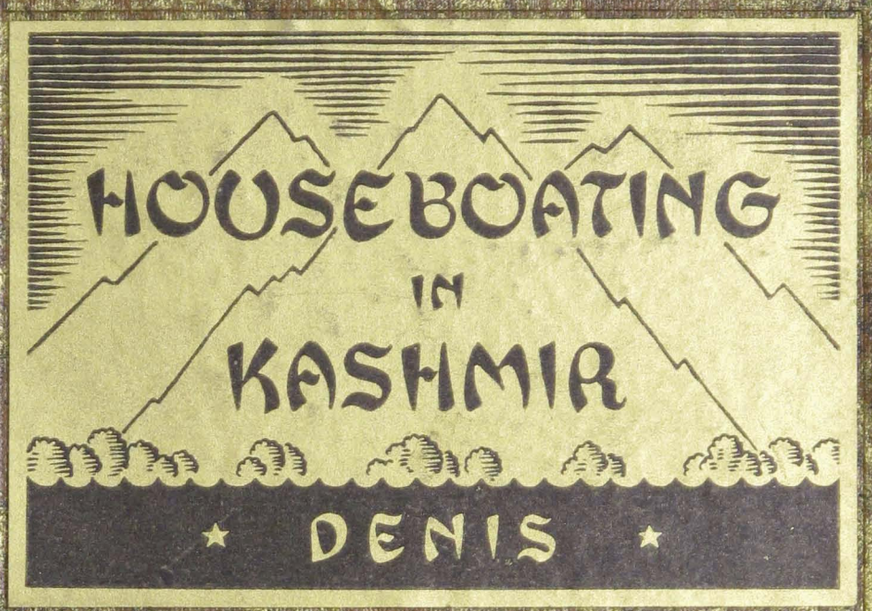
HOUSEBOATING
IN
KASHMIR
★ DENIS ★

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NANGA PARBAT
KIANGANGA
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ZOJI-LA PASS
BARAMULA
BANDIPUR
SONAMARG
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WULAR L.
SIND R.
GANDARBAL
ANCHAR L.
SHALIMAR
BOD DAL
NISHAT BAGH
JHELUM R.
SRINAGAR
LOKUT DAL
DAL GATE
PAHLGAM
ISTAN
SINKIANG
KHYBER PASS
PESHAWAR
RAWAL PINDI
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GODWIN AUSTEN
TIBET
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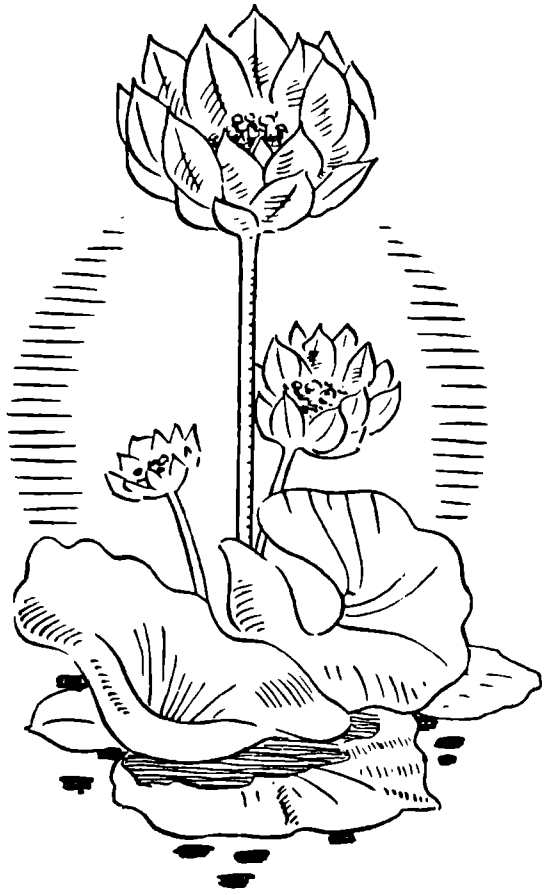
AMRITSAR
MT. EVEREST
DELHI
AGRA
JAIPUR
AJMER
DARJEELING
LUCKNOW
CAWNPORE
BUDDH GAYA
ACHI
ABU ROAD
MT. ABU
CHITORGARH
GWALIOR
UDAIPUR
AHMEDABAD
SANCHI
UJJAIN
MHOW
KHANDWA
CALCUTTA
BARODA
BOMBAY
AURANGABAD
INDIA

HOUSEBOATING IN KASHMIR

By Alberta Johnston Denis
Author of Spanish Alta California

Illustrations by the Author



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Poleman at the Bow of Our Houseboat,
the *Long Melford*.

1

THE MONTH OF MARCH WAS WANING. HOT weather had set in. The thermometer had climbed to 104 degrees at Delhi. Government had already betaken itself to Simla, the summer capital, and, pleasant even in such heat, in a grove of sacred nim-trees, our hotel, the Cecil, which meant modern bath-rooms, good service and comfort generally, was to close for the season, on April first.

There was nothing to do but move on—which coincided with our plans.

At the time of which I write, we were in India, for the third time, and had spent several weeks in Delhi, earlier in the season. We had returned there, ten days before, after a trip to the south, by way of Gwalior, and Sanchi, where the Great Stupa and the beautiful toranas of the Buddhists are—the carvings dating from about two hundred and fifty years B. C. From Mhow, a pleasant military hill-station, we visited the old ruined city of Mandu, about which a most romantic love-story is woven. Crossing the Vindhya Mountains and going into the Dominions of the Nizam of Hyderabad—often referred to as "the richest man in the world"—and making Aurangabad, interesting in itself, our travel-base for the time, we motored to the Buddhist Caves of Ajanta, where the celebrated frescoes, still rich in color, date from about the same time as the carvings at Sanchi; and, in the other direc-

were halted by an Afridi sentry just short of the international boundary-line, where there was *a* gate, but not *the* gate about which so much has been written. That was, however, in full sight just below us.

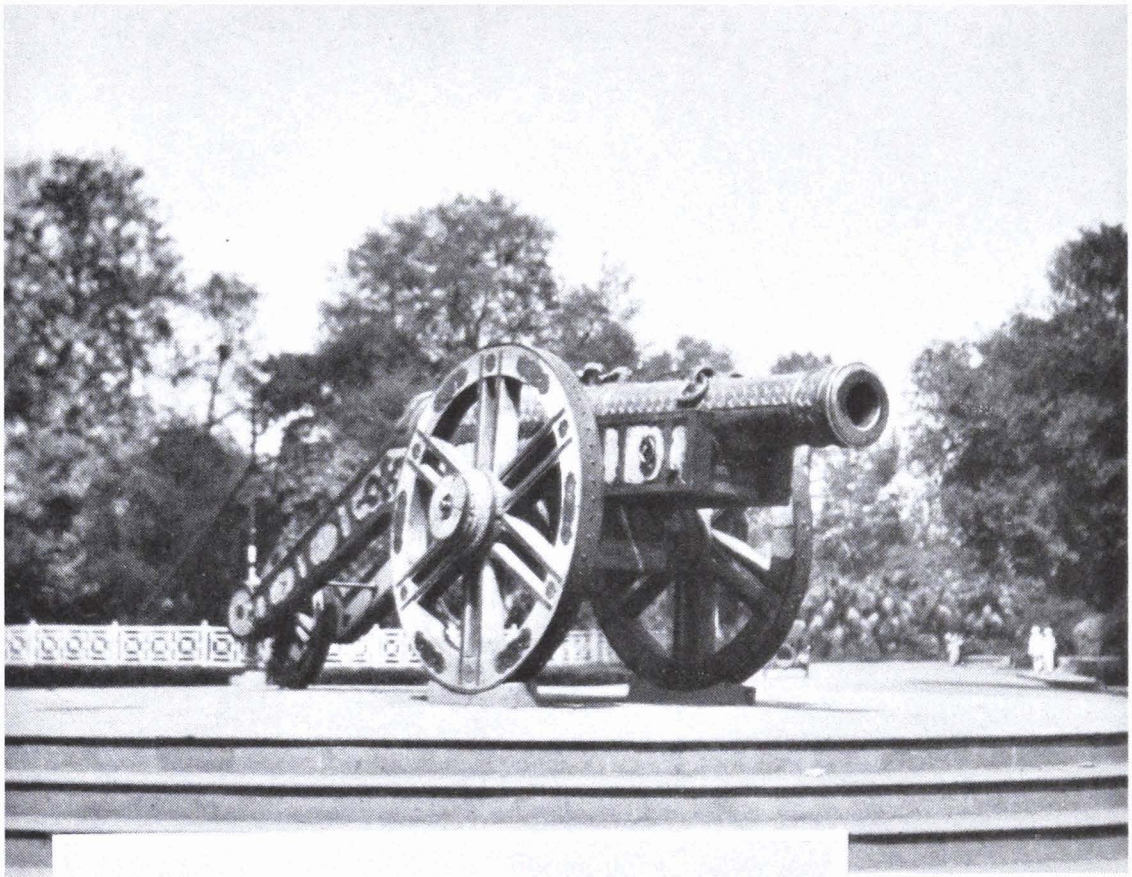
From this military vantage-point, above a sheer descent, the outlook, spreading like an open fan, was magnificent. We were gazing directly into Afghanistan where, far away across an arid, soulless waste, the Hindu Kush Mountains in unsurpassed beauty rose blue and serene.

With all these delightful preliminaries completed and the Gorge of the Jhelum reported open for automobiles, we now felt that we were on our way into Kashmir.

The Vale of Kashmir is easily reached from Rawal Pindi, a pretty cantonment-town in the Punjab, only one night and a day from Delhi by train, but it is a difficult side-trip for passing-tourists to fit into an itinerary—and to get out of India, if the terrific heat there, which reaches its peak in the month of May, is to be avoided. The road is not open, the ice and snow cleared away, until about the first week in April, which gives but little time to tarry in the beautiful valley, cupped in the Great Western Himalayas.

We had long since decided not to be "passing-tourists," but to spend the entire summer there, living as do the many English who, each year, fleeing from the heat in India proper, flock into Kashmir.

Our heavy luggage had preceded us to Rawal Pindi and was in charge of the Radha Kishen Company which, from the moment of our arrival from Pesha-



KIM'S CANNON, THE "ZAM-ZAMMAH," AT LAHORE, INDIA.

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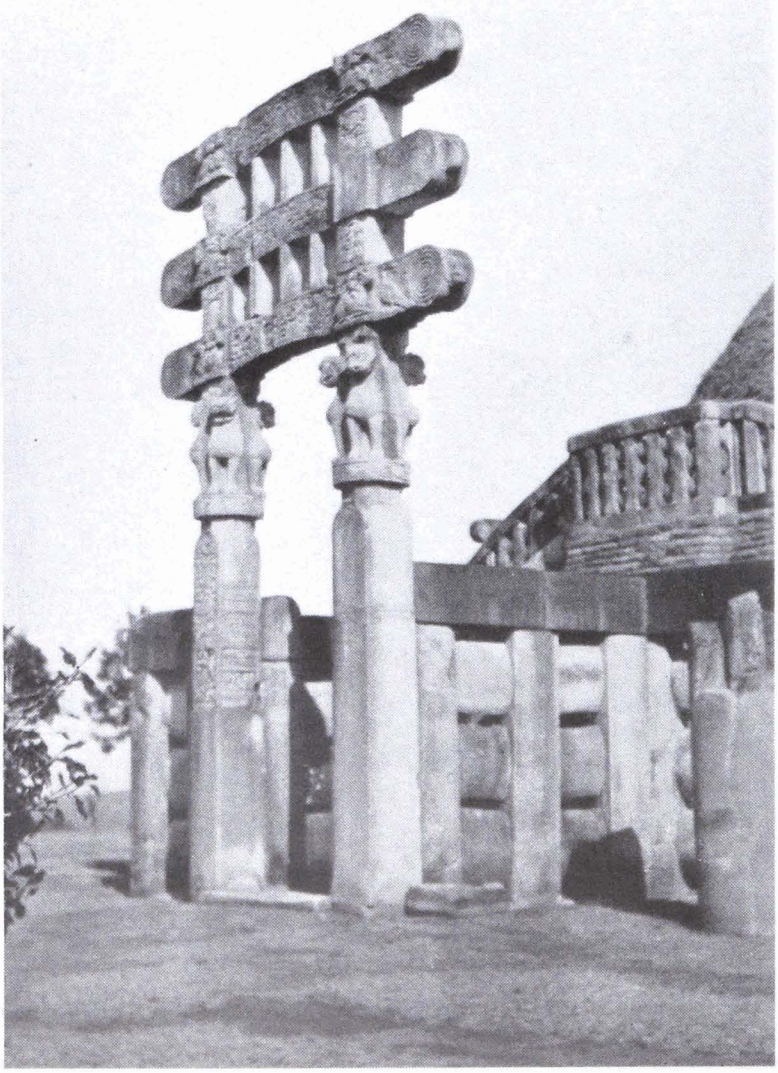

TORANA AT SANCHI, INDIA.

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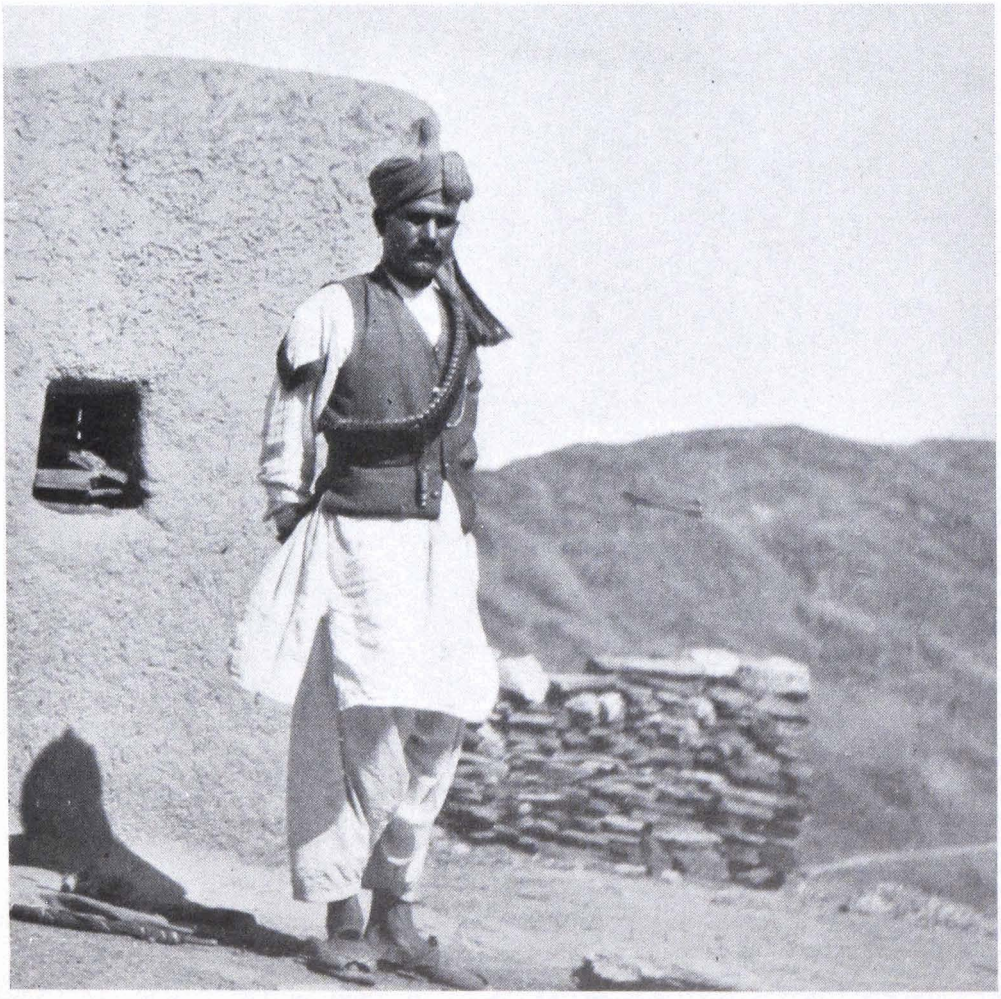
Caravan Coming Out of the Khyber Pass From Afghanistan Into India.



Afridi Sentry in the Khyber Pass.

war, attended to everything for us. We had reservations at Flashman's, a good hotel, where we had a sitting-room, two bed-rooms, two bath-dressing-rooms, properly appointed in Indian style; the water, hot and cold, carried in; and a covered verandah, where our Madrassi bearer, who had been with us ever since our arrival in India, could sleep outside our door, as is the custom.

We found Pindi an attractive place of bungalows, gardens and wide, shady streets. For the American tourist, a touch of the theatrical centers in the famous camel-corps and syces; turbans and uniforms, appertaining to an Indian cantonment. And there is romance, for the old historic Grand Trunk Road, bordered by four rows of great trees, met time after time by the traveller in India, passes straight through Rawal Pindi, vastly enhancing its charm.

We left Pindi, at three o'clock on the day after our arrival, our trunks having been sent on ahead by lorry, early that morning. The automobile was a new Buick, and we had a careful and otherwise excellent man at the wheel. Our hand-luggage and the bedding-rolls, that accompany one everywhere in India, were in—and on—the motor with us.

It is thought best to break the little journey of something less than two hundred miles, from Pindi to Srinagar, so that the Gorge of the Jhelum river—a wild place, sometimes with precipices on both sides, and often precipitous both above and below the road—may be negotiated by daylight and not, as in case of delay, after dark.

There are dak bungalows at various places along the way, where the night may be spent. At Murree,

a resort between seven and eight thousand feet above sea-level, before the Gorge is reached, there are several hotels. We went farther, to Barsala, sixty-seven miles from Pindi, where there is a rest-house perched high at a turn in the Gorge, and overhanging the river. It is a crude little place. To insure coolness the bedrooms, at the back of the wide verandah, are like caverns. Of first importance, it was clean and well looked-after. As it was at that time under the management of Nedou's Hotel at Srinagar, it was probably the best.

At eight o'clock the next morning, we continued on our way, one hundred miles to Baramula—in the Vale.

The road had been good the whole way: a long, gradual ascent through pretty country, after leaving Pindi; steeper grades and real scenery, as "the hills" were reached; in the Gorge, there were sweeping curves around outjutting barriers of rock, hundreds of feet above the river or dipping down to the water in its mad hurry among the rocks.

From Baramula, we motored thirty-seven miles through the far-famed avenue of silver poplars, set as close as a fence, across the "mile-high plain" to Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir, arriving at Nedou's, where we had reservations, at three o'clock.

The weather had not been especially cold, on the long drive across the high reaches of the Pir Panjal range of the Himalayas; at Barsala the night before or, even, when we had made the early start of that morning; but when we entered our rooms at Nedou's,

they were as cold as if the walls, frozen during the long winter of snow and ice, had not as yet thawed out! We ordered fires in both rooms and, in our efforts to keep warm, burning many *maunds* of wood, kept them going day and night.

Indoors it was so unmercifully cold, the hotel so unheated, that Englishmen with the fixed dinner-jacket habit, casting ingrained etiquette to the winds, came to dinner in their tweeds, looking as unhappy and as uncomfortable as if they were appearing at a royal garden-party in bathing-suits! Most of the ladies wore wraps; some of them, fur coats.

Fruit-trees, in the valley, were just venturing to put out a few scouting blossoms, and the chenar-trees were not yet in leaf.

On the afternoon of our arrival, rain fell heavily. The wisdom of the advice given us to stop-over, and to come into the valley by daylight, was clearly demonstrated when a party of people in several motors, who had come straight through from Pindi, arrived after ten o'clock that night in a raging storm, while we were comfortably seated before our fire.

Shut in during the winter, with no trade at all for months, the Kashmiri merchant, quite rested when the tourist season arrives, is full of zest and very enterprising. One is waylaid at every turn by emissaries; and he himself, forbidden the hotel, gains access to one in devious ways—a custom of the country. Even so, some of them, personally, impress one well, and have things to sell worthy of better, more ethical business methods. On the other hand, one has to be

most careful not to be preyed upon, for some of them are utterly unscrupulous. Many are the tales told of their perfidy!

The Kashmiris are an artistic people and many beautiful things are made by them. I am not speaking of the wonderful shawls worn by our mothers and grandmothers. These, they have almost ceased to make; but nevertheless, under an agreement made many decades ago, six are sent, each year, to the royal family of England.

In the shops, up many flights of stairs, of many steps—of different heights and different widths—in the old buildings "below the Third Bridge," that look as though about to fall into the Jhelum, many enticing things may be found. The Kashmiri artisan repeats, in all his work, the things he loves—the only things he knows, for most of them have never been out of their own country. In all their patterns they use chenar leaves *ad infinitum,* and the birds and flowers they see around them. Imagination supplies the rest!

Papier-mâché is important in Kashmir. Unlike what we usually term "papier-mâché," it is displayed in several grades and is all handwork. The finishing is artist's work. Most of it is pretty; the best is exquisite and will bear critical examination under a magnifying glass, which is the test used in grading it. Bowls, tea-caddies, trays, candle-sticks, cigar and cigarette boxes are only a few of the many things, in innumerable designs and alluring arrangements of color, that are turned out to tempt the strangers within their gates. That they do tempt them is evident, for they all depart loaded down with papier-mâché.

Much embroidery is done. Hand-woven, unbleached cotton bedspreads embroidered in wools, a strange combination, are positively compelling, and every woman going into Kashmir, who can lug them away, does so! There are also hand-woven pongee bedspreads, silk-embroidered in birds and flowers and chenar leaves, as well as in conventional patterns. Sleeveless jackets, richly embroidered in colored floss-silks, on white Pashmina cloth, a cloth made of the long hair of the Kashmir goat, are very pretty. While perfectly wearable by foreigners they are, in design, true Kashmiri.

Wood-carving is a winter industry. It is done in the homes by the men, house-bound by the intense cold, sitting in groups on a platform, heated from underneath. The wood used is walnut and everything imaginable is made, seemingly, in great quantities. The carving is well done and, when an acute desire for over-elaboration is held in check, it is really fine.

Far from least in importance are the dealers in antiques—some say the makers of them! There are, of course, imitations and reproductions, just as there are in other places, I suppose; but there are, also, genuine antiques, rare and interesting, that leak into Kashmir from Ladakh, where they arrive from much farther away—even from Lhasa, in Tibet. Everyone visits these shops "below the Third Bridge"—for where could they be, except up those interminable steps, in the rookeries overhanging the river?

Some good carpets—rugs—are made in Kashmir, which many visitors buy; but I question whether, buying hurriedly, they would not have done better buying their rugs at home! Carpets of cotton, flat

finish (the old finish) are also woven. They are attractive but, like the pottery made there, they are, to me, not worth the trouble of shipment.

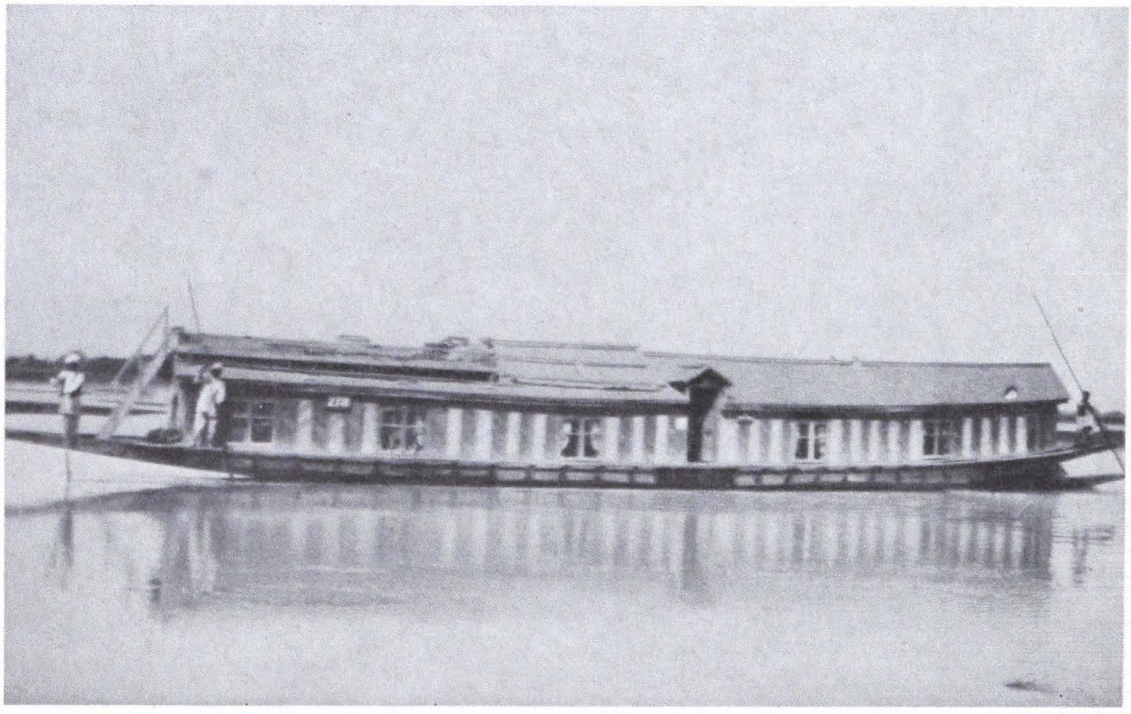
Spring came slowly but, what with the merchants and their shops, time passed quickly!

Beauty was everywhere—water and reeds; light and shade; Takht-i-Suleiman—Solomon's Throne—back to the sun, looking like brown velvet—a thousand feet above and dominating the town; the Fort, alone on the plain, limned in gold, above the wall built by Akbar—the greatest of the Great Moghuls.

Each day led to the next. The sun shone warm and, one day, the spring came, in the glory that *is* the spring in Kashmir—all held in the hand of the complete circle of snow-covered mountains, surrounding the valley. On the sod-roofs of many houses, iris bloomed, or narcissus, or wall-flowers, or masses of pale-yellow, low-growing mustard; and on the roof of the old Shah Hamadan mosque, dating from the fourteenth century, scarlet tulips flamed.

Shah Hamadan was a holy man, according to the Mohammedans of Kashmir; but whatever he may actually have been, in their loyalty to him, at least, they were intolerant. To this day, this is evidenced in the inscription, elaborately carved on the verandah over the entrance, which, translated, reads: "This is the tomb of Shah Hamadan, who was a great saint of God. Whoever does not believe this, may his eyes be blinded and if he still does not believe it, may he go to Hell."

Reflections on Dal Lake in Kashmir.



Moving Day in Kashmir. Our Houseboat, the *Long Melford*, Leaving Gujri Bal; Poleman at the Bow, Another at the Stern; Man on the Runway on the Side of the Boat, Walking the Boat Along.

2

AS THINGS TURNED OUT, WE HAD BEEN LUCKY when, in Burma the previous December, we had met two agreeable English women who had spent a part of the preceding summer in Kashmir. Hearing from us that our steps would soon turn in that direction, they were helpful in the way that one traveller can be to another, in giving us much information gained by them while there, which might in turn be useful to us.

They recommended highly the house-boat they themselves had occupied, stressing its cleanliness, adding: "Even the cook-boat is clean."

In the house-boat, in Kashmir, there is no kitchen, nor are there any servants' quarters, both being in a tender that accompanies it: the "cook-boat," so-called.

House-boats, in that part of the world, do not date back very far—only about forty-odd years. Neither did they come into existence for the pleasure-seeker, but to meet a real need. Under the laws of the country, foreigners are not permitted to erect buildings on the land. Accordingly, an Englishman with initiative who, for business reasons, passed many months there every year, taking the carrier-boats on the rivers for a model had a boat built for himself, in which he lived. Others followed suit until, at the present time, there

are some seven hundred and fifty house-boats on the waters of the Vale. Many are built to rent to visitors, in the summer season. This would seem to give a wide choice; but not all are, by any means, desirable residences! We looked at a number of them, and some—many—would be better avoided than occupied.

Some of the boats are not clean; others are not sufficiently furnished—"scarce half made-up": no chairs that would be endurable to sit in; no places to put anything away!

One boat that had been written up as a pattern of perfection in house-boats, *we* would not have inhabited—but the magazine-article was extremely interesting.

All Kashmiri house-boat floors are made of planking laid in place, but not nailed. On some of the boats, the planks are loose, warped, wobbly and dangerous as well—for persons who do not go barefooted in the house, as the Kashmiris do. How often, in the Orient, one finds one's shoes very much in the way!

Some of the boats are too small to be comfortable—or, almost as bad, too large to be conveniently moved from one mooring-place to another, which is one of the chief delights of house-boat life in that beautiful valley of rivers and lakes. The large, privately-owned, well-furnished boats that one sees on the Jhelum are, to all intents, fixtures, and are seldom rented except to personal friends. Some of them have permanent sites and are never moved at all. It is not possible for those having attractive porches, overhanging the river, to make the turns in some of the canals; and those with a room or two on

top cannot be taken under the bridges over the Jhelum, of which there are seven.

One other thing: Many high-caste Hindus come to Kashmir for the summer, but it is not thought advisable to rent a house-boat that has been lived in by them—or other natives. Their domestic civilization does not fit in with our own!

One day, in Srinagar, I was sitting in a *tonga*—the two-wheeled vehicle of the country, used by everyone—waiting for G., who was somewhere in the vicinity on the masculine traveller's never-ending hunt for cigars "fit to smoke." I was vastly interested in the merchants and their solicitors, collected about me. I had accumulated quite a lapful of cards, and much information in regard to the depths of rascality I should find in *all* the shops except, of course, their own, when a tall, fine-looking Mohammedan, different in bearing, approached and salaamed. He, at once, held my attention and I said: "And, what have *you?*"

His answer surprised me: "*I* have a boat."

I had just been thinking that the world of Kashmir had been "so full of a number of things" that we had not yet looked at a single house-boat—except from the outside. We had not interviewed an agent in regard to them, nor had we spoken to anybody about one—and here was this man, so entirely *comme il faut,* who had a boat!

"Is it your boat?" I asked him, "or, are you the *chowkidor?*" (A chowkidor, as here applied, seems to be a majordomo for the owner or, sometimes, for an

agency). He had a certain pride in his manner, as he replied:

"It is *my* boat."

"Tell me about your boat," I said.

"I will *show* you my boat." With that, he handed me a photograph of a very good-looking boat, as boats go, in Kashmir.

All the house-boats are numbered and, on the side, I read: "278"—the number of the boat recommended by our English acquaintances, so many months before —and here it was, being delivered into our hands! Surely, again, the gods were being good to us! So I said:

"I know about your boat—and, maybe, I know about *you*. Is your name Mahammed Khan Kashi?" ("Khan," in Kashmir, I was told, is a petty title, something akin to "Squire.")

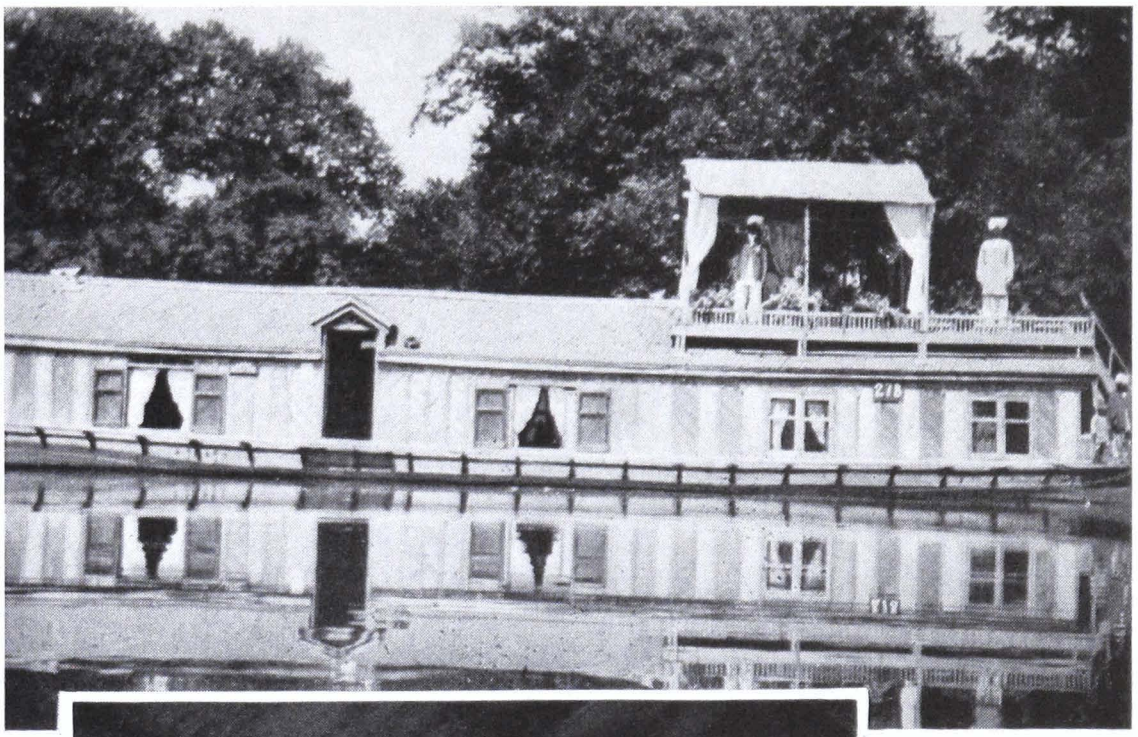
"Yes," he said, "I am Khan Kashi."

I then told him I had met some ladies, in Burma, who had rented his boat the season before, and I gave him their names. He was radiant.

"Oah, yes! They had my boat for two months. Will *you* look at my boat?"

I said I would. He had a friend with him who, it seemed, also had "a boat." He, too, was very presentable—but not in Khan Kashi's class. And, would I look at his boat? I promised that I would and, that afternoon, both came to the hotel together, to escort us to their boats, moored side by side at the Mission Hospital Bridge, not five minutes' walk from Nedou's.

The friend's boat was too small and the floors were shaky. There was nothing about it that appealed to



THE HOUSEBOAT *Long Melford* MOORED BELOW THE TERRACE AT NASIM BAGH—"GARDEN OF THE BREEZES"—DAL LAKE. ON THE ROOF-VERANDAH ARE THE *Manji* AND THE *Khansamah.*

•

LIVING-ROOM ON THE HOUSEBOAT *Long Melford.*

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Dining-room on the *Long Melford.*

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Our Cook at Work on the Auxiliary "Cookboat."

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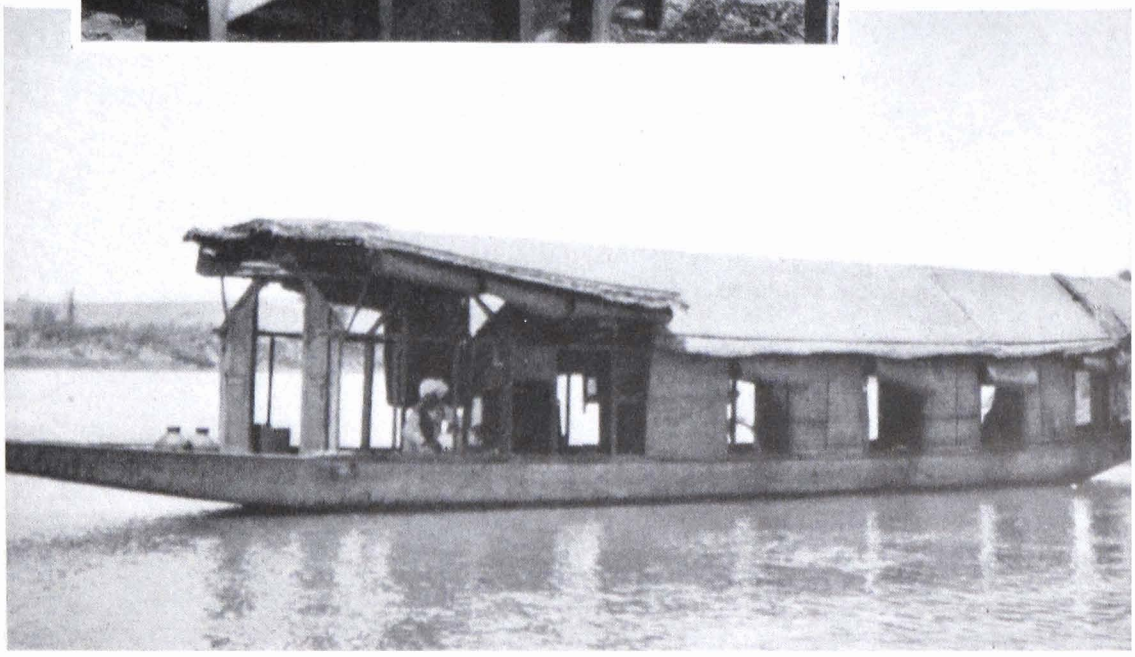


us; and I thought that, if all were like it, we would remain at the hotel! But the moment my eyes fell upon the interior of the *House-Boat Long Melford*—where Cleanliness was, evidently, goddess—mentally, the boat was ours; but that, with unusual discretion, I kept to myself.

We went into all the details customary, in such matters, and told the *manji*—boatman—Khan Kashi, to come to the hotel the next afternoon for his answer. Then, for the next twenty-four hours, we were very busy persons. To be quite sure that our favorable first impression had been correct, we looked at other boats, but not one could compare with the mental picture that remained with us, of the *Long Melford*.

What luck! Recommended to us while we were journeying on the Irrawaddy river—almost *en passant!*—and, without a suggestion from anyone, it was the first boat, out of seven hundred and fifty, called to our attention!

The next day Mahammed Khan Kashi came, and with him we went again to the boat, to confirm our opinion of the day before; for if we took it—which, in the back of our minds, we already knew we should—we would have to live in it for some time.

The outcome was, of course, that we formally engaged it, taking it by the month, which is the best way in Kashmir. The *manji* informed us that the cost would be considerably greater than if we rented it for the season; but we had been advised by our English acquaintances that with the promise that "if all goes well," you intended to remain for such-and-such a time, you had a "sword of Damocles" that guaranteed good behavior. It is generally recommended, but in

the case of Mahammed Khan Kashi and the *Long Melford* it was, I believe, an unnecessary precaution.

Our newly-acquired temporary home, occupied summer after summer for nine years by an English artist, who named the boat after a place in Suffolk, was about seventy-five feet long—a "dunga house-boat," which must not be confounded with a "dunga," the mat-covered native-boat, of which there are so many. The dunga house-boat, however, is the same shape, pointed at both ends, while the house-boat, without the adjective-prefix, is square at the ends and more unwieldy.

We had a well-furnished sitting-room, a pretty and quite a good rug covering the entire floor; comfortable chairs, a writing-desk, a number of occasional tables, pictures on the walls and books on the shelves.

The dining-room was well stocked with glass, china and cutlery. There were two bedrooms, two bath-rooms, and a roof verandah. In fact, the more we investigated our to-be-surroundings, the better satisfied we were. There was an air of comfort of a simple kind. Flowers, beautifully arranged, were everywhere bidding us welcome. There is nothing de luxe, anywhere, in Kashmir, but there was a certain hominess in the well-cared-for little boat.

Keeping the house-boat company was, of course, the usual "cook-boat," almost the same length. Our kitchen was at one end and, partitioned off, were the quarters for the servants—all of them men—their wives and children, and their kitchen, at the other end.

There was a *shikara,* a Kashmiri gondola, for our use, and a smaller service skiff.

Everything seemed very complete but, in reality, there were many things to be attended to before the boat would be ready for our occupancy. For house-boats, otherwise furnished, do not supply blankets or house-linen of any kind—not even dish-towels, which for some inscrutable reason they call "dust cloths," and ask for a dozen. The English who come up from India bring all these things from their own houses, as well as such other things as will make for their comfort; but the world-traveller, who may be in Kashmir for only two weeks, must, if he takes a boat, purchase sheets, pillow-slips, towels, bath-towels, table-cloths and napkins, bed-linen and blankets.

I went into all these details with the *manji,* who will buy such things for you; have them sent for your inspection and personal selection; or go with you and act as interpreter, if you prefer it.

We did all three!

Besides being the owner of the boat, Mahammed Khan Kashi was to be our butler. It was, therefore, his business to arrange about servants, and that question had to be discussed. The matter of the *khansamah*—the cook—as of most importance, came first. I was asked:

"Would the *sahiba* like a very fine cook?" The *sahiba* replied that she would.

"He would cost a great deal."

"Indeed? What would I have to pay him?"

"He is a *very* fine cook. . . . Thirty rupees a month."

Thereupon I made a lightning calculation and, finding that I was being asked to pay this "very fine cook," $10.80, our money—with memories of the prices paid cooks in America—I answered: "Oh, very well! *If* he is so fine a cook, as you say, I will pay him that." He was his brother! But, Sultana *was* "a very fine cook," a graduate of a cooking-school. He received the highest wages on board, and was one of the high-priced cooks in the Vale. Even the *manji* on the *Long Melford,* in his capacity of butler, received less, his wages being twenty-five rupees, or exactly $9.00. There were five servants, all men, as I have said—women "cut no figure" as domestics in Kashmir—the others getting less, totalling, about, $28.00 a month. They feed themselves, living principally on rice; meat and vegetables are very cheap, as is fruit in the summer. The fruit of Kashmir is celebrated but, to Californians, it seemed to have been too highly praised.

For the boat and everything that appertained, we paid $36.00 a month rent. Even at these, to us, ridiculous prices, *we* were supposed to be paying a little too much. Of course there are certain small "squeezes" possible to the *khansamah,* but to no one else. They are so infinitesimal that were "the lady-sahiba" to notice them, or even to show an awareness of them, she would "lose face" at once and, in the estimation of all in her employ, would descend from her pedestal.

Visitors in Kashmir, in so far as may be, are taken care of. There is a bureau especially appointed for their protection, to which they may go with petty grievances, where complaints may be adjusted and kept out of the higher courts; for the *Motamid*

Durbar—Director of the Bureau for Visitors in Kashmir, or words of the same import—is a magistrate with summary powers.

In the leasing of a boat it is advised that the parties to the agreement go before him prior to completing the contract, so that each may state what his understanding in the matter is, and the owner or his agent held in check; and the tenant—in fact, both sides—protected.

So, the day after our conference on the boat, we paid a visit, accompanied by Mahammed. At the bureau his record was looked up in the files, and found very good. He was questioned by the Director himself, in his own language, as to his understanding of our decisions of the day before, and his answers verified by us. All this was taken down by a secretary for future reference, should it be necessary.

There was no signing of papers, and it was all settled in a very short time.

We found Major Gunsar Singh, the Motamid Durbar, a charming man—very handsome and very distinguished-looking.

Officers and soldiers in Kashmir are "people of Jammu," *Dogras,* who speak a dialect of Punjabi as their home-language; who, by blood, are Rajputs—a strikingly handsome race—and are all of the *Kshatriya* —soldier—caste, as is the Maharaja of Kashmir and Jammu, Sir Hari Singh himself. Also, all the officials are Hindus of the same caste, seemingly, of varying sects, if the caste-marks on their foreheads are indications, but—the people who do the work and pay the taxes, ninety-five per cent of the population, are Mohammedans.

After the first Sikh war, Kashmir was ceded to the British. Later, it was sold, with certain restrictions, to Gulab Singh, Raja of Jammu, which adjoins it, and he became Maharaja of Kashmir and Jammu.

The "Vale of Kashmir" is not Kashmir, but is just a tiny corner of it. It is made up of many states: Poonch, Ladakh, Baltisan, all the Gilgit Agency states, and others. There is a British Resident at Srinagar; one in Ladakh, and in other places; and in some of the states, Great Britain is represented by an Agent.

3

ON THE SUNDAY MORNING FOLLOWING OUR interview with Major Gunsar Singh, we and all of our belongings with the *manji* in charge—in a caravan of *tongas*—left Nedou's on our way to Gujri Bal, on the other side of an apple-orchard from the road where, on the main canal leading to Dal Lake, the *Long Melford* was moored.

After our months of strenuosity—automobiles, railways, and one hotel after another—everything looked very peaceful as we came in sight of the primitive little boat, and very restful within it, and we entered upon the simple life in Kashmir, willingly.

The canal, however, was gay that morning. It was a Mohammedan holiday. Excursion-boats, filled with merry-makers singing, and playing on instruments, passed in almost a procession, en route to some of the gardens, where *melas*—festivals—were being held.

The views from that spot were ravishing. We were just under brown Takht-i-Suleiman. From Nedou's it had been fascinating; but here we had another view of it. The little, age-old temple, the child of another, seemed just above our heads. I never tired of it! The Fort on Hari Parbat Hill, two hundred and fifty feet above the marshes, was as clear-cut as if carved against the sky.

Water and reeds were in whatever direction I looked. I shall never forget Gujri Bal!

Gujri Bal was too convenient; we were away from home most of the time. A few minutes, by *tonga* or automobile, from the post-office, Lloyd's Bank, Nedou's; and Pestonjee's, where one bought what are called "English stores," although these may be Holland cheeses, paté de foie gras, jams from Australia, "tinned fruit" from California, or anything from anywhere.

Our *manji* had a bike and could summon a *tonga* in ten minutes. We often went in the *shikara* to the Dal Gate, a water-gate between our canal and another leading to the Jhelum river, and picked-up a conveyance there. That took a little longer, but not much.

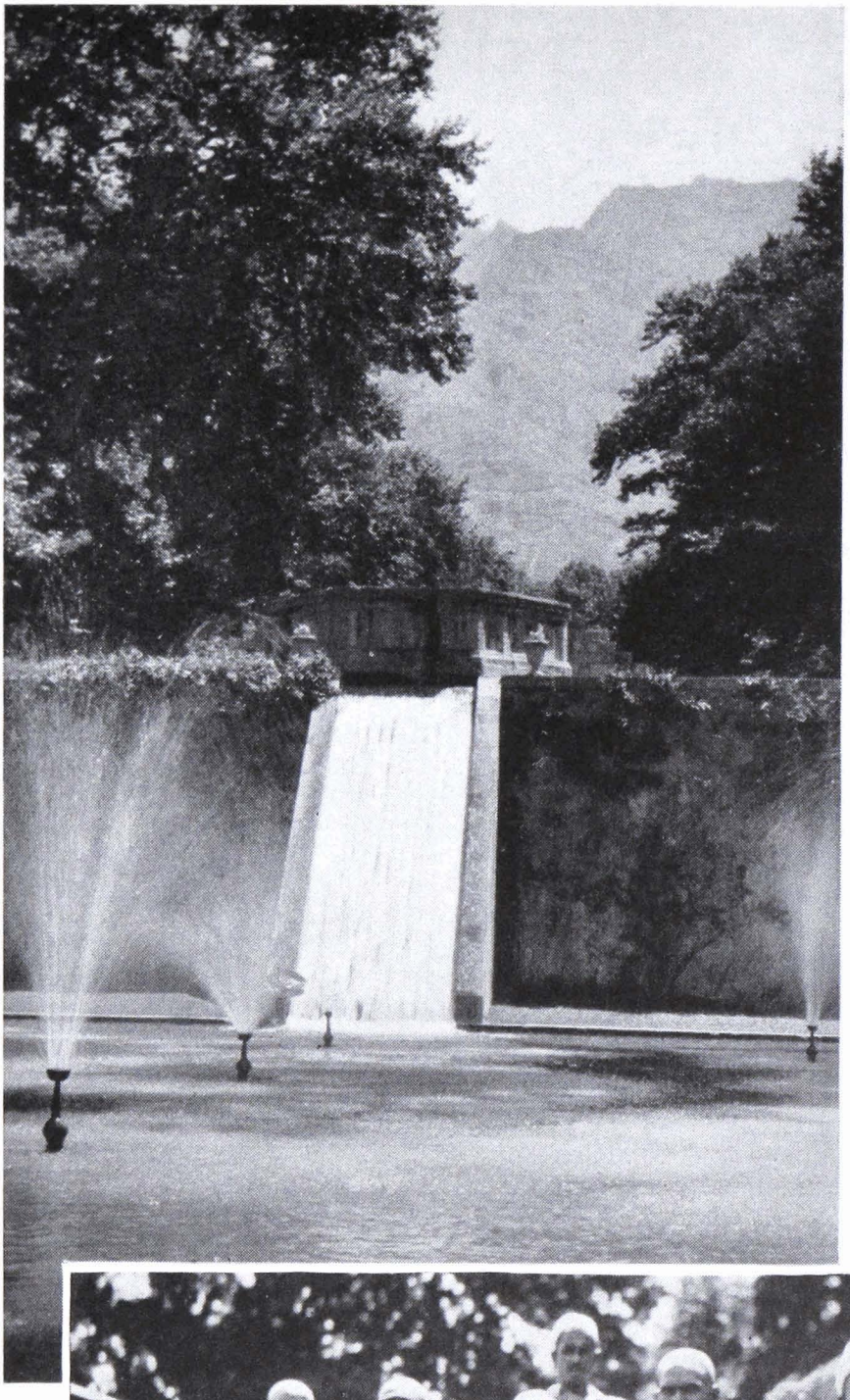
The shops below the Third Bridge were not in the same category. They were much farther away—about three miles—and as, by that time, we were quite familiar with the trip down the river by *shikara,* we motored. We found that, also, an interesting way to go. There was a great deal to be seen along the road.

Every morning, the *khansamah*—the cook—who looked like a poet, brought his account-book for me to inspect and O.K. Every second morning I handed him ten rupees, in addition to whatever small amount he may have expended in excess of the last installment. If, on balancing his book, I found that anything was left over from the last ten rupees, which was rarely the case, I did not deduct it from the amount for that day, but left it to increase his purchasing power for the next two days.

Out of his daily allowance, the *khansamah* does all the purchasing for the house-boat table, except such things as come under the head of "English stores." These we bought, a list of things needed being made out by the *khansamah* for the *manji,* who always

KASHMIRI HOUSE OUTSIDE THE GATE AT SHALIMAR.
SHOPS DOWNSTAIRS.

CASCADE IN SHALIMAR BAGH—GARDEN OF THE ABODE OF LOVE.



Cascade in Nishat Bagh—Garden of Gladness.

•

The Crew of Extra-Men for Moving Our Houseboat From One Mooring to Another.

•

accompanied us everywhere. Both could read and write English, and spoke it well; accomplishments rarer, in that part of the world, than one would suppose. Some of the *chowkidors, manjis* and *khansamahs* cannot read it or write it, and can understand and speak very little of it. This is extremely awkward for the tenant, who is very dependent upon the *manji.*

Someone has said, facetiously, that the expression "English stores" stands for everything that is bought for the house-boat table. This is far from a fact: the *khansamah* forages for chickens, ducks, geese, pigeons and squabs; buys the excellent mountain-mutton of the country, which he serves as a roast, broiling the kidneys for the English breakfast, which he so well understands; using other cuts for curry, a frequent luncheon-dish in Kashmir, as it is in other places in the Orient. Lamb cutlets, grilled to a turn, were often on our table. He supplies eggs, butter, milk and the best of the (poor) cream obtainable. Wherever the boat may be moored, he manages to secure fresh fruit and vegetables; and, in some way, bread from Srinagar.

The saffron of Kashmir is of great repute. It is said to be the best in the world, and is quite expensive. He buys *that,* if he is a *khansamah* on an "A class boat," for the pillau. He buys all the other spices and, using mortar and pestle, he grinds them himself, scorning the condiments of our Western kitchens. If he is a first-class cook, as was Sultana, he makes his own curry-powder—declaring Crosse & Blackwell's world-famous brand not fit to be considered.

As a purchasing agent, the Kashmiri *khansamah* is a wonder!

I gave Sultana no orders at all, as such, merely mak-

ing suggestions as to what might be done with what he might be able to get. These little ten-minute seances, daily, ended the whole subject for the next twenty-four hours, so far as *I* was concerned; but my interest in culinary affairs meant everything to him!

There were some things, however, that we could not have. As the whole staff were Mohammedans, I never hinted that bacon would be acceptable for breakfast; nor did pork, in any form, ever appear on the table. As the Maharaja is a Hindu, no one in Kashmir has any beef. Any person killing any member of the ox-family—if found out—would be sent to jail for two years, and, until recent years, would have been given the death penalty. All the cooking is done with mutton fat or with ghee, the clarified butter of the country.

We made little trips on Dal Lake, where the truck-gardens *float*—literally. I have many times seen good-sized ones being pushed to new locations. The ground upon which they flourish is built up on rafts, of reeds overlaid with "lake-weed," a kelp-like growth which is dragged up out of the water, bringing with it the rich sediment from the bottom of the lake. The top layer of the weed is twisted into nests, which are filled with mud. In these the seeds or seedlings are planted. The results are marvelous, in the way of early vegetables. There are acres of these floating vegetable-gardens. I saw no floating flower-gardens. Flowers are all that they need be, when grown on land in Kashmir. Some gardens, quite large, must have a nucleus of solid ground and have ceased to be *floatable,* for there are houses upon them in which the truck-gardeners and their families live—the women

working as hard as the men. These women, as well as the wives of the boatmen, although Mohammedans, are not veiled.

The children in Kashmir are not worked to death. They work, of course, but they are gay little souls, laughing and playing over it, as if they would rather work than anything in the world!

The Maharaja allows no laziness among the cultivators of the soil, to whom it has been leased. Every bit of it must be made to produce, thus combatting a desire on the part of the farmers to do less work and to raise the prices as a consequence. Prices, in those food-stuffs, do not fluctuate, except because of unusual conditions, at which times the situation is taken in hand and officially controlled.

Rice is grown, but only for home consumption; none is exported. Heads of families are furnished with coupon-books, representing the amount of rice which may be purchased—a liberal amount, according to the size of the family. Once a month, the coupons may be presented and the rice bought at the lowest price that is possible, in justice to the cultivator. *Shali,* unhusked rice, is usually bought by preference, by the Kashmiri, although he can purchase rice that has been cleaned by machinery for about the same price. They do not cook it with the husks on, however; but, with infinite labor, these are beaten off by the women, who work two at a time. The rice of the Vale of Kashmir is delicious.

The Kashmiri method of cleaning the rice is that of the mortar and pestle. The rice-mortar is hollowed out of a section of a hardwood tree, and is about two feet high and one-and-a-half wide at the top.

The pestle is a beam of wood, about five feet long, cut thin at the middle, so that it can be comfortably held in one hand.

Mortars and pestles all look gray with age and smooth from long usage as if, for generations, they had been inherited. Two pestles are needed for each mortar, as the women work in pairs. They lift them high and, holding them poised for a second, bring them down with all their strength; raising and lowering them alternately, often changing the pestle from one hand to the other, but never losing the rhythm.

It is very hard work, taking an hour, an hour and a half or even longer, according to the condition of the rice, to husk enough for one meal for a small family. Then comes the winnowing—a pretty sight, the husked grains shaken and tossed up and down in sieves held high, in the wind if possible—usually with chickens in attendance, rushing about the workers' feet after the grains that sometimes come their way.

After the winnowing, the rice being prepared for our cook-boat was always carefully washed, and then spread to dry on a length of clean, unbleached cotton. Now vigilance, indeed, was necessary! Someone with Argus-eyes had to be alertly on the spot. Else, chickens and birds would not have left one grain for the family!

Somewhere, every day, I would see these things going on, and I had long wanted to secure a photograph, but luck had never been with my camera and me. Pleasing to the eye, picturesque—fascinating; but with conditions, environment, perspective—everything—wrong for a picture. At last, the moment for which I had waited came, when everything

seemed propitious. We were out for a walk and came upon the women, exactly as I had longed to find them —the *mise en scene,* perfect!

Nearby was a man, probably the husband of both. I spoke to him about the weather, and found that he spoke English quite well. I knew that there were several superstitions that made it difficult to get a picture of even the unveiled Mohammedan women, so I asked him if he thought I might venture to take a snap-shot. Very seriously he answered:

"It is a sin for a Mohammedan woman to have her picture taken."

"A *sin?*" I said.

"Yes."

"By-the-way," I asked, "has a woman a soul?"

"Oah, no! A *woman* has no *soul.*"

"In that case, I suppose, she cannot go to Heaven."

"Oah, no! A *woman* cannot go to Heaven."

"Then, what does it matter if she does sin?" Then almost joyously—rolling his eyes—as if a delightful solution had been reached, he countered:

"She can go to *Hell.*"

"R-e-ally?" His answer startled me.

"Yes, *Sahiba.*"

So, according to a husband of one or more of them, a Mohammedan woman does not possess a soul; she cannot go to Heaven; but, she has the privilege of going to Hell!

When on little trips on the lake, we added two or three men to our regular crew of three men, which the rules governing house-boats the size of the *Long*

Melford, require the *manji* to furnish. The *bhisti*—water carrier—is one of these; the "between-boy," who brings the food from the kitchen in the cook-boat, is always expected to do valiant work in the *shikara,* when the tenants are using it, anywhere; the *manji* himself takes an oar; but the *khansamah,* who has "other fish to fry," never lends a hand, nor does the "sweeper," who does many things besides sweep: he is the errand-boy and the boatman for the service-skiff. The "sweeper," in Kashmir, among the Mohammedans, is not an outcaste—an untouchable—as he is in India, among the Hindus.

Srinagar and the immediate vicinity are said to be unbearably hot, as the season advances toward mid-summer; but we were there repeatedly, for several days at a time, and never found it unpleasantly so. The temperature rarely rises above 85 degrees, and that for only a few hours. The nights are often cold and, always, cool; but "Class A" house-boats are usually moved farther away than Gujri Bal, which then seems to be given over to boats of the less exalted classes.

There are not so many good sites and it behooved us to find one before all the desirable places were appropriated.

Twice, we went far up Dal Lake, which is about four miles long and two-and-a-half miles wide; and, before entering open water, boats must weave their way through a net-work of canals or, this way and that, among the floating-gardens. Some of the canals are short-cuts, across projections from the land.

After much consideration, we selected a *jai*—site—at Nasim Bagh.

4

WE WERE VERY ALERT AND INTERESTED on the morning of our first move in the house-boat. Outside, everyone was astir a few minutes before six, the extra-men on hand, each doing what, I suppose, each did every time he participated in the move from one site to another.

The mat-top of the roof-verandah was taken off, as a whole, and laid on the roof of the boat; the light frame-work supporting it was taken apart and laid flat—otherwise, the boat could not pass under the bridges spanning some of the canals.

Then "stakes were pulled up" and, at six o'clock to the dot, the house-boat was pushed off.

We had six extra-men at one rupee a day each, with one rupee for the lot, thrown in, for their afternoon-tea—the customary wage and perquisite.

At the start and from then on, one man graced the bow, poling sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other; walking toward the stern only a short way, he steered the boat and kept it in the channel. Holding their long poles firmly fixed at the bottom of the lake, two others, bending to their work, walked along the runways on the sides of the boat all the way to the stern—in this way pushing the craft ahead—the work falling heavily on their legs and hips. The journey

from end to end completed, after a vigorous push which sent the boat forward, the poles were lifted out of the water and carried to the other end, just short of the bow, and the same routine was begun all over again—time after time, hour after hour! They were human machines. Hard work—for thirty-six cents a day and tea at four o'clock!

The cook-boat followed, propelled by all hands and one of the extra-men. The *shikara* was in tow, loaded to the brim with all sorts of things; back of that came the skiff with chickens and ducks, under coops made of willow basket-work the shape of bowls turned upside down. We made quite a trail along the way—but that is the way every house-boat on the waters of the Vale is moved from place to place.

After a while, at about eight o'clock, the boats were turned into a side canal and fastened, casually, to the bank. Shortly afterward, our usual delicious breakfast was served.

Nearby, was a flourishing garden; and boatloads of fresh vegetables were soon being paddled across the canal and brought alongside for Sultana's inspection and selection. Some little time was spent there loading on wood and for one thing and another, and then, when everything had again been made ship-shape, the voyage was resumed—taking in all, some seven hours to the new site.

We passed Hasrat Bal, which to the Mohammedans is the holiest spot in all Kashmir, because enshrined in the mosque is a single hair of the Prophet! Nasim Bagh is just beyond and we moored there, below the slope where the chenar-trees came down to the water's edge and, from the top of the incline, marched away

Pampur, on the Jhelum, on the Way to Islamabad.

Towing the Boats in Water From Ankle- to Waist-Deep, All One Afternoon. On the Jhelum on the Way to Islamabad.

Ruins at Avantipur on the Jhelum.

•

The Little Temple Over the "Pond of the Sacred Fish" Near Islamabad.

•

in long rows in the other direction—Akbar's "Garden of the Breezes."

One of the glories of Kashmir, almost worshiped by the people of the country, the chenar-tree, is not a native but was brought from Persia by the Moghuls. It is a plane-tree, akin to the sycamore of the eastern United States and to the *aliso* of California. The leaves are much darker, a deeper shade of green than either, more leathery and much larger. It is sturdier—a giant of the species.

Nasim Bagh—whatever it may have been in the long ago—at the present time is not a garden according to our ideas. It is a great grove of fine trees with a velvety turf under foot. There are no flowers—but one does not miss flowers in Nasim Bagh. To almost everyone, it is perfect *as it is!* There are birds; there are many in Kashmir. There are no parrots in flocks, as there are in the mahua-trees at Sanchi and in some of the mosque-gardens elsewhere in India, but there are bulbuls—Persian nightingales; orioles, dazzling flashes of gold; and tiny kingfishers, of an unbelievable blue, darting about over the little stream that rushes through the *bagh.* These last were always about the boat, using the mooring-wires as vantage-points from which to drop head first into the water—bent on business. Sometimes there would be three or four just outside my window. They were never afraid.

The *Long Melford* was wired for electricity and we had had electric light at Gujri Bal but, so far out as Nasim Bagh, it was rather surprising to have it; yet, the electricians from town had it all connected-up within an hour or so after we arrived. The boat was well screened. Flies and mosquitoes gave us no trouble,

perhaps because the *manji* shot the "Flit-gun," used everywhere in India, in every room, morning and night.

We were very comfortable and felt that, now, we were really living in Kashmir; no longer just sight-seeing tourists running this way and that; and we settled ourselves to live the life as we found it. While, in a certain way, it is all very primitive, there was not one thing in our surroundings that could offend a person of refinement. We were waited upon by those who, all their lives, had ministered to the wants—foibles, mayhap—the eccentricities, if you like, of the Anglo-Saxon. We had letters to write, neglected perforce in the rush and fatigue of travel; we had books in plenty and, as our English cousins say: we "took in" the *Times of India* and the *Civil and Military Gazette,* for which Kipling wrote. We walked every day, under the trees, in the *bagh.* Now and again we sent to Srinagar for an automobile, motoring the seven miles to town, over the road that twists its serpentine way across the marshes. Sometimes we went in the *shikara,* taking on an extra man or two, for speed, always disembarking at the Dal Gate and going the rest of the way in a *tonga,* if our errands were in the new part of Srinagar, or in an automobile, if below the Third Bridge.

Just across the lake, only half an hour away by *shikara,* was Shalimar Bagh—"Garden of the Abode of Love"—created by Jahangir for the pleasure of Nur Jahan, his "Light of the World."

Shalimar is the most celebrated of the Moghul Gardens and is very beautiful. Under huge chenar-trees, a mountain stream flows swiftly through the

center, falling in six cascades. The first time we went there, the Persian lilacs were in full bloom, in masses and hedges. Fountains, hundreds of them, played and cooled the air as, so long ago, they had for Nur Jahan.

Many men go to Shalimar and to the other Moghul Gardens, some of them taking their birds with them—larks in cages—putting them beside the water, which makes them sing; and they, picturesque in white garments, sit about in groups for hours listening to them, looking at the fountains, and talking. There are women, too, wandering about or sitting under the trees, four or five together, completely shrouded in the full, impossible-to-describe, all-enveloping, thick white-linen *boorkhas* worn in Kashmir, with only small square peep-holes of drawn-work or lace to see through, and no place at all to breathe through. These are the most suffocating-looking affairs that I saw worn by any of the veiled women of the Far East. I saw many of the women, who had thrown back their *boorkhas* when no men were about; all were good-looking, some of them beautiful. Kashmiris of pure blood are a fine-looking people. Even the women in the rice-boats, despite their dirty clothes, are often very handsome. Almost without exception, the children are joyous, pretty little things.

Nishat Bagh—"The Garden of Gladness"—was in easy reach by *shikara*. It is two miles from Shalimar. If possible, it is the more beautiful of the two, the water coming down from terrace to terrace with a rush, over inclined planes; and, as at Shalimar, there are hundreds of fountains.

All through the early summer, pansies ranging in every shade from cream to gold ran riot, in wide bor-

ders, down the slope at Nishat Bagh, each shade to itself. The "Gardens of the Moghuls" are perfectly cared-for. "The Superintendent of All the Gardens in Kashmir," which seems to be his title, understands his business. He evidently has a soul for beauty, albeit of the Hindu variety. They are indescribably lovely.

Going to Srinagar in the *shikara* was always a fascinating experience, but even with the extra-men, it took all of an hour and a half each way, leaving little time for anything except going and returning. For as the summer advanced, rain fell in torrents almost every afternoon and we dared not be caught out on the lake.

Akbar's "Breezes"—wind-storms with thunder and lightning—sometimes came tearing across the water, pulling all sorts of things loose about the boat; ripping to pieces the little bridge connecting the boat with the land, and having all hands rushing hither and yon, trying to make things fast.

One day, the mat-top was lifted entirely off the roof verandah and hurled twenty feet on shore.

Fruit and flowers we had in plenty at Nasim Bagh —strawberries of delicious flavor, the season lasting only a short time. Then came cherries of several varieties that were good; but most of the fruit in Kashmir, celebrated in song and story, was very ordinary.

We had quantities of glorious, long-stemmed roses, that Mahammed went himself to get, bringing them back in his arms. The bills for them did not come to me, as all my dealings were with Sultana, the *khansamah,* but went to G., whose house-boat business-affairs were with Mahammed the *manji.* So, one day, I made inquiry as to their cost, and found that eight annas—sixteen cents—a day paid for them all!

Srinagar is in the latitude of Los Angeles, California, but the Vale averages from five to six thousand feet in altitude, and the flowers are such as one sees in and around San Francisco. Kashmir is not in the least tropical, as so many persons seem to think.

The sensation of the summer, at Nasim Bagh, worked up to with much preparation, was the arrival of an Indian raja. Three "A class" boats were necessary to accommodate him, his friends and a part of his retinue.

All the best sites at Nasim Bagh are what are known as "Public Sites," as are all the best sites in the Vale, and are secured from the Maharaja through the Motamid Durbar. If, however, a friend of the Maharaja comes to Kashmir, anyone may have to vacate a site, to permit him to occupy it. In this case, three sites had been cleared.

First reports announced that the raja was eighty years old. Actually, he was eighteen. With him came his guardian, a British colonel, and ten or a dozen young noblemen, his guests—just good-looking young gentlemen in flannels. No splendor, so far as they were concerned; but the uniforms of his retinue and the livery of the servants punctuated the landscape with exclamation points!

He had two ugly little dogs with a "dog-coolie" in attendance, often called a "flea-coolie" in India, where many of the English have a man especially to look after their dogs. The young raja's was gorgeous. One would say that he felt his importance and wished to be very much "in the picture," in his immaculate white, with a brilliant red turban and a sash to match —standing with his arms folded, immobile, for long

periods in front of a tiny bed upon which the two dogs lay in the shade of a tree!

The *bhisties* in their journeys back and forth from the spring, which was back of our boat, did not carry the ordinary pottery *chatties*—water-jugs—of the country, but came jogging along, resplendent in their livery, with great brass jars shining like gold, suspended on bamboo poles, Chinese fashion. Among the Hindus of high-caste, brass is used for this purpose, and is strictly in accordance with their traditions. Everything else is "unclean." They may not cook their food in anything but brass utensils; eat from anything but brass; drink from anything but brass, I have read; and if, for any reason, china is used, the article must be broken after using, as it *cannot be cleansed!*

A large marquée was erected on the grass-covered slope between the house-boats and the road. This was the dining-hall and, close by, was the "cook-tent." Tents were also set up in Akbar's "Garden of the Breezes" for the various functionaries. Motors of one kind or another were constantly coming and going, and Nasim Bagh took on an unwonted gayety, until one day, about two weeks after their arrival, the young raja, his guests, the colonel-guardian and the retinue motored away to Gulmarg for a sojourn in "the hills," where "huts" had been prepared for them.

Servants packed up the paraphernalia and, not long after the departure of royalty, every evidence of their presence had disappeared and Nasim Bagh returned to erstwhile peace and quiet. On board the *Long Melford* there was talk of moving to another site, or a trip up the Jhelum and, finally, this idea prevailed.

5

ONE DAY SLIPPED INTO ANOTHER, GENTLY, softly, as days do in Kashmir.

Again, Mahammed Khan Kashi, the *manji*, owner of the craft and our butler all in one, got together his six "good men"—at one rupee a day each and their afternoon tea—and the boat was made ready for a voyage on the waters of the Vale.

A certain excitement was apparent on the night before departure—we felt it ourselves—and, at six o'clock the next morning, the *Long Melford* was pushed off.

Poled along down the lake and through the chain of canals almost to Dal Gate, at ten o'clock we put into a pretty little inlet off one of the much-travelled canals, and tied up under pollarded willows in full leaf. Every inch of water around the boat was covered with lily-pads thickly studded with small jewel-like blossoms, gleaming white, and when fully open only about the size of half a dollar.

We had a busy morning ahead of us, much to do out of the ordinary—not the usual routine of affairs that travellers, the world over, find must be attended to everywhere they go. This was different. We were in the throes of preparation for our first long trip by house-boat; in fact, we were already on the way and

were going up the Jhelum, as far as Islamabad, near which the river rises. It is the second city, in size, in Kashmir, with an entirely native population.

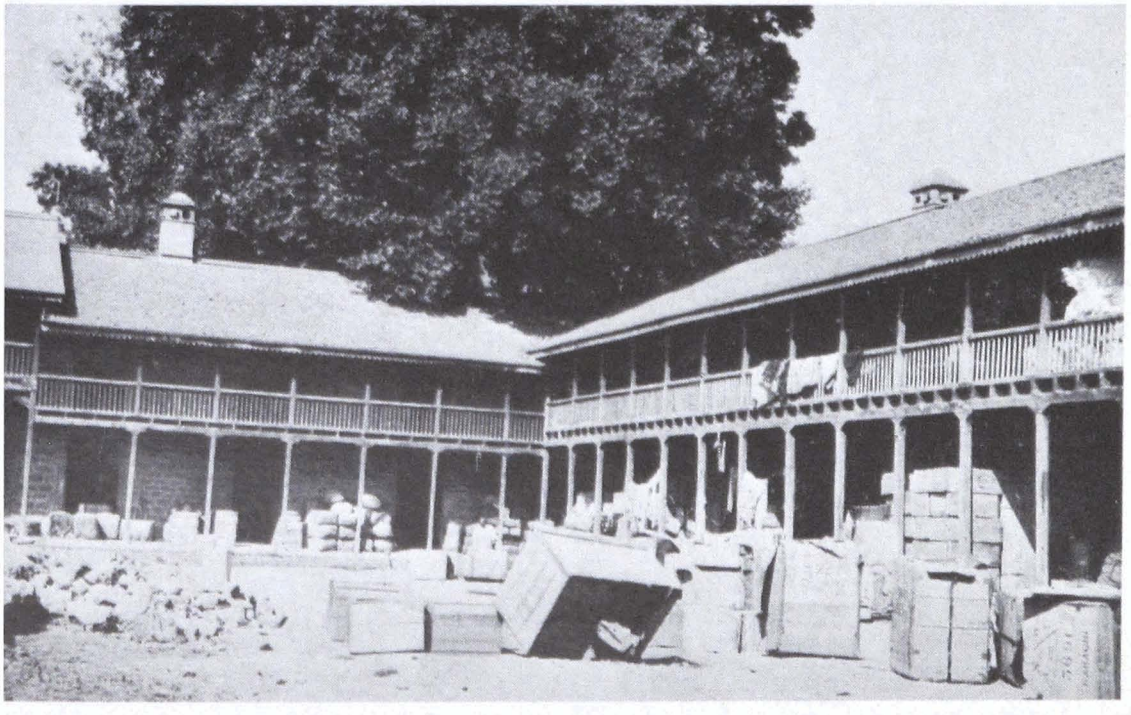
Even before we left the boat, Sultana—the cook-who-looked-like-a-poet—was a busy but unruffled person, the sweeper having been despatched immediately upon our arrival, somewhere, in the skiff—doubtless, after chickens; and he himself had come to me for twenty rupees, extra, so that his larder might not become empty and the *sahibs*, hungry.

We went in the *shikara* to Dal Gate and there picked up a *tonga*. The *manji* perched, as usual, beside the driver, we sitting with our backs to them, as the geography of the vehicle makes necessary. It is easy to get into, difficult to get out of, convenient for short trips but, withal, utterly uncomfortable.

After taking the letter-of-credit to Lloyd's Bank for the wherewith to meet who-knows-what emergency, we went to the "chemist's"—druggist's—Lambert's, whose beautiful garden was a never-ending delight, because of the old-fashioned roses that in our own country seem to have passed out of existence: Maréchal Niel, Cloth of Gold, La France, Gloire de Dijon, great rambling La Marcks and a host of others.

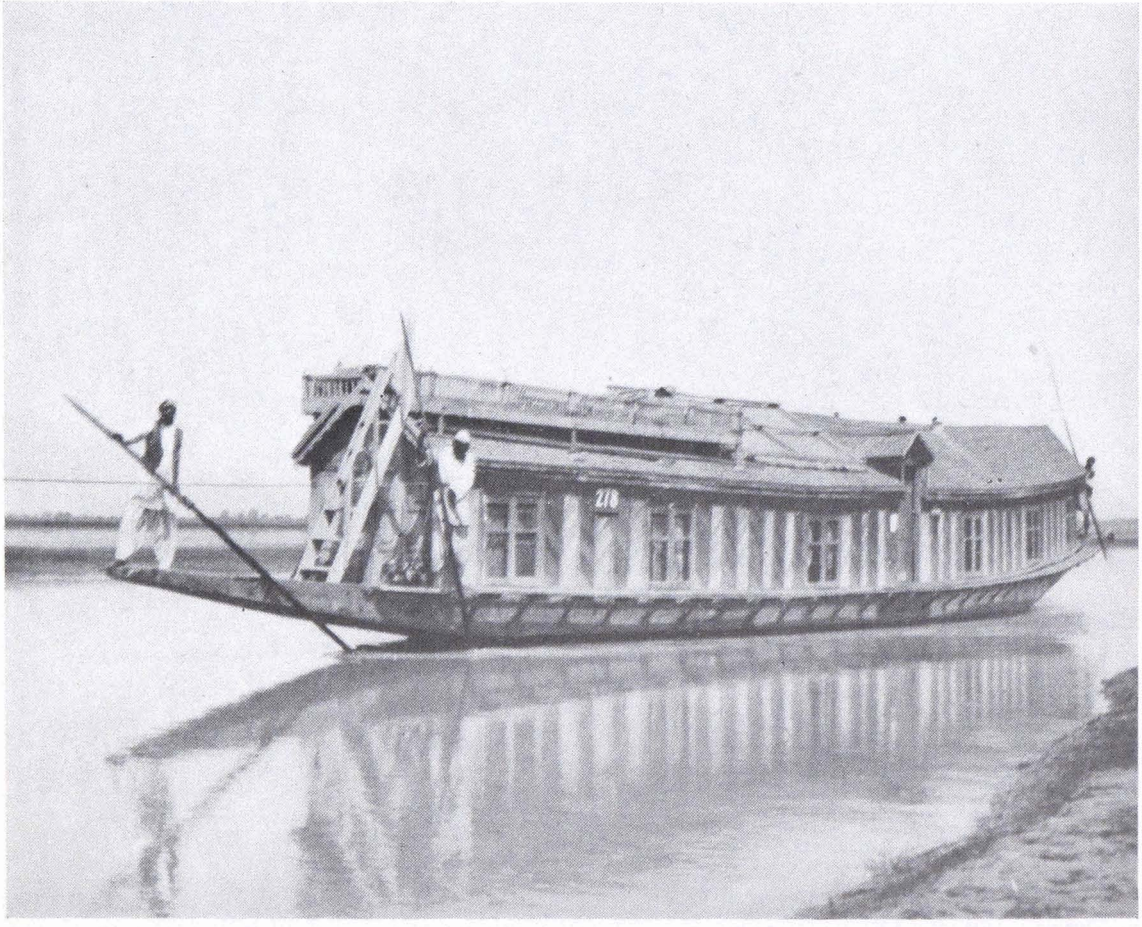
As we did not drink the water of the country even after it had been boiled, an extra-large supply of bottled-water had to be sent on board. That put up in Srinagar, distilled water, carbonated, is very good—just the "soda" of the British, such as is used everywhere in the Orient. Then came the "English stores"; for nothing along those lines could be bought until our return, and this was most important, for G.'s cigars and cigarettes came under this head. All these

THE LIDDAR RIVER AT PAHLGAM IN "THE HILLS."



THE YARKAND SERAI AT SRINAGAR.

Towing on the Lower Sind. These Men Are Not Those Towing the *Long Melford*, But Are Towing the Cookboat, Which is Not in the Picture.



The *Long Melford* on the Sind River, the *Manji*, Khan Kashi, at the Bow, Poling.

"stores" were delivered by Pestonjee—a Parsi, by the way, as so many of the successful business-men of India are.

We went back to the boat for luncheon and had a long, quiet afternoon, part of which I spent watching the passing-show on the canal, from the porch-like stern of the boat, where one of my merchant-acquaintances, clad in snowy-white silk, spied me, came alongside, and paid me an interminable Kashmiri visit. He asked me a thousand questions, difficult to answer so that he, having no perspective outside his own snow-rimmed valley, could understand. He was avid for information. At one stage of the conversation, he said: "You say, you have no king! How can that be? I cannot understand a country without a king!" And again, with a long-drawn sigh: "*You* go everywhere, see everything; *I* do the same things every day. But, some time, I shall make the pilgrimage to Mecca!"

At six o'clock the next morning we went through the Dal Gate into the canal running at a right angle to it which flows in from the Jhelum and, in another hour, through the water-gate into the river. After the house-boat, the "cook-boat" and the *shikara* were all safely through, I was interested in the efforts of the sweeper, striving to get the light service-skiff, loaded with fowls, out of the gate without an upset. The water rushes in from the river with great force and, again and again, the small boat was beaten back and almost overturned, but at last he got it through and our water-caravan proceeded on its way.

The Jhelum loops back and forth in such a way that, on the first day, we were never more than two or

three miles from Srinagar—looking at Takht-i-Suleiman from so many angles that it was difficult to retain a sense of direction. On the afternoon of the next day we reached Pandrethan, a small ruined Hindu temple, which is by road only a little more than three miles from Nedou's.

There are no good mooring-places in the canals at Islamabad, and our real destination was Bijbehara, a few miles below on the river where, for our drives in the vicinity, an automobile from Srinagar was to meet us. The run does not take long, the distance is short; but, because of the windings of that eccentric stream, the Jhelum, the trip by water took four days. Notwithstanding the help of the six extra-men, poling and towing the boats up the river was no easy job.

One day, those with the tow-rope—inured to hardship—were tugging along contentedly, the whole afternoon, waist-deep in the water! Sometimes, they would be scrambling up a bank where there were only footholds; now and again, sliding down one where there were none! There was rarely a towing-path but, sometimes, there was fairly level ground, high above the river.

Hard work for all the regular men; hard for the extra-men; hard work for *everybody*—except the tenants of the house-boat, for whom it is the easiest, most care-free travelling possible, with everything that can be thought of done for them.

We had a wonderfully fine trip. Every day, we had delicious meals; hot baths, just as always—how, I do not know. In India, cold baths, but in Kashmir . . . no. At seven o'clock every morning, I would feel the boat rock as it had, almost on the stroke of the hour,

ever since we had boarded it, and I would know that my bath was arriving; the hot water being brought by the big *bhisti,* in a great can. Pouring the water into the large oblong, galvanized-iron tub in my bath-room—the same as on all the house-boats—under the *manji's* supervising eyes, and placing plenty of cold water in readiness, they would withdraw. The same performance would then begin at the other end of the boat. *Place aux dames!*

Later, at the breakfast hour, the boats would be stopped for a few minutes, often in mid-stream, and the breakfast taken on board from the *shikara,* which had come alongside. The lower part of the side-board in the pantry was zinc-lined and, in this place, there was one of the little portable stoves (pottery bowls, filled with charcoal, in a basket of wicker-work) called "*kangris.*" One sees them everywhere being carried about by the people. In the house-boat, our breakfast toast was made on a *kangri,* which was also used to keep the food warm on tour, when so many trips, back and forth from the kitchen in the "cook-boat," could not easily be made. As soon as breakfast was taken on, the boats would move on again, the crew having had theirs before the six o'clock start had been made, while we had been snoozing comfortably in our camp-beds.

At luncheon time, house-boat and "cook-boat" would be tied up usually in some nice place for an hour or so, giving time for food and rest, for every-one. Then it was that the chicken-coops were put on shore, and the chickens turned loose. They would scatter in all directions, foraging. At starting time, it would give no little trouble to get them back in their

wicker-work hutches, all sorts of enticements being used.

The children, turned loose from their end of the "cook-boat" at the same time, would rush about in much the same way, investigating everything but never wandering far away.

At four o'clock the boats would be tied up to the bank once more, and the six "good men" would carouse on tea purchased with the "extra-rupee-a-day" thrown in for the lot and, as Sultana made the tea, I suppose *he* got the rupee!

The *khansamah* had two wives. The first wife, the mother of two dusky, sprite-like, little girls—pretty as they could be—had not presented him with a son—therefore, the second wife. There is a superstition rife in the Indian Orient, whether among the Mohammedans, I do not know . . . but, mayhap—that a man who has not had a son borne to him becomes a snake in the Life-to-Come. Hence this wide-spread agitation!

At Bijbehara the boats were moored below a grove of mighty chenar-trees, one of them known as "the largest in Kashmir," measuring forty-three feet in circumference. The morning after we tied up here, the automobile from Srinagar was on hand waiting for us, and we motored to Islamabad, which did not greatly interest us. We went to various Hindu temples in the vicinity, some of them over or near water-courses, where there are small ponds of "sacred fish." No one is supposed to eat them, I was told, yet they do not seem to have increased to uncomfortable numbers, as in the sacred ponds of the Buddhists, in Burma. One wonders!

We drove up into "the hills"—eight or nine thousand feet in altitude—under *real mountains,* seventeen thousand feet above sea-level, towering above them.

We gave a whole day to an excursion to Pahlgam, a resort near the head-waters of the Liddar, a tributary of the Jhelum. The Liddar is a wild, beautiful river, the half-mad water tumbling about—over and around the rocks, in a great hurry—as it does at Happy Isles in the Yosemite. With a post-office, a book-stand, and the so-called "huts," preferred to tents at that altitude, scattered about among the pines, Pahlgam is typical of such places in Kashmir.

Sonamarg, on the way to Ladakh; Gulmarg—Meadow of Roses—smarter socially, on the Baramula side of the valley, where Nedou has a hotel; and Pahlgam, are all at about the same altitude, 8,500 feet. Of the three, only Pahlgam is accessible by automobile.

On the day at Pahlgam, we had both Mahammed and Ahmedoo, "the boy," with us, who spread rugs and piled cushions on the rocks beside the river and served our luncheon there, which included hot coffee poured from Mahammed's much-prized thermos bottle. We enjoyed every moment of the day.

While at Bijbehara we motored to Martand, where the largest ruins in Kashmir, evidencing a Hellenic influence, are found. This suggestion of the Greek seems to be a surprise to many persons. I wonder why! It should not be. The Jhelum river is Alexander the Great's "Hydaspes." And Bucephalus, his historic horse, came to his death near the southern boundary of Kashmir, where Alexander dedicated a city to his memory—and there are many other reasons for the "Greek influence" besides.

The dryness and aridity of India were distasteful to the Moghuls and their palaces were set in gardens, through which water was made to flow, so that rose-gardens might flourish and jasmines bloom. But, in the great heat of the summer, even these were deserted by them, and many summers were spent in Kashmir. Gardens were laid out along the way, and chenar-trees planted, so that under their shade, amid flowers, the long journey into the Vale might be broken. One of these rest-gardens is in the Islamabad region, Achibal, the smallest of the Moghul Gardens in Kashmir—where water gushes out from under the mountain in several places, only to be caught and conventionalized, as was the way of the Great Moghuls.

Also, in the region of Islamabad, the present Maharaja, Sir Hari Singh, has a fine modern rest-house where he, too, breaks the journey—in different fashion—motoring over his private automobile-road from his winter-capital in Jammu to his summer-capital in Kashmir.

At Achibal, only a few minutes' walk, at the base of the mountain, below a bank down which trails wild star-jasmine, and through a gate, hidden away—out of sight—one comes upon a most up-to-date trout-farm, where rainbow and other trout are bred, fifteen thousand of them being transferred to the trout-streams every year. Fishing permits are issued by the Maharaja, of course, through the Motamid Durbar.

This, at Achibal, is one of several such hatcheries in Kashmir.

6

AFTER HAVING TAKEN FOUR DAYS TO ASCEND, we came down the Jhelum as far as Srinagar in eighteen hours, and tied up across the river from the town. We had tried to get a *jai* there, even before we went to Gujri Bal, but these sites are all but impossible to secure until after the exodus of the summer visitors to the hills, when it is thought too late to be in Srinagar.

The mooring-places on the town side of the Jhelum are nearly all permanent sites, and any available on either side are seized upon early in the season, or are engaged by letter before the road into the Vale is open. The location is most convenient. In a few minutes, the house-boat *shikara* lands one at the foot of the steps leading up from the river to the Bund, a wide, tree-shaded dyke high up many steps, on both sides, between the Jhelum and the town. The Club, with its library and tennis courts (membership open to all properly accredited visitors); the post-office, the banks, and many shops, are all on the Bund. The Golf Links, the Polo Field, and Nedou's, where there is dancing on certain nights and dramatic entertainments are given in the theater on others, are all close at hand.

We stayed there for a while, until impulse prompted, then we took on stores and went on down the river to

Shadipur, tying up below "the Sacred Place"—a tiny island, with stone steps up from the river—buttressed around, where there is a small chenar-tree which is known as "the tree that never grows." At Shadipur, the Sind and another smaller river give their waters to the Jhelum.

After a bit, the boats slipped on down the river, and tied up in the canal that cuts the distance from the river into Wular Lake, across from Baramula at the entrance to the Gorge of the Jhelum.

The trip down from Srinagar is prettier—more smiling—than that up the river, which we had just completed. The many pollarded mulberry-trees, on both, constantly called to mind the silk-culture that has increased to such proportions, in the valley. It is natural that it should have done so. The mulberry-tree is indigenous and the culture of the silk-worm should follow "as the night the day."

One hundred and fifty thousand persons raise the silk-worms and deliver the cocoons at the factories. Four thousand are employed in the preparation and the spinning of the silk, which is of a high grade. None of this silk from the government plant is woven in Kashmir. It is all exported.

Tourists in Kashmir are invited to visit the factories, and we spent an interesting morning there, taken about by the superintendent. I was surprised to learn that the silk from a single cocoon can be drawn out to more than a mile in length.

Many other fruits are native to Kashmir; but, of course, the mulberry is the most important, and anyone injuring a tree is punishable under the law. Apricots, apples, cherries, are all wild fruits of the country.

The apricots are only about as large as good-sized marbles, but their flavor is as delicious as the finest cultivated apricots of our own country.

We were on our way to Wular Lake *from* the house-boat, *not in it.* In the first place, it is very exposed on that side, and there are absolutely no safe mooring-places. Further, and important in that part of the world, Wular Lake has a bad name coming down the generations. One hears much of what "My father told me," or "My grandfather told my father," and the like.

The boatmen do not like Wular Lake and some of them refuse to take a boat across it, at any price; and, because of sudden and dangerous squalls, the house-boats, built like Noah's ark, do not take kindly to it, either!

Although only crossing the end of the lake and starting before day, the best time, many a boat sent down to Baramula to bring passing-tourists to Srinagar—considered a "smart" way to arrive and good to talk about afterwards—has been in serious peril before the canal is reached.

So we went out on Wular Lake in the *shikara,* soon after sunrise, with seven men at the oars—looking like a galley of old—solely to look upon Nanga Parbat, 26,620 feet in altitude, the fourth highest mountain in the world. On the other side—one reads—it looks down, sheer, twenty thousand feet to the Indus. On the Wular Lake side, it gives no such impression, but we had a glorious view of the snow-covered giant-among-mountains. There was not a cloud in the sky!

Wular Lake, twelve miles long by five wide, is the largest lake in India. Strewn about on its surface are

great patches of Singara nut-plants, like rosettes of strawberry-leaves, with long runners out from the center and floats on the larger leaves, welcome nesting-places for great numbers of water-birds. The nuts gathered from this strange water-plant are those shaped like a cow's head—horns and all—seen in Chinese shops. In Kashmir, they are shelled and ground into meal that is largely used and much liked.

We had had *chota hazri*—the little breakfast of India: tea, toast and, sometimes, fruit—but when we got back to the boat, Sultana had a real breakfast waiting for us.

No time was lost in getting under way, and the *Long Melford* was back at Shadipur at four o'clock. We had friends there and, at five, we went to call upon them. We were asked at once to have a "peg" with them—whatever *that* was—but before the butler could produce it, a gale came tearing along, bringing fast-speeding masses of black storm-clouds. We made a hurried departure down the gang-plank shaken by the wind, reaching our own boat just as rain began falling in torrents. So, I never knew exactly what they had offered us!

That night rain continued to fall; the wind raved about the boat, hurling itself against first one place and then another; but everything had been made fast, before dark, and ropes and guy-wires held. But what a night! We knew that the *manji* never slept on a stormy night—so *we did*.

The storm blew over and the next morning dawned clear. A little past daylight, the boats were turned out of the Jhelum into the Sind, and headed upstream toward Gandarbal, where we had a *jai* that we had

investigated earlier in the season, motoring over from Nasim Bagh. We had engaged it the next day, which was best, as it was a desirable mooring-place. By road, the two places are only nine miles apart.

In this fast-flowing river, the channel shifts and the volume of water varies. It is no easy matter to navigate the Sind. At one place, we had twelve men poling, and holding the boats away from the bank where the force of the current was pushing them. On the "cook-boat," the women were helping—as good boatmen as any of the rest!

We arrived safely at Gandarbal but, with the swift rush of the river to combat, it was almost dark before everything was ready for the night.

There was not much to do at Gandarbal—and that is just what we did there, not much of anything and enjoyed it. But if not much to do, there was a great deal to see.

Shortly after our arrival there was a *mela*—a festival; in this case, of a semi-demi-religious character. There were dancing-girls and what they called a "circus." It all took place just across the river, in full view of our boat. There was much feasting in some of the boats, "open-house," seemingly; much *tamasha*—noise—and merry-making. The proprieties seemed, nevertheless, to be carefully observed and, to our Western eyes, it was rather a formal affair.

This particular *mela,* we were told, was a reunion, a meeting of old friends, many of whom had not seen each other for a long time and were renewing their friendships; all men—there were no women except the dancing-girls, singers, and musicians.

Public cook-boats used as restaurants, mat-covered *dungas,* some very nice ones, partitioned into compartments, began arriving several days before the festivities commenced. Others of the excursion variety, and many fine boats belonging to rich Mohammedan merchants, all of them gay with Kashmir carpets and cushions, came by the hundreds.

All of our merchant-acquaintances called upon us "to pay their respects," as they say, even when they come to sell a piece of embroidery or papier-mâché. We had some most pressing invitations to go on board some of the finest boats, which—remembering a luncheon to which we had gone, in our "salad days" in Kashmir, out of pure curiosity, where ten long courses had been served, *all of them mutton*—we *thankfully* declined!

Gandarbal is the starting-point for everything going to any place on the road to Ladakh or beyond. Many parties, perfect caravans of pack-ponies, strong little horses of the country, camp there before commencing the ascent, which begins on the far-side of the narrow suspension-bridge that spans the Sind, eight miles farther up—beyond which no wheeled vehicles are permitted to go, or could go.

For only one or two persons, much impedimenta is taken along; for the more taken, the more ponies; the more ponies, the more *syces,* who, during the short "season," must make their livings for their entire year.

We were often approached, as good "prospects," by *syces,* showing-off their horses and displaying their "chits"—recommendations—which they themselves cannot read, who were anxious for us to try their horses. Sometimes their "chits" are exposés of the

character of the bearer and not, as he thinks, complimentary. Sometimes, they appear to have been written in a spirit of fun! A "chit" shown us on one occasion by a man, unaccompanied by any animal, read: "This horse is a good horse, and has taken me safely through the Baltal country."

All varieties of camping-parties appeared at Gandarbal, from simple ones going up into the "hills," to Sonamarg or some similar place, for rest and mild recreation, to parties bent on big-game shooting, a sport for which Kashmir is famous and for which a few permits are issued. These hunting parties are accompanied by *shikaris* and their helpers and coolies, besides the usual staff consisting of *khansamahs* and their assistants, bearers, and *syces* for the riding-horses and pack-ponies—an enormous array, moving with military precision. And no trouble, at all, to the *sahibs!*

Two nice-looking American women, who were returning from a sojourn in Leh, in Ladakh, nineteen "marches"—day's journeys—away, which included the Pass of the Zoji-la—11,300 feet in altitude—a terribly strenuous journey, had, for several days, a well-appointed camp near us. Evidently they were in the hands of competent people, for they looked as fresh as though beginning, not ending such a trek—taking all their meals near the water's edge, served by their white-clad be-turbaned bearer; reading and writing there, very much at home; literally, living out of doors. Fine for fine weather but they, certainly, would have had to take to cover, had one of Haramukh's notorious storms descended upon Gandarbal!

Two other American women far from young, who had had a boat next us at Nasim Bagh, were reported by Mahammed as at Sonamarg, seven marches up the Sind. And another, a frail-looking woman travelling entirely alone, who had a tiny house-boat below our site on the Sind, started off at daylight one morning, on her fat little pony, on her way to a place five marches beyond the other two: twelve marches, with no one with her but native servants!

These things puzzle the Mohammedans. I was asked several times by a Kashmiri, wrinkling his forehead: "But . . . *Sahiba,* have these American *memsahibs* no husbands?"

A great many pack-pony caravans—"goods-caravans"—encamp at Gandarbal, going to Leh or coming down from there, where, for purposes of trade, three or four thousand persons gather in the summer; where goods that have come great distances by yak caravans are bought and sold; where many strange articles—often stolen from old temples and lamaseries, it is said—some of them valuable, coming as "single spies" from Tibet, Mongolia, Persia and Who-knows-where, change hands.

These caravans coming over the Zoji-la and encamping at Gandarbal are on their way to Srinagar where, at the Yarkand Serai, they are unloaded and the goods overhauled.

Some of the Kashmiri merchants have representatives at Leh and come simply to claim their already-purchased goods, but many other things are picked up besides and much bargaining is done. These caravan-brought things, one finds, occasionally, in the old shops "below the Third Bridge."

Returning caravans are packed at the Yarkand Serai and take manufactured articles from the Occident as well as from elsewhere in the Orient, below the wall of the Great Western Himalayas.

We knew a few people at Gandarbal and Nasim Bagh, friendly souls who, on the slightest provocation, asked us to tea, and so we ourselves had tea-parties, for which occasions Sultana "spread himself," making many kinds of sandwiches, small cup-cakes, and scones, buttered hot; Mahammed, a model of *savoir-faire,* waiting upon us.

On every jaunt on the lake while at Nasim Bagh, I had watched the lotus-leaves expanding and growing in beauty, but "beside the Shalimar," even at the time we left Dal Lake, no "Lotus buds that float on those cool waters"—immortalized, from a Kashmiri love-song, by Laurence Hope (Mrs. Nicolson)—had appeared. In fact, there are very few there, now. I should have been sorry to leave Kashmir without a sight of one in that environment and, later, just before we left the Vale, I did see a few in bloom "beside the Shalimar" and on Dal Lake, near Nishat Bagh; but my outstanding day at Gandarbal was that of our voyage by *shikara* to Anchar Lake, which now has the most famous lotus-gardens.

We saw them at the perfect time of their blossoming. Getting daily information from his friends on the carrier-boats, one evening the *manji* announced: "It is now! Please, go tomorrow." And, we went.

The *shikara* was manned by six at the paddles and one at the bow—seven men, by way of precaution—so that we might be sure of getting back, up the river.

On the down trip the boat was swept along, needing only to be held in the channel.

From the Sind, we proceeded through a maze of canals. Along the banks and in all of the inlets there were glorious water-gardens—reeds and grasses and tall-growing rose-colored lotus-flowers, wide-cupped.

On every leaf trembled a silvery water drop, crystal clear—the "jewel of the lotus"—the subject of the well-known prayer of the Buddhists, *Om mane, padme Om,* which I have seen interpreted in this way: "O God! As the jewel of water on the lotus-leaf falls into the lake and is lost—so may my soul be lost in Nirvana."

We enjoyed Gandarbal: the sunsets coming up like flames from behind the Himalayas; the cloud effects; the distant pastel-glimpses of many-peaked Nanga Parbat; and, on the other side, beyond the rice-fields, snowy Mahadev—Great Spirit—that high above Shalimar, across Dal Lake, looked down upon us at Nasim Bagh. Yes! the storms, too, coming down, from Haramukh, with a rush of wind and sheets of lightning. They were thrilling and wonderful!

And there was a strange, unaccountable feeling of satisfaction that, behind it all, was Mount Godwin Austen, the highest mountain, next to Everest, in the whole world, 28,250 feet in altitude!

The middle of August arrived and, with it, our departure from Gandarbal. Our stay in Kashmir was drawing to a close. The time for us to go had arrived: the monsoon had come, and cooler days and nights might now be counted upon on the other side of the Pir Panjal Range, for our contemplated journey down the Valley of the Indus and our embarkation at

Karachi. The *Long Melford* slipped swiftly down the Sind to the "Sacred Place," but from there on, up the Jhelum, every man earned his paltry wage many times over!

We moored at Srinagar, at the *jai* that I liked, opposite the Bund, directly across from the Club, where we remained for the next two weeks—picking up loose ends, after our sojourn of almost five months in Kashmir.

On the twenty-sixth, taking Mahammed Khan Kashi with us as bearer—leaving his mother weeping bitterly, fearing we were taking her son to America, never to return—we motored away. But how we left the Vale and, finally, India, is another story!

THE END


KHYBER PASS
SWAT R.
GODWIN AUSTEN
I KANA
ANDI KOTAL
PESHAWAR
NANGA PARBAT
INDUS R.
ATTOCK
R.
KISHANGANGA R.
M
I
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K
MURREE
BARAMULA
BANDIPUR
ZOJI-LA PASS
WULAR L.
SONAMARG
BALTAL
RAWAL PINDI
SIND R.
GANDARBAL
ANCHAR L.
SHALIMAR
BOD DAL
NISHAT BAGH
JHELUM R.
SRINAGAR
LOKUT DAL
DAL GATE
PAHLGAM
PUNCH R.
JHELUM
R.
SINKIANG
KHYBER PASS
GODWIN AUSTEN
SRINAGAR
PESHAWAR
KASHMIR
RAWAL PINDI
TIBET
LAHORE
AMRITSAR
MT. EVEREST
DELHI
JAIPUR
AGRA
AJMER
DARJEELING
LUCKNOW
CAWNPORE
ABU ROAD
CHITORGARH
GWALIOR
MT. ABU
UDAIPUR
BUDDH GAYA
AHMEDABAD
SANCHI
UJJAIN
CALCUTTA
BARODA
MHOW
KHANDWA
AURANGABAD
INDIA