



P A T T E R N
of the Tiger

by

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

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U.S.S.R

U.S.S.R

Sinkiang (CHINA)

Afghanistan

PAKISTAN

INDIA

TIBET (CHINA)

Nepal

EAST PAKISTAN

Arabian Sea

Calcutta
Bay of Bengal

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To
Peggy

PART I

*The pattern of the tiger is on the outside, that
of a man is on the inside.*

— TIBETAN PROVERB.



Chapter 1

IN THE WINDPIPE of the tiger, an elastic ligament in place of bone permits great extension of the larynx and causes the familiar roar. The tiger can neither purr nor mew. All other cats except the lion and the leopard have bone in their windpipe apparatus, restricting the movement of the larynx and tongue, permitting the purr and mew, but not the roar. However, the world has long been familiar with the roar of the tiger, as with his color and stripes and his fetid smell. If he mewed, we should be shocked.

India, home of the tiger, was familiar to us also, until the summer of 1947, when the elastic ligament of the British rule was taken away. Then, with partition of the old British Indian Empire into India and Pakistan, the voice of India, stiffened by the bone of nationalism, changed drastically. With the new India and the new Pakistan we are not so familiar, although they have become important to us in our relations with Asia and the Arab, or Muslim, nations.

I returned to India and Pakistan in 1951 because I wanted to revisit places where I had lived as a boy and young man. At the same time, I wanted to determine whether or not the northern areas would be suitable for an expedition to collect mammals for American museums. However, I found a vastly changed and unfamiliar country. Politics and suspicion of the West were chief topics of conversation. Ordinary travel and tourist pursuits were made difficult by the State of

National Emergency, the Kashmir Situation, the Refugee Problem, War with Pakistan, Communism, the "Liberation" of Tibet, Trouble in Nepal, Famine, Drought and Floods, Religion, which refused to condone the spraying of locust-infected areas for fear of injuring the soul of someone's departed aunt, and the resentful attitude toward all Americans, who, according to most Hindus, are trying to dominate India by use of the dollar.

I found it difficult to concentrate on the habits of the snow leopard while military truck convoys rumbled by to a cease-fire line where fighting was expected to break out at any moment; prime ministers were assassinated; my own movements and conversations were checked twice daily by men of the Criminal Investigation Department; the presence of a "dancing girl," or prostitute, in an Englishman's hotel room caused a citywide strike of cooks and servants, forcing me to live on fruit and boiled eggs; and official delay and red tape were calculated to the number of dollars I might pay for permits and licenses. In an area where the local natives were so hungry they ate mice and grass, I decided that trapping mice for specimens would be an uninteresting occupation.

These conditions, however, did not become apparent at once on my arrival, and I had traveled too far to cut short my visit because of personal discomfort. As I traveled, it became clear to me that the areas I was familiar with, and most interested in, were also the centers of movements and affairs of vital interest to the rest of the world. I had to study the political and military situation of an area before I applied for my permit to go there. Thus it was that I learned about other things than the habits and habitats of Indian mammals. Interesting events were taking place all over the northern parts of the subcontinent, and I felt it would be a good idea to visit them before they became inaccessible for one reason or another.

My previous stay in India, covering a period of years, had been altogether pleasant, and I had been little concerned with politics or national problems. Now, however, I felt as many Americans do—that modern India's place in world affairs warrants serious re-study. This large, turbulent sub-continent, whose human population is more than twice the number of people on the North American continent, and which stretches for twenty-two hundred miles from east to west and two thousand miles from north to south, had already assumed a position in international affairs which seemed likely to affect America's future in Asia.

Since I had gone to school in India, and had also lived for some years in the North-West Frontier Province of what is now Pakistan, it was natural that I should visit Pakistan as well. This gave me an opportunity to see at first hand the effects of partition of the old British Indian Empire into two new dominions, one of which became a republic two years later. In Pakistan—the newest and largest Muslim nation in the world—which does not yet have a constitution, I found far less resentment against America, though some criticism. My travel difficulties were easier to put up with, and when, toward the end of my stay there, my wife, Peggy, joined me, I thoroughly enjoyed seeing things through her clear eyes, unjaundiced by too many months in India.



Chapter 2

WASHINGTON, New York, London, Frankfurt, Istanbul, Beirut and Basra. Flying eastward to the India I had once looked upon as home, I had yet to feel the thrill of excitement. The rapid transition from country to country and the smooth efficiency of the airline people had made everything seem so simple, almost humdrum, that there was no sense of adventuring into new and strange lands. I still wore the suit I had put on in the midwestern United States, more than seven thousand miles away, and smoked cigarettes I had bought at Idlewild Airport in New York.

At Frankfurt, a group of prominent Americans boarded the plane, to go as far as Karachi in Pakistan, where they were to begin a tour of the Indian subcontinent and other parts of Asia for the Ford Foundation, to find out where American dollars could most wisely be distributed. An attractive stewardess had kept us well fed, supplied us with magazines and ministered to our wants during the night. In Istanbul, she guided us to a restaurant and breakfast; there the smell and the flies told us that we were at the gateway to the Middle East. That night we stayed in Beirut in Lebanon. The airline had supplied taxis to take the passengers of the plane to a hotel by the shores of the Mediterranean, and we had our first experience with a wild native driver whose hands never left the horn as we skittered round and through lines of startled camels and frightened nomads on a winding road

that followed the shore. Palm trees and golden sand, incredibly blue water, a still different currency to puzzle over, food with strange flavors, hard beds under whirling fans that stirred the oppressive heat and water one could not trust for drinking purposes. The Far East was drawing closer.

Another dawn found us drinking tea at the Basra airport with armed guards watching to see that no one strayed from the building. Mosquitoes buzzed about our heads, persistent flies walked over our faces, and in the fast-increasing light we could see the flat arid land. It was pleasant to return to the plane we had left in the dark a few minutes earlier. Except for the armed guards, there was nothing to indicate we were quite close to the Abadan oil fields, the scene of another episode in British history.

From Basra, we continued over Iran, while the Americans of the Ford Foundation played cards, a Burmese prince in a bright green skirt talked with his seat companion, and most of the other passengers slept. In the front seat of the plane, surrounded by diplomatic mail sacks and with one wrist chained to a briefcase, a tired young U. S. State Department courier rested uncomfortably. Since leaving London, he had spoken with no one except the plane's crew, and I wondered what he was carrying in those mail sacks and pouches. The man sitting next to me was a Swiss gentleman from Karachi, where he had been in business for many years. We had introduced ourselves, exchanged cards and now and then made polite conversation, but no one in that airplane expected ever to meet the other passengers again. Compared with the long voyage by ship, taking weeks and affording time for the forming of friendships, the magic carpet of the airlines was too fast. One barely had time to find out what country it was one had just left, and to reset one's watch.

We were due to reach Karachi at noon. As the sun came up out of the red-dust horizon I noticed we were flying parallel

with the coast of Iran. Soon we would be over Baluchistan in Pakistan — vast, thinly populated, sandy and waterless — which I would probably reach on foot in about six months' time. I wondered what it would be like, and for the first time I felt excitement. How much had the country changed? What effect had the 1947 partition had on the Baluchis and Brahuīs of the deserts, the Pathans of the dry, hot mountains of the North-West Frontier near Russia, the turbulent and excitable Punjabīs, and the people of Sind? Had the wildlife of the country been affected? Much would depend on the new conditions resulting from the separation of Hindu and Muslim peoples into two nations.

At noon we landed at Karachi, where a crew of uniformed men boarded the plane with spray guns and insect repellent, which they used most liberally before we were permitted to disembark and stretch our legs. The large airport building was impressive; the city had grown tremendously since I had left it by ship years before. Only a few Muslims, in typical loosely tied turbans and baggy trousers showed that we were in a different country from the ones we had briefly touched during the last few days.

In the air once more, I pressed my face to the window and peered down through the haze to the land below. I felt pleasure at returning, and curiosity too, for I had lived some happy years here. School at Mhow and Rawalpindi, years at Nowshera near the Khyber Pass, summers in Mussoorie, Simla and the Rānikhet hills in Kumaon. A thousand memories came back to me with the smell we had picked up at Karachi and which seemed to linger in the cabin of the plane. I fancied I could detect the odor of cow-dung fires, and thought it was my imagination. But it was not a fancy. Flying much higher than we were, pilots have frequently found themselves in a stationary layer of hazy, acrid smoke that has risen from the millions of tiny cow-dung fires which are as much a part

of Indian life as the temples in Benares, the snows of the Himalayas, the cow on the sidewalk or busy street, the ubiquitous beggar or the howling jackal in the night.

It was not long after we took off from Karachi that we left Pakistan behind and were over the plains of India. Clouds began to appear all around us, and for the first time there was violence in the air. It was July, monsoon time, and down below the parched earth was sucking up the desperately needed water as fast as it fell. I hoped the floods would not be too terrible. Then we began the descent, and in a few minutes rolled to a stop at New Delhi's Palam Airport, freshly washed by a recent deluge.

During the lengthy and careful customs inspection at the airport, an airlines representative telephoned the Cecil Hotel in Old Delhi and engaged a room for me. An hour or so later, my passport, health cards, police registration and currency declaration papers were returned and I was free to go to the hotel. Within two days, I was to present myself and the papers at the Alien Registration Office, with details of my proposed itinerary in India, so that the Criminal Investigation Department (C. I. D.) could keep informed on my whereabouts.

It was late in the evening as the taxi drove past the ruins of the old Purana Qila Fort, built by the Moguls about five hundred years ago, and passed through Connaught Circle in the center of New Delhi, then turned northward through the Delhi Gate, where the stench of human excreta and long-dead bodies waiting for burning mixed with the smell of chicken kabob that came from the Moti Mahal restaurant.

As the taxi passed the Jama Masjid, one of the largest mosques in the world, and the huge Red Fort, built by Emperor Jehangir over three hundred years ago, the scent of flowers was strong, but too soon replaced by the acrid fumes of urine and kerosene lamps as we passed Chandni Chowk ba-

zaar, famous – or infamous according to one’s inclinations – for the incredible variety and nature of its wares. Then through more gates and under railroad bridges where smoke and soot from trains filled the air. Scraping past Brahman bulls and red cows sleeping in the street, the taxi slid through the narrow Kashmir Gate behind a slowly moving bullock cart, and a few minutes later entered the imposing driveway to the Cecil.

I was tired, dirty and anxious to bathe. While I registered in the required detail and filled in police registration forms in duplicate and even greater detail, a uniformed hotel servant with bare feet walked around playing on a gong. It was eight-thirty and dinnertime. Chief Justice W. O. Douglas, that day returned from travels in the Himalayas, sat in a rumpled seer-sucker suit, talking with news correspondents under whirling fans. At another table, a Hindu maharaja and his aides were drinking whisky and sodas; a cheerful group of red-faced British business representatives at another table examined my luggage and watched me with thinly veiled curiosity; and several ladies, whose evening gowns showed styles from the present to seven years past, chattered while they watched and listened to my conversation with the Hindu desk clerk. I felt that I had been remiss in not having written to the hotel in advance, giving my personal history and present occupation, so that all these charming people would have been saved so much burning curiosity. Then I followed three turbaned, barefooted servants with my bags to a large room on the second, and top, floor of an annex building a few steps away.

It was here at the Cecil that I found the first evidence of the old India I had known before. With my room went a “bearer” or servant, who tended to all my wants, took care of my clothes, fixed my bath, supervised the daily cleaning of the room by lesser servants and wakened me with tea and fruit in the morning – a ritual known as *chota hazri* or small breakfast. Ganesh was soft-voiced, clean and thoughtful in

my interests. His dignified respect was unusual, and a few moments after we met and studied each other, we fell into a relationship that made my stay at the Cecil more pleasant than I had expected it to be. He knew little English, and made an excellent tutor for me in remembering the Hindustani and Urdu languages that I had almost forgotten. The name Ganesh somehow suited him, though his head by no means resembled that of an elephant. The divinity Ganesh is venerated by Hindus of all sects. One comes across his idol everywhere. He is the god of obstacles, and no Hindu begins a serious undertaking without first seeking his aid. Ganesh is represented by an elephant's head, an enormous stomach and disproportionate limbs. Always, there is a rat at his feet. The first time his mother saw him, she reduced his head to ashes by the brilliance of her look. Siva, his father, learning of this misfortune, grieved at having a son without a head and sent his servants out with orders to cut off the head of the first living creature they met sleeping with the face turned to the north. An elephant happened to be the first creature they saw in this position, so they cut off its head and carried it back to Siva, who fitted it on his son's neck. Since then, Ganesh has preserved his peculiar appearance and remained a favorite deity.

In India, even the poorest people have servants, and for the Westerner, a bearer is essential, as much from the social prestige viewpoint as from the necessity for having someone to speak and deal with untouchables, who carry water, sweep the floor, mend clothes and perform other tasks which none but untouchables may perform. In this country, where the three great resources are land, rain and men, the bearer or personal servant is not a luxury, he is a necessity. Ganesh was the type of servant it is increasingly difficult to find in India today. These faithful and reliable men, with generations of family service behind them, are a vanishing race.

That night, Ganesh served dinner in my room, and I fell asleep on a hard bed under the fans while watching two friendly, tiny lizards stalking insects on the whitewashed walls.

After breakfast and my first encounter with diminutive eggs produced by some undernourished hen, I went by taxi into New Delhi and called at Thos. Cook and Son. They advised me that some old clothing, mousetraps and skinning instruments for small mammals, which I had shipped before leaving America, had arrived safely. They would be happy to arrange an appointment for me with the customs officers on the following day, to have the things inspected and released. Then I changed some dollars into rupees and annas and walked the few steps to Connaught Circle.

Old Delhi, on the west bank of the Jumna River and about four miles north of Connaught Circle, is just what its name implies. Here the Mogul emperors built their lasting monuments to the Muslim rule over India, and introduced the foliated arches that are today a prominent and distinguishing feature of Indian architecture. The great Red Fort which looks as though it had been built only five years ago; the Jama Masjid mosque nearby, also of red sandstone, built by Shah Jehan, who later built the Taj Mahal for his love; the high fortress walls and numerous gates in Old Delhi — all are relics of the Golden Age of Muslim power in the Indian subcontinent. The capital was moved to Delhi from Calcutta late in 1911, and in the 1920's, under the British, European styles of architecture were introduced for the central government buildings, beyond the Old Delhi Gate. Thus the two Delhis were created, utterly at variance with each other in appearance, atmosphere and utility.

New Delhi is laid out in a way similar to the city of Washington, D. C., with its boulevards and wide roads radiating from Connaught Circle. There the resemblance ends. With-

out any tall buildings, new and modern structures line the tree-bordered streets which stem from the circle, itself a huge, bewildering, two-storied wheel of shops, banks, restaurants, cinemas and offices. It is almost a mile in circumference and its center is a park. As I walked slowly along the circle from shop to shop, I was amazed at the variety of goods on display, and realized that many visits would be required before I could hope to know where to go for whatever I might require. On that first visit to Connaught Circle, my wanderings were handicapped by dozens of maimed, crippled, deformed and diseased beggars, lepers without toes or fingers and persistent fortune tellers, all with clutching hands and a vile odor. Moaning and begging for *baksheesh*, or alms, they are always there, sickening and annoying, trading on their beastliness, usually in larger numbers at the doors to restaurants.

Several months later, after returning to New Delhi a few times, I spent one entire day in Connaught Circle, and felt that at last I knew it well enough to find whatever I needed. I knew where to find the best star sapphires and rubies, the finest stone-marten skins, cloth of gold or silver, Gorgonzola cheese, luscious grapefruit or hand-carved elephant-tusk ivory that had cost two men's eyesight and their youth in the making. I knew where to find the latest thing in American and British cosmetics, and where the finest tiger and leopard skins were hidden behind some old rags while the fur dealers exhibited moth-eaten skins for the tourist trade; where I could buy a 1952 Buick or Jaguar automobile, or a young Chinese virgin, at black-market prices. The best shops for Chesterfield cigarettes, portraits of Queen Victoria or the Duke of Windsor, fabulously rich silken saris and brocades, pornographic books in complete libraries, and either the cheap grade — twenty-four lessons — or the more expensive sixty-four lessons in the Hindu Art of Love. I knew that the

“asking price” for all these things was at least three times above the final selling price, and that almost all of it was either soiled or of inferior quality. But it had taken me too long to acquire my knowledge of the circle. I left India the next day.

During the day I had visited several book stores and one library in search of up-to-date material on the flora and fauna of northern India. But I had been disappointed. There seemed to be little worth-while natural history information that was even comparatively recent or comprehensive, but I had found a small book by Salim Ali on the Himalayan mammals. It looked useful, and I spent the evening studying it. From the lounge below came the sounds of a gay party, which reached its peak an hour before midnight when a female voice needlessly informed New Delhi that its owner was “spiffed.” A little later, I heard stealthy movements outside my door and opened it abruptly, to see the night watchman, or *chowkidar*, making his rounds. I felt a little sheepish as he turned to see who was so nervous, for I had forgotten about chowkidars. Throughout the subcontinent, the approach of dusk brings out an army of men, very often small-statured Gurkhas wearing their long-bladed kukris, whose lifelong occupation is the guarding by night of homes and houses where people live. In a land where robbery is an honorable profession for many, the chowkidar is an absolute necessity, and my earliest childhood recollection is of the twisted body of a chowkidar lying on the veranda of our home, where the man had been strangled with a thin silken cord, used by Thugs. The sounds of India by night would not be complete without the occasional low call of the chowkidar as he makes his rounds and notifies his friend at the next house that all is well.

Next morning I went early to the Alien Registration Office and handed over to an official the papers I had been given at

the airport. Shortly afterward I left the office armed with a long, stiff document, stamped and numbered, which set out in detail the places I expected to visit in India and the dates that I would visit them. It carried all the details from my passport, a personal description, and lengthy instructions by which I understood that I must report my arrival and departure to the local C. I. D. at each place I visited. This regulation, together with the requirements for hotel registration, in duplicate, along the same lines, gave the C. I. D. a double check on all travelers, for India had become thoroughly security conscious. The word spy was frequently heard, and it appeared that everyone was concerned about the large number of Pakistani spies believed to be in India plotting evil. From the moment I left the office that day, though I was unaware of it at the time, my movements were known in detail to the C. I. D.

The obliging Mr. Mathur at Cook's had arranged my appointment with the customs officials, and I presented myself at the proper time, expecting to complete the business quickly. I was wrong. The contents of the two small boxes were mainly old, warm clothing I would need in the Himalayas, small scalpels, tweezers, probes, scrapers, cotton wool, fine wire and a lot of mousetraps. The old clothing was a simple matter and quickly dealt with, but the other items seemed to fit into no established category. The first underling who interviewed me chewed the end of a long-nibbed pen and considered the problem at length, with occasional suggestions from his friends, who had joined in the examination of my skinning kit. Their concern was "How much can we make him pay?" Finally they gave up, and sent me to their chief, a Mr. Mathews, whom I came to know well later. In a few minutes, the necessary papers had been drawn up in quadruplicate, longhand, and Mathews, with a peculiar gleam in his eyes, escorted me to the office of the chief super-

intendent. Mr. Gupta, a sunburned Sidney Greenstreet, overflowed a creaking chair in a hot office and was very courteous. Mathews opened the conversation by mentioning that I was interested in mice. Then he sat down to watch the effect on Mr. Gupta, and I wondered whether it was Sidney Greenstreet, after all, or Nero Wolfe who inspected me carefully.

“An unusual profession, is it not?”

I explained briefly that I was a naturalist, more interested in smaller mammals than in tigers or elephants, and that I had brought my skinning case in the event I found something of particular interest I might want to preserve.

“Why the poison powders, and what is the wire for?”

“The poison is to protect the skins from germs or insects. The wire is to stuff the tails, when wrapped with cotton wool.”

“Then you only handle dead mice? Who kills them for you?”

“I kill them myself.”

“Why?”

“So that I can examine them and preserve them for proper identification.”

This brought a long pause, then: “Why are you interested in the mice of India? Are there no mice in America?”

As he handled one of my very sharp scalpels, I decided it was Sidney Greenstreet after all. I explained that in many countries, people like myself collected specimens for others to study, and that the mice of India were not well known, there were few of them in collections in the U. S. A. and a knowledge of mice was frequently extremely useful in planning agricultural developments and experiments. This was apparently the right answer.

“Then you are a professional investigator of mice, and these sharp knives and other things are the tools of your profession. Then there will be no duty payable. We are most

interested in your work, Doctor. It has been pleasant to talk with you." I am not a doctor, and had not come to India to spend my time catching mice, but the man seemed so relieved to have found a category to place me in that I did not mention it. Turning to Mr. Mathews, he directed that the papers be rewritten accordingly, and then said, "Are you interested in Delhi mice? There are many in my house. I will arrange for you to have them."

And so it was that I received the following day a large wire cage containing a lot of live mice. More arrived soon afterward, and I was forced to turn them loose in the hotel grounds, later that night when no one was looking, for Mr. Gupta would have been upset. Whether it was a friendly gesture or not, I suspected that the entire customs department personnel were ridding their homes of mice, which, as Hindus, they could not kill. Ganesh seemed a trifle bothered and also amused at the gathering of mice in my room. I noticed that the other servants in the hotel talked in whispers as I passed by, and the permanent residents eyed me pityingly. I knew that they failed to understand why anyone in his right mind would travel to India — in this era of unrest and tension — to catch mice, when there were tigers and all sorts of large and spectacular animals to hunt.

Now that I had my belongings together and papers in order, I was ready to make my first trip into the North. I planned to go to the Kumaon Hills in the Himlayas, near Tibet and Nepal, stopping at one or two places on the way. Before leaving, I made inquiries about Kashmir, where I wanted to go after my return from Kumaon, and found it was necessary to apply for a special permit to travel in Jammu and Kashmir. I applied for the permit at once, and was told it would be ready for me by the time I returned from the hills. Then I called Cook's and they made train reservations for me on the following day.

Train travel in India is an experience one never forgets, nor wishes to repeat more often than is absolutely essential. All of the rolling stock is antiquated and the roadbeds are rough. In August 1951, the express from Delhi to Calcutta averaged forty miles per hour and established a record which made headlines in the newspapers. Ninety per cent of the carriages have stone floors, and the windows are badly fitted. Since I had chosen to travel off the beaten route, where frequent changes had to be made from broad gauge to meter, or narrow, gauge, I had no opportunity to see the most up-to-date equipment, but I did hear that some carriages even had air-conditioning facilities, for which passengers paid a slight premium in addition to the usual fare. During the months that followed, I made several journeys by rail, and they were all in the same type of dilapidated carriage, which rocked and rattled while dust, sand and coal-smoke grit poured through the two doors and windows. Wood and hard leather benches or bunks, held in place by heavy chains and hooks, frequently gave way with embarrassing results and no few bruises. Toilet facilities were limited to a minute wash basin, and a cement floor with a hole in it served as a shower. Water for the shower had to be brought in from the outside by an untouchable. The rest of the equipment was of the ball and chain type so popular about fifty years ago. On the rim of the seat two boards were nailed, shaped to fit the feet, and designed for Hindus, for whom position is important. This is rather awkward without practice. The carriages usually have three or four separate compartments: a reserved coupé for individuals or two people; an adjoining reserved compartment for four to six people; and, at each end of the carriage, small cubby-holes for one's servants. Often there is a separate compartment reserved for women in purdah.

I left Delhi, in a reserved coupé, for Bareilly, where I was to change to the narrow-gauge train for Kathgodam, the end

of the line at the beginning of the Kumaon Hills, where the great plains of deep alluvial soil, stoneless for hundreds of miles, end abruptly against the fold of the sub-Himalayan mountains.



Chapter 3

TIME HAD WAITED for me at Kathgodam. At the end of the narrow-gauge line, the town sat with its back to the plains, facing the first upthrust of the Himalayas, and reeked with the smell of turpentine from its one factory. As I left the carriage a vendor walked past carrying a tray of overripe bananas, his head and the bananas shrouded in a buzzing swarm of wasps. On the station platform, a Jain, naked except for a G string, stood aloof. He was a good-looking young man, with well-cared-for hands and a dignified nonchalance that somehow needed a furled umbrella to complete it. It seemed that I had been jerked back into the old India I had known before, and I realized afresh the importance of religious custom to the Indian people. Outside the stationmaster's office, a punkah-wallah pulled lazily at the rope which pulled the swinging beam which carried the cloth and burlap which fanned the stationmaster inside his office on the other side of the wall. Near the exit from the station, a large brown goat walked by, to stop at the open-fronted restaurant where a man drank tea, and stand there watching — not begging like a dog, just interested. Outside, two men repaired the tin roof of the station where the lashing winds and rain of the monsoons had ripped it to pieces. The sign in English and Hindustani — GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS, KATHGODAM — needed painting. Only the two busses and a dilapidated taxi were new to me.

The Kumaon Hills—the Himalayan mountains are generally referred to as hills by the people of India, unless a particular mountain is being discussed—are actually many chains of mountains which form a watershed between Tibet and India; and the Kumaon district is that area which is bounded by Nepal on the east, Tibet, now occupied by Chinese Communists, on the north, and the Himalayas of Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh provinces on the west. It is this section of the Himalayas around which are spun all the great narrations of Hindu mythology. In modern times, at Kausani, near Almora, Mahatma Gandhi translated the famous *Gita* which has been called the Song Celestial of the Hindus. In the Kumaon borderland, adjoining western Nepal and Chinese Tibet, in a strip of territory less than thirty miles wide and one hundred miles long, there are huddled together no fewer than one hundred Himalayan peaks over twenty thousand feet high. A fearsome rampart unsurpassed in grandeur anywhere else in the world. Here, in the middle of this cluster of incredible rocks, is the sacred Nanda Devi, rising to 25,645 feet from the center of her “Inner Sanctuary.” Mount Kailas, the supposed abode of the god Siva, is just across the border in Tibet. Through Kumaon, pilgrims from all over the subcontinent pass on their way to Kailas, and the shrines and temples of Mount Badrinath.

As a boy, I had gone to Chaubattia and Ranikhet to convalesce after fever, and I had walked the fifty-three miles from Kathgodam, by-passing Naini Tal, a lovely lake at sixty-three hundred feet above sea level, surrounded by mountains two to three thousand feet higher. Now I wanted to see the lake, but more particularly I wanted to talk with Jim Corbett, author of *Man-eaters of Kumaon*, who lived in a house by the lake. I understood that in addition to being an authority on tigers and leopards, he was also a keen observer and had made voluminous notes on other forms of wildlife, including

the birds. I wanted to talk with him before going on to Ranikhet, Almora and the hills beyond.

The taxi turned out to be in fair condition and seemed capable of climbing the long winding road up into the hills. The instant we left Kathgodam we also left behind us all flatness. The land was suddenly transformed into a forested, mountainous country with streams and vivid greenery. A different world indeed from the hot, drab, monotonous plains. The temperature dropped rapidly. At every turn in the road, long-tailed gray langur monkeys with small black faces sat, played, walked or mated on the low retaining wall on the outer edge of the road overlooking the valleys far below. Here there were few macaque, or rhesus, monkeys in gangs, and I saw nothing of the wanton destruction they were causing in other areas. Later, however, I was to witness the havoc these red-ended devils created. It has been reliably stated that at least 50 per cent of the crops raised in India each year are eaten or destroyed by monkeys. Although a bounty has been placed on his unclean hide, the monkey is revered by millions of Hindus under the name of Hanuman, the mythical god in the form of an illustrious general whose achievements at the head of his army of soldier monkeys are described at great and tedious length in the *Ramayana*, favorite epic of the Hindus. The worship of Hanuman, therefore, prevents the killing of predatory monkeys, or in fact, harming them in any way. This the monkeys appear to fully comprehend. But the bounty is a boon to the poor and hungry, whose food, property and livelihood are destroyed by the marauders, and so there has come about a system, typically Hindu, by which monkeys are captured alive and turned over to the authorities, in cages, for the bounty money. The authorities, however, many of them devotees of Hanuman, dare not kill the creatures, but load them into trucks, or sometimes into a bus, and transport them into

some other area where they are not already a pest and dire menace, and turn them loose again. In the Kumaon Hills the dumping of bounty monkeys has reached the stage where something drastic will have to be done. Either the monkeys will have to be controlled or reduced in numbers, or the human inhabitants will have to move out. Neither the monkeys nor the Hindus are much interested in birth control, and none of the obvious solutions can be applied in a Hindu community. The monkey problem in India is one of many which the government will have to face up to eventually, reluctant though it may be, but I doubt that legislation calling for the killing of monkeys will be passed for many years to come.

As the taxi wound its low-octaned way up the road, clouds moved past like great slithering shadows, scraping their bellies on the hairpin turns; mile-deep valleys beyond the outer wall were blotted out, and except for the ghostly gray langurs on the wall, the dripping forests and the sudden appearance of shrines where travelers leave a few coins to insure protection against evil spirits, it was a still world, tilted, damp and oppressive. As the car climbed higher, the first waterfall, brown with the earth and roots it had torn up, crashed down the mountain side and passed under the road through a crude duct. Soon others sounded in the mist, and once in a while the driver slammed on his brakes before slowly navigating a landslip or slide that partly covered the road. In second gear, the last four miles before reaching Naini Tal were a succession of sharp bends and a series of landslides. Where the debris of fallen earth and rocks had completely blocked the road, gangs of drenched men and women worked with baskets and their hands to clear the way; donkeys pulling large carts carried huge rocks to culverts where the rocks were tipped off into space, and large, impassive bullocks pulled small carts filled with earth, like-

wise dumped into space. Men in pairs shoveled wet earth from the slide area, one digging and the other, facing him, pulling on a rope attached to the handle of the shovel, throwing the earth a few feet. By doing this in relays, the earth was moved eventually to the edge of the road and heaved over the wall. Here and there slides had carried rocks over the road, smashing the low retaining wall and creating narrow, dangerous areas where traffic was exposed to washouts or the sudden crumbling collapse of the weakened roadbed. Natives reported to us that on the road north from Naini Tal, which I was to take later on, several slides had so blocked the route that it would take extra gangs and several days to clear a path for traffic.

My immediate thought was of the dozens of new bulldozers I had seen from the train, parked under canvas, idle. Gifts from America. Then I looked at those laboring men and women, some of them resting, crouched on their haunches in the rain with their huge circular baskets over their heads as umbrellas, and I knew that one bulldozer would put them all out of work, increase the poverty in the district, and result only in opening the road a few unimportant hours earlier. It was better that these poor people earned their thirty cents a day and ate at least one meal.

Within an hour of my arrival at Naini Tal, the monsoons came. Normal rain had fallen more or less gently from the time I left Kathgodam. Now it fell in a solid wall of water. The tin roof of the Royal Hotel shuddered under the impact, all sound was drowned out in the hiss of water striking the ground outside and the roar of overflowing drainspouts cascading down to wear holes in the gravel at the corners of the buildings. Water rolled down the mountain sides, and within minutes the level of the lake began to rise. Sixteen and a half inches of rain fell on Naini Tal in twenty-four hours, and few people seemed interested when it was reported that Simla,

not far away to the northwest, had received nineteen and a half inches during the same period.

Sacred abode, or sleeping chamber, of Goddess Nanda, or Naina, Naini Tal was discovered in 1841. After about 1900 it became one of the most popular of the hill stations in India, with its boat club, its temples and shrines, its fine climate and its fishing. From the surrounding hills, up which one may walk or be carried by coolies in a dandy, or chair slung on poles, there are views of the distant Himalayan peaks and snow fields. Flowers of every hue, native to the Himalayas, are mingled with a hundred varieties introduced by homesick Englishmen. Fruits and insipid vegetables are plentiful, and only the local people are poor and hungry, for the fruits and vegetables are shipped to other areas. Today, Naini Tal lives in its past. Business is poor and the summer visitors are few. All of the buildings need paint and repair work and only the lake itself is unchanged, tranquil. Since its early days, many great landslides have necessitated rebuilding of much of the two parts of the town, each at its own end of the lake, and even the Nanda Devi temple has been moved more than once. Geologists believe the lake had its origin in glacial action or was formed by a monstrous landslide. But this is too prosaic for the Hindu, who claims that the lake was formed out of the tears shed by Sati, whose eyes dropped there when she was abducted and her body carried away by the god Siva. Almost a mile long, surrounded by the forested mountains, flowering trees, huge ferns and indescribably beautiful flowers, the lake is a pretty thing. Its fame is natural in a land where water is so precious. To me it lost its charm when, from a distance, I saw a man drown in it a few scant yards from the flower-garden shore while dozens of Hindus calmly watched. The man, a local official, had been sailing with two companions when a sudden squall overturned the small sailboat and threw them all into the water. Two of the men swam

ashore, the other could not swim, and he screamed for help. It so happened that Nanda had not received sacrifice in the form of a life for too long a period, so his friends and countrymen looked at him sadly, shook their heads and said, "Sorry, old boy, you seem to be elected, there is nothing we can do." And long before I reached the scene the crowd was already breaking up. The man had gone down to the bottom and Nanda was appeased for another month or so.

Built largely by the British, whose women and children spent summers there to avoid the blistering heat and the malaria of the plains stations, Naini Tal no longer thrives, and the wistful reminiscences of hotel proprietors and their bartenders are reflected in the rioting eagerness with which any Westerner is greeted at the tollgate entrance to the town. Here waits a band of coolies, as well as hordes of rickshaw boys, dandy carriers, beggars, would-be guides, servants and pimps. At the Royal Hotel, where I stayed, there was one other guest, a retired British officer whose better memories were obviously of pre-partition days in what is now Pakistan, an alien land to Naini Tal.

Jim Corbett was in Africa, so I talked with the only man then in Naini Tal who had any knowledge of the wildlife of Kumaon, Mr. James Stevens, forest officer and an old-time resident of the Himalayas. While the rains fell outside, we sat on stools at the semicircular bar of the hotel, with its beautifully hand-polished oak panels and wall decorations of ancient Mogul stabbing knives, and, without ice, drank a few well-flavored sodas. The Indian bartender, glad to have listeners, relived the days when American GIs had brightened his life and left him with indelible impressions of a fantastic Broadway, an incomprehensible Brooklyn, a vast and superior Texas and a heavenly California. When at last the bartender had run down a little, Jim Stevens talked about the wildlife, and I began to realize that the natural history of the

Himalayas and the Kumaon was not in any of the books I had read, but locked away in the brains of a few Englishmen who had chosen to live there. Indian students and scientists have long been far more interested in metaphysics and metempsychosis than in zoology or even biology, although the latter seems to be of paramount importance in the everyday life of most Hindus. For them, the soul is of far greater importance than the house it occupies, regardless of the shape — be it in the form of a man, a serpent, a dog, a horse, a mosquito or an ant. Perhaps this is one reason why so many of the animals in India are so horribly neglected and in such miserable condition, even though some of them are worshipped as sacred. A great many women in India are desperately trying to revive the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, abandoned about four days after India was handed its independence. They are campaigning to eradicate some of the worst evils, particularly in regard to the pariah dogs and the small tonga pony which pulls the poor man's taxi.

Jim Stevens had recently returned from a trip to the forests along the Nepal-India boundary, just below Tibet. He spoke of the animals of the district and described to me the zho, a beast of burden that was being used to carry heavy loads. A hybrid, resulting from the crossing of the yak and the Indian cattle, the zho is apparently suited for the high altitudes, and capable of carrying great loads. A shaggy brute, with a terrible disposition, it has many of the characteristics of the yak, which, in the wild state, inhabits the coldest, wildest and most desolate mountains, and is found at greater elevations than any other mammal.

In New Delhi and Old Delhi libraries I had found little published material that was useful as a basis for notes on the Himalayan mammals. Most of the recorded data on wildlife of the hills, written by visitors, tourists, or early adventurers,

were to a large extent observations flavored with romance and no little imagination. There appeared to be few books anywhere that dealt with the fauna specifically. Gazetteers written in 1891 were not reliable, regardless of their astonishingly fine bindings and plates. Perhaps the somewhat unusual system of cataloguing books in the libraries I had visited had much to do with my inability to find what I wanted. I imagine the system was introduced about the time Clive was active there. In New Delhi, the best libraries are not for use by visitors, for on making inquiries there I was informed that none but a "gazetted officer" can handle the books. At Naini Tal, the highly touted library was never opened during my stay there, and no one knew who the librarian was or where he was sleeping. I decided to go on to Chaubattia and Ranikhet, and the hills around Almora.

I had last seen Chaubattia on a moonlit night. With two friends helping, I had searched for some keys lost while refereeing a hockey game on a field cut out of the side of a mountain. As we searched near the edge of the field, close to the steep drop into the forests, a large limping tiger had appeared on the scene, also looking for something. We had left there without my keys, myself in the lead. Next morning a local farmer was killed and his legs eaten, the tiger then going off to rest. A man-eater always eats the legs first, so warnings were posted everywhere. Within two days Jim Corbett had killed the tiger and everyone was happy. Now I wanted to see if the place had changed, and if by any chance there were any of the great fighting dogs that I remembered. As a boy I had gained some small notoriety as the owner of a jet-black killer of other fighting dogs, a champion of all weights and breeds. Blackie had chosen to sponsor a hideous, cowardly, red dog-friend, aptly named Porky. Porky was attacked by a panther one night and Blackie

attacked the panther. Hours later we found his torn body on the hillside, a few feet from the panther, which was also dead, with its throat torn out.

The day I left Naini Tal the rain stopped for a little while, and the sun appeared. The vivid green of everything was startling, and I was surprised to see the splashes of bright-colored flowers that had survived the deluge. Since I was not leaving until after lunch, I walked up the side of a hill nearby, following a winding path that led to Snow View, a place at the top from which the Himalayan snow fields can sometimes be seen. Miniature torrents cut their way down to the lake, and I soon rose above the smell of spices and cow-dung fires that perpetually hovers over all Indian towns. Tiny pink and lavender orchids, ten inches high, clung to the sides of steep banks, and the bent-over leaves of huge ferns made spouts for the water that fell on them from above. Once or twice I turned to look down at the lake, but it was blotted out by wispy clouds. With the smell gone, and the noises, I might have been anywhere in the world. After an hour I reached a well-traveled path that took me to a shelter with wooden seats, on the top of the crest of the mountain. Clouds rolled by, wet and fragrant from the trees and shrubs they had brushed against. I could see nothing through the clouds, and after a while started down the hill again as the rain began to fall in great drops, then in a blinding, roaring sheet. By the time I reached the bottom, the water running warm down my back and the insides of my legs, I noticed the little orchids were bent down to the ground. Then the smell came back, and the voices of Mali Tal, the name given to the upper part of the lake.

A different taxi took me along the road to Bhowali, and then to Chaubattia. The old footpath up which I had walked years earlier was gone. A new black-top road that had been well surveyed made the journey pleasant, and except for the

palpitating moments when we faced head-on collision with busses or trucks driven by irresponsible Sikhs or Hindus, there was little traffic.

In the days now dead and gone, tales of the hazards of riding a hill pony always dealt with the creature's deliberate selection of the outermost edge of the road or trail, where danger of landslips was greater and one's outside leg dangled over too much space. Today the hazards are mechanized, and more terrifying. A Sikh in the driver's seat of a bus or truck is immediately transformed into the leader of an armored tank division, slightly inebriated. His afterlife is already assured anyway, and the present only an illusion, so his progress along a good road is marked by hairbreadth evasions of disaster, and a completely demoralized enemy in the form of those who have crashed off the road to avoid annihilation. I do believe that there exists in India a race of people whose sense of judgment and of distances has been impaired in some way, for in passing cars or trucks on the highway there seem to be only two procedures possible. The first, applying particularly to those who drive a bus or truck, is simply to charge at any approaching vehicle without swerving. This unnerves the enemy and softens him up a little. If he is stupid enough to stick to his course and try to frighten you, then you step on the gas and take a little more of the middle of the road. (The fool will try to save his own life at the last minute anyway.) If, however, he maintains his right to part of the road, and fails to waver in the last split second, then you must consider whoever it is that owns the bus or truck you are driving and use procedure number two. This is to outguess the other fellow, and swing in the opposite direction to the one he will take a fraction of a second later. For safety, you must leave the road altogether, in a wild plunge, and drive into the ditch, where no one can get at you. To pull over slightly so that someone else can pass with a foot or two to spare is not only

unthinkable, it would be cowardly and heinous for any respectable Sikh driver. After all, are they not the "Chosen People?" Those who are not killed outright, in head-on collisions, invariably swerve as I have described, though many of them are too late. Then there are the bullock carts, and the sleeping drivers of bullock carts. Although a beast of burden, the Indian bullock knows that he is sacred, and he travels the middle of the road without fear of anything. Since he also knows where he is going, the driver is able to sleep on his cart, and the blasting of motor horns is of rather less importance than the buzzing of a mosquito. Automobile and truck drivers coming up from the rear must of necessity go around the slow-moving bullock cart, with a watchful eye on the sleeping driver. Will he wake in a panic and twist the bullock's tail to the right or to the left? Will the bullock obey, or go in the opposite direction? All are elements one must consider. After driving a jeep for a few weeks through central India, I found that you must coast up behind the carts silently as possible, then sneak out to one side, step on the gas and drive in the ditch by the side of the road until you have passed safely. If you are driving a noisy jeep, turn around and go home. Since most of the Indian roads are surfaced only in the center for eight to ten feet, driving in the ditch and soft shoulders is filled with unpleasant possibilities.

Chaubattia looked much as I remembered it, but there were many empty buildings and shuttered shops. I saw no Europeans, and the place had a deserted air. The *dak* bungalow, or resthouse for travelers was dirty, attended by a cross-eyed untouchable who was nauseatingly filthy, and the only dog to be seen was an ill-fed creature so emaciated and weak it could not stand upright but leaned against the wall of a house on which cow-dung cakes dried in the sun for fuel.

Immediately on leaving Delhi I had noticed an attitude on the part of railroad officials and Indian travelers that indi-

cated the changed position of the Westerner in India since partition. I was an alien in a country which was in a State of National Emergency as a result of the War with Pakistan over Kashmir. But I was also a naturalist, traveling beyond the usual tourist routes into areas where there were no comforts and practically no food even for the people who lived there. I began to notice the resentment toward the white man, who was finally "kicked out of India," but who can still afford to buy things the Indian cannot afford — an attitude that has become increasingly apparent in India during the last three years or so, and particularly during the past eighteen months. I noticed suspicion too. Some months earlier, a professed naturalist in search of a "pink goose" had turned out to be a foreign "agent." Mr. Nehru had made quite clear his personal unhappiness over such deceitful conduct, and the whole episode had received a great deal of publicity. At the time I was traveling in Kumaon I did not know that the pink-goose hunter had been caught in this same territory!

Always inquisitive to the point of being irritating, many Indians are now suspicious of aliens who are not either lending them money without security, spending another country's money to improve their standard of living or spending money on inferior Indian products. They are determined to impress upon all aliens the fact of India's freedom from European or Western control, and in individual relationships have adopted an arrogant manner which can only be explained by the fact that so many of the erstwhile clerks and messengers have blossomed into importance as chiefs of departments, heads of divisions of the government and bosses over other lesser individuals. Manifest in his attitude toward foreigners, the exaggerated self-importance of many Hindu public servants has become a feature of the new India. As the days passed, I realized that I had become a suspicious character and was under surveillance. It was almost a month before I discov-

ered who it was had the job of keeping an eye on me. I nicknamed him the Ascender, for it was only his rear that I saw plainly for several weeks.

As the road to Ranikhet wound about the hills, the lush wet forests ended and the hills took on a changed appearance. On the valley floors, the trickle of the streams and rivers had been pushed back by low mud and stone walls, to allow cultivation of the rich river silt. On the high slopes, up to where the pines grew, the hillsides presented a view of myriads of cultivated terraces, none of them more than a few feet long and all barely wide enough to permit oxen to turn with their primitive wooden plows.

Abruptly the road leveled off. As we rounded a dry, treeless hilltop I caught a glimpse of nearby Himalayan peaks and snow fields, then the road entered thick pine and oak forests which sloped gently down to Ranikhet Cantonment, and the driver pulled up at a tollgate and tax collector's office, near a grove of magnificent cedars. While the tax collector laboriously scratched out a receipt, I studied a tall narrow signboard on which were listed the tax rates for travelers and their animals or conveyances entering the cantonment. I had noticed the same signboards at Bhowali and Chaubattia, but the lists were so long I had not read more than the first few lines before we started off again. Now I read further: Camels, 4 annas; Camels carrying produce, 6 annas; Donkeys or Mules, 2 annas; Donkeys or Mules carrying produce, 2 annas 6 pice. Elephants, Oxen, Mule-carts, Ox-carts, Goats, Sheep, Cyclists, Busses, Busses with Passengers, Trucks, Automobiles — the most varied assortment of traffic that the mind can conceive. I had almost reached the bottom of the list when the tax collector handed me my receipt and the driver let in the gears once more.

Ranikhet is primarily a military hill station, and, along with Chaubattia, is usually garrisoned with three battalions

of troops and a cadre of muleteers of the transport corps. On the hillside, at about six thousand feet, the officers' bungalows are set in groves of oaks, cedars and cypress. Here and there I could see huge deodars, and by the side of the winding, black-top road several flowering Butea trees. Perhaps the most useful and interesting tree of the Himalayan tracts, the Butea is known to the natives as *Chichra* or *Dhak*, and, in English, as Flame of the Forest, from its vivid red flower. It yields good firewood, gives a useful gum, dye is made from the red flowers, and the broad leaves provide fodder for cattle.

From the bazaar road below the officers' club and soccer field, Ranikhet has one of the most magnificent views of mountain scenery anywhere in the world. Barely forty miles away, in an unbroken line for one hundred twenty miles, the gigantic Himalayan peaks rise out of the hills in a rampart that includes at least eighty peaks above twenty thousand feet in a strip of territory thirty miles long. Pilgrim routes to holy places wind through the hills around Ranikhet, to vital and strategic passes into Communist territory, and to numberless shrines and temples along the way to Lake Manasarowar in Tibet.

Soon after we reached Ranikhet, the rains came. In the intervals between one deluge and another, clouds covered the distant mountains, and Ranikhet too. I had been given only a brief glimpse of the great Himalayas and was sorry it was gone. Here, the rainfall is less than at Naini Tal, a few miles away, and as one goes farther into the hills, to ten thousand feet or more, the monsoons have little effect as a rule, for the high mountain wall is a barrier to wind and weather, as it is to wheeled vehicles. I ate a few bananas and drank some cold tea, then decided to continue on to Almora, stopping at Ranikhet for a few days on my return journey to the plains. Perhaps by that time the rains would be over and

I might be able to see the cantonment and the snow fields. For some reason I had not been able to remember anything about the place. I had visited Ranikhet many times but the only thing that remained in my mind was the road from Ranikhet to Chaubattia. One night, after a dance, I had hired a small hill-pony to carry me back to Chaubattia. I was riding sleepily along when a large monkey that had been sitting on a stone by the road gave forth with a soulless scream that frightened me beyond all reason. It frightened the pony too, and we went in different directions. The saddle girth broke, and I was dumped ignominiously down the hill-side. The pony returned to Ranikhet alone and I walked the remaining two or three miles to Chaubattia, cursing all monkeys. I remembered it so clearly because I was in such a blue funk as I climbed the winding track, where, at every turn, I expected to meet a hamadryad (a king cobra) or a man-eating tiger. As a matter of record, the only tiger I have ever met unexpectedly had a bored, even wistful expression, and seemed quite friendly.

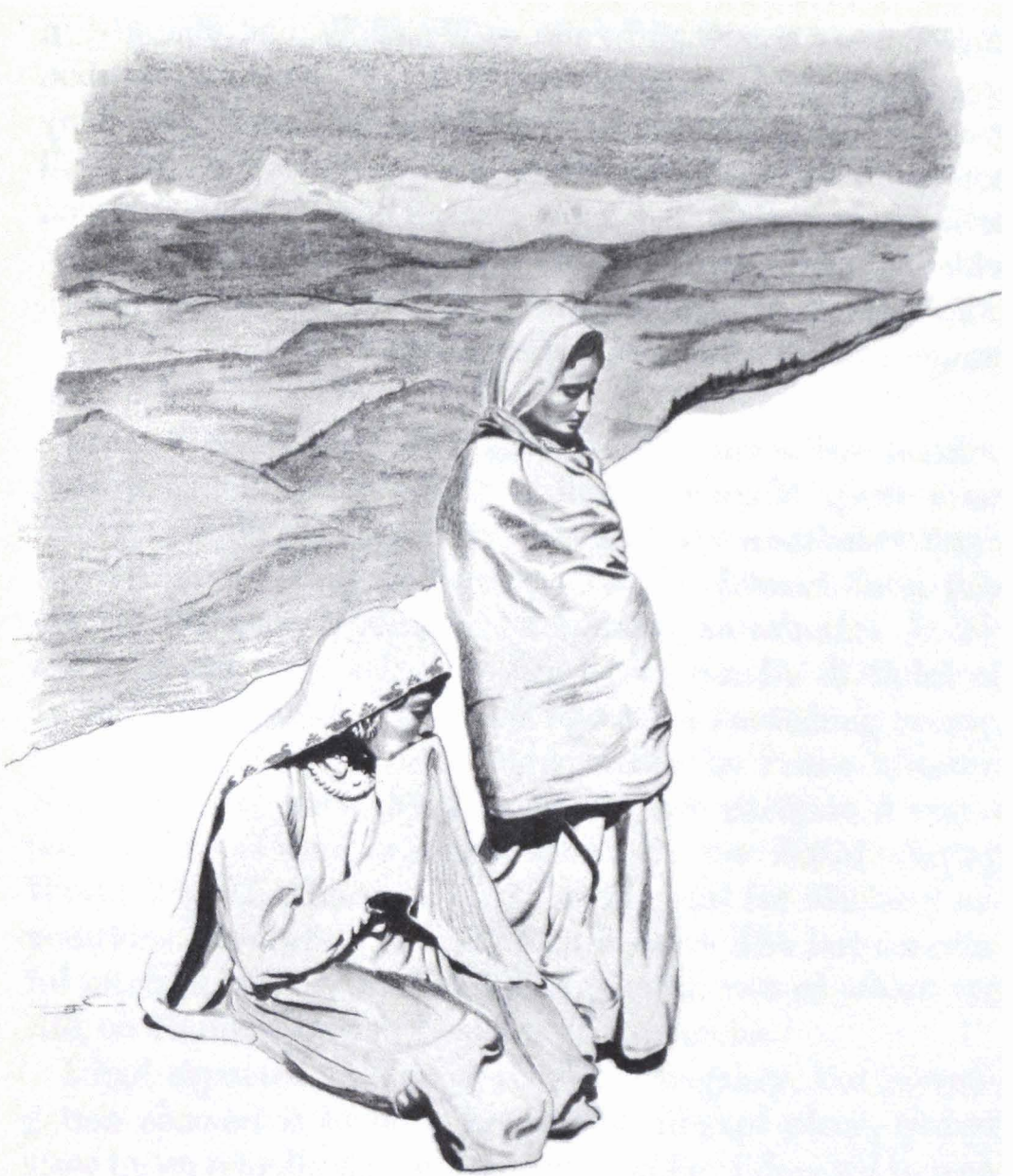
As I walked down the road to the bazaar, while the driver serviced the taxi, it appeared that the monkeys were still there, though in greater numbers. Just beyond the post and telegraph office I was hit in the side by a fairly large stone, and only just managed to dodge a second one that whizzed by my head. Female screams came from a nearby hut, and as I looked, several monkeys came from the open door and climbed to the low roof, stopping there to look down on an infuriated woman. She bent to gather up a handful of stones and the monkeys walked leisurely over the ridge, to turn and peer at her over the top. Hurling the rocks, the woman continued to scream her rage, then she went into the house to another door at the back. The monkeys anticipated her move and crossed back again, as stones were flung from the other side of the hut. As I walked down the road, stones and sticks

everywhere told their own story. At a fork in the road, four fat monkeys came toward me and I was forced to move to the side of the road so that they could pass.

Beyond the bazaar, where many of the shops were closed and business was apparently in a slump, I waited for the car on the Almora road. Toward me out of the mist came a group of women and girls carrying huge loads of wet, freshly cut grass on their heads. I wondered how much of the grass was for fodder, and how much was for themselves. The people here in these hills, as in many other parts of India, were hungry. At this time, the zamindari system of landlords was still in effect — in fact, a well-dressed and apparently well-fed zamindar led the procession of hip-swinging women as they strode along the road. The women worked on his land as his tenants. What they produced was turned over to him, and they were allowed to keep for their own use only a small portion. In their colorful costumes, with sharp, sickle-shaped knives tucked into their waistcloths, these hill women were typically small and doll-like, with finely chiseled features, beautiful eyes and big feet. As they walked, their long medallion necklaces, silver anklets and toe rings jingled. Then they were gone into the mist and the jingle faded.

From Ranikhet to Almora is thirty miles — thirty miles of narrow winding road, uphill and downhill, partly in pine forest and partly along dry slopes above terraced valleys. Soon after we started off in the car, the driver remarked that the switchback road often made people ill, and from then on he kept watching me in the rearview mirror. When the road straightened out, I had the impression that he was disappointed because I had failed to be sick.

The sun shone for a while and we were stopped only twice — by a gang of more than seventy monkeys crossing the road, and by a small landslip where men and women, boys and donkeys all worked to clear away debris that held up a long



Pahari women — Kumaon

line of army trucks and vehicles. The hills had changed in appearance and were dry and generally treeless. Bamboo grew in high clusters near the road, and I could see many pomegranate trees. Far down in the valleys were small orchards of apricot and apple trees. Then the long ridge on which Almora perched came into view, and several sadhus, from some nearby Yoga ashram walked by in their clean, orange-colored robes and shaven heads.



Chapter 4

FOUNDED about the year 1520 A.D., Almora has become famous as the place where Mahatma Gandhi spent some time and received inspiration for his book *Anashakat Yoga*. Near Almora, Gandhi's English disciple, Kumari Sarla Ben (Miss Catherine Heileman), is running an ashrama. In Almora proper, two ashramas are being run by disciples of Swami Vivekanand. They also operate a flourishing apiary. Near here too is the estate now owned by Prime Minister Nehru and his sister, Mrs. Pandit. Before partition it was a jail—where Nehru was imprisoned by the British during World War II. Almora is the take-off point for climbing expeditions attempting to scale Nanda Devi. The last successful attempt was by four Polish engineers, two of whom are still on Nanda's breast, beneath an avalanche.

I had expected to stay at the dak bungalow, but investigation showed it to be a flea-ridden, ill-kept place, looked after by an equally disreputable chowkidar. I decided to seek better quarters, if possible, for I planned to be there for some days before making trips into the nearby mountains. As we entered the bazaar streets, noted for their paving-stone construction, I saw large gatherings of noisy young Hindus, which reminded me that here were several recently developed schools for cultural and religious education. I had chosen to arrive in the middle of a riot and demonstration by students. In a few brief but action-packed moments, stones

and sticks were flying, knives were plainly visible, a Muslim was beaten to death and a frightened taxi driver, in his wisdom refraining from using his horn, drove as he had never driven before. I rolled up the windows and felt several thumps on the back of the car, then we were in comparative safety and I talked the driver into slowing down before we plunged off the road and down the mountain side. When I kept repeating, "*Ahista, ahista,*" he turned to me with a pitying look, as much as to say, "Go slowly! Don't you realize those people are Indians rioting?" As we emerged from the crowded section on the lower road and reached the hill road up to the residential section, I suggested to the driver that he change his mind and, instead of returning to Naini Tal immediately as he had planned, remain in Almora, where I might need him for a quick trip somewhere. He agreed at once, and mentioned a distant relative whom he could visit. Then we reached the top of the ridge and pulled up at the circuit house, where there was a telephone, and where I hoped to stay for a few days.

In all outlying Indian districts, the most important authority is the district commissioner, or the district magistrate. Both of them were in Ranikhet at the time, and I telephoned them there, with the aid of the chowkidar of the house, who alone seemed capable of manipulating the ancient hand-cranked wall phone. Eventually, after explaining that I was interested in the wildlife of the area and nothing else, and repeating the story to three or four other minor officials who in turn called the district commissioner and confirmed what I had already told him, I was given reluctant permission to remain at the old house, which I found was named Ramsey House, after the famous British general who built it about 1850. The spacious and well-kept lawns and flower beds, the large rooms and verandas seemed indeed a pleasant place in which to spend a few days, regardless of the apparent diffi-

culty in obtaining food. I unrolled my bedroll, set out a few mousetraps around the bedroom walls and sent for water to bathe in. The copper tub which hung on a handmade nail in the bathroom was just large enough for me to sit in, and the two jugs of tepid water which the water-man brought in were almost sufficient to cover two inches of me. But I felt better afterwards, and enjoyed my supper of three eggs from a midget hen. For dessert, I ate a banana or two and drank some concentrated coffee. Then I sat out on the veranda to listen to the noises of the hills. The lawns in front of the great house were the exact width of the high ridge of the hill, and on either side the slopes were steep, down to the valleys far below, where almost-dry river beds carried small streams fed by the snows of the Himalayas. Birds, all of them silent in the approaching dusk, still were active, and I discovered the little minivets, or honeysuckers, which cluster on every flower that has a long stalk, bending it almost to the ground. When disturbed, they rise together in a bunch, seemingly out of the flowers themselves, then settle back again a moment later, like a swarm of large silent bees. As I sat quietly, one or two mice ran by, followed by the largest shrew I had ever seen. It stopped to inspect me and I moved, but the shrew held its ground, then slowly came closer, and I fancied it crouched. As it moved, it uttered a sound that was more a hiss than a squeak of fear, and I decided that the traps I had set were far too small for this type of character. I rose and the shrew moved only a foot out of the way, quite unafraid, but watching me carefully. In the bedroom, all the traps were sprung and two more shrews chewed at the straps on my bedroll, and continued to chew, with angry hisses, as I shook them free. By the light of a candle I rearranged all of my gear and clothing, set out a number of larger traps around the charpoy, or rope-strung bed, and went outside again. By this time it was dark. The ghostly figure of the chowkidar, huddled under

his blanket, materialized at the side of the house and stood motionless for half an hour. Then he came over to me and we talked about the house, the people who had lived in it many years ago, the gay parties and formal banquets he remembered as a boy, when his own father was chowkidar to the Bara Sahibs, and the British Raj, in the form of handsome young men and their wives, was at the height of its glory, pomp and circumstance. I asked him about the local animals, but he was vague and not at all interested. His world was this house with its fifteen or more rooms and its horsehair furniture, rope beds and creaking high-backed chairs around the massive oak dining table. This was his life, and he hoped to die here. His own living quarters were in a cubicle five feet by six, in a row of similar holes built for servants behind the house on the edge of the steep hillside, near a great stand of bamboo, overlooking the valley where tigers and leopards lived. In the old days, the row of holes would have been filled with men, women and children. Now he had them all, alone.

In the middle of a sentence, the chowkidar broke off and walked away into the darkness. I went inside to the bedroom. Something struck my foot as I lit the candle, and I saw the tail of a snake go through the door. The candle sputtered out, and for a moment I sweated, quite still. Then one of those damned shrews hissed at me and I lit the candle again. There was no mark on my shoe at all, but one trap was gone, another had been sprung and I had two dead shrews and a live one underneath the bed. I gathered that the snake had taken the missing trap, with a shrew in it, and I hoped it would not return. The brief glimpse I had had of the tail had convinced me it was a cobra, though perhaps not a large one. I examined all the other rooms of the house, and finally found a large walking stick in a closet, a hound's head carved on the handle. With the stick in one hand, a guttering candle in the

other, I fought a ten-minute battle with the remaining shrew. He was making his third vicious pass at my legs when I hit him over the head, upset the rickety table, dropped the candle and plunged the room into darkness. This, I thought, would be a good place to have a pet mongoose or two.

During the night I caught two more of the gray devils, and slept very little. While I breakfasted on two even smaller eggs, and a few soft bananas, it was a pleasant surprise to see a small house mouse with big ears and a tiny squeak scamper fearfully along the wall and dart under the huge sideboard, where he probably lived. Here was something familiar and timid. I decided to leave all of the smaller traps unset. I needed friends. Later I wondered how the little fellow survived living in a house occupied by so many ferocious, carnivorous shrews.

Leaving the house, I found that great cloud banks still covered the high peaks of Nanda Devi, Trisul and the other giants of the Himalayas, but at the lower levels the air was clear and fresh. I took a walk along the ridge, through the gardens beyond the lawns in front of the Ramsey House, and came to an ancient fortress where narrow window slits and turreted watchtowers reminded me that five hundred years ago, in the days of the Mogul emperors, life had been more exciting in Almora than it was in September 1951. Nearby, I passed an empty barracks building, which for so many years had housed a Gurkha battalion but now was the temporary quarters of two families who eked out a singularly poor living by making a foul-smelling substitute for soap. Then I came to the cemetery.

I have more than once stood in remote, inaccessible places of the earth and known that no other human has been there before me. I have also stood in remote, outlandish places after suffering hardship and danger, and found the grave of a man who had died there long before my time and long

before modern civilization had developed the gadgets and facilities which made exploration less dependent upon man's own resourcefulness. For the early pioneers who crossed America in covered wagons, or slashed out of the forests of the east a home among hostile Indians, I have always felt a great admiration; for the known and unknown adventurers and explorers into the Arctic regions, whose bones I and others have buried, I have a deep sympathy and humble respect; but for the handful of young men and women in that Almora cemetery, on the edge of a mountain above a Buddhist temple perched high over a deep valley, I have a wonder and admiration that leaves me angry that they should so long have been left unsung by the poets. Perhaps dusty old records in the London archives could give us the details in a dull way, but I seriously doubt that any document exists which can speak eloquently of the romance, devotion to duty, tragedy and brief joy, privation and sudden disaster that ran like a bright ribbon through the broken headstones and the flowerless mounds where the babies rest. Five young brides and four babies died within two years of each other, the oldest twenty-seven, the youngest three months. Their men lasted a little longer. One, "accidentally killed while cleaning a musket," had been the first to lose his bride, aged twenty-four, in what must have been a ghastly two-year period for a handful of young officers and their brides. One hundred years ago, these Moores, Cavanaughs, O'Rileys and Thompsons upheld the reign of Victoria in an Almora settlement that must have been even less attractive than it is today. How they reached it then I can only surmise. Certainly not in a hired automobile. I sat on a broken stone and thought about them for a long time. Indomitable courage were the only words I could find, inadequately.

On the way back to Ramsey House, I met the chowkidar, who told me of a couple living nearby, the wife an American

who was interested in flowers. Thinking I might find out a little about the local wildlife before making any trips into the hills, I walked down to the bungalow where they lived and knocked at the door of an attractive one-story building around and over which flowers of every description flourished, bees buzzed and birds sang. The husband, an Indian, was away on business, and I sat in a book-filled room for an hour listening to names of famous people—"very intimate friends of mine, you know"—and a tirade against America and its imperialistic aims in Asia that made me sick. The subject of wildlife was brushed aside, and when I rose to go in the middle of a vicious criticism of American people in general, the lady sharply remarked that it was obvious that I was "not interested in hearing the truth about America, are you, Mr. Thomas?" Climbing back up the hill, I wondered about this woman, so bitter, and terribly lonely. Several months later I met her again in a shop in Connaught Circle in Delhi, where she was buying American cigarettes. She greeted me with, "Oh. I heard you'd been arrested, Mr. Johnson. When did you get out?" I replied, "This morning," and left as she began, "You Americans . . ."

Wishing that I had not met this unhappy woman, I returned by way of a lower road and the bazaar. The town was quiet now and the riot apparently forgotten. I bought some fairly clean bananas and apples and stopped at a small shop by the roadside to buy some Scissors cigarettes, a cheap weed that years ago had been the first I ever smoked. Outside the shop a hungry child stared at me for a moment and then went away, and I realized that, except for a few instances in Naini Tal, since leaving Delhi I had not been bothered by maimed beggars, insistent fortune tellers and the usual crowd of grimy urchins with filthy, clutching hands. Yet I knew that in this area the people were desperately poor and living standards were lower than in many places in India. I had the

feeling that foreigners were not at all welcome here. On my way back to Ramsey House, I passed several women in typical Pahari costume, but with their hair worn in a Medusa-like coiffure, the twisted coils sticking out in all directions. A few yards farther along, two sadhus talked in the shade of a giant rhododendron tree, the purple flowers and the orange robes of the holy men making a bright splash of color against the dull green of the hillside. The women and the sadhus turned their backs to me as I walked by.

Almost every part of the Indian subcontinent has been the subject of a number of books, poems and descriptive essays. Kumaon is the exception. The northern parts of the district, bordering on Tibet and Nepal, have never been considered a tourist resort area, although in scenic splendor and fine climate Kumaon more than rivals Kashmir, the Murree Hills, Simla and Dehra Dun. I had always looked upon Kumaon as being a region of inaccessible mountain ramparts, glaciers and a lot of vague pilgrim paths into Tibet — a good base of operations for lusty people planning to climb an unclimbed mountain. By the time I reached Almora, I had come to see it quite differently. Perhaps the Hindus' overemphasis on Kumaon as the dwelling place of mythical gods and goddesses has created an aura of unreality about it. Anyway, it is certainly true that Kumaon has long been regarded as a frontier region of difficult terrain, backward people, inclement weather and man-eating tigers and leopards.

When I realized the extent of recent and widespread increases in cultivated areas of the district, I naturally expected to find that the wildlife had been affected by the changes. But this had not happened. This stronghold of the wild creatures has been saved by religion. Hinduism and Buddhism are the primary religions of Kumaon, and both prohibit the harming or killing of animals, by tradition as well

as belief. This has resulted in the complete fearlessness of all wild animals, not excluding those belligerent shrews.

Sitting on the wide veranda of Ramsey House in the evening, I wondered about the excursion I had planned for the morrow, into the hills of Kausani. I was trying to reconcile the conflicting stories I had been told by several natives I had just interviewed. One man had insisted that there were no wild animals in the Almora vicinity and I should go to the Pindari Glacier area, where they were plentiful. Another fellow suggested that I go to Nepal, where his friend and brother was a famous hunter. But the Pindari Glacier was seven days walk away, and Nepal a little farther — even if I had had a permit to enter, which I did not. I had finally ended the discussion knowing very little more than when I had arrived. As the men walked away, I got out my cameras and cleaned them, putting them away carefully so that the shrews would not eat the leather cases. Then I returned to the veranda to write letters. When I looked up a few minutes later, two magnificent yellow-throated martens sat on the green lawn watching me! For a moment I disbelieved my eyes and sat still, then I thought of the cameras, carefully put away inside the house. Behind me I heard the chowkidar, and I hissed at him to bring me the movie camera. During a long whispered conversation, the two martens sat interestedly, their gray and brown fur glistening in the late sun. They remained motionless until the chowkidar came out with the camera. Then, in graceful, undulating leaps, they loped across the lawn into a thick flower bed on the edge of the hill. Desperate in my haste, I put the camera together and set the telephoto lens, for by this time I judged the martens were at least two hundred feet down the hillside. Diving into the flower bed, I looked everywhere. For several minutes I remained there, but nothing moved. I packed up the camera

and stepped gingerly back out of the flower bed, missing the tail of a marten by inches! Without a sound, the two martens loped leisurely back across the lawn to the flower bed on the other side and vanished over a low wall overlooking a steep slope. I never saw them again. Angry at myself for being caught napping, I went back to my chair on the veranda and asked the chowkidar about the martens. "Oh, yes, Sahib. The *chuttal* come here many times. You want his picture?"

That night a leopard took a twelve-year-old girl from a hut below the Almora Ridge. In the early morning hours, a gang of more than three hundred monkeys raided an agricultural experimental station, and in exactly seven minutes destroyed every single plant and seedling, and completely ruined three years of painstaking work by two agricultural experts. A dozen replacements in the shrew department kept me awake until a large brown rat strolled in from the bathroom and sprang three traps in a row. When I banged him over the head with a boot, he left via the bathroom and the large hole in the wall designed by the builders to allow bath water to run outside and down the hill, but more useful as a means of ingress for rats, shrews and snakes.

My breakfast eggs were smaller than ever and I felt like a martyr as I placed a little piece of yolk near the sideboard for the small mouse with the big ears. He took it immediately.

During the next few days I discovered that the country beyond Almora contains many deep valleys, most of them cultivated in terraces, and is generally a vast area where travel in any direction involves mountain climbing and high altitudes. In the valleys, trade route and pilgrim route combine to pass under cliffs and over snow bridges and shaky footbridges above rushing torrents fed by the snows of the Himalayas. There are villages here and there, with surprisingly wide main streets paved with huge flagstones, and

everywhere there are shrines, temples, caves and monuments.

There is also polygamy and polyandry. The Hindus claim that it is not polyandry, but "communism in wives." Whatever the name, the people seem to prosper and are obviously not anxious for any changes. Their marriages are simple. The eldest brother is married to a young girl – of the proper caste, of course. She becomes the wife of all the other brothers, some of whom may even be born after her marriage, being younger than her own children. Nevertheless, she must call them husband. When the youngest brother takes a wife, she must be married to the eldest brother and be the common wife of all other brothers. They share her company in turn, and their domestic life is so arranged that one brother is out tending sheep, another tending cattle, and so on. One remains at home, cultivating. In one case I saw, three brothers had one wife; in another instance, four brothers had four wives, all living together in the same house. Their land, sheep, goats and cattle are common property, as the wives are common property of brothers. I asked one educated and apparently well-to-do man why the custom was maintained when it had been given up in most other areas. He replied, "This is our security. It keeps the family property intact." To me it was obvious that they were fairly prosperous, and happier than most of the people I had seen. The women, usually remarkably good-looking, all wore plenty of jewelry and silver ornaments – which is everywhere an indication of prosperity. I later discovered that in some parts of the Garhwal district immediately adjoining Kumaon there is a local custom, enforced by law, by which a man may sell or divorce his wife to her paramour by charging a price he calls "marriage expenses incurred." The same woman may be sold by her new husband to another man, who will have to pay an even higher price. Depending on the endurance of her charms, there appears

to be no limit to the price a woman can bring. As a variant, in some areas the exchange of wives in even trade is normal practice.

I had apparently chosen to visit Kumaon at a time when travel conditions were not the best. Mud was everywhere, and only the higher altitudes afforded reasonably good walking. I was surprised at the varied tree growth, the prevalence of blue and violet flowers — gentian and swertia being the most conspicuous. From the sal limit at an altitude of four thousand feet, the deodars grow to six thousand feet and no higher; from six to seven thousand feet, oak and rhododendron are abundant; eight thousand feet is the oak tree limit, and at ten thousand feet — the limit of chestnuts and sycamores — grassy slopes begin. Eleven thousand feet is the limit of silver fir, spruce, larch and rhododendron; twelve thousand feet is the limit of blue pine and birch. At thirteen thousand feet, vegetation ceases generally and there are only small patches of grass, and a great deal of mud.

I would have been happy to spend more time there, hunting and studying the many varieties of spectacular cats. While India is often called the home of the tiger, the Kumaon district is the home for other cats that are less known but just as interesting. There are fishing cats, clouded leopards, black-chested cats, caracals, lynxes, jungle cats and the beautiful snow leopard. Altogether a rich assortment of claws and character, teeth and temperament that is rarely found in one geographic area. However, my time was so limited that I could spend none of it searching for any of them. I saw one snow leopard, a ghostly gray shape against rock and snow, and later found that in recent years there had been a large number of them killed in the area.

Back at Almora I visited a charming elderly American Buddhist, from Akron, Ohio, who lived on the brow of a hill just outside the town. Throughout India, Mr. Brewster is

known for his paintings of the Himalayas. To get to his Snow View estate my driver took me out of the town to where the road became a pack-train trail, caved in here and there as it wound around the hills. Leaving the car, I walked along the narrow path slowly, until I met head-on with a huge gentleman wearing a pink turban, riding a diminutive horse whose ornate trappings proclaimed his owner to be a man of importance and wealth. The giant's legs dangled on either side, to within an inch or two of the ground, and my sudden appearance on the narrow trail seemed to upset both horse and rider. The little horse tried to go down the sheer mountain side, and danced on his hind legs in spite of the great weight he bore. The man calmed him without a word, by gentle pressure on the reins, never once taking his eyes from me. While horse and rider glared at me, I sidled past them and went on along the path. The giant and the little horse galloped off, and a few minutes later I came to Bhawani, Brewster's house, and entered the driveway.

Slight in stature, with a fresh, rosy complexion, Mr. Brewster bade me enter his house and asked a servant to bring tea. Near the door stood a great gilt Buddha, with bowls of fresh-cut flowers before it. Paintings covered the walls, easels were stacked in one corner and a low divan was strewn with paintings that had apparently just been framed. A widower, my host's only companions were his servant and his paintings. At the time, he had a large number of pictures on exhibition in New Delhi and was sorry that I could not see them. After we had enjoyed several cups of tea, we walked out of the house to the small lawn in front. Here was his workshop, close to God, and with a breath-taking view. Great clouds passed by in endless procession, partly obscuring the mountains, and I had to tip back my head and look up to see the peaks. Many of them were in Tibet.

That was a refreshing visit. We did not talk about America,

just about the hills, for he knew them intimately and loved them all. I noticed there were no flowers in his garden, and he told me that the mountains gave him all the color and beauty he could bear to see or try to paint, particularly at the rising or falling of the sun. The flower garden was on the other side of the house. "On the Nepal side," he said.

"Nepal is so close. Have you been there?" I asked.

"Not since my wife died. We painted together, years ago, but I have not traveled much lately." A few minutes later he went on, "Nepal — the part you can see from here — is most beautiful. It is a pity it is so little known. Like forbidden fruit, the Nepalese policy of total exclusion to foreigners has been its chief attraction. The country seemed clothed in romantic legendry. Now, great changes are taking place, I hear. The little kingdom is tense and upset."

"Do you think Nepal will be able to maintain her independence?"

"No. I think that much will happen over there in the next few years. I am sure it will not be peaceful. There has been very little peace in her history, as you know."

"I know very little about Nepal, or about its people."

"It is, perhaps, the last survivor of the oldest cultures in the world. And some think it is the inevitable cradle of the New World in Asia — now being born. It is the only country in Asia which did not suffer the cruelty of a Muslim invasion, or the dishonest incursion of Christian businessmen. From the beginning, her history has been one of astonishing intrigues, of kings and queens murdering each other, and of two great men who were to have considerable effect on the country's future. The first of these was Jang Bahadur, who, at a time when Nepal was rife with murder, political intrigue and tumult, emerged as a strong young man, the first, it seemed, capable of setting up some sort of order and government. By murdering his uncle and some other relatives who were plan-

ning to murder him, Jang Bahadur overcame the most powerful obstacles and united the whole country into one kingdom, laying down the foundation of the Rana dynasty. The present prime minister, Mohun Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana, is his descendant. The other man was his contemporary, Brian Houghton Hodgson, about whom I like to read in old books.”

“Is that the Hodgson after whom so many birds and animals of the Himalayas have been named?”

“Yes. A paradox in Nepalese history, he went there in 1820, as a young man, and remained for twenty-three years. He made the first attempt to record scientific data on the wild-life of the country and surrounding regions. He observed the flights of birds and the habits of animals, as well as the minds of the people, and he left voluminous notes which I believe have been the basis for all zoological descriptions of the Nepalese fauna.”

As clouds rolled across the face of gigantic mountains before us, and I listened to my host’s descriptions of Nepal, events were leading up to the end of the rule of Mohun Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana, and in less than two months he was to be deposed in a coup, and a new prime minister, more friendly to India, established in his place.

Then Brewster asked, “Do you know how Buddhism entered Tibet?”

“No,” I replied.

“Long before Jang Bahadur was forced to murder his uncle in order to survive, a woman named Bri Btsun, daughter of King Amshuvarmar of Nepal, married Song-tsen Gam-po, King of Tibet in 639 A.D. Song-tsen Gam-po is regarded as the political founder of Tibet, but it was Bri Btsun, the woman, who left the most lasting impression. At the time of her marriage she brought with her a bowl of lapis lazuli which had belonged to Buddha himself. She converted her husband to Buddhism, and in doing so, founded the city of

Lhasa, introducing Buddhism to the whole of Tibet. She was an important person.”

I left Brewster in his Bhawani several hours later, feeling glad that I had come to Kumaon after all.

At Ramsey House a message waited for me, to the effect that the district commissioner and the district magistrate of Almora, and some friends, would arrive the following evening – and would I please arrange to vacate the house? The chowkidar explained that one of the men in the party was the district commissioner of the Binsar area, who had created a furor when he issued orders that no renewals of gun licenses or hunting permits would be granted unless the applicants paid a toll of three monkey tails, five myna birds and five jackal tails. Purely his own idea, the legality of the order was in question, and a meeting was to be held to settle the matter.

My taxi driver appeared before I could send for him, apparently aware of the impending move. So I made him help with my packing, and thirty minutes later we left Almora and headed back toward Ranikhet. On the way, we came to a small village where a great noise was being made by some women. Inquiring about the fuss, we found that a leopard had taken an old woman in the morning and had returned a few minutes ago to take a young boy from the same hut. The stone and mud hut village was on the edge of an area, originally a swampy jungle, that was being reclaimed for cultivation and forestry experimentation. It appeared that when his habitat was destroyed, the leopard changed his diet instead of his spots.

Mrs. Ferguson's small hotel in Ranikhet proved to be most comfortable. The food was excellent, the surroundings pleasant, and the lady herself a grand hostess. Her instructions to servants in Hindustani with a broad English accent were a constant delight to the ears, and her love of bridge amounted to a passion. Every evening she played with the commanding

officer of the garrison and his two good friends, the commissioner and the magistrate of Almora. They had apparently changed their plans, for they did not go to Almora at all during my visit at Ranikhet.

At dawn the second morning I was wakened by inhuman screechings from just outside my window, where the hill sloped down to several huts, and terraced farms where fruit trees and vegetables grew. Hundreds of monkeys were moving down the hill in a swarm, howling and chattering. When they had passed out of sight, the vegetables were gone, the fruit was gone from the orchards and Mrs. Ferguson's flower garden looked as though a giant scythe had cut off every blossom she had raised with such loving care. It seemed to me that everywhere these fat fiends were triumphantly marching across the land destroying the people's efforts and livelihood, and yet no one dared to stop them. A mythical god held priority. Survival of the people was a secondary consideration. As soon as I had completed my note making, I arranged to leave Kumaon for the plains.

The following morning my taxi driver appeared, smiling and eager to be off. Like myself, he had had enough of Kumaon. This land of outward splendor and magnificence, and inward hunger and unhappiness had depressed me more than I had realized. When we reached Kathgodam and saw the same two men still at work repairing the roof of the station, I felt relieved. The stench of turpentine hung over the station, and even the wasps which accompanied the seller of overripe bananas seemed to fly heavily.



Chapter 5

AT THE CECIL HOTEL several urgent messages waited for me from the chief of customs, requesting the return of his cages so that he could send me more mice. But I had no intention of spending my time skinning the common house mouse that overran his residence, and decided to go away again as quickly as possible. During my earlier stay in the city I had met a Hindu family from Gwalior, who had extended to me a cordial invitation to visit their famous city. About two hundred miles south of New Delhi, Gwalior is frequently described as the cultural center of India. It is also the center of an area noted for the number and variety of its game animals, particularly tigers and sambars, the latter greatly resembling the American elk. My application for a permit to enter Jammu and Kashmir was still under consideration, and as there was no way of telling when, or if, I would get it, this seemed a good time for me to visit Gwalior, and to take pictures of animals where possible. I telephoned my friends, Justice Shinde and his charming English wife, who at once set about making plans for my entertainment. Then the long-delayed rains came and my departure was postponed for several days.

Until that time, clouds had covered the sky, and rain had threatened but had never fallen. Hundreds of thousands of people in the Delhi district had prayed to all their gods for rain, without floods, but the temperature had stayed at the

one hundred seven-degree level, with the humidity in the nineties. When the rains came at last, Delhi turned green within a few hours, and I knew that if it had also fallen on Gwalior, my chances of seeing or photographing tigers would be very slim. In the flat, scrub-jungle country of central India, the dry land does not hold water for long. Tigers, wild pigs, leopards and deer – all hunt and browse near a few waterholes where there is little grass in which they can hide from man. Near these well-used waterholes, generations of hunters – maharajas, rajas and their friends – have built stone *machans*, or shooting stands, from the top of which wild game may be seen and shot, or photographed, in brave safety, as the animals come to drink. When the rains come, however, high grass springs up in two to three days, the game finds running water in the covering jungle forests, and is hardly ever to be seen. Hunting tigers in tall grass is hazardous at the least; photographing them is extremely difficult.

When the rains had subsided, I left Old Delhi in a rented jeep and drove along the Grand Trunk Road that links the Khyber Pass with Calcutta and was originally built by Akbar four hundred years ago. Through Muttra, the playground of the god Krishna, and on to Agra, where I stopped for lunch on the lawn of Lauries Hotel. While I ate, snake charmers appeared with baskets of reptiles and gave a mediocre performance, then I was treated to an extraordinary and pleasing performance by an old man with several trained weaver birds. On my way out of this old city, I stopped at a fruit vendor's stall and bought a bag of *narangi*, or sweet oranges, that were like large tangerines. The bag was handmade of lined yellow paper, and the inside was covered with longhand writing in English. Opening it up I found it to be part of "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," from a Hindu student's homework. The shortage of paper is acute in India.

South of Agra the road crosses a river. During monsoon

time, the pontoon-type bridge is removed and travelers cross by means of manually operated scow-ferries. Along the banks, men and women bathe, water buffaloes wallow and huge crocodiles swim nearby, hoping for someone to stray just a little farther out into the deep water. On the other side of the river, I narrowly escaped death in the form of a frenzied truck driver who ran me off the road, and a little while later nearly turned the jeep over in avoiding collision with a bullock cart that swung to the right instead of the left as I tried to pass it. Then I saw some small hills in the distance, and soon came to Gwalior, seventy miles from Jhansi, where my mother and father spent their honeymoon.

It was late in the afternoon when I reached Gwalior House hotel. A room had been reserved for me by the Shindes, and while a water-boy carried in buckets of hot water for my bath, a dozen peacocks strutted around the grounds uttering their peculiar, grating cry that sounds like the heehaw of a donkey in distress. In a nearby zoo, a tiger roared his displeasure at iron bars, and as the sunlight dwindled, I could hear the low roar of the distant town of Lashkar, under the walls of Gwalior Fort, which is built on the top of a hill.

A few hours later, in the attractive home of Justice Shinde, I was being introduced to a number of fascinating people. Soon after I arrived, a huge man entered the drawing room. He had a large black mustache, sparkling black eyes and the hands of a hunter and outdoor man. Raja Pancham Singh of Pahargarh was a renowned hunter, with one hundred ninety-four tigers to his credit. His rani had killed eleven. Their castle — thirty odd miles away — was over four hundred years old. A few minutes later, a shorter, boisterous gentleman entered the room with his wife, a slender, beautiful lady, whose grace and elegance matched her stunning brown sari edged with gold. Recently returned from the Argentine, where the husband had occupied a diplomatic post, the Rajwades made

an attractive couple, and as I came to know them more, later, I marveled at their good fortune, for they had been betrothed at the ages of seven and eight, respectively. Their marriage had been planned by their families long before they knew anything about each other, and yet they were so obviously in love. Then I joined Pahargarh and his delightfully witty rani and talked about animals and hunting until our host announced a special treat. A curtained archway opened, and a fat, cheerful-looking man appeared with a *sitar* (a seven-stringed instrument played like a steel guitar). With him was another fat and cheerful man carrying a *tabla*, or small drum, and behind them came the sitar player's son – twelve years old, in immaculate turban, with beautiful black eyes and lashes to make a woman envious. He was there to listen and learn, and he remained in the background. They all sat on a rug, while the guests, seated in a semicircle, settled themselves in pleased anticipation.

Hafiz Ali, famed throughout India for his wizardry with the stringed instruments of his country, played on his audience from the moment he touched the sitar. Mahdar Singh, the tabla player, with facile fingers brought from his drum muted accompaniment that blended with the strings, and as the peculiar tones swelled or receded, telling their classic story, I felt myself caught up in the excitement that grew imperceptibly, until I wished the music would end so that I could relax. Outside the house, the rains began to beat upon the ground, and Hafiz Ali's head and eyes moved faster and faster while his fingers brought musical whispers from the strings. Finally, a full twenty minutes after he had begun, he stopped playing and looked at us with twinkling eyes in his satirical face, enjoying the homage from his bewitched audience. In a few moments he began to play again, a song about rain in the evening. First in loud, bold tones, then in hushed gentle notes – and one of the ladies seated near a corner of the room

bowed her head and began to sing. In quarter tones and half tones, the low voice and vibrant strings blended with beat of the tabla and the swish of the rain outside, in a song that was a tradition, handed down from father to son, father to son, without notation. A song to the rain at night, sung by countless Hindus at that hour only, and only during the rains. But nowhere, I felt, with such passion and spiritual feeling as here in this room where a roguish fat man with twinkling eyes played on the senses of all of us. Then the voice became louder and the strings whispered again, while the tabla beat out the rhythm of the rain. Hafiz Ali closed his eyes, and slowly, drop by drop, the tabla quieted, the sitar died and the woman's voice rose to a high quavering note and ended.

When I returned to Gwalior House and asked for my key at the desk, a nondescript character in poorly tailored tweeds rose from a chair in the lobby and I recognized a man I had seen talking with the Ascender in Old Delhi. He passed by into the rain outside, and I went into my room, where a tiny green lizard sat on the table looking at my small clock.

During the next two days it rained incessantly, and all hunting trips were called off. Justice Shinde and his wife took me to the Jai Vilas, palace of His Highness the Maharaja Sir Jivaji Rao Scindia, where I was shown the ceremonial elephants, the polo ponies, a hundred-car garage and, inside the palace, the amazingly beautiful chandeliers of the Gold Durbar Room, which are suspended by seemingly small attachments. Before the two huge chandeliers were hung there, the suspension cables had been tested for strength by one large and one small elephant, whose combined weight approximated that of the chandeliers, reported to be the largest in the world. I removed my shoes and visited the cenotaphs which commemorate departed members of the Scindia family. I saw the tomb of Tansen, the greatest singer ever known

in India, where the leaves of a nearby tamarind tree are chewed by credulous singers in the belief that their voices will be sweetened; The Scindia School for boys in Gwalior Fort, the walls of which play a bloodstained part in pages of history; the Padma, or Lotus, School for girls, which is making history today; and the cenotaph of Rani Lakshmbai, who so ably led her soldiers in the Mutiny of 1857, until she fell in battle and her body was cremated in a stack of hay by the few devoted followers who remained with her.

Then the rain stopped, and at four in the morning Raja Pahargarh and one of his servants, with food, bedrolls, rifles and ammunition, climbed into my jeep and we were off for a few days to see the animals. We drove toward Shivpuri, and in the afternoon stopped at a dak bungalow in Kuno, overlooking a river where, in the dry season, all the wild animals of the district came to drink. Now that the rains had come, grass was already growing high, and Pahargarh told me that we would start out at dusk and travel along a dirt road — using a bright spotlight to see what we could find — and discover what animals were in the area. Later, as we drove along the narrow road that was used by bullock carts, we talked about tigers, and compared them with leopards. I asked my friend about the tigers he had killed, and how he had hunted them. He explained that he did most of his tiger hunting from tree machans in his own estate, but had often killed from the ground. He scorned the use of elephants, as he did the practice of tying out “kills,” or bait in the form of a live goat or young calf. The thrill of the hunt meant more to him than the killing, and I was not surprised when he told me that very often he watched the tiger go away unharmed.

In the dusk, two very large mongooses crossed in front of the jeep, and I wondered about snakes. Pahargarh told me that cobras were very numerous here, and a considerable number of the farmers died from their bites each year. As we

passed cultivated fields, natives sat on high platforms supported by poles, guarding their crops from marauding animals. As the road began to climb a rise, Pahargarh slipped two cartridges into his rifle and smiled at me. "Best we are prepared. The tiger is not afraid of a jeep and might attack us." On either side the grass was at least three feet tall. Twenty feet from the road, beyond the grass, scrub jungle of small trees and bushes made a shadowy curtain, and by the time it was dark the forest had closed in on us until our world was confined to the small area in front, lit by the lights of the jeep. Pahargarh was apparently quite happy. We were not out to kill anything, but just enjoying ourselves, and as we rounded a corner and saw two spotted deer in the road, transfixed by the headlights, he switched on the powerful spotlight and centered it on them. Common throughout India, most beautiful in form and coloration, they spend their time in bushes and trees near water. They are known for their barking voices. Their white spots, like huge snowflakes on a golden background, made me think of fawns in America. I stopped the jeep and we watched them for a few minutes. Then we drove forward and the deer bounced off into the grass and trees. A little while later a startled peacock almost ran under the wheels, and at that moment we caught sight of two bright stars in the night, on a level with the top of the grass. Pahargarh stiffened, and whispered, "Gently, and do not stop." The stars blinked, and turned away. At the same moment two smaller but no less bright stars appeared in the road ahead. Then the great shape of a tiger appeared for a second, the smaller lights went out and mother and kitten vanished in the grass. Pahargarh spoke to his servant in the back seat and I heard him cocking a rifle. I felt an urgent need for speed, and wanted to be far away from there, from the tall grass that hid everything from our view. But the tigers had apparently kept on and we saw nothing. An hour

or so later, after seeing a number of deer, hundreds of peacocks and the vague shape of a huge creature that Pahargarh said was a blue bull, we coasted slowly down a hill where a stone wall on the outer edge of the road overlooked the forested hillside. Halfway down the hill a black sambar stood for a moment, then leaped lightly over the wall and crashed into the forest.

Before dawn next morning we ate a hurried breakfast and prepared for a day of hunting, and as we started out in the early light, saw three spotted deer on the opposite bank of the river, perhaps one hundred and fifty yards away. Pahargarh handed me his rifle and said, "The people in the village near here will be glad for meat. You get one, two if you can." A few minutes later one deer rolled down the bank into the river, and a second, hit twice, fell as though it had run into a wall. Shouts came from the dak bungalow and several natives ran to the water; others, at directions from us, went to the deer on the bank. My companion shouted instructions for skinning the deer and delivery of the meat in the village, less one haunch that we would use ourselves, then we drove on. Bullocks walked along the road, and since the horn button on the jeep had been out of order from the time I left Delhi, we were forced to go slowly. We saw a large number of deer, two bull sambars, several wild boars and finally, in a grassy clearing, a great blue bull or nilgai, nibbling at the leaves on a bush while it urinated. Blue-gray in color, with mauve throat tuft and black tips of the ears and tail, he had a large white breast patch, and was the size of a young moose. The bull of the species can be overtaken by a horse, but the cow cannot. Hindus regard them as a kind of cow and never kill them. I stopped the jeep and quickly raised my movie camera, setting the lens. Pahargarh whispered, "There is time. He will be doing that for two full minutes," and I began to film the creature. An instant later, in a corner of the view finder of

the camera I noticed a movement in the grass near the blue bull, and for a moment was spellbound. It was a tiger. I whispered to Pahargarh, who slipped the safety catch of his gun, and returned to my photographing. The tiger was hidden, but the blue bull, stretched out as a horse does in urinating, had turned his head to stare in the cat's direction. Then, while I pressed the button on the camera and hoped for a thrilling picture, the horn on the steering wheel gave forth a feeble "peep!" I had been leaning on the wheel to steady the camera; the horn had been out of commission for hundreds of miles, but it had chosen this moment to come to life for a second before dying again. The blue bull flung up his head and, still urinating, dashed into the trees. The tiger showed for a moment as it went in the opposite direction. As I sat there, exasperated, the strong and unpleasant scent of the tiger came to us in the air. Except for peacocks, we saw nothing else that day, and returned to the dak bungalow.

In the evening, while I attended to the spotted-deer skins, which I wanted to preserve, Pahargarh and I talked about the prospects of seeing any more game in the high grass, and decided against remaining. Rain had started to fall and we wanted to leave for Gwalior before the road became too muddy. On the way back, Pahargarh suggested that I return to Gwalior in two or three months' time, or after Christmas, and be his guest on his own estate. He would arrange several hunts, and by that time the grass would be down and the rains over. This I agreed to do, and when we reached Gwalior, I arranged to return to Delhi next morning.

On my way back to Delhi, I thought about returning to the Cecil Hotel and its extremely sedate atmosphere. I had been informed that no reservations could be guaranteed there, since the more or less permanent residents were returning from the hills and must, of course, have their old rooms. I decided, while driving, to try the Swiss Hotel, where sev-

eral friends were living, and where the atmosphere was less formal. When I reached Old Delhi and obtained a pleasant sitting room – gayly decorated and with a bowl of freshly cut flowers on a table – on the ground floor of the Swiss Hotel, I felt the change was a good one, though I missed Ganesh and his efficient care.

Next day, when I called at the travel office to inquire about my permit for Kashmir, I was told it had not arrived but was expected. The necessary investigations had been made, and the delay had been occasioned by my nonofficial status. I had the impression that my desire to visit Kashmir at this time of tension and uncertainty was not looked upon with favor. However, one of my interrogators said that the permit would no doubt be ready in one or two days, and I returned to the hotel. Three days later I received word that the permit had arrived and I could leave when I wished. Instead of thirty days, the period allowed on my permit had been reduced to fourteen days, which could be extended only by the local authorities in Srinagar, seat of the Jammu and Kashmir government.



Chapter 6

FOUR HOURS after a clerk handed me my permit to enter Jammu and Kashmir, I was met at the Delhi railway station by a young representative of Thos. Cook and Sons. He had a new bedroll for me in a reserved compartment he was guarding against interlopers. As soon as he left, I locked the doors and windows, bolted them, and went to bed. I had to be up before five o'clock, when the train reached Amritsar near the Indian-Pakistani border, in order to get whatever breakfast was available before the train went on to Pathankot, the end of my rail journey and the beginning of the road into Indian-held Kashmir. I expected to hire a car at Pathankot to take me the two hundred and sixty-eight miles to Srinagar, via Jammu, a city of golden temples.

At thirty miles an hour, the train rocked and clattered through the night, and I wakened only twice, at towns where the sweet and pungent smell of India came into the compartment and the babble of frantic travelers hunting for space to sit was accompanied by hopeful poundings on my doors and windows. I knew enough to keep them bolted and barred.

In the morning, I stood at the open door of the compartment and caught the attention of a vendor who brought me some scalding-hot tea, cold toast covered with a white grease called *ghee*, and two tiny eggs that had been momentarily exposed to lukewarm water. As I stood at the door later, a

husky Hindu walked up with a bedroll on his shoulder and grasped the handrail to step in. I remained where I was, blocking the door, and told him that the compartment was reserved, in my name. Pushing with his bedroll, the man raised his head, and with glittering, hate-filled eyes, shouted that by law he could enter, and did I mean to forcibly resist him? I wondered at the sudden outburst of temper, and put it down to a natural dislike of Westerners, until the man finally turned away after exchanging some rude comments, and I recognized his back. It was the Ascender! I watched him as he scrambled into an already overflowing carriage as the train began to move. The venomous hatred I had seen in his eyes seemed more than mere frustration over a seat on the railroad.

Through friends, it had been arranged that at Jammu I would meet Major General Yadunath Singh, commander of the Jammu and Kashmir forces. He had been telephoned, and expected me in Jammu that evening. When I found that there were no cars of any kind to be hired, I had coolies carry my bags to the bus station and looked for a telephone. A moment later a smartly uniformed major of infantry introduced himself and said that he had been instructed to meet me at Pathankot. The general was extremely sorry that it had been impossible to arrange a car for me, but he, the general, would meet me personally on my arrival by bus in Jammu. While I bought my ticket, the major saw my baggage stowed on the roof of the bus. Then he went off to report that I was on my way. The bus soon filled with passengers and heated up nicely, even though the windows were open. Then the driver appeared, with an assistant, and I looked around hurriedly for a safety belt. Never had I seen a more villainous-looking Sikh. Typically immaculate turban and carefully combed beard could not hide the gleam in his bright black eyes that boded ill for any other vehicle we might meet on a

narrow road. On his hip hung a long-bladed knife with beautifully carved hilt, and on both wrists he wore the slender, polished-steel bangles with razor-sharp edges that make a formidable weapon when pushed down over the knuckles. I was glad the major had insisted on my seat being near a large window toward the rear of the bus. Then we took off. Two Muslim women in purdah, across the aisle from the Muslim who sat next to me, fell to the floor at the jerking take-off, and the food they carried in brass vessels spilled out under the seats, saturated someone's blankets and filled the bus with a strong, spice-laden odor that was indescribable and not good. Behind me, a Gurkha soldier shouted to the Sikh driver to take care, and laughed at his face in the rearview mirror, daring the driver to get tough. The driver blinked a few times, for no one in his right mind will argue with a cheerfully belligerent Gurkha wearing his beloved *kukri*, that curved-steel blade that has struck fear into the hearts of so many enemies of Britain. The chattering women gathered up their mess from the floor and I took note of the other passengers.

Two white-bearded Muslim patriarchs sat behind the driver, their white cotton shawls draped picturesquely over their shoulders and heads, the edges held in slender fingers, ready to cover the mouth and face when dust swirled through the window. Behind them, and in front of the two women, who were by this time screaming at each other, sat the Ascender, in a brown coat, bare head, a sheet, or *cumbli*, instead of trousers, and bare, hairy legs. Next to him sat the driver's assistant, a young Sikh in a pale blue shirt with the tail hanging low, a flowered yellow turban, meticulously tied and spotlessly clean, and two steel bangles on each feminine wrist. Behind the two noisy women were four convicts in leg-chains, and two guards. The convicts were huddled together with dull, expressionless faces, and the guards were appar-

ently completely uninterested in anything that was going on.

On my side of the bus, a young Hindu and his wife sat together, quiet and reserved, surrounded by their possessions and holding two drinking-water containers of exquisitely carved silver. Behind them, crouched on the seat with feet under their haunches, two Muslim youths wearing "Jinnah" caps of Persian lamb, old army khaki tunics and blankets over their shoulders, talked in low voices. In front of me sat a slender Hindu wearing a cheap Panama hat, horn-rimmed glasses and a pin-striped blue suit. He had several small paper packages under the seat, three sporting rifles and a bulging briefcase tied to a bedroll that somehow had not been put on the roof. Although a large sign said NO SMOKING PERMITTED, Panama Harry surreptitiously smoked one cigarette after another, puffing the smoke out through the open window. Next to him sat a nondescript, ragged Hindu boy, who never opened his mouth during the entire trip. While the bus was in motion, he kept his eyes closed, too. The Muslim next to me was a merchant from Srinagar, with a curio and souvenir shop on the *bund* or embankment, by the Jhelum River. Apparently well educated, and very curious, he asked if I knew anything about cameras or photography, which was his hobby, and which provided us with a topic of conversation for the rest of the journey. Behind us, next to the Gurkha soldier, sat an elderly Hindu wearing a thick corduroy jacket, a small white cap, Punjabi slippers with turned-up toes and a number of sweaters and shawls. He seemed to be ill with malaria. Behind him were his two servants, apparently, for in turn they offered him water, some sort of medicine, betel nut, another blanket. They asked if he was comfortable and seemed very concerned over his welfare. Both of them sat on and in a pile of bedding, baskets of overripe fruit, rifles in leather cases and food baskets.

We had departed from Pathankot at exactly noon. After

two miles, the bus stopped at a road barrier and we all alighted to have our permits and registration papers examined and stamped. Indian Army police and civil police authorities asked a lot of questions, and an hour later we were told to board the bus again. About three miles farther along the road, which had been following a wide canal, we came to another barrier and customs inspection post. All baggage was taken from the bus and counted against the passengers' declarations, then it was opened and examined. When it was all over, and the baggage was stowed on the bus again, we found that the two purdah women were missing. Police and customs men went off to search for them while the bus driver started the motor and played a horrendous tune on three types of horns: a frightening blare from the horn on the steering wheel; a raucous, obscene honk from a rubber bulb and brass horn relic from the past; a high-pitched, penetrating whine from something attached underneath the hood and operated by a button over the driver's head. Then the two women appeared from behind a small hut, where they had been eating a white, and apparently sticky, mess of curds and cucumber. Climbing into the bus, they fell headlong again as the driver ground in the gears and we were off once more. At last we were in Kashmir, the land of romance and bewitching beauty, scented gardens and strolling poets.

Soon the road began to twist and climb, hugging the side of mountains. The two purdah women stopped their chattering and turned ashen. The afternoon passed slowly as the bus swayed around hairpin bends and over flimsy bridges. Toward evening we stopped to let off the convicts and their guards, and to take on a motley group of poor men and women with bundles and babies. One thin child sucked silently at a small ivory breast while tears rolled down its cheeks in an endless flow. There was no room for all of them to sit,

so the women crouched down on the floor in the aisle, holding their babies. They had brought an additional ingredient to the already overpowering smell in the bus, and when the two purdah women at last gave up and were violently ill, partly inside and partly outside the window, I wondered just how much the olfactory senses can put up with.

No one in the bus seemed at all concerned about what happened to anybody else. The merchant next to me finally stopped talking shutters and lenses and fell asleep. Panama Harry still smoked and puffed out of the window, the two whitebeards covered their faces and nodded off to the rhythm of the bus, and I kept my face to the open window and breathed in all the air I could get, dust and all. The only dignified people in that bus were the two white-bearded Muslims, and I thought how different they are in general from Hindus. With a few exceptions, when a Hindu begins to lose virility, he discards everything; clothes, caution and responsibility no longer matter. But with the Muslim, age seems to bring added responsibility and no loss of dignity.

As the hills on either side became higher and more rugged, we stopped in a narrow gorge for gas and water. A moment later a convoy of military trucks came lumbering down the road in second gear. There must have been hundreds of them, for it was at least forty-five minutes before we were able to move on again. The outside air had cooled considerably. It was perhaps sixty degrees, and all the passengers had covered themselves with every conceivable type of blanket, scarf and coat. Most of the windows were shut tight, and body odors mingled with everything else.

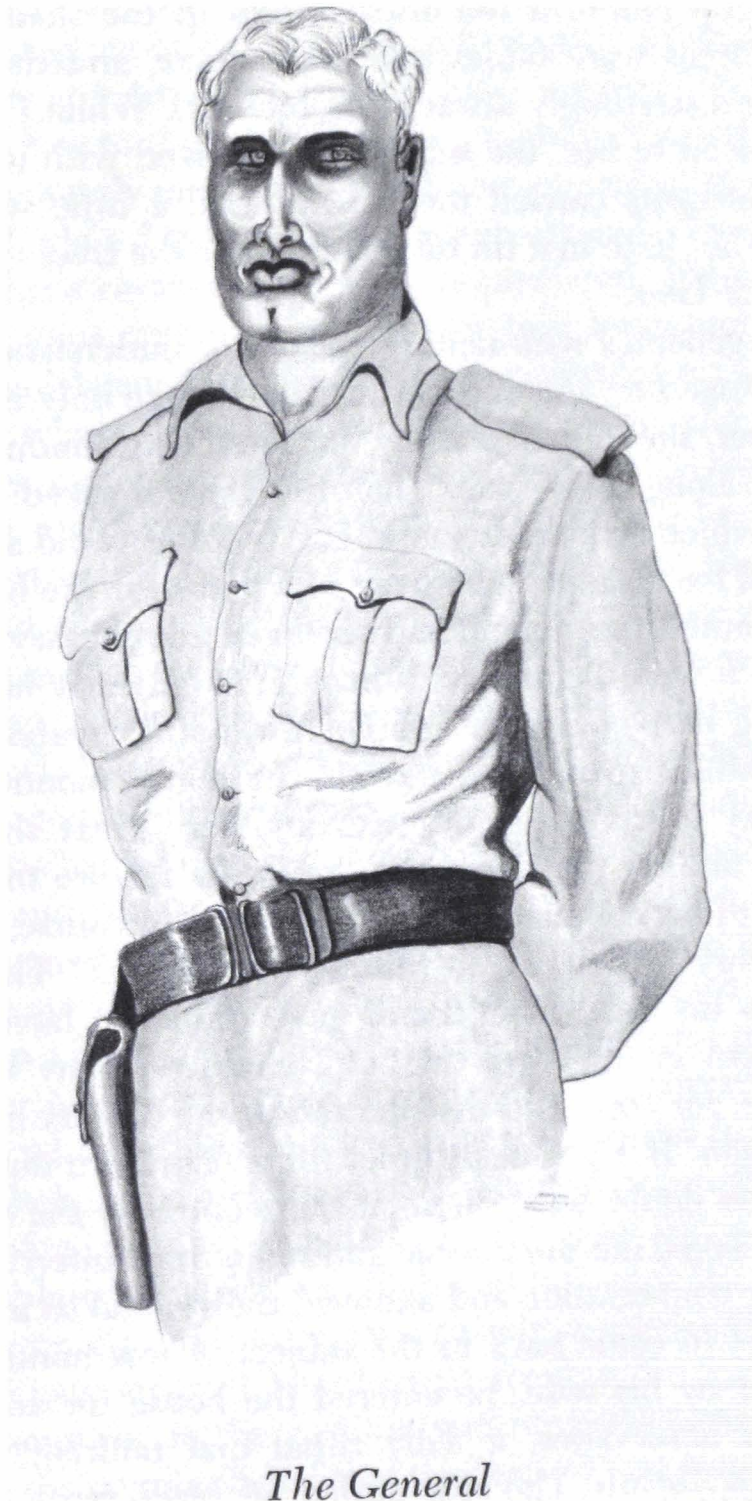
At four in the afternoon we entered Jammu city and pulled up at an imposing dak bungalow, painted pink. Dumping my gear on the veranda, next to the Ascender's pile of bags, I asked him to keep an eye on it for me and went into the dining room to order tea. In a few minutes I heard jeeps

arriving outside, and a moment later Major General Yadunath Singh marched in with his aide. We exchanged polite greetings and I gave him several messages from friends, then he announced I was to be his house guest while in Jammu, and ordered his aide to take care of my gear. Tall, gray-haired and handsome, the general was obviously a professional soldier.

When I climbed into his jeep and my foot kicked a loaded Tommygun, I suddenly realized that I was in an armed frontier region where the tense atmosphere was being carefully watched by the rest of the world, and the United Nations was desperately striving to avoid a fresh outbreak of the fighting, looting, abduction and rape that had been so much a part of earlier trouble in Kashmir, following partition. To the north, a little beyond Srinagar, lay the cease fire line, where Pakistani and Indian troops faced each other from trenches and gun emplacements, and hurled insults over loudspeaker systems. Here in Jammu was the center of planning and military authority. As we drove by a temple with a golden roof, I saw soldiers everywhere. When we came to the newly repaired and reinforced bridge over a tributary of the Chenab River, there were sandbagged enclosures for machine guns and detachments of troops at each end.

Here was a different world indeed from the one I had been living in since leaving Delhi. This was an up-to-date armed camp, with an atmosphere of business-like and efficient preparedness. From a land of odorous bus transportation, I had been swiftly transported to a clean world, where generals drove jeeps, wore pistols and had Tommyguns in easy reach. I wondered if I carried the smell of the bus on me, and if it was as noticeable as I thought it was.

The general drove well, at high speed, and as he drove, asked questions in rapid-fire succession, without waiting for me to reply. His English was excellent. Then we entered a



The General

high barbed-wire enclosure and camouflaged tent area, and pulled up before a red-brick house. In the shade of some lovely trees were tables and deck chairs, and the general's lady in a startlingly attractive white sari. While I was being introduced to her, the second jeep arrived with my belongings. Servants carried them away, and a little while later, after a hot bath in a tin tub, I sat under the trees with a cold bottle of beer.

The general's wife neither spoke nor understood English. When together, she and her husband spoke only in Punjabi. However, she understood my not too fluent Hindustani, and we got along quite well. Then the general asked about my plans, which he already knew, and before I could answer, he shouted for his aide, who lived in a tent near the house. In a few minutes, the general had arranged an itinerary for me as though it were a military campaign. At an early hour in the morning he would have "one of Kashmir's greatest hunters and wildlife experts" take me into the nearby mountains. The next day I was to go off with another "great shikari," or hunter, and on the following day give a lecture to "all staff officers of my command. The subject will, of course, be Natural History in Relation to Military Operations." Then, as an aside to his aide, the general gave orders to have a typewriter put in my room so that I could type my lecture in advance, for copy and distribution to the officers before the talk began. If I had kept quiet for a few more minutes, he would no doubt have dictated the lecture on the spot, and so have saved me the trouble and time. But I interrupted the one-way conversation and annoyed the general so much that he forgot to come back to the subject. A few minutes later, followed by his wife, he entered the house for an hour of religious observance, a daily ritual that nothing was permitted to disturb. The aide curled his black mustache for a moment, and then went off to do the general's bidding.

I had originally intended to spend only one day in Jammu, but my vigorous host apparently had other ideas, and I could only accept graciously. I was sincerely grateful for such kindness and hospitality, and I was a little surprised, for I had seen the letter to the general, from a mutual friend in Delhi, and it had merely mentioned that I was an American, a naturalist, and while I was traveling in the general's home territory, any little courtesies would be appreciated. The fact that I had no guns and was only moderately interested in the wildlife had been discounted and several rifles made available. The whole thing seemed a little overdone, and I sat in the garden under the trees thinking about it until some ants found me, and I went inside to my room, and to bed.

The next two days were extremely busy ones. The "great hunter and wildlife expert" turned out to be a heavy-set landowner whose tenants lived in some hills where there were a man-eating leopard, a lot of wild pigs, a few deer and some jungle fowl. In the early dawn we drove fifteen miles in a Jeepster into the hills, and to a grassy clearing by some native huts. Two charpoys were carried to the clearing from one of the huts and placed under trees for us to rest upon. Several natives arrived, obviously by prearrangement, and for more than an hour there was a heated debate over which of them would get a contract to cut hay on the landowner's property. Finally, a price was agreed upon and the contract signed. The man who had accompanied us in the Jeepster turned out to be a clerk, armed with legal papers, quill pen and ink pot, instead of guns and binoculars. By the time the legal deal was completed, the sun was high and hot, and the "expert" was hungry. An hour later, two natives arrived from somewhere below, where I heard cattle feeding on the hillside, and a discussion on the possibility of my seeing any animals ended in the popular belief that the leopard had gone to some other hills, the cattle grazing below would surely have driven

away any game in the vicinity and since it was so late, I could take a walk with one of the farmers if I wished. My host was going to rest awhile before going back to Jammu!

Amazed at the whole procedure, I went off with one of the farmers, who crashed noisily through the woods, avoiding animal trails and selecting the best of the thorn-shrub parts, until, after fifteen minutes, he began to circle back toward the clearing. I moved to one side quietly, and sat down on a rock for half an hour. Soon I heard voices calling from above, and some time later a line of natives passed by, calling to each other as they searched for me. When they were far below, I climbed back to the clearing and bumped into the rope bed where the "great hunter" was sleeping. Blood-red juice from the betel nut he'd been chewing trickled from one corner of his mouth as he glared at me for waking him, and he appeared to me less a hunter than a crafty, ill-mannered bore. On the way back to Jammu, I asked the man about his hunting experience, and at once realized that he was a fake.

Someone had lied to me. Or was this just normal procedure? Why had the general gone to so much trouble to foist this uncouth character on me? Did he care what I thought anyway? I doubted it, for I knew the Hindu mind well enough to understand that consideration for the other fellow is not of great interest to the Hindu with authority or position in the world — a characteristic that is neither plain selfishness nor personal vanity. It is the result of centuries of Hinduism. With some encouraging exceptions, the Indian peoples share common traits and characteristics that neither poverty nor prosperity can touch. Hinduism is a system of ideas and customs, the latter stemming from the former. It is in the mind that the Hindu really lives. Through *maya*, or illusion, which is one of the four basic conceptions of Hinduism, he thinks of God as more real than the material world. He escapes reality by realizing that actuality is an illusion, and his con-

viction that the material world around him is only an illusion may, perhaps, explain his characteristic indifference to earthly problems and his shrinking from reality – which some Western minds are fond of calling the “spirituality of India.”

¶ In this modern world there is little advantage to be gained from illusion, or escapism. In the world conflict of ideologies and cultures, the Hindu is handicapped by his traditional beliefs and customs, which, in any event, he is unwilling to change or to give up. How can he, and remain a Hindu? Yet the Hindu must now live in a world where he has assumed an important role, and where his other-worldliness is no help at all. Individually and nationally, he has a low esteem for the value of time, a characteristic disregard for punctuality, and infinite patience. He has a love of social esteem which sometimes creates jealousy and often leads to conflict, an excess of politeness in speech which flatters the unwary but shuns clarity, a high degree of devotion to religious sentiments and an overemphasis on gratuities, commissions and outright begging. He has a definite tendency toward slipshod ways of doing things, and a horror of being thorough. He has a fear of responsibility or of taking initiative, complicated by his remarkable aptitude in deliberately dressing up all reports or personal letters, statements to employers or superiors, non-fiction articles and books – even official government documents, which is today causing no little consternation and confusion among military and civil officials. He has, characteristically, a roundabout subtlety in speech rather than a direct approach, and a reluctance to conclude any conversation in which he holds the floor. To these traits we must add a great credulity, a susceptibility to superstitions, rumors, omens, charms (the whiskers of a leopard are a fine thing these days), miracle-workers, divinations, and a general impracticability in which fantasy and daydreaming are more important than reality. He has an eloquence, particu-

larly demonstrated in law-suits or debates, flavored with all the characteristics already mentioned, that leaves the Western mind confused and befuddled. At the same time, we have seen practical evidence of the Hindu's achievements in science, psychology, languages, metaphysics and mathematics that rank him with the best in the world, past or present. We have noted the grace and almost feminine poise of the hand, which is the most remarkable in the human race. And now we must notice characteristics that are less old — a newly acquired National Spirit, and an ability to believe his own dressed-up statements and opinions, which he would have us accept as facts. There is also an outward expression of arrogant superiority which, I am told, is in order for those in authority who deal with people from the West.

For some reason of his own, the general had led me up the garden path, as it were, and I suspected that he was anxious to discover whether or not he harbored a pink-goose hunter. When we arrived back at the house in the late afternoon, he asked if I had enjoyed the trip. I replied that since the "great hunter" was in my opinion a rank amateur, I had wasted a whole day, and would he kindly cancel the next day's expedition so that I could leave for Srinagar a day earlier? Plainly angry with me, the general addressed the "expert" in Punjabi at some length. I went inside to bathe. At dinner that night the aide was given orders to call off the next day's program and to set up the lecture instead.

After dinner, during which I thoroughly enjoyed some interesting and mysterious desserts, wrapped in silver and eaten with the wrapper, the general and his lady went off to their rooms and I sat under the trees with the aide. In a few minutes, several jeeps drove up and I was introduced to a group of officers who later took me off to their "club"—a large tent in a grove of trees, camouflaged and guarded by armed sentries. Most of the officers were able, two-fisted drinkers,

and long after midnight a Sikh colonel of artillery and a colonel of engineers who wore the Victoria Cross, highest British military decoration, escorted me back to the general's house in a gay mood.

When I wakened in the morning, there was a reproving note from the general on my breakfast tray, which an orderly brought in. The general suggested that if my head did not ache too much, would I kindly give his aide the typed outline of my lecture? An hour or so later I sent word back that the typewriter was not working properly and I would have to read the lecture from longhand notes.

My talk was scheduled for 3 P.M. At lunch, with the general absent and his aide interpreting, I heard from his lady a vivid description of the work being done by Indian women in tracing and rehabilitating Hindu and Muslim women who had been abducted by Pakistan troops during the Kashmir war. She seemed dedicated to her mission of rescuing these unfortunate women and girls, and I was impressed by her stories, particularly by those of the "tribesmen raiders" from the frontier regions where I had lived for some years. For the first time since my arrival, the lady became really talkative, and I had the impression of being the first interested listener she had met in a long, long time.

At the appointed time I was driven to the auditorium, and the general introduced me with care and precision. For thirty minutes I spoke of the necessity for the conservation of wildlife, the preservation of predatory animals (a subject which causes no end of conflict among my friends) and the advantages of a thorough knowledge of natural history in any military operation. At least 98 per cent of my audience spoke perfect English, and the five-minute question period brought forth some interesting questions. One was: "What, in your opinion, is the truth in the stories concerning the Abominable Snow Man of the Himalayas?" Mr. Eric Shipton, leader of

the 1951 Everest expedition, had recently published photographs of strange tracks his party had found on Everest's slopes. The tracks were reported to be those of the Abominable Snow Man, feared by Sherpa porters but believed to be really a mythical legend. The news and the photographs had stirred all India. I explained my own opinion and belief that the tracks had been made by a Bactrian camel, and the meeting ended. But my mind was running over the questions I had been asked by three officers near the front row — questions involving the Latin nomenclature and generic order of family groups in the animal world. As we drove back to the house, I became convinced that my status as a naturalist had been tested, deliberately. I was apparently still under suspicion.

Before leaving for the auditorium, I had packed my gear for the journey to Srinagar in a hired station wagon. Now I learned that the confounded thing had broken down, and since there was no other conveyance, I would have to take the bus again, or wait for days. The general suggested the latter, but I insisted that I had already caused him inconvenience by staying so long, and chose to take the bus.

On the way to the bus station with the general's aide, I met my two friends of the previous evening. The V. C. insisted that they take me in their jeep, and in a moment we were off again, the other jeep following in our dust. Skidding around corners on two wheels, the laughing Sikh colonel drove into the city with his hand on the horn button and delivered me at the bus — already loaded and ready to leave — in a cloud of red dust. Coldly and efficiently the officers removed two passengers from the seat behind the driver and installed me there, while the driver willingly saw that my gear was stowed on the roof. Then they dashed off, after arranging a reunion meeting on my return from Srinagar, and the second part of my journey into Kashmir began.

The smell in the bus was the same, and the white-bearded Muslims were there — and the Ascender, who sat in a center-aisle seat. The night closed in quickly, and the mountains on either side appeared as though out of focus. Occasionally we passed the flickering glow of a cow-dung fire with shrouded figures round it. A strange, unreal world it seemed.

Halfway up a steep incline we met a convoy of military trucks, and the driver respectfully pulled over to the edge of the road so they could pass. When they were gone, we moved another hundred yards or so to where a native with a lantern stood in the middle of the road. We had arrived at Kud village, where we were to spend the rest of the night. In a long-fronted stone building that had once been an attractive rest-house, I found a room at the end of the veranda and sent the not-too-clean caretaker for whatever food was available. When it came, I closed and bolted the doors and went to bed hungry, wishing I had stocked up on bananas. I also wished that I could have left the doors open, so that I could enjoy the fresh air, but I wanted to be alone for a few hours at least.

At four-thirty in the morning, I dressed and called the chowkidar to get some hot water and food. After some luke warm tea and cold, soggy toast that had been rescued from a cow-dung fire, I stepped out into the darkness of the veranda and almost fell over several sleeping forms huddled together for warmth. Then everyone began to fumble about, striking matches and rolling up bedding. An hour later we were off again.

As the sun rose, we came to a heavily wooded section where great pines overhung the road, and a number of fruit trucks passed us, heading in the direction of Pathankot. One of them we hit, bashing in a fender. Later, in scraping past another truck at a narrow bend, we lost one of our fenders entirely. The truck kept on going and our bus driver was livid with rage. The rest of that day's journey was a succession of

near murders. By noon, the scenery had changed considerably, the deciduous trees were scarce, and there were no bare areas. It reminded me of the pine-clad mountains of the Canadian Rockies. We crossed dozens of bridges that day, and some of them were so shaky the passengers were advised to alight and walk across, while the bus crossed empty. Then we began to climb to the top of the Banihal Pass, on a treeless mountain where the road zigzagged interminably and made hairpin bends every few hundred yards. Finally, through a short tunnel just below the peak of the mountain, we passed to the downgrade on the other side, and had our first view of the famed Vale of Kashmir. Surrounded by high mountain ranges on all sides, the valley was level and golden-colored, with bright green patches along irrigation canals, and, in the distance, the waving line of trees along the Jhelum River appeared blue. In less than an hour we had descended over four thousand feet, and I noticed the poplar-lined roads, small patches of cultivated ground, rice paddies, myriads of flowers, and piles of chilies on the ground, drying in the sun, their redness a vivid splash of color against the yellow-green countryside.

At Anantnag we stopped for refreshments. For a very few annas I bought a large sack of walnuts, some fresh pears and, at a crowded stand, the best cup of tea I had tasted in months. The road had straightened out now, level and wide, and we made good time. Soon we reached the Pampur saffron fields, but the blossoms were not yet showing. Eight miles farther on we entered Srinagar, spread out over eleven square miles along the Jhelum River, and almost surrounded by lakes.

I had wired ahead reserving a houseboat owned by one Salamo Doono, recommended to me as perhaps the best and certainly the most honest of all the houseboat owners. The man owned three houseboats, and they were moored to the

banks of Nagin Bagh, an attractive lake a few miles out of Srinagar proper.

At the bus terminal, I fought off a number of ragged characters who clutched at my bags and screamed at me to rent their houseboats. They were all touts for houseboat owners, seeking business. I had seen a photograph of Salamo Doono, and looked for him in the crowd, but the only clean-looking person was a young boy in a blue suit, who leaned against the wall, with long-lashed, sleepy eyes, and whose mind was apparently far away from the bus terminal. I stood over my bags and shouted, "Salamo," loudly, over the din of the persistent touts. The boy in the blue suit straightened up and looked around, as though surprised to find himself there. Then he saw me and came forward, shouting to the other natives, who fell away from me. Introducing himself as Guffara, son of Salamo, the boy helped me to load my gear into one *tonga*, a light, two-wheeled vehicle, and called for another to take me, explaining at the same time that Salamo had met each bus for several days. My delay at Jammu had discouraged him. In a few minutes we were on our way out of the city on the run, bells ringing on the ponies, a bell clanging on the footboard of the driver's seat and a rubber-bulb brass horn blaring. The ponies were quite obviously well fed and well groomed. They matched the spick-and-span tongas, with their fresh paint and varnish, and were the most gaily decorated ponies I had ever seen in India. I wondered if these two were an exception, but soon saw others, as we approached Dal Gate, and all were the same. At Dal Gate we stopped, the bags were carried down stone steps to a waiting *shikara*, or long, narrow gondola-type boat, with a small canopy and curtains over a spring mattress covered with a gay cotton print. With two paddlers, this was a part of my new establishment. The shikara came with the houseboat and

was always ready to take me anywhere on the water. Nagin Bagh was about five miles away, and as we went along the winding canals, dodging other boats, fishermen, women in tiny shikaras gathering weeds and lily vines from the water, men in large boats carrying lumber, I thought it was picturesque and delightful, even if it did smell a little foul. The smell was particularly strong in the sections where houses rose from the water's edge on either side, and stains on the damp walls showed that a variety of refuse, urine and waste was usually thrown out of the windows into the canals.

Leaving the system of winding canals, the shikara slipped along to the wide areas where hundreds of floating vegetable gardens made small islands of vivid green on the water. On rafts of interwoven roots and wood, earth had been dumped and seeds planted. The rafts grew each year until many were several hundred feet long, and formed portable gardens that could be moved about from one place to another by polling, a facility which has given rise to the expression that here is the only land that can be stolen, or lost.

Nagin Bagh, wide and long, was reedy at the edges but clear in the center. Along the shores, moored to the banks, were a dozen long houseboats with their smaller cook-boats alongside. On the open-decked end of one of these, a husky Muslim with a short white beard stood waiting. His twinkling eyes belied his stern, almost sour expression, and as we drew up to the steps he welcomed me to the King's House houseboat with old-world courtesy. In a few minutes he had shown me over the houseboat, I had selected one of the three bedrooms to sleep in and Salamo had sent Guffara for the cook. He ordered tea and cake, and gave instructions for my dinner, then we sat down and went through the business of the contract for renting the houseboat and its facilities. Business in Kashmir was suffering considerably from the lack of tourists, food was scarce and most of the houseboats were empty.



Salamo Doono

Only a few of the United Nations military observers were living there, and Salamo Doono, along with other owners, was having a difficult time keeping his boat. Our negotiations complete, I bathed in a small tin tub, settled my few belongings, and got out my notebooks and cameras. Salamo was extremely curious, so I told him what I wanted to do while in Kashmir. He immediately brought out a pile of old books from a locked bookcase, and several maps that had been out of print for fifteen years. They all contained valuable information, and we pored over them for hours, while from his wise old head Salamo gave me many details about Kashmir and its people.



Chapter 7

IN THE EVENING of my first day in the Kashmir Valley I sat on the sun deck of the houseboat while Salamo Doono told me things. As he talked, partly in poor English interspersed with pure Persian, and partly in Urdu flavored with the bastard Kashmiri dialect, his colorful descriptions seemed to conjure up a living past. Vague sounds came to me from distant Srinagar city, and behind the houseboat a woman sang a folk song about lovers and moonlight in the saffron fields. The scent of dying lotus blossoms was in the air, and in the early pink twilight I listened to Salamo and saw the past in all its vivid color.

Kashmiris believe that the valley was once a great lake, inhabited by a demon who fed on human beings living in the highlands around the lake. Aroused to pity by their distress, Kashyapa, a sage, prayed for their deliverance until the Goddess Sharika, disguised as a myna bird, dropped a pebble on the demon's head. The pebble grew into a hill and buried the demon. Kashyapa then cut a gap in the mountains at Baramula and drained the lake, and the valley so created was named after him, "Kashyapa Mir."

Two thousand three hundred years ago Emperor Asoka built the city of Srinagar and introduced Buddhism into the valley. Hindus and Buddhists lived side by side more or less happily for several centuries thereafter. Then the Muslims came, at the end of the thirteenth century. Akbar conquered

Kashmir about 1587, and soon afterward Jehangir created the Shalimar Bagh, or Abode of Love, for his Light of the Palace, lovely Nur Mahal, while his son, Shah Jehan, laid out black marble pavilions for court ladies, and floating gardens where the flowers were chosen for harmony of scent as well as color.

Then the Sikhs overran the valley, followed by the Hindus, then by the British, who, in 1846, unromantically arranged the sale of Kashmir to a petty chieftain named Gulab Singh, for about two million dollars. Thus came taxes, police and poverty to fertile Kashmir Valley. Grain, silk and saffron became state monopolies; butchers, bakers and prostitutes were taxed heavily to pay for the army, and occasional uprisings were brutally suppressed. From 1931 onwards the whole of Kashmir was locked in a bitter struggle between the preponderantly Muslim populace and the Hindu maharaja, who clung to his despotic powers. The oppressive rule of the Sikh and of the Hindu Brahmin caste continued in Kashmir until the fall of 1947, when the British left India. Then, the maharaja feared that the attraction for his subjects of the newly created Muslim state of Pakistan on his western borders would threaten his privileges. His rule had been oppressive. He had forbidden the Muslims to eat beef, he had imposed heavy feudal taxes on windows, chimneys and all sorts of other things. All through the early part of 1947, when the British were preparing to leave India, he was busy introducing Sikh and Hindu Mahasabha agents into Kashmir to "influence" his subjects. Discontent grew, and in August, the month of partition, the storm broke and the Devil himself took over the Kashmir Valley, its gardens, and all the mosques and monasteries. The rest of the world suddenly awakened to the fact that Jammu and Kashmir's boundaries touch Tibet, Sinkiang, U. S. S. R., Afghanistan, India and Pakistan. In a few terrible days, two hundred thirty-seven thousand people

were systematically exterminated in one area alone, and all the wars of the past, all the religious riots and massacres of the past were dwarfed by the horror and slaughter that came to Kashmir with independence and freedom. The Akali Sikhs and the Hindus of the R.S.S.S., or Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh, systematically wiped out hundreds of thousands of Muslims in cold blood. Towns and villages were sacked, their occupants burned alive or put to the knife. Trains loaded with refugees fleeing to Pakistan were derailed and all but a few massacred. Young women were abducted or raped and killed. Unborn babies were taken from their mothers and decapitated.

Then came UNCIP, the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan. Establishment of the cease-fire line followed quickly, and UNCIP brought in the United Nations Military Observers — a group of remarkable men, of many nations and languages, creeds and colors. With the military observers came one American airplane, to keep the headquarters supplied with food, fuel and parts for the jeeps, or replacements for the observers. Some day, the epic story will be written of the UNMO teams and their airplane, flown by Major Robertson and Captain Moore, U. S. Air Force, and we shall be proud, regardless of India's complaints about United Nations interference in Kashmiri affairs.

This was the Kashmir I came to late in 1951, via the bus route from Pathankot. No longer a highly popular tourist resort, but the center of events that were being followed by leaders of all other nations. I was glad that I had decided against living in Srinagar itself, and was unaccountably pleased when Salamo Doono told me that the great mosque a few yards away from the houseboat was the Hazratbal, where a hair of the Holy Prophet was kept in a shrine. With waving arms Salamo pointed across the lake to where Srinagar sprawled, five miles away, cut in two by the Jhelum River

but held together by seven bridges. From the poplar-lined shore of Nagin Bagh, where the houseboat was moored to the bank, the still waters reflected two prominent landmarks: directly across the lake was Pathan-built Hari Parbat Fort on one hill, and to the east Shankar Acharya Temple, on the hill known to all Muslims as *Takht-i-Suleiman*, or Solomon's Throne. Against the golden-yellow rocks at the base of the temple hill was Shankar Villa, headquarters for the UN Military Observers. Beyond Srinagar, in the blue distance, we could see the mountain walls of the valley, snow-capped and remote looking, though still fresh in my mind's eye as I thought of the bus and my first glimpse of the valley from the Banihal Pass, the only land route from India into Kashmir Valley.

Behind us, less than four hundred yards away, was that lake of delight and pleasure garden of the Moguls, Dal Lake, with a dozen miniature Gardens of Eden along its shores. On the far side of Dal Lake, two miles away, rose the wall of mountains at the northern end of the valley, and at their feet the great white palace that belonged to the maharaja until partition and war with Pakistan, when it became the home of Sheik Mohammed Abdullah, virtual ruler and chief minister for Jammu and Kashmir.

There was so much to see in the hills surrounding the valley that it was many days before I had time to visit Srinagar city, but I felt I should do it all as quickly as possible, for these were tense days, and a few miles away the loudspeakers on the cease-fire line had stepped up their propaganda barrage. Prime Ministers Nehru of India and Liaquat Ali Khan of Pakistan were exchanging impolite notes about Kashmir — though no one suspected that one of them was to die from an assassin's bullets within a few days. The Clenched Fist, Pakistan's symbol of determination to hold to her position, had been held aloft to cries of "*Jehad*," or Holy War. And in

the valley itself there was an undercurrent of tense expectancy. On the road behind my houseboat, a constant procession of Sikh-driven truck convoys rumbled past, on their way to Ladakh through the Zoji La, eleven thousand feet high, lowest of the passes leading to Leh, the Karakoram Range and Tibet. In the cold early-morning hours I heard airplanes overhead, heading eastward toward Leh, capital of Ladakh, the most elevated inhabited region of the world, peopled by sturdy Buddhists and myriads of Tibetan sheep and goats. From these same goats came the rare pashmina wool for Srinagar merchants to weave into priceless treasures of shawls and cloth at the price of the eyesight of the men who wove them in ill-lit rooms.

Salamo Doono helped me to plan my itinerary. First, there would be one or two trips into the mountains, then, since Srinagar was a trading center and market place for Tibetan and Yarkandi traders, it would be a good place for me to examine skins and skulls. The Yarkandis from Sinkiang were reputed to be reliable sources of information on the wildlife of the high plateaus beyond the Karakorams, and I looked forward to talks with them. It was the best I could do, since I could not get a permit to travel beyond the cease-fire line area.

As we talked and planned, I realized that I was fortunate in having met Salamo Doono. One after another he named strange and interesting places. In his lifetime he had traveled considerably in Kashmir, and it was apparent that he remembered all he had seen and heard. Leh in Ladakh, and the Ladakhi people; Sonamarg, the meadow of gold, and its buttercups; Wulwur Lake and its fine fishing; Manasbal Lake, noted for the transparency of its waters and its lotus blossoms; Gulmarg, the meadow of flowers; Amarnath Cave, the legendary abode of Lord Siva, incarnate in ice within the cave, which has become a mecca for Hindu pilgrims. A dozen places to see, each entirely different, none like the Vale of

Kashmir, all reached by pilgrim routes or pony trails, and every one with its own peculiar type of inhabitant. He knew little of the wildlife, but displayed an amazing knowledge of the characteristics and dialects of the people. I found myself becoming more and more interested in the ethnic types he described, and in the religious customs of the people who dwelt in these high regions around the Kashmir Valley.

Early in the morning, as I breakfasted on two small trout, freshly caught, a jeep drove up the path along the lake and an Indian Army officer came on board the houseboat. Colonel Prith Nath Kak, from Army headquarters in Srinagar, introduced himself with a slight hint of pride and asked what he could do to make my stay in Kashmir more pleasant? General Yadunath Singh had telephoned him from Jammu and requested that he pay me a visit and assist me in any way possible. A slightly-built man, the colonel literally bounced with vitality. When he heard that I had played polo years before, he immediately decided that I must play in the weekly game in Srinagar. Then he suggested that my houseboat was too far from Srinagar and I should give it up. He would arrange quarters for me in the city, where I would be "closer to things and we can see more of you, you know." At once I recognized the danger to my plans for traveling alone, and I had to be firm. However, I agreed to play polo on my return to Srinagar in a few days and the colonel bounced off the houseboat and roared away in his jeep.

Some few minutes later Salamo Doono appeared, wearing a glum look on his round face.

"You go live in Srinagar, Master?"

"No."

"You know that Colonel Kak before this one time, Master?"

"No."

"Why he come here see you?"

"He knows my friends in Jammu."

For the next hour Salamo seemed to be very much upset, but he cheered up as soon as we made ready for my first trip into the mountains.

We spent the next night above Arau, in a small drafty hut sixty-five miles from Srinagar and about five miles south of the Kolahoi Glacier, which rises to about seventeen thousand seven hundred feet. At Pahlgam, where most of the people were already preparing to close their shops in the great bazaar before winter came, we had left the hired car and hiked seven miles to Arau. At dawn, in bitter cold air, we rode rented hill ponies up through alpine valleys where the woods were strangely silent. There were no birds and no animals to be seen or heard. Above timberline, at twelve thousand feet, we passed two herders and their flocks of sheep, every single one of which was painted from head to tail in pink spots, for a brand. One or two had a blue stripe as well, and the whole effect was clownish and silly-looking. However it looked to me though, it was obviously a good protection against brand changing, and would be most difficult to alter or hide.

When we had passed the foot of the glacier and my pocket aneroid barometer showed fifteen thousand nine hundred feet, we stopped for lunch. I was having trouble with my breathing, unaccustomed to the altitude, and was glad to rest for a while. Salamo dug into his pack and pulled out some cold roast teal, hard-boiled eggs and fresh tomatoes. It was a grand meal, and the lukewarm tea was refreshing. Later, as we smoked a cigarette, we discussed the absence of animals and I wondered if all the mountainous terrain was the same. So far, I had seen only hawks soaring in the distance, and a few droppings on the rocks that indicated either very small foxes or, as Salamo suggested, stone martens. Returning to Arau we saw nothing, and paused at the hut only long enough to pick up our bedding and then go on down to Pahlgam and the waiting car.

At the houseboat I found a message from Colonel Kak, reminding me that I was expected at the polo field at 4 P.M. on Friday, four days hence. He would send a car for me. Colonel Kak also informed me that he had found a houseboat on the bund in Srinagar that would be better than the one I had. He suggested that I take it at once. This I decided to ignore.

Determined to find some evidence of the wildlife I had heard about and felt sure was there, I spent the next two nights in stone huts above Sonamarg, and near the beginning of the Zoji La (*la* being Tibetan for pass). Here I had my first impression that I was in "Lost Horizon" country, and when on that first evening we met a group of Yarkandi merchants with a caravan, the story-book effect was heightened. With Salamo acting as interpreter I talked with the men — who impressed me with their simple courtesy and dignity — and learned that they had a large number of skins and furs in their packs. One young Yarkandi from Khotan in the Takla Makan Desert area, spent hours with me examining furs of martens, minks and weasels, snow-leopard skins with beautiful black markings in the deep-gray fur, and several ordinary leopard skins of a size and richness of color I had never seen before. The young man had a surprising knowledge of leopards, and I was fascinated with his ability to describe the habits and characteristics of the big cats. When we retired in the early hours of the morning, I promised to visit him and his friends in Srinagar.

Next morning the Yarkandis were gone when I wakened. On the slopes below the stone hut, the rising sun colored the rocks faintly and I saw the griffon vulture, the ubiquitous lammergeier, Bonelli's eagle and kestrels, all soaring together. Occasionally a kestrel, hovering like a kingfisher, fell from a great height upon some unsuspecting mouse or other rodent.

Muffled to the ears, Salamo complained about the cold, but provided a breakfast that looked good, even though it tasted of the smell in the hut. In this area, and through the Zoji La to Kargil in Ladagh, the natives dress in gray rags they never change, live in stone huts without windows and have a dark complexion which gives them the appearance of having been smoked, especially the women. One can usually detect the sour odor of their bodies from a considerable distance. My breakfast that morning seemed to be flavored with the memory of past occupants of that hut.

During the day, hiking and watching for signs of wildlife, I saw two bears, one brown and one black. They met head-on in a scree of rocks below me, and I noted that the brown bear, or "Redbear" as it is known locally, gave the smaller black bear a wide berth as it rose on its hind legs, with its forepaws together, and waddled forward. I thought of Kipling's description of "The bear that walks like a man in prayer." Later in the day we saw three ibexes. They were directly to the south of us, silhouetted against snow-capped mountains, and I suddenly realized that these mountains we stood upon were the extreme northwest end of the great Himalayas. To the north and the northeast were the mighty Karakorams, the Muztagh Ata Range, the Kara Kush and the Hindu Kush. Not far away to the northwest was Nanga Parbat, or the Naked Mountain, twenty-six thousand six hundred and sixty feet high, where the bodies of twenty-seven men were somewhere hidden in the snows. Known as the *Murderer*, this great peak was finally conquered by the veteran Austrian climber Hermann Buhl, in July 1953. The great mass of the Karakorams hid from me the second-largest mountain in the world, Mount Godwin Austen, or K-2, twenty-eight thousand two hundred fifty feet high.

Late in the afternoon we met two groups of traders who were heading for Srinagar. The first party, with four shaggy-

haired two-humped camels, was made up of seven Yarkandis and their women, and in appearance they closely resembled the ones we had talked with the day before. The others were Ladakhis, with goats carrying their trade goods. They were the first Ladakhis I had seen. The two caravans were quite separate, and it was some time before I learned that the average Yarkandi has little respect for the Ladakhis, whose morals and manners are generally conceded to be of a low order, even by the Kashmiris, whom the Yarkandis claim to be the greatest liars on earth.

The Yarkandis, from southern Sinkiang, south of the Takla Makan Desert, are usually well-to-do tradesmen with higher standards of ethics than is common in northern Kashmir. They have penetrated the Kashmir areas in increasing numbers during recent years, and many are taking up residence there. Most of them have entered Kashmir via its back door, the Karakoram Pass, at eighteen thousand two hundred and ninety feet in northern Ladakh. Mongoloid in appearance, with bronzed complexions and uncommonly smooth skin, even in the aged, they are a reserved and likeable people, esteemed highly by Kashmiris and Ladakhis alike.

Yarkandi clothing is simple. Over a pajama of silk or cotton, the men wear a *choga*, or cloak, made of silk in summer and wool from the yak in winter. Their footwear is usually an embroidered leather shoe of a Chinese type. In winter they wear Russian-style knee-boots of leather, lined with hair from the yak. Their women, strictly Mohammedan in behavior, remain in purdah at all times, and their outer garment is the common *burka*, or loose-fitting robe and headdress combined. The footwear of the women, like that of the men, is embroidered leather of a Chinese type, made like a slipper. The hats of the men vary to some extent in material, although the majority favor a fur cap, with large ear flaps, made from beaver, the tails of foxes, Persian lamb in gray colors — never

black — or leopard. The summer hat is often embroidered and without fur, the ear flaps and visor always pointing upward and outward.

Kashmiris of the valley, and almost all other people of India wear a great deal of silver ornament and jewelry, but the Yarkandis wear gold. Their languages are Tibeto-Chinese, Persian and Pashto. Most of them understand Arabic and the educated can read and write classical Persian as well as Tibeto-Chinese. Their diet is principally meat of the yak, some mutton and great quantities of dried fruit and tea.

Salamo spoke to the leader of the Yarkandi group, and apparently gave him a message from the others we had met. All of the men smiled; the leader bowed to me respectfully and offered his hand to shake. Back at the stone hut, I wondered how we would arrange the sleeping accommodations. I need not have worried however. In short order three tepee-type tents were erected close together among the rocks behind the hut. The tops of the tents had been cut off, leaving a hole three feet in diameter in each, and springy sticks of wood bent into circles kept them taut. Noticing my interest, the leader of the Yarkandis explained in very good Urdu that the material was felt, made from goat wool. Then he went off to see that the four camels were secure for the night. Because the women were present, I could not visit with these men, so I asked Salamo about the Ladakhis. His nose turned up and he explained that they were not very clean. He was glad that the Ladakhis were not camped near us.

That night, after Salamo and I had had a light meal of mutton curry that had been prepared before we left the houseboat, the Yarkandi leader and one other man politely asked if they might enter the hut, and a few minutes later were answering my questions about their home country and the mountains they had traveled over. I learned more about the Yarkandi and the Tibetan-Ladakhi areas in the next three

hours than I would have learned in weeks of traveling in the country alone. Their stories of the wildlife showed keen perception and long familiarity with all kinds of animals, and the simple references to events that had occurred at altitudes of seventeen and eighteen thousand feet amazed me. It was from the leader of this group that I first heard of the Kazakhs, who had fled to Kashmir from Russia. He mentioned the strange word once or twice, then went on to another subject. When I met the Kazakhs later, I thought of this man, and wished I could have spent more time with him.

In the morning I watched the Yarkandis break camp and load the moaning camels. Under their beaver-fur caps, all the men wore spotless white handkerchiefs tied around their foreheads, and I noticed that the white borders of the women's burkas were freshly cleaned and white also. They were ready for Srinagar, although it would be late that night before they reached it. As we watched them picking their way through rocks and stones on the path, I told Salamo that I wished I could see Yarkand and the country these people came from. He smiled and asked if I wanted to get married. Then he explained that in many Yarkandi villages along the Kashmir-Sinkiang border it was customary for strange men to be compelled to marry a Yarkandi girl immediately on entering a village. When the stranger left the village again, having stayed a day, a week or a year, the marriage was automatically annulled. In this way, Salamo explained, trouble caused by roving bachelors was eliminated.

On the way back to Nagin Bagh, we had unusually clear views of Nanga Parbat. A man we met, who was leading four ponies, told us it was the first occasion in about ten months that the mountain was clear of clouds and could be seen in all its majesty. By early afternoon, clouds began to build up at its base and in an hour had covered it entirely.

Back at Nagin Bagh, I made the acquaintance of Mark Short and his charming wife. An American, Mark was an administrative assistant in the UN Military Observers headquarters in Srinagar, and he lived in a houseboat just a few yards along the shore from my own. Mark Short was the first member of the United Nations that I had ever met personally, and as I got to know him a little, I began to appreciate the fact that the United Nations had somehow found a way to enlist in their services the finest type of American it is possible to meet. Later, I met many others and became still more impressed. There are no better ambassadors for the U. S. A. than the Americans who form a large part of the UN Military Observers teams.

The polo game provided some interesting sidelights. I had been too long out of the game in the first place, and, secondly, no one thought to tell me before the game started that none of the horses (how can one call a mount of sixteen hands a pony?) were trained to turn on the forehand. Twice my mount and I went down with a crash as we slipped on the hard-packed field.

This was my first visit to Srinagar city, and I made up by mind to see more of it later, for the place interested me tremendously. On the way to the polo field, I had ridden past Hari Parbat Fort on its prominent hill, and at Dal Gate had passed shops with rather odd names – Cheap John, Suffering Moses and others. I knew that these characters were famed the world over, through pre-partition tourists and visitors, and I wanted to find out what they sold. However, before I met any of them, I became involved with Subhana the Wurst, with his shop on the bund, and found that any further exploration among the salesmen of Srinagar would be unnecessary; he stocked everything I needed.

For several days, with Salamo Doono as my guide and

interpreter, I dug in the narrow alleys of the bazaar and the *serais*, or caravansaries, of Srinagar, in search of animal skins, skulls and case histories. At the serai where my Yarkandi friend lived with others of his race, I examined many hundreds of skins of leopards, snow leopards, bears, minks, martens — both of the stone and pine varieties. There were Tibetan and snow lynxes, pale Russian foxes that were like the synthetic platinum foxes, mounds of Persian lamb in all shades and grades, marmots and huge wolves, otters, and a small tiger which turned out to be a local variety and not from outside of Kashmir.

It was while visiting traders and merchants in the bazaar and outlying districts of Srinagar, that I particularly noticed the tense atmosphere and undercurrent of anxiety regarding the future of Kashmir. As the days passed and I came to know a little more about it, I became anxious too. Certain facts were self-evident, and when they began to affect my daily life I took a definite interest. At that time, Kashmir, and particularly Srinagar, were preparing for the coming elections. Feelings were running high, and the outcome was uncertain. Dr. Frank Graham's mediation mission was coming to a close and India wondered, as did Pakistan, what he would recommend to the UN Security Council. But there was no talk in Srinagar, or anywhere else in Kashmir, of the right or wrong of the situation. The people were more concerned about what would happen to them in the immediate future than in the happenings of the past. They were caught in a bitter struggle which had already reduced the fertile Vale of Kashmir to a place of hunger. Few were eating a meal every day, many were eating only once in three or four days. The Hindu troops were well fed, but there were so many of them that little was left for the people. As the days passed and pre-election excitement increased, I saw that anxiety was stronger than any other feeling.



Kashmiri woman and child



Chapter 8

TROUBLE BEGAN in Kashmir long before partition in 1947. The conflict there became a symbol of Hindu resistance to division of the old India into two separate nations. Through the voice of Nehru, the Hindu's greatest and loudest argument against partition was based on the claim that economically and geographically the subcontinent was a single unit. They brushed aside as irrelevant the fact that the countries of Europe, of North and South America, are also single units, which have for centuries been successful as individual nations. For the Muslims, religion was a most important issue in the demand for a separate Pakistan. The basic differences between Mohammedanism and Hinduism made it impossible for Muslim and Hindu to work together. They also felt that one hundred million people were too many to be a minority.

In 1938 a movement was begun towards a democratic government in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, and the National Conference Party was formed under leadership of Sheik Mohammed Abdullah, a Muslim. The regime of Sir Hari Singh, Hindu maharaja of Kashmir, was reactionary and opposed to any emancipation of the people, and Sheik Abdullah was imprisoned seven times for agitation against the maharaja. In 1946, Abdullah was sentenced to nine years in jail for organizing a "Quit Kashmir" campaign against Sir Hari Singh, and he was in jail in 1947 when the British Vice-

roy, Lord Louis Mountbatten, begged the maharaja to decide whether to accede to Pakistan or to India, and at all costs to ascertain the will of the Kashmiri people. The population of Jammu and Kashmir was more than 78 per cent Muslim then. But Hari Singh seemed unable to make up his mind. An orthodox Hindu, and renowned more for his polo ponies and race horses than for his political acumen, he had no wish to acknowledge a Muslim state. He preferred either independence – or accession to India. At the same time, there was Sheik Abdullah – the locally popular leader of the National Conference Party, President of the All-India State's People's Congress, and a close personal friend of Mr. Nehru, Abdullah was one of the few Muslims who rejected the idea of a Muslim nation separate from India, and though he was in prison his party was important. It favored accession to India. But still the maharaja dallied, while events began to force his hand. In Poonch, a craggy, barren area of the Jammu district, Muslims demonstrated for accession to Pakistan. Their meetings were fired on and they rose in open revolt against the Maharaja. Then Hindus of the R.S.S.S. and Sikhs of the Akali organization came into the area and began their systematic atrocities. The riots and bloodshed spread into the Kashmir Valley. On the day of partition, August 15th, 1947, Sir Hari Singh entered into an agreement with Pakistan, known as the "Standstill Agreement," whereby Pakistan was to assume the duties and responsibilities of the pre-partition government in respect to Jammu and Kashmir. But he still dallied over the actual accession. In October the Pathan tribesmen of the Northwest Frontier Province and Afghanistan came down from their mountains into the Punjab and Kashmir, incensed by tales the massacre of Muslims. They swept through the Hindus and Sikhs and were within sight of Srinagar when the maharaja called for V. P. Menon and composed his hasty letter of accession to India. In it he begged for military assist-

ance, stating that he was asking Sheik Abdullah, just released from jail, to form a government. Within a few hours, the first Indian troops were flown into the valley and it was saved by a hairbreadth. Sir Hari Singh fled southward to a less dangerous area, and Sheikh Abdullah took over. Pakistan was appalled and furious. Mohammed Ali Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan could not, had they wished, have restrained the Pathans and the people of West Punjab from giving aid to the *Azad*, or Free Kashmir Forces, retreating before the Indian Army and Air Force. They resisted the popular clamor for open war and proposed to India that the fighting be stopped and a plebiscite held. Mr. Nehru refused to listen.

In the meantime, Pakistan and India had become two separate, sovereign, independent dominions of the British Commonwealth, and there was the vexing question of more than five hundred Indian princely states. Britain, through her Viceroy, Lord Louis Mountbatten, had advised the princes to take into account the geographical location of their states, economical and strategic factors, and, above all, the wishes of their people in arriving at a decision as to whether to accede to India or to Pakistan.

The Indian position regarding accession of the states — frequently expressed, and emphasized by the Indian representative to the Security Council of the United Nations on March 8, 1948 — was as follows:

No doubt the ruler, as head of the State, has to take action in respect of accession. When he and his people are in agreement as to the Dominion to which they should accede, he applies for accession to that Dominion. However, when he takes one view and his people take another view, the wishes of the people have to be ascertained. Then the ruler has to take action in accordance with the verdict of the people. This is our position.

This stand on the part of India was clearly expressed on numerous occasions in White Papers and government statements.

Of the five hundred or more princely states, the majority acceded to India or Pakistan without argument, but trouble arose with regard to the states of Hyderabad and Junagadh, as well as Kashmir. Hyderabad had a Muslim ruler and a majority of non-Muslim population. Hyderabad decided to remain independent. India, however, decided that the state should first accede to India, and then a plebiscite could be held to ascertain the wishes of the people. Indian Army troops occupied Hyderabad, and accession to India quickly followed. Junagadh had a Muslim ruler and a majority of non-Muslim population, also. Junagadh acceded to Pakistan. India maintained that its accession to Pakistan was in violation of the principles on which the partition of the subcontinent had been based, and that it was an encroachment on India's sovereignty and territory. Indian Army troops entered Junagadh, a new government was formed, Junagadh reversed its decision and became a part of India.

In Kashmir, however, the situation was different. The maharaja had entered into an agreement with Pakistan, whereby Pakistan assumed the duties and responsibilities of the pre-partition government in respect to Jammu and Kashmir. When he suddenly acceded to India, Pakistan regarded the accession as a fraud, and as the fighting continued she negotiated for settlement by proposing an evacuation of all troops on both sides, and a plebiscite. This failed. Pakistan then proposed that both sides refer the matter to the United Nations for settlement. India chose to beat Pakistan to the punch and came before the United Nations as a complainant against Pakistan.

After lengthy hearings, on February 6, 1948, the Security Council formulated the following recommendations:

1. All outside troops should be withdrawn.
2. A neutral administration should be set up.
3. A plebiscite be held and Kashmir should accede to Pakistan or India.

The United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan, was appointed to implement these resolutions. But, while it was being organized, Indian troops began a major offensive in Kashmir in April 1948, driving toward the Pakistan border. Pakistan sent in her troops at once.

In July 1948, the UN Military Observers arrived on the spot, and on January 1, 1949, the cease-fire line became effective. Since that time, demilitarization of the state of Jammu and Kashmir has been successfully obstructed by refusal on the part of India to agree to the withdrawal of her troops. India has stated she is prepared to agree to a plebiscite only if her armed forces are allowed to remain in control, if the civil administration of Jammu and Kashmir is kept under the charge of her protégé, Bakshi Ghulam, and provided Pakistan has no access to the plebiscite area.

All efforts to solve the deadlock in Kashmir have been abortive. After years of study, negotiation, proposal and counter-proposal, the situation has not altered. The high majority of Muslims in the population has been reduced to a bare 51 per cent. The state is unable to vote on its accession either to Pakistan or to India. It is being bled in order to support the Indian Army; the people are hungry, and fear for the future. Bitterness and hatred are growing where, a few years ago, the people were known for their sunny dispositions.

The Indian claim to Kashmir rests on three points: the Hindu and Sikh population of Jammu; the legitimacy of the government appointed by the maharaja; and the claim that the Muslims of Kashmir have declared their allegiance to India. The first of these claims, that the population of Jammu is altogether Hindu and Sikh, is correct, for every Muslim was

eliminated from the area during the riots and massacres. The last of the claims is untrue. I found that, when the jails of Srinagar are choked full and can hold no more, or when they feel safe from Hindu listeners, 90 per cent of the Muslims of Kashmir express a passionate wish for accession to Pakistan. Not unnaturally, they fear the spirit known to exist behind the scenes in India, incorporated in the Brahmin caste, the Hindu Mahasabha, the Sikh Akalis and the murderous and secret force which was responsible for the death of Mahatma Gandhi.



Chapter 9

MY INTEREST in natural history gave me a good excuse to prowl through the narrow streets and back alleys of the Srinagar bazaar. By the time I had made several excursions there, I began to realize the extent of the variety in the fauna of this Kashmir region, as contrasted with the typically Himalayan types in Kumaon. At the same time, word had spread among the merchants and dealers that I was interested in animal skins — provided that they were accompanied by the skulls of the animals as well. Early every morning my breakfast on the houseboat was interrupted by the bumping of a shikara against the sides, and a polite, “Good morning, Sahib,” from a trader whose boat was loaded with an assortment of skins and skulls in varying degrees of cleanliness or decomposition. By this time, Salamo knew roughly what I was looking for, and he eliminated some of the characters who brought crudely mounted skins with falsely opened jaws, hideous papier-mâché tongues and odd patches sewn into the hides to cover holes or tears. Some, however, brought raw skins and mummified heads that interested me, and I examined a large number of skins and skulls from all parts of the country — from Yarkand, Sinkiang, Tibet, Ladakh, Zaskar and the Kashmir Valley itself. I was particularly anxious to find skins and skulls that belonged to each other, and some sort of authentic story as to where they came from, but eventually I gave up the idea altogether. Many of the men brought sacks of odor-

ous skulls with their bundles of skins, but could not tell which head went with a particular skin. Others showed me fresh skins to which stinking skulls, covered with black, dried meat, years old were tied. They insisted that the skin and skull were from the same animal, but when I examined them I would find the skull tied to a fine leopard skin had once been carried by a bear, or vice versa. One handsome golden-yellow marbled cat skin came with a great skull that probably belonged originally to a snow leopard, and the salesman explained, "This one, she clever fellow, Sahib. She have too much brain." Sometimes the skulls were made up of the lower jaw of one animal and the upper part of another. Salamo Doono's houseboat began to smell as it never had before. One man brought twenty or more beautiful mink skins which he claimed were from Russian Turkestan, but the feet were cut off, some of the tails broken off and there was no way of obtaining the true story of their origin. It was a frustrating experience, although the examination of so many skins gave me information that otherwise would have taken months to acquire.

Each of the natural, distinctive topographical divisions of this great area has its own distinctive fauna, yet through all of them pass many forms of wildlife common to China, Burma, Tibet, Siberia, Nepal, the Hindu Kush, Afghanistan, Iran, the Caucasus and even Europe. It seems to be a meeting place for animals whose ranges cover a great portion of the earth's surface, and I was grateful for the opportunity to see some of them. Here, at the top of the greatest archway of mountains in the world, there was so much to study that I wanted more time to spend, so I applied for an extension of my permit, with aid from Colonel Kak, who still insisted I would be happier living in Srinagar than on a houseboat. In a few days, the extension was granted. With Salamo and native coolies with horses, I went off into the Pir Panjal

Range, which forms the northwestern fringe of the Kashmir Valley.

It was late in September and many of the flowers were gone, but some were still in bloom. Tuberoses, hydrangeas, pure-white and slightly scented asters, and velvety-dark begonias were just beginning to bloom. As we entered some pine and cedar forests I listened to Salamo describing the Valley of the Flowers on the Kishenganga River at Kamri, and wanted to go there too.

“A luffly place, Master. You like very much, I take you there sometimemebbe.”

“Any animals to be seen there, Salamo?”

“You like bear smell more better than flowers, Master? Why for, Master?”

This was difficult to explain, particularly to a Kashmiri, whose nose is brought up in air laden with the perpetual scent of nearly two thousand five hundred varieties of wild flowers. As we rode through the great trees, I noticed that even the bushes had fragrant leaves, though the flowers were long gone. Salamo told me that the scented leaves of *skimmia* and *viburnum* are used by Hindus for worship. A scented oil is extracted by burning, and, mixed with ghee, it is also used to cure burns. Then I saw the first flocks of goldfinches, pausing in the trees on their way northward to Gilgit, Hunza, the Pamirs and perhaps on into Russia. A few moments later a swamp deer, which resembles an American elk, walked leisurely along the edge of a grassy area until he saw us and trotted away, his tracks mixing with those of a small bear. This was different country from the harsher, more barren terrain near Sonamarg. In the woods, creepers were everywhere, woodpeckers hammered at the trees and their noise almost drowned out the soft, sweet calls of turtledoves and pied-crested cuckoos.

It was on this trip that I discovered a peculiar and un-

accountable absence of wildlife from the eight thousand five hundred-foot level to timberline, which is usually at about ten thousand feet. At the lower levels we saw numbers of noisy macaque monkeys as they fought and chased each other. Once we caught sight of the pale beech marten, or stone marten, that is so popular with the ladies. Here in these hills, this Palaearctic trespasser was common enough to be well-known to Salamo, and I was astounded when one of the coolies nonchalantly explained that it was known by the split tip of its genital organ, a fact that I later found to be a distinguishing characteristic. But as we climbed higher, where there was practically no undergrowth and the slanting rays of sunlight marbled the slopes, the silence became oppressive. Nothing moved, and there were no birds. At two old log shacks where we stopped, there were no shrews, although they are extremely common throughout the area generally, from Nepal through the Himalayas, the valley and west to Pakistan. I spent one entire morning in the forest below timberline, and the complete absence of wildlife seemed unnatural, as though nature had made a mistake. The coolies said that in winter they had seen animals there, but now it was empty, and even the trickling streams from melting snows above were hushed and almost noiseless. I never found a satisfactory explanation for it, and later heard of other areas similarly barren of wildlife.

Above timberline, where the zigzag trails wound along northern exposures, I caught glimpses of Nanga Parbat thrusting its pointed peak at the sky, and I thought of Major Robertson's description of the mountain as seen from the air, "Like the bust of a naked woman."

At about twelve thousand feet, above the rhododendron bushes, the mountain slopes became steeper and rockier, breathing was more difficult and we rested frequently. Even the small ponies puffed rapidly, although they were accus-

tomed to the altitudes of these hills. At fourteen thousand feet, after crossing a great scree a mile wide, where the broken rocks were all a pale-green color, we rested and ate, and looked down on an outpost of Indian Army troops, several thousand feet below us on the edge of a tiny green meadow that looked as though it were watered by a spring. I had almost forgotten that we were quite close to the new boundary of Pakistan and that there had been severe fighting on these alpine meadows a few months earlier. Turning back, I realized something of the immensity of the tangled mountains beyond the Kashmir Valley. Climbing, we had had our backs to the view, but now it was spread out before us in a great circle. The Pir Panjals on which we stood were rounded and well forested to the ten thousand-foot level. To the north, out of the lower hills, Nanga Parbat rose in solitude, then an unbroken line of high, snow-covered mountains rose in tiers, the Deosai, and beyond them the mighty Karakorams. To the east and southeast the glaciers of the great Himalayan Range glowed with afternoon sunlight, and behind us were the waving crests of the Panjals.

Late in the evening, three days after leaving Srinagar, as we rode the small ponies down through the quiet forests, one of the coolies stopped us with a gesture, and from the brush bounded a small, stocky deer with long tusks protruding from the upper jaw. Almost rabbit-like, with its fat, rounded rump much higher than its shoulders, it bounded along for a few yards and then stopped suddenly to look at us. I thought what a dangerous habit it was, for a deer to be so curious, and in the middle of flight to stop and take a good look at man, offering an easy target. It was a musk deer. Salamo hissed through his teeth in excitement, and the coolies watched it with great interest; in all their minds was the valuable "pod," an abdominal gland that secretes about an ounce of musk, which is commercially valuable as a perfume

and which, coupled with its foolish habit of stopping to look at man, has brought the Indian form of the species near to extinction. Neither the male nor the female musk deer carries antlers, they make no cry or sound vocally, their diet is chiefly leaves and flowers, and they are solitary creatures, never seen in company with more than one other of their kind. In India, they have been greatly reduced in numbers but are now more or less protected. Nearly all the peoples of Asia know the musk deer. It ranges in most of Russia, Mongolia, Manchuria (it was quite common in Korea), China, Burma, Tibet and Nepal.

As we left the thick forests and came to the open slopes leading to the poplar-lined roads of the valley, Salamo went to the hut of a farmer and returned with a bundle wrapped in old newspaper. He carried it carefully in what I thought was a furtive manner. Some hours later, on the houseboat, Salamo proudly brought in my dessert. Delicious fresh strawberries.

Early next morning I had a visit from Colonel Kak. Although he was a Hindu, he had offered to arrange things so that I could witness the Muslim *Muharram* festival. For over a week, religious fervor and excitement had increased in Srinagar. Few people slept at all, and all through the nights chanting and prayers lasted until dawn. Purely a Mohammedan religious festival, Muharram is observed by the Shiah sect and celebrates the martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Husain, grandson of the Prophet, who sacrificed himself and his family almost thirteen hundred years ago. On the tenth day, processions are held and thousands line the streets, beating their breasts to the rhythm of their chanting. Groups of men, stripped to the waist and carrying iron or steel chains two to three feet long, whip themselves across the shoulders and backs in a frenzy of excitement. Sometimes, sharp steel hooks are attached to the chains and blood flows freely while the

shouting spectators beat themselves and sway from one foot to the other. It is flagellation in high form. It is also claimed that the men who cut and tear their own flesh with the hooked chains heal rapidly and show no scars.

Colonel Kak had apparently decided to rearrange my program. He insisted that the Muslims would object to my filming their Muharram festival, and thought it would be wiser for me to film parts of the *Dussehra*, or Hindu celebration commemorating the victory of Durga, Siva's consort, over the buffalo-headed demon Mahishasur. The final act in *Dussehra* is the beheading of a buffalo and a large number of goats, a bloody event indeed. The little colonel made light of the importance of Muharram, and said he would personally drive me to the sacrificial place early on the second morning. Then he asked about my trip to the Pir Panjals, and dashed off a few moments later. Salamo appeared, thoroughly unhappy again over the colonel's visit, but determined that I should at least try to get some pictures of Muharram. Late in the afternoon, with his son Guffara and two paddlers, we left Nagin Bagh in the shikara and paddled to the canals leading toward Srinagar. On the way we passed some men poling a long floating garden, on which vegetables were growing behind a flowered border, and sometime later, just at sundown, we reached a mosque area where steps from the stone buildings led down to the water. Salamo walked with me, and I stepped around the kneeling Muslims as they prayed, facing Mecca. On their faces there was no expression of resentment, or interest in my presence, and it was obvious that they were all completely absorbed in their prayers. Farther along, outside the high stone walls of the mosque, thousands of men and boys milled about in a noisy crowd, and I lost Salamo somewhere in the press of people. Finally I made my way to a wall and a high gate facing the mosque, and found a large rock on which I could stand and watch the procession

approach the throng of Muslims. Carrying banners and emblems of the martyred Hazrat Imam, swarms of men led three groups of chain-slinging zealots who were stripped to the waist. At intervals, they stopped and whipped themselves to the rhythm of a chant that gradually made me excited too, and I had difficulty in holding the camera steady. One or two men were bleeding profusely, from cuts and tears in the backs and shoulders, one man fell to the ground and his chain was snatched up by another, who had been waiting for that to happen. Then I heard a few comments from the people nearest to me, heads turned to stare, and I decided that I had seen enough. It was time to go away, and as I stepped down from the rock, I caught sight of Salamo waving frantically, and headed in his direction. Several small urchins followed me, whining for "Baksheesh, Sahib," and only stopped their begging when Salamo lashed them with his tongue in the Kashmiri dialect. Soon we were in the shikara again, slipping past grassy banks where purplish-red cochineal flowers grew six or seven feet high, and across the water yellow lights began to appear as darkness came on. Salamo scolded me for staying on the rock too long, and suggested that I take quicker pictures in future. Then we reached the houseboat, where I found a message from the Mark Shorts, inviting me to supper in their neighboring houseboat. We ate strawberries with goat milk, for Salamo had bought more than would remain fresh another day.

Two days after the Muslim Muharram celebration, Colonel Kak failed to appear to drive me to the Dussehra ceremonies as arranged, so at noon I took a tonga and went into Srinagar without him. Guffara with the big black eyes was with me, fully instructed by his father, and we reached the sacrificial square barely in time to see the major event. The crowd of Hindus — mostly soldiers — was larger than I had expected. Their whole attention seemed concentrated on a buffalo tied

to a stake, and on a sturdy young Gurkha who was to behead it with one stroke of his curved-bladed kukri. If he failed to completely sever the head and neck with one blow, then shame would be heaped upon him and all connected with the ceremony. His kukri was honed to razor sharpness, and in the hands of an expert was capable of slicing through the thick, hairless hide, meat and bone in a flash. A few moments after I reached the scene, men approached the doomed buffalo. It was not a full-grown adult, but a large animal nevertheless. Pulling on its tail, they tautened the rope to the stake so that the head was stretched out, still. The pale-faced Gurkha slowly stepped forward, measured the distance with a practiced eye, and held out the huge knife as though introducing a friend. The crowd hushed, and I noticed many of the watching officials and dignitaries were standing on tiptoe, their faces strained and anxious. Then the blow fell. The flashing blade described a peculiar curve upward, and fell, passing through and on while the man's whole weight moved sidewise and he narrowly missed his own left foot. No one moved or breathed: the stricken buffalo quivered from shoulder to tail and the severed head swung on the rope to the ground. The Gurkha's grunt had been the only sound, and I almost missed the slight *snick* as the kukri did its work. Then, pandemonium broke out. In the frantic crowd, I could just see the knees of the dead buffalo bending, before the howling mob shut it out of sight. After that, there came the beheading of hundreds of goats. In the excitement following the main event, some of the smooth efficiency had been lost, and I heard sounds of mortally wounded goats, before the second strokes fell. Then there were cries and wails as unlucky executioners were shamed before the spectators. It is the custom to smear the unfortunate man who fails at the first blow with the blood of the dead animal, and to place him backwards on a donkey, to be led through the streets by jeer-

ing crowds. The noise was still going on when I left Srinagar, feeling that I could well have missed the whole thing.

My time in Kashmir was running out. On the following day, I went into Srinagar to call on the friendly Yarkandi traders, but they were gone. The iron gates to the serai were closed, and my inquiries among nearby shopkeepers brought forth evasive replies, as though no one wanted to talk about the serai or why the Yarkandis had left it abruptly. Eventually I found out that a party of Kazakh refugees from Russia was to be kept there while the question of their future was argued by the authorities. The Kazakhs were even then on their way to Srinagar, from Leh, the one large town in Ladakh. I was mildly curious, and left Srinagar wondering if I would have time to meet these Kazakhs on their way, and perhaps see a little more of the wild country and high mountains of "Little Tibet," as Ladakh is frequently called. Salamo seemed to think it was not a good idea, but eventually it was decided that we would go as far as we were allowed, and see what happened. I had no desire to see the cease-fire line, but I did want to see some of the country near it. I believed that, in the last twenty or thirty years, some of the animals whose ranges normally extended from Burma to western Nepal, had increased their territory to include eastern Kashmir and Ladakh. I hoped to find some skins, and perhaps skulls, to confirm my belief, for it seemed certain that any route taken by migratory or wandering animals would coincide with the traveled valleys and river systems, avoiding the rocky and barren mountains above the high valleys. Some of the skins I had seen in Srinagar were representatives of species whose ranges were not known to extend beyond Nepal, such as the marbled cat and the clouded leopard. Several Kashmiris had spoken to me of the "very little pig" with a bad temper, and I thought the description fitted the pigmy hog. Its range was supposedly limited to Nepal, but

I had already found it in Kumaon and had heard several apparently authentic reports of its occurrence in Garwhal. Perhaps I could find some evidence of these animals north-east of the Kashmir Valley. At any rate, it was worth while making the trip, just to see the country and the people who chose to live in it.

From the Pakistani border in the west, in a waving line toward the east, the cease-fire line, four hundred fifty miles long, cuts across to the Indus River, and ends at a glacier in the icy peaks of the Karakoram Range. In these great mountains at twenty-two to twenty-five thousand feet, there is no place for a manmade line of any kind, and no one is there, except gazelles and snow leopards.

Ladakh, in the extreme north of the Indian subcontinent, is one of the most elevated regions of the earth, and the whole area enjoys one of the most singular climates in the world. Burning heat by day is succeeded by piercing cold at night, and everything is parched by the extreme dryness of the air. The rarefied atmosphere offers little impediment to the sun's rays, and barley ripens at fifteen thousand feet, providing the Ladakhi people with the means for brewing *chang*, a beer that makes them quarrelsome and noisy. The valleys are high—few are lower than ten thousand feet—and sparsely wooded, with trees consisting mainly of willows, poplars, tamarisks, and the pencil cedar. The willow is plentiful along all the watercourses, standing starkly naked as a pollard, for its supple twigs and branches are extensively used in basket making. Most of the small villages are wooded with orchards of apricot trees, and all villages are carefully enclosed behind walls or hedges of dead branches of shrubs. Hedges of clematis and rose bushes lead through the villages, and surround the *gompas*, or monasteries of the lamas, and the cultivated tracts contrast sharply with the utter sterility of the drier, stony areas.

Sheep form the principal wealth of the Ladakhis, and are food, clothing and carriage. As many as five to six thousand sheep laden with shawl wool, common wool, borax or sulphur, and always dried apricots, are constantly moving southward to the trading markets. The famous Kashmir shawls are made from the under wool of Tibetan goats from the Ladakh area, near the borders of Tibet and Sinkiang. This is the pashmina of lightness, warmth and beauty. Sometimes it is mixed with a coarser wool from the Kashmir Valley, to produce a tweed known as *pattoo*, from which blankets are made.

East of the massive Karakoram Range is the Kuenlun, a ridge of high mountains and plateaus which contains not only the richest deposits of nephrite, or jade, in the world, but fabulously rich gold placer deposits. From a strategic point of view, it seems that gold has played only a secondary part in power politics in the past, but it is possible that, in the not too distant future, the monopoly of gold will become a critical factor in the balance of power. Beginning at the "Mountain of Murk," or Karanghu Tagh, the gold deposits of the Kuenlun occur in alluvial placers and eluvial screes, in masses of post-Pliocene conglomerates. The source is in talc schists, cut by numerous quartz veins. The richest deposits in this amazingly rich area, which extends for more than five hundred miles, to southern Tibet, are grouped on a ridge called "Rusky," near Ak Tagh, at slightly over sixteen thousand feet, not far from the trail leading to the south and the Karakoram Pass. The gold is very coarse, and occurs in the gravel below five to seven feet of overburden, but it can only be worked for two to three months of the year on account of the rarefied air and bitter cold. However, since the eastern deposits of southern Tibet, worked for only three months of the year, have been the main source of the great wealth of the Tibetan lamas, the richer deposits near Ak Tagh must

be beyond description. The Western world, and apparently India also, place Ak Tagh within the Kashmir boundaries, but it is quite probable that the Chinese Communists in Tibet have an altogether different understanding.

In this elevated region, travel is easier in the inhospitable mountains than in the lower valleys, where there is so much mud and swampy moraine. It is a faraway, mountainous corner of the earth about which we know little, and which we vaguely visualize as uninhabited, rarely seen and a fitting background for the stories of legendary characters we know to be myths. But, to the traveler of these mountain trails, there is no sense of pioneering adventure. Countless thousands of hardy men, women and children have clambered over these trails, rock slides, cliffs and precipices, and the only hazard there is *tutek*, or mountain sickness, which sometimes kills man and frequently kills pack animals. Tutek is apparently a form of anoxemia, but there are peculiarities about it which are difficult to explain. According to traders from Yarkand, tutek is apt to strike more frequently and severely along the trail south of the Karakoram Pass, at lower altitudes than the pass itself. When suffering from tutek, man and beast gasp for breath, and horses fall and die in convulsions. Men can barely move one foot before the other and bleeding from the nose is common. Even among the most experienced travelers, men are often unable to handle their own food and go hungry. Some die. When using pack horses, it is customary to start out with at least 50 per cent more horses than will be necessary, for so many are lost to tutek. Yarkandis claim that slitting the nostrils of a horse, so that blood is lost and some inhaled by the gasping creature, will save its life. Ladakhis claim that eliminating barley from the horses' food, and traveling very slowly, will reduce casualties. Both peoples believe that for man the best protection against tutek is to eat crushed apricot stones. Whatever the cause, tutek is a

deadly thing, as testified by the convulsed, dried-up skeletons of man and animal along the mountain trails.

Over the passes into Ladakh, from Sinkiang in the north, and Tibet in the east, the bare sandy places are frequently powdered white with dust from bones of the dead. There are no foxes, wolves or vultures, and the only bird is the lammergeier, which is not a carrion eater. The only animals in these high mountains are small and dainty: the Tibetan antelope, a very shy creature with a dark brown band down the front of its face and the front of its slender legs, ranging up to the eighteen thousand foot levels; and the Tibetan gazelle, not the least bit shy, with the rare gift of complete indifference to humans. Neither of the two is a carrion eater, and carcasses of the dead lie untouched. Bacteria apparently cannot survive the intense cold of the altitudes, and so bodies do not rot, but mummify and dry up until they eventually fall away into powder. In the same way, skeletons turn into calcareous dust and blow away, borne on the winds of the upper levels that circle over central Asia. At watering places, there are sometimes pieces of bone and white sand mixed with the pebbles and yellow sand. The Bactrian camel, or "two-humper," is the only animal that resists the sickness. It is the preferred pack animal, and its low moaning voice of complaint is one of the few noises to disturb the gazelles of the high altitudes. In the mountains, the voice of the camel and the cry of the wild ass are still the only noises, but from the valleys, below the eternal snows, the gazelles are hearing new sounds, the sounds of modern machinery.

To supply and maintain the Indian troops in the cease-fire line areas, good roads have been constructed from the Kashmir Valley into Ladakh. The large airfield at Leh, five miles north of the Indus River, at 11,500 feet, has revitalized the town, previously noted more for its huge Golden Buddha set

with precious stones than for its roads or construction work. Military truck convoys along the new roads are incessant, and the native travelers with their pack animals keep well to the side of the road, in the dust, where the small hooves of donkeys and ponies are not hurt by the sharp gravel and hard surface.

Beyond the Zoji La, we passed several groups of traders on their way to Srinagar, and came to the village of Dras. Actually a series of villages, scattered over a broad valley about 10,000 feet high, it seemed to be swept by cold winds that bore an unpleasant smell, and we kept on. From Dras, the road descended gradually to about nine thousand feet, and then ascended again. Here and there were fertile, open places, but they occurred less frequently as we went on, and the ascent over a ridge opposite the Shingo River showed us rugged, barren landscape. Salamo told me that a plateau on our left, in the north, was famous for bears and other wild game, but at this time of the year travel was difficult because of the crumbling snow bridges and rock slides. Above the trail, in the same rocky area, hundreds of Indian troops were killed in a battle with only two hundred Pakistanis under Brigadier M. G. Jillani — now Naval-Military-Air Attaché for his country in Washington. The hard-fighting Pak troops were finally driven back by tanks. At the suspension bridge near Kharal, where the Leh road turns to the right and the Skardu road to the north, a white painted jeep stopped, and I talked with the two young men who were observers for the United Nations. They were tired, unshaven and unsmiling. When they went on again toward Srinagar, I thought that both India and Pakistan should be grateful to these rugged men from many nations. Indeed, the whole world should be grateful to them, for their unbiased reporting of the military situation along the cease-fire line has prevented serious outbreaks and violations which might have spread into a full-scale war.

From seven countries — the United States, Canada, Belgium, Norway, Denmark, Chile and Sweden — the thirty-five or more observers are divided evenly between Indian-held and Pakistani-held areas. In teams of two, they continually patrol the line, checking violations. Not always able to travel by jeep, much of their work and travel is on foot, or on horseback, in all kinds of weather. Sometimes they must wade into a shooting fight, and see for themselves just who caused it and how it started. Teams from both sides, keeping in touch with each other by radio, investigate the incident and finally submit their separate reports to their chief at headquarters in Srinagad. Frequently, acting under fire, they have kept both sides from becoming involved in full-scale fighting, and have sometimes experienced no little difficulty. On one occasion, a Canadian observer, driving a jeep, came to an area where an Indian engineer unit was setting off explosives on the roadway. A sentry saluted the observer, and waved him on — in time to be hit by the blast as the explosive were touched off. The jeep was overturned and the Canadian tossed into the air. Shaken, but not badly hurt, he walked back to the sentry and asked why he had waved him on into the explosion. "Sir, my orders are never to stop a white jeep." There have been two occasions when an observer, coming on a fight, has stopped the fire from one side, then, unarmed, walked across a hundred yards of no man's land to halt the firing from the other side. The military leaders on both sides of the line, as well as most of the troops, understand why the observers are there, and co-operate well. However, outside of the Kashmir area, the Communist elements and a few others insist that the presence of the observers is an affront, an attempt to dominate and influence the people, and call loudly for the removal of the UN observers from Kashmir. Should they leave the cease-fire line, it seems certain that the fighting will begin all over again, with terrible consequences.

The men in the white jeep had told me that the dak bungalow at Kargil was filled with Indian Army men, so I decided to stay the night at Kharal, where the river was fast, the banks sandy and cleaner than usual, and the wide valley picturesque. Kargil, four miles farther on, is built on an alluvial plain on either side of the Dras River, and is reportedly a crowded, not too clean place. I was interested in it only because I had heard that the Kazakhs were there, in a large serai.

That night I met the agent of a Hindu businessman I knew, who owned sapphire mines in southern Kashmir. Although the agent was relatively poor, he was gracious and hospitable, and insisted that I visit his house. He had a fund of information about the people of Ladakh, and seemed glad to have someone to talk with. He was a staunch believer in the great future of Ladakh, and felt that its strategic importance as neighbor of Communist-occupied Tibet would be realized by India and result in the development of this backward area.

Earlier that day, on the way to Kharal, I had met the head lama of Ladakh, Kushak Bakula, high-ranking panchen lama in the Buddhist world. With a large entourage, he was journeying to Srinagar to present his demands for economic aid for Ladakh, and particularly for the electrification of the city of Leh. A graduate of leading lama universities in Lhasa, thirty-four-year old Kushak Bakula was distressed over the poverty of his people, and felt that not enough attention or assistance was being given to Ladakh by the Indian government. The strategic location of Ladakh, and his own personal friendship with the Dalai Lama in Tibet, seemed strong points in favor of his receiving polite consideration from the Indian government. One of the people in his party was an outstandingly interesting lady. Her husband had been executed by the Chinese Communists in Tibet, and her headwear consisted of two huge black lambskin wings, rising on



Bakula Lama of Ladakh



Buddhist woman from Leh – Little Tibet

each side of her face, with a tiny silken cap on her hair. The embroidery on her clothing was elaborate, and her many earrings were almost six inches in diameter, suspended by a wire over her head.

Culturally and linguistically, the Ladakhi people are quite different from the people of the rest of the Indian subcontinent. Of a Mongolian type, they are short, compact and — except for the Nubra Valley, where they are a little taller — their average height is five feet. Most of their houses are of stone or stone and mud, flat-topped, one-roomed, and with a few windows which serve as chimneys, for out of them pour volumes of smoke from cooking fires. My host's house was of the same type, although larger than usual, and it was here that I found to my surprise one more way of cooking mutton. With well-spiced chunks of very tender mutton, I was served the favorite Ladakhi *trombah*, made from a sour-tasting seed that is ground into flour and made into an evil-smelling pancake, used as a scoop or ladle, in place of spoon or fork, to shovel highly spiced meat and rice into the mouth. Rice is not grown in Ladakh, but traded for — consequently the amount used is small, but the quantities of mutton served and eaten is astonishing. The *trombah* tasted better than it smelled, and after the meat came dried apricots, served with thick pink tea, flavored with soda. The tea had been boiled for two hours, with a little soda added, then mixed with yak butter, milk and salt to make a paste, reheated and served.

With my lips and mouth burned by the hot spices, I left the agent's house and surprised my lungs with the clear, cold air outside. But I felt pleased that I had come here. I had learned a great deal and met a kind man. I had found the expression "pink tea" was founded on fact, and I had another recipe for mutton and spice. That night I slept well and used all the blankets in my bedroll. Early in the morning, I visited the serai at Kargil, where one hundred and twenty-one

Kazakhs were staying. I was introduced to the two chieftains, Hassantaj and Sultansharif, and within a few minutes my mild curiosity turned to amazed interest, particularly when I saw newly born babies, young boys of ten, girls of thirteen or fourteen, and old ladies of seventy. They had walked eleven hundred miles, without wagons or carts, over tangled mountains, through passes eighteen thousand feet high, across burning, waterless deserts, and along the way had battled Russian security troops and Chinese Communist patrols. With thousands of sheep and goats, the old people, pregnant women and babies riding shaggy camels or laden donkeys, they had fled from Communism, down onto the roof of the world in Tibet, and at last had crossed into Indian territory, with Communist troops at their heels.

Hassantaj was a tall man in black clothes and shiny gold buttons. Around his head he wore a spotless white handkerchief, knotted on the side, like a pirate. His bronzed features were wrinkled at the eyes and around the mouth, and as he talked I saw the humor in the man, just hidden behind the terrible shadows in his eyes from the ordeals he had passed through. Sultansharif was smaller, in nondescript clothes, with a small skullcap and the thin black mustache that only a Chinese mandarin should wear. In the open serai, their diminutive goats walked about, and occasionally a white-capped woman milked one of them directly into a tin cup, which was given to a child. A boy of nine or ten chopped wood with a small axe, and an elderly woman in a black cloak, white handkerchief on her head and incongruous new boots on her feet leaned against a wooden pole and watched us, her eyes bright and interested. Several large cream-colored, goat-felt tents, with open tops dyed black, gave forth smoke, and inside them children cried and chuckled. A young Hindu, who spoke Indo-Chinese and several other languages, acted as interpreter for me, and, as the story unfolded, he too



Kazakh chieftain

became fascinated. The Kazakh men seemed glad to talk. They showed no resentment at my questions and stood together, in a line, as if already accustomed to being interrogated. From my questions, they must have realized I was only interested in this personal story, and soon they smiled, volunteering details and descriptions. As we talked, some more of the men came from tents, and Hassantaj introduced them by name.



Chapter 10

WILL YOU TELL ME how you came to Kashmir? Where your long journey began?"

"Yes. We will be glad to speak of those things," said Hassantaj, as he turned to his companions and spoke rapidly in a low voice, apparently explaining my question. Then he turned to me and began to talk, slowly, making it easy for the interpreter to keep up with him.

The eastern part of Kazakhstan, a huge constituent republic of the U.S.S.R. in Central Asia, is peopled by peasant farmers who have for years resisted Communist doctrines, and have occasionally revolted against "forced requisition labor" and new government farm programs. During World War II, thousands of Kazakhs fled southeastward into Chinese Sinkiang, but were never heard of further. The first Kazakhs to openly resist the Communists were twenty-five men, women and children, who were forced to flee to Urumchi, capital of Sinkiang, in the northern district of Chuguchak. They were all devout Muslims, their leader was Hassantaj. At Urumchi, they settled down to start a new life, but were soon driven out by the MVD security troops, and they moved four hundred miles to the east, to the town of Barkol, where they were joined by hundreds of other Kazakhs under the leadership of Sultansharif. Months later, warned of the imminent arrival of security troops, approximately fifteen hundred Kazakhs fled in the night, southward

over the mountains toward the Takla Makan Desert, losing some of the people to the altitude and climate, some to the MVD troops. On the northern fringe of this vast desert, over five hundred miles long and three hundred miles wide, their goat-felt tents numbered approximately three hundred. The original twenty-five Kazakhs had produced children, their pack animals had increased in numbers, and were made up mainly of the two-humped camel, fast and capable of carrying heavy loads, hundreds of goats and hundreds of horses. The Communists' influence was increasing, and it was only a question of time before "requisition labor" would be sought. Along the northern edge of the Takla Makan Desert, road construction was being hurried through, toward Kashgar in the Yarkand area above the Kashmir boundaries. Well-dressed and well-fed troops were appearing; new paper currency was being used and there was talk of severe punishment for those who refused to accept the new paper money, punishment in the form of cutting off the hands. Then, security troops found the encampment of tents near the desert and a fight took place before the Kazakhs could get away. Many were captured or killed, and only about six hundred escaped, including the original group under Hassantaj and Sultan-sharif. They evaded armed patrols on the new road skirting the desert and crossed the desert far to the east of the regular trail, where the burning sands and inadequate water took heavy toll. At Cherchen, on the northern fringe of the Kuen-lun Range, the natives were very friendly and apparently strongly anti-Communist. The tired Kazakhs again settled down to live, and were soon joined by many others.

In the meanwhile, back in Urumchi, the finance minister for Sinkiang, Janam Khan, was relieved of his post, and his son, Brig Dalel Khan, fled for his life to Barkol, following the route taken by Hassantaj and his people. He joined a large number of Kazakhs who had gathered in Barkol. On Septem-

ber 29, 1949, the Communist coup occurred in Sinkiang, and the fleeing Kazakhs were declared outlaws and bandits by two foes, the MVD security troops and the Chinese Communists in Sinkiang. In April 1950, a four-day battle took place in Barkol between the Kazakhs and Communist troops, who employed ten Russian-type tanks, besides other armored vehicles. The Kazakhs suffered a terrible defeat, and less than three hundred survived to flee southward across the Takla Makan Desert, to join their friends who had crossed earlier. By this time, Hassantaj's party numbered about twelve hundred people, including a large number of widows and children, and thirteen hundred pack animals. Brig Dalel Khan's people numbered about three hundred. Altogether there were approximately twelve thousand sheep, three hundred fifty camels, two hundred horses and hundreds of goats. It was at this time that word came to Dalel Khan that the Communist authorities in Urumchi had executed his father, beheading him. Then the Kazakhs began to move slowly southward through great mountain ranges into western Tibet, and as they traveled, they talked of India and Kashmir, where they believed they would find sanctuary. Here, Hassantaj paused for a moment, and his eyes moved to the serai gates, where an armed guard squatted on his heels. Then he continued his story.

When word came of Communist troops moving in the Yarkand area, Hassantaj and Sultansharif led their people through western Tibet's snow-covered passes, and finally reached Gartok, the large trading center on a high plateau at fifteen thousand two hundred feet altitude. Here, the great Indus River begins as a small stream a boy can jump across, already rapid, building its power before entering Ladakh and Kashmir and eventually becoming the lifeblood of Pakistan. Dalel Khan and his people tried a different route through the Kuenlun mountains, and five times his caravan clashed with

the Communists. Forty-six Kazakhs were killed and a number wounded. The Kazakhs lost eighty-two hundred sheep, thirty horses and one hundred forty camels, but they finally reached Gartok and brief respite. A few weeks later, Communist China "liberated" Tibet. For a while the Kazakhs were safe, for there were no roads linking east and west Tibet. But at last word came that the Taklakot road was completed, and platoons of well-armed troops were patrolling the Indian border, advancing westward. The Kazakhs prepared to leave Gartok, and thought to cross into India by the comparatively easy Shipki Pass route, but they were too late.

They left in the night, after a clash with a small advance Communist platoon armed with Russian and American-made Tommyguns, leaving some of their dead behind. Following the Indus River trail, they learned from Tibetans that Communist troops were already east of them near the Shipki Pass and the Indian border, so they turned to the north again, leaving the comparatively easy routes, and deliberately choosing the most difficult paths. By this time, they were desperate and had fear in their hearts, for it seemed that the Communists had closed in all around them and they were traveling too slowly. One night, a small group of Communist soldiers surprised them, and in the brief fight, the Kazakhs split up and some fled into the mountains. They were never seen or heard of again. The survivors traveled mainly at night, and their recollections of the following weeks are hazy, filled with the nightmare of sudden clashes with well-armed troops, against which their old muskets were poorly matched. Over snow-bound, untrodden passes, at sixteen thousand feet and higher, two surviving bands of Kazakhs pushed on to Rudok: Hassantaj and Sultansharif with two hundred or more people, mainly widows, children and elderly men, and Brig Dalel Khan with four hundred people. At this point in his story Hassantaj smiled briefly, and his eyes glowed suddenly, as

he said, "All of the first twenty-five who had fled with me from Kazakhstan were with me still."

From Rudok, Hassantaj and Sultansharif led their weary Kazakhs through the mountains toward the ill-defined border of Tibet and Kashmir. Another "skirmish" with a Communist platoon near the border reduced their numbers still further, to a total of one hundred twenty-one, then they reached the Chushul Pass, looking down from seventeen thousand feet to the town Chushul, on mud flats at fourteen thousand feet altitude, with the salt lake Pangong Tso in the background. On that day, while traveling slowly at over sixteen thousand feet, one of the men of the original twenty-five refugees died, and his grandchild, a girl, was born almost at the same instant. The young and attractive mother, and her baby, survived, and a day later crossed into Indian territory.

Stopped by Indian border police and military patrols, the one hundred twenty-one Kazakhs surrendered thirty-five ancient muskets. They had remaining twenty-nine camels, including a white one, a few goats and ponies and only 20 tents. They were escorted by Indian police to Leh, in Ladakh, and were on their way to Srinagar when, as Sultansharif stated with a faint smile, "You, sir, kindly come to visit us."

"What happened to Brig Dalel Khan and his people?"

"He reached the border with only two hundred people. They are encamped on the Tibetan side, while Dalel Khan goes to the city of Delhi to ask permission for his people to enter this country."

So my interview with these stout-hearted anti-Communists ended. I took some photographs, while Hassantaj held the hand of his nine-year-old son, and the old lady who had been watching and listening called to a young woman nearby to join her and be photographed. The rosy-cheeked woman was a widow, and on her breasts she wore all her worldly wealth, in the form of gold and silver medallions, the way all her



Kazakh girl widow

people had carried their money for many generations. A little later I wished them all good luck, and left the serai.

Deep in thought, I walked around a corner in the narrow street and was almost spitted on a pair of the sharpest horns I have ever seen. A brown and black creature with long, shaggy hair, was being loaded down with large net-bags containing cakes of dried cow-dung fuel, and the brute was fighting mad. I had seen the yak, a domesticated form of the wild cattle that inhabits the most desolate mountains of Tibet at greater elevations than any other mammal, but this ill-tempered bovine looked somehow different. Salamo, who had leapt away also, told me it was a zho.

That afternoon, after visiting some fur traders in the bazaar, I packed my bedroll. I could go no farther in this rugged country without a special permit. I had seen a few skins that bore out earlier conjecture, and my trip had been worth while. As we left for Srinagar, I still thought of the staggering experiences of the Kazakhs, whose young boys and girls looked just like any other children in the world, and I made up my mind to find out about the two hundred still camped on the other side of sanctuary, where the Communists could get at them with Tommyguns.

Several days later, I learned that following the entry of Hassantaj and his people from Tibet, the Kashmir government, on orders from the government in New Delhi, stopped further "infiltration," as it was called, and announced a ban on the entry of any more Kazakhs into Indian territory. With a deputation led by a former Deputy-Governor of Sinkiang, Brig Dalel Khan, who had been flown to Srinagar from Leh, made an appeal to Sheikh Abdullah, Prime Minister of Kashmir, to have the ban lifted so that his people could find safety. Sheikh Abdullah thought about it for a few days, then a committee was set up to consider the problem of "infiltration" by Kazakhs. Eventually, after a direct appeal to Mr. Nehru in New Delhi, the second party of Kazakhs was allowed to enter India. By this time there were only one hundred seventy-seven of them left.

When Hassantaj and his people reached Srinagar, they were given cereals and vegetables to eat. But they had never seen cereals before, and cared little for vegetables. Their sheep were gone, so they began to eat their small horses. When I saw them in Srinagar, a day before I left the valley, they were in the large serai in which the Yarkandis had lived. Their goat-felt tents were set up on the open square inside the buildings of the serai, and only a very few goats were visible. I spent a little while photographing Hassantaj and his friends,

and watched his son eat an American candy bar. Hassantaj walked with me to the gates a few minutes later, and I watched his face as the Indian military policeman locked the iron gates after me. He made a slight gesture with one hand, and before he turned away I thought I saw bewilderment in his eyes. Then a swarm of beggars surrounded me, and I hurried to my waiting tonga.

It was not long before the Chinese Communists in Tibet demanded that India turn over the "Kazakh bandits and terrorists" to them for punishment. The Chinese Cultural Delegation, then in New Delhi, at a public meeting in the Constitution Club on Curzon Road under the auspices of The Asian Relations Organization and Indian Council of World Affairs flatly stated that India had erred in judgment by admitting the Kazakhs into Kashmir. The delegation forthwith canceled its plans to visit Srinagar, where elaborate preparations had been made for their welcome.

Of the three hundred and forty or more Kazakhs who finally reached India, approximately one hundred and forty have been given asylum in a Middle East country and a few remain in Kashmir; some are reported to have been returned to Tibet and the Chinese Communists at the time Mr. Nehru's sister, Mrs. Pandit, headed an Indian Cultural Delegation on a good-will mission to Red China.



Chapter 11

THE RETURN JOURNEY to Nagin Bagh and the houseboat seemed short. My mind was going over the Kazakh's story, so full of desperation, courage and human desire for happiness. I felt depressed. In any other free country the Kazakhs would have been welcomed. Here in Kashmir, they were locked up under armed guards, treated as questionable characters and reminded that they were a burden. Brief mention of them was made in the Indian press, which emphasized the kindness shown to refugees by a beneficent government.

When I saw Colonel Kak in Srinagar the next day, I asked him what was going to happen to the Kazakhs. He said: "Why are you interested in these people?" and changed the subject abruptly. I was planning to visit the saffron fields at Pampur, eight miles away, and the colonel offered to send one of his men along to explain everything to me. But I knew that he would either forget to do it — or simply not bother, so I declined the offer. Then I told him I was leaving Kashmir by air for Delhi in two days, and went on my way, paid a visit to the shop of Subhana the Wurst on the bund, where servants provided cigarettes, tea and cake while I sat in a comfortable armchair and looked at silks, Kashmir shawls, rugs, brocades and exquisite, carved woodwork. Then I returned to the houseboat.

While saffron is also cultivated in Spain, France and Iran, the Kashmir variety is considered the best. It is exported

all over the world for use in medicines and food flavoring. It plays an essential part in sacred Hindu festivals and is used by some castes to mark their foreheads with signs. As a perfume, it was strewn lavishly in Greek pleasure halls and theaters, and in the Mogul courts. The streets of Rome were sprinkled with saffron when Nero made his entry into the city.

As summer ends and fall weather begins, Pampur takes on a new life and color — a new fragrance smothers the smell of man. The exotic purplish and golden flowers in the saffron fields shimmer alike in sunshine and moonlight, making a rich carpet scenting the air for miles around. The fields are divided into tiny plots a yard square, and the bulbs are rotated every three years, leaving some of the plots fallow for three years. Nothing else is grown there. At first, the plants are small and delicate, the leaves with sharp needle points. They grow rapidly and blossom early in October. Each flower, in shape like a well-opened crocus, has six stigmas protruding from its center. Three are yellow and three are red. After the flowers have blossomed fully, men, women and children gather in the fields to pluck the flowers carefully. They are spread on the ground and partly dried, then the stigmas are carefully pulled out by hand and separated, the red in one pile, the yellow in another. Red stigmas make the best quality saffron, which sells for high prices.

The fields belong to the state, are rented annually to the highest bidder, and are a source of considerable income. In Kashmir, an ounce, or *tola*, sells for considerably less than in America, where a pinch costs fifty cents or more.

I visited Pampur on a moonlight night. The sky was clear and the moon full. Men and women danced and sang, celebrating the harvest, and from mounds of half-dried purple flowers a heavy, heady perfume rose in waves. The songs were all about the sad lot of a lover whose beloved has been lured away by the fragrance of the saffron flowers.

On the day I left Kashmir for Delhi, Colonel Kak sent a jeep and driver to take me to the airfield, on a high plateau outside the city. I wondered at his kindness, until he drove up to the Customs Inspection Office and an orderly carried several long boxes and packages of flowers of every hue and scent from his car. The colonel asked me if I would be good enough to deliver the flowers to his friends, the Mukerjees, in New Delhi. As we stood there talking, a motorcade drove up and delivered Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, the Prime Minister of Kashmir, to the waiting plane. A little later, with the flowers in the lavatory in the rear of the crowded DC 3, where they would keep cool, I sat opposite "The Lion of Kashmir" and studied his features. I wondered what was going to happen to him eventually, and thought what a poor insurance risk he was. (A few days later there were rumors that a plot to divert the aircraft to Lahore in Pakistan had been uncovered and arrests made.) As I looked at him across the aisle of the plane, the part he had played in the sorry plight of Kashmir went through my mind, and I wondered what had made his change from a respected Muslim to a friend of Nehru, despised by more than fifty million people. I wondered, too, if there was a prominent leader of the Hindu people who had not at one time or another spent time in jail. Then we reached Delhi, and I became involved with my packages of flowers, which I dropped off at the attractive house of the Mukerjees on my way to Old Delhi.

A few days later, I made ready to depart for Pakistan. I had decided that India was not the place that I could recommend for a scientific expedition that would need the cooperation of local as well as government officials. Its wildlife was shrouded in a pall of restriction, travel difficulties, permit delays, suspicion and resentment. Of course, any government-sponsored expedition with unlimited finances would be extremely welcome. But the ordinary expedition does not have unlimited funds. It was a great pity.



Sheikh Abdullah

I had the feeling that when the British left India, they took away with them the necessary organization that had held the country together. Now, in the guise of a Nationalist Spirit, hatred, prejudice and bigotry were finding free expression in the undeclared war against all Muslims. Between the central government and the people there was a wide gap, and in the middle of it a fearful, brutal police system working for its own ends, holding the terrified poor in near panic. The government, awed and overwhelmed by countless insurmountable problems it was not trained or equipped to handle, was hampered by Hinduism's unrealistic attitude toward facts, and torn by conflicting power-seeking factions. Pressed by neighboring Communist China in occupied Tibet, worried over Nepal, and held at great expense in Kashmir, where military leaders with little combat experience were confronted with a possible war in the highest and most formidable mountains in the world, the government was now forced to realize the growth of Communism internally. High-sounding phrases and lofty speeches of plans for the future no longer carried the weight of the early days after partition. The people were beginning to criticize the government. Not openly, because of the police, but the criticism was there. All of these things together were too much for Congress Party leaders to cope with. Without the British organization and discipline, the innate weakness of the Hindu was showing itself, and they turned away from practical problems of their own to the psychological problems of other countries. India, through Nehru, insisted that the rest of the world recognize India as a key figure in international affairs, particularly in Asia. Within less than five years after its birth as a nation, five years in which it had developed countless "schemes" but had put few into practical effect, India was to assume it had the wisdom and experience to show the United Nations, and the United States of America in particular, how to end the

Korean War — by a cease-fire line and agreement such as that in Kashmir, where so many have died and no arbitration or negotiation has resolved anything.

The people of India were confused. Nehru's promises — and they were legion — never bore fruit, or food. They remembered how long it had taken to get the wheat America sent — while Pakistan offered the same wheat and was rudely rebuffed. They remembered that Communist China had offered at low cost, and at once, the same amount of wheat India finally accepted from America with ostensible reluctance — an offer also refused, while people starved. Nehru, with his personal vendetta against the princes, or former rulers, of Indian states, seemed bent on the destruction of the one last source of protection the masses had. They remembered that under the British there had at least been justice, and in spite of Nehru's statements to the contrary, their princes had been just also. Now, their incomes vastly reduced, the erstwhile rulers were all that the masses had as protection against government and police. The people could not understand why they were being pressured to ignore their old rulers and vote for Congress Party members, who vowed they would get rid of the princes, the only leaders who knew the problems of the people and to whom the people could turn in trouble. At Cuttack, referring to the coming elections, Nehru declared: "I am willing to listen to healthy criticism, provided constructive suggestions are put forward. But the sooner the privileges of the former rulers of what were Indian states disappears, the better for the country, because I do not want any big gap to exist between the high and the low, between the rich and the poor. The former rulers have a right, even, to contest elections, but if they adopt methods that are against propriety and decorum, a serious view will be taken of it. The days of the rajas are now over, and it will not be proper for the people to vote for them, no matter what

they might say. After the disappearance of the British, most of these rulers collapsed because their protectors had gone and they could not withstand the wrath of the people. I do not consider it proper for the people to give them votes. These old princes now have the audacity to criticize the government with all sorts of falsehoods. I warn them, that if they try to do any mischief, they will be dealt with strongly. Even much bigger rulers have been swept aside. The princes can stand for elections, but if they indulge in falsehoods and impropriety, they will be made to answer.”

There were many Hindus in India that day who thought they detected fear in this speech. Fear that, after all his efforts, the establishment of Socialism in India would fail. And they became afraid, too – not like the poor fellows outside the Red Fort in Delhi, who surreptitiously wave a British Union Jack flag and whisper, “Let us get them back, friends, before it is too late” – they were afraid because Nehru had become virtually a dictator, ambitious for an India run on Communist lines – with his own personal ideas in places where he felt ordinary Communist practices were weak. They knew that this leader of theirs, who was a Communist twenty years ago, had brought his country along a dangerous road and could not permit any delay or hindrance to his plans. They remembered also that this was the man who said of Gandhi: “I felt angry with him at his religious and sentimental approach to a political question and his frequent references to God. . . .”

Before I left India for Pakistan, I spent many hours with Jawaharlal Nehru’s autobiography. I followed him along his present road from chapter twenty-six and his urge to spread the ideology of Socialism, through his efforts to secure for himself the position of being the link between Marxist groups and the Nationalists, his increasing sympathy with Communism and feeling that the Soviet’s example “was a bright

and heartening phenomenon in a dark and dismal world,” and, “The Communist philosophy of life gave me comfort and hope. How was it to be applied to India?”

Then I read *The Constitution of the Communist Party of India*, published by V. M. Kaul, Bombay, 1948. I learned that the Party objectives are twofold: “National: To establish a democratic socialist society in India,” and “International: To work with Socialist forces in other countries with a view to eradicate imperialism, racialism, colonialism, all other forms of national oppression and economic inequalities among nations and to create a democratic socialist world.” So I turned to Nehru’s autobiography again and followed him along as he said: “It (nationalism) had not exhausted its utility yet, and was not likely to do so till the nationalistic urge gave place to a social one. Future progress must therefore be largely associated with the Congress, though other avenues could also be used,” and, “But the Congress at present meant Gandhiji. What would he do? Ideologically he was sometimes amazingly backward. . . .”

Long into the night I read and pondered these, to me, startling statements. Nehru’s oft-professed neutrality appeared false. His redefinition and regrouping of International Communism seemed to be mere words to justify his own part in the tremendous encouragement and support of Communism by the Indian Congress, which he led. At the same time, I began to understand how Nehru’s friend Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah came to the leadership of the Kashmir National Conference Party – for many years known to be predisposed toward Communism, and which in formal and positive declaration adopted the Communist class-war doctrine – a doctrine fundamentally basic in International Socialism – as a basic principle of party constitution, party technique, party disposition and objective. The props of Communism in India are many, bearing many names, not the least of which is

Jawaharlal Nehru, with his new interpretation of the word "neutral."

It was at this time I noted Nehru's overemphasis on the pronoun "I." "I will not tolerate" or "I will do this," and the total absence of "We" in all his speeches for home consumption. When I saw him personally, at an Embassy reception, while an orchestra played both of the Bharati national anthems, I thought, here is a cruel man. For me, the charm he undoubtedly asserts for visiting dignitaries did not hide his personal conceit, and his English was no better than that of countless thousands of Hindu clerks, doctors, office messengers and others. A few weeks later, in his first post-election speech, before a convention of the Indian Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Nehru stated that "private enterprise is not sacred in India, and if it clashes with the interest of the country, it will be put down or eliminated entirely." Curtly, he lashed out at the remarks of C. M. Kothari, president of the federation, who, in his opening address, had declared that private enterprise was inseparable from the rights of democracy. Nehru snapped: "I certainly do not consider free enterprise has anything to do with the concept of democracy. Democracy is for the good of all people. I do not want to give private enterprise a place it has in some countries, where it is virtually a demigod. If private enterprise clashes with the interest of the country as a whole it will be put down or will have to go, root, trunk and branch."

In that convention were many earnest young Hindus, some of them recently returned from America, where they had studied democracy in action, and visited our Chambers of Commerce. After Nehru's outburst, they were confused and worried. As the peasants and farmers were confused and worried, for fear that the rajas, whom they respect and rely upon, will end up in jail, leaving the people at the mercy of a central government, backed by the police, which was lead-

ing the country too fast along a road they were not familiar with, or prepared for.

By this time, I had become aware of a general lack of interest in the growth of Communism in India. Under leadership of a man named Dange, the Communists had not shown any cleverness — in fact they were frequently referred to as being stupid — yet the movement was spreading. Events in the Punjab, where the Communist Party had increased its membership considerably, surprised Mr. Nehru, as well as most Western observers. Yet no one seemed to consider the increase of Communism as a danger. The fact is that there are two kinds of Communists in India — one favoring the Moscow brand, the other oriented towards Red China. Relations between India and Red China, having passed through varied stages, now appear to be following a definite pattern. Nehru, believing, or perhaps knowing, that Red China will eventually pull apart from Soviet Russia, sponsors such separation, for he is convinced that close unity of the two would inevitably result, first, in World War III, second, in the end of India's strong position in Asia and a possible leading role in a Third World Force favoring neither Soviet Russia nor the Western world. Nehru believes that Red China does not need Russia, but that Russia must, in her own interests, try to get along with Red China. The death of Stalin coincided with the end of Soviet Russia's prestige in Red China, Mao Tse-tung does not feel the same respect for Malenkov that he had for Stalin, and in supporting Red China, Nehru is building for the future.

India's chief concern is to prevent pressure on India through the fall of Indochina and the rest of Southeast Asia. This concern is paramount in Nehru's mind, and the primary motive in his support of Red China in Korea.



Chapter 12

IF THE PEOPLES of India were to be represented by a national, symbolic figure, it would probably be in the form of a woman. In India today, the position of women has changed, particularly since partition. But the changes are slight, so far, and old customs prevail against newer and more modern ideas. It is still possible to see houses where a woman indicates her husband is not wanted by placing a pot outside her door. In one region, a woman breathes heavily on the neck of any male who arouses her interest – and casts a spell over him from which he cannot escape untouched, without suffering dire consequences or even death – and this is regardless of any other woman's prior claim or her own marital status.

The new constitution of the Republic of India, formally adopted in January 1950, raised the status of Indian women far beyond anything they had enjoyed previously, in spite of the slow improvements that had been made during the last decade. Personal laws, or those laws pertaining to such matters as succession, marriage, divorce, adoption, gifts and endowments, are still much as they were when compiled some time between 200 B.C. and 400 A.D. and claim divine origin, being interwoven with religion and based on custom. Custom is so important to the Hindu that even these personal laws are sometimes suspended in certain tribal districts, where a judicial decision on customary practice is final and binding. Although comprehensive changes were made in the

eleventh century, the ancient laws of religion and ethics are still in effect, regulating Hindu society in all matters of civil, religious and moral behavior, emphasizing the duties of every man as a member of the whole Hindu society and of the particular class to which he belongs. These are the laws that have given solidarity to Hindu society in spite of the vast and complicated system of conflicting interests and ideas. These are the laws which are being modified, slightly, to include for the first time in history a place for Hindu women that is commensurate with their ability, natural rights and proper place in a modern world where a woman's intellect is felt to be badly needed.

This new freedom and equality for women in India, however desirable it is, cannot be fully realized for many years to come. Custom, religion and centuries of practice cannot be overthrown by a few words in a new constitution. It is as great a project as the announced colossal program of complete compulsory education for the whole country within sixteen years, and literacy for 50 per cent of the people in five years, from 1949. If only a half of this ambitious project is accomplished, the result will be far in advance of the magnificent achievements of Kemal Ataturk in Turkey, and the mere fact that more than two million additional teachers would be required where now there is a desperate shortage indicates difficulties ahead. There are difficulties ahead, too, in the complete abolition of "untouchability" provided for in the new constitution, which is followed by a list of Directive Principles of State Policy, which are actually admonitions and not enforceable by law. Equality and freedom for Hindu women appear to be facing an uphill road, with almost insurmountable barriers ahead.

Marriage usually occurs early, it is for life and is certainly the most important event in the social existence of the people of India. Regulations governing possible mates are strictly

observed, although the variety and number of these regulations is confusing to a great degree. Rules of caste, ancestry and relationship are seldom the same in two places. For instance, relationship in one area includes six degrees removal through paternal lines, while a few miles distant, the preferred marriage for a man is with the daughter of a maternal uncle. In another area, incest rules cover only the close members of a man's immediate family, while nearby they include a large number of quite distant relations and even some unrelated persons.

After an uncertain beginning, the woman's movement in India has achieved importance as the All-India Women's Conference. At first absolutely non-political, it is now closely associated, if not actually affiliated, with the Congress Party, to which the conference gave its support, and in so doing insured its own survival. But the All-India Women's Conference, the new constitution, Western ideals and ideologies touch only a small percentage of the women of India after all. The women of the Himalayas, for example, the dwellers in the mountains of the north, are not much interested in politics and freedom or equality with men. They are a healthy lot and just like men. Their only contribution to history is their aloofness to the succession of invasions that have swept across the plains of India below them, passing by. They have even seen the European come, and go, having barely marked the few main trails and pathways into the hill stations and resorts. These are the women of India, too, strong, handsome and poor but happy.

A woman's position in India depends on her family position. Her ability to produce male children and her productive daughters-in-law are of far more importance than money or anything else. She may, of course, become a courtesan, or she may become a religious ascetic. She may become a temple girl, or dancing girl and the "wife" of one of the gods, and

subject to the peculiar whims of religious *gurus*, who claim to represent their gods in all things. Or she may even enter the professions, which are open to increasing numbers of Hindu women who seek a Western education. She seems to enjoy the comparative freedom and independence which a Western education provides, even though, like her brothers, she finds the conflict of ideologies and cultures a considerable barrier to future happiness. In her flowing sari, with her graceful carriage and her remarkable eyes, the well-bred Hindu woman is more and more frequently seen in the West, and she is very welcome. But she must return to her home, to marriage and children, to the fever of living, which, to the Hindu, is really a fever and not a more or less exciting reality.

The basic Hindu institution is caste. Sacred Hindu writings record that the author of caste was the god Brahma, who created the world and established the caste system when he peopled the earth. The Brahmins, highest of the castes, are the product of Brahma's brain; the Kshatriyas came from his shoulders and are the nobility of India; the Vaisyas, or trading and writing castes, came from his belly; and the Sudras, or mass of the population, who are cultivators and artisans, came from his feet. The clean Sudras are above the unclean Sudras, who are the so-called untouchables — *Harijans*, or "Sons of God."

Thus we have the Indian woman — subordinate to man, surrounded by regulations and what the Western mind calls superstition, forced to mate with a Hindu, whose initiative is sapped by the realization that nothing is real. And, now, she is exposed to Western ideas, ideals and a new-found freedom, however insecure.

According to tradition, Brahma, the One, Lord of Creation, issued originally from a lotus flower. He was born with five heads; but he outraged Parvati, wife of Siva, and Siva avenged himself by cutting off one of the heads of the adul-

terous Brahma in combat. Consequently, Brahma is now represented with only four heads. He rides a swan and his symbol is the water lily, or lotus, and his own daughter, Sarasvati, is his wife. Not daring to satisfy his passion for her in human form, he changed himself into a stag and his daughter into a hind. For having thus violated natural laws, he has neither temple nor worship nor sacrifice.

While Brahma does not receive worship, he has the attributes of being the creator of all things, the dispenser of all gifts and favors, and the disposer of man's destiny. It is this last attribute which carries greatest importance, for the Hindu is fully convinced that all men are born with their fates — written by Brahma — written on their foreheads. As the Westerner, with humble resignation, may say, "God's will be done," the Hindu will say, "It is written on my forehead," and upon this irrevocable destiny lay all his faults and any crimes.

Brahma, the One, when manifested on earth is called Vishnu, or again, Siva. These two gods are the great divinities whom the Hindus worship. Vishnu, invoked by devotees under a thousand names, is the favorite god of the Brahmins. As preserver and redeemer of all that exists, Vishnu has often found it necessary to take a number of different forms, which Hindus know as avatars. Siva, also known by a host of other names, is a frightful god with the power of destroying everything. Instead of with jewels, his ears are adorned with snakes. Some huge idols representing Siva are calculated to inspire genuine terror.

Favorite among most Hindu women, Krishna is an incarnation of Vishnu, the preserver and redeemer. Today one may see Krishna, playing his flute, portrayed by women or girls wearing special costumes, in dances depicting episodes in his somewhat dissipated life among the *gopis*, or milkmaids. His seductive charm is cleverly expressed in the dance

by the pauses, which need no interpretation or explanation.

Krishna's life began in a place called Brindaban, which is now celebrated as the paradise of Krishna, where untold delights are to be enjoyed. Its beauty is beyond all description. Little Krishna spent his earlier years in games and amusements suitable to his age. Mythical history records that his ordinary pastime was to steal milk and butter, which he shared with his friends the milkmaids. On reaching manhood, Krishna gave himself up entirely to a life of dissipation. He did not even respect the virtue of his own sisters or of his mother, but carried them all off by force, and treated them as if they had been his legitimate wives. Having resolved to finally marry, Krishna carried off the maiden Rukmani, and a number of other virtuous girls. The number of his wives amounted to sixteen thousand, and they bore him a prodigious number of children. At length, having seen all his children die before his eyes, he himself paid tribute to nature and died, pierced by an arrow, the result of a curse pronounced against him by a wrathful penitent.

Siva, the destroyer, the author of the worship of the *linga*, or phallic symbol, rides a bull and carries as a weapon the trident. His followers are almost as numerous in India as those of the god Vishnu. The history of Siva, like other Hindu fables, is extravagant, and he is famous particularly for his shameless intrigues and drunken habits. He had much trouble finding a wife, but eventually married Parvati.

In the ancient records and books on the origin of the *linga*, there are several variations, but the details are generally the same. It appears that Brahma, Vishnu and the penitent Vasishta went one day to pay their respects to Siva, in his paradise at Kailasa (Mt. Kailas, near the holy Lake Manasarowar in Tibet at the joint boundaries of India, Nepal and Communist-occupied Tibet), and their untimely visit caught Siva in his bed with Parvati. Not the least disconcerted, and

showing no shame, the two continued their pleasure. The fact was that the shameless god was intoxicated at the time with passion and drunkenness.

At the sight of him, Vishnu began to laugh, but the other gods were angry and indignant and loaded Siva with insults and curses, saying, "Let no virtuous person have dealings with thee! Let all who approach thee be regarded as brutes and banished from society!" After pronouncing these curses, the gods retired in shame.

When Siva recovered his senses, he asked his guards who it was that had come to visit him. They told him the story and described the curses and attitude of the gods, and their words fell on Siva and his wife like a clap of thunder. They died of grief in the same position as that in which they had been surprised earlier. As he died, Siva exclaimed, "My shame has killed me, but it has also given me new life, and a new shape, which is that of the linga. You, my evil spirits and my subjects, regard it as my other self. I ordain that henceforth men shall offer it sacrifices and worship. . . ."

These are the gods of the women in saris, whose position in the world today is slowly being improved. The Hindu male is wholly responsible for their subordinate position, as is evidenced in the attitude of the more rigid caste Hindus toward the bill for codification of Hindu law, which they vigorously oppose. The content of the bill itself explains the abuses it sets out to rectify. The measure is an involved one, but its basic intentions are to equalize the inheritance rights of sons and daughters, to safeguard a woman's dowry from the deprivations of her relatives and give her full control over her property, to establish monogamy, to provide for divorce, to make inter-caste marriages valid, to concede the claim of a mother to be the natural guardian of her children, to give her a say in questions of adoption and to insure the right of a testator to will his property more or less as he chooses. Some

of the changes this bill suggests have already been adopted by some states in India, but not by any means all.

Like her sisters in other parts of the world, the Hindu woman is still a great problem to men, and perhaps the Hindu should add one more *sloka*, or moral stanza, to the hundreds which are familiar to all educated Hindus. Stanza 46 tells the Hindu: "However learned one may be, there is always something more to be learned; however much in favor one may be with kings, there is always something to fear; however affectionate women may be, it is always necessary to be wary of them." Stanza 47: "The meaning of a dream, the effects of clouds in autumn, the heart of woman and the character of kings are beyond the comprehension of anybody." Stanza 48: "It is more easy to discover flowers on the sacred fig tree, or a white crow, or the imprint of fishes' feet, than to know what a woman has in her heart." Stanza 49: "The quality of gold is known by means of the touchstone; the strength of a bull is known by the weight that it will carry; the character of a man is known by his sayings; but there is no means by which we can know the thoughts of a woman." Stanza 50: "Place no confidence in a parasite, or in a miser, or in anyone who meddles in affairs which do not concern him. Do nothing to damage your friend. Above all, avoid all communications with your friend's wife when he is away." The modern Hindu should be wise enough to add a last stanza: Never underestimate the power of a woman.

P A R T I I

*Some said to the camel, "Is an ascent or descent the easier?"
The camel replied, "Confound them both."*

— PASHTO PROVERB.



Chapter 13

LESS THAN TEN YEARS AGO, Pakistan was only a dream. It is now the world's sixth or seventh nation in population. If India may be called a land of conflict, Pakistan can be called a land of contrasts, strange contrasts where the new government and modern business operate along western lines – and where tribal regions are still governed by ancient customs and laws centuries old, laws without any amendments. It is a land where there is pride in its history and confidence in its future, frank criticism of the West and faith in the ability of the West, meaning America, to lead the world out of its present unhappy situation. Pakistan is a land of people who believe in God instead of idols, tough people who build modern hotels with handmade bricks.

Nowhere else in the world does nature demonstrate both her sublime qualities and frightening powers in the way she does in Pakistan, where awe-inspiring scenery, spectacular mountains, magnificent flowers, luscious fruits, outstandingly handsome men and women live in a climate that is healthy and invigorating – and where the vicious destructiveness of nature can surpass all conceivable limits in the blistering heat, shattering earthquakes, red-dust and golden-yellow sandstorms, devastating cloudbursts, crop-destroying locust and rat plagues and frightful epidemics and famines. Nowhere else in the world has there been such a constant procession of invaders and conquerors, over so many cen-

turies, as in the northwestern part of the Indian subcontinent, now Pakistan, where the tall, hawk-nosed Pathan tribesman shows his Greek ancestry, and recent excavations indicate that built-in bathtubs were popular there a thousand years before Alexander the Great invaded India. Nowhere else in the world is man's inhumanity to man more patently expressed or frequently shown than on the Indian subcontinent, between Muslim and Hindu, Pakistani and Bharati.

Pakistan emerged from bloody partition in spite of the wishes of the British and the avowed determination of the Hindus to prevent it. The Western world, once horrified by the extermination of Jews by the Nazis, looked on the slaughter of Muslims as minor communal riots – something that had for a long time been customary in India. From a distance of more than ten thousand miles, we thought little of the incidents – until Mahatma Gandhi was murdered in January 1948, following one of his periodic fasts. The new Pakistan, home of the Muslim of the Indian subcontinent, we assumed to be just another state of the India we had always heard about. We had for some time criticized the British for holding India back from progress, refusing her freedom. Now, we said, everything will be fine over there.

But sinister events were taking place. The Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh – or the R.S.S.S., as it is now well-known – started by a Nagpur doctor in 1925, had grown into a terrible organization, financed in part by prominent Hindus in the Indian government. The R.S.S.S. claims that the theory that the forefathers of the Hindus migrated to India as recently as two or three thousand years before Christ has been concocted by Western scholars to belittle the greater antiquity and superiority of the Hindus and depict them as upstarts and squatters. They believe that India has been the home of Hindu civilization for ten thousand years, and that

the Arctic regions — cradle of the Hindu Nation — together with the North Pole, were originally located in that part of India now known as Bihar and Orissa. The members of the R.S.S.S., supported by the Hindu Mahasabha Party and the Sikh Akali organization, were determined that India should not be partitioned, and, to prevent it, they would simply eliminate the greater portion of the Muslim population. On January 24, 1947, seven months before partition actually took place, after widespread incidents of murder, rape, poisoning, stabbing and abduction, the R.S.S.S. was declared an unlawful organization under the Criminal Code. But it continued its activities and declared itself as opposing the Congress Party's soft attitude and democratic tendencies. Then, the ban against it was lifted and training courses were started for young members, with emphasis on the use of the dagger to disembowel and acid to burn. Master Tara Singh, leader of the Sikh Akali organization, came out in the open and, in a public speech on March 4, 1947, at Amritsar, cried: "Oh Hindus and Sikhs! Your trial awaits you. Be ready for self-destruction, like the Japs and the Nazis. Our Motherland is calling for blood, and we shall satiate the thirst of our mother with blood. We crushed Moghalistan and we shall trample Pakistan. I have been feeling for many a day now that mischief has been brewing in the province, and for that reason I started reorganizing the Akali army. If we can snatch the government from the Britishers, no one can stop us from snatching the government from the Muslims. We have in our hold the legs and the limbs of the Muslim League, and we shall break them. Disperse from here on the solemn affirmation that we shall not allow the league to exist. The world has always been ruled by minorities. The Muslims snatched the kingdom from the Hindus, and Sikhs grabbed it out of the hands of the Muslims, and the Sikhs ruled over the Mus-

lims with their might and the Sikhs shall even now rule them. We shall rule them, and shall get the government fighting. I have sounded the bugle. Finish the Muslim League!”

Riots and murder increased. Entire villages of Muslims were wiped out either by R.S.S.S. members or by the Sikh Akalis. As the time for partition grew near, the Mahasabha Party and the Sikhs openly supported the R.S.S.S., and atrocities reached new heights of bestiality. The planned destruction spread over the country, and of the untold hundreds of thousands who died in a few short weeks, a great many were women and children. Then came the fateful day of partition, and the tragedy of Delhi. The Indian government found to its horror that the Sikhs were beyond control, and, apart from their systematic attacks on Muslims, were ambitious in other directions, already talking of reconquering the Punjab with the sword. Through the fall and early winter, the situation deteriorated, and, in January 1948, Mahatma Gandhi prayed for a while and then began his historic last fast, directed against the increasing madness that was spreading, and against the policies of the central government which acquiesced in, even condoned, the slaughter. While Gandhi fasted, English news correspondents reported that Hindu police and government troops made no effort to intervene when Sikhs dragged screaming Muslims from railroad carriages and killed them. Leaflets were distributed telling the Hindus, “Your Military and Civil Forces are out to help you. They will join hands in crushing down these Muslim Serpents.” Then, Gandhi was assassinated — while members of the R.S.S.S. in cities a thousand miles away waited in newspaper offices for the news to come over the wires. The next day, the Sikh Akali Party passed a resolution to the effect that Gandhi’s speeches should not be broadcast over the All-India Radio. The R.S.S.S. was again declared an unlawful organization, but the damage was done. With Gandhi dead, the strongest voice

of criticism was stilled, and although the killings and atrocities had failed to prevent partition, the Muslims had indeed been reduced in numbers. I have seen a copy of an R.S.S.S. circular with the title: "The Problem of Changing the Population of Areas by Silent Extinction of the Evil of Pakistan."

Does India really want a plebiscite in Kashmir? Particularly since it has once again in the United Nations Security Council demanded advance recognition that all Kashmir is, legally, already India's? If a plebiscite is to be held for discovering the wishes of a people about their political allegiance, what are the conditions under which such a plebiscite might be considered fair and just to both sides? The issue should be open. As little influence and pressure as possible should be brought to bear on the people in advance, so that neither of the interested parties will have an unfair advantage. That is the only reasonable approach to a plebiscite. But it is not India's view. Mrs. Pandit declared before the UN Security Council that any consideration of the Kashmir problem must proceed on clear and unequivocal recognition of the authority of the Jammu and Kashmir government over the entire territory of the state, including the area of Azad, or Free Kashmir — now held by Pakistan. She maintained that it must also be recognized that the state, by virtue of its accession to India under the ex-maharaja, has become part of Indian territory. If this were to be recognized by the Security Council, there would be an end to the business. But the Security Council, after receiving the reports of several able advisers from different nations, does not recognize India's claims, and points out that India herself insisted a plebiscite must be held in the event that the ruler of a state wished to accede to one country or another in opposition to the wishes of the people. The facts are that India has refused to submit to any democratic proposal for settling the dispute and is determined to maintain her physical occupation of the area

until she is ready for a plebiscite. Her behavior is by no means consistent with her attitude toward what she terms "the failings of the Western world." In the meantime, far away from the Security Council, in Kashmir, the population is changing its character. At the rate outside Hindus have replaced Muslims, under Sheikh Abdullah and his successor, Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad, it will not be long before the Hindus and Sikhs are in the majority.

While India resented the freedom given to Pakistani Muslims, the latter at once began to make Pakistan a nation. The break with the British was clean, and there was no resentment. Britain took her place in history along with the other conquerors of the country, who had ruled awhile, then passed away. The job confronting the Pakistanis was a staggering one, the handicaps almost insurmountable. It is a wonder that they survived to build the new nation which is now earning the belated respect of the rest of the world.

When it became evident that the Muslims would have their separate Pakistan, in spite of the Sikhs and the R.S.S.S. and the Hindu leaders, the Indian government, with offices and an administration already functioning in Delhi, saw to it that Pakistan had nothing with which to begin. Everything that could be moved was transported to India. When the final day of partition came, the Pakistan Federal Government had neither desk, chair, table, typewriter nor paper. And, for a while, she could not get them, for they were in the hands of wealthy Hindus, who had purchased all available supplies. The economy of Pakistan was chiefly in the hands of Hindus, who controlled banking, the cotton industry and almost the entire communications system of the country. Railways ceased to operate, and the Muslims did not know how to run their great cotton industry. The Hindus had cut off the markets before partition, and for a while there was chaos. Those first few weeks of freedom were difficult ones indeed, fraught

with dangers and pitfalls planted by India in the hope that Pakistan would collapse. Today, five years after partition, the position is vastly changed.

Despising idolatry and animal worship, the Pakistanis no longer tolerate perambulating cows on crowded sidewalks or busy streets. The new capital city, Karachi, has grown from about three hundred thousand to more than one million two hundred thousand people, and in her first five years as a nation, she has balanced her budget each year — with a surplus, fought a war with India over Kashmir, handled the problem of more than eight million refugees, who have streamed in from India, and initiated a program of education and health improvement that was sorely needed. Justifiably proud of their accomplishments, the Pakistanis frankly state that, if had they received foreign aid in the same proportion as was given to India, their position today would be even better.

Handicapped as they were at the beginning, the freedom from internal conflict must have been a blessing to the millions of Pakistani Muslims. The long history of India has been — and in the new republic still remains — one of conflict. There is the conflict of nationalism and internationalism, the communal conflict of Hindu and Muslim, stronger now than ever before, the conflict of caste and outcast and the racial conflict of white and brown. Behind these lies a conflict more difficult to define — the conflict of cultures, civilizations and fundamental attitudes toward life. To the Western mind, these conflicts are extremely difficult to comprehend. We, ourselves, have a common cultural heritage that has come down to us from the cultures of the Greeks, Romans and Jews — which were all merely variations on a common theme. But in India, the theme itself is different, and so we fail to understand it. The main conflict between India and the West is one of ideas. Modern Hindus have adopted Western ideas of equality and,

in so doing, claim political equality with the West and social equality among themselves. This presupposes acceptance of the equality of man, which, unfortunately, Hinduism cannot tolerate at all. Because Gandhi named untouchables "Sons of God," or Harijans, this does not give them the right to use a touchable well or drink its water. The footprint of an untouchable Son of God will still defile a whole neighborhood of Brahmins. A further paradox is seen in the Hindu's attitude towards women. He regards his mother as a goddess, and his wife regards him as her god. But a wife has no relation to her husband or society at large. A few years ago, she was burned with her husband when he died. Now she is kept in seclusion. Her marriage is indissoluble. As the Greeks discovered many centuries ago, equality cannot live or flourish if it is restricted to only the male half of society. Behind these caste- and custom-bred inequalities are the ideas from which they spring, but mainly that of *karma*, or transmigration and the fixed law of moral consequences. Equality conflicts with karma as Communism conflicts with Democracy. Eventually, one or the other will triumph. For the Western man, the development and improvement of one's personality and individuality is a good thing; for the Hindu, both are abhorrent. He is more concerned with his before and after-life than with the present.

With these conflicts of custom, caste, ideas and cultures, the Muslim of Pakistan has nothing in common. Islam, or the Muslim creed, successfully resisted the absorbing sponge of Hinduism and is entirely different in texture and outlook. The Muslims of Pakistan are a compact body, living in their own land, separate from the Hindus, not only by virtue of different religious convictions, but in culture, traditions and, most important of all, in their sense of values. Islam can be seen for what it is, and recognized at once. Where Hinduism is elusive, like grains of sand in the palm, you can measure

Islam and know that it is solid and real. It is a clear-cut creed, believing that "there is no god but God, and Mohammed is His Prophet"; it is a brotherhood, in which all Muslims are equal before God and each other; it is a book, the *Koran*, which lays down the rules of life. Thus the Western mind finds something it can grasp and understand, a common approach to life and faith. Muslims accept the world as being a reality, they have belief in it and rules for living in it. The Hindu does not accept the world in which he lives, he denies its existence and has created rules to escape it. For the Muslim, life on earth and his conduct in this life is all important as a preparation for the next world. For the Hindu, it is an illusion and not to be taken too seriously.

Hinduism itself attracts the attention first to its customs, then to its ideas and beliefs; Islam is the reverse, and one is compelled to realize first the ideas and beliefs, then the customs. Where Hinduism has its thousands of castes, each further subdivided, and each with its own dreamlike deities and incarnations, Islam has the Prophet, the rite of circumcision and unfailing belief in the teachings of the *Koran*.

Arabia, as well as Turkey, plays a large part in the Pakistani Muslim's heritage. The prohibition of alcohol, although not universal today, is of Arabian origin. The prohibition of music in worship and the absence of living forms in art are also Arabian. The sacred language of Islam is Arabic, and last, but by no means least in importance, sexual morality for the Muslims stems from Arabian laws. The Prophet allows a limit of four wives, and Muslim law recognizes concubines. In the past, princes and wealthy Muslims enjoyed plurality in wives, but the practice is dying out, for only the rich can afford the maintenance and there is an increasing dislike of the idea. When a wife is unable to produce children, or when an old man in his senility becomes infatuated, a second wife

may be taken, but of this modern Muslim society tends to disapprove.

Twenty-five per cent of the Muslim women in Pakistan still live in rigid seclusion. While women now have seats in provincial and national legislatures, the fight against purdah has widespread opposition. Orthodox Muslims bitterly oppose any laxity. The seclusion of Muslim women is not a law of the Prophet, nor is it commonly practiced in all Muslim countries. But it certainly exists among the Muslims still in India, and in Pakistan. In Indian-held Kashmir, in Baluchistan tribal areas, and in the Pathan tribal districts around the Khyber Pass, it is almost as common today as it was fifty years ago.

The *Shariat*, or the Path, which all Muslims follow, consists not only of the precepts of the *Koran*, but the traditions of the way of behavior of the Prophet. It has been called the “canon law of Islam, comprising as an infallible doctrine of ethics, the whole religious, political, social, domestic and private life of those who profess Islam.” The late Liaquat Ali Khan maintained that, if fully applied, as it has seldom been since about 1200 A.D., the Shariat would produce a social democracy that would lift young Pakistan to a place of great eminence and respect among nations of the world. He was a great man, a remarkable leader, and the world lost in him one of its ablest statesmen, but he might have added that full application of the laws of the Shariat would place the lovely Muslim woman in her rightful position and give the world a combination of beauty and intellect that so far has been to a large extent wasted. The Muslim male cherishes his woman as few other men do. He guards her, according to his lights, and accords her all possible favors – but he trusts no other man. Each time I have caught a glimpse of a Muslim woman whose burka has slipped, I have appreciated his viewpoint, for many of them are extremely attractive.

Today, the Pakistani Women's National Guard is one illustration of the awareness of the Muslim woman of her duties to her country. After decades of seclusion, during which, however, in times of national or tribal crisis the women fought alongside their menfolk, Islam has taught a new equality and ended many of the old superstitions concerning female behavior. Under the enlightened leadership of a few remarkable ladies, particularly the Begum Liaquat Ali Khan, widow of the assassinated prime minister, there has come about a new spirit among the women of Pakistan. They now have a place outside of the boudoir, and the mystery of the veiled ladies is ending. A new era has begun for the Muslims of both sexes.

Living in this country as a boy, my interests had been more or less restricted by choice to horses, tennis, field hockey — played on hard, grassless fields — and other violent athletics. If I was aware of the Muslims as a separate people, it was only as tailors or servants, or fierce-eyed Pathans of the Khyber region, where they irritated the British administration. Now, returning to Pakistan from India, where I had heard the Hindu version of present conditions, I was prepared to meet with difficulties and unpleasantness far beyond those I had experienced in India. Nevertheless, I looked forward to seeing the country again, and was particularly anxious to revisit the North-West Frontier Province and the Peshawar district, where I had lived for the last three years of my earlier stay in the country.

Compared with the Kumaon and Kashmir areas in India, there was little wildlife in Pakistan that was of interest to me, and I planned to devote all of my time to travel over routes I had previously known.

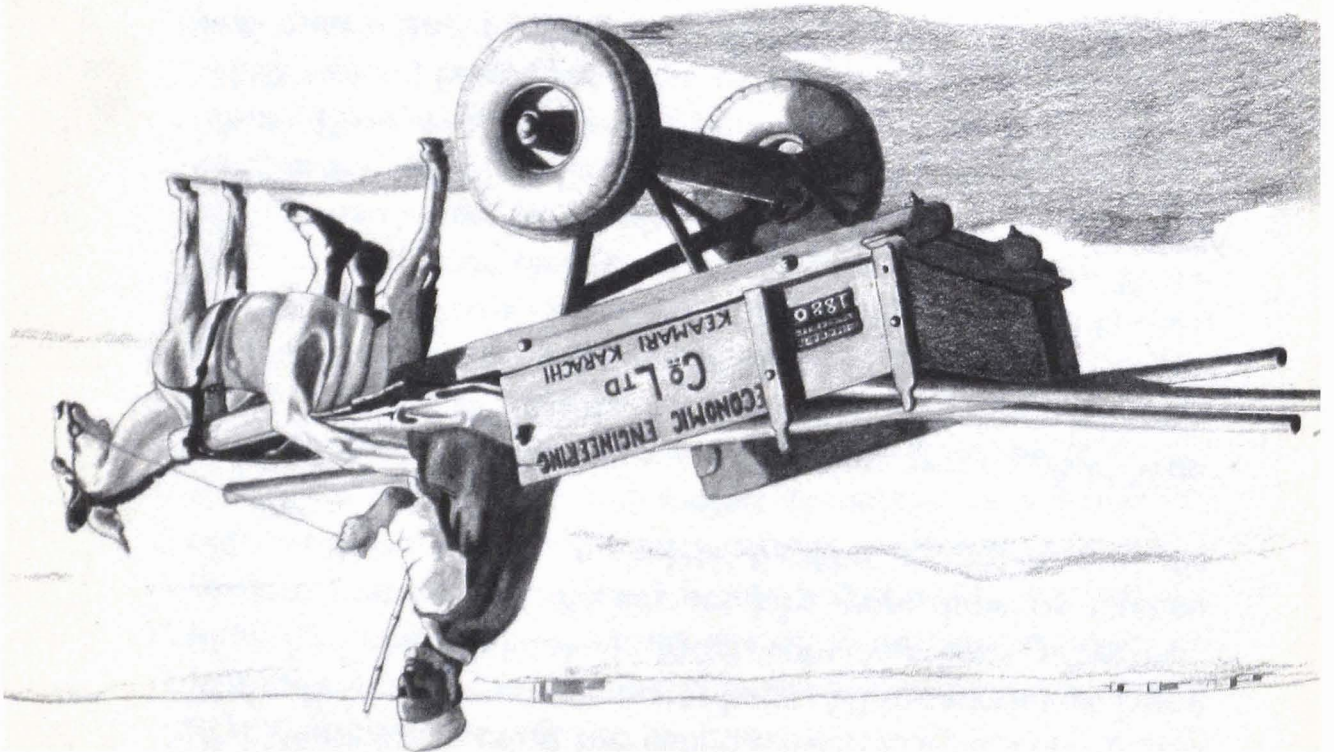


Chapter 14

A TERRIBLE EPIDEMIC of influenza had swept the city of Karachi at the time of my last visit there. I had lived in a tent on the beach near Clifton, an area now built up into a residential district where long, rambling houses in pastel shades house diplomats and government officials. As I drove from the airport in a taxi, it was all very strange. Having just left India, the absence of cows in the streets was noticeable. I was impressed with the large number of camels hauling freight on rubber-wheeled carts, the well-controlled traffic in wide streets and the remarkable variety of headwear—from the red fez to the small, gray, Persian lamb “Jinnah” cap, and everywhere the typical loosely tied turban. Most of all, I noticed the noise, a roaring curtain of sound through which tinkling bells, on diminutive donkeys pulling tiny rubber-wheeled carts loaded with people and merchandise, mixed with the louder, jangling bells on the knees of camels, cycle-rickshaw bells, blaring horns from American and British automobiles and the cries of vendors selling sweetmeats, fruit, hot tea and bananas. A breeze from the Arabian Sea brought the smell of low tide on the mud flats, and shipping in the harbor signaled with sirens and whistles. A flight of British-made jet fighters of the Royal Pakistan Air Force swooshed overhead in tight formation, and not far from the Metropole Hotel, as the taxi drove by a railroad overpass, a woman teacher held class for a group of children under the shelter

of the archway. Nearer to the hotel, hundreds of women laborers were resurfacing a wide road with steaming hot tar and gravel, and black-painted hansom cabs waited for customers at every street corner. Few of the women I could see wore saris, most wore trousers, or "pajamas," of silk, there were no beggars visible, no lepers, and in almost every block construction work was being carried on feverishly. At the modern-looking Metropole, covering a square block, guests occupied the lower three floors while women and a few men poured cement and built the fourth floor to the hotel, one wing at a time. A human chain of women on a ladder passed small pans of dripping cement upwards to the fifth-floor level, where a man dumped the cement into wooden forms for the pillars. Another stream of women carrying cement on their heads from one place to another was silhouetted against the

Karachi cart



sky. Water for mixing the cement was brought from below by men carrying goatskin water bags. All the work was being done by hand, without elevators, conveyor belts, wheelbarrows or pumps, and the heavier jobs were done by women who wore large silver bracelets, bangles, necklaces and toe rings.

Hotel guests in Pakistan, as in India, are supplied with room servants, or bearers, but I wanted to engage my own servant, one who would be able to travel with me. The manager of the Metropole, Mr. Soso, sent me to the housekeeper, who in turn recommended a man who needed a job. When he appeared later in the day, I hired him on the spot. His references were excellent and his manner suited me well. Bhuta Khan, with spotless, threadbare clothes and dazzling white turban, became at once my guide, nurse, valet, adviser and guard, and he remained with me until I left Pakistan months later.

After two days, my registration papers had been presented to the authorities and I had reported to the police as required. The numerous forms for alien registration in Pakistan were almost identical with the Indian ones, and the only difficulty was in currency regulations. The exchange from dollars to Pak rupees was not the simple process it had been in India, and the rates were quite different. In India, the American dollar was worth almost five rupees, but in Pakistan, it was valued at a little over three rupees, and the regulations, strictly enforced, called for a thorough and detailed accounting of all dollars exchanged. The purchase of a simple airplane ticket to the North-West Frontier Province turned into a frustrating experience that was at once a deterrent to air travel, and also resulted in my using the train for all subsequent trips in Pakistan.

It was my plan to go first to Peshawar, near the Khyber Pass, then to Malakand, Swat and perhaps to Dir, Chitral and

Gilgit, before traveling south of the Peshawar valley in the tribal territories along the Afghanistan frontier. At the Frontiers Administration offices in Karachi, I applied for permits to travel in these areas, and was told that permits were not necessary, though I should check in with the local C.I.D. authorities at Peshawar before going any farther. Then I made application for a revolver permit, since I had been informed that travel in the Tribal Territories, while not actually dangerous, nevertheless had its hazards. Kidnapping for ransom was not uncommon, there had been a few killings and it was considered advisable to go armed. I was to pick up my gun permit at 3 P.M. on Friday, present it to the customs officials on the other side of the city, pay my fee and my gun would be handed to me. At a little after eleven in the morning, I stopped at the airlines ticket office to buy a ticket to Peshawar. A neat young lady clerk asked me where I wished to go, and when, then she handed me two long forms, telling me to fill them in, take them to the State Bank with my passport and all other documents and have my travel by air approved. It seemed a difficult way to buy an airplane ticket, but I went off optimistically, thinking I had plenty of time, blissfully forgetful that Friday was a religious day from noon onwards, when all Muslims go to pray and few return to work until Monday. Picking up my passport and other papers from the hotel, I took a taxi to the Currency Control Division of the State Bank, and with fifty or more Muslims, who were already waiting, I lined up with my filled-in forms, registration papers, police-approved itinerary and receipts for the dollars I had exchanged for Pak rupees. At three-thirty I reached the counter, where a courteous official informed me that my forms were incorrectly made out, the Peshawar airfield was inoperative, I could go to Rawalpindi, ninety miles from Peshawar, if I wished, in which case I must make out new forms. Finally, I was handed my passport, all the other

papers and a small slip of paper advising the airlines people that the State Bank approved my purchase of a ticket to Rawalpindi using Pakistani funds – and I dashed out to my waiting taxi. By this time, however, the Arms Permits Division was closed for the weekend, and I was forced to wait two more days. Early on Monday, an embittered young Muslim at the police offices sent messengers to find his chief, who alone could sign my gun permit, and while we waited, he told me about his escape from India at the time of partition in 1947. He had hidden under the seats inside a movie theater for four days, after seeing his wife and family killed, and without food or drink, had waited until friends helped him escape in the night to the airfield, where he purchased a few inches of floor space in a plane flying refugees to Pakistan at ten times the normal rates. At noon, armed with my gun permit, I reached the customs offices a few minutes after everyone had gone for lunch. They returned an hour or so later, and by 4 P.M. I had my gun and went leisurely back to the hotel, wondering about Bhuta Khan. I had sent him ahead by train, with my bedroll and heavy baggage, to meet me at Dean's Hotel in Peshawar.

An hour before daybreak on Tuesday, the plane took off from Karachi, and we landed shortly after noon at Rawalpindi. At the time of my visit Pindi was a quiet city, in deep mourning for the late Liaquat Ali Khan, brutally assassinated there a few days before. The place seemed little changed from the days when I had gone to school there, and when the airlines bus dropped its passengers off at Flashman's Hotel, I had the feeling that if I looked around I would see old friends. I had lunch while the hotel people sent for a taxi to take me the ninety miles to Peshawar, and over my dessert was joined by an elderly Englishman bound for Kabul in Afghanistan, where he was to teach school, and a young Swiss businessman looking for business in metals. They asked if they might join me in the

taxi ride to Peshawar, and share the expenses. Soon, the taxi arrived and we began to load our gear in the trunk. One of the plane's passengers who had come to the hotel was a heavily-scented Muslim girl, or woman, for I could not see her features, in purdah. She had been met at the bus stop by an unsavory-looking character in ill-fitting Western clothes. Now, as the taxi was about to leave, the two of them came up and harangued the taxi driver, who turned to me and asked if the woman could go too. I replied that she was welcome, if she paid her share. The woman insisted that she would pay only her rightful share, and a moment later, with bags, bundles, baskets and cumbersome shrouds, she climbed onto the seat next to the driver, and, without a word of farewell to her companion, slammed the car door and settled down for the ride.

Years earlier I had ridden horses along this same Grand Trunk Road, from Nowshera to Rawalpindi, and had come to know the country well. Now, as we drove along slowly — at every downgrade the driver switched off the ignition and coasted to conserve fuel — I recognized a number of places — small villages, and hilly areas where the departed British forces had held maneuvers. There had been few changes, and when we reached the Attock Bridge over the Indus River, less than a mile from its junction with the Kabul River out of Afghanistan, I was surprised to find it exactly as I remembered it. The one link of communication between all of northern India and the North-West Frontier Province, the great two-decker iron bridge was closely guarded by well-armed detachments of troops at each end, the railroad passed above the vehicular highway and sentries checked all traffic. On the west bank of the Indus, the hills of Khattak began, and in a few minutes we were in Pathan tribal territory where the people speak Pashto, Persian, Urdu and several other languages, and where a man seen walking without a

rifle in his hand and crossed ammunition bandoliers over his chest would appear undressed and conspicuous.

The Englishman had never been to these parts before, and he seemed not to like what he saw. He was most concerned as to the conditions in Kabul and Afghanistan generally. He explained that he was to be met at Dean's Hotel in Peshawar by some Afghans from Kabul, and before finally crossing the boundary at the western end of the Khyber Pass, he would decide whether or not to go on. It seemed that the correspondence he had received from Kabul had been rather vague as to the details of his future accommodations. The young Swiss was quiet, and appeared unconcerned about everything.

Nearing Nowshera, the road followed the Kabul River. On the outskirts of the cantonment, I told the driver to make a detour so that I might see the church, and the houses that had been so familiar and friendly to me. The stables, where I had kept several horses, were no longer there. In their place was a long row of native huts, in front of them several string beds, on which reclined a half-dozen gossiping Pathans, smoking *hookahs*, or water pipes, in the sunshine. The road to Risalpur and Malakand turned off to the right, and as we came back onto the Peshawar road, a group of young Pakistani soldiers drove away from a barracks building that once was the officers' club for a British artillery brigade. Every vestige of the British Raj seemed to have been obliterated.

Just outside the cantonment, the road ran along the banks of the Kabul, where shallow bays of calm water afforded safe bathing places for children and cattle. Farther out, the main current was swift and deceitfully dangerous I knew. It was at this spot that I had once, in sheer bravado, swum my horse across the wide Kabul, then, riding back along the opposite bank, had gone at least two miles beyond and swum the horse back again, landing not far from where I had

started out. A foolhardy thing to do, for I distinctly remember watching the men at Attock "lifting the net," as they did at regular intervals, to recover the bodies of animals and humans who had been caught in that swift stream. But it had been exciting, and well worth the severe dressing-down I received from my father.

Soon after leaving Nowshera, darkness came on, with rain. Then we came to the outskirts of Peshawar, the city within a city, where Aircraftsman Shaw, the famed T. E. Lawrence of Arabia, was killed in a motorcycle accident. The Muslim woman, who had spoken no word since leaving Rawalpindi, now talked with the driver, and we turned down a muddy side street near the bazaar section. Several times she bade the driver stop while she peered into the wet night, looking for a certain house in the rows of mud-walled dwellings across the road. After many stops, she finally said, "This one, here. I will leave you," and she climbed out of the taxi, gathered up her bundles and baskets, slammed the car door and vanished into the rain and darkness. No word of thanks for the ride, no mention of her share of the costs. She just went off. The driver looked at me and shrugged his shoulders, then let in the gears and we moved on. The Englishman was indignant, and the Swiss laughed derisively. Then we came to the main street and Dean's Hotel, a low, rambling bunch of buildings surrounded by flower gardens. The place seemed deserted, cold and damp, and I was relieved to find Bhuta Khan waiting for me. Soon he was lighting a fire in the tiny grate of my room, and arranging for the hotel water-boy to bring enough hot water for my bath.



Chapter 15

DRENCHED IN ROMANTIC HISTORY, wild and forbidding, the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan is one of nature's most unfavorable and inhospitable lands. Only one third of it was inherited by Pakistan from the British. The other two thirds belong to the many independent hill tribes, restless, proud, warlike and colorful. The brown stony mountains are not so high as to be impassable, nor so low as to be strategically useless. There are convenient but difficult passes running westward to the Iranian plateau, and some of them, particularly the Khyber, are well known, since they are well traveled. In contrast with other passes, the Khyber, for most of its length of twenty-seven miles, has three separate roads: one for railroad transport, one for motorized vehicles and one for camel caravans. The railroad does little business; the motor road frequently swarms with crazily driven trucks and busses overloaded with fruits and hides and poor Pathans; while the caravan route is generally crowded with amazing, long caravans of decorated camels carrying loads of trade goods, with babies on top of the loads, and led by dirty but fine-featured women, who often own a string of pack camels a mile long. The men of the caravans from Kabul typify the Persian mode of dress, with hanging clothes in contrast to the usual wrap-around styles of the rest of the Indian subcontinent. Though these men own hundreds of valuable animals, and do a brisk business in trading, their clothes are invari-

ably in tatters and shreds, hanging from shoulder to ankle in unclean strips.

The brotherhood of Muslims, stretching from the Strait of Gibraltar through the Middle East to the Far East and the Orient, includes in its membership no son of Islam more colorful than the Pathan of the North-West Frontier Province. No follower of the Prophet is more underrated or less understood by the West, for whom the name Pathan is largely associated with Kipling's virile verse, belonging to the romantic days of British punitive expeditions along the Afghanistan borders.

Under the British rule, the tribal areas of the North-West Frontier Province were regarded as a political volcano, recurrently belching out strife and turbulence. To enter them was forbidden, and in rare cases where the authorities granted permission, the visitor found himself involved in an exciting adventure where only a thin partition divided life from death.

Grouped into tight, tribal communities, each with its own distinct individuality, the tribes are welded together by a common religion, culture and language. A unique feature of tribal life is the *Jirga*, or council of elders, which settles inter-tribal disputes and acts as spokesman of the whole tribe where relations with the central government are concerned. In some respects, the Jirga system is reminiscent of the early administrations of Greek city-states, for while it gives every adult male the right of active participation in the conduct of tribal affairs, it excludes women.

The character of these tribesmen has been analyzed by many outsiders, who, without intimate knowledge, have frequently sacrificed accuracy for vivid journalism. Of course they are "primitive," for many of the so-called benefits of civilization have not yet found easy access to these craggy hills and sun-blistered valleys. They have vices too, but they

pale into laughable insignificance when compared with the headlines in our morning papers. Brave to the point of recklessness, impulsive and warm-hearted, they are implacable enemies should their code of honor be violated. It is this code of honor, cherished above all things, which is the core of their social and economic order, and brings swift punishment to the transgressor. Bitterest of foes, they can also be the greatest of friends, to whom no crime is worse than failing one's friend. According to tribal ethics, any attempt to influence one's loyalty is no less a crime than touching the honor of a woman — the traditional penalty for both is summary death.

Living as most Pathans do, in isolated villages on barren hills or arid plains, they are the visible product of man's struggle for existence in a harsh environment. They are, at the same time, history's children, for through their villages of mud and stone and wood have passed the most illustrious soldiers, adventurers, kings and conquerors that the world has ever known.

The Pathans, who had perhaps been there since about 1100 B.C., first appeared as a strong, separate people about the end of the sixth century. Preferring to call themselves Pakhtoos rather than Pathans, some believe themselves to be Israelites, descendants of Saul, said to be commander in chief under King Solomon. The only basis for this theory lies in some of their customs and in the striking Jewish cast to the features of many of the tribes. On the other hand, there is some evidence tying the Pathans to the Pactriyas, who were mentioned by Herodotus.

By the tenth century, the Pathans' love of fighting was established. Then the first Muslim, Mohammed of Ghor, invaded the territory of the Pathans. After a series of minor invasions and many masters, Gengis Khan appeared. In 1398, his descendant, Tamerlane, swept like a hurricane through

Chitral, but with the decay of Tamerlane's dynasty soon afterwards, the Pathans regained their hold over the entire territory. Then Baber invaded Peshawar, and he was followed by Akbar. In 1668, after a few years of peace, the Yusafzais tribe revolted. It is they who claim to be the Lost Tribe of Israel. Then, Aurangzeb, who had imprisoned his father, Shah Jehan, in the Jasmine Tower near his beloved Taj Mahal, left his throne in India and marched on Peshawar. His successors retained control over Peshawar, but the great Mogul Empire was dying, and the kings at Delhi had neither the power nor the inclination to control the Pathan tribes. The subsequent chaos gave the Sikhs an excellent opportunity, and they took it. In 1818, the Sikhs took Peshawar, and after sixteen years they had reached the hills bordering the Peshawar valley, and could go no farther against the spirited resistance. The Sikhs lasted only twenty-five years, but it was long enough to engrave into the minds of the Pathans a picture of slaughter and monstrous punishments that remains with them to this day. It was under the Sikhs that the "Tenure of Blood" was evolved, a unique form of taxation. Under this system, the tribal chieftains were required to hand over a hundred Pathan heads to the Sikh rulers, as yearly rent for village lands they held.

Then the British annexed the Punjab, and automatically inherited the Frontier in the west. Hardly had the Pathans settled down to a comparatively peaceful life, killing a few British soldiers now and then, when the Indian Mutiny burst out, over the issuing of rifle cartridges that were greased with the fat of pigs and cows to soldiers. After the mutiny, there were tribal uprisings, referred to in history books as the First and Second Afghan Wars. Then came World War I, followed by the Third Afghan War and fighting in the Khyber and Waziristan tribal areas. In 1920, the Indian National Congress launched its non-co-operation movement under

Mahatma Gandhi, and the Muslims their Kilafat Movement. By 1936, the demand for a separate homeland for the Muslims had shaped itself into the demand for Pakistan. In 1947, the Pathans of the states of Chitral, Dir and Swat cast their lot with Pakistan. In 1948, on hearing of the slaughter of their brethren in Kashmir, the Pathans walked, hitchhiked, bullied and murdered their way to the aid of their stricken friends.

In this era of napalm bombs, atom bombs and hydrogen bombs, the West is inclined to adopt a superior attitude toward the Pathan tribesman, with his homemade rifles, sharp-pointed daggers and pillbox watchtowers perched on rugged mountain tops. It is difficult for us to concede much importance to these hawk-nosed tribesmen, who appear as remote from troubled Kashmir as they are from the Abadan oil fields in Iran. Yet the Pathan is directly involved in the Kashmir situation and, as Muslim members of the largest of all Islamic nations, they are concerned with the future welfare of other Muslims in neighboring countries.

The morning after my arrival in Peshawar, I entered the dining room of the hotel to find the English schoolteacher breakfasting with a group of swarthy Afghans. He introduced us, then I went to my own table, where the Swiss joined me a few minutes later. The weather had cleared up. A sun with little warmth made the world bright, and I planned, after reporting to the local police and the C.I.D., to hire transportation to take me through the Khyber to Landi Khana on the Afghan frontier.

After breakfast, the Swiss sent for a tonga, and together we went off to the Foreigners Registration office. A courteous plainclothes officer checked our papers and asked for details on our plans while in the Frontier regions. He suggested that we obtain permits to enter the Khyber Pass, and that, as I was later to travel in the Malakand, Swat areas to the north,

I should apply for permits to travel there at once. He intimated that it usually took four to ten days to get them, but it might be arranged a little faster. When we had worked out my itinerary, allowing three days for contingency delays, the whole day-by-day schedule was written onto my registration papers and signed with the approval of another plainclothesman, who had been sitting nearby, listening without entering into the interrogations or making any comment. Outside, we had to rouse the shivering tonga driver, curled up on his seat, shrouded in a blanket against the cold air. At the Khyber agency, we quickly obtained the necessary permits, then returned to the hotel, where the Swiss went to his room to rest. He was suffering from the usual "belly" trouble, a mild but inconvenient form of dysentery that one accepts everywhere on the Indian subcontinent, as one accepts the inevitable. At the hotel desk, where I inquired for directions to the office of the chief secretary of Swat state, I found a New Englander asking the same questions. The young man with a crewcut was on vacation from the American Embassy at Kabul, and he wanted to travel with friends in the small, picturesque state of Swat. Together we set off in another tonga and a little later were seated in the outer office of the chief secretary, where our application forms were filled in and carried off by a messenger. Then we chatted about the weather and waited. It seemed that the young man had sent in a request for a permit several weeks previously and had been informed by letter that it would be granted within a few minutes of his appearance at the proper office in Peshawara. A group of other people from Kabul, who already had their permits, were waiting for him at the hotel.

An hour later, a tall, thin man came out of the inner office and headed for the outer door. I asked him if he were the chief secretary and he said, "Yes. What can I do, please?" The young man from Kabul stuttered in exasperation, and a

moment later we went into the inner office, where the thin man shouted for a messenger. When the man returned with our applications, I noticed that they were pinned together, and someone had written across the face of them several paragraphs in ink, with a leaky pen. The thin man read the scrawl slowly and then asked our names. He appeared confused at the answers, and turned to the young New Englander and said, "But where is your companion? The one who applied from Kabul?"

For the next twenty minutes I listened, fascinated, to an up-to-date version of "Who's on First?" with a Pakistani-New England flavor. Finally, when the New Englander was on the point of violence, I interceded, and we soon found out that the clerk responsible for checking applications had confused the young man's name with that of his father, of the same name but, unhappily, dead. It was at last clear that the young man and I were not related in any way, and fresh applications were carried off by the messenger to another office. The thin man excused himself and went out, neglecting to mention that he was going for lunch, and we waited. Half an hour or so later we found the messenger, who told us that the chief secretary would soon be back to sign the permits, which were now ready. By this time my companion's temper was in shreds and his crewcut stood out like a wire brush. When the tall thin man reappeared, surprised to find us still waiting, he shouted again for the messenger, who came in with two small slips of paper on which were written a very few words. The New Englander looked at his permit in disbelief, then he counted the words and muttered, "Nineteen words, in almost three hours, after a week's notice!" He wanted to say more, but the words would not come. The chief secretary was not interested anyway, and we left the office.

The morning and lunch hour had passed. The November days were short, and travel in the tribal areas after 4 P.M.

was neither sensible nor practicable. So I sent Buhta for a tonga, and we drove into Kissa Khani Bazaar, to the noisy narrow alleys of the metal market, where tiny stalls exhibited silver, copper, brass and ironware. After an hour of searching, I found a small stall six feet wide, with iron chains and sharp knives on display. In the dark recess at the back of the stall, a bright-eyed, bearded merchant sucked at a hookah pipe. Over his head dangled chains and leg-irons once worn by a convict, and on his trays, among sharp-honed hand axes, swords and knives, was a short-handled stabbing dagger with a beautiful blade that I knew had been hand forged in the mountains of Chitral in the Hindu Kush. I nodded to Bhuta to start bargaining.

“My master is aware you are a thief, and knows the true value of this thing you name a knife. What is your asking price?”

“The sahib is a kind man. To him I will give this treasure for nothing. (If he buys at a good price a part of my profit is yours, friend.)”

“My master also understands your speech, thief.”

Undismayed, the merchant sucked at his hubble-bubble pipe, then quoted a price five times higher than he was prepared to accept. Half an hour later, when everyone, including the bystanders, was satisfied over the bargaining, polite sneers and name calling, I gave the man the equivalent of two dollars and left with the dagger wrapped in newspaper. The newspaper was printed in Urdu and carried a picture of Walt Whitman alongside one of Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt. The headlines on the front page dealt at length with the American Point Four Program, and the feeling of encouragement over America’s refusal to side with the British in the dispute over Iranian oil. The rest of the afternoon I spent walking the narrow, noisy streets of the huge bazaar, looking at baskets of fighting quail, gold-embroidered Persian slip-

pers, silks, shantungs and brocades, and a thousand other things that can only be found in such a place. At a stall near the red-marble Prince of Wales Pavilion — incongruous in a dark and narrow thoroughfare where dogs, donkeys, bearded Pathans and doves walked or stood in mud saturated with urine — I had tea, then returned to the hotel. I was pleased to have the dagger for my collection, and glad that the bazaar had not changed at all since my father had taken me there, to buy the first knife I remember owning.

After dinner, the Englishman and his friends from Kabul joined me for coffee on the glass-enclosed veranda, where a log fire burned cheerily in an open fireplace. The decision to go on into Afghanistan had apparently been made at last, and they were to leave for Kabul, one hundred ninety miles away, in the morning. I asked the Afghans about the wild-life in their country, but they quickly countered with the suggestion that I go there and find out, so that I could tell them and teach their students. Then the Swiss joined us, looking rather pale and walking slowly, and the conversation changed to a long discussion of the frailty of the Westerners' bowels. The Afghans thought it was the Western type of food, and said they experienced "the belly" when they tried our kind of diet. Before retiring, the Swiss and I arranged to hire a taxi and visit the Khyber next morning.

Bhuta Khan had a fire burning in my room. He had laundered my socks, shirts and underwear. The room reeked with the smell of shoe polish and oranges, a bowl of which stood on the table. Bhuta had spent some time in the dry hill areas of Waziristan, south of Peshawar, in the so-called bandit country, and he suggested that we go there to see a legless lizard and a very poisonous snake that were reported to be common. I wanted to go there too, but for a different reason. Somewhere in the tribal areas of Waziristan lived a legendary chieftain named Haji Mirza, better known to the British Army

and the rest of the world as the Faqir of Ipi. I had good reason to believe that this leader of the Pakhtoonistan Movement was even then planning his future course of action. I also felt that Pakistan was deliberately, and perhaps mistakenly, making light of the movement, correctly naming it a stunt created by India for its nuisance value.

In India, I had heard through a Hindu who was over-fond of whisky, that Ipi would, at the right moment, accept Indian help in his fight for freedom and independence of Pakhtoonistan. In exchange, he would use his warriors and support the Indian scheme for the defeat of Pakistan and an end to the struggle over Kashmir. For several months I had pondered this thing, and sought answers to the questions: Does India actually mean to try to force Pakistan into submission? Does India intend to dam up the Indus and its tributaries and cut off all water to Pakistan? Will they use the Paktoonian Movement, which they openly support, as a tool for their own ends? Is the Pakhtoonistan Movement important, or is it an exaggerated tribal uprising and of little account, as Pakistan leads us to believe? How much faith could I place in the talk of an inebriated Hindu? I had listened to several people who had visited this Peshawar district months earlier and reported that there was little support for Ipi in the border areas. Bhuta's suggestion that we go south was a good one, and I decided to do it after I had been to the north, beyond Malakand and the little state of Swat, where, I had heard, the Wali of Swat had installed a telephone system that was superior to that of the city of Karachi, and where new and powerful hydroelectric plants had made possible the irrigation of large areas of tribal territory.

Early the next morning, the Swiss and I left Peshawar in a taxi and drove slowly toward the Khyber. As a boy, I had grown up listening to hair-raising tales of horrendous doings in the pass, of murder, massacre and ambush. And my father

had played a part in its bloody history. Now, the strategic importance of the Khyber, its proximity to Russia, Iran, Kashmir and hostile India obscured the romantic past. The coming elections, the first free elections to be held since the establishment of Pakistan, were exciting the tribesmen. India had been refused permission to fly over prohibited areas en route to Kabul in Afghan territory, and the Yahyakhel family ruling Afghanistan had just seized control of all motorized transport operating in the Khyber and other regions, calling it Nationalization of Transportation. It was at this time that Afghanistan, supported by India, increased its agitation in favor of a Free Pakhtoonistan. With considerably fewer Pathans in her country than in Pakistan, Afghanistan claimed that the tribal Pathans were fighting for freedom from oppression. India loudly supported the claims and praised Afghanistan's support. The claims were entirely false, but at the time I wondered, as did the rest of the world, how much truth there was in the rival claims. I did not realize then that India was behind the agitation, planned with care and forethought.

As we approached Jamrud Fort, a mile or so from the gash in the hills where the Khyber begins, a small camel caravan was entering the huge serai nearby, and infant camels with large eyes browsed on thorn bushes growing from the rocky ground. At the fort, sentries checked our permits, and we left our cameras there since photography in the pass was not permitted. Then we went on through the brown, craggy hills, and the first group of Khyber sentries appeared, standing motionless on a peak overlooking the road, rifles cradled in their arms. Watchtowers like pillboxes studded most of the surrounding mountains, and pairs of rifle-carrying Pathans patrolled curves in the road. Not a foot of the road nor a living creature on it was for a moment unobserved. About

halfway through the pass, in a wide level area, we came to several wall-enclosed houses, each with a watchtower in the center. Built of mud, the same red color as the surrounding hills, each house and its protecting wall was a fortress, designed especially against unwanted visitors in the form of feuding neighbors. As the road rose above the level of the houses, we could see the arrangement of flat-roofed buildings inside the walls, and a few cattle too. Then the road entered narrow gorges again under the watchful eyes of tribesmen, who stood or sat on every hilltop.

At Landi Kotal, a large town midway to Afghanistan, we passed long caravans of camels loaded with hides. Frequently, well-laden trucks carrying fruit passed us, and at a sharp bend in the road we were stopped by an overturned truck whose driver had been a little too careless. Melons, grapefruits, oranges and vegetables were strewn all over the road in a squashed mess, while the drivers of other trucks behind the wreck argued with the one responsible for the accident.

At Landi Khana, where Akbar's Grand Trunk Road ends, a gate separates Pakistan from Afghanistan. On each side are sentries. Near the Afghan sentry box is a small garden. There is no water on the Afghan side of the barrier, so the Pakistanis have run a pipe over, to water the small garden and to permit the sentries to make tea. A detachment of Pak troops was cleaning its outpost, and sentries on both sides checked the papers of a busload of people. At a roadside stall, we had tea, then turned around and headed back toward Peshawar. The empty barracks at Landi Kotal, the overgrown tennis courts and squash courts, gave the place a sad, deserted appearance, but the people were unchanged, and I wondered how long this peaceful period would last. As the road unwound before us, I heard the flat crack of a rifle on a hillside

and saw two sentries shooting at a small white stone on a rock. At the second shot, the stone disintegrated. The people would not be unprepared, I thought, whatever happens.

At Jamrud Fort, we retrieved our cameras and photographed a caravan of several hundred camels as it left the road and entered the large serai. Then we returned to Dean's Hotel, and our expedition through the Khyber was over.



Chapter 16

IT IS NOT FAR, in miles, from the Peshawar valley to the states of Swat, Dir and Chitral in the north. But in the short distance along a so-called "jeepable road," the turbulent, realistic world of warlike Pathans, thorn shrubs and burning-hot rocks is left behind and the land becomes a place where pixies ought to live. The tribal areas south of the Peshawar valley reflect the harshness of the hills and the fierce character of the people, but in the country to the north, nature smiles, and so do the people. There are no sullen faces anywhere. By some standards the people are terribly poor, yet they are happy, which is reason enough for envy.

I had never before visited beyond Malakand. All I saw was new, and it seemed I had suddenly moved to another country altogether, to another continent. Conflict and friction were gone. A little beyond Risalpur and the training center for Royal Pakistan Air Force cadets, I met a man who waved his hand and smiled. I was startled. He said something I did not understand, but I knew he was not asking for a handout in the monotonous demand for baksheesh so common in India, where hysterical security agents and the suspicion and resentment of the past months had taken away much of my pleasure in traveling. When a second man smiled at us as we passed him, I began to feel better than I had for weeks, and forgot for a while the discomfort of my belly, long tortured by dysentery. At Dargai, the new canal from Jabban

was finished, and from a distance I could see the Malakand hydroelectric plant, harnessing the waters of the Swat River, providing electricity for old villages through which pilgrims have passed for four thousand years. The green flag of Pakistan, with its white crescent and star, fluttered from tall straight poles and short bent sticks wherever it could be planted. As the road descended into the valley beyond Malakand, I saw a few picket posts on rocky peaks and men with guns on their shoulders, but they were too far away to detract from the charm of the country side. I saw the old Buddhist road, worn smooth by countless Buddhists on their way to Peshawar, and here and there stone carvings scattered about to remind the traveler that here in these quiet mountains devout Buddhists had sought *nirvana* and built their monasteries long ago.

Without very definite plans, which annoyed Bhuta no end, I wanted to see Swat State because the stories of its pastoral picturesqueness and its unique telephone system intrigued me. But as the car neared Chakdarra Fort we met another man who smiled, so we stopped, and with Bhuta as interpreter, I talked with the man for a while. His voice was deep and clear. As he talked I caught the words Birir, Bhumberat and Rumber, several times repeated, and they caught my fancy somehow — fitting so well together that I was reminded of Wynken, Blynken and Nod. The man was from southwestern Chitral, and his laughing, open manner and pleasing voice made me curious. I asked him about the place he lived in, and he threw back his head and laughed out loud, “Go there, you will see.” In a little while he waved a hand and walked away down the road — the first person I had met in five months whom I wished would have stayed awhile. Even his back had a jaunty, carefree air, and I made up my mind to see this Birir, Bhumberat and Rumber.

A few miles farther along the road, we passed through the



Kafiristan boy

frontier gate into the autonomous state of Swat, snug in the wooded lesser hills reaching down from the Hindu Kush mountains. A few years ago it was one of the least known and most neglected areas of the northwest, a lonely place, backward, and frequently a battleground for feuding tribesmen. Irrigation of the valleys began under the British, and it was not long before orchards and vegetable gardens sprouted. The Swat River was tapped to irrigate the Mardan valley in the south, and its waters today fill the maze of canals and irrigation ditches throughout Swat and the land below. Since 1947, the development has leaped ahead.

In the fertile valleys and on the wooded mountains and meadows, there are about four hundred fifty thousand Swatis of the Yusafzai tribe, speaking Bashgali and Kohistani dialects of Pashto, the language of the Pathans. They are typically devout Muslims, of the Mulai Sect, whose head is the well-known Aga Khan. It is among the Yusafzai that very old Christian Bibles have been found, prized possessions indicating that perhaps the ancestors of these people were Christians. The grandfather of the present ruler was first to unite the tribesmen against the Sikhs, and in 1926 the British appointed his son, Badshah Sahib, *wali*, or ruler, of the state. Badshah Sahib, completely illiterate, lived only for the improvement of social and economic conditions in Swat, and his vigorous personality, deep religious convictions and ingenuity quickly transformed Swat into a productive area. In 1949, Wali Badshah Sahib voluntarily abdicated in favor of his son, Alahazrat Jehanzeb Khan, a graduate of Islamia College in Peshawar, so that the younger man could develop the state more actively.

I was unprepared for Swat State. I had become skeptical of all stories of advancement and progress, and particularly of the "schemes" for the utopian future that are so numerous

in neighboring India that they have taken several volumes to enumerate. When I reached the low valley of Saidu Sharif, capital of Swat State, and saw the attractive Juma Mosque on the edge of a clean town, where people walked by the side of the road instead of down the middle, I was surprised. When I sat in a comfortable armchair drinking tea in a chintz-draped lounge in a modernized State Hotel, heard a telephone bell ringing somewhere, and found there were electric lights and hot and cold running water, I was amazed. Later, as I stood in the dark on the wide veranda and listened to water from a fountain in the garden, the scent of faded flowers seemed to come in waves. The distant noises and high cries from the town of two thousand people heightened the feeling of a different world, as a girl in the servants' quarters began to sing.

In the morning, I left very early. Already I had been longer than I had planned, and there was much to see in this charming country so near to troubled Kashmir, Russia and Afghanistan. As the pungent, blue-gray smoke from early morning fires hung over the flat-roofed, two-storied houses of Saidu Sharif, we passed along a tree-lined road to a busy trading mart, and about five miles farther along saw a small, white palace, the Moti Mahal, residence of the retired Badshah Sahib, the man who could not read or write, but who had brought education and health to his people. Off to the east, the snow-topped mountains reminded me of Colorado.

The Swatis govern themselves by old tribal laws — aided by the telephone and their progressive young wali, who confers with his chieftains in their villages over the phone each morning. It is an efficient system, like many other modern inventions adopted for the benefit of the state. There are practically no nurses, few doctors and few teachers, yet a college is being built, they have a new hospital and a veteri-

nary hospital, and many new schools. Most of the villages are electrified, and plans are made for increasing the available capacity.

At Bahrein, where doll-like houses are built literally over the froth of two rushing torrents which fall from the mountains, the motor road ends. It is a place of boulders and pretty, shy women and girls with black hair cut in straight bangs. They all wear dark-colored clothes, against which their silver ornaments and jewelry shine. I understand there is little shyness in their dealings with their own males, but with strangers they are modest, and have the custom of quiet observation without curiosity, and then a silent walking away, as if to think about it all before making up their minds about something.

Everywhere along the many Swat roads there are seemingly fragile suspension bridges, anchored to boulders or jagged, blasted rock piles. A few miles beyond the motor road, along narrow paths the early Buddhist monks used, the bridges are shakier and smaller, and far less interesting than the view to the north, where nineteen thousand foot peaks reminded me of a Disney picture. I was sorry to turn back. But Birir, Bhumberat and Rumber kept running through my mind and the smile of the young man who said "Go there and you will see."

In Swat, it was difficult to realize that I was still on the Indian subcontinent. In nearby Chitral, it was even more difficult. Under Chinese domination until the middle eighteenth century, it came under British political control in 1895, and was made a dependency of Kashmir. Freezingly aloof from the rest of the world, Chitral has acquired new importance as a watchtower of Pakistan. It was the first state to accede to Pakistan on partition, and since 1949 has seen vast changes and improvements. Early in 1950, the *begar* system of forced, unpaid labor was abolished. Every person who

works for the state is now paid. The bodyguard of His Highness the Mehtar is now paid regularly, in cash, for the first time. Schools and medical facilities are being set up where previously there were none. The Lowari Pass road is opening up new trade routes for export of apples, apricots, walnuts and timber. A tourist agency is planned as soon as the airfield at Chitral, the capital, is operating with regular services. The large mineral resources are being surveyed and explored, and the weaving of sheep and goat wool has been modernized.

Aloof from all this activity and advancing civilization, by one day's easy walking from the main route to Chitral in the north, are three small valleys: Birir, Bhumberat and Rumber. In November, the fruits and nuts are gone from almond, pear, apple and pomegranate trees. The climbing vines on the walls of huts clinging to hillsides bear no grapes. But the grass in the valley is still green, willows and poplars contrast with firs and pines on the steep slopes and icy torrents speed downhill past spreading walnut trees.

It is only about ten miles, as the crow might fly, from here to Afghanistan, but the mountains are high and snow covered, in places rising sheer and barren. It is a place where twenty-five hundred dirty, happy children of nature live without any religion at all. There are practically no Pathans in Kafiristan and the local people are a race apart, distinct from the Chitralis and Pathans who live in surrounding areas. The Kalosh, as they are known locally, are of unknown origin, probably descended from some branch Aryan race which liked the country — possibly they were left there by some of Alexander's deserters. The men, in their rolled-up, sacklike headdress, which resembles the British Balaclava cap, are tall and healthy looking, and the muscles of their calves are developed from climbing up and down the mountains. Most of them wear no sandals or shoes, and they have a good-natured air about them that makes their rough and ragged

clothing unimportant. The women are tiny creatures, the color of wheat with a blush, and apparently free from any of the skin blemishes that are common in so many places on the subcontinent. Invariably, all they wear is a long black dress, loose, open wide at the neck to show off their dozens of necklaces — and a hint of breast — without any style or fit, yet provocative. The loose gown gives freedom of movement no doubt, but it must be terribly drafty in late winter. The headdress is another matter entirely. The somberness of the gown is at once forgotten at sight of the bright, conical hat and hood combination — beaded and betassled, with feathers and embroidered flowers, and set at a jaunty angle. The younger women and girls wear nothing around the waist, but the older ones wear an embroidered sash, tied tight, and matching the flowers and tassels of their hats. The skin of green walnuts, used to clean the teeth, gives the gums and lips a blood-red color. It is supposed to have medicinal value too. The rinds of pomegranates are roasted with almonds, and crushed into a paste with other aromatic herbs and oily seeds, and applied to the face as a cream. It is washed away with raw milk. Linseed oil scented with wild flowers is rubbed into their hair, which is worn in two pigtails, or curled up on the forehead, under the front of the *kopesi*, as the hat-hood is called. Since they are poor people indeed, and there are no drugstores within many hundreds of miles, there are no mirrors or pocket vanities, and a woman seen bending over a pool by the side of a stream is not fishing, she is making up her face.

No religion, no god nor incarnation, and no idols enter the life of the Kalosh. When they are happy and well-fed, they sing and dance. When someone breaks a leg or dies, they sing and dance a slightly different song. A night-long barbecue over a log fire, with the meat well salted, is part of all births; fermented grape juice from large tubs flows like water, and



Kafiristan girl

every soul there takes part in the celebration. Death is celebrated in the same way, with guns popping, dancing and impromptu song-poems lauding the fine character of the departed. The dead are placed in a wooden box, and the box is left in an open place, to rot. Some time later, a wooden effigy of the deceased, crudely carved, is carried in a procession to a hillside near the rotting box, where it is leaned against the rocks. This is also an occasion for dances and singing, and for the song which begins:

Where have you been since the day you left us?
Tell us something about your new home.

Are there running brooks with cold clear water,
singing songs which are deathless?

And maidens with sky-blue eyes and curly hair
and roses in their cheeks which never fade?

And sweet maize cobs and apples and honey
fresh with the smell of wild flowers?

And grapes whose juice is no less intoxicating
than a loving woman's kiss?

When the grapes are ripened in the month of September, the people of Birir, Bhumberat and Rumber hold their Festival of the Grapes, as the picking season starts. The whole tribe works at picking and crushing, and the juice is stored in huge barrels. I am told that when it ferments, it is potent, and is the common beverage, replacing water during the months of freezing temperatures. At the end of December the Festival of the Snows is held, and a sturdy young man is selected to herd the livestock of the entire tribe, while they graze in sheltered valleys below the snow line. The one chosen is given the title *bhudalak*, or hero-boy, and there is apparently keen competition, regardless of the long, lonely winter months away from home, grape juice and bonneted girls with ripe, red lips. As the one selected leaves with his

flocks, he is given a demonstration and a send-off by girls singing and dancing around him until he crosses beyond the tribal area. While the bhudalak wanders from pasture to pasture with his sheep, goats and cattle, the girls of his tribe make up lyrics of love and passion, anticipating his return.

You are enjoying yourself in warm snowless valleys
and drinking the sweet milk of cows.

But I am imprisoned in great mounds of snow, eating
dried grapes and apples, and pining away in your memory.

Say, when you come, will you pick me up as your
sweetheart on the Chirangash night?

I curl my hair for you, and my eyes are waiting
to drown you in their depth.

My love is longing to squeeze from your aching limbs
all the fatigue and gloom of these winter months.

Say, when you come. . . .

Chirangash is the Spring festival celebrating the return of the bhudalak. Wine flows freely, and the bhudalak is permitted to take his pick of any married or unmarried girl, as a reward for his lonely winter.

Pakistan has changed nothing in Birir, Bhumberat and Rumber, except to give them a school. I have since heard that a few of the Kalosh have been converted to Islam. I hope they will not learn too much.

On the way back to Malakand and Peshawar, we met a caravan heading northward toward Chitral and Gilgit. It was in the Gilgit territory, many centuries ago, that the game of polo first came to the subcontinent from Turkestan, and spread up the Indus Valley to Tibet. Today, polo is still played in Gilgit and the Indus Valley, where it is the most popular village sport. The tribesmen will play it at any time, anywhere, even on a narrow, tree-lined road. But their game is rather different from that played on American, English and

Argentinan fields. Their mallets are often crude, and the balls are irregular; there are no fouls, no rest periods, and rarely a change of mounts. In some places they use ten or fifteen men to a side, and the wild-eyed riders are rough on their opponents. Mayhem would be a more fitting name for their game than polo.

Not far from Malakand, we passed an open-air school, where the teacher sat on a stool and the pupils squatted on the ground, inside a square made of small white stones. A little distance away were other white-stoned squares, shaped like the rooms of a house without walls. Teacher and pupils had a grand view of snow-capped mountains and terraced valleys. I had the feeling that their comparative poverty gave the students something many wealthier children miss.



Chapter 17

NO PERMITS are required for travel in the Kohat and Bannu tribal districts south of Peshawar. Only the silent, watchful permission of the tall Pathans, who are coming out of their fortified retreats to build roads and attend schools, where they are avid students of military history. The transition began some time after 1947. At first, they were defiant of the new Pakistani government, and there were several incidents that developed into shooting frays. The Pathans had for so long fought against foreign troops that it was impossible for them to look upon Pakistani soldiers as friends. Fortunately for Pakistan, there were many Pathans in her new government, and serving as officers in the military forces. In a bold move, she withdrew all armed forces from the tribal districts and turned the defense of the territory over to the Pathans themselves. The withdrawal cost the lives of a number of Pakistani soldiers, but it was a wise decision. The tribesmen are slowly being won over, and the Frontier is quieter now than ever before in history. A social revolution is taking place that would have been impossible while the British troops were there. At the same time, Pakistan is gaining for herself a first-class fighting force of men who, as soldiers, are superior to any other in the subcontinent or Asia, including the vaunted Sikhs of India. The large-scale program of education for young and adult which has come to his rocky, mountainous homeland provides the Pathan with an outlet for his

bounding enthusiasm, and the results so far have been very encouraging. The bold move is paying dividends in the form of reduced expenses in maintaining order on the Frontier. The peace that has come to the tribal districts for the first time will remain only so long as Pakistan continues to respect and recognize the great independence and pride of these tall, colorful warriors. Their family feuds, fantastic superstitions and religious zeal will not change for long years to come. Their demand for action in the Kashmir dispute will also continue, for there are no Muslims more devout, than these highly sensitive men with hair-trigger tempers.

In order to protect Peshawar and the adjoining settled districts from marauding Pathans, the British maintained a considerable army. It was the presence of this army, even though it was intended as much for defense against outside aggression as against inside trouble, which offended the Pathan at his most vulnerable points — his religion and independence. The British felt the Pathan was quite wrong in his love for a fight or a feud, and they told him to stop killing anyone who insulted him. This was itself an insult, so the Pathans killed Englishmen as well. In a manner unfunnily reminiscent of Kipling's Paget M. P., the British respected the tribesman's ability as a fighter and soldier, but treated him as a bothersome character. Now, the Pathan feels better about everything — except the Kashmir situation.

In no less than thirty separate tribes, along four hundred miles of Pakistan's border with Afghanistan, the Pathan dwellings of mud-walled fortresses and watchtowers blend with the sun-scorched rocks and arid terrain, where blades of grass are scarce. The traveler is advised to stay out of tribal districts after 4 P.M. each day, since the spirited inhabitants seem to prefer the later hours for the happy pastime of kidnap for ransom. During the earlier hours, they are too busy manufacturing remarkably fine rifles and revolvers, and

testing them on the hillsides, to bother much with strangers. But there are always a few people strolling the roads, looking for whatever excitement they can find, and a few tribal policemen, each carrying a rifle, revolver or two, several hundred rounds of ammunition and a stabbing dagger in their belts. Later in the day, when shadows from the watch-towers are long, there is a great deal of clicking of rifle bolts as guns are traded or sold, or just toyed with by itchy fingers. This love for a gun is a natural one, for the Pathan has always been poor, and from his earliest days his only toy has been either a model gun or a real one. From the age of six or seven, he is taught the use of firearms, and at the age of ten he is expected to be as good a marksman – almost – as his father. Without his rifle, the Pathan feels undressed and exposed, and his gestures with a gun have frequently created a wrong impression. Hospitable in the highest degree, the Pathan is apt to invite you to eat at his house while fingering his pistol, as though daring you to refuse. This is just a habit, born of his determination to be known as the perfect host.

The day before I left Peshawar for the tribal areas to the south, Indian newspapers published a story about the kidnapping for ransom of two Royal Pakistan Air Force pilots who were forced down in tribal territory. With great glee and some sarcasm, the Hindu press noted that the ransom price was a mere six thousand rupees, or three thousand per pilot. A cheap price they said. The following day, as I traveled towards Kohat and Bannu, a Hindu dignitary passing through the territory was kidnapped and frightened almost out of his wits, and then released without any ransom demand – as an insult.

As my hired car left the Peshawar valley and headed into the dry, rocky hills, I could see the great need for water that is ever present in West Pakistan. The road ahead and the nearby boulders shimmered in heat waves. There was no

water anywhere, and I remembered hearing a man say that Pakistan is suffering from water in odd ways – in the West, to get it, and in the East, to get rid of it.

As the road began to climb a little, the driver asked Bhuta if I was a man who talked or a man who listened? Did I carry a gun? Did I know that when we entered the Afridi and Adam Khel tribal districts, and later the Bannu area, I should behave as a polite guest of the people? Bhuta satisfied him on all these points: I wore a gun in a shoulder holster, I would cause no uprising and I talked little. Relieved, the driver became talkative himself. He apparently had been well educated and I noticed he was typically fond of proverbs, for every now and then he used one to illustrate a point in his narrative. As we edged past a small camel caravan on a hill, he laughed and quoted: “When the camel was asked, ‘Is an ascent or descent the easier?’ he replied; ‘Confound them both.’” Noting my amused interest, the man reeled off several more, until I remarked that none of his proverbs mentioned women in any way. At once, he stiffened his back and reminded me that Pashto proverbs were not to be compared with the *slokas*, or moral stanzas, of the Hindus, which were all about women and all indecent. He was slightly incorrect in this, for of the hundreds of *slokas*, only fifty or so mention women, and they do so in such a way as to remind the Westerner that the Hindu male is also aware of the unpredictability of the female of the species.

As we passed through the Afridi district, to the Bangash tribal border, the winding road climbed rugged hills similar to those in the Khyber area. Here, also, the well-graded but narrow roads, maintained by Pakistani government funds, belonged to the tribes, who were paid for the use of the roads, as had been the custom under the British. Then we came to the Handi Side Gate, entrance to the Kohat district, where a turreted fort looked down on the road and a group

of tribesmen stood in the middle of the road watching our approach. I told the driver to pull over to the edge of the hillside, and got out. As I walked toward the unsmiling group of riflemen, I wondered what they were thinking. I asked if I might take photographs of them, and one said, "If you wish to, yes." No one smiled, I took two pictures and returned to the car, feeling the unsmiling eyes on my back. A few minutes later, we started off along the winding road as it descended to the Kohat valley, where trees were visible and the green banks of a small canal made a bright splash of color against the red earth and rocks. Soon we entered the town of Kohat, where flowers of every hue bloomed above mud walls. Near a newly built hospital, children poured out of a school building, and the green velvet of a beautifully kept polo field stretched away behind a border of shade trees. I thought the town looked cleaner than Peshawar, and neater, and when I left the car to visit a rifle factory, the maze of paths between mud houses seemed to be newly swept. There were no cowdung cakes plastered on the walls to dry for fuel.

From the road there was little to indicate that in these low, crudely built buildings a thriving industry was being carried on. Against a wall there were one or two new-looking British .303 Lee Enfield rifles, near a group of Pathans who watched as I approached. But I could hear an anvil being struck in rhythmic blows. Then the driver called to a sharp-faced thin man, who apparently supervised a section of the factory, and I was shown through the place. It was not crude, one only had to look at and handle the finished product for a moment to realize that these men were artists, and loved their work. As I entered a shop where primitive forges were kept aglow by foot bellows made of goatskin, a heavily built Pathan with gray-white whiskers entered behind me. He smiled at me, and I smiled back, then he nodded to the supervisor, who apparently said, "I'll attend to you in a little while." As I

walked around, the Pathan stood close by and listened to my queries. Once in a while, he spoke to the workers and touched a gun barrel or fingered a stock. On his own shoulder, hanging from the folds of a thin blanket, was a well-worn Marlin rifle. Across his massive chest was a cartridge belt for the revolver that hung at his hip, and around his middle was another belt stuffed with shells for his rifle. His eyes were gray, the skin around them wrinkled with crow's-feet creases, and his skin was burned to leather. After a while, I spoke to him in Urdu and asked him where his home was. He replied that he was a Mahsud, and had come to buy a new rifle — if he could find one that proved worthy of his long walk from his home near Bannu. Then, with a gentle gesture of his hand and sidewise nodding of his head, he said good-by and went off to inspect some of the finished rifles on a long table. As he moved, I thought how well his rifle fitted him. I also wondered if he were one of the men pressing the Pakistani government to allow them to go to Kashmir and settle the dispute finally and honorably. The Mahsud tribesmen are the most aggressive of all the Pathans and repeatedly express their intense feeling about the stalemate in Kashmir. Their solution is simply: "Let us go there and fight those people."

It was long after noon when I left the rifle factory, and I wanted to see more of Kohat before going on to Bannu. I told Bhuta and the driver that we would stay at the dak bungalow that night and go on in the morning. This made them both happy, and a little later I was relaxing in the comfortable resthouse, making notes on my travels since coming to Pakistan.

My decision to remain in Kohat no doubt kept me from becoming involved in a serious incident that occurred next morning. An Englishman, in business at Bannu until partition, and now revisiting the town, rather foolishly expressed his opinion on the part played in the Kashmir war by Pathan



Pathan tribesman

warriors. The Mahsuds wasted no rifle bullets but stuck knives in the man, and he died soon afterwards.

South of Kohat and the Bannu district lies the tribal district of the Wazirs. West of Bannu near the Afghan border, the country is bare and mountainous, affording excellent protection for guerilla-type activities. In this region, the Pakistani government has maintained a careful watch over the operations of the Faqir of Ipi, leader of the Pakhtoonistan Movement within Pakistan, as it is distinguished from the agitation fostered by India and supported by Afghanistan. It is certainly true that many Pathans laugh with derision when Pakhtoonistan is mentioned, for they have seen with their own eyes the conditions on both sides of the Afghan-Pakistani border. They are getting the benefit of new roads, schools, hospitals and irrigation facilities that did not exist under the British. They are well informed about world affairs, and their chieftains are frequently consulted on problems of government. On the other hand, no lighthearted treatment of the movement for an independent state of Pakhtoonistan can eliminate the facts as they exist. The movement is there, in those barren hills, and the fact that there are few following the Faqir of Ipi does not detract from the importance of India's participation, or interference, in Pakistan's internal affairs.

At the time Pakistan and India were established as separate dominions in 1947, the tribal districts of the North-West Frontier Province were recognized by the British as “. . . Independent Tribal Districts between the British Administrative border and the Durand Line (boundary of Afghanistan), and is in theory a British protectorate, but has not been annexed; the Tribes have not accepted our rule.” It was necessary, therefore, for a referendum to be held, and a decision made whether or not to accede to Pakistan. The referendum was held, but a small percentage of the Pathans, mainly from the

Wazir area, refused to take part in it, and they claimed later that the Tribal Belt was “given” to Pakistan without proper agreement by all Pathans. The Faqir of Ipi led the people who refused to take part in the referendum. He had been pardoned by Pakistan upon partition, and early in 1948 walked the streets of Peshawar a free man. But after the referendum, he returned to his guerilla activities. Pakistan took over from Britain certain responsibilities and some of her headaches. The tribal areas had been Britain’s greatest headache, and she had tried every possible means in her power to coerce the Pathans into peaceful pursuits under her administration, without success. The man most responsible for her failure was the Faqir of Ipi. Not a hereditary chieftain, but a man of poor family, great ability and unlimited conviction in his fight for freedom for his people, he is often called a fanatic or a bandit, but no one has yet called him a fool, and Pakistan would do well to face the fact of his usefulness to others, who wish no good for Pakistan.

More than forty-five years ago – no Pathan over forty will tell his exact age – a boy was born in a Tori Khel family of the Waziri tribe, the most powerful and politically important of the Pathan tribes at that time. At the age of twelve, his father died, and a few years later, following a pilgrimage to Mecca, Haji Mirza Ali Khan was elected to lead his tribe in a religious war, or jihad, against the British. From that time onwards, he was a thorn in the side of the British Empire, and from 1935 to 1937 fought a campaign against them in the Wazir country which cost the British taxpayers millions in pounds sterling. The official estimates of the British and Indian Army forces occupied in the fight against Ipi vary from thirty thousand to forty thousand troops. Mountain hideouts were bombed to pieces, villages were burned to the ground, and the faqir was even publicly hanged by the neck with a rope – only to turn up again, when the British found

they had hanged the wrong man. The faqir's reputation grew, quite naturally. He cheated death, defied the British and Indian Armies, and maintained the independence of his people so long that he came to be regarded by his followers as Allah's favored son. He prevented the British from ever attaining complete authority over the tribal districts.

The British government developed considerable respect for the faqir's ability and skill as a warrior. They admired him as a leader in guerilla warfare, particularly since he rarely, if ever, employed more than seven or eight hundred men at any time in his war against them.

Ipi has a subterranean hideout establishment in the mountains and gorges. The British sought it passionately and for a long time. Now Pakistan is seeking to eliminate it. But it is difficult of access. After a long ride by nothing larger than a jeep, followed by some distance on mule, sure-footed donkey or camel, the route is through a narrow valley by circuitous footpaths overlooked by jagged rock piles, on the tops of which are determined, loyal, sharp-eyed marksmen with Sten guns, grenades and a variety of other instruments of sudden death. Inside, there are living quarters with rugs on the floors. Quarters for the faqir and his family, separate quarters for visitors, which are seldom used, quarters for his personal retainers and his animals, as well as space for his arms factory and workshops, where radio facilities are repaired and operated. He has an office, with a library, although he does not read English, preferring to employ a staff of translators and interpreters. He is a student of history, a collector of maps old and new, every one of which is an open book to him. He is fully aware of the changes taking place all over the world, and of his own position, which he expresses in this way:

"I am not in any way sorry for what I did years ago when the British were trying to take charge of our territory, bit by bit. They think I am a devil. As a matter of fact I believe in



Faqir of Ipi

the Holy *Koran* and dislike the sight of blood. I had many opportunities to be a rich man, for the British offered me large sums. Instead I chose to be poor, and continued the fight for my people's freedom."

While admitting to ruthlessness and the stirring up of trouble, he argues: "During the last war, when Americans and British were arming themselves to resist attacks on their shores by Japanese and German soldiers, the people were prepared to kill every invader. They were patriots. Yet I am called a fanatic!" Which is, of course, true.

It is clear that the alleged demand for a "free Pakhtoonistan," as reported by India and Afghanistan, is a figment of imaginative minds outside Pakistan. Perhaps Mr. Nehru was not convinced in 1946, on his last visit to the area, that the tribesmen prefer a Muslim ruler to a Hindu ruler. Before partition, as vice president of the interim government and head of the Congress Party, Nehru visited the Frontier and was taken to the tribal areas. At that time Nehru's Congress Party being in power, the Frontier had a Congress Party Ministry, which claimed that the Muslim League did not represent the Pathans. In a move to split Muslim solidarity and cut the future Pakistan in half, the Congress Party maintained that the Muslim League was a puppet of the British — enemies of the Pathans — and claimed that the Pathans were not in favor of acceding to Pakistan. This propaganda failed. When Nehru appeared in the tribal areas, there was an outburst of protests. Stones and rubbish were thrown at him, and, protected by the bodies of his escorts, he was hurried into a bus. The bus was held up and stoned, a few shots were fired, roadblocks were set up to prevent his further travel in the area and word came of an ambush prepared for them. Nehru turned back, his efforts to persuade the Pathans to join India a complete failure.

The great improvement of conditions in the North-West

Frontier Province has satisfied the tribesmen, who are now loyal Pakistanis as well as Pathans. When Pakistan applied for admission to membership in the United Nations, Afghanistan was the only voice which opposed it. This puzzled the late Liaquat Ali Khan, Prime Minister of Pakistan. He could not understand why a Muslim nation, which had entered into treaties and agreements to the effect that there would be no interference in the affairs of the people living on the east side of the Durand Line, would disregard all considerations and agitate with pressure and denunciation for a separate state of Pakhtoonistan. Since the assassination of Liaquat Ali Khan, however, a large number of Afghan officers and other personnel have fled into Pakistan with stories which seem to offer a solution to the puzzle. One of the officers, a lieutenant, insisted that the "unholy" Delhi-Kabul alliance was launched to sidetrack the Kashmir Issue and foster unrest in the tribal districts. It is clear that the pressure and propaganda originated in India, where there is hope that a large-scale uprising in the tribal districts will serve a dual purpose. First, Pakistani troops would be pulled out of Kashmir, enabling a coup there; second, and most important of all, an uprising on the Indian subcontinent would afford an excuse to "liberate" the North-West Frontier Province and cut Pakistan in two. After that, it would not be long before West Pakistan and her Muslims would return to the fold under Hindu domination. East Pakistan, on the other side of the subcontinent, could not survive more than a day or so.

At Peshawar, there was a cablegram waiting for me from my wife. Peggy was arranging to join me in Karachi. In addition to being a wonderful person, she is a musician. She began her music studies as Peggy Keenan, at the age of five. A graduate of the University of Southern California College of Music, she also studied orchestral conducting and dramatics at the University of California and was a pupil of

Leopold Godowski and Sigismund Stojowski in San Francisco. For a number of years, she was a member of a two-piano team under contract with all the major radio networks, and during World War II toured the USO overseas. I had written of my visit to Gwalior, and of Hafiz Ali's music and my plans to return there if she could be with me. Now she was on her way. For the next two months or so we could be together, and while she studied the native music – and explained it to me – I could show her a little of the country and the people. Bhuta was almost as excited as I was. We caught the next train for Karachi.



Chapter 18

PEGGY REACHED Karachi three days after leaving San Francisco. At the airport, her bags were quickly inspected and passed by customs officers, who were frank in their admiration of her lovely red hair. Bhuta hovered around her, and his face, which I had always considered a trifle sour-looking, wore a pleased, smug look as he climbed up beside the taxi driver and we drove to the Metropole Hotel. For the last two weeks or more, he had frequently suggested: "When the mem-sahib comes, Master, better we take her to see . . ." or, "better we do this. . . ." He had hinted that, if I were to rent a house or small bungalow, he himself would cook. I felt that my own plans to take Peggy to Baluchistan did not meet with his approval. He would rather have us remain in Karachi, where we could attend cocktail parties and entertain — and give him the opportunity to show what a good servant he was. However, when he heard us discussing plans for a few days in Karachi while Peggy became familiar with everything, he brightened up. Later, when our bed-sitting room in the hotel was neatly arranged to his satisfaction, he went off happily to his own quarters, after asking what time we wanted chota hazri in the morning. With a glance at Peggy, I told him in Urdu to bring it at nine o'clock, knowing quite well that this was against all his principles and he would bring it, as he always had before, at seven-thirty exactly.

At seven-thirty sharp, Bhuta rapped on our door, and a few moments later entered carrying a tray with tea, biscuits and fruit. While he cleared the small table and arranged it between our beds, Peggy opened one eye and glared at us both. Bhuta arranged the tray, then went noiselessly into the bathroom, where he began, as usual, to wash my socks and anything else he could get his hands on, whether it was soiled or not. Fearing for a pair of nylon stockings on the shower-curtain rod, I called him to leave the mem-sahib's things alone, and a little later he came back and began to lay out my clothes, as he had done every day. Peggy muttered, "When can I get some privacy and use of the bathroom? This place is like Grand Central Station." Bhuta asked, "What time you have breakfast, Master?" and I said we would go down to the dining room later: in the meantime, he could go away and clean my shoes. Later, while Peggy was bathing, Bhuta came in with the shoes and we had a little talk. From then on, he gave us a half hour of grace in the mornings and brought chota hazri at eight — after which he washed things and left, to sit with the other servants on the wide veranda outside the door.

When her registration papers and currency declarations were handed in to the police, we spent a few days seeing Karachi. Two days after Peggy's arrival, Bhuta asked me for money to buy some cookies and fruit. He explained that there would be no more food served in the hotel for a while because all the help was on strike. A foreign guest had brought a prostitute to his room and shocked his room-servant, a proper Muslim. The servant reported the incident to the manager, who referred the servant to the proprietor, a Parsee. Instead, the servant reported to the police, and the girl involved was arrested and incarcerated in jail. It was reported to us at the time that the proprietor, annoyed at the publicity, had advised the servant to retract his charges, but

the man refused. He was then fired. In sympathy, two or three other room-servants quit their jobs, enraging the Parsee, who hired non-Muslims in their places. The general secretary of the Hotel Workers Union forthwith called a strike, and all employees of the hotel, including cooks and waiters, walked out. Servants, cooks and waiters also walked out of the other hotels, clubs and a few restaurants in Karachi. For two weeks or so the government's efforts at a settlement failed, and there were many hungry people in Karachi. Peggy and I subsisted on citrus fruit, cookies, boiled eggs and tea, while the striking Muslims sat in the road by the hotel, playing cards and singing songs. The power of a woman had been completely underestimated by everyone.

While this was going on, we applied at the Indian High Commissioner's Office for Peggy's Indian visa. My own visa had been properly renewed. Many weeks before leaving America, Peggy had obtained her Pakistani visa in a few minutes. Then she went to the Indian Embassy in Washington, where she explained that her visit to India was to study native music. Immediately, she was informed that if she wanted to deposit forty dollars, they would send cables to find out the state of my visa. Although my visa had nothing to do with hers, Peggy agreed and paid the money. Her visa was to be sent to San Francisco. When she reached San Francisco several weeks later, it had not arrived, and after several fruitless telephone calls, she left for Pakistan without it. In Karachi, we explained what had happened and filed her application again, with the necessary fees. Then we made ready for the trip to Baluchistan. I could not face the complicated ordeal of buying airplane tickets again, and we decided to travel by train.

I was already learning a great deal from Peggy, whose impressions of Pakistan so far were most enlightening. She noticed so many things that were commonplace to me, but,

seen through her eyes, they took on an added interest. As we walked past the cinema near the Metropole Hotel, where the whitewashed walls were stained and water in pools trickled slowly, going nowhere, I steered her automatically into the middle of the road. She asked, "What on earth is that smell?" and I had to explain that during the intermission period most of the people inside the theater went outside for air. Many of them had been drinking soda pop and needed to urinate. A month or so later, we saw in a newspaper that a man had been arrested for watering on the sidewalk, and found that it was illegal. Apparently, at night no one really cares. At the junction of McLeod Road and Napier Street, the center of the printing and publishing business at Karachi, she was fascinated by the tiny donkeys with bells around their necks, and by the slow-gaited camels, with bells on their knees, as they hauled freight from the nearby railroad yards. We stood on the corner and, while she watched it all and noted the remarkable variety of headwear used by Muslim men, I watched the Muslims as they passed by. The naturally red hair shining in the sun stopped many a small donkey cart that was trying to thread its way through camel carts and automobiles, cycle rickshaws and pedestrians, balling up the traffic.

The journey by train to Quetta, through the Bolan Pass, was dusty and slow. Several times, on steep gradients, the train slowed and finally shuddered to a stop. When this happened, the engineers from both of the engines, one in front and one at the rear, blew their whistles and tried to get the train started again. Eventually they left the cabs of the engines and walked towards each other shouting and gesticulating, until they met and arranged a plan of assault on the hill. Then they returned to their engines, blew their whistles in some sort of code and at last managed to breast the gradient. While this was going on, a number of the passen-

gers left their carriages and walked along the tracks, to hop back on when the train caught up with them. At every station halt, Bhuta came from his small servant's compartment to shake sand from our belongings and to dust off the seats and leather bunks. At intervals, the train guard took our orders for meals and telephoned them ahead to the next station that had a restaurant. Peggy stood at the open door when we stopped, to watch the teeming crowds of women in purdah, tribesmen, soldiers, and a few flower-bedecked grooms on their way to be married. The beggars along the tracks were mostly children, probably orphan refugees from India. I was glad that she had not been suddenly exposed to the maimed and diseased beggars of the Indian railroad stations.

When the Indus Valley was left behind, and we entered the Bolan Pass, the country took on a new appearance. It is in this part of the subcontinent that one feels it is "un-Indian." Rugged and barren, sun-scorched mountains rent by chasms and narrow gorges, alternate with deserts and stony plains of a monotonous buff color; here and there are level valleys of considerable size. It is the flatness of these valleys which distinguishes Baluchistan from all other areas in this part of the world. Inside the mountains, a few tiny irrigated areas are startling green, with junipers, eucalyptus trees, palms and vines. There are no rivers or streams anywhere, but the entire land is cut deep by gorges of great depth, which pour out onto the plains in wide washes of sand and gravel. Death lies in wait for the man or animal caught in these dry washes by a flash flood after heavy rains. Sometimes the gorges are so narrow the sides may be touched by stretching out both arms — at other places they are hundreds of yards across, with vertical banks.

On the morning of the second day, the train left the Bolan Pass and came to the Quetta-Pishin district, where the coun-

try took on a gray-green color and all the villages we passed had typical wall enclosures and watchtowers. The mountains of rock rose from six thousand foot plateaus, and here and there we saw what looked like a long curving line of shell holes, stretching from the mountain walls out into the level plains. They were Karez wells, a unique system of providing water for irrigation in a land where there is no water on the surface anywhere. Specialists from Iran or Afghanistan are brought in to dig the Karez. At a spot near the mountain walls where there is an underground spring, the digger sinks a shaft until he reaches free-flowing water of sufficient volume. This may be one hundred feet down or six hundred feet. A hundred yards or so out toward the plains, a second shaft is put down, only a few inches or a foot less deep than the first hole, and a tunnel bored to the first, bringing the water underground to the second shaft. The next shaft and those following, are linked by tunnels, each slightly less deep than the last one, until eventually the water is brought to the surface, a mile or so from the first shaft. Then it is carried by a narrow trench, of wood or concrete or stone, to farm or village. The idea of Karez wells came originally from Persia, as did many other customs now adopted by Pakistan.

As we neared Quetta, where my mother is buried, a tribesman on a prancing stallion with gay trappings rode along a path by the rails. He paid not the slightest attention to the train, but sat his excited horse with magnificent ease. Then we reached the station and were driven in a galloping tonga to the hotel.

Quetta is cold in December, and the weather of the high plateau a noticeable change from the balmy air of Karachi. While Bhuta brought coal for the small fireplaces — our rooms had been tenantless for a long while — we unpacked warm clothing and spent the rest of the day shaking sand and train soot from everything we owned. As usual, we had made no

definite plans, but would make some inquiries and see what was to be seen. There were several people I wanted to talk with, and I carried a message for a Pakistani officer from the retired English colonel in Naini Tal.

After a cold breakfast in a chilly and deserted dining room, where the odor of last night's curry dishes lingered, we rode in a tonga through the "City of Khans" spoken of in *She*. Quetta was almost completely destroyed in the earthquake of 1935, when twenty-four thousand people were killed. The natives we passed were all shrouded in warm blankets draped over the head and shoulders, and Peggy wondered about the climate here. I explained that almost all of Baluchistan enjoys extremes of heat and cold, with no half measures, and quoted an old Baluchi proverb which says: "O God, when thou hadst created Sibi, Nushki and Nok Kundi, what object was there in creating hell?" But now it was cold, and few people were in the streets so early in the morning. Jinnah Road, heart of the shopping district, was completely empty except for an immaculate and cold traffic policeman, and we were the only customers in the large grocery store, where we bought grapefruit, oranges, Ovaltine, salmon and biscuits. The departure of the British military forces and their attendant families has left a great hole in the life of Quetta.

The native bazaar was the first of its kind Peggy had seen. As we walked through the narrow streets and the sun broke through the departing mists, shops were unshuttered and small groups of two or three men squatted round hookah pipes and puffed and gossiped. At one stall, where we purchased some multi-colored silks, the shopkeeper had a charcoal-burning heater pot, which gave off a welcome warmth. At a corner store, we examined hats and shoes and bought for Peggy a gold-embroidered pillbox type of hat usually worn by chieftains or princes. It looked so well on her shining hair that the Muslim shopkeeper went into ecstasies and sold her

a pair of golden slippers with upturned toes for a ridiculously low price. By this time, we were being followed by a number of interested tribesmen — Pathans, Baluchis and Brahuis. A passing tribesman, whose hair and beard were dyed red with henna, stopped short in his tracks as Peggy passed — then he too turned to follow. It began to be a party. Until Peggy turned into a street where painted ladies known as “dancing girls” entertained male friends. The street was swept clean, and a woman sat on a rope bed surrounded by baskets of fighting quail for sale, as she talked with a young woman at the open door of one of the houses. Most of the gay-painted huts were shuttered at this hour, but the green door of one was open. Inside, we could see bright-colored curtains, and Peggy thought it was a shop, so she went in, followed by Bhuta. I called to her to come out, but by this time she had met one of the girls who reclined on a couch, and was admiring her dainty slippers. As I entered, the scent of heavy perfume and fumes of native wine were strong, and another girl came from an inner room. While Bhuta explained that our visit was an accident, Peggy begged me to arrange with the girls to film them while dancing in their elaborate costumes. “Aren’t they attractive? Will they let us photograph them?” In a little while, after everyone had politely expressed great joy in the unexpected meeting, and the girls had agreed to dance for us, we left and pushed our way through the small crowd around the green door. As we left the street, I asked, “Why on earth did you go in there?” When I explained what sort of house it was, Peggy was amazed, and agreed that perhaps it would be a good idea to forget the pictures — “But it is such a pity.”

Later that afternoon, we returned to the hotel with our purchases — several bags of fruit and tinned foodstuffs. I telephoned the revenue commissioner, an Englishman, but he was away for two days, so we decided to make our first

trip the next day, to Chaman on the Afghanistan border.

At six in the morning, while it was still dark, Bhuta came with tea, and word that the rented taxi would arrive in half an hour. The mist over Quetta was thick and low, and we were some miles along the road before the surrounding country took clear shape. All around us were eroded hills that looked like huge tailing piles from some gigantic mining operation. Red, yellow, brown, lavender or gray, the conical piles of earth spread themselves for miles on each side of the road. A strong wind blew sand through the funnel-like valleys, and we were glad it was cool winter instead of blistering summer, when this particular spot suffered the intolerable punishment of "the one hundred-twenty days wind," parching the land with its fierce, incessant force.

It was a strange world through which we drove, one without any kindness. As the hills gave way to flat treeless plains that glittered gray against the distant blue mountains of the border, we passed a shepherd and his flock of fat-tailed black and white sheep, moving fast to find nourishment from the few blades of dried-up grass. Then we reached a tiny village near the mountains, where a mud house stood by the road on one side, and two camels turned Persian Wheels on the other. A few men sat on a long rock, and children played listlessly. We stopped to film the camels as they went round and round, pulling a pole attached to one wooden wheel that was geared to another over the well. The water came up in handmade earthen buckets tied to a chain, and spilled into a narrow ditch leading to a small field, where a farmer and his camel plowed greedy gray sandy soil. Then I asked the tribesmen if they would pose for my camera. A gray-bearded patriarch nodded assent, and I filmed them against their background of semi-desert, nearby mountains, houses of gray mud and toiling camels, as sand drifted into the irrigation ditch and absorbed some of the precious water. When Peggy

offered a child a chocolate bar, it ran away, frightened and crying, and when we thanked the men for their courtesy, they nodded their heads with dignity and grace, and smiled at us. Not for the first time in this country, it occurred to me that, when nature is most harsh and unrelenting, the people become hardy, straightforward and charitable — three traits which are rare, even singly, in other places. Fierce in appearance and at times in outward manner, these people have a great dignity, blunt honesty and simple hospitality which is more than the Pathan's normal desire to be known as "the perfect host."

A few miles farther along the road, as it began to climb to the hills of solid rock, we entered the village of Kila Abdullah, where three thousand Pathans live. At the old tax gate, no longer in use as a barrier, we stopped to talk with some of the tribesmen, who were proud to tell us that they raised fine fruit, and that two new schools had recently been built there. One of the men, a fierce-eyed, hawk-nosed fellow with a gun on his shoulder and knife in his belt, presented us with a freshly killed *chukor*, or partridge, "for the mem-sahib." Then he stepped away behind the crowd of interested onlookers. I began to realize that Peggy's happy smile for all the people we met was something my travels had seriously lacked. Alone, I would have passed through Kila Abdullah, or stopped for a moment to talk seriously with grim-faced tribesmen who wondered why I had stopped. Now the grim faces cracked into smiles as Peggy asked their names, and they crowded around us, as interested in us as we were in them.

The road beyond Kila Abdullah through the bare mountains was graveled, and as we reached the short level stretch at the crest, a white signboard said: Khojak Top. Near it, an old man leaned on a staff as he and his small pack-donkey rested before going on down the winding road that reached to Chaman and the flat plains of Afghanistan. Through the

haze, the individual mountain ranges of Registan Province reared up, brownish-purple in the distance, each separated from the next range by wide plains of sandy desert. Immediately below us, a railroad tunnel disgorged flashing rails, which were at once swallowed again by another tunnel. Not far from the bottom of the hills, we could see the town of Chaman, on the Afghan border, and a straight gravel road running out toward the great city of Kandahar, fifty miles or so away in the haze. As we stood there on the Khojak Pass and scanned the territory of Afghanistan before us, the romantic history of this region seemed overshadowed by present world conditions, and it was easy to appreciate that this country before us may well be destined to play an important part in the future peace of Asia. Having but recently visited the tribal areas a little to the northwest, along the same boundary, the picture seemed to take definite shape. The presence of Afghanistan made a cushioning buffer between where we stood and Russia.

In the one place where the Indian subcontinent's mountain rampart is weakest, Asiatic Russia spreads closely to the borders of Pakistan. Not so many years ago, when Russia was pushing her influence and extending farther and farther southward toward India, only the territory of Afghanistan intervened to prevent a clash with British interests. Now, with troubled Iran on the south and west, Afghanistan sits perched on the top of Pakistan's northern borders in a terribly narrow corridor next to Russia. Her eastern border, along Pakistan's tribal areas, is peopled mainly by Pathans. The foreign trade of Afghanistan is with Pakistan and Russia, via a single road that stretches from Kabul and the Khyber Pass to Kandahar, with an offshoot to Chaman, and from Kandahar to Herat and the Russian railhead at Kushka Post, just four hundred miles from where we stood.

An unfavorable land, of mountains in the north and deserts

in the south, the torrid, sand-covered wastes of Afghanistan are traveled with difficulty by nomadic Baluchis and their camel caravans. At one time, the southern areas were irrigated and fairly well populated, but the drifting sands and marauding invaders of the Middle Ages have ended any prosperity. The Hamuns, or great lakes, are drying up. The fat-tailed sheep, so common in Pakistan, is native of Afghanistan. It is the giver of grease. The immense weight and size of its tail is caused by the development of masses of fat which provide a source of nourishment to be drawn upon in case of fodder shortage. The grease from their tails is used everywhere as a substitute for butter known as ghee.

At Chaman, ninety miles from Quetta, we found a few armed sentries and a great deal of barbed wire entanglements. Since we were by this time quite hungry, we drove to the dak bungalow, where the caretaker boiled water for tea and we ate lunch from the foodstuffs bought in Quetta. A fat black and white cat rubbed against our legs with his tail stiffly upright, begging for food, and in one of the other rooms, a party of men discussed plans for a tribal meeting to decide what was to be done about petitioning the Pakistani government for faster action on the Kashmir situation. Bhuta and the taxi driver went off somewhere to buy gas for the car, and in a little while returned to eat their own meal. There was little to see in Chaman, but we saw it all, and eventually turned into the one narrow street and shopping center, where armed tribesmen squatted or stood in groups. Afghans were plentiful, and there was a turbulent atmosphere about the place that had obviously affected Bhuta and the driver, who both seemed anxious to leave Chaman. But I had noticed that almost all of the tribesmen wore short-hilted stabbing knives, and I wanted one to go with the knife I had bought in Peshawar. As we met a group of Pathans and the driver stopped to avoid hitting a child, I asked one of

the tribesmen where I could purchase a dagger. In a few moments, while Bhuta, the Pathan and I had a three-way conversation on the price of the Pathan's own dagger, a crowd had gathered, and faces with beards or bristling mustaches or both peered through the doors and windows of the taxi. A startled policeman came to see what was happening, and seeing the white lady he became quite upset. Shouting at the tribesmen, who at first had looked a little grim, but now were exchanging bright smiles with Peggy, the policeman turned to me as I paid the Pathan for his dagger and said, "Please, sir, please go away from here." Without waiting, the driver let in the gears and we moved forward. Peggy waved at the tribesmen, who shouted back and waved to us, and as the taxi gathered a lot of unnecessary speed, we looked back and saw the policeman surrounded by arm-waving Pathans, who no doubt resented having their affairs interfered with. Bhuta seemed upset and the driver relieved, and both reminded me that, "These people, Sahib, they sometimes make much trouble. More better we don't stop any more." And so we turned back towards Quetta. At Kila Abdullah, some tribesmen shouted as they recognized us, and the driver pushed the accelerator to the floorboards instinctively, then he grinned sheepishly. The camels were still going round and round and the wind still blew sand and dust into the stream of water from the well of the Persian Wheels. Two of the men were still sitting on the long rock, and a little farther along, the same shepherd appeared with his fat-tailed sheep. It seemed to us that this ninety miles of road had shown us an important part of Pakistan, but at the same time, a place without water, harsh and sterile. Quetta city seemed very large and modern, by comparison, though it smelled of coal smoke and spices.



Chapter 19

BECAUSE A PESTILENTIAL RODENT preferred to eat the roots of seedling trees, rather than the thorn shrubs of the deserts, we went to Nushki, and the deserts beyond, on the road to Kila Safed in Iran.

When Major Kenneth Saker, Revenue Commissioner of Baluchistan, returned my telephone call, it was not long before the conversation turned to mice. Saker spoke of a rat that was destroying young trees, plants and vegetables in the Nushki area beyond the mountains. The British government had sent out some large Flit-guns loaded with cyanide gas, which they said would kill the rodents at once if it were pumped into their underground burrows. However, the rats apparently liked the flavor and seemed to be flourishing. Last reports indicated they were becoming bolder and more numerous, and several people had been badly bitten. So far, none of the creatures had been caught or identified. As I became more and more interested, Saker suggested that we stop at Nushki for a night or two, and try to see for ourselves what type of rodent they really were. He would be happy to send one of his men along with us. He would also telephone the political agent at Nushki, so that accommodations could be arranged for us at the military resthouse.

Shortly before seven the next morning, while the frosty mists came to the door of our room and tried to come in to the warmth, Saleh Mohammed Khan presented himself,

with a note of introduction from Saker, a basket of fruit and vegetables, and a large bedroll. A slender man with a virile black mustache, he wore a gray Persian lamb cap and western clothes under a new topcoat. His English was excellent, and he seemed very glad to be going along with us. His brother, he said, was assistant to the political agent of the Nushki-Chagai district of more than eighteen thousand five hundred square miles, where approximately thirty-five thousand Baluchis, Pathans and Brahuis lived in scattered villages, and where water was more precious than gold. He added that the rats were beginning to burrow holes in the banks of irrigation ditches, letting water seep through to the sands. Then he asked if we had brought any food, and in the same breath said that it did not matter anyway, for he had brought more than enough, and we could get more at his brother's house if necessary.

Peggy remarked to Saleh Mohammed that he buttoned his coat to the left, as a woman does. Saleh smiled and replied, "Muslims button coats and vests to the left – Hindus button theirs to the right." Then Bhuta loaded our gear into the car and waved a wistful good-by as we started off, following the road that led through wide plateaus, until we came to a large sign which read: London 5886 Mills; Kila Safed 391 ditto; Nushki 82 ditto. Here, a guard was stationed to check the papers of all travelers. A few words from Saleh Mohammed satisfied the guard, and we went on, past several curving lines of Karez wells, until the high rocky mountains drew in closer to the road and we stopped to examine some diggings at a place where no one now lived, but it bore a name, Damb Saadat. At a small mound, archaeologists had found evidence of a civilization four thousand years old, and what is believed to be the oldest alphabet in the world, incised on the base and neck of beautiful pottery – pottery that was ancient seven hundred years before the days of Nefertiti. As we

walked over the mound looking at earthen ovens identical with those in use by living people a mile down the road, several camel caravans appeared. Each camel was burdened with a gray-green shrub — ephedra, source of medicinal ephedrine that was manufactured at a plant in Quetta. Then we returned to the car and the mountains moved in closer still to the road as it wound and curved along dry stony valleys. Tier upon tier, streaked in black, red or yellow, the jagged cliffs were etched against the sky, eroded and crumbled like a gigantic illustration in a book on geology.

Trailing a rising cloud of white dust as we went along, we noticed a slight rise in temperature. Saleh Mohammed talked about the country and its people, of the nomadic Brahuīs, who, with the Baluchis, make up the greater portion of the desert tribes, and claim Arab descent in spite of their Dravidian language. Primarily breeders of camels, they are constantly traveling, and the poorer Brahuīs may be recognized by their black tents, pitched in the gravel of dry torrent beds, or in the valleys between low hills or sand dunes. They always wear sandals, generally with a single strap of camel hide. It is not unusual for a Brahui camel herder traveling in the thorn-desert country to repair worn-out sandals with a strip of hide cut from a living camel.

Saleh Mohammed talked well. He had degrees from three universities and was still studying to improve his position with the government. At no time did he chatter unnecessarily, nor force us to listen to the Pakistani versus Indian propaganda that becomes tiring after a while.

By noon we had left the mountains behind us and were traveling on a flat, narrow, gravel road leading towards the Irania border. Early in the afternoon, several low, rounded hills of sand appeared, then a few palm trees. Along the side of the road, a narrow ditch brought water from the last of the Karez wells, thirty or more miles away, and when we reached

Nushki village outskirts, we saw that the water went first to an old flour mill before going on to irrigate the small patches of cultivated ground by the village square. The aged master of the flour mill showed us the dark, sweet-smelling interior of his mill, where a great worn stone was turned by the falling water to crush wheat and barley. Then we went on through the village to a rise of ground where the political agent, Abdullah Khan, resided and held office. He met us on the road near the small hill, where we had a panoramic view of Nushki, a square village oasis with a square, high-walled fortress and watchtowers. Abdullah Khan greeted us courteously, his rather small eyes fixed on Peggy, and suggested to Saleh Mohammed that we would be comfortable for the night in the barbed-wire enclosure of the resthouse outside the village. Then he continued his afternoon stroll, walking-stick swinging and baggy trousers flapping at the knees.

The dust and sand of the journey had parched our insides as well as our throats. Saleh Mohammed told the driver to turn back, and a few minutes later we turned into a high mud-walled alley where there were no windows at all but one large door of corrugated iron. When the door was opened at a shout from Saleh Mohammed, we drove into a sheltered courtyard and were so astonished that we sat spellbound for several moments. On a bright green lawn of grass, two desert gazelles played with each other and occasionally bounced and butted at a bearded servant working near a wall. The door to a large room was open, and sunlight streamed through onto a beautiful Persian rug covering the floor. It was so large that much of it was rolled up at one end, and would have covered the floor of a room almost twice as large. We could see a hand-carved table and comfortable looking arm chairs, and the man who came toward us with his shirtails hanging out in typical tribal costume, bade us welcome to his house and all that was his. Saleh Mohammed introduced his brother,

a robust edition of himself, and a little while later we sat at a table near the grass and drank as much tea as we could hold. From a nearby kitchen building, a servant brought bowls of *pullao*, a fragrant rice dish prepared with almonds and raisins, a delicious curry of lamb, liberally spiked with chili, and a mound of flat, thin, rubbery *chapatties* made of *atta* flour, the native bread common everywhere on the Indian subcontinent.

Since her arrival in Pakistan, Peggy had not yet found herself in circumstances where she must eat native food or go hungry. She had not yet become accustomed to the biting-hot spices or flat chapatties. It was not long before she felt glad that Saleh Mohammed had brought vegetables and eggs, and that in the car were fruit and canned salmon we had bought. As we ate the hot curried meat with our fingers and scooped up rice with folded pieces torn off the chapatties, she coughed once, and I saw the tears in her eyes. She turned to me in despair and whispered, "Please — get me a grapefruit from the car — I'm on fire." Soon afterwards we thanked our host and left the house-behind-the-wall, and drove to the top of some low sand hills where the resthouse stood in a walled enclosure surrounded by barbed wire. Servants took our bedrolls and bags. The vegetables and fruit were taken to the kitchen building, and we were shown to comfortable quarters where the covers on two string beds matched window drapes and chair covers in green. A black-bearded and uniformed soldier brought water in two jugs, and we bathed. Then, as the sun went down, we stood on the veranda and peered through the barbed wire as the sharp crack of a rifle came from nearby sand hills. Just then, Saleh Mohammed entered the compound accompanied by an immaculate Pathan officer of the Azad Frontier Forces. Sun-burned and handsome, the major announced his own name and said he was honored to meet us. If there was anything

he could do to make our visit more pleasant, he would be pleased to arrange it. He explained that he was in charge of the detachment of troops responsible for this Nushki area, and the shooting we had heard was one of his men at target practice. By this time a chill had come with a gusty wind, and we were glad to go inside to the warmth of a small open fire. Dinner was to be at eight-thirty, giving us time to rest and prepare cameras for tomorrow.

The Pakistani people everywhere are as interested in good food as any other race of healthy people, and some of their dishes are delectable experiences. Their characterization of a hearty eater is "One with great guts," a forthright and accurate description of many of their women as well as men. Peggy had no "great guts," however, and she was looking forward to her civilized vegetables and lamb. Saleh Mohammed's basket had been huge and full, and by eight-thirty we were hungry. Then the gong rang and we entered the large dining room of an adjacent building, where the drapes, chair covers, rugs and settees were in blue. By the light of candles — there is no electricity in Nushki — we sat at a great table covered with a fine white cloth, with Saleh Mohammed and the major. In the middle of a conversation, Peggy stopped talking and stared at the dishes brought in by the bearer. The bright-green cabbage and firm, round peas and potatoes were a mound of strongly spiced goo, mashed, crushed and molded into a single, chili-flavored mess. For a moment Peggy hung her head, then the servant returned with the "bread"—the same old chapatties, but larger, thinner and more leathery looking. I felt like a traitor as I ate the stuff and liked it. The shadows from the waving candle flames, and the typically male preoccupation with food, gave Peggy time to recover from her disappointment, but I knew she was terribly hungry as she picked at the unhappy mixture on her plate. Tea and grapefruit for dessert helped a little, but as soon as we could

do it gracefully, we left for our own quarters and opened a can of salmon for her.

After a night of such utter silence that I wakened several times to listen to it, we were ready for breakfast before it was ready for us. As we washed in cold water, we discussed the possibility of cooking eggs so that they no longer resembled eggs. We decided eventually that a Baluchi cook turned loose over a cow-dung fire, with a pound or two of sheep's-tail fat and coarse-ground chili, was capable of anything. With open minds and fearful stomachs, we sat in the Blue Room, as we called it — to remind us of another Blue Room in Washington, where my friend Barnee provides delicious melody to match the cuisine. When the eggs came, they were scrambled, generously garnished with chili, and bathed in axle-grease from a bullock cart. We ate two grapefruits each and drank some strong tea, then went outside, where the major joined us a moment later. We took his picture, with and without his Tommy gun, and he presented us with the head of an ibex he had killed a few days earlier. Then Saleh Mohammed arrived with the car to take us to the village. He explained that, after we had visited the area where the rats were doing most damage, we would meet the three principal chieftains of the district, and later some of the tribesmen would perform a dance that resembled the Khattak Sword Dance.

As we passed by the square, a group of men walked aimlessly about beating *dholak* drums, the double-headed drums used for most folk dances and folk songs. A few children squatted in the sand to watch and listen. Then we stopped and left the car as a number of ragged farmers came to meet us. They reported that the rats had invaded a fresh area near the road where we stood, and during the night had destroyed a young eucalyptus tree and eaten the roots of many vegetables. They showed us fresh mounds of earth at the scene

of the crime — then they stepped back and looked at me, as though to say, “Now it is up to you. What are you going to do about it?”

With a large, heavy-bladed knife, I dug at the base of the ruined tree and few inches down came to a burrow which circled it. All of the young roots were chewed off, and under the mound of freshly moved earth were several pellets of droppings. I believed the rat or rats were still there, somewhere in the burrow, so I dug and followed it for several feet, explaining to Saleh Mohammed that I wanted to catch at least one of the rats and examine it. As he interpreted for the Baluchis, they moved back a few paces and I realized that they were really afraid of whatever was there. Then a breathless messenger arrived to announce the arrival of the chieftains — and would I kindly go to meet them. So I gave my knife to one of the men, and told him to dig as I had done until he reached a spot I indicated, where there might be a Y in the burrow, and at the end of one of the branches, a rat or rats — I hoped. I told him to kill whatever he found, without breaking the skull, and bring it to me. Then we walked across the square to the low buildings where the chieftains waited inside an office. A crowd followed us, and we noted that there was not a girl or woman to be seen. Saleh Mohammed remarked that, in these tribal areas, laws that were ancient before Columbus discovered America were still upheld, and females were not permitted to show themselves to strangers. The drummers were now circling to the rhythm of their drums, and Peggy began to photograph them as I went inside to meet the chieftains.

Seated around a large table were seven men. As I entered, they rose politely and an interpreter introduced them. I listened closely, for protocol among tribal chieftains is as important in the deserts of Baluchistan as it is in Embassy Row in Washington, D. C., and I wanted to make no mistake

or *faux pas* by paying attention to the wrong man. Had I not caught the title, I would have known the right man, however, for Haji Mir Dost Mohammed Khan, Zagger Mengal, of Nushki, had a bearing and manner unmistakably superior, and the most penetrating eyes I have met with in a very long time. His beard was dyed red, neatly kept, and as he spoke to the interpreter in Baluchi, his hands moved gracefully. He bade me welcome to the district and asked if I had a solution to the rat problem. Then he began at once to talk rapidly, turning to look at me now and then, and frequently using the words "Hamerica," Communists, Pakistan, Bharat, and Point Four. The words Communists, "Hamerica" and Point Four were repeated several times, and finally, turning to face me, he mentioned "Hambassador" Bowles . . . Moscow . . . Liaquat Ali Khan . . . Nehru. Then he leaned back and watched me closely as the interpreter spoke. They all watched me closely.

"The haji wishes to tell you that the American resistance to Communist influences and propaganda is encouraging to the Muslim people of Pakistan. However, the haji cannot understand why America has two programs of aid for her friends. One, the large loans or gifts to India, in addition to Point Four assistance; two, the Point Four only, for Pakistan, where there are no Communists, as there are in India. He tells you that the new ambassador, Mr. Bowles, has just arrived in Delhi, yet he returns to America immediately to get millions of dollars for Nehru — who wants to be friends with Moscow. When Liaquat Ali Khan tried to arrange meetings on the Kashmir problem, Nehru sent his sister to Moscow and then refused to meet with our people. The haji wishes to tell you that it is difficult to understand why America continues to give hundreds of millions of dollars to India, a non-friendly nation, and so little to Pakistan."

I believed that I knew the answers, or at least something

of the concern behind the questions. But I could not tell the haji in a way he would understand. I generalized and used lofty phrases — and resented being put in the position where I had to justify something I, myself, felt to be wrong. Here, in this desert area of Baluchistan, this sincere Pakistani chieftain was simply puzzled over my country's behavior toward friends and foes of Communism. To him, good is good and evil is evil, whatever the garb it wears. Many other Pakistanis have been puzzled over the funneling of millions of dollars into India, while at the same time so little, in comparison, reached Pakistan. Eventually, however, some Pakistanis found the answer. That answer was in my mind as I hedged in my replies to this chieftain of Nushki. The Muslims of Pakistan have come to believe, and have stated quite frankly, that their destiny is bound up with the Western world and with America in particular. They are declared anti-Communist. At the same time, many Pakistanis began to realize that their anti-Communist inclinations were not a help but a hindrance in their own struggle as a new nation. They found that the only way to get any aid from America was to have Communists in their midst and to appear to America as "unsafe." They found that America would not aid those who were "safe," but would pour millions into countries like India, which was on the fence, if not actually on the other side. The recent arrests of Pakistani officers, reported to be Communists, is directly connected with this belief, and, incredible as it may seem, I have good reason to believe that in the few startled headlines in our newspapers about the arrests in Karachi, there is a hidden story of sacrifice and devotion that is worthy of America's deepest thought and concern.

When the interpreter had translated my remarks, the haji spoke again: "We here in Baluchistan, and in the rest of Pakistan, are trying to bring better conditions to our people, and to develop the economy as it should be developed. Our

greatest need is water. Water is our lifeblood. To a large extent, unfortunately for us, India controls our water and has threatened to cut it off — indeed, she has already stopped it for a while to show us that it can be done. The headwaters of our water supply are in Kashmir, where Muslims live under intolerable conditions, conditions which Nehru is determined to maintain. If America is to assume leadership in the world, taking the place of the British, why does she not act on the Kashmir deadlock? Is she afraid of India? Or that India will come out in the open, where now she is playing hide-and-seek? Does America believe that India is right and Pakistan wrong in the Kashmir matter? Does your great country feel that the many reports on the Kashmir situation by different officers of the United Nations are not sufficient? Or are the fifteen *lakhs* (one and a half million) of dead people of less importance than the Korean people? If she wishes, America can end the Kashmir deadlock tomorrow, and rightfully claim leadership among nations. But in the meantime, we Pakistanis, needing water for the development of our land, must act unaided, matching your money with our money, digging canals and ditches which may never receive water because India now tells the world that international agreements governing the use of rivers do not apply to the Indus, Sutlej, Chenab and Ravi because they are the business of India and India will not tolerate interference. Does America think she has the right to divert water from the Canadian plants at Niagara? India, favoring Communist China, whom you are fighting, gets money for development and threatens to cut off our water, while holding Kashmir in bond. Pakistan gets small aid from America. We can only plan improvements and hope that the Kashmir business will one day be settled. If Kashmir is taken by India, our water will be cut off and we will be

brought to our knees, which is what Nehru wants. America seems to accept responsibility as the leading nation and makes speeches about it. Why does she not act also?"

I replied that America, as one member of the United Nations, could not assume the responsibility of settling the Kashmir dispute without weakening the effectiveness of the United Nations and ourselves everywhere. I pointed out that America was carrying most of the burden of the UN Military Observers in Kashmir, in such a manner that it was considered a major factor in preventing further fighting and bloodshed. In addition, Pakistan was receiving direct aid in the form of the Technical Co-operation Administration under the Point Four Program. I added that I thought the critics would do well to remember that, as a leading nation, America's responsibility was to all the world and not to one nation alone. Furthermore, we were aiding backward nations voluntarily, alone, and the American people, who paid the taxes which provided aid to Pakistan and many other nations, felt that the aid should be received graciously. At this, the haji stared at me for a moment, then he smiled, turned to the other chieftains, and the meeting became a general discussion. I asked about the people, the village and their plans for developing the natural resources, and we were listening to the haji's hopes for development of oil in the area when Peggy came in. The haji broke off in mid-sentence, and never fully regained his austere manner again. Rising to his feet, he greeted her with profound dignity mixed with astonishment at her appearance. He had apparently never seen hair so naturally red, nor a well-filled slack suit on a woman. Nor had he ever been subjected to Irish-American charm and humor that quickly turned the meeting into an uproar. The interpreter, a serious and rather sour-tempered character, tried to get the meeting back onto a dignified footing, but it

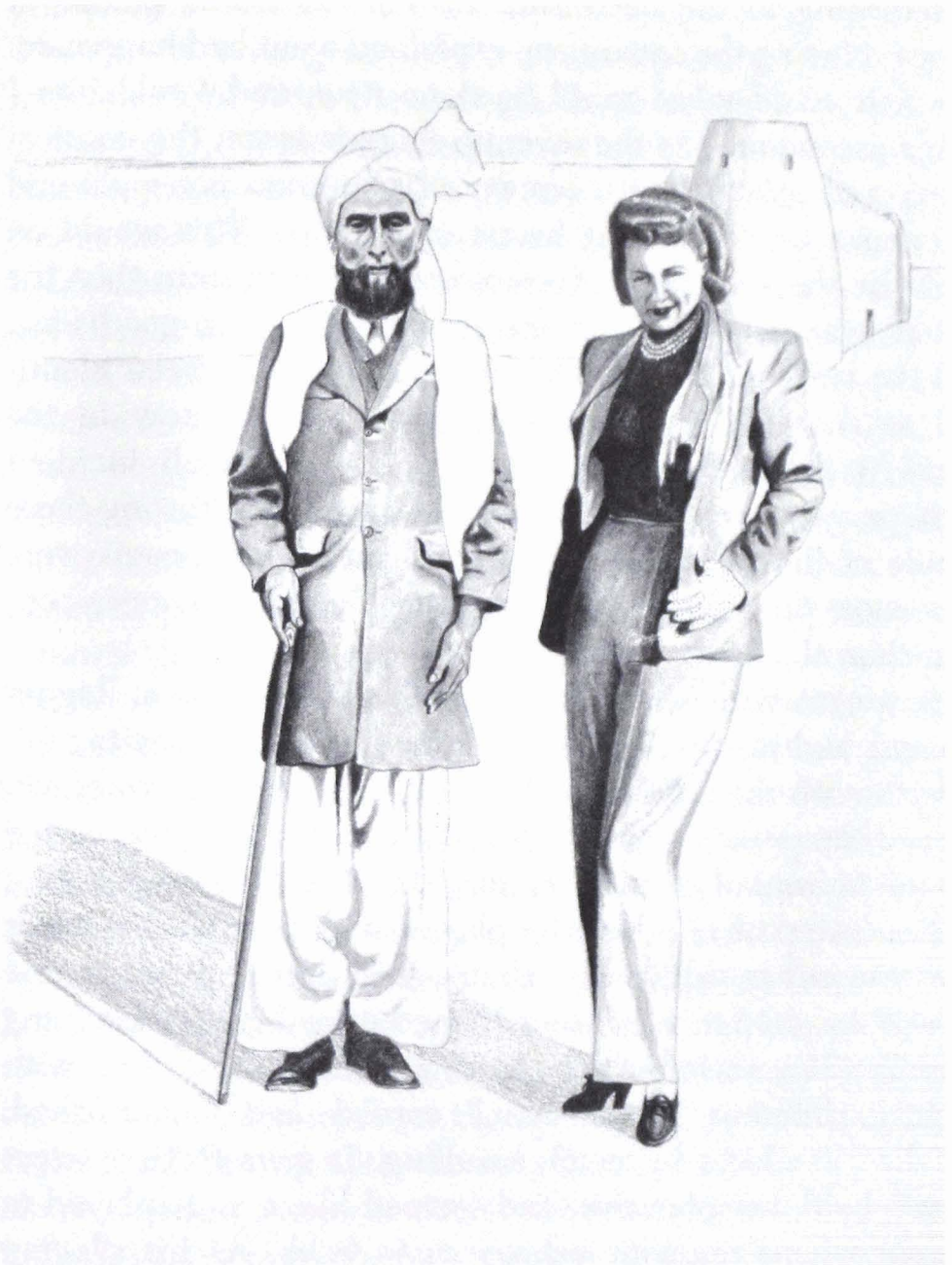
was hopeless. The haji was bemused, and when Peggy asked if she might take his picture, he rose at once and ordered everyone outside.

As we left the office, Peggy said, "What were you talking about when I came in? You looked upset."

I replied, "The chiefs had me cornered. Your entry saved me at the bell."

She said, "That's what I thought."

Out in the sunshine, a crowd of men and boys were arriving from the rat-hunting area. One of the men carried his thick woolen coat rolled up in a bundle, and inside it, he said, were two biting rats. Muffled squeals of rage came through the thick folds. The farmer and his followers were excited and elated. He had caught the rats at the end of a branch in the burrow, as I had hoped he would, but he had not killed them because he was afraid of damaging their heads. Then he held out the bundle to me. As I reached gingerly inside the folds and finally had a grip on the heart of each wriggling rat, the spectators strained forward, and I heard Peggy clicking away with the camera, catching the tense faces. I have killed several hundred mice and other animals by crushing the heart suddenly, but to these people of the deserts the whole procedure was strange and exciting. These vicious rats were taking their food and ruining the young trees planted to make shade for their village paths. As I brought the two creatures from the folds of the coat, their chisel-like teeth bared in a last spasm, I told the farmers, through Saleh Mohammed, that I would skin the rats, have them identified, and send word to the village as to how they might be eliminated or at least controlled. Then I put the two specimens in my pocket. The farmers talked with Saleh Mohammed and he said, "These men, they say they are not afraid of the rats now. They thank you and hope you will stay to see their dance."



Haji Mir Dost Mohammed Khan and Peggy

Returning to the chieftains, who sat in chairs placed in the sand facing the square, we explained what had happened. The haji asked what could be done now, and I told him I would recommend to the revenue commissioner, the political agent, and others that a bounty of one anna per male and two annas per female rat be set up at once. This would no doubt be cheaper, more effective and less dangerous than the use of cyanide gas. Everyone thought it was a good idea, and the incident closed. The two animals have been identified as short-tailed bandicoots, and they are now in the National Museum in Washington, D.C. A small incident perhaps, yet somehow it seemed significant, for to these people of the Baluchistan desert areas the bandicoots were a menace, threatening their existence, and of far more concern than the atom bomb.

As we sat with Haji Mir Dost Mohammed Khan, Zagger Mengal, and his friends, the drummers were still beating out a rhythm on their dholaks. A thin, black-bearded tribesman opened the performance by playing a *sarinda*. Seated on the ground in front of us, with the sarinda upright, its base resting on the instep of one foot, he played with a crude horsehair bow. On either side of our chairs, men and boys sat on the ground or stood in a crescent-shaped crowd, silent, listening intently. The sarinda resembled a violin in size, but with slightly different shape, hand carved and unvarnished, polished in places by much handling. It gave forth a sweet sound, bold, not plaintive, and seemed like a viola played in a cave where resonant echoes came back. As his playing stopped, a motley group of fourteen tribesmen formed a half-circle around the drummers and two buglers. The rhythm of the drums had changed to a very slow beat, something like a slow conga, and the line of tribesmen began to pirouette gracefully, their arms raised high, each man moving in slow motion. Their feet, some bare, some in sandals, moved to-

gether in a hesitant step as the line circled the drummers. Then a voice rang out like a priest intoning prayer, and a murmur came from the dancers. Imperceptibly, the rhythm increased in tempo and the pirouetting men, arms poised like skaters, swung in unison, with their baggy trousers flapping round their knees. Their feet swung an inch above the sand. Each man seemed to be interpreting his own happy feelings, yet all moved together, in perfect step, smoothly as with long practice. We noticed one graceful husky in a black turban, black waistcoat over a white shirt that reached to his knees, black baggy trousers, and with a flowered pink scarf folded and carelessly thrown over one shoulder. He moved like a ballet dancer, and the pink scarf never skidded from its unfastened position throughout the dance. Filming them with a movie camera, as they circled in ever quickening steps, I felt the insistence of the drumbeats and the gradually increasing excitement that had spread to the spectators grouped about our chairs. A dancer kicked off his sandals without losing step, and another cast off his coat. The musicians circled, with their feet keeping time, pivoting inside the line of dancers, and now and then they shouted as the drums beat faster and faster. Sand flew from the skipping feet, and the bodies of the dancers swayed forward and backward. By this time, their steps were strides and the excitement was heightened by loud shouts from the spectators. A staccato, "Hah! Hah! Hah!" came with the drumbeats, and some began to chant. The last complete circles the dancers made were amazingly fast, yet none made a misstep. With a final cheer and Hah, Hah, Hah, the line broke, the sand settled, and Peggy and I looked at each other, worn out by the excitement that had been deliberately built up by these graceful, wild-looking tribesmen. It had lasted half an hour.

Late that afternoon, driving behind a new Jeepster carrying the three chieftains, we traveled across the desert areas

near great sand dunes that were mountainous in size. At small villages, where a tribesman went ahead to tell all women to get out of sight, we stepped carefully through the warm sand trying to avoid the sharp, hooked thorns which were like porcupine quills, and we looked for signs of the legless lizards and venomous snakes that were common in the area. The *Reg-Mar* and the *Reg-Mai*, as they are called – one harmless and the other a killer – were probably sheltering under the sand waiting for the winter to end. None were seen, and we returned to Nushki before the long shadows came.

At the house-behind-the-wall, Saleh Mohammed's brother invited us to eat and rest before starting back to Quetta. We played with the gazelles while food was being prepared, and then sat in arm chairs in the room where the exquisite rug covered the floor. I ate curry and spices while Peggy, prepared in advance, ate the last can of salmon and some fruit. Then we bade good-by to Nushki, where a whole village of people called backward and illiterate had entertained us with grace and charm, sincere friendliness and perfect hospitality. At the same time, they had frankly told us that America encouraged them but puzzled them, and they counted on our country to preserve the rest of the world.

The night closed down like a shutter soon after we left Nushki. Stars hung close to the road until we reached the black mountains. Saleh Mohammed talked freely about the people and some of their peculiar customs, and seemed to possess an inexhaustible fund of information.

“The Marri-Bugti people, sir. They are Pathans too. In the tribal regions of Lorelei and Sibi where they live there is scarcely any water. So they do not use it to wash themselves or their clothes.” He smiled at us. “Although their proper name is Phullen Marri, which means ‘Pure as Flowers.’”

“Long ago this country was called Aleppa. When the invader Rind captured a large number of women in a battle,

he had some trouble with the guards of the captives. But the Marris, when it was their turn to guard the women, refrained from molesting them – in any way – and in the morning the women captives praised them and gave them the name Phullen Marri, by which they are now known. Perhaps, sir, that is why they are so fierce today about the personal laws. They buy and sell wives, but any girl-child or woman caught talking with a man, not the husband, brother or father, is killed quickly. Under the law of Shiah Kari, only a blood relation is allowed to kill in circumstances like that. Then the fine is a small one.”

He went on to describe tribal justice and the penalties for crime.

“Tribal justice includes trial by ordeal, and even today the ‘Four Ordeals’ are resorted to when official justice fails, or seems to the elders to be inefficient. First, sir, is the Ordeal by Oath – in which the accused must hold the *Koran* and declare his innocence. This is better if done in a mosque. Second, there is Ordeal by Water. The accused must remain completely submerged in a pool, holding a heavy pole, while two men walk sixty paces, sir. They walk slowly or fast, according to their own inclinations. The third is Ordeal by Fire, in which a six-foot long trench is paved with seven hot stones covered with seven Khareg leaves. The accused, sir, must walk over the stones and leaves barefooted. If he is unblistered, he is innocent. The fourth and last Ordeal, by Plowshares, is very hard, sir. The plowshares, while still red hot are placed on the hands of the accused, which are covered with leaves of the Khareg. After two minutes the hands are examined, and if he is unblistered, the man is innocent. There are many other customs like that. The people are very superstitious. To sneeze in the evening is a particularly bad omen, sir. A death is sure to follow at once. For these people back there in Nushki, the only cure for the ‘evil eye’ is to take dust

from under the feet of the one with the evil eye and throw it onto the fire. My people just spit. The Baluchis use the milk of camels, sheep, goats and cows, but they will not touch the milk of a mare. They have no military traditions at all, sir. Not any at all. But they are very pleased with sport and gamble a lot. They like marbles, quoits, cock and ram fighting, but their chief delights are dancing, wrestling, weight-lifting, and particularly raw-egg fights. This is very popular, sir."

By this time we were alarmed that we would reach Quetta before Saleh Mohammed ran out of wind, and begged him to tell us more.

"Well, mem-sahib. There is much more. Food that is licked by a cat is awfully defiled. Years ago, nothing could be done about it; the food was beyond redeeming. Now it can be cleaned by boiling for some time."

Within a mile from this point, Saleh Mohammed began to nod, and finally his head lolled to one side and he slept. Peggy said, "He certainly is familiar with the habits and customs of these poor people. Are there many other stories like that?" and I told her of the custom of circumcision for women.

"Son of an uncircumcised woman!" is an epithet to invite slaughter. In Baluchistan and some other parts of the sub-continent, the reference is to an actual operation—a ritual performed on the young. It has been suggested by some historians that the ritual originated in the primitive tabus concerning virginity, itself a dread mystery a few centuries or less ago. Some believe it to be the origin of the feudal *droit du seigneur* custom, or the right of a ruler to the first night of a bride. In parts of Baluchistan, when a girl is between four and seven years old, she is injured in a minor operation. Immediately prior to her marriage, she is again operated upon in such a way that her husband will have no

doubt concerning her virginity. During this second operation, the girl grips a rope of wool—the same rope that she pulls upon later in child bearing—to aid in bearing the pain. She must not make any sound, and a group of women relatives are there to shout and drown out any screams.

“Why do so many of the men with beards dye them red with henna? Is it a religious custom?”

“Not altogether. It is popular among Muslims more than other people, I think. It is sometimes said that Muslim men dye their hair and beards red after making a pilgrimage to Mecca. That is not strictly true. When they go to Mecca, they shave off all hair. The henna is used as a cosmetic, to make them more attractive, distinguished, or just to please themselves. Just as a woman uses lipstick and rouge, many Muslim men dye their hair and beards with henna. I think they look quite handsome. What do you think?”

“Beards look best on Muslims and Frenchmen.”

Quetta seemed terribly cold to us next day. It was four days before Christmas. After visiting with Major Saker and his attractive wife, we rode in a tonga to the railroad station with Bhuta, and gave him money for our return reservations to Karachi. While we waited for him, we watched the passers-by, and they watched us. It was an interesting occupation. Bhuta returned with word that it was difficult to get a coupé to ourselves, what should he do? I advised him to tell the ticket office walla that I would not permit strange people to look upon my mem-sahib while traveling, and since we had reservations, it was up to the railroad officials to arrange it. He returned to the negotiations and we became interested in a man who approached the steps of the station building. He weaved on his feet slightly, as though ill. He was dirty and poor, and his bloodshot eyes were fixed upon Peggy, as though he could not believe what he saw. It was his costume which attracted our attention, and the fact that he was ill.

On his head he wore a loosely tied turban, gray with dirt and with the ends straggling down. His sun-burned chest was bare, and the gray rags he wore hung in tatters, under a thick and shapeless blanket of cream-colored goats-wool felt. It hung from his shoulders in wide, straight lines, and almost reached his feet, shod in camel-hide sandals. The blanket was open at the front, and as he reached the steps, his eyes on Peggy, he stumbled and nearly fell. We photographed him and gave him a little money, and learned that he suffered from malaria. As Bhuta returned and we left him, he smiled a wan smile and staggered up the steps.

Early next morning, Bhuta took our baggage some time in advance, and when we reached the station, he met us. Excited, angry and worried, Bhuta explained that an officer of the military had moved into our reserved compartment and refused to leave. When we reached the carriage, I noted that our name in chalk on the side of the door had been erased. The officer stood at the door and talked rapidly in good English, stating that it was his carriage and the mistake was on the part of the railroad authorities. I would have been less surprised at this sort of thing in India, but here in Pakistan it made me angry. The unfortunate railroad officials went into conference, then asked me if I would accept a compartment with other people. I explained that the officer, whose name I forthwith requested to be written down, was preempting a carriage officially reserved in my name, and if it were not made available immediately, I would telephone the agent to the governor general, and the commanding officer, in Quetta. After a lot of loud noise, from that compartment for two came the most amazing collection of people, baggage, children's toys, baskets of food, water *chattees* and other paraphernalia. Two men, three women, four children and all of that baggage had been stowed away in a space for two people and their baggage. We watched in astonishment as



Baluchi nomad — Quetta

it was handed through the door, and through the windows, while the station master blew his whistle frantically to get the train, already late, started on its way. Bhuta perspired and hovered about, white with anger still. But eventually it was clear, and he traveled with us to the next stop, so that he could clean the compartment of all signs left by the would-be interlopers.



Chapter 20

AT THE Metropole Hotel in Karachi, the strike was ended and meals were being served. Peggy's Indian visa waited for her, and we made plans to leave for Delhi in a few days. In the meantime, we had several things to do. The first night after our return from Baluchistan, in the lobby of the hotel we met the man who had sat next to me on the flight from London to Delhi months earlier. We talked for some time with Mr. Feldberg and his wife, who was associated with Radio Pakistan, in its new and modern building on Bunder Road. As a result of this accidental meeting, we were invited to visit the studios of Radio PAK, as it is known, to record for ourselves, and to hear played, some interesting native music. By this time, Peggy had studied and become familiar with the music of the subcontinent, and with the various and complicated instruments played. When we reached the studios, an orchestra was rehearsing for a broadcast under the direction of a tall Pathan named Rafique. Seated on rugs, the musicians were in a circle, and they played music learned without notation. In another studio, we observed a composer composing without notation; the studio musician learning the composition without notation and finally broadcasting a number perfected in one rehearsal – from the origination of the melody to the perfected performance, all in one sitting.

We returned to Rafique's studio and recorded four *ragas* on a tape recorder. Then, so that we would film them with

the movie camera, the members of the orchestra put on their shoes and we went outside to the grass lawns beneath big trees. Everyone was extremely kind and most helpful. As I watched them and listened as they talked with Peggy, I could see they were speaking a common language, the language of music, which unites all peoples. The Pathan director and Peggy talked of techniques and nuances, *srutis* and the classics, in a language only experts use. Peggy knew no Pashto or Urdu, the Pathan's English was limited, but they understood each other clearly. When words failed, both of them used their hands — the Pathan with sweeping gesture or a delicately poised finger, Peggy with the movement of a pianist interpreting line and flow of a theme. Some of the musicians joined in the discussion and demonstrated with their instruments, others followed suit, and the noise and talking became faster and faster. Until someone remembered it was time for a broadcast and, with reluctance on both sides, the discussion ended. I suddenly realized I had been witness to a Pakistani jam session.

We had been surprised to find such a modern building. But it was an amazing contrast to find music which had been handed down for thousands of years without notation being performed in such beautifully appointed studios, with the most modern American facilities. We felt greatly indebted to Mrs. Feldberg for the insight into techniques and methods employed in native broadcasting.

When we returned to the hotel, a message had been delivered from the Indian high commissioner's office. Peggy was thereby notified that her visa for entry into India had been canceled: "Please to present your passport for official cancellation." There was no explanation of any kind, just the curt announcement. For a few moments, we could not believe it. Then we drove to the American Embassy and requested that the matter be clarified and corrected, if pos-

sible. I visited the Indian offices, where I was told the cancellation instructions had come from Delhi, and no one knew why. "If you care to write a letter to Delhi, perhaps in a week or two . . ." Several days later, the American Embassy reported that "there has been a mistake. The matter has been straightened out," and Peggy's visa would be ready by the time she reached the high commissioner's office. But when we reached there, the situation had changed again. "There has been another mistake. We cannot issue your visa until we hear whether or not our office in America issued a visa for you." At this, I lost my temper, and informed the officials that we were no longer interested in going to India. I demanded an accounting of the money Peggy had paid, both in the U. S. A. and in Karachi, and its return to her, in dollars, not foreign currency. I also advised them to cancel my own visa and refund my money. This seemed to upset everyone there. That we no longer cared to go to India was unexpected. They were prepared for argument, and expected it, but not this. The money presented a problem too. Somebody would have to write letters of explanation. When a messenger was sent to the office of the assistant high commissioner we rose to leave. When we first entered the place and asked for the assistant high commissioner, we were told he had gone to India. Now they sent a messenger to his office asking him what to do about us. As we left the door, a group of Hindus stood talking on the lawn nearby. One of them called my name in a loud voice, and I turned to see Rao Raja Rajwade, a friend from Gwalior. He was the recently appointed chief of the Indian high commissioner's office. When introductions and greetings were over, Rajawde asked what we were doing. Could he help? As we stood there trying to explain something we did not understand, the second assistant to the high commissioner came to us and handed Peggy her passport and India visa, the ink on the signature still wet.

As we drove back to the hotel, after arranging to have dinner with Rao Raja Rajwade that evening, Peggy asked, "What is going on? Why did they do it? What have I done that they should behave like that?"

Next day we visited Colonel and Mrs. Conrad of the U.S. air attaché's office, and when "Bobbie" Conrad suggested we film a place called Dhobi Ditch, we took her along with us as guide. On the outskirts of Karachi, Dhobi Ditch is a small body of water where more than a few hundred *dhobis*, or washermen, launder much of Karachi's washing. To stand and watch such wholesale destruction of buttons and hems is an awesome sight, as clothing is wrung into ropes and bashed against rocks in a frenzy. A few yards beyond the row upon row of unmerciful dhobis, women lay out the linen to dry. They put it on the bare ground, in places protected by hedges of metal scraps from a stamping factory, so that wandering bands of ravenous goats cannot eat it. A little farther along, where the banks by the water are black, stinking mud, buffaloes wallow, trucks, busses and cycles are washed off, a few men stand in the ooze panning for gold and vultures sit in a row, watching. As I filmed the gold panning and truck washing, a herd of water buffaloes left the mud and brushed past me, covered with high-smelling ooze. I began to photograph them, but my nose revolted and I hurried back to the car and we left there quickly.

Returning to the city, Bobbie Conrad asked if we had seen any of the large refugee camps, and when she told us that one of the largest was right outside her living room window, we thought it would be a good idea to see it. A little later, we stood at her windows and gazed out at a sight to provoke pity and wonder. Pity for the hundreds of thousands of homeless and destitute forced to live under such conditions; wonder at the magnitude of the job being handled by young Pakistan, when she is so involved in a struggle for survival.

More than eight million Muslim refugees, in destitute condition, crossed into Pakistan from India following partition. Thousands are still entering the country each month. The sudden and unprecedented exodus from India created terrific problems of transportation, shelter, food, public hygiene, medical relief and rehabilitation, for all the peoples of Pakistan. There was no cessation in the living stream of unhappy people for almost a year, and the government was unable to devote any time to the problem of rehabilitation. By the first week of March 1948, the whole of the Punjab State had become a refugee camp, where six hundred thousand homeless were sheltered, and still others poured in. Similar huge camps spread over the country, and by the end of March 1948, over six million refugees from India occupied vast areas, which began to create serious health problems. Any one of the epidemic diseases common to the subcontinent, occurring at that time, might well have wiped out a nation.

A great deal of credit is due to the women of Pakistan. Women in strictest purdah, and closest seclusion, banded together and accepted the challenge to custom, joining unveiled women in an effort to aid the swarm of frightened, ill-clad people who were tired out from the long flight without sustenance.

More than 75 per cent of the incoming refugees were the rural type, and their rehabilitation was most pressing. Since only four or five million had left Pakistan for India, mainly artisans and so-called white collar workers, the vacated land was small, and it was cut up into very small areas. But the chief difficulty was in the lack of housing facilities. Almost all the important towns of Pakistan were already crowded, yet the incoming refugees seemed to focus their attention on the towns and cities, particularly Karachi. They thought they would find employment there. The city was never designed to accommodate so many people, and the entire administra-

tive machinery for sanitation, public health and water supply was completely put out of gear. At first, many were accommodated in houses, and public buildings such as schools and hospitals. Then they spread out into vacant areas and erected crude shelters. Finally, they occupied the sidewalks and streets — there was nowhere else for them to go. The influx from India continued, as Muslims who remained there found they were being victimized by new laws and acts designed to take over their property and assets under a category of “Intending Evacuees.” It seemed that India would cause another mass migration before the first had been brought under control, and Pakistan would be unable to absorb an additional influx without serious danger to her entire economic structure. Pakistanis now claim it was a miracle they survived.

As we stood looking through the window at the rows of gunny-sack houses, bamboo frames, mud hovels and packing-case homes, we could see that they came to the edge of the black-topped road. Stretching for twelve miles, beyond the Tomb of Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Father of Pakistan, *Quaid-i-Azam* (The Great Leader), this refugee camp was a mile wide. In front of a gunny-sack wall, one man worked making chairs and stools by hand, and a row of chairs for sale lined the side of his “house.” Just then the wind veered into our direction, and from the center of the camp came an indescribable odor. We quickly closed the windows. It had been a sobering experience. At the time, I could only think to myself, what a ghastly thing it would have been had these people been Hindus, permitting cows and Brahman bulls to wander at will through such a camp.

That afternoon, Bhuta and I took Peggy on a tour of a section of the Karachi Bazaar, to the Street of the Silver-smiths. At a corner shop about six feet wide, where a fat Muslim sat crouched over his hookah, we bought for her a

necklace of beaten silver and bells, with matching bracelets. The parts cut from the bracelets to make a proper fit were made into earrings while we waited, and the whole thing afforded Bhuta a great deal of pleasure, for he was a little down in the mouth at our impending departure for India, and this shopping expedition gave him a last chance to do things for the mem-sahib.

Before going to the Feldbergs for dinner that night, we went to a cocktail party where we met a number of friends. Most of the guests were interested in aviation in one form or another, and the party included a number of Pakistanis and their wives, none of whom drank alcohol. Peggy met two of these exceedingly attractive ladies, and talked with them for some time. When the conversation turned to a forthcoming wedding—the *Nikab*, or religious wedding rites, of the daughter of Khwaja Said Hasan, of the Ministry of Economic Affairs in Karachi, and a young man who was deputy director of Civil Aviation, Peggy became interested in the preparations that were being made. One of the ladies, Begum Hayat, whose husband was to be best man, asked her if she would like to be present, and perhaps photograph what went on. It was an exceedingly kind invitation and one rarely extended to Westerners. It would afford a wonderful opportunity to note the progress of modern ideas as compared with the more backward customs of the tribal areas. Peggy accepted readily, and it was arranged that invitations would be received in the next twenty-four hours. On our way to the Feldbergs for dinner, we felt very pleased that the delay in our departure caused by the Indian high commissioner's office made it possible for us to be present at the *Nikab*. We were most grateful to Begum Hayat, and to Begum Raza, whom we were to meet many times in the future, in Washington, D. C., where her husband, Brigadier Raza, was military attaché for the Pakistani government.



Chapter 21

THOUGH THEY LIVE in the same land, and since the eleventh century lived more or less side by side in the old India before partition, the women of Pakistan have little in common with the women of India. As the conflict of cultures, traditions and attitudes toward life are a part of the violent contrasts and painful tensions common throughout the subcontinent, so are the women of both countries different.

The Hindu woman, with her cold exterior and love of romantic tales and mythology, seems to burn with an inner fire that is not so much suppressed as it is waiting to explode. The Muslim woman, secluded and mysterious, is no less a female. She also has a few advantages. Her marriage is a contract and divorce is permissible for a woman as for a man — though the man must divorce the woman first. A woman can remarry freely, and she has rights to property separate from her husband, with a share in inheritance.

The seclusion of Muslim women, so mysterious to Westerners, whether emanating from man's own frailty or that which he sees in women or not, has resulted in failure to educate the Muslim woman. This, in turn, means that the Muslim woman has been unable to fully enjoy her many rights under Muslim law, because she does not know they exist. It seems the Muslim male has successfully maintained his superiority for a very considerable period, or else the Muslim woman has failed to take advantage of her natural

assets. In 1891, Ameer Ali, in *The Spirit of Islam*, wrote of women and the Prophet's teachings: "The teacher who in an age when no country, no system, no community gave any right to woman, maiden or married, mother or wife, who in a country where the birth of a daughter was considered a calamity, secured to the sex rights which are only unwillingly and under pressure being conceded to them by civilized nations in the nineteenth century, deserves the gratitude of humanity."

Purdah means ill-health, ignorance and subordination, while education means revolt against seclusion, and particularly against the covering shroud through which so many Muslim women must peer at the world around them. Abolition of purdah will quickly put an end to much of the tuberculosis which is rampant in many areas. The Prophet simply tells women to be modest and decent, but he also instructs Muslim men to consult them in matters of importance. The Prophet's wife, Ayesha, led troops in battle, mounted on a camel, and his daughter took part in political elections of the caliphs.

Among the Pathan tribes of the North-West Frontier, where the tall, hawk-faced tribesmen are known for their handsome features, the women are astoundingly attractive, and only slightly less ferocious.

In the past, there have been areas in what is now Pakistan where the women had peculiar customs, and men supported them, not always to their own betterment. Kipling's reference to the women of Afghanistan's plains, where British wounded blew out their own brains, was good advice. Today, many unusual customs concerning women still survive. They are primarily concerned with sex, adultery, betrothal, marriage and murder, and do not stem from religion. Some women never speak to anyone at all except their own immediate family; unmarried girls are never unattended, even in their

own homes. In some cases, a woman does not eat with males of the family, nor does she call her husband by name, but addresses him as the father of his children. Women in labor are compelled to assist birth by pulling on a rope of wool suspended from the ceiling. Black clothing is never worn by some women; with others, married women do not plait their hair but unmarried girls do. In one area, only a virgin can cure smallpox. Tribal law and tribal justice frequently override official law and justice in some places, and both systems appear to be mainly concerned with cases to do with betrothal, bride-price, widow marriage, adultery and rape, and murder. There is no age limit for betrothal, which rests with the parents of the girl, but usually the ceremony is conducted when the girl is seven or eight years of age. Until recently, bride-price in tribal districts was about sixteen hundred dollars for a virgin and up to three hundred dollars for a widow. In cases of adultery and rape, the killing of an offender at the scene of the crime once brought no punishment. Now there is a fine. If a member of a chieftain's family is caught being indiscreet, he is fined, and in one area, a guilty man, if not killed on the spot, must pay a fine of one maiden, all his arms and ammunition, as well as cash. If a wife is killed for a similar indiscretion, compensation to the husband will be one maiden, one gun, one knife or sword; for abduction, compensation will be eight hundred dollars, two maidens, two guns and two knives. According to tribal law, suspicion on the part of the husband is sufficient to bring death to the wife. But the penalties prescribed by the Shariat are not so severe. The adulterer is to be flogged—and this cannot be done unless there are four witnesses to the actual crime. To divorce a wife by thrice repeating the word *Talak* was, and is, very seldom resorted to.

Marriage for the Muslim is a contract said to be aimed at the procreation and legalization of children. Every Muslim

who has reached the age of puberty may enter into a marriage contract, and though the male may have as many as four wives, it is not legal for a woman to have more than one husband at a time. A man may marry into one or two other races, but not with an idol worshiper. A Muslim woman may marry only a Muslim. If she does marry a Kitabi, a Jew or a Christian, the marriage is acknowledged but considered most unethical, and she should persuade her husband to make his business in another country. The Muslim male must maintain his wife, and if he fails in this, she may sue him for maintenance. The dower is paid to the wife at the time of the signing of the contract of marriage. The wife may refuse to live with her husband, literally, until the full dower is paid. The contract of marriage can be terminated by the husband at any time, without the wife having recourse to a court of law; it may be ended by mutual consent and without recourse to courts of law; or it may be dissolved by court action at the suit of either husband or wife. The wife may sue and obtain a divorce on grounds that her husband has unjustly accused her of infidelity, or if he is impotent.

It is perhaps symbolic that the Urdu language came into prominence through the back door of the Mogul courts—the harem. The Mogul emperors of India spoke only Persian, and it was necessary to find a means of communicating with the natives. The result was Prakrit, a mixture of Persian, Arabic, Turkish and native dialects. After a few years, and at the beginning of the reign of Shah Jehan, the Imperial Guards in Delhi, known as the Urdu-i-Mualla, adopted Prakrit as their own and called it Urdu. The first Urdu literature was mainly in the form of poetry, and as poetry it was immediately popular with the ladies of the Imperial Harem. In a short time, it naturally became the language of the courts, and when a School of Urdu Poetry was opened in Delhi under the patronage of the emperor, it was firmly established.

For many centuries, it was the lingua franca of North India. As used today by Muslims, chiefly a mixture of Persian and Arabic, and written in Persian script, it is Urdu, the official language of Pakistan. As used by the Hindus, written in Devanagari script, it is called Hindi and is the language of the Republic of India.



Chapter 22

OUR INVITATIONS to the Nikab arrived, engraved in Urdu script. There were three of them. One for the wedding procession from the groom's house to the house of the bride; one for the wedding rites; a third for the luncheon given by the bridegroom's family on the day after the Nikab. The invitations to the Nikab read:

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful,
All praise to Him and Peace be upon his Eminent and
Noble Prophet.

On the Occasion of
the Nikab
of

His son Said-ud-din Ahmed Khan (May he Live Long)

Waqir-ud-din Ahmed Khan requests the pleasure of your company to attend the ceremony and luncheon on 30 Rabi-ul-awal. Nikab Ceremony at twelve noon at the bride's father — Khwaja Said Hasan's house, 10A Bath Island, Karachi.

RSVP — 1/77 Hazra Manzil, Mohammed Ali Jinnah Road, Karachi.

The groom's house was on one side of the city, the bride's far away on the other side, and the wedding procession was to be purely a male affair. It had been arranged that Peggy would visit with the bride during her final preparations, beginning at about nine o'clock in the morning and continuing

until the bride was ready to show herself sometime in the afternoon. In the meantime, I also left early to pay my respects to the groom. With the best man, I reached the groom's attractive house as several other guests arrived. Just outside the high stone gates stood a tiny, open-topped English sports car, racy and fiery red. Nearby stood a late model American automobile, being polished by two servants. Inside the gates, on a lawn in front of the house, a large, high Persian-type marquee in black and white stripes sheltered chairs from the sun, and servants brought cool drinks of sweet lime or orange. The groom stood on the steps by the door, wearing a comfortable old red fez, a white linen slim-waisted long jacket and linen trousers. He smiled and seemed glad to see us. As we shook hands, I thought he looked like pictures of Rudolf Valentino. He was nervous as a cat. When Hayat suggested it was time to start dressing, the groom took my arm and said, "Please, come and sit with me while I talk with my best man." As we entered a comfortable sitting room, the groom began to explain that since this was *his* wedding, and since *he* would be covered with flowers and practically invisible anyway, he intended to wear his old red fez, and *not* the traditional turban of cloth-of-gold wound over a gold-embroidered skullcap. No, he was not nervous. He just wanted to be comfortable. Then he turned to me and asked, "What do you think? Should I wear that turban, or do I have the right to be comfortable? They won't see my head anyway. What?" Then Hayat began to talk with him. "Just for a few hours, old friend. It won't hurt you. You know you'll have to wear the thing at the end anyway. Why fuss over it now? Let us get started." But Ahmed Khan would have nothing to do with the turban. He walked out of the room talking to himself. Hayat looked at me and shook his head. "There'll be a devil of a row over this. I think I had better get someone from his family to come over and talk with him." So he

went outside. I sat under the striped marquee and sipped a lime while Hayat talked with a few friends, then went to a phone.

By this time, the chairs under the marquee were filled. Men stood in groups, chatting. No one went into the house. They sat or stood talking, and by their presence showed their friendship and respect for the groom. Almost all wore Western clothes, except for their hats. The gray Persian lamb cap was dominant, there were a few fezes, and some wore no hats at all. One or two older men wore embroidered slippers with upturned toes.

A car drove up to the gates, and a few minutes later Said Ahmed Khan stood on the steps, the center of a disturbed group of people. He still wore the fez, but I could see that he was losing the fight, though he put on a good show for his independence. In a few minutes, he turned and went inside, and Hayat joined me and said, "Let us go to him now, and see that he does not change his mind."

In a small dressing room, the groom smiled a welcome as we entered. A servant was buttoning his long, tight-fitting coat of cream and gold brocade. He wore tight-legged trousers tailored like jodhpurs, and gold-threaded slippers with elegant, pointed toes. He fitted on his head a round-topped skullcap, heavy and stiff. He was hot, the gold cap was too tight, and with a quick snip of a pair of scissors from a dressing table, he slit the back and tried it again. "That's better, damn it." In a few minutes he had wound a long cloth-of-gold turban round the skullcap, and turned to us with a sigh. "You will never again look as handsome," I said, and he laughed. "Thank you. I don't think I want to go through it again. Will you take a picture now — before they take me away?"

As he spoke, women's voices came through the door. None had been seen until this moment. From another room, carry-

ing garlands of flowers graded from deep red to pale pink, they brought in a heady perfume. The servants left, Hayat moved to the door, and when an elder woman glared at me, I started to leave. But Ahmed Khan snapped, in Urdu, "No! He will stay with me!" And he sat on a stool, defying them. The lady — his aunt — pursed her lips, but made no remark, so I stayed. Two young relatives draped the garlands of flowers over his shoulders as I filmed him. Layer upon layer, they covered his head and shoulders, tying the top with a silver ribbon, and when he rose to his feet, the ropes of flowers hung below his knees. The scent was delicate and sweet — the perfume worn by the young women had the same flavor. While they arranged the flowers with a few deft touches, I left the room to join the men outside.

They stood in groups on either side of the gate, and by it was the newly polished automobile. But there was no glitter of polish. Covered completely from top to bumpers with flowers strung in ropes, the windshield and the windows were hidden deep. In front of it was the small English car, pilot for the procession, and behind it was a long line of others for the guests. In a moment, the groom appeared, led by Hayat and a cousin, for he could not see through the flowers. Down the steps toward the car they walked slowly. As I filmed him, he paused a moment, lifting the flowers from his face. Then he smiled and I saw he was pale. "Still nervous?" I asked. "Just hot," he said, and waved a hand as he stumbled into the car.

I left, hurrying to reach the bride's house ahead of the procession, and to hear from Peggy of the preparations of the bride. The car was hot from standing in the sun, and I thought of Ahmed Khan, in his heavy clothes and flowers, in a crowded, flower-covered car, going slowly.

Close to the beach, the large modern house was flesh-colored, long and low. By the low brick wall surrounding the

wide grounds, a number of red-capped policemen in khaki shorts and stockings stood talking. Two of them held hands in friendly Muslim fashion as they walked to and fro. The wedding was a popular one, and among the guests were to be a few dignitaries of the Pakistani government. Across wide grounds to one side of the house, a great marquee in orange with a black diamond pattern shielded huge Persian rugs on the ground. A few women sat, or stood and talked, and I saw the one lone chair, for Peggy, who wore nylons. Children ran about, but no men were there, for this was the women's area. Behind the house, I could see another high marquee, and servants carrying water glasses. This was the male area.

As I reached steps to a door, looking for Peggy, three young women appeared, and I stood to one side. They were lovely, and startled, in flowing silken robes. One wore cream, one shimmering blue the other a flaming red. With jet-black hair and creamy skin, they positively glowed, like the jewels they wore — bracelets, necklaces, earrings and brow adornments, with sapphires, pearls and rubies set in gold. I must have seemed bewildered, for one of them said, "Are you looking for someone? Can we help at all?" I told them I was looking for my wife and described Peggy. "Oh, of course. She is upstairs. Would you like to wait here while I tell her you've come?"

As I stood there, cars stopped at the gate. Women got out and the cars drove away. To the orange marquee the women guests walked, in a wave of color that was stunning. None wore the same combinations. A few wore saris, of pure gold thread or silver tissues from Benares. Some wore tight tunics with pajama-type trousers, looking slender where they should, and wholly female. Their silken *dopattas*, or long gauzy scarfs, were looped in the front with the ends at the back, in reverse from the customary Hindu style. Most wore the formal, wide Muslim trousers, or divided skirts, full, heavy,

and reaching the ground. It was a blaze of color that seemed to me to reach the peak of possibility. When Peggy spoke, behind me, I jumped. I felt, somehow, as though I were intruding on something mere man ought not to see. Then two women in purdah and white flowing robes passed up the steps to the house, and I felt better. This unleashed female demonstration had seemed almost wicked.

Peggy's eyes sparkled. She, too, was having fun. "What is going on?" I asked. "I hear you've been with the bride. When does she appear?"

As the Muslim fashion parade passed toward the marquee, in gossamer tissues and lace-trimmed flounces, fabulous silks and tight-fitting brocades, she told me of her morning in the bride's boudoir.

The bride was twenty. Two beautiful cousins attended her as matrons of honor, and they were dressed in scarlet and gold. Seated on satin-covered cushions on the floor, the matrons colored the palms of her hands with henna. She had her toenails and fingernails painted red — as so many Americans do. Her face was made up with foundation cream, rouge and powder, and from a small silver urn she used special eye shadow. Then came mascara and lipstick. Her lovely long black hair was brushed, and braided with red yarn and tassels; beads of fragrant oil were dropped in the part. Tiny crystals of gold were sprinkled on her hair. It took hours, and a great deal of discussion. Peggy talked about modern Western beauty aids, the bride and her cousins explained the old Muslim arts. Then it was time to select jewelry from the fabulous gifts the bride had received. From glittering trays, pieces were chosen with care, and an hour and a half passed by pleasantly. It was after one'clock, and the groom had long since stumbled into his flower-bedecked automobile.

As she described her interesting morning, the groom's car drove by the gates to the men's marquee in the rear. Then a

stunningly attractive young woman came up to us and Peggy introduced me. She was one of the matrons of honor, daughter of Mian Amin-uddin, the agent of the governor general in Baluchistan. A moment later, they went off together to the bride's quarters, and as I watched them go, red hair and black hair, the East and the West, the contrast in their costumes was not unpleasing. Peggy wore a black taffeta costume, off-the-shoulder style, with flesh-colored nylon net and roses to match, accentuating the neckline. She wore a black circular taffeta coat with voluminous three-quarter-length puffed sleeves. On her shining page-boy bob, she wore a tiny black sequin-covered cap, and her shoes were bare-looking, black satin strips. She wore sheer nylons, perhaps the only ones in all that female gathering.

The groom was in the high-roofed marquee, where chairs and divans were scattered about. Hundreds of men had gathered there to wish Ahmed Khan well, and many clasped him in their arms in Muslim fashion. Seated by the groom was Pakistan's prime minister, Khwaja Nazim-uddin, and several other high-ranking government officials. As I greeted the groom again, he laughed and said, "How are you enjoying this?" and I noticed the flowers showed slight signs of wear. Then he turned to receive the vigorous embrace of another friend. In a little while a group of older men took him to a row of seats. One held a large rolled scroll. It was the contract, to be signed and witnessed and sent to the women's area for final signing by the bride — after the dower had been paid, listed and accepted. For a moment, as the gathering of men watched him sign the marriage contract, there was a pause in the English and Urdu mixed chatter, then lunch was announced. Everyone moved into a large adjoining tent, where a dozen white-clothed tables groaned under mounds of rice with almonds and raisins, curried chicken, curried lamb, bowls of curried lemons — searing hot with spices —

several kinds of vegetables, meat balls, pickled shrimps, stuffed meat and meat-stuffed eggs, biscuits and chapatties, pickles, relishes, chutneys, cold sliced meats, cakes, sweet-meats, fruit, pastry and ice cream. It was two o'clock. Word had come by a little boy messenger that the bride was having her share of the feast alone, in the seclusion of her boudoir, and had yet to finish dressing. The men, and I, were hungry. Without use of cutlery, chicken legs, meat, rice and spices vanished amazingly fast, and a burp or two seemed to have echoes.

With several new recipes, and lips blistered from hot spices, I wandered back to the women's area. I could not go inside the marquee, of course, even had there been room for me. But I hovered about between the house and the great tent, and whenever a startled Muslim beauty looked at me, I lifted the camera and took pictures. It was like owning a hunting permit. At the same time, I had begun to realize that the kind and friendly way we had been received and welcomed was more of a surprise to me than to anyone else. The seclusion of Muslim women had been overemphasized. It was still there, but not as a peculiar custom, based on primitive ideas. It was a firm guarding of the personal rights of privacy. But what impressed me greatly was the friendliness of everyone. One young lady asked me if I would take some pictures with her brother's movie camera. When I finished the reel and returned the camera to her, she apologized to me for intruding. She hoped it had not been a bother! I went away to sit on a low wall, away from all that bewitching femininity, to rearrange my mind. All the misconceptions I had had, all the stories of tabus and strange ways, seemed to wear a shoddy, ignorant aspect. I was the peculiar stranger. These people were understanding and sympathetic, the most naturally gracious people I had met in years.

Between the house and the marquee, I saw a group of seven young ladies talking together. I went to them and asked if I might film them in a group. Shy, modest and almost frighteningly lovely, they posed in natural elegance, perhaps for the first time in their lives before a movie camera. They laughed, and looked at the camera, and I caught a glimpse of proud beauty beyond any man-made tabus or laws of custom. I also caught a glimpse of devastatingly ruthless womanhood, bared for a moment not to me, but to the inanimate camera. Then, one of them moved her silk-draped arm for a moment and exposed a bracelet of gold, studded with priceless stones. I asked her to let me see it, and she moved the hand to rearrange her scarf at the throat in a shy gesture. Round her neck was a necklace to match the bracelet, studded with sapphires. Tiny blue stones twinkled in her long, bell-shaped earrings as she tossed her head and smiled. "Do we pose properly?" It was then I realized I was photographing like a madman, without considering my supply of film. The bride was yet to appear, and I might be permitted to film her, at a distance. Only a few hundred feet of color film remained.

When Peggy reappeared, she said, "I've used up all my film. Do you have any more?" She, too, had found restraint difficult. With the still camera, she had photographed the bride in her boudoir and the interior of the women's marquee, where hundreds sat on exquisite rugs, and mothers with children in identical costumes made wonderful subjects. I gave her the last roll of film as she told me the bride was ready to appear. She had been looking at the bride's trousseau, in two rooms set aside for it. Among the gifts were seventy saris, and fifteen or more pairs of Western evening shoes and slippers to go with them, a gift from the groom. The bride's father had given the groom seventy suits. There was a Frigid-

aire, matched traveling cases and luggage from America, a great deal of silver and tableware and many electric household appliances.

By this time, it was about three-thirty. The excitement in the women's marquee had mounted to an intensity verging on the hysterical. Seated on the beautiful rugs, or standing, there was not an inch to spare. Voices rose in a dozen languages, though I imagined the subject was all the same. From the house, young girls brought satin-covered cushions and silken pads. They were placed in a small cleared area — for the bride to sit on, and later the groom. One little girl carried a handsome gilt mirror, a necessary item in the forthcoming ceremony.

The bride and the groom were not betrothed as children. On several public occasions the eligible groom had observed the young lady — from a distance — and he had expressed his desire for an opportunity to ask for her hand in marriage. This was done through the parents of both of them. Another young man had the same idea, it seems, for arrangements were made for both of them to present their offers. At different times, each man called at the young lady's home, and, because this was a modern Muslim household, and the girl herself educated and enlightened, she was given the privilege of being placed in a position in the house where, unseen by them, she could see and hear them as they pleaded their causes. She was thus able to choose the man whom she felt she liked best. She was also allowed to make inquiry into their ability to take care of her financially, and give her the best social position. At the same time, she inquired into their morals, manners and integrity. After her choice was made, the chosen one, Ahmed Khan, was notified through his parents. Then her parents notified the parents of the unlucky man in such a manner that it would not impair their social relationship. This is a considerate and most important custom.



Pakistani bride

The betrothal announcements were sent out soon afterwards. Gifts of sweets were sent to relatives, and in a little while, invitations to the Nikab were dispatched. Before the Nikab, the couple met by arrangement. The prospective groom twice called upon the bride-to-be, but there was no personal contact and a third person was present during the calls. This was a concession, a modern gesture, compared with many betrothals being made every day by parents for their children — sight unseen — something in the nature of a permanent “blind date.”

A child of ten walked from the marquee toward the steps of the house — then stopped and ran back. As I watched, the bride came through the door, supported by her two lovely attendants. Their flowing robes were all deep scarlet, shot through with gold. The bride wore the wide, formal, divided skirt and two cloth-of-gold embroidered veils over a shimmering, golden, short-sleeved and short-waisted, tight-fitting blouse. The heavy flounces of the wide divided skirt were embroidered in gold thread, and six-inch golden borders on the ends of the veils were hung with golden tassels. The veils draped over her head and face were gauzy, with a narrow golden border, and the sunlight gleamed on a great jeweled pendant on her forehead underneath. The embroidered veils of the two matrons hung from their shoulders; their heads and faces were uncovered, showing rich and lovely earrings. The one I had met with Peggy saw me standing there, and she spoke to the bride, who stopped. Then they lifted her veils and I filmed the downcast eyes and lovely face, and the huge gold bride’s pendant on her brow. Then they dropped the veils and reached the bottom of the steps, as I moved closer. Again they paused and the veils were raised, and as I looked through the camera, the bride lifted her face, the downcast eyelids opened, and I caught the faint Mona Lisa smile. Then a crowd of children swarmed around us,

the veils dropped and they moved toward the open marquee. As the camera followed them, I caught the shine of sun on Peggy's hair as she spoke to them, and a moment later they were engulfed in the press of excited women. As I stood, quite alone in the open sunshine, I prayed a silent prayer that the pictures would do justice to the loveliness I had just been privileged to witness. Late in the evening of the day before, I had dropped my light meter on the stone floor of the hotel, smashing it into tiny, useless pieces.

In a few minutes, a group of men appeared from the men's marquee. They were escorting the groom. As he came near to the women's area, two women met him, and over his head they flung a long, wide silken scarf, covering his head and face. They held the ends of the scarf and led him into the crowded marquee. He was to sit by the side of the bride for the rest of the ceremony. But the crowd of excited women pressed too tightly. There was no way through them, and the groom became angry. I saw him shake his head several times, and then he marched to the side of the crowd and sat on a rug. As much as to say, "This is your responsibility. You women do something about it." At once, several older women spoke sharply to the crowd. In a few minutes, a path had been cleared for him and, led by the ends of the scarf, he was conducted to the satin cushions where the bride sat. Side by side they sat for an hour or more, while the dower was paid to the bride's mother and due note made in a book. They still had not uncovered their faces and looked at each other. Finally, the payments were completed. The crowd of intense women and young girls pressed around the seated couple and the older women, and a child brought forward the large gilt mirror.

According to the demands of established ritual, the bride had signed the marriage contract before witnesses some time before the groom entered the marquee. Now, they followed

an age-old custom and set aside the veils and the flowers, and, as they did so, each looked upon the face of the other, for the first time in the ceremony, in the mirror. The crowd of enthralled women leaned forward, holding its breath. Then, still gazing at each other in the mirror, they partook of sweets and curds, and the ceremony ended. Amid the high-voiced well wishes and prayers of friends and relatives, the groom carried his bride to the waiting flower-covered automobile, and they were gone. It was evening. When they arrived at the groom's house, he carried her over the threshold.



Chapter 23

IN Old Delhi, we were comfortably situated in a bungalow on the grounds of the Swiss Hotel, with a roaring fireplace and vases of flowers fresh from the surrounding gardens. We had flown northeast from Pakistan, and a penetrating cold pervaded the January air. It was far different from the balmy climate of Karachi. In nearby trees and shrubs, hundreds of small birds twittered and sang, and from the highest trees, swarms of shrieking parrots darted like swallows. Peggy was delighted when several dovelike birds came close to our door, and when I told her they were the “Seven Sisters” she counted them, and there were six—a moment later, another one appeared, and Peggy photographed them.

While Peggy visited the His Master’s Voice recording studios, not far from the hotel, I went into New Delhi to check on previously arranged plans for a trip into Nepal. I found the trip was no longer possible, at least for the time being. The pro-Western, anti-Indian prime minister, Mohun Shamsheer Jang Bahadur, had only the day before been deftly ousted from office by the pro-Indian Congress Party in Nepal, and Mr. B. P. Koirala had assumed his office. Riots and fighting were even then going on.

That night, we read the local Indian newspapers, and noted that a Hindu from a village in the Sirohi district, sentenced to four years imprisonment for murder, had appealed his verdict, which was reduced to two years. He had

hung an old woman upside down, put chilies in her eyes, and she had died. Having acquired the power of divination by gazing at grain, the man had named the old woman as a witch and the cause of the death of a youth and the illness of the youth's wife. We noted that the Indian ambassador in China, Sardar Panikkar, then in New Delhi at a meeting of the Press Association, stated that the Chinese government in Peiping was not Communist at all. They were "simply following a system of democratic centralism." In the same paper, we read that Dr. Frank Graham's report on the Kashmir situation to the UN Security Council was "vague and sketchy, unrealistic and unimportant." There were several references to "Uncle Sham" and "vulgar Yanks," and a statement by Mr. Nehru to the effect that "India will stand no nonsense or bullying from any country in the world."

As we talked of these things, the voices of jackals came to us clearly. They were running through the spacious hotel grounds outside, seeking food. Under wide-spreading trees a few yards from our door, three chowkidars squatted on their heels before a small fire, talking in low voices. Peggy had never heard the jackals so clearly, or so close, and remarked that there seemed to be many of them, moving at great speed. Notoriously useful as scavengers, eating all dead things they find and finishing off the remains of tiger and leopard kills, jackals resemble their brother, the wolf, but are much smaller, like a fox. They range all over the subcontinent. They are rarely hunted by men with dogs, for dogs refuse to follow their trail and treat them as brothers. Their howl is a wail, three or four times repeated in ascending scale, followed by quick yelps. Their cries seem to be passed on from one group to another, like a message, giving the impression of a single group traveling at incredibly high speed through the night.

Next day we went looking for snakes. We wanted to film a typical snake charmer and his basket of reptiles and, if possi-



Snake charmer

ble, the famous fight between a cobra and a mongoose. After several wrong leads, we heard of a man described as "Very fine fellow. He live close by. I take you his house, Sahib, you see." So we went, in a taxi, for thirteen miles. At a small village of grass huts, our guide took us along narrow mud-walled alleys where the walls were plastered with drying cow-dung cakes and the dust of centuries filled our shoes. At a grass hut, three men sat, sharing an opium pipe. After listening to our guide, they talked together and then announced that, for a certain fee they would get some snakes and bring them to the hotel next day. They would also try to catch a mongoose, for a little extra money. In a few minutes, it was all arranged and we left the village.

Early the next day, we walked along the banks of the Jumna River. No dead were being burned in the burning *ghats*, although piles of wood were stacked up, in readiness. The air was clear and cold. When we returned to the hotel, we found the snake charmers had arrived with baskets of snakes and an infuriated mongoose in a gunny sack. Each of the men had brought his reed and gourd pipe, and we asked them to play for us — without interference from the snakes — while we recorded their music on a tape machine. Somewhat reminiscent of the wail of bagpipes, the tuning-up period was long and weird. Then they ran through their repertoire of different chants, and we understood why the snakes were fascinated. It was a fearsome sound at close quarters. Then we were ready for the main performance. From their baskets on the green lawn, the men pulled out dozens of snakes. Some they handled carelessly, some with a lot of respect. Our cameras were ready, a crowd of other guests and all the hotel servants had collected, and the hotel manager was there with his own camera. As the men began to play their pipes, a krait headed toward the manager, who backed away hurriedly. One of the men rose and snatched it back by the tail, and the

weird music reached a high-pitched scream. Then the snakes went to sleep. No cajoling or teasing could make them show any interest whatever. Angry, the three men stuffed the snakes back into their baskets and from the gunny sack, one of them pulled the raging mongoose. It was tied around its middle with a long piece of string. From another sack one of the men hauled a seven-foot hamadryad, or king cobra, but it, too, was neither angry nor interested in performing for us. When the mongoose was dangled over its head, hissing with rage at its captors, the snake wound a few coils around the poor animal and began to squeeze. Then we called the whole thing off. The snake and the mongoose were separated, unharmed, and the crowd dispersed. Soon afterwards, our rented station wagon arrived, and we prepared for the trip to Gwalior next day.

We drove out of Delhi, southward along a tree-lined road where families of shivering monkeys huddled together for warmth, and arrived at Agra in time for lunch. As we sat at a table under the wide veranda, a waiter went off to find the bird man, and two snake charmers appeared, insisting that they show us their reptiles. A few minutes later, the bird man arrived, and when he made some remark that I did not catch, the snake men departed a little shamefacedly.

With his small weaver birds loosely tied by one leg to a thin stick, the white-whiskered old man bowed to us and introduced his feathered friends. Smaller than sparrows, the three birds were vari-colored: the male crimson and orange, the females buff and yellowish. As we moved to a table on the wide, grassy lawn, they twittered with excitement. As he released one of them, the old man threw into the air a tiny ring, barely the size of a dime, and the bird caught it in mid-air, and brought it back to his hand. This was repeated a few times, then the other birds, eager and excited, were allowed to perform. They carried cigarettes from one person to an-

other, gently removed small paper disks from Peggy's forehead, flew to far-distant trees and returned with leaves, selected from ten numbered cards any one number we named, and wound up a miniature winch which raised a tiny pail of water. Finally, the old man placed a clean white cloth on the ground, and from a small box took a thin sewing needle and thread. On the thread were ten extremely small beads of different colors, which he spilled over the needle onto the white cloth. One of the birds picked up the needle in its beak and, with amazing dexterity, rethreaded the beads one after another.

A little while later we drove to the outskirts of Agra and visited the Taj Mahal, so much advertised and photographed, and so truly beautiful. As Peggy and I saw it, the lives of Shah Jehan and Mumtaz Mahal were in our minds, and the irony of the fact that this glorious monument to a beloved woman is a perpetual symbol of the Muslim rule over India. Begun in 1629 and finished in 1650, the Taj Mahal then cost the equivalent of approximately fifty million dollars. To reproduce it today would cost approximately a billion. Emperor Shah Jehan promised his wife, on her deathbed, that he would never remarry, and that he would build for her the greatest and most beautiful tomb in the world. He kept both promises. Later, in speaking of the Taj, he said, "The nymphs of Paradise brush off its threshold with their eyelids." Shah Jehan was later imprisoned by his own son, Aurangzeb, in the Jasmine Tower nearby, where he died, lonely and forgotten. Before he died, almost blind, he found that by pressing his face close to a dime-sized gem stone set in the walls of his prison, he could see the Taj reflected in its entirety.

Later that day, as we neared Gwalior, with thoughts of the Taj Mahal and the romantic past still in our minds, we came upon the beginning of a new, modern romance. Toward us, along the side of the road, came five men walking with long

strides. Two of them carried a peculiarly shaped wooden hammock slung on a long pole, the ends of the pole on their shoulders. Seated on red and yellow cushions in the hammock was a boy of seven or eight years, dressed in a yellow shirt and a bright red turban. Multi-colored tassels hung from the carrying pole, and the Hindu boy appeared proud, but tired. A tall man, presumably his father, strode at his side, and as we drew nearer, they all stopped to rest for a moment. They must have come a long way, for they were covered with dust. Then the second pair of men lifted the pole, and they passed by, completely indifferent to our cameras. The boy was being carried to his betrothal ceremony, where he would meet his future bride for a few minutes, then they would part, not to see each other again until the day they were married, ten or more years later.

That evening we were guests of the Maharani of Scindia. In a beautiful golden-mirrored music room we listened to Hafiz Ali, and afterwards I watched his eyes sparkle with surprised interest as Peggy talked with him about ragas and srutis, and the remarkable "inner ear" of the Indian artist. By this time she had come to know and understand a great deal about Indian music.

As we returned to our hotel that night, passing by the great white palace, now dark and unoccupied, we wondered about the future of music in India, and how long the Maharaja and Maharani of Scindia can afford to sponsor the arts in this old city. The incomes of the princes have been drastically cut since 1947. Their heirs will be allowed to keep only 10 per cent of the present income, their heirs in turn will not be allowed to keep any. The effects arising out of this new position of the Indian princes are being felt in many ways, by all classes of people. Under the patronage of the Maharajas of Scindia, Gwalior has come to be justly regarded as a famous cultural center. The present rajpramukh, His Highness Sir

Jiwaji Rao, and Her Highness the Maharani, have maintained their patronage of the arts by reorganizing their own way of living. The great palace, Jai Vilas, is closed. The young maharaja and his lovely wife, who was a princess of Nepal, have moved to a smaller residence, and the money saved is devoted to the School of Music, begun over five hundred years ago and now attended by more than six hundred students. By reducing the number of ceremonial elephants and polo ponies, several schools are aided if not wholly supported, and promising students are given scholarships. The maharani personally sponsors the Padma Vedyalaya High School for Girls, where the tuition fee is \$2.10 per year. The maharaja once provided funds for the building of irrigation facilities and other aids for agricultural development, but the projects have not been completed because he no longer has the personal income which made these things possible.

Our friends, the Shindes, had arranged for us a visit to the Dobra Sugar Plantation, a few miles out of Gwalior. When we reached it by car, a little before noon, the resident manager, a Dutchman, entertained us for a while, and later showed us the plantation. At the loading yards, where freight cars of sugar cane stood at a siding, an elephant appeared. He worked to earn his own keep, and that of his *mahout*, or driver, by replacing a more expensive locomotive. On loan from a maharaja, he worked all day, moving strings of loaded freight cars by pushing with his great tusks. As we reached the tracks, he was cutting out three cars from a long train. The cars were loaded to capacity. With one metal-tipped tusk, the elephant leaned against the third car, and with little apparent effort his weight moved them forward. When they overshot the unloading spot, he walked to the other end and gently pushed them back a little. Our visit kept him at work beyond his usual lunch time and he was slightly annoyed, but a reward of several long sticks of sugar cane pleased him,

and he soon went off in good humor, trumpeting loudly.

Next day, we drove to the castle of Pahargarh and the estate of my friend Raja Pancham Singh. With us was his very wise and very sweet rani, a lady without criticism of anyone or anything, with a passion for betel nuts and calcium. She laughed easily and long, and as we drove over rough, narrow dirt roads, she alone relaxed and enjoyed herself. She was one of those older ladies whom age touches lightly, and she was adored by all her subjects, servants and friends. On the journey to Pahargarh and the castle near the jungle, she and Peggy became good friends, and they laughed together as the miles of dust passed by. Once, I thought I heard the rani speaking of eating calcimine, and later asked Peggy about it. She laughed, "Oh no. She was joking. She is very fond of calcium, which she carries in a small, exquisite silver container, and she refers to it as her 'calcimine' in fun."

Pahargarh Castle was built on a hill, about 1601, by the raja's ancestors. Of gray native stone, with high, turreted walls, great stone-arched gates and hand-carved pillars, the entire structure was a fascinating background for the big man and his devoted rani. They were perfect hosts. That night we dined in an open court under a full moon, on a table that was a long stone slab. As we ate the native dishes, we looked down over the walls to nearby farms and the hills of the scrub jungle.

During our few days there, we seemed to be in a different land. When I went off with Pahargarh in his jeep, tiger hunting, our progress for the first mile from the castle was a series of halts as farmers stopped us to pay their respects to the raja. Though he was anxious to be hunting, he spoke to them all. It was quite obvious that he was loved and respected and considered not as an overlord, but as a father. It was also obvious that these poor people were completely dependent upon him. The construction of dams he had planned, water

facilities and other improvements he had started, were now stopped, for there was not enough money. The electric wiring in the castle was unused, for there was no power, and at night we saw by the light of native lanterns. But it was a good place, a happy one, and we loved it.

One day, as Peggy and the rani sat on leopard-skin divans, there suddenly appeared a very old man with a white beard. He made obeisance to the rani, then requested that Peggy photograph him – after he had bathed. Three hours later he returned, wearing a fresh turban, his beard fluffy and three shades whiter, carrying an ancient mogul shield and a long curved sword. Against a background of hand-carved, foliated arches, he posed for Peggy with such dignity that it was hard to imagine he had never been photographed before.

From Pahargarh, we returned to Gwalior, and visited the Padma School for Girls, and recorded dances and music performed by elaborately costumed students. Next day, we received a telephone message confirming our airlines reservations to Calcutta, Bangkok, Hongkong, Honolulu and San Francisco, and we hurried back to Delhi.



Servant at Pahargarh Castle



Chapter 24

FROM New Delhi we flew to Calcutta, and spent two days there, in the Grand Hotel, waiting for mechanics to repair a faulty engine in our plane.

From our dull, brown-walled room, Peggy looked down on the teeming street below, as I read from the *Hindustan Year Book*. Under "Political Terms" I found: "Jitterburgh — a phrase of American origin applied to apprehensive and excitable alarmists." I was thinking about that when Peggy, who had not spoken for some time, said, "Please come here and tell me whether the things I see are really happening."

Three stories below us, there was a small, beautifully flowered park on the opposite side of the street. It had a grilled iron railing where the wide cement sidewalk edged the busy street. Cycles, rickshaws and automobiles, bullock carts and pedestrians streamed in both directions, and at a hand-worked pump on the sidewalk, a native youth bathed, nude except for soapy lather. Immediately across from our window, next to the park railing, a family lived on the sidewalk. An elderly man and two young women, a baby and a small mongrel puppy — they were sitting on a not-too-clean cotton sheet. Over their heads, on a bamboo pole, was a sheltering cloth, with the corners tied to the railing. The old man slept, his back to the busy street, and the two women squatted, talking, while one fed the baby at her breast. They left no room for walkers on the sidewalk, and the human stream eddied out onto the road then back again.

As we watched, the old man wakened, and they all stood up. He dusted off the sidewalk with the dingy sheet and then replaced it and they all squatted down again. A moment later, one of the women rose, removed her underwear and squatted down to examine it closely. She picked something from it and handed it to the other woman, who killed it between her fingernails. For a long time, the search and killing lasted, and when it was done, the woman rose to her feet and put the garment on again. A man who had stopped to talk with them for a few minutes, went on, and the mother of the child removed her short-sleeved upper garment and the delousing project continued. It was Sunday afternoon, and two o'clock.

Several hours later, when word came that we were to take off at midnight, we looked down on the sidewalk-dwellers. They were all asleep.

In my travels over the northern parts of the Indian sub-continent, I had found it impossible to devote much time to the study of natural history because of the conflicts that were a part of daily living, the economic condition resulting from partition and the extraordinary preoccupation of every single person with politics. I realized that I, too, had become so absorbed in the political strife and international tension that I had paid little attention to everyday problems. Peggy's reactions were different. She was visiting a new and strange country, where our travels had been somewhat complicated by a way of life completely foreign to her. She was impressed with the cruelty of a people who deliberately broke the tail of a bullock in twisting it, to obtain obedience in turning to right or left, the disregard for the dead, who lay by the side of the road, uncared for, the fat monkeys and pot-bellied hungry children, the smell of decay, and unsanitary cities. The pleasure she had felt in Pakistan had given way to depression, and she was anxious to leave India.

While politics is the most discussed problem in India today, it would be wrong to assume it is the most important, or the only one. The traveler cannot go far without being aware that poverty on such a scale is a calamity. Improvements have been made in recent years, with aid from the outside, but in relation to the West, India is becoming steadily poorer. With the development of industry and vast wealth to industrialists, there is a wider gap between owner and worker than ever existed under the British, between prince and peasant. This poverty affects the health of the entire nation. The high death rate and infant mortality rate; the terribly short life expectancy of twenty-six to twenty-seven years show that something is seriously wrong with the health of the country. Each year, more than one hundred million people suffer from malaria, two million die from it. More than half a million die from tuberculosis. Smallpox, cholera and plague breed in squalid conditions, and more than a quarter of a million infective lepers wander about the streets of cities. Sanitary conditions are deplorable—rudimentary in every respect. Under these conditions, the population has almost doubled in the last seventy years, and in the last ten has increased by more than the population of Great Britain.

These are problems of such paramount importance that their solution would appear to be more vital than the accession of Kashmir, which is of little economic value to India when all is said and done. The desire of Jawaharlal Nehru to bring Pakistan under Hindu domination, while following a course aimed at raising India to the position of leadership of an Asiatic Force in opposition to the West, and to Communism, is not in the best interests of world peace. Made up of India, in the leading role, Red China and Japan, this Third World Force is denied vociferously by most Hindus, yet talk of its growth is common, and I know it to exist. Nehru's own actions and words fit well with ideas of such a force. Begin-

ning in 1947, he made several public statements which he has since repeated several times. In March 1947, before the Asian Relations Conference, he said: "India herself is emerging into freedom and independence. She is the natural center and focal point of the many forces at work in Asia." His denial that India is interested in a position as leader in Asia is inconsistent with his proclaimed aversion to joining any power bloc, and to interference by one nation with the affairs of another. Yet through this inconsistency there runs a pattern, a tigerish pattern.

In New Delhi, on January 17, 1952, Nehru declared that the emergence of Communist China as a "great and unified" nation has completely changed the balance of power in the Far East and, to some extent, in the world. Nonrecognition of the Peiping regime "by some countries," he said, amounts to a refusal to recognize "one of the major and obvious facts of the age." That refusal, he added, "has led step by step to the grave consequences in Asia." In this speech, or Presidential Address to the Fifty-eighth Session of the Indian National Congress, he went on to declare: "The world can only carry on if there is acceptance of the fact that each country has the freedom to develop according to its own way of thinking, and there is no interference with it. There is far too much interference today, and attempts to impose one country's will on another." One month previously, at Allahabad, where he was born, in addressing over one hundred thousand people, Nehru reiterated that he agreed to a large extent with the principles of Socialism. He said: "Our ultimate aim as far as I see it, is to establish a classless society." In the same speech, referring particularly to foreign affairs, he said that his personal opinion was that the path India had struck in the field of foreign affairs was the right one. By following this path, a lot of benefit had accrued to India, and he had no doubt her prestige had increased all over the world. Then he added: "I can

only say confidently that basically our foreign policy has not only helped our country, but in some measure saved the world situation. This does not show any special greatness on our part, for we have neither a powerful army, nor wealth. We can neither tempt anybody with wealth nor create pressure through force. Why our foreign policy exercises influence is that even countries who are opposed to us fully trust that our policy is honest and independent.”

The Government of India is rightly proud of its independence. It will not brook admonition, let alone pressure, on the management of its affairs from anyone. Yet it does not recognize that other countries feel, and are entitled to feel, the same. This is a great weakness in Indian diplomacy, and in the policies proclaimed by Nehru for foreign consumption — while speeches for home consumption are frequently altogether different. India’s active interference in the domestic affairs of South Africa, French North Africa, Malaya and Kenya is organized pressure upon the governments of those regions. India already applies a trade embargo against South Africa, and Nehru has repeatedly expressed downright anger at the conditions there. Early in 1953, at his instigation, India’s Congress Party, meeting at Hyderabad, called for support of the defiance movement against Dr. Malan’s Apartheid policy. India is also applying pressure to deter Pakistan from associating herself with the proposed Middle East Defense Organization. Pakistan has several times been warned that such an association would be looked upon as a hostile act. Furthermore, the United States and Britain have been told that, if they encourage it, they will alienate India. India states that she cannot tolerate any action which might bring the cold war nearer to her or endanger her neutrality. Yet this threat was not voiced when Communist China occupied Tibet, and later even claimed the Buddhist shrines in the Kumaon-Garwhal districts of Badrinath as being Chinese

territory. In December 1952, Nehru declared in Trivandrum that India "would not act under compulsion of the joint United States-United Kingdom resolution on Kashmir as approved by the UN Security Council." It is a matter of record that India has taken no active part in supporting the United Nations — though it has been quite vociferous as to how the United Nations should operate. India contributed one ambulance to the UN effort in Korea. One ambulance from almost four hundred million people! This ambulance was withdrawn after the Chinese Communists entered Korea. Siam and the Philippines contributed fighting soldiers who were in the front lines when the fighting ceased, yet they are very small in numbers and resources when compared with India.

Since India became a nation on its own, America has aided her in many ways, not the least being many millions of dollars, much of which went to replace Indian grain eaten by Indian monkeys. In 1952, the amount was in excess of one hundred twenty million dollars. Other nations nearer to India, offered wheat, but the offers were declined. To many people of the West, this was difficult to understand, as it was difficult to understand why Mr. Nehru should attack President Eisenhower with offensive language, as he did after the President's Inaugural Address, stating that "war is far too serious business to be entrusted to a soldier, let alone peace." This absurd statement may be more easily understood by Americans if two simple facts of Indian life are realized. First, Nehru is very much like a spoiled child. The more he misbehaves, the more attention he gets. Secondly, in India today, there is a slogan: "Lick them and they will kick you. Kick them and they will lick you."

In her indignant cries against interference and "compulsion," India makes no reference to the pressure she is exerting on Pakistan. by her geographic position in control of the waters of the Indus River. Unfortunately, the United

States is aiding India in this pressure and interference.

It is indisputable that, by cutting off the waters of the Indus from Pakistan, India could as effectively bring Pakistan to her knees as by use of the atom or hydrogen bomb. Following partition, India did cut off some canals on which large areas of Pakistan depended. Those areas are now deserts. But the greater flow from the Indus affects the entire nation. It has been said that, in this Indus River dispute, both sides have suggested arbitration by the International Court of Justice. This is not correct. Pakistan alone has for some length of time requested that India submit the dispute to this court, or to any other impartial court. India has refused, and has continued to divert more and more water from the Indus, away from Pakistan. The suggestion that economic aid to both countries be withheld until the dispute is settled is unjust. Only India is withholding water. Only India refuses to submit to the opinion of an impartial court. In the meantime, she is using economic aid from America to build dams which will divert more water from Pakistan. It is just that simple, and terrible. The death of a nation may be the result of failure on the part of leading nations of the West to recognize the fact that India intends to force Pakistan into submission — as part of the pattern. The Western world, puzzled over Nehru's inconsistencies and bitter denunciations of the West, now has a choice. To favor Nehru, the spoiled child, or Pakistan, the anti-Communist, pro-Western nation, which has done nothing but earn respect.

As the airlines bus took us along narrow, dark streets to the airport, I began to feel a sense of relief. As the plane became airborne, the feeling grew, and as we rose above the clouds into a clear night, it seemed to us both that we had broken out of that burden of living which envelops the entire Indian subcontinent.

