





CSL

FIFTEEN YEARS

IN

INDIA;

OR,

SKETCHES OF A SOLDIER'S LIFE.

III (a) 80.01



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17-02-1954

LONDON :
Printed by A. & R. Spottiswoode,
New-Street-Square.



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BRING

AN ATTEMPT TO DESCRIBE PERSONS AND THINGS

IN VARIOUS PARTS OF HINDOSTAN.

_____ *by Wallace G.R.*
FROM THE JOURNAL OF

AN OFFICER IN HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE.

Speak of me as I am—nothing extenuate,
Nor set down ought in malice. OTHELLO.

THE SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR

LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1823.



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TO
MY FATHER,
IN TOKEN OF FILIAL AFFECTION,
WHICH NO CIRCUMSTANCES CAN CHANGE,
THIS EFFORT OF MY PEN
IS INSCRIBED,
WITH
THE GREATEST RESPECT.



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ADVERTISEMENT.

ARROWSMITH's new map is now in such general circulation that it seems unnecessary to increase the expense of this work by adding a geographical sketch of India, containing the lines of march described by the author. All the principal places will be found in any of the large maps of Hindostan, by such readers as may be desirous of accompanying the writer through the different provinces he traversed.

In spelling proper names of places and persons in India, more attention has been paid to the common way in which they are written by the English authorities in the country, than to any prescribed rule of orthography. As much accuracy as possible is aimed at, but it is presumed to be a matter of little consequence, whether the name of a particular province be written *Guzerat* or *Gujrut*.



Native words are in general avoided, where English ones would answer the purpose. Of such as are used from necessity or for ornament, and not immediately explained, an alphabetical Glossary is given at the end of the work.

The natural productions of India are now so generally known in Europe, that it has been deemed unnecessary to give their scientific names.



P R E F A C E.

THE gentleman who wrote the journal from which the following pages are chiefly drawn, went out to India in the beginning of 1805, and returned in 1819. During that period it was his lot to traverse a great part of the peninsula, from the Ganges to the Indus. He landed at Madras, and saw part of the Carnatic, joined his regiment in Malabar, and served with it in Mysore and Travancore; after which his fortune led him to Bengal, and a few years afterwards to Bombay, where he was employed with the army in Guzerat which invaded Kutch-booge for the first time, marched through Kattywar, and destroyed the fastnesses of the pirates in Okamundel. His corps being then called to join the Poonah subsidiary force, an opportunity was afforded him of seeing a considerable part of the Deckan during the late Mahratta war. The impressions made upon



his mind by the scenes which he beheld in India, are now, with deference, offered to the public.

Much might be written on the excusable topic of prepossession; and, on the other hand, many arguments might be adduced to prove that all an author can say in behalf of his own book is *vox et præterea nihil*. These pages are therefore dismissed to their fate with a short anecdote.

A British officer, with a small detachment of *sepoys*, was stationed in a pass of the ghauts, for the purpose of intercepting the enemy's *hurkarus*. Among many other travellers, a man in the garb of a villager was stopped. By his own account he was merely going to a neighbouring town. He wore only a cloth round his loins, a blanket, which served him as a sort of tent, being contracted to fit his head while it covered his shoulders, and a pair of old sandals. This scanty dress and all other suspected means of concealment were carefully searched, and a stick, which he carried with little bells fixed to it, for the purpose of frightening away tigers and wild elephants on his journey through the forests, was broken lest there might be a letter en-



closed. "Let him pass," said the officer. "Saheeb," replied an old *subadar* with a venerable beard, whose language being Hindostanee, I shall translate, "Sir, permit the voice of experience to penetrate the ear of understanding, and suffer me, thy servant, to examine these sandals." This hint, respectfully offered, was not scornfully rejected. The soles of the almost worn-out sandals were cut, and behold a letter in the Persian character, made up in the form of a small roll, was secured in a proper opening. It contained information that led to the surprize and defeat of the Mahrattas, with the capture of their treasure, camels, and elephants. The native officer knew what the European did not, that the old sandals were carried by the messenger on his march, lest the concealed communication should be injured by friction, and merely put on as a *ruse contre ruse*, when he was taken prisoner.

Thus reader, I wish with humility to insinuate that you should examine my book very attentively, for it comes before you without the recommendation of a literary name, a high sounding title, or a powerful patron; and therefore should it contain any interesting matter,



it will resemble the *hurkaru*, you the officer, and I the old *subadar*, who assure you, with solemnity, that in it there is a great deal of truth.



INTRODUCTION.

THERE is nothing, it is presumed, in the following pages, contrary to good manners, received opinions, and social duties. It may therefore be asked, Why is the title page without a name? The writer may have a thousand reasons for anonymous publication; but, without enumerating them, he will give at once the history of this work, and his motive for declining immediate notoriety. On both subjects it is only proper to state, that he who now obtrudes himself on attention came home from India, after a long residence there, in a debilitated state of health, with a large family, under the well-founded expectation that solid independence awaited him; but so great and severe were his disappointments, that he retired to a mountain, where he pasted on the fireboard of his humble parlour, the singular order of the day issued by Napoleon, when First Consul, against suicide: "A soldier ought to know how to subdue sorrow, and the agitation of the passions; there is as much courage in enduring with firmness the pains of the heart, as



in remaining steady under the grape-shot of a battery. To abandon one's self to grief without resistance, to kill one's self in order to escape from it, is to fly from the field of battle before one is conquered." — At last, remembering the precept of Virgil, "*ne cede malis*," he sat down to write on India. A short Prospectus gave some publicity to his intention, and the proposal was countenanced by his Majesty's librarian, by his Royal Highness the Duke of York, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and two other distinguished personages. However, so very few answered his letters, that the hopes excited by these auspices began to give way to despondency. One day, while trying to rally his spirits, he cast his eye to the window which overlooked the road winding up the mountain, and saw a gentlemanly person, of the middle size, in a blue frock, leading a handsome grey nag, approaching, which was an unusual sight.

"I think I should know you," said the stranger, extending his hand, with a friendly and familiar aspect.

"Your face is that of an old Indian," replied the other, grasping the proffered hand; — "but the name —"

"Thoughtless," answered he; "the liver-complaint has altered us both; I should not have known you either, but for your Prospectus; — I came to see you, and put down my name;" and he pulled some bank notes out of his pocket.



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“ Not till the delivery,” said the author.

“ And I hope,” said Thoughtless, after some preliminaries, “ you have experienced much encouragement of a private and individual nature.”

“ Very little. I really fear I have mistaken the public taste.”

“ Your book is certainly addressed to the understanding, contrary to the modern system, which is to tickle the fancy, and occasionally become so pathetic that the heart almost breaks with a swell, and the soul rises towards the end into harmonic sublimity with the scene, till the curtain drops on a sort of ineffable felicity. — He who can effect this, may sport his curriole and livery, and breathe his nags at Brighton !”

“ My own thoughts precisely, in better drapery than my wardrobe affords. I have often felt inclined to suspend my labours on the book in question. The risk of a light work would be trifling, and should the style and matter have merit to force their way, Messrs. Longman and Co. would not hesitate to make a proposal for something more scientific. But my own adventures in India are common-place : — joined my regiment an ensign, rose in gradation, and served a few campaigns not of an interesting nature.”

“ The circumstances of my life have been more diversified — I shall send you my journal — use it — ‘ speak of me as I am — nothing extenuate ;’ — where



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fictitious names are used, add or diminish at pleasure; but where real actors are introduced, let no embellishment allure from justice and truth. You will perceive I wrote in the title page — ‘Fifteen Years in India, or, Sketches of a Soldier’s Life.’”

“That strikes me as happy — simple — unostentatious — it pledges to no particular line. A tangent may at any time be formed in favour of merit or expediency, as the practice is at the Horse Guards, where no promise of a step is ever given. Had it been Memoirs, Travels, or any of the designations heretofore used, some known course must have been pursued at the jog-trot of a set of *palankeen* boys from one regular stage to another, instead of being as free as King Lear’s fool to jump from the sublime to the ridiculous, and to chatter and grimace, just according to the romance of my disposition.”

“Exactly — you will be in the situation of a prudent minister of state who reserves to himself perfect liberty; for what is there in fifteen years in India? In that time, it is true, a man may have seen much and observed little. It is sufficient, then, to excite curiosity, but it is by no means binding as to any particular mode of gratification. But there is a third edition, explanatory of the first and second, namely, ‘being an attempt to describe persons and things in various parts of Hindostan.’”

“Equally guarded I protest; *parvis componere magna*, the three heads resemble those of Brahma,



Vishnu, and Sheva, in the cave of Elephanta, which are curious to behold, but so difficult to understand, that learned *Pundits*, and Christians deeply skilled in oriental lore, cannot agree as to the interpretation.

“An author should consider himself as opening a game at chess. He who aims at success, whether he play a regular Philidor party or a Gambit, must well consider before he pushes his meanest pawn, for one move at the outset may so entangle his pieces, confine his field of operation, expose his king to check, and disorganize the combination of his queen, rooks, bishops, and knights, that he may be mated under the very fire of his own towers, from taking up a position where his forces could not come into action.”

But, gentle reader, I most conscientiously declare that I aspire not at sporting either curricule or livery, nor do I wish to breathe my nags at Brighton, though the desire of beholding the smile of my Royal Master is near my heart. The highest flight my ambition has indulged in is to have a *shigrampo* of such dimensions as to contain twelve persons, great and small, with an abundance of warm cushions, to protect from the penetrating winter air of my native hills in journeying to church. All that is desirable in the *shigrampo* of Malabar, the *hackery* of Hindostan, the bullock coach of the Carnatic, and the *palankeen* carriage of Calcutta, might be adopted; for a pair of mules or Scotch



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poneys, in plain clothing and harness, would transcend a couple of oxen, notwithstanding their delicious humps, silk housings, golden tassels, and silver bells; and a servant in clean drab surtout would be as ornamental as any *turbaned* driver. I would covet nothing more in the mansions of luxury, except a glass of good old Madeira or Port, instead of raspberry and ginger substitutes; yet the Vicar of Wakefield's wife was not better pleased with champagne of her own making, than my kind-hearted rib is when she mixes the ingredients in such just proportions that the acid does not prevail, or, as she technically says, "*predominate*;" nor the lusciousness hurt the vivacity or interfere with the transparency. Nevertheless, I am seriously inclined to think that with my *shigrampo*, and servant in clean drab surtout, I should not have "*les vapeurs noirs*," or in native phrase, "*the blue devils*," at home so often when a sigh assails me. "To be sure, my dear, as you say, we must strive to be contented; but I wish I was once more on the sweet little island of *Colabah*, taking an airing to the light-house, the band playing, and all your brother officers promenading and saluting the ladies with such grace and spirit. Then you know we would have a little tea party this evening and a dance, but I must forget those happy times." Then a tear starts to that eye whose beam has pleased mine for near twenty years; and really, sympathetic reader, one at present fills mine to think that I cannot kiss it away so as to prevent another



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from springing up when that deceiver Memory mocks her, by representing the past more fascinating than the present.

To conclude, trust me, I have more respect for your feelings, notwithstanding all the aforesaid trifling, and a better opinion of mankind in general (though I know human nature to be a curious mixture), than not to make it my ardent aim to afford you information and entertainment.



SKETCHES.

CHAPTER I.

To see an estimable friend depart
For Europe, agitates my pensive heart.
Adieu to scorching winds! Farewell, ye plains,
Long marches, camps, where war eternal reigns.
Welcome the comforts of his native soil,
In blest retirement sweet from by-gone toil.

THE prospect with which a man solaces himself who leaves his native land for the purpose of improving his condition, is to return home and enjoy the fruit of his enterprise. This fond hope, common to all speculators in India, makes it a subject of congratulation when any one is so fortunate as to realize the general expectation by taking a passage for Europe. But there is a struggle between joy and sorrow on both sides. Fifteen or twenty years must elapse before even a successful candidate for the favours of fortune can in common progression be in the state to which he looks forward with such anxiety. In the meantime his heart becomes linked to friends and associates, the anticipated separation from whom



becomes more and more painful as the hour approaches. At that period he again experiences some of the emotions of an exile. He lingers fondly, and hesitates to bid adieu, perhaps for ever, to companions endeared to memory by long community of pursuits, and participation in toil and danger.

Adventurers to India would not be so frequently disappointed, if, soon after arriving there, each fixed for himself the object of independence at a moderate and rational distance, with determined resolution to march steadily towards it, and there to stop. In taking the first steps for the acquisition of fortune, the mind is humble and easily satisfied; but this calm and philosophic contentment gives place to ambition, when the career becomes more rapid and easy. New desires then arise, hopes expand, and an exertion is made to increase what was once thought enough. One boundary is passed after another, till death either stops the march, or the traveller returns to his native soil, so much debilitated from long residence in a hot climate, as to be incapable of enjoying his hoarded wealth.

The Company's immense army is officered by young gentlemen of family, respectability, and good education. They go out at a tender age, and the lapse of a few months places them at an apparently hopeless distance from the objects dearest to their affections. On joining their regiments in



the interior, and becoming fit for duty, they are sent on detachments to small out-stations, where they have frequently to pass the dreary wet season without a possibility of enjoying the consolation of society or friendship. Placed in command of whatever number of Sepoys the exigency of the service may require, with merely the assistance of native officers, they are entirely left to the resources of their own minds. In the civil department, the Company's servants are generally replaced by youths of high connections, and very often of most finished education, which is carried on in oriental literature for a considerable time after their arrival in India; and although they have advantages as to society and comfort far beyond those of the military branch, still the attendance on college lectures, and the great labour required by such as are not blessed with natural talents to pass the examinations, make life very irksome. Another class consists of the young officers of the King's regiments in India, who generally experience much mental pain before they become reconciled by habituation to the country.

These three classes of fine young men at setting out in life feel the emotions so beautifully described by Campbell in his *Pleasures of Hope*. While surrounded by friends and the tender ties of kindred in their native land — while their young hearts feel the influence of that sweet affection which exists between brother and sister, and perhaps



begin to warm with sensations of a still more tender nature for a sister's fair friend — they stand at summer eve, and behold the prospect glittering in all the enchantment given by distance; but upon approaching the tempting scene, the rocky and barren projections of that mountain are perceived which fancy had conjured into those green spots on which the aching eye rests so seldom in life.

It has been suggested to the reader, by the lines at the head of this chapter, that an adventurer to India was regretting the departure of a companion for his native soil, while at the same time he rejoiced at the accomplishment of his friend's wishes; and the cause of this intermixture of sorrow and pleasure has been explained. Both were military men who had seen some service together; and these sketches of a soldier's life will open with a relation of the manner in which Lieutenant George True was enabled to return home.

This officer had the honour of holding a commission in one of his Majesty's regiments, and having been long exposed on very active campaigns to the utmost severity of the climate, his health was in a declining state. Strict temperance and a good constitution had enabled him to keep at his post, while many of his companions found an untimely grave instead of that distinction at which they aimed. His private affairs, however, were of a nature to preclude the prospect of returning to the renovating breezes of his native hills, and he perse-



vered in his profession, in the hope of honourable fame and glorious independence.

The irruption of a predatory horde into the Company's provinces in the south of Hindostan Proper, had rendered the march of his corps from Baroda necessary, in the month of June. At this period all nature is parched. The thirsty earth throws back with sickly languor the burning rays of the sun, and the air, heated to a suffocating degree, sweeps along whirling clouds of dust. But the benevolence of Providence about this time intercepts the glare by spreading a thick canopy of damp clouds over this torrid part of the earth, which soon open their flood-gates and pour down a deluge of refreshing rain, that revivifies expiring vegetation and animal life. In the awful intervening space, however, burning fever drinks the juices of many a distracted brain. A major and twenty-three soldiers of this brave regiment fell dead under coups de soleil in one day. Death in this form is terrible to contemplate. The moment the system is affected by the atmosphere, the blood no longer circulates; and if immediate steps be not taken to remove the obstruction by copious bleeding, a relief often very difficult to be procured, life for ever ceases. No enemy being in the vicinity, the marches were made at a very early hour, to avoid the intense heat of the meridian sun. On the day previous to that in which a material change occurred in the prospects



of Mr. True, the force had reached a village called Bowla, situated in the Run, a deserted tract of country so named, between the gulfs of Kutch and Cambay. Thence to the town of Limree extends a cheerless sandy plain. The villages were all in ruins, having been desolated by the dreadful famine of 1802. Indeed it is surprising that even the poor and miserable should have ever thought of seeking an asylum in this unfriendly region; for the earth is of such a thirsty nature, that the deepest wells will not yield water, nor the best made *tanks* contain it. Nondoudra is the next halting place, and during the march thither the long-looked-for *monsoon* commenced.

At two o'clock on the morning of that eventful day, the moon was dimly seen at intervals, through dark clouds. The British camp was, however, often visibly revealed by vivid flashes of lightning that illuminated the zenith, and rushed with fiery broad course into the remote horizon, accompanied by awful and sublime peals of thunder. Natives, camels, elephants, and bullocks, pressed by their loads, were ready to move off with the line drawn up in front. Here the Sepoy's wives might be seen, tying their children on the backs of bullocks, or placing them, like poultry in baskets, to be carried on their own heads. There the numerous servants of the officers, some with lanterns searching where their master's tents stood, lest any thing should be left behind; others



with chairs and breakfast apparatus, conducting greyhounds in leash, carrying couches, or leading horses, and followed by grass-cutters and water-carriers — in short, there were at least seven native followers for every fighting man. But it was melancholy to see the numerous European sick of the force carried along on men's shoulders, some dying, and others in burning fever; and it would have produced a smile on the face of the most serious, to behold the convalescents mounted on bullocks, and laughing heartily at each other when left sprawling by the plunges of their horned supporters, unaccustomed to such obstreperous loads.

Two miles from Bowla the flood-gates of the heavens opened, and the rain fell in torrents. For some time the sandy expanse, which had not tasted moisture for six months, drank freely the mighty deluge; but as the line proceeded very slowly, being forced to halt frequently for the rear, this march occupied several hours, and the road at length became so soft and heavy, that the beasts of burden sunk to their bellies. Then were seen tents and boxes rolling in the mud, while the field pieces were dragged along with great difficulty. In short, order was changed into confusion, and as indescribable a clamour was produced by the crowd on the baggage flank, as if the enemy's cavalry had been dashing among them with their merciless spears.

Lieutenant True was the officer of the rear guard. During the march, finding himself so

exceedingly faint as to be unable to keep his seat in the saddle against the pelting of the storm, he had sent his groom for a *dooly*, and discovering a little to the right a *pagoda*, near a ruined village, he alighted under its shelter, and stood leaning on the neck of his horse. The objects before him seemed to grow black, and the whole scene became of a shadowy tint. In fact, he felt as if the hand of death was upon his heart. "Gracious God," said he, "is this the end of my earthly hopes? Preserve me, for the sake of her I love, and the dear objects of our affection." He fainted and fell. At this moment a profuse gush of blood from his nose relieved him. After bleeding copiously, he felt much better. His docile *Arabian* had stood near him. "Thank God," said he, regaining his seat, "I feel now able to proceed;" and he soon overtook his guard, and reached the camp, where the surgeon having prescribed for him, he retired to his tent for repose.

"Saheeb," said his servant Ballo soon after, opening the tent door, "one soldier other regiment, master speak to want."

"Let him come in." He entered the *marquee*, and making a fine curve with his right arm, touched the polished front of his shining cap, and withdrawing the same gracefully, stood in the erect posture of "Attention."

"Ah! what do I see? Am I awake? As I live, the face of Bob Gordon."



"I am indeed the identical Bob, and right happy to see your Honour in the land of the living."

"This is wonderful!—When did you leave home, and what forced you to turn soldier?"

"Misfortune, Sir; I left Ireland only a year ago, and recognised you this morning passing with the rear-guard through our lines."

"Ah, Bob! Several years have passed away since I left my native land, and emerged from the joyous stage of school-boy. In all my wanderings I have not met a soul from the spot that cherished my childhood; nor have I received any account from home, having never written, for private reasons. But the sight of you has brought early associations feelingly to mind. I have many questions to ask; but, first, sit down and tell me the cause of your own misfortunes."

"Then you have not heard of your father's return to his native soil."

"Eh, Bob!—Is my dear father in Ireland? and has he overcome the persecution of fortune?"

"He has, indeed, Sir.—Rolling in wealth, he would give it all to witness the return of you, his only son."

"Wonderful! And my uncle, what of him? is he alive, and still the same?"

"Alas! Sir; still so."

"How melancholy to think of him, and what he might have been! 'Oh that a man should put an enemy in his mouth to steal away his



brains!" And the worthy Mr. Stanhope, what of him?"

"A distressing account, Sir. A villain, in the mask of a gentleman in holy orders, seduced his beautiful and only daughter. The father threatened to prosecute the clergyman, who was of the Catholic church, unless he changed his religion and married her. Dreading this, the horrible miscreant induced his victim to forget the strongest tie of nature, and to father her child on the author of her own being. The distracted parent died broken-hearted. His daughter, stung with remorse, confessed on her death-bed, almost immediately after, the horrible part she had acted. The priest fled; and her only surviving brother sold off his property, changed his name, and exiled himself for ever from his native country."

"Torturing thought, that the depravity of human nature should produce such a tragedy!"

"But say, Bob, how are the family of Rose Mount? Well, I hope."

"Ah no! The worthy old magistrate became a bankrupt; and his son-in-law, young Mr. Sinclair, who married the lovely Miss Fanny, lost his whole fortune in the crash, and is now a struggler in life, with several children to support. There was a bill of exchange drawn and accepted by the old gentleman, who was in the habit of taking that freedom, on his son, then engaged in commerce. It happened that he was embarrassed, and unable



to honour the unexpected bill when presented, and to secure his credit disavowed the acceptance. The enraged holder lodged an information against the father for forgery. He withdrew till it could be explained and adjusted, but was soon after killed by a fall from his horse."

"And how is old farmer Glendinning? His pretty daughter, the gay, thoughtless Mary, is, I hope, happy."

"The fate of poor Mary, Sir, is a sad one. She was seduced by a captain of yeomanry. She had received a religious education, and would have resisted the insinuating addresses of a suitor so much above her in rank and fortune; but the son of Sir Walter Sennit had married a miller's daughter, and made a lady of her by education, and poor Mary concluded that her own station in life was more respectable and less liable to objection. The circumstances of her fate were so affecting that I, who am poetically inclined, could not resist the temptation of endeavouring to immortalize her story in a ballad, for the instruction of every pretty girl."

"Which, I doubt not, is very pathetic: I shall trouble you, at your leisure, to write me out a copy. I hope your verses will record poor Mary's fate when the present generation has passed away. But tell me of the worthy curate—how has fortune dressed his silver locks?"

"He has found happiness on earth, Sir, which he so well deserves, as a foretaste of the felicity that



awaits him in heaven. But the particulars require some detail. You know he was very poor, and had a numerous family to support. There is a parish that yields its rector an income of one thousand a year, although the church never contains five persons in it as a congregation, for the parishioners are Catholics. The rector, who lived at a distance, quarrelled with his bishop: his Grace ordered him to have divine service performed regularly; adding, it had only lately come to his knowledge that the contrary was the case. Knowing it was in vain to expostulate, he was forced to fix the curate's salary very high. Seventy pounds a year induced a young man to undertake the ludicrous task of preaching a sermon every Sunday to the clerk. He persevered for some time; but one day, instead of doing so, he lectured, and pointed out extempore the necessity of strict conformity to Christian doctrine. The bishop heard of it; and wrote a letter to the rector, informing him that his Grace was not only surprised, but utterly confounded, at the irregular proceeding in his parish. That the Almighty only knew what his curate might say, in the latitude he was giving to the unrestrained flights of absurd and whimsical imagination. 'If this practice,' said his Grace, 'which directly strikes at the root of every thing orthodox, be not visited with the utmost severity, the Lord only knows where it may end, even in the destruction of the Protestant church, and the overthrow of our



venerable constitution.' The rector was forced to dismiss his curate, being greatly apprehensive that he might be prohibited from having one, if he did not show that he concurred with his Grace in thinking the irregularity seriously reprehensible. Upon this he offered old Mr. Meekly 100*l.* a year to do his duty, who moved to that part of the country, to the no small regret of all our neighbourhood. But his situation and merit reached the ear of the Lord Primate, whose goodness is universally known; and Dr. Stuart wrote him with his own hand a letter, notifying that he had heard of his great worth, and felt happiness in being now able to present him with a living of seven hundred per annum."

"And how are the loyal tenantry, Bob? Do they continue to commemorate the battle of the Boyne on the 12th of old July?"

"No, Sir; that custom is discontinued: for, about five years ago, there was an actual battle on that occasion, instead of a sham fight, which induced the magistrates to prohibit it. The Orange boys had, as usual, made great preparations, and assembled with flags and streamers:—they formed in two divisions; one of which, commanded by King William, marched down the slope, to the tune of the Boyne Water; while the other, under King James, was drawn up on the opposite side of the Devarnagh river. A smart discharge of blank cartridges announced the attack. But lo! in the hottest part

of the engagement, a body of Roman Catholic youths, from the mountains of Slievegullion and Killeary, started up from an ambuscade with pitchforks, grapes, and scythes, and assailed the two kings. The Duke of Schomberg was actually killed in the river, and the water of the stream was reddened with the blood of both parties; for the Orange boys fought desperately in honour of the day with the butts of their firelocks."

"Unhappy country, where political wounds are not permitted to heal!"

"But tell me, Bob, are the manners of the credulous people about Mount Norris and Loughgilly changed? Do they believe in ghosts, witches, fairies, lougherymen, and banshees?"

"Yes, indeed, Sir, as much as ever; and it is believed as true as the Gospel, that a lougheryman appeared to Farmer Jones, of Rathcarberry, only a short time ago."

"Pray, Bob, mention the particulars."

"The farmer was sitting in the parlour, which was also his bed-room. Being fond of music, he was playing some of his merry tunes on his Irish organ, as he calls the bagpipes, and occasionally talking to his wife, who was in bed. He was enjoying his glass of warm native too, at intervals, for it was a cold winter night. The door stood a little ajar, and in the middle of a favourite tune — 'I'm over young to marry yet' — a little slender figure, about two feet high, of exceedingly beautiful form and



proportion, with laughing black eyes, and a red cap, came skipping into the room. He danced with astonishing grace, swung in air, and kept such fine time, that the delighted musician played on with pleasure and surprize. At length he had to rest from fatigue. But the lougheryman nodded for more music, and kept nodding till he gained his wish. The farmer, who is a merry man, enjoyed the fun, and played several of his best tunes for the little dancer; and his wife, who is of the Methodist persuasion, positively says, to this day, that she heard her husband several times saying he was tired and could play no more; and that at last he raised his voice in anger — ‘Get out of my sight, you little unreasonable brat; you would never be satisfied.’

“That very night the flames burst out of the house in the dead of sleep, and nothing but life was saved; and it is said the lougheryman set the house on fire in three different places, in revenge for not getting enough of music; and that if he had been gratified, he would have filled Mr. Jones’s pockets with gold.”

The lieutenant was amused and interested with these and other stories that reminded him of home. — Such is the case, O reader! with every man absent for several years from his native place. As a bird, forced by want to quit the nest which contains the objects dearest to affection, flutters around, and strains each pinion but to return; so does the



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FIFTEEN YEARS IN INDIA.

adventurer to India, in all his wanderings, mentally circle, like the mariner's needle, to that north pole of his heart, the scene of his boyish days: when he regains it, he finds the hills, valleys, mountains, and rivers where they were; but those who gave life and rapture to the remembered scene, where are they?—Many of them gone, as we shall shortly be, to

That undiscovered country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns.



CHAP. II.

Here *Gunga's* banks terrific scenes display,
Idolatry stalks forth in open day.
Grim death like lightning human life assails,
And pale disease o'er banish'd health prevails;
Vice glares with specious aspect undismay'd,
While virtue hides her lovely face afraid !

THE Hoogly, on the eastern bank of which the city of Calcutta stands, is the western arm of the Ganges ; and the natives call it, as well as many other rivers, *Gunga*, being the name of one of the three goddesses of waters. She is fabled to have been brought to light in the same way nearly as *Minerva* — from the brain of *Brahma*.

In going up this fine river, the observer, if he be a man of sensibility, is strongly affected with what he sees. The luxuriance of nature and the grandeur of the scene please his eye, while the customs and manners of men make his heart bleed. He beholds many an emaciated human being, worn away to the last gasp of lingering existence, brought from a distant residence to expire near the sacred stream. The pains of death are often embittered by forcing the muddy water down his throat ; for when the recovery of any person is despaired of, his immediate friends hurry him off to the river, in the hope that



the goddess will restore him miraculously to life, if they can force him to drink freely. Should any one die at home near the Ganges, it would be lamented as a great misfortune. When the grasping dispositions of mankind are considered, and it is recollected that those about a dying person share his property, the various accounts of the numerous murders perpetrated by seeming attention to this shocking custom need not be discredited. The wealthy pitch a tent, partly in the water, to screen the sick from the glare of the sun; in this the patient is placed, sometimes on a low cot, and oftener on the ground, with his head in the stream, — there to be restored to health by drinking plentifully, or to die with the certainty of immortal bliss. The poor are seen writhing in the pains of suffocation, under officious, mistaken kindness of friends, and lying all night in the water.

At the same time he views the smoke ascending in curling volumes from many a funeral pile; and the useful stream bearing away the remains of those whose friends could not afford to burn them. On each bank his sight is shocked occasionally with dead bodies, rotten and torn by fishes, mouldering to kindred clay on the spot where the tide chanced to cast them, for no man will remove them, it being contamination to touch a dead body whose caste is unknown.

Very few Europeans remain long in vigorous

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health. Were a country gentleman, in the full enjoyment of all his bodily faculties in this happy climate, to be suddenly transported to St. John's church, in Calcutta, during the performance of divine service in the month of June, he would fancy himself seated among ghosts. He would look upon their sallow countenances with fear, and see the big drops like tears coursing each other on the anxious brow, notwithstanding the large fans suspended overhead, and drawn briskly backwards and forwards, by means of ropes passed from them through the windows of the church, by natives outside, to produce an artificial circulation of air. If he followed any gentleman to his home, he would see him there throw off his coat, and put on a light white jacket, as a relief from his sufferings; and on passing the burying ground beyond Chouringhee, the stranger would there perceive, in the numberless tombs and monuments, ample evidence of the terrible mortality prevailing in the land of his sojourn.

The absence of health is more manifest here than in many other parts of India. Men who follow sedentary employments, that require close mental attention, are most numerous, and soonest decline, in a province which is peculiarly inimical to the European constitution; for such quantities of putrescent matter are left by the inundations of the Ganges and Burrumpootre, that they infect the air with malignant vapours, which prove more fatal to



strangers than to the natives. This remark is indeed applicable to all Hindostan; in every part of which the European is prematurely wasted by slow but sure degrees, if not assailed by fever or acute hepatitis.

There is no doubt, however, that if a proper regimen were observed from the first arrival of an European in a hot climate, the preservation of health would be of much longer duration. It is probable that the great Creator in his wisdom has suited the constitution of man to that soil of which he is formed; but plants, with care, flourish where they were never intended to grow, and it is surprising that so many skilful naturalists seem not to consider the effect of a similar process on their own body and mind. Most young men live in India thoughtlessly and luxuriously, as long as they are able. Before they prepare for defence, they are taken by the enemy. Nature and instinct have directed the natives of different climates to adopt that course of living best calculated to preserve health; without which all other earthly blessings lose the power of conferring happiness. Should it not, therefore, be the object of every sojourner in a strange land to conform as much as possible to the mode of living adopted by the aborigines? Personal comfort soon induces a man, in a hot climate, to dress lightly: but the palate is a deceiver; for as the powers of digestion decrease, it requires and craves to be gratified with what is pernicious. The Hin-



doos live chiefly on vegetables: rice is the principal of their food; and the use of strong liquors may be said to be unknown. That diet preserves the fluids of the body free from inflammation on the part of the stomach, and they enjoy during the usual course of existence regular physical health, and many of them are long-lived. If you adventure to India, do as I have done; dine often on boiled rice and goats' milk, and you will probably live to enjoy the *otium cum dignitate* to which you aspire, during the decline of life, in your native land.

According to Faithorn on Bilious Disorders, the liver is an organ of the most general and universal importance and use in man: its acute or chronic affections often appear under the form hydrocephalus, cough, asthma, consumption, mesenteric disease, stomach complaints, headaches, melancholy, debility, flatulence, and costiveness. In our attempts therefore to preserve health, our success must depend on enabling this grand source of life and vigour to perform its due functions; by which alone the bowels are emptied, the blood cleansed, the strength recruited, and the mind invigorated. Now as there is some unknown atmospheric peculiarity in India which produces superaction of the liver, does it not follow, that an inflammatory mode of living must be pernicious?

The body and the mind are so intimately connected, that the one cannot perform its functions without the co-operation of the other; and grief



may therefore be the cause of much mortality in India. Disappointed expectations on arrival in that country, separation from every object held dear, and the very remote prospect of return home, produce the blackest melancholy in minds of great sensibility. In short, these emotions have driven several valuable young men to commit suicide; for nostalgia is not restricted to the Swiss.

At the head of this chapter it has been said, that vice glares with specious and bold aspect, while virtue hides her lovely head, in Hindostan. That the reader may fully comprehend the truth of this strong remark, it is necessary for him to reflect upon the idolatry of Brahma, which sanctions a general indulgence of the gross passions of human nature to such a degree, that, if we may believe assertions founded on good authority, there are mysteries in the celebration of some of its secret rites similar to those once performed in honour of Venus, at her temples in the Isle of Cyprus. But the facility with which atonement can be made for the commission of the most horrible crimes, is a demonstration that they are often perpetrated. Yet many people argue, that the Hindoos are an innocent and harmless moral race. Quite the contrary is matter of fact. The mass of the general population is in a state of monstrous depravity. Lying and perjury are so common, that an oath goes for nothing in a court of justice. In the city



of Benares, the fountain of Brahminical lore, when Lord Valentia visited it, there were four hundred natives, who supported themselves by giving false evidence in courts of law. Let the sceptic reflect upon the numbers that are sacrificed every year in pilgrimages to Badrinaut, Juggernaut, and several other temples in India; let him think of what is before the public on the subject of Hindoo infanticide; the burning of wives with their husbands; and the encouragement of suicide, or voluntary sacrifice, so general in India; and surely he will change his doubts for abhorrence and detestation.

The state of concubinage, in which so many of the native females live, corrupts all morality and decency. Nearly every European private soldier has a family of half-casts; and there have been officers of rank and civilians in the country not contented without seraglios, like other nabobs, whom they learned to exceed in debauchery. But to resume our story.

“Well, George,” said one of Mr. True’s brother subs, dashing into his tent, followed by half a dozen of his friendly companions in arms, “my old boy, how are you after the *coup de soleil*? You must come to the mess to-night; we have thirty-seven guests.”

The evening air was still and refreshing; for the storm with which the monsoon commenced had cooled the burning earth, and calmed the troubled atmosphere. Nature seemed to have sunk into



repose from the violence of her late struggle, suggesting to the contemplative observer an idea of those calms that intervene as agreeable vicissitudes, in voyaging on the stormy ocean of human existence. The camp was all life and motion.

When the gun had announced the setting of the sun, and the drums, bugles, and trumpets along the line performed that fine point of war, "the retreat," Mr. True went to the mess. The guests now arriving, were received with frank politeness; they formed into circles before a spacious tent, the walls of which were thrown up all around for the circulation of every breath of air. Camp-tables, calculated for seventy or eighty guests, occupied the centre of this grand hall of canvass. A double row of clear wax-lights stood at proper intervals along their surface, shining with increased lustre through Indian table-shades. Here were servants with their masters' dinner apparatus, which the stewards took care to intermix, so that every guest might receive proper attention; and a *Parsee* stood behind each chair, ready to point out his master's place, and attend to his wants, as soon as Nuswangee, the messman, shrilly drawled out, — "*Gontleman, Denere on table-e!*"

Excellent cheer and good old wines soon excited a flow of spirits; and the luxuries of the East having allayed the edge of appetite, conversation began to circulate.

"Where is Duval, that he has not joined the force with you?"



“He was obliged to remain behind from a sad accident. A tiger hunt was formed a short time ago; the party came upon a large female in the act of suckling her cub; she sprang with amazing force at the trunk of the foremost elephant, upon which Duval was mounted: the other elephants, struck with panic at the exertions of their companion to shake off such a dreadful foe, disregarded the drivers, and scampered away from the scene of action.

“In the meantime, Duval had lodged a brace of bullets from a double-barrel in the body of the tiger; she staggered and fell, but recovering, and feeling the smart, she sprang on the back of the elephant, and our friend was precipitated to the ground by the violent plunges of the animal to get rid of such a load as the tiger, whose maddened claws and teeth tore the flesh in ridges from his mighty body. Duval having recovered from the shock of his fall, lodged another bullet from a pistol in the body of the tiger, which brought her once more to the ground, but again recovering, she seized him by the back in her monstrous mouth. Even in this desperate situation his presence of mind did not desert him; he drew his remaining pistol from his belt, and placing the muzzle of it over the panting heart of the tiger, lodged its contents in that vital part. The death-gasp of the monster relieved him from seemingly inevitable destruction, just as his companions came up to his assistance;



though lacerated, he is doing well ; and we all hope to see him join in time to have a dash at the Wagurs."

" Yes, indeed," said the political agent, seated near a young ensign, whose enquiries he kindly answered respecting the inhabitants of the neighbouring provinces, " some of the customs of these regions are as wonderful as the manners and habits of the people in general. Strange it is, that a country, in which hospitals are endowed to preserve with care the old and maimed of every description of animal, should permit insanity, idiotism, ulceration, and leprosy to shock the eyes of humanity in the streets of its cities ; yet to see this you have only to travel to Surat. And equally surprising it is, that men who are ready to tear an European to pieces for destroying the life of a peacock, a monkey, or a bullock, should notoriously put every female infant to death, and encourage beautiful virgins to sacrifice themselves on the funeral pile in the flames that consume the bodies of boys to whom they were betrothed when children, and whose lot it was to die before consummation ; yet the latter custom prevails throughout India, and the former is practised by the Ierajahs of the provinces of Kutch and Kattywar. Let me add, that if you continue thus curious, it will not be said hereafter of you

" *Cælum non animum mutant qui trans mare curreunt.*"

HORACE, *Epist.* XI. *Lib.* 1.



Which the surgeon translated — “The heaven, not the mind, of those changes who cross the sea.” — But some one corrected his error, in taking the wrong nominative case, and said — “I would construe it thus :

“*Qui* they who, *currunt* go, *trans* over, *mare* the sea, *mutant* change, *cælum* their climate, *non* not, *animum* their mind.”

“Bravo, bravissimo!” exclaimed a student from the college of Armagh.

“You will do well, my dear Sir,” said a young M.D. to an officer, who was complaining to him of the state of his health, “to continue the aperient plan, with the cooling medicines I have sent you, until the indications of the regularity and healthy action of the bowels appear. In short, the general cause of the frequent aberration from health in this climate seems to be the impediment offered to the due assimilation of the food by the absorption of the nascent principles of electricity in the circulating fluids of the body ; and as these principles are of an acid quality, those chemical agents which can neutralize them, and at the same time impart a vivifying stimulus to the system, are indubitably indicated. Nitre being a compound of nitric acid and potash, and nitric acid having an excess of oxygen in its formation, these circumstances point it out as an appropriate remedy. The aperient medicines are recommended to remove accumulation, and consequent congestion.”



The cloth being removed, claret began to revel in the exhilarated veins of all, while their ears were regaled by the harmonious tones of a full band. Spirit is excited by the well executed solo of the flourishing trumpet; emotion awakened by the soft round swell of the Kent bugles; and thrills of pleasure touch each heart on hearing the magic turns of the piercing clarionet and melodious flute, blending their tender, spreading or softened warblings with the deep relief of the duly attuned horns, bassoons, and kettle-drums.

Other senses were refreshed by the perfume of bubbling *hookahs*, that from silken carpets gave their odorous vapour, circling through silver snakes to the pleased palate, or by the gently rousing application of the scented maccaba, that passed in a superb box.

And it should not be forgotten, that an attentive observer might have seen the worthy colonel commanding the corps, handing from off his plate a tart to the interesting orderly boy of the band, who stood behind his chair ready to communicate the calls for particular pieces to the master in an adjoining tent, and slipping his pleasing gift to the youth, as if unwilling that the affectionate benevolence with which he treated every one under him should be known.

Our aged King's health being drunk in silence; the Prince Regent's with noble animation; the Duke of York and the army's with three times three; and the Duke of Clarence and the navy's



with a loud huzza and Rule Britannia, astonished the crowds of gazing Hindoos, who shook their beards, and murmured their thoughts to each other in deep re-echoed ejaculations.—The president then called upon the major for a song, and he gave — “Let the glass pass, drink to the lass,” with a joyous energy that made the table ring with “Encore !” after which, “Auld lang syne” was sung by Dr. Robertson, with pathos that spoke to the heart of the guests, whose hands were linked around the table, while a tear stole to the eye as memory recurred to the scenes of boyhood.

The ghurries were now striking twelve, and the shrill voices of the Sepoy sentries challenging, “Who come dere-e ?” “Rounds.” — “Vat ouns ?” “Grand rounds.” — “Vans one give cant line.” — “Ass an ouns, all is velle-e-e !” upon which the band was sent to repose, and the prudent guests stole away to enjoy refreshing sleep ; but some thirsty souls remained enjoying their bottle and well-spiced devils, till the generale beat at four o’clock.

It will be obvious to the reader, how many things have been omitted in this brief sketch of a military camp dinner in India. The *curries*, *paloies*, and *mullagatawnies* might have been described, and the ingredients which compose those eastern dishes specified, and more of the conversation might have been given. But enough has been said to demonstrate the importance of a mess to every



corps. A well regulated one preserves harmony, polishes manners, and improves the understandings of the officers. Where this bond of society brings them every day familiarly together in friendly intercourse, under necessary restrictions, no divisions into parties take place. Like a well regulated family, their habits become assimilated, and an affection like that of brotherly love is necessarily produced.

There are in every regiment some well educated officers, who improve their early advantages to the utmost ; and there is hardly a question which can arise on the subject of ancient or modern discoveries, but some one will be found capable of answering it. But it must also be acknowledged that there are others who form a direct contrast ; and in the fine corps in which Mr. True had the honour of serving, this was the case ; so that at one part of the table might be heard an animated discussion respecting the spirit of Miltiades, or a difference of opinion between Cæsar and Pompey ; while at another, there was a description given of the Persians pouring "*Wollies*" into the Russians ; and to the question — " Pray what fish is that before you ? " this answer was returned, " Really I do not know ; I am not *botanist* enough for that."



CHAP. III.

There, in Britannia's fertile verdant isle,
The cottage, garden, farm, and mansion smile.
No deadly serpent lurks beneath the rose ;
But whispering love may in the shade repose.
No dreary forests cover useful space —
A gallant peasantry supplies their place.

EVERY inhabitant of Great Britain should exult in the security he enjoys in his own country, on comparing it with other regions of the globe. Were he to travel over the northern parts of India, and see its population cooped up within walled cities ; were he to see hordes of Pindarries, with plunder in their van, desolating the plains ; were he to look upon the ruined villages and towns that every where bring a tear to the eye of sensibility ; and behold sometimes poor old men and women creeping from the ruins, as from the graves of departed happiness, near which they still lingered, with what grateful feelings would he afterwards view the smiling cottages that adorn the surface of his native soil, where a good lock and window-bolt are considered protection enough against those men, everywhere to be found, who are wolves to their fellow-creatures.

It must, however, be acknowledged that a different picture should, in truth, be given of other



parts of India. In Malabar, a country diversified with beautiful hill and dale, and watered by crystal streams flowing to the sea from the neighbouring mountains; in the Carnatic, in Mysore, in the Koncan, and in every tract long under the controul of Britain, walled towns and forts are forsaken by the peaceful peasantry, whose cottages begin to clothe vast plains, where desolation and solitude reigned. The golden melon and pumpkin may be seen in all the full blow of native luxuriance, overspreading the roofs of their dwellings, surrounded by groves of cocoa-nut trees, through which the broad-leaved plantain and climbing pepper-vine peep at every opening, and smiling chubby children, and groups of laughing females, may be viewed going down to the wells, with all the simplicity of patriarchal times.

In establishing this security and happiness, throughout so large a portion of Asia, which is entirely owing to the impartial justice of our glorious constitution, many acts of oppression, no doubt, hidden from the research of man, were committed; for have ever armies traversed a country with hostile banners, without producing deplorable effects; or have ever men been found, who were so virtuous, that some of them, in carrying plans into execution which had for their object the good of mankind, did not dishonour their cause by the gratification of their own passions? No man exists, who is further from being the sycophant of power



than he who now addresses the public : for it is durably impressed upon his understanding, that all governments should be watched, and forced to observe the rules of equity, because they are composed of men, and it is the nature of man to encroach upon the rights of his fellow-creatures. If therefore he ventures to praise the constitution of England, it is from mature conviction that it is the best in the world, and that we who live under it enjoy the greatest share of rational liberty, consistent with political security. But it is time to end this digression and resume the thread of our story.

Mr. True, having ascertained from Bob Gordon the particulars of his life, which are considered foreign to our subject, acquainted him with many circumstances in his own adventures in India, which we would accordingly narrate verbatim, had he not passed over some interesting matters, with the modesty becoming a brave man ; it is therefore necessary to guard his honour, and an author's veracity, by relating in the third person what it is thought proper to make known respecting this gentleman.

It has already been indirectly intimated to the reader, that he was of an ancient and most respectable family in the north of Ireland ; but early misfortune blighted his hopes in Europe, and it was with some difficulty he obtained an ensigncy in a regiment in India.



No situation can be more lively and agreeable than that of a young officer on board an Indian, during his passage out. Hope presents to his youthful mind a bright picture. The captain and officers of the ship are generally attentive and gentlemanly; and a large party of ladies and brother passengers sit down every day to excellent cheer, and exhilarating wines, at the cuddy table, while the evenings are spent in dancing on the quarter deck, either to an organ or the ship's band. At the same time, the lee-side is occupied by the soldiers and their wives, whose unsophisticated steps form a ludicrous contrast to the graceful movements on the other quarter. Time flies, and his flight is unheeded amidst the diversions found in music, books, drawing, backgammon, chess, and piquet. It is most to be dreaded, in such a situation, that quarrels should arise, and disturb the harmony that ought to reign; but fortunately on this occasion there were so many old officers returning to their regiments, and such proper discipline exercised by the senior, who commanded the troops on board, that every aberration from concord was checked, and the whole kept in proper tune. Nothing was wanting but a few pretty girls, to make out a quadrille, or a love story; but it so happened that no Celia went to the land of husbands at this time, and our young adventurer therefore had no opportunity of losing his heart.



The monotony of a long voyage is always great, where there can be little but sea and sky to engage the sight, and the screams of aquatic birds to recreate the ear. Madeira, the peak of Teneriffe, the channel of Mozambique, the Island of Joanna, and the distant appearance of Ceylon, have been often described, and it need only be said, that a fine view of St. Thomas's Mount, near Fort St. George, was gained without having witnessed any very important occurrence; and the clear blue cloudless sky of the Coromandel coast shed its azure cheerfulness on the mind of Ensign True, while he surveyed from the poop those new objects which arose to amuse and interest him; for although he had read many descriptions of Madras roads, and of landing at Fort St. George, the reality as far exceeded what he had conceived, as the grandeur of nature surpasses the finest panorama executed by the ablest artist.

Before a distinct view was obtained of the shining white buildings of Madras, the bright sandy beach, and tall palmira-trees that beautify the shore, the natives were beheld as if walking on the smooth glass-like surface of the serene ocean, whose bosom was only fanned by zephyrs that carried the ship imperceptibly towards her destination. These children of Neptune were known by the captain. Leaving their catamarans (which are little more than a log of wood and a paddle) fastened to the chains, they climbed the side like monkeys, and accosted



him as an old acquaintance, but with such respect as is paid to a God. Nearly naked, having only a cloth round the loins, and a cap made of mat on the head, their slight and agile forms, their jetty bodies shining from being anointed with oil, and their intelligent countenances, formed an interesting spectacle, which was soon followed by groups of tall graceful figures rustling on the deck in long white muslin robes, and large gold ear-rings, looking more like fine Irish women painted black than men who were brought alongside by Mussoola boats, loaded also with a variety of fruits and refreshments. These boats are admirably calculated to meet the violence of the surf on the Coromandel coast, which is so great as to render it very dangerous to go on shore in any other. The rowers watch the approach of the first billow, and with great dexterity manage their long oars so as to raise the stem of the boat to receive the shock which dashes it forward to a great distance, while with loud shouts they receive the shower of foam and spray that follows them. Having just time to recover, another wave, still more mountainous, heaves the boat aloft and precipitates it headlong, groaning and spouting the salt fluid from its planks that bend like whalebone, for they are sewed together with the fibres of the cocoa nut, called *coir*, the boats being flat-bottomed, with high sides and no keels. Another surf sent Ensign George True high and dry on the beach.



Assembled on the shore to see the troops and passengers land, there were crowds of spectators, whose Asiatic costume and gesture imparted an indescribable novelty to the scene, while the bustle and competition among the natives for the advantages of carrying the luggage to the Fort, their solicitations to be employed as servants, the earnestness with which they presented their characters, and the extraordinary idiom of the English language through whose medium they endeavoured to set forth their former services, produced such busy confusion, that Mr. True stood for some time lost in wonder. The recruits for the regiments on the Madras establishment, who were generally Irish lads, expressed their astonishment in loud exclamations.

“ Arrah, Pat, only look at the coaches wid the black ladies, carried, by my salvation ! on the backs of naked human cratures. Och ! man alive, hear the bells ! and how they grunt and keep the time wid their legs and arms together. Fat would your moder and sister Juddy, at Ballyporeen, say to see dis, my jewel ! ”

What excited Paddy's surprise were the numerous palankeens, conveying the native clerks from the offices in the Fort to Black-town, for it was now evening in the month of July. One of these hackney conveyances soon after transported Mr. True to the tavern, a staff-sergeant having taken charge of the soldiers, and marched them off without delay



to the depôt at Poonamallie. Next morning he paid his respects to the authorities at Madras, and was ordered also to the depôt, to await an opportunity of joining his corps on the Malabar coast. This did not happen till the month of October, during which time he made frequent visits to the presidency, and saw much of the society at Madras. The grandeur and pomp in which the governor, commander-in-chief, members of council, and principal civilians lived, naturally surprised a youth new to the luxury of the East; but the sensations of pleasure which these fascinations imparted, were counterbalanced by the torment he endured from the bites of musquitoes, and the distressing heat of the climate.

Poonamallie is situated a march inland from Fort St. George. To the different villages around Mr. True often rode, being curious to witness the idolatrous processions of the natives, and their veneration for the Brahminy Bull. At this season the Carnatic presents a barren and parched level aspect to the beholder, except in the vicinity of towns, where, by artificial irrigation, green spots are produced that smile with all the charms of vegetation, and meet the pleased eye amidst the brown sandy desert-like prospect. The buffalo is the animal in general use for all purposes of husbandry. Herds of these ferocious looking creatures were roaming over the plains. Frightened at the European costume, they would cock their ears and tails, raise



their backs and noses, gaze a little, and then turn and run, shaking their slate coloured huge sides, to the nearest *tank* or river, and plunge in the water, just keeping their eyes, horns, and tails above the gratefully cool fluid.

No rain fell till September, when showers were frequent, and the monsoon began to threaten. It generally sets in with violence in the latter part of October, when the flag-staff of Fort St. George is struck, and ships are directed not to approach the roads for three months. During this period, while the floods of heaven deluge the plains of the Carnatic, no rain falls on the coast of Malabar, but a fine alternation of land and sea breezes prevails, for the monsoon commences in the beginning of June, and is over before it sets in on the Coromandel coast. This strange phenomenon is occasioned by the stupendous Ghauts whose height arrests the clouds that convey fertility from the ocean, and produce a peculiarity in a region where the climate is naturally the same as to latitude.

The earth, thus refreshed and renovated, yields one good crop of rice in the year; but where artificial moisture is procured, two harvests are reaped. Water is raised for this beneficial purpose in an ingenious way; on the bank of a well or river, much below the level of the fields, an upright strong post is erected, to the top of which a lever is fixed, that moves on a central fulcrum. To one end of the lever a rope is attached of such length as to drop,



with a leather bag tied to it, into the water when the beam is depressed, but when raised the bag strikes against an embankment, and empties the contents into a channel which conveys it to fertilize the neighbouring plantations. The man who manages this machine runs up several steps cut along the lever, till he places his foot above the fulcrum, and turns it so that the bag falls into the water and fills; seeing which, and poising himself with nice dexterity, he runs up the opposite way till he comes to that part where his weight is sufficient to raise the object of his labour. In this manner he will continue running backwards and forwards as quick as thought, raising at every turn a considerable quantity of water, till a fine stream flows to every part of his plantation.

Nothing can exceed the address and ingenuity of the natives of the Carnatic. The Madras jugglers are the most expert in India, and rival those of China in astonishing feats of art, swallowing swords, vomiting fire, charming snakes, balancing weights, leaping and tumbling over sharp-pointed weapons, so as to amaze every beholder. All the inhabitants of the provinces under this presidency enjoy perfect security in their property and persons, and amidst their cocoa-nut and plantain groves taste perhaps as much real happiness as falls to the lot of man. Their virtues are industry, passive obedience, and contentment; but lasciviousness, falsehood, and selfishness are prominent traits in



their character. All the peninsula of India from the river Kisthna may be said to belong to the government of Fort St. George; for the only native states which preserve the shew of independence are those of the Rajahs of Mysore, Travancore, and Cochin, who are in fact merely tenants of the East India Company. The population of the presidency, exclusive of the subjects belonging to the three princes above mentioned, was estimated at twelve millions, but it will be found now to exceed fifteen; and if the whole be taken together, the mass would be above twenty millions of souls.

This vast extent of territory is divided into districts, over which the Company's civil servants preside as judges, magistrates, collectors, and assistants. Justice is administered according to the Gentoo and Mahomedan law; but there is a supreme court at Fort St. George, consisting of three judges, and a full establishment of barristers and attorneys, whose jurisdiction is very considerable. The population is controlled by upwards of 200 civilians, and an army of fifty thousand men, the expences of whose establishments exceeded £5,000,000, which was more than the revenue by £400,000 per annum, so that the government was upwards of £9,000,000 in debt; but this was counterbalanced by a surplus revenue in Bengal, and by the great improvement expected from the peace and security then fully established throughout the provinces subject to Madras.



The principal article of trade consists of piece goods which are paid for in specie, and the exports exceed the imports very considerably; but as a commercial establishment, this presidency is inferior to Bombay, although second only to Bengal in political consequence. That it is not subject to such extremes of heat as our more northerly possessions in India, will perhaps surprise the reader; the thermometer ranges at Madras during the whole year from 70° to 91° , so that with the assistance of *punkoes* and *tatties* the houses are kept agreeably cool even in the hottest day. The European families at Madras reside in garden houses, generally of one story high, but whose pillars, virandas and terraces might remind a beholder of the grandeur of Grecian temples; and the stucco made of shells with which they are finished has the beautiful polish of marble. The gardens, and the fine shady roads about Madras, are extremely agreeable to a new-comer: exercise is generally taken along these fine avenues before breakfast, for the morning is delightful in India. The forenoon is spent in paying and receiving visits, and in lounging with the ladies. *Tiffin* is served up at one, after which all idlers take a siesta, or spend the afternoon in reading. In the evening the fashionables sport their gay equipages on the mount road, and having shewn themselves off around the cenotaph erected to the memory of Lord Cornwallis, return to dinner, after which a ball and supper, or perhaps theatricals



in the pantheon, by amateurs who aim solely at pleasing the ladies, close the daily scene.

One of his Majesty's ships having to go round to Bombay for repair, the opportunity was favourable for sending the recruits to the Malabar coast, and accordingly Ensign True embarked in charge of several detachments. The soldiers were distributed among the sailors, and he was invited to join the officers' mess, where he experienced an agreeable and cordial reception. There were two other passengers on board, a fine-looking old French gentleman and his adopted daughter, whom the captain very politely accommodated on their return from Pondicherry to Mahé, a beautiful settlement near Tellicherry.

The young lady was at first sea-sick, but she made her appearance at divine service on Sunday, when the quarter-deck was covered with a sail-cloth awning, and the sides screened round with the flags of the ship, for the comfortable reception of all on board, to whom the captain read prayers, and one of Sterne's sermons. Mr. True entirely forgot his devotional duty that day, for his eye feasted by stealth on the most bewitching object he had ever seen. She was about twelve years of age, and had all the pleasing roundness and fascinating bloom of approaching maturity, which the female form displays about that period in hot climates. Her dress was a simple but tasteful white muslin robe; and the only ornament she wore was a half-blown



artificial rose, which the eye rested upon, but rather to behold the beautiful virgin swell of the bosom in which it was placed. Her auburn hair was negligently but elegantly turned up with a comb, and shining ringlets played in natural curls on her temples of snow. Her face and figure were those of one of the most beautiful daughters of Eve, with soft but penetrating blue eyes, whose brightness forced the gaze of admiration to withdraw, but whose attraction quickly brought back the runaway. Her features were exquisitely regular, but it was the infantine sweetness playing upon them, combined with an archness coming from the soul, that gave the captivating expression to them, which the young ensign could not resist.

Having to deliver stores at Trincomallie, the ship lay-to in Back-bay under the flag-staff, from which point the fort and ridge on which it stands appear to advantage. Mr. True was sitting on the side sketching the scene, and he had introduced the castle of Osnaburgh in the distance, and shaded the whole, when Monsieur Fortier, who was standing behind looking over his shoulder, exclaimed — “Bravo, bravissimo! — Benè, benè, tres bien” — with a look of great complacency. — “It is very well — permit me to look — strengthen here de shade a little more, and the light dere will produce one grand improvemong. Pardonnez moi, — I will shew it to Nannette.” So saying he skipped off calling in a shrill tone — “Ma chere Nannette,”



and her sylph-like form came out of the round-house to meet him. She admired the sketch, and returned it with her own fair hand, and this slight accident led to a closer acquaintance. Monsieur Fortier said he would feel pleasure in hearing the youth read part of Charles the Twelfth, for the purpose of correcting his French pronunciation, and Mademoiselle most graciously lent him "Elizabeth," with "Paul and Virginia."

One day he was leaning over the railing of the poop, so that he looked into the open window of Miss Nannette's cabin, at which she was sitting, with drawings and books before her on a table, but at that moment she was braiding up her beautiful hair and looking in a dressing glass, seemingly with great pleasure. He forgot himself, or never suspected that she might understand Latin, for he ejaculated with much feeling from the 5th ode of Horace —

"Cui flavam religas comam

"Simplex munditiis!"

"Je ne sais pas," said she in the sweetest tone of playful delight, and added with naiveté, in a childish half-angry half-pleased way, — "Not for you to be sure."

The youth was confounded, his face burned, and he drooped his head and looked the picture of woe.

"Oh! I am not angry," said she; "it was only



a little of my vanity. I wanted to shew you that I understand Latin."

He said something in a very low tone in reply, and she leaned over the window the better to hear it, seemingly unconscious that there was any danger in doing so, when, dreadful to relate, she fell overboard!

He shrieked, — and plunged after her.

It is a long way from the poop of a seventy-four to the surface of the sea. He made a great splash and sunk. When he recovered, he saw Miss Nannette floating a little way from him, seemingly kept up by her muslin drapery, and just caught her as she was sinking, and almost breathless from the effort she had made to keep her head above water. She twined her arms round his, and would have taken him down with her, but he succeeded in keeping her and himself on the surface.

"For heaven's sake," said he, "do not clasp me. You are quite safe, I can support you with ease; but if you cramp me, we shall be inevitably lost."

She soon recovered her presence of mind, and became heroically tranquil. "Oh! mon papa! mon papa!" was all she said on letting go her hold; after which with his left hand he supported her with the greatest ease. Upon looking round he discovered the ship at no great distance, and saw she was laid aback. Two life-buoys and some hen-coops



were floating a little way off that had been thrown out to assist him, but he could not reach them, for there was a strong current at this time on the surface, running with the breeze into the gulph of Menar, that carried them away past the vessel, while a still stronger counter current beneath urged the vessel forward against the breeze towards him and the lovely nymph he supported, and at the same time the flow in the opposite direction transported them towards the wished-for point. A boat had been let down as quick as lightning from its stays on the quarter, but the officer who had leaped into it, in his hurry and anxiety, mistook one of the hen-coops for his object, and rowed off with all despatch. The captain, who saw from the deck the alarming mistake, almost burst his lungs before he could rectify the error; but the oars had now to pull against the current, and made very little way. And now the scientific captain saw with pleasure, that the young ensign was an expert swimmer, and that he supported his fair charge with ease and skill.—“So, so,” exclaimed he, from the quarter chains, where he stood managing with nice art and success the ship, in order to intercept the objects of his solicitude, and at the same time cheered Monsieur Fortier with hope, who was prevented, by two officers, from jumping overboard.

Mr. True was now within a few yards of the vessel. He heard all tongues applauding his skill,



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and saw the adventurous tars coming down the chains with ropes tied round their middle and hanging over the side, their hands extended to his assistance, when, making an effort too violent in his state of exhaustion, he was seized with a sudden head-ach and dizziness, which disabled him from proceeding, and scarcely left him strength to sustain his precious burthen. Perceiving his desperate condition, Frank Stanley, one of the soldiers on board, who was standing on the hammocks, leapt into the sea, and having reached the sinking pair, managed with great coolness and judgment to keep them afloat until the boat arrived to their succour. Stanley, with the assistance of the sailors, carried the ensign and Nannette, rising like Venus from the foam of the ocean, on deck, where she was embraced by her almost frenzied father, and her deliverer fainted, from his long-continued struggle, in the arms of the captain.



CHAP. IV.

While yet the ebbing flood that bears away
My friend, permits a pause of short delay ;
We stand at Champaul Ghaut's refreshing green,
And contemplate the grandeur of the scene.
Aurora's hand had spread the genial feast,
Of golden morning o'er the silver east ;
While crowds of Hindoos, at the dawn of day,
With Gunga's tears to lave their sins away,
Plunge in the Hoogly's deep majestic flow,
Whose curling waves move past sublimely slow.
A wood of lofty masts, Britannia's pride,
From ships well moor'd along Calcutta's side,
Extends to where Fort William's flag unfurl'd,
Proclaims our glory to the eastern world.
Far spreading thence the city's rich display,
O'er which appears the splendid car of day,
Of lofty structures, pleased we thus behold,
Like orient pearls that glow in burnished gold.

ARTIFICIAL descents to rivers, wharfs, quays and landing places, are called Ghauts in India. Many of these, on the banks of the sacred Hindoo streams, have magnificent flights of stone steps, leading from pagodas, whose structure, antiquity, and grandeur surprise every beholder. They are distinguished by the appellatives of gods and goddesses, as "Kallighaut," or, "Champaul Ghaut," the latter of which is an insignificant one, but it is the place where Europeans generally land, on arriving in Calcutta, and embark, on leaving it for



their native soil. Thence along the left bank of the Hoogly, there is a fine promenade to Fort William, whose spreading trees, planted on each side, lend a refreshing shade, through which cool breezes from the broad bosom of the river wing their course over the esplanade, to meet the attraction of the heated atmosphere of the city. From this point of view Calcutta appears to great advantage, for the panorama embraces the river Hoogly and shipping, the buildings and docks on the right bank, the magnificent structures of the Government House, Town-hall, Supreme Court, Fort William, Kidderpore School, the Theatre, and the fine range of palaces along the Chouringhee side of the esplanade, together with the row at right angles, extending to the river, through which the monuments, mosques, pagodas, and churches of the city have a beautiful effect.

The aspect of morning is sweet and refreshing in the east. Night's damp shades having restored objects to an agreeable temperature, the eye rests and recreates upon them, in that short period during which they can be seen to advantage, as they lose the power of gladdening sight in the glare that overspreads them soon after sun-rise. Crowds of Hindoos approach the river, during this delightful space, to bathe and pray. They bring with them small images representing some of their thirty thousand millions of gods, and such as have none, make little idols of the mud of the Ganges,



which they set upon the bank and adore. The men and women go down into the water together, dressed as they come to the river, except that many of the former, who wear turbans, long gowns, and slippers, leave these articles aside, and bathe in their trowsers alone. On coming out they wring their wet garments, which dry in going home; and the women often strip in the river, wash their apparel, and dress there again; for the female dress is generally composed of one long piece of cloth, the end of which is rolled several times round the waist, whence it flows in graceful folds down to the ankle; the other end is drawn tastefully round their breasts, so as to cover the back also, and serve as a veil, flowing over their black hair, braided up in a knot behind, when they meet Europeans, on which occasions they often turn their backs, and stand till the strangers pass. They wear rings in their noses and ears, and on their fingers and toes, with ornaments encircling on their wrists, arms and legs, of gold, silver, brass, ivory, glass, bone, or horn, according to their circumstances. They have bright dark eyes, the glances of which they strive to increase, by painting their eye-lashes jet black, which colour is also thought beautiful for the teeth. Their forms are graceful, and of commanding deportment, from the erect and majestic step common among the females of Hindostan. The inhabitants of Bengal, like those of other flat and rich marshy countries,



are of portly stature, and have those large joints, prominent bones, swelling muscles, and rough and elastic integuments, which have been called fine properties for a soldier. Their cast of countenance, with the exception of colour, is the same as our own, except that there is no variety in the eyes and hair, which are very nearly of the same colour every where in India, although the complexion varies from the deepest shade of black to a soft pale tint, which in some of the northern females might be termed *fair*. The aspect is penetrating and bold, and the movement powerful and vigorous. Bengal sepoys are the finest looking in the Company's service, nearly all grenadiers, and individually very brave; but like other large men, they are not so hardy, nor do they stand change of climate so well as the natives of Madras and Bombay.

If the reader, not acquainted with Hindoo mythology, was startled by the mention of thirty thousand millions of objects of adoration among the Hindoos, it ought to be explained, that this is the number of gods mentioned as composing the fourteen heavens. But it appears that not one in a hundred of even tolerably well informed natives, has any correct notion of the nature of their religion. The peasantry are actually in a state of the grossest ignorance, and kept so by the Brahmins. Sometimes they offer adoration at the tomb of an European of rank, who had become popular



for acts of generosity and grandeur of soul. A crowd of them has been seen by the author, at Seroor, making their offerings, paying their devotions, and invoking the shade of Colonel Wallace, to cure some disease, or avert some calamity; with candles burning round the monument erected to his memory, and a priestess performing his rites, and deriving a livelihood from the presents brought to obtain her intercession. Colonel Wallace, who distinguished himself on many occasions, commanded the Poonah subsidiary force, and died at the cantonment of Seroor. He was a fine, venerable looking soldier, and made this strange impression on the affections of the credulous natives, who firmly believe that he is still their patron and friend.

The Bore, an extraordinary swell which, during spring tides, agitates the Hoogly, has rendered it necessary to lay down moorings before Calcutta. This phenomenon is not peculiar to the Ganges; it is felt in several other rivers, and is occasioned, no doubt, by the great body of water during the springs that rushes up their channels, and drives back the mass flowing to the sea, with an impetuosity proportioned to the resistance opposed by projections or straits in the course of the returning fluid. The navigable bed of the Hoogly is in some places very narrow, and often nearly choked up with shifting sand banks, so that the tide finding in some parts of its course ample space, and in others having to



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force its own way, its violent effects may be easily conceived. It rushes past Calcutta with astonishing fury, and what is curious, sometimes takes one side of the river and then another, but never visits its broad bosom. That side up which it rushes is raised to a frightful height, and the appearance is that of a monstrous billow of the ocean in a storm, or the dash of a foaming surf. Boats have been swallowed up by the Bore, and all in them lost. The *dandies* on the Hoogly, therefore, feel great terror at the idea of being caught, and take care to get out of the way in due time, which they know so well that immediately before its approach, all is uproar and seeming confusion. Hundreds of boats are seen rowing as for life and death towards the middle of the river, the crews of which urge each other on with shouts and wild shrieks, and seem to delight in the general exertion to surprize the beholders with noise and precipitancy, though at the moment no danger appears; but soon afterwards the spectator is sensible how necessary it was to take precaution, by seeing the Bore foam past with fearful velocity.

Fort William is superior to any other fortress in India. It is constructed on the most scientific principles of military architecture, and fortified in a manner which, with a British garrison, would bid defiance to all the powers of the East. Its foundation was laid soon after the Battle of Plassy in 1758, the old fort of Calcutta having been found unfit to



sustain a siege. The barracks in it are superb ; and the remarkable state of cleanliness in which its shady walks and fine parades are kept, together with the attraction of a military band, which plays almost every evening for public entertainment, draws all the fashion of the city to promenade within hearing, and causes it to be a continual scene of gaiety, except during the monsoon. In this fortress the Honourable Company have an excellent arsenal, and a gun foundry, with a large establishment for the preparation of the material of an army.

But to a contemplative mind the most curious object within the walls of Fort William at this time was Vizier Ally, once Nabob of Oude, who was confined in a room made to resemble an iron cage, for the murder of Mr. Cherry, where he lingered out seventeen years of his life, and died at the age of thirty-six. (Vide the Gentleman's Magazine for June 1818, page 84.) At the time he was seen by the author, in 1814, he was an emaciated, wretched looking being, the vicissitudes of whose career are pregnant with interest and instruction.

The city of Calcutta now extends from Kidderpore to Cossipore, a distance of about six miles along the banks of the river Hoogly ; and if the reader trace in imagination a half moon from that base line, about two miles in breadth, he will have a pretty accurate idea of its surface. About one hundred and ten years ago, nothing was to be seen on the space where a magnificent city and fortress now



stand, but a few Indian huts, called the village of Govindpore. As the human mind may be advanced to wonderful maturity at an early age, by being expanded under the influence of skilful masters of education, so this city, pushed forward by the able political architects that superintended its progress, has all the majesty of age with the vigorous flow of youth yet in full circulation.

Dr. Boughton, at a time when the Company's affairs were at a low ebb, and the factory on the Hoogly in its infancy, was so fortunate as to cure the daughter of the Emperor Shah Jehann of a dangerous illness. This obtained for him much influence at court, and paved the way to advantages in trade for his employers that contributed essentially to their success.

In this way rose the city of Calcutta, which is now the metropolis of a mighty empire, co-extensive with that of the Great Mogul. It was surrounded by a mound of earth, called the Mahratta ditch, raised by the early settlers, when those marauders were plundering the province of Bengal. The Marquis of Wellesley had this ditch levelled, and on what was the fossé there is now a fine circular road, from one extent of the river-front of the city, to the other. The prospect around is a vast plain, unbounded by a single hill, whose soil is rich and exceedingly fertile. No stones are to be found near the city, therefore the houses are composed of brick, and the marble and free-stone of the public



buildings were brought from a distance. Chouringhee, Park Street, Durrumtollah, the Jaun Bazar and Esplanade, now form the European part of the town. On passing along these fine streets, the mixture of native huts with houses of the most noble appearance, like Grecian temples, spoils the effect; though, when at a distance, the detached state of the houses, giving them the character of palaces, insulated in a great space, is an advantage, and strikes the beholder with greater admiration. It would not be easy to describe the grandeur of the line of buildings that surround two sides of the Esplanade of Fort William, situated about a mile from the city; to which there is a fine broad road, called the Course, watered every day, that it may be in an agreeable state for the society to exercise in their carriages, buggies, tandems, and palankeens, as soon as the declining sun permits such recreation. To pourtray the edifices of interest would be dry and tedious. Besides those before mentioned, the churches and chapels, and the college and museum, deserve notice; with the numerous beautiful garden houses that ornament that part of the suburbs below Kidderpore, called Garden Reach, to the extent of more than five miles.

In this country, unless the reader reflects how grateful it is in hot climates to have large and airy rooms, remote from the glare or intrusion of the sun, and also how easy it is with plenty of funds to raise large structures, he will be unable to conceive

the magnificence and extent of these dwellings, on some of which vast sums have been expended. Nothing can, therefore, be imagined finer than the approach to Calcutta. These houses rise upon the sight, like so many scenes of enchantment, one after the other: the vessel or boat glides on, and sometimes touches the constantly verdant bank of the river; till Fort William, the numerous ships lying off Calcutta, and the seemingly interminable extent of the city, beautified with groves of evergreens, complete a climax, that to be properly felt must be seen. The city is upwards of an hundred miles distant from the Sand Heads, in a direct line; and the approach is much longer by the windings of the river. Very large ships seldom go up to Calcutta, but discharge and take in cargo at Kedgeree, Sangur, or Diamond Harbour; poor places, and the only ones worthy of notice below Fultah Farm, where there is an inn for the accommodation of passengers. Here the grandeur of the city begins to appear; next the Company's botanic gardens please the eye; and then all is delightful till the stranger lands at Champaul Ghaut, and perhaps encounters a cloud of dust, which assures one of his senses that he has not landed on the Elysian Fields.

The river Hoogly is so dangerous, that the pilot service is very extensive. The Company have ten vessels, fast-sailing schooners, each commanded by a Branch, with masters, mates, and assistants, all



Europeans, who cruise in turn off the Sand Heads, and conduct ships up the river.

About seventeen miles above Calcutta are the Governor General's country-seat, park, and gardens, situated at Barrackpore, which is a military station, with a remarkably beautiful cantonment for two regiments of Sepoys. The officers have erected a very neat theatre, and often invite their friends from town to witness amateur performances of a very respectable and interesting description. Thither there is a fine road from the city; and in the Governor's park there is a collection of the curious birds and quadrupeds of the East, which attracts the visits of strangers. Just opposite to it, on the other side of the Hoogly, is seated Serampore, a Danish settlement; where the Anabaptist mission has established a school, and a press for printing the Scriptures in the native languages. The French settlement of Chandernagore lies about twenty miles higher, on the western bank also; and not far from it is the Dutch factory of Chinsurah; and to these agreeable places of recreation parties of pleasure are often formed from Calcutta.

(The police department in and around the city is finely conducted. It has a corps of natives called runners. These men are armed with cutlasses and round targets; and guard-houses are erected at convenient distances for their accommodation, where they are ready at all hours to run to that point whence a call is heard for their assistance.



In consequence of this efficient police, and the opinion vulgarly entertained that the magistrate at the head of it is a magician, who can discover all stolen property, robbery and theft are seldom attempted by the natives; and the misconduct of European sailors and soldiers, nearly all addicted in such a hot climate to intemperance, is restrained. Such as have witnessed the fun of sailors on getting ashore after a long voyage, will easily conceive their excesses. But in India they are excited to the utmost display of folly, by the desire which many Europeans have of *showing off* in great style before crowds of wondering Hindoos.

Europeans in Calcutta, exclusive of the civil and military servants of government, are clergymen, merchants, some members of the medical profession, shopkeepers, schoolmasters, tradesmen, and speculators, who come out under free mariner's indentures. The government shows a decided dislike to colonization; and permission to remain, in all cases, is refused to adventurers without authority from the Court of Directors; some who resisted an order to depart, have been forced on board a ship by the bayonets of a military escort. Though the government has the power of sending any European home, yet that arbitrary act has been committed only in a few very glaring instances, where individuals of restless ambition attempted to disturb the peace of the country; for it would be monstrous injustice first to permit a man to estab-



lish himself, and afterwards to arrest the course of his industry. There is, however, an European and half-cast public in Calcutta that crowds two large protestant churches, a Presbyterian meeting-house, a large Anabaptist chapel, and three extensive Portuguese churches. With respect to the exact number, however, nothing like accuracy can be assumed, since no census has been taken; but in Hamilton's East India Gazette, authorities are quoted upon which may be placed perfect dependence. In 1802, the police magistrates estimated the population of Calcutta at 600,000, and calculated that within a circle of twenty miles there were 2,225,000 souls. Sir Henry Russel, the chief justice, a few years ago, estimated the inhabitants of the city and its environs at one million; and General Kyd calculated the population of the town alone, at between 4 and 500,000. There are upwards of 78,760 houses belonging to individuals; viz. to British subjects 4300, Armenians 640, Portuguese and other Christians 2650, Hindoos 56,460 Mahomedans 17,700, and Chinese 10.

As to the native part of Calcutta, it is, like most other Indian towns, composed of narrow, crooked streets; and houses, some of brick, and others of reeds, bamboos, wood, and mud, covered with tiles, or thatched with the leaves of the cocoa-nut tree; but the palaces or dwellings of many of the native rajahs, and great men of large fortune, are an exception. Some of the streets too,



such as Rada bazar and the Cossipore road, are tolerable; and the new and old China bazars present a fine display of Asiatic and European splendour.

The variety of costume and contrast of appearance to be seen in the streets are worthy of notice. Many a young Bond-street dandy struts with inconceivable self-satisfaction; and youthful British, Portuguese, and French half-cast, with tawny face, and neck stiffened almost to suffocation, jumps from the sublime to the ridiculous in attempts at imitation. A stranger's eye would next, perhaps, rest upon a Capuchin friar, with the beard and costume of the 14th century; and soon remove to a British missionary, who, in deepest black and countenance of longest sorrow, musing on the state of man, marches against a grave Turk, who jostles a Persian, who discomposes a Seik, who insults an Arabian, who electrifies a Chinese, who contaminates a Hindoo, who upsets a dancing-master, and terrifies an Armenian. He would see the military staff, bucks with waving feathers and gorgeous aiguillettes, shading their fair country-women with silken *chattahs* from the glare of the sun, while handing them from some grand long room or attractive bazar to their carriage, chariot, phaeton, barouche, sociable, or palankeen; and he would try to have a peep into the covered *hackeries*, or native carriages of the opulent Hindoos, drawn by bullocks richly caparisoned with silk, and jingling



bells of silver, in which their wives are concealed from the eye of man when they visit their female friends. And what would he say in another part of the town, upon seeing a dozen of almost naked runners dashing down the street with drawn sabres and upraised targets, to separate a group of British tars, fighting for no other purpose than to show the Hindoos the courage and blood of England? — But to resume our thread of narrative.

Frank Stanley, who at the imminent peril of his own life endeavoured so nobly to save that of his officer, was a promising youth of handsome exterior, with an air and address much above his humble station, to whom Ensign True had paid some of those little attentions, during their passage from England, that win the human heart. He was a reduced branch of a very respectable house, and patronized by his relation, Squire Worthy, whose niece, a beautiful young lady, was heiress to his large estate. The old gentleman took Frank from his mother to his own home, and seemed to feel much pleasure in the improvement of his mind; for he employed him to read aloud the battles of Marlborough and Prince Eugene, in which he greatly delighted. His old lady herself used to come into the library, and sit with her netting for hours, hearing him. Miss Sarah Oliver would also lend an attentive ear; and her aunt at length conceived that she discovered in her pale cheek love lurking for the handsome stripling, in whom she saw no merit, because he was



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poor. Their reading and family intercourse was soon at an end; but Frank had imbibed not only the glances of Sarah's dark-blue eyes, but the romantic notions of a soldier of fortune. He embarked in his arduous profession, in the hope that he would reap laurels worthy of being laid at the feet of the girl his soul adored; and sailed for India full of high expectation. Among one hundred and twenty recruits, with whom he crossed that wide expanse of ocean which separates Europe from Hindostan, he found only one in whose society he felt the sympathy of congeniality. Kindred souls soon assimilate; and in the person of Charles Thoughtless, Frank Stanley realised the visions that youthful imagination had formed of friendship.

The infant years of Charles Thoughtless were passed in Dublin, the place of his birth, with every promise that his opening prospect would be delightful. But a change came over the scene. His mother died; and his father, a gentleman belonging to one of the learned professions, became unfortunate in his pursuits. When about five years old, Charles was removed to the country, and placed with his grandmother, then in slender circumstances, being much reduced by the extravagance of sons, to whom she had given a high education; but who, like many other young men, were not contented with such means as she could afford. His preparation for life received its finish at the school of Maghernahaly,



in county Armagh, where the dominie amused his pupils by performing the battle of Aughran. One of the mistress's quilts was converted into a curtain for the stage; sheets and shawls were the scenery, and a blind fiddler filled the orchestra. The master acted the ghost, and Thoughtless strutted in the character of Sarsfield. — But to be brief with matter not much in point, he became enamoured of the glorious profession of arms; and having neither interest nor friends to enter the army as an officer, he determined to hew a way for himself to distinction through the ranks; for he was left to manage his own affairs, his father having crossed the Atlantic in search of fortune in the new world.

These young adventurers, with the other recruits, upon coming ashore at Madras, were marched off, as has been mentioned, to the depôt at Poonamallie, having received two drams of arrack and some biscuit to support them on the way. The first river they crossed they all plunged into it like ducks, to gratify their longing desire for water, which they thought, in consequence of being so long on a short allowance, the most precious gift of Providence. To avoid the heat of the day, they had marched from Choultry plain a little before sunset; for travelling by night is delightful in India. About twelve o'clock they arrived at the depôt, and slept for the remainder of the night on the parade, with their knapsacks for pillows, it being covered with



soldiers who had brought their mats out to lie in the open air, rather than be bitten to madness by mosquitoes in the barracks. But next morning they found that the white ants had attacked their knapsacks, and, *mirabile dictu*, had eaten a dictionary belonging to Stanley, and Brookes's Gazetteer, the property of Thoughtless. Their time passed not unpleasantly, however, at the depôt; for serjeant-major Luttrell, a most excellent and worthy man, paid them many marks of attention. But they had dangerous duty to perform in the fort, over three hundred French prisoners; two of whom were shot in an attempt to escape, after having killed the sentinel on the ramparts. These gallant fellows had been taken on board privateers belonging to the Mauritius; and from them, Charles and Frank picked up a smattering of the French language.



CHAP. V.

The monument we here behold with pain,
Is there a heart can from a sigh refrain?
Whose sculptured base commemorates the time,
When the brave Holwell suffered in this clime.
With seven score men it was his wretched fate,
In the black hole a *Soubah's* sleep to wait;
Though dying Britons strew'd the reeking ground,
And many a hero gasped for breath around,
The slavish guards, O horrible! avow,
None dares to chase sweet slumber from his brow!

WHEN the black hole was pointed out to the author, it was almost full of coals; but he viewed it with strong emotions, and rejoiced that millions of people, who have now the watchful eye of our mild laws guarding their rights as men, were rescued from the tyranny of masters who could strike such terror into their subjects, as to prevent pity from driving away slumber on hearing the dying shrieks of 146 human beings! And when any man reflects upon the simple order of a *Soubah* having the power to trample him under elephants' feet, to throw him to tigers or lions, to hang him up in an iron cage to waste away by slow degrees, or to have his life pinched out of him by exquisite and indescribable tortures, he will set the right value upon trial by jury, and freedom from tyranny.

The monument which commemorates the capture of Calcutta in 1756, by Surajah Dowlah, is hastening fast to decay, having been shattered by lightning. Being an obelisk of considerable altitude, it is one of the conspicuous objects upon which a stranger's eye rests, among the numerous spires, temples, and minarets of the city, which give a pleasing and magnificent variety to the prospect from the river. This noble sheet of water is full a mile wide before the town, and every day ships are seen in full sail on its bosom ; for seven hundred vessels take their departure annually from the Hoogly, with upwards of 150,000 tons of merchandize ; and the reader may entertain some idea of the busy scene, when he reflects that the trade of Calcutta averages from thirteen to fourteen millions sterling per annum, and that upwards of 300,000 boatmen are employed on the Ganges, in conveying the productions of the upper provinces to the presidency, and circulating the commerce of Europe through the East. Formerly, no trade yielded a more certain profit to the speculator than the latter ; and three voyages were usually considered as ensuring a fortune to the captain of an Indiaman. But since the opening of the free trade, the markets have been glutted ; and in many instances adventurers were unable to realize prime cost. The imports of Calcutta average from two to three millions, and the exports from four to five annually ; and the treasure imported amounts to six or seven



millions a year. With the inland trade, which averages five millions per annum, the government reap a revenue from the commerce of Calcutta, of £108,000. The whole revenue of the Bengal Presidency is very nearly ten millions sterling, and the annual charges about eight, with a debt of twenty millions; against which there are assets to a far greater amount, for the dead stock belonging to the Honourable Company in India is enormous. There are about for hundred civilians on this establishment, who receive salaries of from five hundred to four thousand pounds a year. The Bengal army is about sixty thousand strong, and is organized and inspired by sixteen hundred European officers; and, besides the settlers in Calcutta, there are upwards of two thousand British subjects residing in the interior of this province, as indigo-planters, shop-keepers, and speculators.

Much might be said respecting the fertility of Bengal, and especially of the district in the vicinity of Calcutta. The latter is, in short, a perfect garden; and the former the most productive province in the world, yielding not only rice and wheat in abundance, but valuable crops of indigo, cotton, tobacco, sugar, and opium, with silk, saltpetre, and a variety of other valuable productions. There have been various calculations with respect to the population of Bengal, Behar, and Benares, which have been ascertained to give 162,000 square miles, and about 30,000,000 of souls;

but owing to the extensive deserts and forests, and to the inundations of the Ganges, there is not an acre of arable land for each person.

In a garden house, near Calcutta, the sons of Tippo Sultan reside, with as much freedom as is consistent with the security of their persons. The reader will recollect that they were removed to Bengal soon after the massacre at Vellore, and the eldest has since put a period to his own existence. Although there is a faithful account of the tragedy at Vellore before the public, yet I am sure the reader will be pleased to learn further particulars from a letter to a friend, written by Mrs. Fancourt, whose husband was commandant of the garrison.

This unfortunate lady commenced her account by describing the happy and tranquil evening she and the colonel had spent, amused with the Hindostannee prattle of their little daughter, a child about four years old. They had retired to repose at a late hour, and some time after were alarmed by hearing a continued firing in the direction of the barracks. Colonel Fancourt started up, and opened the venetians round the bed-chamber; but all was quiet near the house, though the noise of a distant struggle was loud. The long roll beat at the main guard, and a quick firing continued there. The colonel, leaving his lady greatly alarmed, went out to ascertain the cause of the uproar. Soon after, Mrs. Fancourt heard the firing much nearer, and the doors of her house were