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RIFLE AND SPEAR

WITH THE

RAJPOOTS:

BEING THE NARRATIVE OF

A WINTER'S TRAVEL AND SPORT IN NORTHERN INDIA.

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RIFLE AND SPEAR

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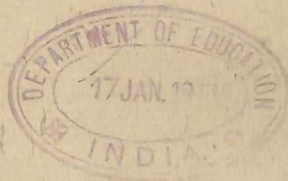
RAJPOOTS:

BEING THE NARRATIVE OF

A WINTER'S TRAVEL AND SPORT IN NORTHERN INDIA,

595 BY

MRS. ALAN GARDNER.



ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS AND SKETCHES BY THE
AUTHOR AND TWO DRAWINGS BY F. H. TOWNSEND.

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TO

My dear Father,

TO WHOM THE LETTERS WERE WRITTEN,

THIS VOLUME IS

AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.



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PREFACE.

THIS volume is an almost verbatim reprint of letters written hurriedly by the roadside. It contains neither guide-book descriptions, nor attempts at scenery word-painting, and is simply a plain and unvarnished account of our rough but very pleasant experience of Indian Camp Life. The narrative is, I fear, equally rugged, but both notes and sketches were at least taken on the spot, and I think would lose what realism they may possess, if polished up and elaborated at home.

N. G.

4 OLD BURLINGTON STREET, W.

June, 1895.



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RIFLE AND SPEAR WITH THE RAJPOOTS

CHAPTER I

En route—Sports on board—"Dear old tunes"—Church at a canter—
 Music at sea—Bombay Harbour—Kurrachee—Government House
 —An Indian Whiteley—An aristocratic butler—Santan's *gaze*
d'amour—Lahore—An Ali Baba coachman—"Sudden death."



JUNGLE GRASS.

WE left Brindisi for Bom-
 bay by the P. and O. mail
 steamer, our intention being
 not to land at Bombay, but
 to go on by steamer to
 Kurrachee, and thence to
 Kashmir, *via* Lahore and
 the Indus Valley railroad.

The sea voyage will be a
 little longer, but we shall escape at least two days' Indian
 railway travelling, which at this time of year is very
 hot and dusty. If it is worse than the Italian railway
 journey to Brindisi, it must be bad indeed.



The Mediterranean is lovely, as it usually is towards the end of September; calm and sunny, with hardly a breath of air, yet not too hot; simply perfect weather to lounge in a deck-chair and—do nothing. We have not very many fellow-passengers, as it is early for globe-trotters and return Indians. There are two lots of girls with anxious mothers, taking them out, I cannot help thinking, as a last chance for husbands. They are frightfully energetic and tear about all day, getting up concerts, dances and all the other amusements without which life at sea would be so very pleasant.

They are all tall, all thin, and all rather jaded, and they all sing and play. Unfortunately there are three pianos and a harmonium on board, and two or more of them are usually going cheerily one against another from morning till night. There are two “grass” widows on board, several “grass” widowers, and the usual other unconsidered items.

Tuesday, September 20th, 1892.—Most of us awoke this morning with a sea coming in at our ports, and, staggering on deck, found that a breeze had sprung up and that we were rolling and pitching merrily. This caused a good many gaps at breakfast, the grass widows and I being the only representatives of our sex. It had been arranged to have some “sports” this morning, but the “Honorary Secretary” was missing, and, on a careful search being made, was found lying on the floor of his cabin in a



deplorable condition of collapse. As he had the lists in his pocket, and was lying on them, and, in answer to alternate entreaties and threats only implored "to be left to die in peace," the sports were put off till the afternoon, when we expected to be under the shelter of the land. Even then we rolled a bit, and the winner of a skipping race left with suspicious haste and the significant remark: "I am going to bed as quickly as I can." Towards evening it became quite smooth again, and after dinner a dance took place, although the thermometer registered about 100° F. The two maternal veterans brought their daughters up to time, whilst they themselves took it in turn to play, observing, as a precautionary measure to disarm possible criticism, that they did not "approve" of modern dance music, but stuck to the "dear old tunes." We certainly had the venerable Mabel Valse thrice; but we danced merrily to all hours. Varied by a coaling episode at Port Said, and the damp heat of the Red Sea, this was the fashion in which with a persistence worthy of a better cause we daily toiled at our amusements.

Monday, September 26th.—We shall be at Aden to-night, and, I hope, soon out of this heat, which is quite awful. The captain says that August and September are the hottest months in the Red Sea, and I have never experienced more disagreeable heat, so damp that the decks at night look as though a heavy shower had just fallen.



Church yesterday was suffocating, the temperature of the sea itself being 95° F. I think no one regretted, as they perhaps should, the absence of a clergyman, and that the captain therefore read us the abbreviated service. He took it at a hard canter. In the evening I attended the second saloon service, where an Irish missionary preached an excellent extempore sermon. Afterwards Lady M. A. and I found a draughty corner on the spar-deck, and really seemed to get a little air, till the *Rome*, homeward bound, passed us, when a rush was made to our retreat and all hope of further coolness and peace fled. A banjo has been added to our miseries! People who sing and play in the Red Sea should have a padded chamber kept for them! I am not sure that capital punishment would be too severe for some of the offenders.

It was too late to see anything when we arrived at Aden, but by six o'clock on Tuesday morning every one was on deck, for the heat was awful, all port holes being closed owing to the native boys who were swimming and diving on all sides, and to whom "mine" and "thine" are synonymous terms. The deck was crowded with varied specimens of Easterns: Arab, Somali, and Parsee, who brought ostrich feathers, African skins and horns, and a dozen other commodities, and gave one little peace until they sold them. Close to us, standing out of the water, were the masts of a French steamer which had been run into and sunk there,



and, by a curious coincidence, before we weighed anchor, the boat that did the mischief came into harbour.

We were soon off again, and as we steamed away from land the wind freshened, and there was more motion than some of us quite liked.

In the evening there was a concert, but our musical talent on board is not great, as it consists chiefly of very young girls with untaught school-room voices, and elderly dames with the remains of what might, in pre-historic times, have been good. An Irish lady with a sweet voice and a delicious brogue was the one exception. Poor thing! she suffered terribly from *mal de mer*, and had to run below between each song. Of course, the irony of Fate gave her the only two encores of the evening. A Parsee gentleman sang "Queen of my Heart" with much feeling, but the boys rather spoilt the effect, as they persisted in treating the last line of each verse as a chorus.

The phosphorescence in the water to-night was lovely; the sea one blaze of light, dotted with innumerable sparks of fire wildly chasing each other to and fro. Our poet remarked that it resembled "golden moths entangled in a silver net."

Wednesday.—A decided swell prevailed, and those who appeared at breakfast had an air of pardonable pride about them. I took refuge in chess, and I believe that it was only racking my brain over a tough problem that

RIFLE AND SPEAR WITH THE RAJPOOTS.

prevented me from joining the sufferers, several of whom lay about the deck, pictures of unmitigated woe. For the first day since we left, the pianos had a holiday, and we were even able to walk about, for "Sports" and deck cricket were at a standstill. Even the kodaks ceased from troubling, and the banjos were at rest, so an ill-wind blew some of us good.

Sunday, October 2nd.—It is pouring with rain, and every one is wildly undoing rolls of umbrellas and waterproofs. By the time they are disinterred the rain is over, and the heat stifling. Alan says that with the exception of a few showers about Christmas time, this is the last rain we shall have until we return to Europe.¹

At 2 P.M. we anchored in Bombay harbour. Even before the anchor was down, hundreds of coolies swarmed on board, and tore the luggage from meek, unoffending people, screaming and shouting wildly in unknown tongues the while. Never in my life have I witnessed such a scene of confusion. The British-India boat by which we proceed to Kurrachee was already starting, and we had barely time to get ourselves and about a ton of luggage on board, the boxes positively having to be hauled up the ship's side as she slowly steamed her way out of harbour. Mr. Rustomjee, a very wealthy Parsee merchant to whom we had an

¹ Our experience, alas! did not bear this out, hardly a week passing without rain. But then of course it was, as usual, an "exceptional season."



introduction, came off in his steam launch to meet us, and had it not been for his assistance I think we should have been left behind; some of our luggage was! Mr. Rustomjee has one of the finest houses in Bombay, at Malabar Point, and he very kindly tried to persuade us to stay with him for a few days. But we felt that we must get on to Kashmir before the winter sets in. Mr. Rustomjee's principal place of business is at Kurrachee, and is managed by two of his sons, who reside there, and he has promised to telegraph to them to meet us on arrival. Alan has already sent on a letter of introduction to Sir Charles Forbes's Kurrachee manager, and Lord Harris very kindly wrote to the Commissioner in Sindh, so that we shall be well taken care of.

B.I.I.S. "Karagola," Monday, October 3rd.—This is a nice clean-looking, white painted little boat, that is to say little when compared with a P. and O. liner, but very comfortable if she would not roll so horribly even in a perfectly smooth sea. We have re-named her the *Caracola*. She carries many native deck passengers, who sleep, eat, and live amidship, divided off from the poop by a canvas screen. They are inoffensive, as they never appear to be awake, but loll about all day, with their eyes closed, on bright-coloured cotton quilts.

Government House, Tuesday, October 4th.—We arrived in Kurrachee harbour this afternoon, and were met by Mr.



Hoare, and Mr. Rustomjee's son, who very kindly asked us to be his guests; but we had already accepted an invitation to stop with Mr. James, the Commissioner.

The town of Kurrachee is six miles from the landing-place, and is divided from the sea by long mud flats. Directly Alan had passed his numerous guns through the Customs, we drove straight to Government House, which is charmingly situated in a large semi-tropical garden. What a comfort it was to get into a cool house and a bath!

All around the country is dried up and brown. The houses are scattered widely apart, and are dreary-looking, and the ground parched and cracked by the baking sun. We found a tennis-party in progress, but I was too tired and dusty to face it, and went to my room at once and had real tea, an unspeakable blessing after the mixture on board ship, which one might be pardoned for picturing as made in London and carefully kept stewing during the voyage.

After dinner we explored the garden, which has a beautiful green lawn, the only one in the town. Two bheesties (water-carriers), I am told, walk up and down all day watering it.

The flowers and foliage are wonderful, and the cocoa-nut palms covered with fruit. The moon was nearly full, and almost bright enough to read by. It was too nice after the heat of the day. The house itself always keeps comparatively cool, the living rooms, being, indeed, only the kernel



of the building, as round the outside runs a huge verandah, and inside again a very wide corridor, which opens with great arches into the rooms, all of which run right through, with doors communicating, so that you get a good draught.

With the help of numerous punkahs vigorously pulled to and fro, it is not so bad so long as you sit still. Our rooms on the first floor had a beautiful view over the garden, but the long stone passages, and great open verandah, look rather creepy at night, neither did I care for the door and staircase leading from my room on to the large flat roof. My room has six doors, but it is far too hot to bear them shut, and they are only screened by reed curtains.

The rooms themselves, sitting-room, bed-rooms, and two bath-rooms, are big enough to hide a regiment of sepoy, and, never being very brave at night, I came to the conclusion that Indian life has its drawbacks.

At six o'clock the next morning we were aroused and chota haziri (little breakfast), consisting of tea and toast and various fruits, brought in whilst I was dressing. By seven I was ready to drive round the town with Mr. James, and we visited the College, Public Gardens, &c. There is rather a good Zoo., and most of the tamer animals are not penned up but wander about in seeming liberty. There are several varieties of wild sheep, and queer goats with huge corkscrew horns. They have been trying for some time to get a wife for one of the latter, and last week they sold a tiger (which



I presume was too common), and got one, but alas! she did not meet with Mr. Goat's approval, so he gently walked up to her and ran her through with his horns: a more summary method than either breach of promise or divorce.

Thursday, October 6th.—We went after breakfast to see Mr. Rustomjee's warehouses. It was a most interesting experience. They extend for a long way, with a tram-line running through them, and we went round on a tramcar. Mr. Rustomjee is the greatest merchant in the place and apparently the "universal provider." He supplies everything, from iron rails to *marrons glacés*, from the latest fashion in tea-gowns down to white mice. In one room thousands of various samples are laid out for the up-country shopkeepers' inspection, but there seem to be very few native productions. I admired some Oriental-looking cotton stuff sold for two annas a yard (about twopence), and lamented that such things could not be bought at such prices in England. It was rather a shock when Mr. Rustomjee quietly said: "Oh! these all come from Manchester!"

The Army and Navy Stores have opened a branch here, but Mr. Rustomjee says it will probably not pay, as the English shopmen have to be fed, lodged, and paid high wages, whilst the native shopkeepers are content to earn a few pence a day, sleep on the ground and feed on a handful of rice or chupatties. Leaving the warehouses, we passed a yard stored with bales of old English newspapers that are



exported at five rupees a cwt., and sold here to the shops and natives. The business offices are on the first floor. It looked very odd to see rows of black clerks all dressed in white, writing in a nearly dark room.

This morning an ayah was found for me, and she has been all day having what they call a "high old time" amongst my clothes, packing up and getting out warm clothes for Kashmir and the Hills. Alan has also got a Portuguese servant who is called indifferently "Butler" or "Boy," although he is gray-headed, and a scion of the noble Portuguese family of the Da Souzas. We always call him "Santan," his Christian name, for he really has been baptised, and is "same religion and gets drunk like Massa."

Thursday.—We left Kurrachee by the 9.30 p.m. train for Lahore, nearly a two days' railway journey. A very nice carriage with two compartments and a bath room was reserved for us, and, as you carry your bedding about everywhere in India, the servants soon made things comfortable for the night. A large party came to see us off, but nothing like the number who came to bid adieu to my woman and Alan's man, the latter being particularly popular. We think Santan gave Alan's cherished white umbrella as a *gage d'amour* to some one, as it has vanished and he mourns much for its loss, although he cannot use it in the train, and won't want it shooting, but it makes his lists wrong and that vexes him.



The next day was fearfully hot and dusty. Luckily we had been advised to bring two huge blocks of ice with us, and stood them in the middle of the carriage in Alan's indiarubber bath. Round this we sat and cooled our hands as you would warm them by the fire. Alan's costume is a silk pyjama suit and a huge sun helmet.

The scenery from the railway is uninteresting, except when crossing the Indus at Sakhar. The river is very broad and rapid here, and bridged by enormous steel girders. In midstream, on white limestone rock, stands the fortified town of Bakhar, and the line, using this as a stepping-stone, winds through the picturesquely situated old fortress, and then on to the large native town of Rohri, on the opposite bank.

Lahore, Saturday, October 8th.—We arrived here about 3 P.M. A friend of Mr. Rustomjee's met us at the station, with carts to take our numerous boxes to the hotel where rooms were engaged for us.

Our present intention is to go straight to Kashmir, and thence march shooting across the mountains to the Hill State of Chamba, returning *via* Pathankôt and Lahore to the Salt Ranges on the Jhelum, where Alan hopes to have some oorial (wild sheep) shooting.

About the beginning of January we think of gradually working our way south again, visiting the principal States of Rajputana on our way back to Bombay. We shall pass through very varied degrees of cold and heat, from the frost



and snow of the Himalaya Mountains to the semi-tropical climate of Bombay, and therefore had to bring a considerable variety of clothing. We have also provided ourselves with saddles, Edgington's hill tents, and three cases of tinned provisions, soups, Swiss preserved milk, jams, &c. Alan's battery consists of two 450 express rifles, one 360 express rifle for antelope, one 12 bore gun, and one pea rifle. Add to all this, fishing rods, cartridge boxes, and the innumerable packages of odds and ends without which no self-respecting servant will travel, and you make up a total which demands two bullock-waggons to convey it from the station. Thank goodness! we shall leave a great part of this *impedimenta* at Lahore, only taking on with us what is absolutely necessary for the journey to the hills. Tents, camp furniture, kitchen things, &c., which will be required when marching, we intend to buy at Kashmir.

In the evening we took a *voiture-de-place*, called, I believe, a "first-class ghari," and went for a drive round the cantonments. There are many of these vehicles about, of three classes to suit all purses. They would rather surprise a London cabman. Imagine an old-fashioned, but eminently respectable-looking, barouche-like carriage, hung very high, lined with red morocco, and attended by two native servants (coachman and footman), dressed like Ali Baba in a pantomime! All this magnificence can be hired for little more than a shilling an hour, or five shillings by the day.



We were very much disappointed with the buildings of the official capital of the Punjab. The English offices, museum, court-houses, &c., built of colourless, dusty-looking brick, are caricatures of Indian architecture, intensifying its few vulgarities and missing altogether its simplicity and its repose. If a jerry builder in the London suburbs were given pictures of the Taj and Jumna Musjid, and told to run up Board schools, town halls, &c., "in this style," he would probably heap together a similar meaningless jumble of minarets, domes, and chattris, with an occasional huge plate glass window thrown in by way of a change. We have reserved the native city, fort, and other sights, until we return in December, when it will be cooler. It is very hot now, and towards night a sort of damp, smoky-smelling mist arises, that recalls the smouldering bonfires and burnt-out fireworks of an English 5th of November.

On our way we called for our letters at Government House, which is a fine building, situated in the midst of a pretty garden. The nucleus was the dome of an old shrine now forming the dining-room, but large additions have been made by Sir L. Lawrence and his successors. Sir Dennis Fitzpatrick, the present Governor, is now away, but we found a letter from him asking us to pay him a visit when he returns in December. He also very kindly gave us a letter of introduction to the Maharaja of the Chamba State, where we propose going after Kashmir.



Monday, October 10th.—We left Lahore by the 3.30 P.M. express for Rawal Pindi, dined and slept in the train, and were awakened at four a.m. o'clock by the ayah, who said we had nearly arrived. It was hardly light and very raw and chilly. A friend of Mr. Rustomjee's was waiting for us with a tonga and two ekkas.

The former is a two-wheeled canvas-hooded trap, something like a small Cape cart. It is drawn by two horses, one in a pair of shafts, and the other running half loose beside him. It is to be our conveyance to Kashmir, relays of horses (called in India "dāk,") being posted along the road. An "ekka" looks like a small garden tent on two wheels, pulled by a pony between shafts supported by a bar over his back. It is the common pony carriage used by the natives all over India, and, though springless, is of very light draught and carries an extraordinarily heavy load. They are quite the funniest looking things I ever saw, the shafts rise at least a foot over the pony's back, and are about four feet apart. They run right through the cart, and come out joined together in a point behind. It looked as if one wretched little piebald pony must be hoisted bodily up in the air, but the ayah assured me "they are so safe, even if the horse on his hind legs go, it cannot tumble."

We drove straight to the hotel and had breakfast. The ekka men promptly seized the opportunity to go to theirs, and did not turn up again till nearly nine o'clock. We



started for Murree directly they returned, taking Santan with us on the tonga, and sending my ayah and two ekka loads of luggage by the lower and direct road to Kashmir. We intend to sleep to-night at Murree, the chief hill station of the Punjab.

The road from Rawal Pindi at first runs nearly straight across a fairly flat country, and looks as if it were going right through the big mountain, 7,500 feet high, on which Murree is situated. After about an hour's drive, however, we reach the lower spurs of the hills, and from Trit, where there is a dāk bungalow, the real ascent commences.

These dāk bungalows are an excellent institution kept up by the State, imperial or native, for the use of travellers, and you find them about fifteen to twenty miles apart on all the more important roads. The majority have only a bare bedstead, table and chair, but a few are more comfortably furnished. You bring your own bedding, as indeed you do in the train, and everywhere else in India. For food you can nearly always rely upon a fowl being caught, killed and cooked for you. This, the staple dish of a "Sahib" in India, goes by the name of "sudden death."



CHAPTER II.

Murree—Backsheesh and “Bahut achha Sahib”—Jibbing stage horses—
A dangerous road—Domel—A queer village—A spider-haunted
bungalow—Rampur *en fête*—Waiting for the Maharaja—Hindoo
and English peasant lads: a contrast—The Forty Thieves—
Baramula boatmen—Letters of (doubtful) recommendation—Cookery
under difficulties—A lively night—A scratch crew—Srinagar—
Married quarters—A race of amphibians—Bahar Shah—A big
“Liberty” room—A papier-mâché grandfather.

AFTER much jolting and many changes of horses, we reached
Murree late in the afternoon. The situation is fine, and the
villas or bungalows are scattered on and around the summits
of the hills, which in parts are thickly wooded with huge
oaks and pines. What a blessing it was to see a fir tree
again! As we sat round our hotel fire to-night, I quite
realised the feelings of a dusty perspiring memsahib, flying
from the hot season of the plains.

There was a bad epidemic of cholera this summer in
Kashmir, principally at Srinagar (the capital), and along the
road we are now going; and nearly three thousand natives
died. We now hear of a sudden outbreak having occurred
about a fortnight ago in this station, five English officers and
a lady dying in one day. Apparently it passed away as



quickly as it came, for there have been no cases since. It seems to be a disputed point whether it was really cholera contracted from drinking contaminated milk or poisoning from unwholesome tinned provisions. Anyhow we congratulate ourselves on having brought our preserved milk and tinned stores fresh from England.

Wednesday, October 12th.—We started at ten this morning in a fresh tonga which is to take us all the way to Baramula. There is a good road so far, but no farther, and the journey thence to Srinagar is by water. Another fellow-countryman of Mr. Rustomjee made all our arrangements, and indeed our kind Bombay friend appears to have laid a dâk of Parsees for us all over the Punjab.

At first we drive down-hill, until the bank of the river Jhelum is reached, which we then follow. At Kohala, where we had luncheon, there is a good bungalow near the little native village. Here we overtook our ekkas with the ayah and luggage. They ought to have been miles ahead of this, and unless they go quicker we shall have to wait for them at Baramula. We tried to bribe the drivers to push on with promises of backsheesh, but "Bahut achha, Sahib," "All right, Sir," is all we can get from them.

The weather had been threatening all the morning, and whilst we were at luncheon a violent thunderstorm came on, and we had to wait a couple of hours before the heavy rain ceased. We then crossed the river by a suspension bridge,



and followed a picturesque road cut out of the side of the hill, and in places passing through short tunnels running through the projecting cliffs. At five o'clock we reach Dulai where we meant to stay the night, but find the bungalow has a leaky roof and is flooded with rain, so we push on to Domel. From this point I began to hate the Maharaja. He is now on the road down from Kashmir to his winter abode, and all the best bungalows, horses, drivers, &c., are reserved for him.

Besides this, everybody is on the way back, as leave is up on the 15th, for the Indian army; so the poor little stage horses are worked to death, many of them going their stage uphill, on dreadful roads, five or six times a day. This is the only excuse for their being such confirmed jibbers. For a great part of the way the syce (groom) has to run in front, pulling them along by a rope tied round the foreleg. Frequently this was the only means of starting or getting them along at all. They told us this was a strange stage to our pair, and not the one they were used to, hence they resented it with peculiar bitterness.

At the next stage we had more vigorous horses, too much so in fact, at first. They reared straight on end directly their heads were let go, danced along the edge of the precipice on their hind legs, and, failing to break the pole by several violent bucks and bounds, started at a furious gallop down the hill. The next ascent, however,

pulled them up, and then the old jibbing game recommenced.

The river here roared hundreds of feet below us. It was a dark night, but occasional flashes of lightning gave us a glimpse of the water at the foot of a descent so sheer that the torrent seemed absolutely to rush under our feet. To-day's rain has washed away in many places the low wall at the side of the road, and, naturally, our horses selected those spots to back and jib. We were not sorry to reach Domel, where two Englishmen at dinner in the verandah of the bungalow looked cheery and home like.

The road to the bungalow leads through the native village, and we had to pull up to a walk and frequently halt, to avoid driving over the numerous family groups, squatted eating or sleeping on the highway. No carriage except the post is supposed to travel after dark, and the metalled road being the cleanest and driest spot handy, the villagers bring out their beds, light their fires and thoroughly make themselves at home on the public road. Their houses on either side appear to be only used as store-rooms, for they never seem to live inside.

Lighted up by numerous fires, it was a very picturesque scene: burnished cooking-pots, brightly-clad women, turbaned men, huge black buffaloes and curiously shaped carts, all jumbled pell-mell together. There was a decided Irish touch about it all, the buffalo being the Hindoo sub-



stitute for Paddy's pig, and apparently living on the same familiar terms with his master.

Thursday, October 13th.—I think if I had not slept on that bedstead it would have gone for a walk by itself! It is explained to me that the rain drives "things" indoors. It certainly did. There is a tiny English shop here, and I am laying in tins of Keating's powder.

The view from the bungalow is beautiful. Two rivers meet below, one quite blue, the other brown, and the mountains tower above us on every side. We decided to wait here until our ekkas arrived. The first came at 12.30, the other at 3. The difference explained itself when we discovered that whilst the winner had only some rugs and a small portmanteau, the last had all the stores, my boxes and the ayah. The successful driver was much disgusted when we divided the weights more equally, and wept bitterly over his piebald pony, which he swore would be killed.

We started again soon after, but, leaving so late, it was nearly dark before we had gone half-way. The recent heavy rain had washed away the road in places, and once the tonga was obliged to descend by an extempore track through the river, whilst we walked round. After dark, of course, we came to the very worst part of the road, or at least what appeared to us to be so, and, as usual, the horses seized the occasion to commence jibbing.

It was late before we reached Hutti. The bungalow is

RIFLE AND SPEAR WITH THE RAJPOOTS.

some distance from the road, and approached by a rocky footpath, up which we stumbled, lighted in fitful fashion by pine torches. The rooms were small and dirty, and tenanted by some of the very largest hairy-legged spiders I have ever seen. They looked like tarantulas, but the servants assured us they were harmless.

Friday, October 14th.—We started about nine this morning, and drove through wild mountainous scenery, the Jhelum valley in places contracting into narrow gorges, whilst the road is scooped and tunnelled out of the cliffs. Uri, the town of a Nawab tributary to Kashmir, soon comes in sight, but the road has to make a *détour* of three or four miles before reaching it. An old castle crowns the summit, and round the base were clustered the Maharaja's advance guard and camp. At Rampur we stopped for luncheon and found the place in a great state of excitement, the Maharaja being shortly expected.

Rampur is in a most beautiful situation between the rapids of the river and huge gray crags and precipices, whose tops, massed with dark blue-green firs, shade downwards into a forest of trees of every tint, from golden brown to bright scarlet; indeed, all along the road the autumnal foliage is lovely. Above us is a deep blue sky, and purple mountains, streaked with snow, shut in the distance on every side. I cannot imagine anything more exquisite.

The loyal inhabitants had attempted to gild refined

AT RAMPUR.

23



RAMPUR.



gold by planting on either side of the road little coloured cotton flags about the size of a pocket-handkerchief. These decorations, we learn, are part of the stock-in-trade of the State, and will be moved bodily to the next place of reception, whilst the Maharaja rests for the night. As an extra mark of respect, the mountain road for many miles had been carefully swept ; except of course in the places where it was washed away.

The Nawab of Uri and his attendants were galloping about on little fat long-tailed ponies, and on either side of the road numerous ekkas, drawn up and crowded with spectators, awaited the show. Two little boys, sons of the Nawab, dressed in bright-coloured velvet tunics beautifully embroidered with gold, were seated near us, and a little incident strikingly exemplified the easy self-possession and seeming independence of bearing which are so curiously blended with abject servility in the Hindoo. Seated on the ground, close to the Nawab's sons, and carrying on with them on apparently equal terms an animated and laughing conversation, were two half-naked little peasant boys, the children of some coolie or labourer. One could not help thinking how ill at ease an English country lad would have been under similar conditions ; of his short churlish answers and painful shyness, mingled with rugged independence scarcely distinguishable from boorishness. Yet in India etiquette is perhaps more strictly observed, and the grada-



tions of rank more rigidly marked, than in any other country of the world. Very likely this accounts for it. The position of different classes is so clearly fixed and accepted that no feeling of social degradation can exist. Self-assumption is useless; the peasant converses with his lord with much of the well-bred familiarity of a courtier chatting to his king, and there is none of that half-defined feeling of shame and grudging envy which probably produces the "I'm just as good as you" manner of the English and American lower classes.

Presently the Maharaja arrived at a gallop in a funny little red landau, very like Tom Thumb's at Madame Tussaud's. He was sleeping peacefully, and followed by a straggling escort on small ponies. Their appearance suggested the "Forty Thieves," and, if half that we are told is true, they don't belie it.

At the next change there were no horses at all. Ours distinctly refused to go beyond their usual stage, and behaved like fiends, turning sharp round, backing into the cliffs, then going a few yards at a wild gallop, and finally running over the naked foot of a syce who was attempting to lead them. The poor man was dreadfully cut, but he was very plucky, and in a few minutes got up in front again and we struggled anew to get on.

After this the horses had it much their own way, and I was very glad when we found fresh ones at the next stage.



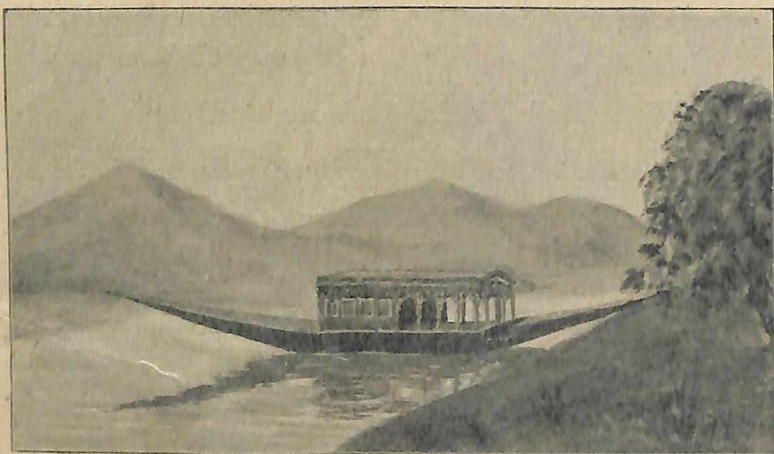
Alan wanted the syce to come on with us to Baramula and be attended by the doctor, but he preferred to return to his own home, and a few rupees made him apparently quite happy.

Our new horses behaved in a novel and somewhat startling manner. When the off one got bored he sat down on his hind legs, like the trained circus-horse when the band plays "Home, sweet Home," and the near one, turning round his head, looked at him admiringly. This happened every half-mile or so, and it was more by good luck than judgment that we arrived that night at all. My only wonder is that the poor little beasts get on as well as they do. They are only about thirteen hands high, and so thin, their backbone looks as if it would cut the reins, it is so sharp. Besides some luggage and guns, there were Alan and I, the driver, Alan's servant, and the groom; and we were considered quite a light load—all the tongas we met had much more.

We got to Baramula about 5 p.m., just as a thunder-storm broke, which lasted nearly all night. It was bitterly cold, and the bungalow was only a two-roomed wooden shanty, the old bungalow having been entirely destroyed by an earthquake which, a few years ago, wrecked the town. To-morrow we go on by boat.

Saturday, October 15th.—Since early morning the house has been surrounded by a shouting crowd of boatmen, each

wishing us to take his boat ; and whenever you look out they thrust a packet of letters of recommendation into your hand. As they cannot read English, many of the characters they hand you with so much modest pride are the reverse of flattering. We ended by taking a man whose chief merit seems to be that his brother is the captain of the Maharaja's boat (now moored here), and that everything we may want is to be borrowed from the Raja. On board his own



THE MAHARAJA'S HOUSEBOAT.

boat are temptingly laid out two cups, a jug, and a few plates and dishes ; but when Santan, who has been sent to explore the cooking boat, comes back, he reports there is nothing in it except a fireplace. Rather crest-fallen, our man goes away to interview his brother, returns proudly in half-an-hour with a frying pan, and is hurt and surprised that we do not consider that our cooking for two days can be perfectly well done in that. After some delay and much



groaning, a kettle is added, and, feeling they have done a hard day's work, the two brothers squat down on the bank and look at us. We can't help thinking that the Raja's captain has played us false, and return to the bungalow saying we shall hire another boat.

In the afternoon, whilst Alan was out shooting, the two came up at the head of a band of coolies, bearing triumphantly one dish, two pans, two spoons, and a stewing-pot, and they all sit down on the ground around me, and insist on my inspecting the reinforcement of their *batterie de cuisine*. They have evidently looted the Raja's boat to the last straw, and explain that although there are "many more beautiful things" they have all been lent to other Sahibs on the river. I have said it will do and they walk their men off again. I have a horrid suspicion that they are only borrowed to show me, and with no intention of putting them on our boat.

It was past three o'clock when our ekkas arrived. At first I did not recognise them, for our familiar piebald was gone, and a black pony had taken his place. It appeared that his indignant owner had removed him from the road, and replaced him with this animal.

By five we are all on board and fairly off, when Santan comes to tell me sorrowfully that the cooking utensils I had passed "are all holes." As a housekeeper I feel I have lost his good opinion for ever; still I can't help

thinking that he has accepted a bribe from another boatman and wishes to make us employ him.

All the boats are the same, long broadish punts with square ends sloping slightly upwards. They are undecked, but, amidship, a few poles and sticks, tied together and roofed with reeds, form a sort of hut or cabin. The sides are closed in with reed mats made to roll up when wanted. Everything is very rough, and there is



BOATS AT BARAMULA.

no attempt at varnish or paint. We dine at one end, and sleep at the other. There is just room for two little camp beds side by side.

After the sun went down it was bitterly cold. But this journey is generally made in summer, when you are glad to sleep out of doors. At half-past nine we turn in. I have piled all my clothes on the bed.

Sunday, October 16th.—We had rather a lively night.



Our boat is followed by the cooking boat with our servants on board, and their crew sang most of the night. There were also many rats, who evidently considered us intruders, and once I awoke with a mouse under my pillow. Several times, the man rowing forward put his head over the reed screen to tell us when places of interest were being passed.

Early this morning we went through the Woolar lake. There are a fair number of wild-fowl about, and at daybreak Alan went off in a small canoe, and returned about nine with a lot of teal and wild-duck.

The scenery is very pretty, with snow mountains in the distance, but parts of the river and canal are so shallow that the men are frequently obliged to wade and push the boat along. Occasionally we go aground. We have discovered that the crew of seven we bargained for consists of four men, a woman, and two little boys just able to toddle. The captain assures us it is all right, and brings out a copy of the rules which say "women and boys over twelve years old are to count as able-bodied seamen." However, he has since produced another man and boy, for whom an increased wage is demanded, and sits down to argue it out.

These boatmen seem to be a cheery good-tempered race, with an endless flow of conversation. My not understanding or speaking a word of Hindustani, or they



of English, does not interfere with this at all. They take the greatest interest in all we do, and if I begin to paint, or produce a book with pictures, or even to make tea, the whole crew leave work and crowd around to receive explanations. Alan's maps puzzled all of them a good deal, especially the captain, who was so fascinated that he has planted himself at Alan's side and every few minutes inquires where we are. By the time he has mastered this we have gone on a mile or so, and it all has to be begun again, which is a little trying. Running aground is the only thing that takes him off. He tells Alan long tales of the places I am to see, and has also confided to him that he means us to employ him all the winter. We really had not the heart to undeceive him.

At times the other boat is pulled up alongside so that their crew may join in the conversation. Once Alan, in an idle moment, began to burn patterns with a magnifying glass on the wooden deck. This arouses such enthusiasm that the whole crew stand round in breathless interest, the captain watching with conscious pride, which glides into a gentle annoyance when he finds that it won't rub out. However, we have drifted firmly aground once more, and, by the time we are off, he is all smiles again.

Santan now comes on board to remark in a matter-



of-fact tone that he has dropped one of our spoons in the river. As we have only two, this means taking it in turns for our soup, and our dinner to-night is quite a feast—mutton-broth, teal, wild-duck, Irish-stew, and a sweet omelette.

At eight I go to bed, not before Santan has appeared again. This time it is a tumbler. He seems to think it so much a matter of course that things should fall overboard, that I feel it would be ungenerous to reproach him. My forbearance is rewarded by finding it is "only one of the Raja's," and not from our precious luncheon basket.

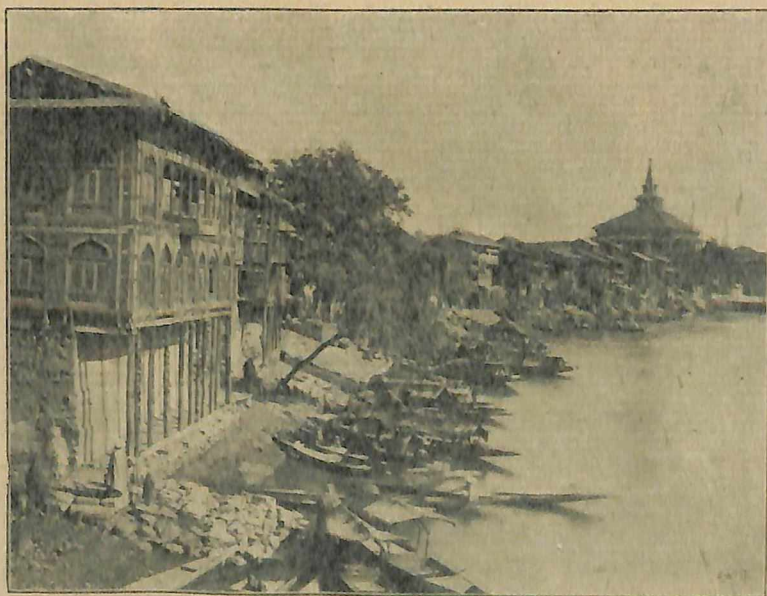
Monday, October 17.—Arrived at Srinagar about 5 A.M. After breakfast, Alan went to see Colonel Prideaux, the Resident, to whom the Viceroy had given us a letter of introduction. He found Colonel Prideaux was leaving that day on his way south to join the Maharaja, but was introduced to Colonel Chamberlain, the Military Secretary, who very kindly recommended a first-rate Kashmiri shikari (hunter), Rahman by name. The head shikari has the entire organization and management of a party when marching in the hills. Upon him depends one's comfort in camp as well as all prospect of sport. He is a combination of major-domo and courier, and, in addition, commandant of the twenty-five or thirty coolies who carry the baggage. It is therefore of the greatest importance to obtain a really good man.

There are no hotels in Srinagar, but a few bungalows where visitors who do not care to camp out can stop. They gave us one of a row of funny little cottages on the bank of the river, built by the State for married visitors only. Ours contains two whitewashed bedrooms and dressing-rooms, furnished with a table and chair: that is all. Of course, people do not take the week's journey up here only to stay two days, but generally come for the summer, and with a little furniture and a few rugs and curtains which can be bought in the bazaar for two or three rupees, it is easy to make oneself fairly comfortable in this lovely climate.

We leave to-morrow, so our household arrangements are very primitive. Two sheets have been spread side by side, on which all our clothes are piled. Occasionally my dresses are found on Alan's heap, then I retire and leave the ayah to explain matters, but seldom to his satisfaction. It is a great saving in house room that the servants never take off their clothes, and sleep in the verandah, or outside your door.

After luncheon we took a boat to the town, about half an hour's row lower down the river. The houses of wood and sun-dried brick are built on the water's edge, and seemed mixed up and crowded together. Here and there, wide flights of stone steps lead down to the river. On these most of the inhabitants appear to live, some in

the water, some in boats, others on the steps half-in and half-out of the river—a race of amphibians. Many of the wooden houses are carved, but there is an utter absence of colour. All is brown except an occasional gold or silver dome of some temple. The Maharaja has a house near the European quarter, an ugly bare building that



SRINAGAR.

looks like the grand-stand of a racecourse, but I believe he usually lives in an old palace in the town.

Several of the shops are inscribed "Shawl Merchant and Banker," which seems an odd combination. We were advised to go to one Bahar Shah. To reach him one had to go up steps into a little yard surrounded by open sheds, where men sat embroidering rugs; then through

rickety arches, and up little corkscrew flights of stairs of the roughest description—when, quite suddenly, we turned into a large room hung with curtains, carpets, &c., like a big “Liberty.” Some of the things were quite lovely, and we bought recklessly. They make a beautiful hand-spun cloth called “Pushmeena,” very soft, like a Rampur chuddar shawl. It fetches a good price. On the other hand, the common native home-spun called “puttoo” is ridiculously cheap, yet makes quite charming country suits and dresses. The ordinary price for a man’s suit of clothes, made to order, is $4\frac{1}{2}$ rupees (about five shillings and eightpence). I have seen “puttoo” before in London shops, but need not say that it was sold at much the same price as English home-spuns.

There were many white felt rugs and serge curtains very prettily embroidered with coloured silks in Eastern designs, and sold at very moderate prices. And on every side were piles of gold brocades, and beautiful Kashmir shawls worth thousands of rupees. In the midst of all this splendour, Bahar Shah conjured up from somewhere most prosaic articles, such as camp-beds, worsted stockings, tea, sugar, and the many little necessities of camp life.

When at last we came out, we found our boat surrounded by sellers of papier-mâché, silver and worked copper goods, shoemakers, and many others, each with

his wares around him. One, more enterprising than the others, had got into our boat, and talked to us in queer English all the way home. He was a papier-mâché manufacturer, and told us his grandfather was “made of papier-mâché.” He meant, of course, his business. We bought a few things, and he was most anxious to enamel a crest or monogram on them, and very sceptical when Alan said he had none with him. “But surely the Sahib has it carved on him somewhere”—he meant tattooed.





CHAPTER III.

The Apple-tree Canal—The Dhal Lake—Luncheon at the Nasim Bagh—Shalimar Bagh—An “abode of love”—The Emperor Jehangir and Queen Nūr Mahal—A word-picture by Moore—A sturdy beggar—The start for Islamabad—Floating tradesmen—The Noble Presence—A “man of the world”—In a dandy chair—“Where is Mahdoo the good boatman?”—Camping out—Stalking the barasingh—The Maharaja’s preserve—Kashmir Valley—Bagging a bear—A dirty town—The Temple of the Sun—Kashmiri shikaris—Khadra the dandy—An unlucky coolie.

Wednesday, October 19th.—In front of our cottage is a high narrow bank, built to keep the river within bounds in flood time. From early dawn this morning, a long row of natives have squatted on the top with their knees up to their chins, looking like a line of crows on a telegraph wire. They never stop shouting the excellence of their wares, and offer us everything, from cart-ropes to watch-springs. Each man carries a book of letters of recommendation, which he thrusts into your hand at every opportunity. They ask four times as much as they mean to take, but apparently set more store on the wording of the “chit” (letter), which they beg from you to add to their book. It is their only form of advertisement.

After breakfast we started for the Dhal Lake, rowing



down the river, and then through the Apple-tree Canal which turns back almost parallel to it. The entrance to the lake is only about half-a-mile on foot from our bungalow, and not far from the bachelors' quarters, ^{or} rather camping-ground, for there is nothing else. But as usual the bachelors have the best of it. Their camping-ground is in a lovely situation on the banks of the Apple-tree Canal, and shaded by a group of enormous chanar trees. These chanars (a large kind of plane tree) are scattered along the banks of the river and dot the valley with beautiful clumps, reminding one of an English park. Curiously enough, they are not indigenous, but planted, I believe, by the Mogul Emperors.

The entrance to the lake is closed by a pair of wooden gates, arranged to shut inwards when the Jhelum rises too high, and so prevent its waters flooding the lake. Once inside the gates a network of canals weave themselves in and out, cutting the land into numberless little islets. It is a good hour's row before the open part of the lake is reached. This is covered with bulrushes, reeds and flags, huge leaves of lotus and water-lily floating between. In the spring, I believe, the latter are lovely, one mass of pink, blue, and yellow, and white flowers; but now everything is withered and dried up, and the peasants pass in boats piled up with rushes to thatch their houses before winter sets in.

We landed at the Nasim Bagh for luncheon, which we brought with us. This was one of the numerous summer palaces of the Emperor Akbar, but except for the avenues and clumps of big chanars, and the massive stone encircling wall, there is nothing left but a few ruins to mark the spot.

We have kept on the boatmen who brought us from Baramula, and they come up now and beg for money to buy food. As there is no place where anything can be purchased, we ask for an explanation; "That no matter, we long way from home, always custom Sahibs give money for food here;" and this became their war cry for the rest of the day, even after a plentiful repast which they had brought with them and shamelessly devoured.

After luncheon we rowed across to the Shalimar Bagh (garden). The gardens are formed by four terraces rising one above the other. Through the middle, a mountain stream has been led along a stone-paved perfectly straight course, widening in places into tanks sprinkled with fountains, and falling in little cascades over each terrace step. On every terrace stands a large pavilion, the top one the finest, made of painted wood, with polished black marble pillars. It is in the middle of a marble-lined tank, into which cascades fall on each of the four sides. There are innumerable fountains all around and along the canal, with jets of water intended to cool the air playing in every direction.



Shalimar when interpreted means "Agapemone," or "Abode of love," and was according to all accounts a sort of "Petit Trianon" of the Emperor Jehangir, and his Queen, Nûr Mahal.

The sun was just setting when we left, and the lake, with its mountains on all sides, and mosques, temples and villages scattered around, filled one with astonishment at the accuracy of Moore's second-hand description :

Oh, to see it at sunset, when warm o'er the lake
Its splendour at parting a summer eve throws,
Like a bride full of blushes when lingering to take
A last look of her mirror at night ere she goes.
When the shrines through the foliage are gleaming half shown.

There was not a breath of air to ruffle the water, and the mountains were mirrored back with startling exactness. Their shadows and reflections were perfectly wonderful and of every hue and tint. Each hill seemed to have its own particular colour, and, I am bound to add, its own particular smell, for the water was very low indeed.

One ought of course to visit Kashmir in the spring, when the roses are in bloom and the ground covered with wild flowers. But although it is beautiful at all times, I believe its chief charm to the Anglo-Indian is the great contrast it forms to the plains; its coolness and greenness, when the rest of India is baked and dried up and brown. It was rather *too* cool to-night on the water,



and we were not sorry to leave the boat at the gates, and walk briskly home.

Thursday, October 20th.—We spent the morning in the town, making our last purchases, and ordered some very pretty chased copper tea-tables and vases to be sent to England. Our boatman was extremely annoyed because we refused to visit the bazaar. He harangued me the whole way down. “How ashamed I should be when other memsahibs asked me if I had seen the bazaar. No memsahibs ever came to Srinagar without seeing it.” Of course his object was to get a commission on what we might buy. I never met such a beggar in my life. Nothing is too small, and he never loses a chance. Now we go to a shop, and he asks would the sahib give him a little shot for his gun. Alan promises to give him two pounds of shot, and whilst we are busy, he orders and takes it. It is only when we come to pay the bill, that we find that he has taken *six* pounds. He robs us right and left, but with such a cheery, good-humoured manner, smiling and showing the whitest of teeth the while, that it is impossible to be angry with him.

In the afternoon we went on board our boats again, and started for Islamabad, the head of the navigable part of the river. A crowd of tradesmen came to see us off, ran after the boat pressing their goods for sale, and would not be convinced that silver candlesticks, inlaid cedar



boxes, filigree gold jewellery, &c., are rather in the way on a shooting expedition. The watchmakers (or rather menders), and coppersmiths, were the most persistent. Trade must be very slack, for they follow us in boats at least a couple of miles up the river. I am rather in favour of taking the clock-man with us, for Alan's watch is the only one among the party, and if anything goes wrong with it, we shall never know the time again until we return.

It was very cold at night, more particularly so as the boatman continued his old trick of leaving a large hole in the roof, through which he talks to Alan at intervals, telling him how cold it is and miserable. "Nevertheless, because the great Sahib has commanded, he will go another mile, although all other boats have long since stopped, but he knows the 'Noble Presence' will pay him well for it, and what is he but his 'Highness's servant and slave," and so on, giving Alan every possible title of honour, of which "Protector of the Poor" is the favourite one. By the way, his own name is "Mahdoo," which I believe means "Almighty Being."

All next day we were on the river. Mahdoo is as pleased as a child at our catching some fish, which also leads to the suggestion that we should give him our fishing rods, as they will only be an incumbrance on the hills. He is not in the least annoyed when we refuse, only saying mildly



that the "Protector of the Poor" will then give him a larger backsheesh.

The river is very shallow, and the men who tow are often compelled to wade in the water. Mahdoo proposes that we should give him a few rupees, then he will get more men from the village, and we shall go faster. As on a previous occasion we found this was only his excuse to be utterly idle, and, what was worse, devote himself entirely to conversation, we turn a deaf ear to him.

October 22nd.—About the middle of the day we arrived at Kanbul, and were met by a patriarchal-looking person, who announces that his name is "Lassoo," and that he is the father of our head shikari.

He brought with him a bunch of flowers, a basket of fruit, and an enormous bundle wrapped up in a sheet, and containing nine volumes of *chits* (letters of recommendation), every one of which he expected us to read. In his youth he was a well-known shikari, and has done much good service, once saving the life of his master. Oddly enough he remembered Alan at once, having met him many years ago when shooting with the late Duke of Marlborough.

Lassoo is now Kotwal (Mayor) of the village, so his *chits* cannot be of much service to him, but he appears to have a harmless mania for collecting them, possesses already over two thousand, and asked for ours without a moment's delay.

We went up to the bungalow, where we found the



garden spread with carpets and curtains which a local merchant had brought for our inspection. The rest of the day was fully occupied in getting our camp together. Rahman, our head shikari, has taken us in hand, and arranges everything. He seems an excellent man, with plenty of *savoir vivre* and tact in managing those under him.

Colonel Chamberlain told us we should find him quite a "man of the world," and this so perfectly describes him, that between ourselves he always goes by that designation. Nothing comes amiss to him, and he seems able to turn his hand to anything. Indeed, he assisted me yesterday to try on a dress, and convinced the tailor that it did not fit.

Besides the "man of the world," our staff consists of a second shikari, and a tiffin coolie, named respectively "Khadra" and "Khaira." The latter carries our luncheon basket, and is my especial attendant when marching. We have also a cook, a bheestie (water-carrier), a dhobhie (washerwoman, or rather man), and six permanent coolies who go to and fro with letters, &c., and make themselves generally useful. Our tents and baggage are carried by about thirty other coolies, who are the rank and file, and recruited from the villages on the way.

The Maharaja also sent us a most imposing-looking individual called a "chuprassie." He is a cross between a policeman and an orderly, and wears a scarlet belt with a large engraved brass badge, as his insignia of authority. So



long as we are in the Maharaja's territory the village kotwals are bound to obey his orders, and to supply us with the coolies and provisions we may require.

In the evening old Lassoos arrived with a packing-case containing a framed photograph of the Duke of Marlborough. It was considered far too precious to be taken from its box, and had not yet been unpacked. He also brought me a very welcome present of a jar of wild honey.

After dinner we paid off the boatmen. Mahdoo begged for everything we had,—down to the blankets off our bed. He succeeded in getting a chit for himself, and also for each member of his crew, which I believe he retailed to them privately. He shortly returned to remind us that we had omitted writing one for his children; to whom, he suggested, it would give a fine start in life.

October 23rd.—We started after breakfast for a thirteen mile march to our shooting ground. Rahman insists that I shall be carried in a dandy-chair, and one is brought from the village. The native women sit in them hung from a pole carried by two men. I am not allowed to do this, and it is arranged to be carried on four men's shoulders, most unpleasantly high from the ground. It looked so shaky and unsafe, that, feeling it would be ignominious to be killed by a fall from a dandy, I prudently sent the ayah on a trial trip. Alan has a little pony on which his legs nearly touch the ground.



On reaching the river we find we have not yet shaken off our boatmen, and they are waiting to ferry us across. Mahdoo is a little sulky, for he has found out that I presented Lasso with the Army and Navy Stores list, which we found on opening a case of provisions, also sundry guide books, and other superfluous literature.

The whole party, including dandy and pony, cross together, excepting Santan and the ayah, who have chosen this moment to cook their dinners, and are left behind. At the further side, Lasso takes a ceremonious farewell of us, kissing our hands and wishing us good luck. With me it was not a dignified leave-taking, for in a native dandy it is only possible to sit cross-legged like a tailor, and I was rocking about, some four feet from the ground. Lasso noticed I was writing in a book (my diary), and suggested to Alan that I ought to mention his name. Mahdoo, overhearing this, rushed up, and, running after me with his hands clasped on high, begged that he might not be forgotten. The whole procession had to be stopped whilst I took down his name and address. "And now put 'good boatman,' for if memsahib is writing a book other memsahibs will read it, and will come to Baramula and ask 'Where is Mahdoo the good boatman? I not go to Srinagar till he comes.'" Then, determined to go one higher than Lasso, he shook hands cordially. Even after he had gone, his smile, like that of Alice's Cheshire cat, seemed to remain.



It was rather a tedious march through rice fields. Once I vacated my exalted position rather hastily, one of my coolies falling down. The chuprassie, gorgeously arrayed, walked the whole way in front of my dandy. He wears a white turban and white quilted overcoat lined with fur, a scarlet underdress, gold waistcoat, bright green puttis (gaiters), and a long sword, but rather destroys the effect by carrying a huge Sairey Gamp umbrella. I am borne on my litter, sitting cross-legged on a bright blue rug, with a white sunshade over my head, and feel that I look like some Hindoo idol being trotted round at a festival.

At 2 P.M. we arrived at our camping ground, just above a little village under the hill, and we soon get our tents pitched. About five a message came. The ayah had broken down and the dandy has to be sent back for her, much to the coolies' disgust. Since our arrival they have never moved, and sit on the ground wrapped in rugs, with only their heads out. They are only stirred to activity by the chuprassie prodding them with his umbrella. Half-an-hour later Alan's keys are handed to him, a token of Santan's defeat, and it is dark before he and the ayah arrive, very weary and footsore. However, it is not long before they are all singing and cooking round a fire.

The poor chuprassie is of a higher caste, so cannot eat with the others, and has a fire of his own. It gave me quite



a shock to see his beautiful coat and sword hung on a tree, whilst he cooked his lonely little dinner.

October 24th.—Alan started up the hill at four this morning—pitch dark and very cold. He returned to luncheon, and had only seen one small stag of about eight points, which they could just make out with the telescope, feeding on the opposite hill side. In the evening he went out again, but without success.

The hangal, or Kashmir stag, although larger, is identically the same species as the Scotch red deer. The shikaris generally speak of it as “barasingh” or “twelve-horns” from the number of the points, although they have been so shot down that a “royal” is now seldom met with. Fortunately, game laws have lately been put in force, or they would soon have become as extinct as the dodo.

Hinds, as well as stags, used to be killed in and out of season, and during the winter numbers of them were frequently mobbed to death in the snow by the villagers. Some excellent regulations have now been made, forbidding the hinds to be shot at all, and establishing a close time for stags. A still better law takes away the chief incentive to their massacre in the winter time, by rendering the sale of horns and skins illegal.

Alan tried to impress upon Rahman that if game became extinct it would not be long before the shikari followed suit, and with him would disappear the numerous train of



followers who now fatten on the sahibs' gold. The "man of the world" perfectly agreed with this, and pointed the moral with a little Hindustani fable bearing a striking resemblance to "killing the goose with the golden eggs."

There is a charm in stalking the wild animal, when he is wild, which is absent in a Scotch deer forest. When you do see him (alas! not too frequently), he is your own, if you can get him. The wind can never be wrong if a stalk is possible, and there is no gillie to observe that you will drive the beast on to a neighbour's forest. Still, for stalking as an art, Scotland is far superior. In Kashmir it is very rarely you can see and circumvent the stag on ground which renders a scientific stalk possible. He lives in a forest, not only by name but in reality,—an endless wilderness of huge pines. His only appearance is at daybreak and dusk, when he comes out to feed; and almost the only chance of getting a shot is by lying in ambush near to his favourite haunts. With patience and luck this may succeed, but it can hardly be called real sport.

When the stags are roaring, it is better fun. This sounds rather unsportsmanlike, but it is not so in practice. The extent of ground is so vast, and the stags so few in number, that even when one is heard bellowing in the miles of fir forest which stretch along the hill sides, to find him is like searching for a needle in a bottle of hay. And although they are



on the look-out for hinds, and much bolder at this season, still it requires very careful walking up wind, and a quick ear and eye, to get a shot. Unfortunately for us, this has been an early summer and autumn, and the stags have almost ceased to roar.

It was chilly enough to-night to make a large wood fire very pleasant. Indeed our Hindustani servants, Santan and the ayah, evidently considered the climate Arctic. Poor things, they little know what is before them! Santan, on the strength of his Portuguese blood, affects the European, and pretends that he rather likes cold, but the ayah has no false pride and passes all her time crouched by the fire. At night I believe she sleeps on the embers, for in the morning when she comes into my little tent to awake me, her flowing garments are spotted with burns and chars, and positively reek of smoke and wood-ashes.

Alan started at 2 A.M. for the Maharaja's preserve, about ten miles across the valley on the opposite hills. He says, "It was pitch dark, but, with a lantern to guide us, we pushed along the track at a good pace, my pony having to jog to keep up with the shikari's long strides. In about two hours we reached the foot of the range of hills, where black bear and barasingh are said to be. It was still dark, but a glimmer of dawn showed behind the eastern mountains, so I sent back the pony, and commenced the

ascent on foot. Rahman, who had never been allowed to come here before, was full of expectation, and declared that bears were as plentiful as sheep. And sure enough, when we were about half-way up, we could just make out a smallish black object scuttling through the rocky ground about a couple of hundred yards above us. It was still barely light enough to see one's foresight, and, the bear being a small one, I would not fire, and risk losing my chance at a barasingh. At last we reached the top, just as the first ray of sun burst over the mountains behind us. The view was splendid. At our feet lay stretched the lovely Kashmir valley bounded on the left by the snow-clad Pir Punjal. A slender twisting silver wire marked the river Jhelum, and in the far distance, the Takht-i-Suliman mountain, which towers above the city of Srinagar, looked like a small mole-hill on the plain. But Rahman and Khaira had not come up here to admire the view, and they quickly set to work, scanning through a glass each likely corrie and glen. From the saddle-back we were on, one could see for miles along both sides of the low hills, but although we waited nearly an hour, not even a black bear came in sight.

"The sun was now well up, and we continued our way along the hill-top. There were several little wooded nullahs which at intervals deeply furrowed the sides of the mountain, and ran down into the thick black



forest below. As we were passing one of them, Rahman suddenly stopped, and, touching me on the shoulder, whispered that he heard the grass being torn up by some animal concealed in the bushes. Running to a projecting rock, which commanded both sides of the ravine, I signalled to Rahman to roll down a stone. Almost before he had done so an enormous black bear cantered noiselessly out of the nullah, lower down on the opposite side, and lolloped leisurely away through the high grass. He was about a hundred and fifty yards off, going straight from us, and I had just a moment for a snap shot at his hind quarters before he was hidden by the bushes. I had not even time to align the sights, and hardly expected to hit. To my great delight, the thud of the bullet and 'ough-ough' of the bear, proved that the former had found its billet.

"There was an open space in front of the thick jungle he was evidently making for, and we ran along the hill-side, hoping to cut him off. If he reached the forest, even wounded as he was, we must lose him, for nothing but a line of beaters would have got him out of the dense undergrowth; and at this time of the year it is forbidden to beat.

"We were not long in reaching the open ground, but no bear was visible. It was impossible he could have crossed before us, so he was evidently still in the

bushes and high grass we had passed. Rahman and Khaira therefore went back to track him, whilst I stood in front, in case he should attempt to break. In a short time I saw Rahman beckon, and on going back he pointed silently to a big smear of blood on the grass, and whispered that he thought the bear was lying wounded in some bushes below.

“The jungle was very dense, and we made our way

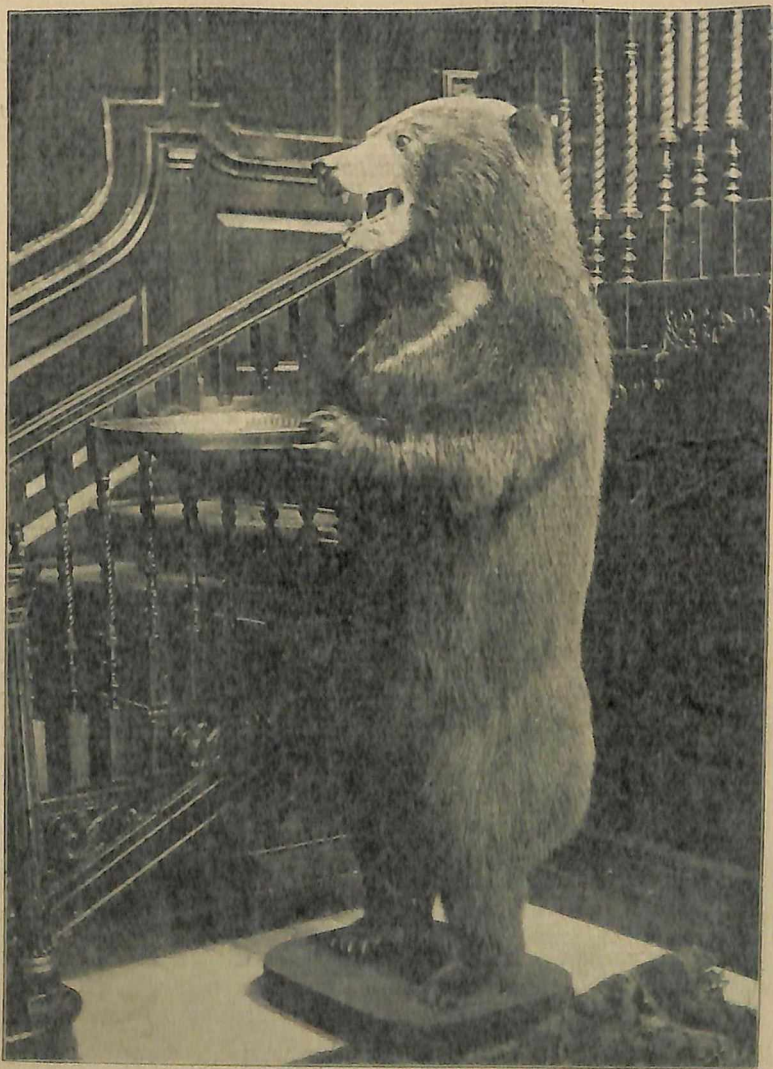


“THE BEAR WAS A LARGE MALE.”

down the hill cautiously, looking into each clump of bushes we passed. When we had gone about a couple of hundred yards something stirred in front of us, and we suddenly saw the shaggy black head and shoulders of the bear standing behind a rock some thirty yards off. He had evidently heard or smelt us, and was moving his head to and fro, and peering in our direction. A

A KOTAH BEAR.

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BEAR SHOT IN KOTAH (see page 294.)



steady shot at the point of his shoulder rolled him over, to all appearances lifeless, and Rahman, in a state of excitement whipped out his knife, and rushed forward to take off the skin. He was a little premature, for, when we were within two or three yards, the bear suddenly struggled to his legs, and very clearly showed that he did not mean to part with his hide just yet. But a bullet through the side of his head finished him off, and he fell on his face, stone dead.

“The bear was a very large male, and on skinning him we found my first shot had broken the hind leg high up, which luckily prevented his travelling faster than ourselves, or we certainly must have lost him in the thick jungle.”

The next two days we worked hard trying to get a shot at the barasingh Alan saw the day we arrived, but without success. These low hills are covered with deciduous trees, whose dried leaves are now lying a foot thick on the ground, and, however carefully one picks one's way, it is impossible to avoid making a noise which can be heard a quarter of a mile off. Yesterday evening whilst I was sketching, there was a scrunching and rustling of withered leaves on the hill behind me, which I thought must be occasioned by a bear at least. On investigation, it turned out to be a little jungle fowl, which, light and small as it was, could not help making noise enough for an elephant.



Rahman wished us to move our camp nearer to the Maharaja's preserve, and guaranteed our bagging two or three bears if we would stay there a few days. But we were anxious to get across the Marbul Pass into Kishtiwār, where we hoped to find barasingh more numerous, and at this time of year a fall of snow might close the passes at any time. In fact they are rarely open after the end of October. We therefore decided to return to Kanbul, and then, after trying Halkin Galli for barasingh, to make our way to Kishtiwār and Chamba.

Halkin Galli, Saturday, October 29th.—We left Kanbul this morning, passing on our way Islamabad, the second largest town in Kashmir, a collection of dirty houses on a still dirtier river, and abounding in barking dogs and bad smells. Whilst our coolies and servants took the direct road, we made a *détour* of a few miles to visit Martand, the Temple of the Sun. This old Hindoo shrine, only the ruins of which now remain, was built in the fifth century after Christ, and long before the Kashmiris had been converted to Mohammedanism. It stands on a low, treeless plateau, the rocky bareness of which forms a striking site for its massive ruins. The central building is approached by a broad flight of steps, very few of which now exist. The roof, too, has disappeared, but the heavy stone walls, covered with weather-worn carving, in great part remain, although those of the two side chapels incline



dangerously outwards, probably from the effects of an earthquake. A colonnade of carved pillars and arches forms a quadrangle round the main edifice. There are eighty-four columns: a number sacred to Hindoos and appropriate to the sun, being a multiple of the number of days in the week and months in the year.

After a short stay we push on, and in about an hour rejoin the direct road. Here we found the ayah quite broken down, so I am obliged to put her in my dandy, and continue my way on foot. It was a lovely evening for walking, but the "man of the world" was scandalised and rushed up with a diminutive pony—of course no side-saddle. The road, or rather track, was now frightfully steep, climbing like a staircase in short sweeps up the face of the mountain, and I was only too glad after a twelve-mile walk to have anything to carry me up, in spite of the saddle. But I am afraid I shall never join the "advanced ladies," and had it not been for Rahman and Khaira on either side, several times when climbing the steeper parts, I feel sure, I should have slipped back over my pony's tail.

We camped at the top of the pass, which crosses the fir-clad range of hills dividing the Islamabad from the Nowboog valley.

It was very cold towards dusk, and poor Santan, who had walked nearly all the way, did not arrive till late, and



half-frozen. He was only revived by the strongest hot whisky and water. We had given him a pony, but he considers it unsafe to ride except on the flat; and uphill or downhill he at once dismounts, as he considers the situation too dangerous.

The ayah was a couple of hours behind, followed by the dandy, in which she refused to be carried. "If I fall, memsahib, I die," was her excuse. And she immediately fled to the fire and wept until she retired for the night.

When our servants did not turn up, the shikaris at once volunteered to put our tents in order. I thought it better to superintend matters, and help to make the beds. But two handier housemaids it would have been hard to find, and I very soon saw they knew more about bed-making than I could teach them.

These Kashmiri shikaris are the cheeriest, nicest fellows possible. They have several times suggested that we should send away our useless Hindustani servants, and let them wait on us altogether, which of course is not the work they were engaged for.

Khadra, the second shikari, is rather a dandy, and slightly apes European fashions, on great occasions smartening up his homespun shooting clothes with a coloured English shirt and necktie. He also carries a highly scented pocket-handkerchief very much *en évidence*, but,



I regret to say, has not yet learned the use it should be put to. His English ammunition boots and stockings are also for show, not use, and when real work commences are at once discarded. Rahman is always the "man of the world," and dresses in garments that give you the idea he is fully prepared to walk or ride fifty miles at a moment's notice, but he never wears superfluous finery.

It is astonishing how the turban, or "pugri" as it is called in India, adds to a native's personal appearance. It is certainly a most becoming headdress. The Kashmiris wind it round a small quilted skull-cap, with a pointed end, like an abbreviated fool's-cap. I had always imagined Rahman to be at least six feet high, and rather picturesque-looking, but one day he happened to pass us with his turban off, and only this little pointed cap on his close-shaven head: I hardly recognized him. He was certainly not over five feet six, and the disillusion was similar to the shock one gets when one first meets on foot, and in kennel clothes, the smart, dapper huntsman, only seen before in all the glories of scarlet at the cover side.

We remained two days at Halkin Galli, and scoured the hills around for barasingh, but without success. There were not even any recent marks of them. Khaira came in one morning with a story of two enormous black bears, so close that he could have hit them with his stick, but



although we at once went after them, they had taken the hint and were not seen again.

October 31st.—We struck camp and got away about 9 A.M. At first the path leads down the mountain side, with a hot sun beating full upon us. Then for a mile or two across the Nowboog valley, to where the ravine leading to the Chingam pass debouches. On our way down we pass some people who told Rahman that early this morning a black bear had killed a man from their village, who had been out shooting with a sahib now in camp below.

A little further on we came to the tents of Colonel and Mrs. Le Mesurier, who, hearing of our advent, with true Indian hospitality had breakfast ready waiting for us. From them we hear the story of the coolie, who, though very badly wounded, is not likely to die. It happened whilst beating a ravine, and the bear came out on the opposite side to where Colonel Le Mesurier had stationed himself. The unfortunate man was close to where the bear emerged, and naturally ran away, but the brute caught him up and hit him a fearful blow on the side of his head with its fore-paw.

The poor fellow's face and neck were dreadfully torn, but the healing power of these total abstainers is wonderful, and they say he is certain to recover.

The other day Alan saw a native, the whole of whose face had been almost completely torn off some years ago



by a blow from a bear's paw, and yet the man was still alive and well!

A bear rarely bites when he attacks any one, but strikes with his forearm, which digging for roots, climbing trees, &c., has endowed with tremendous muscular power. The five projecting claws, hard and sharp as steel, and some two inches long, make a frightful weapon, and as he generally rises on his hind legs and strikes at the face, the wound he inflicts is terrible, even if death does not immediately ensue.

We continue our way through rice fields, till we pass the last little village in the Chingam valley, and then, after a short ascent, stop for the night at a most beautiful camping ground, entirely shut in by mountains. But in spite of its beauty by day, it is rather an eerie spot after dark. There is only a deserted cowshed near, the habitation of the herdsmen during the summer months. But they bury their dead around, and, strolling about at twilight, I came on a tiny graveyard just above our tents. And these Mussulman tombs are so desolate! Just a rough shape of earth with a bit of rock to mark the head, and a few sticks laid around. There is no wall or enclosure of any kind, and when one suddenly comes on a little grave-heap in these wild desolate ravines, it involuntarily evokes thoughts of murders, suicides, and their attendant ghosts.



November 2nd.—It rained and snowed all yesterday, so we did not march. Alan was out all day, but as usual saw nothing: not even a trace of any big game. This morning it was a little finer, although the hills around are white with snow. We start at 10 A.M. and reach the foot of the pass about 2 P.M., having had occasional snow and hail showers all the way. It is fearfully cold. Our tents are pitched near the bank of the torrent which flows from the snow and ice on the mountain in front of us. The forest of pines which clothes all the lower slopes only extends for a few hundred yards higher, and evidently marks the limit at which trees exist. Alan went out towards evening, and says: "We kept along the tops of the lower spurs of the mountain, which are covered with dense pine woods. A thin layer of snow has been lying on the ground all day, and if a barasingh had been about anywhere we must have come across his track; but there was not a single fresh mark. In one place in the dry mud were the footprints of a stag, but not recent, or less than a week or two old. Rahman thinks the barasingh have been driven lower down by the snow, but my impression is they are so very few in number that at any time it is only by a lucky chance they are ever seen in these endless forests."

"When we had climbed above the tree line, we came to a grass-covered merg, on which the recent marks where



a brown bear had been feeding could be traced through the thin covering of snow. We examined the hill side carefully, but nothing was in sight, and, as it was rapidly getting dark, and we were a long way from our tents, we turned to retrace our steps homeward. We had gone about a mile and got back in the forest, when Khaira appeared, running in the distance, and making signs to us to stop. We had sent him to reconnoitre a little lower down the mountain, and he came back to say that a brown bear was feeding not five hundred yards below where we had seen the marks. We went back as quickly as possible, for the night was fast closing in, and the falling snow made it very difficult to distinguish objects even a few yards off. Fortunately, we were above the bear, and the wind was blowing from beneath, so we got to within about forty yards of him without much trouble or loss of time. Even at that distance it was difficult to make him out, and when I put up my rifle it was too dark to see the foresight against his shoulder. Just at that moment he raised his head and looked towards us, and the movement rendered it easier to make him out, and exposed his front and chest. I took a quick shot, and he rolled over without a groan. Rahman was more careful on this occasion, and threw a stone or two before going very near. But the bear never stirred, and lay, a lifeless mass of brown fur, on the snow. The hollow express bullet had made a fearful hole in his chest.

and he was quite dead when we reached him. It was then too late to take his hide off, and the wind and snow blew a perfect blizzard in our faces, so we were only too glad to turn down the hill side towards the tents. It was pitch dark and impossible to see a yard in front of us, so we took a bee line for the valley, to hit off the path from the pass as quickly as possible. The hill was steep, and even the shikaris occasionally slipped up or tumbled over stones hidden in the darkness, whilst I averaged a fall about every hundred yards, and was very glad when we reached the beaten track. Even then we had a long way to go, and did not get back till long past nine o'clock."

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CHAPTER IV.

At the foot of the pass—A bear and a blizzard—A perilous path—An eclipse of the moon—Novel effect—A Hindoo explanation—Eccentricities of an ayah's packing—A day's sport above Singpur—A colony of monkeys—Our first rope-bridge—An artful dog—Kishtiwar—An Idol's lullaby—The Tehsildar—A desolate missionary—A fight for a fowl—Chuprassie *v.* coolie—Lord Lytton on the native chicken.

November 3rd.—It required all one's resolution to get up this morning. Everything was frozen, and even our sponges were solid blocks of ice. But Rahman is anxious to push on whilst it is fine, and says that if there is a heavy fall of snow we shall not be able to cross the pass at all. So we start as soon as the tents are struck. The steep ascent commences at once, the track



A COOLIE.

running by a frozen watercourse, which, although very pretty, with long icicles hanging from the rocks, was

extremely slippery. Rahman's little unshod pony was the only thing that could keep its feet, and we all, coolies and shikaris as well, measured our length more than once. At the top of the pass we sent our ponies and the ayah's dandy back, as there are several rope bridges on the road before us, over which the ponies cannot cross. The poor ayah is very unhappy. She says to me confidentially, "Memsahib, this is one dreadful country, the ice fall down *even* from Heaven." She had evidently made up her mind that Heaven is a warm place.

We are above all trees, and the ground looks frightfully desolate and bare. All the peaks above us are white with snow, which also lies in patches around. As we cross the summit a storm comes on, but we descend rapidly and soon leave it behind us. It is a long steep march down, although the valley looks quite at our feet. In spite of the chuprassie's efforts, and continued prods with his umbrella, the coolies are far behind, and some have not yet crossed the pass. So we decide to camp on the mountain side, some four miles short of the usual halting place. The ground is so uneven that my bed has to be propped up with stones at one end, and, if I were a restless sleeper, bed and all would certainly come to grief.

November 4th.—It froze very hard again last night, and even a bright sun had not warmth to thaw us when we started in the early morning. A very steep and



slippery path led down beside the stream, or rather torrent, at times hardly giving any foothold. Then we climb up again, till the river is a mere thread below, and the track along the precipitous side of the mountain becomes a narrow foot-path, barely two feet wide. At last we descend into the valley, and it is quite a pleasure to be amongst green trees and meadows again, for during the last few days we have been above the firs, and the only kind of vegetation was a little shrub, now leafless.

We pitch our tents for the night in a rice field, high up the mountain, with the village of Chingam lying far below at our feet. As the sun was setting, a snow shower came over, but the sky soon cleared to a bright starlight night without a cloud. This was lucky, as soon after dark a total eclipse of the moon commenced. It was a full moon, and the black shadow of the earth crept bit by bit across its face, until about nine o'clock it was completely covered, but not hidden, for it still glowed like a dusky red ball through the darkness. The effect from the shaded light was most striking. In place of the usual flat-looking circle, it was an unmistakable round ball which hung in the heavens, and the markings on its surface gave it exactly the appearance of a big school-room globe. From the height we were on it was a most impressive sight, so clearly marking out another world far away from us. And as I turned to look down on our own earth and saw the moun-

RIFLE AND SPEAR WITH THE RAJPOOTS.

tains and hills dimly mapped out below me, I could almost fancy I was floating in the ether beyond the air, watching the planets in their far-off revolutions.

At this moment the "man of the world" arrived from his evening meal, and brought me back to the realities of a sphere strongly flavoured with onions. He was bent on inquiry, and, having but a hazy idea of the phenomenon before us, most anxious for information. His strong common sense would not allow him to believe the explanation given by the Hindoos (Idol-worshippers he calls them). They, he informs us, imagine that the moon is being devoured by some wandering monster, and are in the habit of firing off muskets and making other noises to frighten the beast away, and prevent our satellite from being swallowed.

Alan made him look at the moon through a telescope, pointed out its spherical shape, and gave him a short lecture on the solar system. Rahman acknowledged that the moon was like a "musket-ball," but I fear that the sporting phraseology of Alan's Hindustani did not make it clear that an eclipse is purely a mechanical operation; and they diverged to more spiritual topics.

The strangeness of the sight he was witnessing had evidently strongly impressed our shikari, and brought thoughts of a world and life beyond this, and he began to talk freely of his hopes and beliefs. For a Moham-



medan he is certainly broad-minded, although his creed is one more of works than faith. He jeered when Alan touched on the Peris of Paradise, was rather sceptical of a hereafter, and averred if there were, it was not in "man's imagination," and would be gained by good deeds, or meted out to men in proportion to their merits. Such of us who have been lucky enough to be born, as the hymn says "a happy Christian child," of course know better than my poor half-heathen shikari. Yet I cannot help thinking that his belief is healthier than some of the superstitions clung to by more highly educated people.

This is not the first time that Alan has been approached on religious subjects by natives, and some of them Hindoos of very high caste. But he thinks it wrong to unsettle their beliefs, and always advises them to stick to the religion they are born in, try to lead an honest and pure life, and leave dogmas to the priests.

November 5th.—We started early this morning to march up the range of hills which divide the Chingam and Marbul valleys. A local shikari says it is a good place for barasingh, so we decide to pitch our camp nearer to the shooting ground. The path is a very steep ascent through a magnificent pine forest. Many of the enormous deodar cedars and cypresses must have seen centuries of life, and are at least thirty or forty feet in girth and of immense height. We came to a beautiful place to camp,

RIFLE AND SPEAR WITH THE RAJPOOTS.

but there is no water near, so we push on to the top, where we find a little pond and a good spring bubbling out of the ground. Near the summit, our only kettle takes a roll down and is recovered, minus the spout. This is a dreadful calamity, as it cannot be mended, and there is no chance of getting another until we reach Chamba.

We pitch our tents in a green hollow facing the south, and on the top of the hill. All round there is a wonder-



"BROWN MOUNTAINS BACKED BY DAZZLING
WHITE SNOW PEAKS."

ful panorama of brown mountains backed by dazzling white snow peaks. Near us are great detached groups of cedars, closing together into a thick forest below. In front, across the narrow valley, and seemingly almost near enough to touch, is a bare, gaunt hill, with a gray

rocky crest. The sunset tint over all is too beautiful for words. I tried to sketch, but the instant the sun dropped out of sight the paints began to freeze on the palette, and all my coats and wraps failed to keep me warm.

November 7th.—Colder than ever, everything is frozen hard. A hot water bottle in my tent is a block of ice, so are my sponges, and the water left in the hand basin is turned out in the morning a solid mass. Alan, with



a perseverance beyond praise, starts shooting at 3 A.M. But although he has been out every day, and does not return till dark, as yet he has seen nothing except a few hill pheasants. This morning they went in the direction of the Marbul Pass, and about noon I got a note to say that they had seen three brown bears, but on the opposite hills, and that we are to move the camp down into the valley. This was welcome news, for I was getting weary of the perpetual cold, and, beautiful as the scenery is, I began to long for a plate glass window to see through. My unfortunate ayah is simply drunk with cold. There is no other word for it, and, save to make the beds, she never stirs from the fire. The weather leads her to commit the strangest extravagances in the way of packing.

She has removed all the silver-topped bottles from my dressing-bag, and placed them in the remains of the kettle, which she then rolled up in one of my skirts, and packed in a box. Further investigation in another of my boxes brings to light some knives and spoons, and, from a strong smell of tobacco which I trace to my sponge bag, I discover that Alan's pipe and a handful of cigars have found a home there. It is quite impossible to awaken her to a sense of her enormities, so I leave her alone, gently unpacking a tent which has just been rolled up. But until we start I keep an eye on our live-stock,

hens, &c., as I have an idea she means to put one in to “keep my things from shaking about.”

We were not long descending, and pitched our camp above the little village of Singpur. It is warmer down here, and the ayah thaws to the extent of striking work, and refusing to make the beds. So Santan and I set to work



AT SINGPUR.

and do it. She has not the least regard for what I say, and Alan is the only person of whom she is rather frightened. He, as usual, does not return until long after dark,

very tired and hungry. After dinner he interviews the ayah, but she has three excellent reasons to offer for her strike: first, her shoes are too tight; secondly, she is so far from home, and thirdly, she never refused to work at all.

Alan's account of the day is as follows:—

“It was a bright clear night, the ground white and crisp with frost when we left the tents at about 3 A.M., there was no wind, so when walking briskly it was not unpleasantly cold. By daybreak we had reached the main range of mountains, with the Chingam Pass on our right, and the Marbul Pass forming a huge bleak amphitheatre on



the left. We took up a favourable position just on the edge of the forest to watch the ground, but nothing was in sight. Just as the sun was about a spear's length above the horizon, Rahman espied a stag with three hinds feeding on the hill below us, and about a mile off. Although what little wind there was blew from the right quarter, it was impossible to approach them, as the ground was smooth turf without the least cover, and we should have to descend at least a quarter of a mile full in their view. I suggested that we should go back, and then round the hill on our left, and by a long *détour* get directly above where they stood. The wind was favourable, but Rahman thought it better to wait where we were on the chance of their feeding on to a better position. It would have been a very long rough walk round, so I not unwillingly gave in. Presently, however, they lay down, except one hind, which stood on guard watching the hill side, and I began to think my plan would have been the better. However, in about half-an-hour they again got up, and slowly descended the hill, grazing as they went. In a short time they reached a small ravine, down which they disappeared from sight.

“There was a projecting spur below us, behind which we ran, and creeping carefully through the rocks at top, at last got to within some three hundred yards of the herd. They were still moving on slowly, the stag behind, and I could make him out to be a fine beast with nine or

ten points. Just as he reached some low bushes, we took advantage of the slight undulation of the ground and ran to within about a hundred and eighty yards of where he stood, almost directly beneath us. Rahman did not think we could get any closer, so I knelt down to take a steady shot. The stag stood half behind a bush, his neck and shoulders only showing, and I had just drawn a bead on his shoulder and was almost pressing the trigger, when Rahman touched me, and whispered 'Don't fire; wait till he comes out into the open.' It was most annoying, as of course it put me off my shot, and I had covered him steadily, and felt certain of hitting. Before I could get on him again, whether they saw Rahman move, or from some other cause, one of the hinds turned round and trotted down the hill. The stag at once followed, keeping behind the bushes and going straight away from us. At last he appeared in the open, but fully two hundred and fifty yards away.

"I took a quick shot, missed him clean, and just knocked the dust up under his forelegs with the second barrel as he galloped up the opposite hill side. Rahman was very subdued, and I gave him a lecture on the evils ensuing from speaking when one is about to shoot.

"We had hardly finished a hasty breakfast, which in Rahman's case consisted of a lump of half-baked dough, by courtesy called a chupattie, when Khaira came running



down with the news of three brown bears. They were, he said, some four miles off, just under the Marbul Pass. A long weary trudge uphill took us to the top of the divide, whence a powerful telescope showed three little dark brown specks on the opposite mountain, so small that it was hard to make them out when they did not move.

“In the distance they seemed to barely creep along the hill, and curiously resembled those unpleasant crawling creatures whose name the Americans apply to butterflies and similar outdoor insects. They were feeding in a rather unfavourable place for stalking, and it would take a good four-miles walk over very rough ground to get above them.

“It was past three o'clock, and by the time we got within shot would be nearly dusk. And then a twelve-miles walk in the dark back to camp! We had been on foot since three this morning, and although Rahman never acknowledges to being tired, he diplomatically suggested that we should have more time and a better chance after the bears to-morrow. He proposed we should return to camp now, and start again in the early morning, carrying our blankets and prepared to sleep out if belated. The bears were not frightened or conscious of our presence, and we were certain to find them to-morrow on the same hill. So I not unwillingly assented, and we turned our steps homewards. It was lucky we did, for as the sun went down it came on to snow heavily. The night was so dark we could

make but slow progress. There was no pathway or even the sign of a track to guide us, and the certainty of falling over a precipice if we wandered in a wrong direction.

“After some hours’ weary walk, feeling our way like blind men, about ten o’clock we made out a fire some miles below, which was doubtless our camp. Shortly afterwards a speck of light dancing about in the distance like a Will-o’-the-Wisp, turned out to be some of our men with lanterns



SINGPUR.

in search of us. A huge camp fire and some steaming hot grog prepared by the thoughtful Santan were a very welcome sight, and I felt quite sorry for Rahman, whose principles

would not allow him to touch spirituous liquor. However, the zest with which he swallowed his tea would have charmed Sir Wilfrid. Indeed our shikari is a very thorough-going abstainer, and prides himself upon never having taken tobacco, opium or alcohol. Tea, very strong and sweet, is his only vice,—at least he says so.”

November 9th.—Still overcast, with drizzling sleet. The pass is quite hidden by dense clouds, and it is snowing heavily on the mountains. Rahman says the winter’s snow has begun, and that we are lucky to have crossed the pass. It will be probably many days before the snow gets firm on



the hill where we saw the bears. Its steep slopes of slippery grass were difficult walking yesterday, and to-day, covered with half-melted greasy snow, would be nearly impossible. So, very reluctantly, we decided to give up the bears, and make our way to Kishtiwari.

By 10 A.M. the last kiltā was started off, and we turn our footsteps down the valley. The further we descend the warmer it grows. The snow turns to sleet, and the sleet to rain. We pass a colony of monkeys shivering in the cold, and huddled together like human beings. Khaira says the cold nights give them neuralgia, and that they sit in rows holding their heads in their hands and crying like children.

We follow the stream down to Mogul-Maidan, our halting-place for the night. Although supposed to be a village, there were no houses to be seen. But as soon as it got dark a good many lights appeared on the hills above, and country visitors, mostly carrying pine-torches, streamed to our camp. Singing was kept up round the fires to a late hour by the coolies and their new friends.

Thursday, 10th.—We start about nine and walk along the river side, scrambling over stones and rocks and with hardly a vestige of a path. After a few miles we arrive at our first rope-bridge. The river, swelled by an affluent as large as itself, is here very deep and rapid, flowing between perpendicular cliffs of considerable height. Two thick ropes of twisted birch-twigs fastened on either side to posts on the

cliff tops, form the footway, with thinner ones at each side as guys. The height at which this frail-looking contrivance swings to and fro above the roaring torrent, gives an idea of insecurity which it does not really possess. Alan crossed first, and just as he got halfway, a little black dog from the other side ran between his legs. The dog's master, the keeper of the bridge, followed, shouting offers of assistance,



OUR FIRST ROPE BRIDGE.

and skipping along the ropes like a monkey. This caused the bridge to oscillate very disagreeably, but Alan was too proud to accept help, for which indeed there was no necessity, and dog and master were after some delay sent back.

It was now my turn, but no sooner had I reached the middle when up rushed the dog as before. The footway was barely twelve inches wide, with a drop of some forty



feet to the rocks and river below, and the crossing, to a novice, quite bad enough without master doggie's obstruction. However, Alan gave me a hand across, and, arrived again on *terra firma*, we demanded an explanation from the keeper of the bridge and dog. It did not take long to discover that it was a trick to get money for helping strangers over. Both our Hindustani servants fell into the snare, greatly to the Hillmen's delight. Santan was first up, and though evidently very nervous, commenced to crawl across the ropes on all fours. So the dog was a formidable object to meet, particularly when neither meant to give way; and the assistance of its master seemed quite a godsend. I am afraid he made a bargain before he helped, —it looked like it from the distance. The black dog was really very cleverly trained, and knew the exact moment to arrive. If he managed to get past, he turned round and came back again behind you.

About three miles further on was another rope bridge over a wild rocky gorge, just where a third river came in. This stream came suddenly out from between high white cliffs. It was very still and of an intense blue-green colour, quite different from the foaming white torrent it joined. From here commenced an old road to Kishtiwari, paved with large slabs of stone, and looking like a broad staircase leading up from the river over the hill. It must at some distant time have been an important highway.

At frequent intervals were the remains of carved stone fountains for drinking, stone seats, and rest-houses, and here and there a ruined temple.

A steep descent the other side of the hill led down to the Kishtiwari valley. The town was still some five miles off.

Fortunately for me the road was along a flat grass plain, with no more climbing, for I was very tired, and had quite lost my voice from cold and fatigue. Kishtiwari is entered by a road passing a little mosque, and through a great graveyard stretching along either side of the path for some half-mile. The graves are simple mounds of earth, unmarked in any way, but thickly planted with a wild iris. By itself, under a tree, was one with a large stone cross, and an inscription that an Englishman, Lieut. Quinton Hamilton, only twenty-three years old, who had died in the neighbouring mountains, was here buried.

Our tents were on the other side of the town, as there was no good water nearer. We did not arrive till past six o'clock, after a long and tiring march. Just as it got dark a frightful din begins, beating of drums, tom-toms and gongs, blowing of horns, and every discord possible. We find we are camped near a Hindoo temple, and they are putting the idol to sleep!

Friday 11th.—We had meant to start early, but it is difficult to get coolies, as only the country people carry loads. The townsmen do not, and Kishtiwari calls itself a



town. The Tehsildar (mayor of the town) has been very civil, last night sending us watchmen and chuprassies to guard our tents, and this morning a message comes to ask permission to pay us a visit. About 2 P.M. he arrives, dressed in an English shooting coat of a loud check pattern, and purple silk trousers embroidered with yellow flowers. He evidently came in State, with a suite of officials and chuprassies and followed by a crowd of town-people. We exchanged greetings, and then some ten or twelve of his servants came forward, each bearing on his head a large basket piled up with apples, pears, tomatoes, chilis, and many other vegetables. These were laid on the ground as an offering before Alan. Two baskets for me were filled with marigolds. After a short but very solemn interview, the Tehsildar asked permission to go, and departed at the head of his procession.

Rahman told us the Tehsildar had a little girl he was very fond of, and suggested we should send her a present. In light-marching order as we are, we carry little besides the bare necessities of life, certainly no children's toys, and we racked our brains to think what it should be. Suddenly we remembered a magnifying glass which had greatly amused our men, who were never tired of lighting fires and playing with it on the way. So we sent it to her. The shikaris rather repented of their idea of a present when they saw their toy go.

There is a report that cholera has broken out at Budriwar, the next town on our way, and we hear that a missionary sahib has just arrived from that place; so we start off to interview him. We find him, a desolate figure, seated in the middle of a small ploughed field, surrounded by his luggage. A few coolies are feebly trying to level a place for his tent, and he tells us that all his tent pegs were left behind and he has to wait till others are cut. He seems rather surprised to see me, for this is a road few ladies come. As he confirms the outbreak of cholera at Budriwar, we think it prudent to change our route, and take a road which makes a *détour* to the left.

At nightfall the Kishtiwari watchman re-appears, gorgeously attired in the brigade colours, and bearing a spear with a red and blue pennon. He brings two of his



KISHTIWAR CHILDREN.

children with him, funny little figures about five years old. One a boy, dressed in bright pink, the other a girl, in emerald green-coloured clothes with peg-top trousers, and wearing huge ear and nose rings.

Saturday, 12th.—We start about 10 A.M. All the Kishtiwari officials and chuprassies come to see us off,



and beg for "chits." Even the Tehsildar asks Alan to write a letter to the Maharaja's brother saying how well he has treated us. Alan is not acquainted with the gentleman in question, but obligingly gives the letter. At last we get off and are taken in procession through the town and bazaar. Alan, on a piebald pony with a gorgeous red velvet saddle, makes quite a conspicuous figure in the show.

The town is of fair size, clustered round a fort which occupies a commanding position on the hill. The houses are built mostly on one plan. A piece is scooped out of the hill-side on a steep slope, side-walls built, and a flat roof plastered with mud put on. The door is in front, generally with a verandah. The ground-floor forms the living rooms, the upper floor a cowshed. The family generally live on the roof, or when several houses are built together, on that of their neighbours. Sometimes the street gives a hollow sound to the foot, and you discover you are walking on the tops of the houses which make up the street below.

There is a long hot descent from the town. My coolie brings me a great bunch of hollies, which make a most welcome shade from the sun when we stop for luncheon. All the shikaris and servants arrive with nose-gays and daffodils and wild flowers as a present for me, and are much vexed to find Khaira has forestalled them.

Flowers are a cheap form of backsheesh for the memsahib, and at the end of a march I look like the "bunched" beauty of a cotillon.

After luncheon the road follows the crest of the hill, with not an inch of shade. In parts it is paved, and like an interminable staircase. The sun beats down on it fiercely, and our plain servants simply revel in the heat, and are as sorry as I am glad when the holly trees and shade re-appear. The ground for miles is covered with a little bush, which at this time of year turns a vivid crimson, and makes a striking contrast against the dark green of the hollies, and the blue of the distant mountains.

We pass through a little village apparently inhabited by better-to-do people, for the roofs are fenced around, and on them are heaps of pumpkins piled up to ripen.

A little further we come to quite an ideal spot for a camp—on the top of a little mountain with such steep sides that the coolies appear to be coming out of the ground as one by one they arrive. There is a big tree to shelter our tent, and another fallen handy for firewood, whilst, to crown all, a tiny spring of excellent water bubbles out of the ground close by. Alas! only man was vile. We had hardly arrived when a furious fight broke out between the new chuprassie the Tehsildar had given us, and one of the coolies. The latter, accustomed to our



old chuprassie's gentle prods with an umbrella, naturally resented being struck by a stranger, and went for him. Alan and the shikaris had gone after the chikoor (partridges) which were calling all around. There was no one to restore order, and the battle raged promiscuously for some time, every one in the camp taking part—even the ayah, whose jaded palate this excitement seemed to titillate. Our Kashmir chuprassie apparently was the field-marshal commanding-in-chief, and directed the fight with his umbrella. I watched, expecting manslaughter each moment, for there was always some one on the ground whom everybody was beating. At last Alan returned, the combatants were separated, and to my great surprise, a scratch on the face of one coolie was the only wound any one could show.

No attempt up to this had been made to pitch the tents, but peace being restored, all fell to with much enthusiasm wrongly directed, for they fasten the bathroom to the wrong end, and make egress impossible.

But I had little time to notice this, for the noise of battle arose again. It seems that the cook had been unable to leave his dinner to take part in the last engagement, and he thirsted for blood. His disappointment was so keen that he might have been an Irishman at Donnybrook, but at last his chance came. We had sent Rahman off to get a few more partridges, and in

his absence no one had authority to pay for a fowl which a villager brought for sale. Its owner consequently declined to give up possession, and, tying a string round its leg, sat down to warm himself by the kitchen fire. This was more than the much-tried cook could stand, and seizing an alpenstock he fell on his adversary. Again the camp joined in the fray, and the chicken, availing itself of the opportunity to escape, flew up a tree. At last all sat down to argue the matter out (rather an Irish parliament, in which sticks represented the major arguments) when a simple peasant happening to pass by, absently picked up the chicken, and concealing it inside his clothes, continued his way homewards. He was quickly stopped by our chuprassie and brought before Alan, red-handed with the theft.

He pleaded that domestic fowls do not live in trees, and chancing to see what he imagined to be a wild animal belonging to nobody, he naturally took it. Alan ordered the (chicken) bone of contention to be restored to its proper owner, who in an excess of gratitude placed it at his feet, and departed salaaming, after having accepted some four times its value. I could not understand what they were saying, but this is what I gather from my ayah's extremely vivid and verbose account.

Except when any game is shot, chickens form our



pièce de résistance. Even in the more civilised parts they are the most common dish, and, indeed, all over India they form the staple food of the English sahib. Luckily they are very cheap, costing only from threepence to fourpence each. It is true that for some unexplained reason they are about the size of a pigeon or else nearly as big as a turkey. There is nothing between. In the latter case, they are as tough as an ostrich. Even after continued stewing, and with a good pair of teeth, it is difficult to make any impression on them.

We are told a story about them, attributed to Lord Lytton, whose Viceroyalty commenced about the time when the depreciation of the rupee was beginning to be felt, and Anglo-Indians to economise and complain of the shrinking of their incomes.

His Excellency, fresh from home, noticed, it is said, how lavishly the chicken was consumed by people of all classes and incomes, and remarked that "times could not be so bad, when what was usually considered an expensive delicacy appeared so regularly at each meal." H. E. evidently was not aware of the toughness and cheapness of the Indian variety!

In spite of the risk of their becoming *un peu faisandé*, we gave a standing order to the cook to keep his fowls three or four days before cooking them. At first this effected no improvement. They were still as tough as

ever. After a little cross-examination we elicited the fact that the *chef* had slightly misunderstood us. It is true he kept them, but *alive*, and they travelled each stage tied by one leg to the top of a load on a coolie's back.





CHAPTER V.

Camping on the roof—The humours of spear-grass—Native faith in the “sahib” Missionaries and medicine—Field mice at Baler—A mantelpiece and a precipice—A miller’s wife *à la* Drury Lane pantomime—The evil eye—A crazy bridge—The Chamba valleys—Laziness as a fine art—Looking for tahir—The advantages of roof-life—Starting for the Pass—A letter from the Maharaja of Chamba—Manjere.

November 13th.—We started at nine o’clock in the morning along a very bad path, the sun already fearfully hot. It was not cheering to have a great mountain opposite pointed out as our road. After crossing the river Gual, one of the tributaries of the Chenab, we began an ascent like the roof of a house. I thought we should never get to the top. Even luncheon failed to revive me. Worst of all, far below us a little white streak showed the Chenab river, flowing through a smooth valley, along which we should have kept had not the cholera interfered. The path we were taking led up and down every hill in sight. Road there was none, only a track, but, curiously enough, at intervals were remains of old carved stone drinking fountains. Evidently this was once a highway leading to some important point.

After going along the hill tops for some miles, we came to a little village, and Rahman pointed out a mountain in the distance as the next nearest place where water could be got. I was obliged to strike, and decline to go further; so the coolies were called back, and we pitched in a rice field near the houses. A funny little hunchback dwarf had followed us all day, and now climbed up on the



OUR CAMP AT SINGPUR.

roof of a house, whence he watched the camp until dark, evidently much amused at our preparations for the night's halt.

November 14th.—Again a long descent, only to find the bridge over the river washed away, which entails a longer walk to one lower down. Half way up the next hill we stop and pitch our tent on the only flat spot,—the roof of a house. This is an excellent place, as it is plastered with



hard smooth white clay, which makes a cleaner and drier floor than we usually get. The inhabitants do not seem to mind tent pegs being driven into the roofs of their houses. Apparently the only one annoyed is the big reddish-gray sheep dog, when at dusk he returns home with the cattle. Seeing the new top story to his house he is much distressed, and gives vent to loud and long wailings, which he prolongs far into the night.

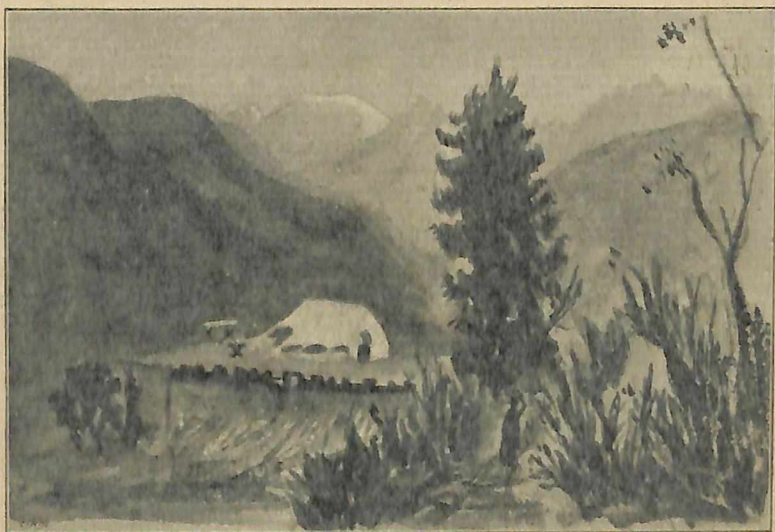
November 15th.—Great part of our road to-day led through long seeding spear-grass. It was most unpleasant. The little sharp-pointed seeds detach themselves from the stalks and pierce through dress, stockings, and everything, causing horrible irritation. Each spear is provided with a kind of fish-hook to its blunt end. This fastens in your clothes and drives the barb home. Leather, and closely woven linen are proof against the little darts, which were evidently only designed as weapons of offence against hairy-coated animals or garments spun from wool. In the early struggle for existence, I suppose the grass evolved this extremely unpleasant method of compelling the primitive passers-by to scatter its seeds, and so lend involuntary aid in its propagation. It would be an interesting problem for some Himalayan Darwin to investigate : whether Nature were capable of sharpening these spear-heads, or in some way adapting them to altered conditions and more impenetrable clothing.

We stopped for luncheon in a little garden where there was a large orange tree covered with yellow fruit, although white traces of last night's frost still remain in the shade. Here we change coolies, and all down the mountain side we hear a wild sort of singsong call for the others to come in.

The irritation from the spear grass was intolerable. Our clothes were full of sharp points, and my homespun spats studded with little spear-heads much as a porcupine carries its quills. I was very glad to sit wrapped in an ulster, whilst the ayah did her best to pull what looked like hundreds of fine needles out of the garments in which I had been walking.

Further on we cross a river ; and waiting on the bridge find a poor man dragging himself along on his hands, and quite unable to walk. He told us that during the summer he was out on the mountains herding sheep, and slept with his family in one of the lean-to shanties supported by big trunks of trees, which the shepherds build on the hill-side. This fell in during the night, killing one of his children, and injuring his own leg. Alan thinks he has broken the thigh. The poor fellow had been waiting for us here since yesterday. He heard a sahib was coming, and hoped to get some medicine to cure him. It was so dreadful to be unable to do anything. There is a hospital at Chamba, and we offered to have him carried there, but he would

not leave his village. It is strange the amount of faith the natives have in the medical knowledge of a "sahib." I believe the English missionaries, who mostly know something of medicine, do a great deal of good in this way. A veterinary surgeon told us he was once asked to attend a native suffering from severe illness, and declined, as it was a very serious case, and there was a regular doctor within



A CAMP ON THE ROOF.

reach; explaining that he was a doctor of animals, not of men. The sick man begged him to prescribe, saying that "if he doctored horses who could not talk, it would be a comparatively easy thing to cure a man able to explain his ailments!" Our path from here led up the bed of a torrent. At the top we pitched our tents in a rice-field above the village of Nagin.

Wednesday.—We found our camping ground not so good as it had looked last evening. These rice fields are terraced up the mountain sides, and those above having been flooded preparatory to ploughing, the water had drained down to us during the night. Santan and some others got a slight touch of fever from the damp. Shortly after we start we are overtaken by the coolie we had left at Kishtiwari to bring on our letters; he having done in two days what it had taken us five days to travel. He came by the lower road, and said only three cases of cholera had occurred. At the next village we meet a venerable-looking man clad in white, whom the shikaris treat with much deference and respect. They explain that he is a Mussulman priest from their town Islamabad, and passes all the summer travelling in the mountains, ministering to the faithful. Like the Apostles of old, "he carries neither silver nor scrip for his journey" and subsists on the charity of his disciples. From his cheery, well-fed appearance, they evidently do him exceedingly well.

We stop for luncheon at an old ruined fountain surrounded by stone seats. These remains, on what must once have been an important highway, occur at frequent intervals, although, excepting a rough track, no traces of any road now exist. As we ascend, the cedar trees increase in size and number. Some are enormous; we pass one with a hollow trunk which would hold some fifty men.



At the village of Baler we pitch our camp in a maize field. The tent has not long been shut up for the night, when I am aroused by the patter of innumerable little feet on the canvas stretched over my head. It was unmistakably the tread of fairy footsteps, else, suddenly aroused from a sound sleep as I was, one would have naturally imagined the bear or panther we can never find at home in the daytime, had called to pay us an evening visit. Striking a light, we found the place alive with field mice, —I suppose we must have pitched our tents over their holes.

I had visions of Dick Whittington and the Emperor of Morocco, and longed for a cat, in lieu of which several large dogs prowled round all night, hoarsely baying the moon. All the villages in these mountains have a fine breed of big sheep dog with shaggy reddish-gray coats, so fierce that they say two or three of them together will tackle a bear or a stag. Unfortunately they seem to despise such "small deer" as "mice." Next morning I tried to make friends with the dogs, but no offers of food would tempt them to approach us. They rather resemble the Pyrenean variety, and like them are very savage and unsociable to strangers. Still they are *dogs*, which I never could bring myself to believe the unhappy, mangy-looking pariahs of the Indian plains to be.

November 17th.—We start soon after daybreak. A

good path till luncheon-time. After which we take a short cut along a sort of mantelpiece barely six inches wide, and overhanging a precipice of some hundreds of feet. Huge bearded eagles (the Lämmergeyer) circle round below me as I crawl along, and sometimes sweep past so near that I can hear the rustle of their wings: and I feel grateful when at length we gain a broader track, and gentler slopes. From here the valley opens out and becomes more cultivated. Below are fields of linseed and other crops. Above, the mountain sides are clothed with gigantic bushes of rhododendron, some of them really trees. Instead of following the river, our path ascends with the line of cultivation from village to village.

Quite suddenly we enter a little glen with a tiny flour-mill astride its stream. The miller's wife rushes out, asks me to be seated, and pours out a voluble discourse, which I am given to understand is a welcome to these parts. She is a wild-looking person, with a plait of coarse black hair reaching nearly to the ground, surmounted by a curiously shaped red cloth cap with a pointed flap behind, and would make the fortune of a Drury Lane pantomime, treated from the low-comedy point of view. Each of her ears is pierced with numerous silver rings, which are fastened by chains to the top of her head. I suppose this is to take off the weight. She has a ring through her



nose with a short chain to it, from which hangs a gold plate the size of a crown-piece.

The two planks which serve for a bridge across the stream are each carved with a footprint. The river here and its tributary torrents are full of roughly squared trees and big baulks of timber, floating on their way to the plains: and they say a man was drowned through mistaking one of these for the footpath of the bridge. So the village authorities have since -ear (or rather foot-) marked the planks, to prevent a similar accident.

A flight of stone slabs leads over a spur and down the other side to a grass plain, hemmed in on all sides by the mountains. Here we camp for the night. The shikaris and servants arrive, full of stories of the inhabitants of this village, whom they declare to be dangerous magicians. My friend at the mill is a witch of fearful powers and possessed of the evil eye. All this is said with so much gravity and evident conviction, that we feel quit a flutter of excitement. Perhaps we have reached the East of one's childhood, and may yet witness some of the sorceries of the Arabian Nights!

Khadra, always ready with an apt story, relates how his late master was driven mad by the spells of witches and evil spirits, and eventually met a gruesome death in the mountains. As only two days ago he killed him by a sunstroke, aggravated by spirits of quite another de-



scription, we are not much impressed, but our hopes sink, —the magic philtre is, alas! only a whisky peg.

In the evening a respectable-looking man comes to Alan, whom he evidently imagines to be the “Cadi,” and asks for justice. His wife and mother-in-law beat him every day. Will Alan order them out and have *them* beaten? The “Cadi” discreetly declines to interfere between a man and his mother-in-law.

November 18th.—We march along the bank of the river, pass an old ruined temple, and then cross by a shaky wooden bridge built somewhat on the cantilever plan. The piers on either bank are formed of piled-up rocks. In these big trunks of fir-trees are imbedded horizontally for about half their length, the other half stretching out over the river. Other tree trunks overlap these, and are again overlapped by others projecting still further over the stream. At last the open space between is reduced sufficiently to allow of its being spanned by a couple of long fir-trees on which the roadway is constructed. The life of these bridges appears a short one. On either side are the ruins of others; whilst a new bridge is being built to replace the one we are crossing.

The river winds through a wild rocky cañon, and seems to stop abruptly at a black fir-covered mountain, till you turn the corner and suddenly enter a big

AN INDIAN MOUNTAIN STREAM.

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"THE RIVER WINDS THROUGH A ROCKY CAÑON."



cultivated valley. Herds of goats with long silky coats, and black water buffaloes with big useless-looking horns lying flat back on their heads, are grazing on all sides. This evening they bring us butter made from buffaloes' milk. But although the pasture seems so rich, the milk and butter are of the usual poor, thin quality. The butter especially would make a Jersey cow-owner cry. It is perfectly white, looks like cold cream, and tastes of nothing—when it is not rancid.

About dusk we reach the little village of Sara, perched high on an almost precipitous mountain where two torrents meet. It consists of three or four flat-roofed houses and a temple, and is the last inhabited place on our route, till we cross the mountain range before us, and enter the Chamba valleys. There is no flat spot near the village, so we descend some two hundred feet, and pitch our tents in what seems a charming nook on the bank of the stream.

November 19th.—We halt, and take the opportunity to air and turn out our things, which drives the ayah, the laziest of creatures, frantic. She compels one's admiration, for she has brought the art of doing nothing to absolute perfection. Lately, she has hit on the plan of sitting down some little distance off, when the halting place comes in sight, and remaining concealed until the tents are up, beds made, and everything prepared for the

night. Then she comes in, remarks with satisfaction "All done," and retires to the fire, which she never leaves until we start again.

We find we have chosen an icy cold corner for our camp, for the sun sets about noon. At least he gets behind the steep hills above us, and when we are in shadow



"WE FIND WE HAVE CHOSEN AN ICY COLD CORNER."

a sharp frost immediately commences. A present of excellent wild honey is brought to us, but as the particular caste of Hindoo in this neighbourhood keep neither chickens nor eggs, we are left on rather short commons.

November 20th.—Early this morning we sent off a messenger with letters for the Maharaja of Chamba, and a



little later ourselves start for the mountains on the left of the pass, where we hear there are tahir. The road was very bad, and we thought to be very clever and avoid the fearful climb the coolies were taking, by following instead the banks of the torrent. We had not gone above a couple of miles, when we were stopped short by a precipice, and had to climb an extremely steep hill to regain the path. Its slopes were covered with short dry grass, so slippery, that, although we were wearing grass-shoes, it was almost impossible to keep one's feet. I was pulled up, literally, for one of the men untied his turban and fastened the end to my waistband.

We camp high up the mountain, and the ground is so uneven that a place on the hill side has to be dug out for our tent. Alan was out till dark, looking for tahir, but saw nothing, nor indeed any trace of big game. Bitterly cold at night.

November 21st.—Alan had settled to be on the tahir ground before daybreak, and calls Santan just as it is getting light, to know why they have not awakened us. He comes with an ominous crunching under foot, and it does not need his one word "snow" to tell us the reason of his being late. The snow was falling heavily, and there was that dead stillness and dumbness of all nature which seem to come with snow. Suddenly I was aroused by a noise which sounded as though our little tent were



coming down. But it was a false alarm, and proved to be only the men shaking the drifted snow off the outside.

Rahman begins to be nervous lest the pass over the mountains to Chamba should get closed. If this happens, we should have to make a long *détour* of many days' march. So we determine to start back at once, and attempt the pass to-morrow. After some difficulty in getting our coolies together, we make our way back to Sara in a storm of wind and sleet. The wind was fearful. Three ravines join at Sara, and it blew a regular blizzard from three quarters at once. This time we camp on a housetop, and lash the tent ropes to the side buildings. They were a long time before they could get our tent up at all. Twice it came down again. The servants did not attempt to pitch theirs, and took refuge in a shed. The owner of our house was rather unreasonable, and objected to a fire being lit on his roof. We explain that it was absolutely necessary to have a fire. He says that "he also must have a house, which will not be the case if we burn it down." Matters are compromised by having some big smooth rocks placed as hearthstones.

These flat roofs serve a variety of purposes. Here grain is threshed out, and seeds dried—small ones like millet spread out on the family bedsteads. In one corner there is generally a haystack; indeed the hay sometimes seems to be grown on the roofs by those of frugal mind, but this is

not done in the "best families." They have a disadvantage, that although on one side you may walk off the road straight on to them, if you take a wrong step on the other side there is a big drop the height of the house, and often something more. In the present instance a torrent some hundred feet below would have received us, and whenever I woke at night, I thought the tent would blow over and take us with it. In spite of the wind and driving sleet

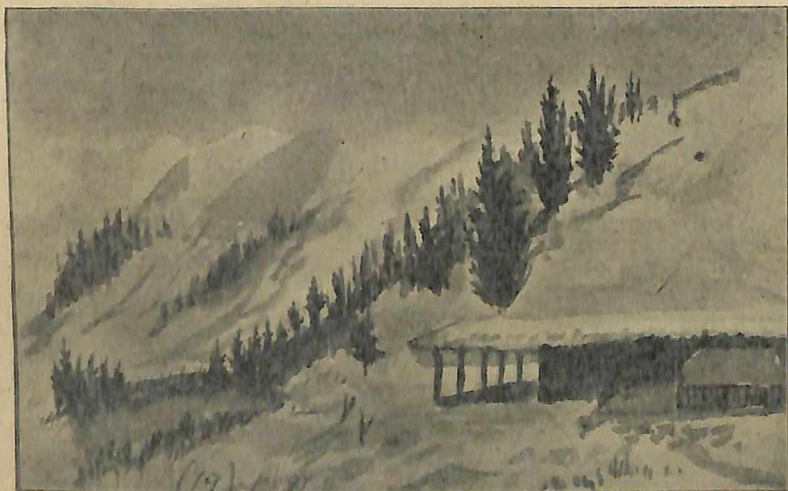


AL FRESCO COOKERY.

we had an excellent dinner. Soup, fish, curry, roast mutton, and a sweet omelette—all cooked in the open air. How our *chef* manages it, is a puzzle to me. Alan says that the joint while roasting was sheltered by an umbrella. The cooking utensils consist of a frying-pan, a kettle, and four or five copper saucepans and stewpots. The fire is made between three stones, which serve for kitchen range, hot-plate, and all the other appliances without which no

self-respecting French or English cook would think it possible to send up a dinner.

November 22nd.—We start for the foot of the pass. It is a perfect day, the sky cloudless and of a deep Italian blue. The distant landscape stands out sharp and clear after yesterday's snow. Miles away we make out the Chingam Pass we crossed a fortnight since, now a white



AT THE FOOT OF THE PADRI PASS.

impassable mass of snow. After a long climb through the pine forests, we reach a small wooden cattle shed—our halt for the night. The servants were delighted to get a shelter in which they could light a fire, but the place was so dirty we pitched our tents outside. It was bitterly cold, and we tried to warm ourselves at the fire lit on the floor in the centre of the shed. But the dense smoke without outlet for escape half choked any



one not a native, and we were soon driven back to the open air.

November 23rd.—We start soon after sunrise. Snow all round, and a bitter cold wind which pierces through all our wraps. There is a little path on the snow, some six inches wide, trodden firm by sheep, but a step to the right or left takes you over your knees. It is a long, tiring pull to the top, and when it is reached the view below is not encouraging: a small black valley, whitened in places with snow and dotted with pinched, black-looking firs, and with equally black-looking mountains hemming it in. This desolate place is to be our halting-ground for the night. The descent to it is bad, very steep, and knee-deep in a mixture of snow, ice, and mud. The ayah is carried down by two coolies. We had to clear away the snow to make a place for our little tent.

Towards evening heavy mists and vapours rolled up from below, and we were soon surrounded by dense watery clouds. It was fearfully cold and raw; a sort of half-frozen Scotch mist. Close to our tent, loomed through the fog an enormous deodar cedar with hollow trunk. A brilliant idea struck us. We lit a huge bonfire in the cavity, and spent the evening quite cheerfully, seated in what formed a snug chimney corner. Just before we turned in, the tree caught fire, and burnt like a torch. It was impossible to extinguish it, and I went to bed in a disagreeable

state of uncertainty as to the side on which it would fall.

November 24th.—The cold was intense last night. Everything frozen in the tent, even a cup of tea became a solid block of ice. It was a miserable morning when I looked out, dark and damp from a white wet fog, which smelt and tasted like iced steam. The valley below us,



"A SMALL BLACK VALLEY WHITENED IN PLACES WITH SNOW."

which you cannot see, is the Chamba Raja's best barasingh ground, and Alan, with a superhuman perseverance, went off in the middle of the night, in the hope of coming across the tracks of one in the snow. Of course he saw nothing, and returned to breakfast wet through and half-frozen. Shortly afterwards, a messenger arrives from the Maharaja of Chamba, with a most courteous letter, telling us to shoot where we like, and consider his country as our own. He

very kindly sends his own shikari. We assembled a council of war at once ; but the general opinion seems to be that the severe weather has driven the deer to shelter below. September, they say, is the month to shoot here, and even in that month the Maharaja only gets two or three stags. Now it is hopeless hunting for them in the miles of dense



BIHANDUL.

forest in which they take refuge. So we decide to start to-morrow for Chamba.

November 25th.—We march down the mountain through a wild broken country, thickly wooded in parts. Now and again a clucking and whirr, recalling an English cock-pheasant, marks the flight of the Himalayan variety (the Moonal), as, startled from a fir-tree branch, he flashes down the dark ravine like a streak of blue flame from a fire-rocket. A descent of a couple of hours takes us out of the snow. As we reach the cultivated valley a distinct improvement is

visible in the villages and peasantry. The road is graded and wide for a mountain one, and the people look more prosperous and well-to-do than on the Kashmir side. At Bhandul we join the road over the Padri Pass from Badriwar which we had intended to have taken. Here is a clean little wooden bungalow, where we stop for the night.





CHAPTER VI.

Chamba — The Maharaja's guest-house — The old English Residency — Through the bazaar — A visit to the Maharaja and his brother, Bhurie Singh — A Durbar Hall and a silver chair — Round the Palace — The Ranee — "Dustoor" — Tennis with the Raja — A leopard hunt — A model town — Serenading a leopard — A real Indian dinner — Shooting gooral — The old palace — "Grandfather's widows" — A grotesque escort — The Raja's aunt — The ayah as interpreter — Flights of fancy — Wasted eloquence.

November 26th.—Our road to-day descends with the river, till towards evening, when there is a stiff pull up the hills dividing us from the valley in which the town of Chamba is situated. From the top we get a distant peep of it, buried in the mountains, and surmounted by the Maharaja's palace. A steep, dusty descent takes us down to Manjere, where there is a good bungalow surrounded by palm trees. It is a lovely warm night, and I revel in it.

November 27th.—It is a bright sunny morning, and we gradually descend to semi-tropical vegetation again. Clusters of palms, bananas and fig-trees, lie in sheltered nooks along the river, and the cottages have lost their Alpine look, although we are still some 3,000 feet above sea level.

The road is very picturesque, first through two or three pretty little villages, then ascending, cut out of the cliff some hundred feet above the river bed.

It was a long dusty march, and we were both tired, perhaps more from the unaccustomed heat, when we reached



A QUAIN OLD WOODEN BRIDGE AT CHAMBA.

the top of the pass above Chamba. From here the Maharaja's great white palace looked quite near, although we have yet some six or seven miles to go. We were pleased to see in the immediate foreground two horses sent to meet us. Mine is a smart, skittish little beast, with a decidedly Irish eye. As the road is only some four feet broad, and



hangs unprotected over the precipice, I suddenly discover that I am not so very tired after all: yet when a dandy, which had been thoughtfully sent for me, arrived, I was unspeakably thankful to seat myself in it.

It was nightfall when we reached the outskirts of the town. The road winds through gardens, past a small temple built in the middle of a piece of water, and then through long narrow lanes overhung by trees, and shut in by dense vegetation. At last we come out in the open, and by the light of a bright full moon, see in front a quaint old wooden bridge over the river, with gates and guard-houses at either end. The guard turns out and presents arms as we pass, and an orderly shows the way up a steep path winding round the hill. Suddenly, turning a corner, we find ourselves in the town. It is too dark to see much, but I can make out two long rows of little shops on either side of a broad grass square, and the people buying and selling, or in true Indian fashion cooking their evening meal on the grass outside their houses.

All dāk bungalows are much alike. Four bare white-washed walls at the best, and, except in the matter of cleanliness, there is little to choose between them. Therefore you can hardly imagine my astonishment to find myself carried through a well-kept garden and put down in front of a large house, brilliantly lit up. The widely-opened door showed a square hall, carpeted and furnished



in English fashion, and beyond, a dining-room with the table laid for dinner with silver, glass, china, flowers, fruit, champagne in ice, in fact everything one sees every night at home, but sees without noticing it. It seems nothing then ; but when for weeks our house has been a little tent, our china and glass enamelled iron, and our table linen of a dubious yellow hue, rough-washed in the nearest brook, it is surprising how these little creature-comforts appeal to one. The clean white damask-covered table is a perfect dream of luxury, the brightly lighted interior a glimpse of another world.

Of course I expected to be shown into a room full of smartly dressed English people, and entered the house meditating rather sadly on my own draggled home-spun, and dusty travel-worn appearance. But to my surprise not a soul appears. Rahman suggests that I should go up-stairs. I find a prettily arranged drawing-room, with bed, dressing and bath rooms opening off, but not a single human being in sight. I begin to think of the fairy tale of the traveller wandering in the wood, who chances on a palace where for days he is waited on by invisible hands, till a white cat tells him she is a Princess under a spell, and begs him to cut off her tail—when suddenly she becomes a lovely lady surrounded by her court. This must be that palace !

But Alan arrives and gives a more prosaic explanation.

This house is the old English Residency. Since the Maharaja came of age there has been no Resident, so the Raja has kept the house for "distinguished visitors," and very kindly puts it at our disposal. He is also sending his servants, who soon arrive, and serve up a most excellent dinner. Not the least good part of it was having once more



THE RESIDENCY, CHAMBA.

a large table and solid chairs; for our seating arrangements in camp had been somewhat primitive. On cold nights, for greater warmth, or rather less cold, we dined in our own little sleeping tent, sitting each on our respective beds, with our dinner served on a small collapsible table placed between us. From the unevenness of the ground, this had



generally to be propped up with stones under the feet, and required delicate handling, and a light touch with the knife and fork. If you stood up, and your head did not go through the top of the tent, you invariably upset the table. On warmer days we dine in our large tent. Here there was room for two chairs—like the table, of a collapsible pattern—and they took a pride in unexpectedly displaying their patent method of closing. One night Alan's chair played this practical joke with such vigour that part of its leg was broken short off as he fell to the ground. It was impossible to mend it, so the other legs had to be cut down to the same length, and, seated in this shortened chair, his head was barely on a level with the dishes.

Our servants are delighted at having nothing to do, and stand in the hall, watching us at dinner. The cook never takes his eyes off us, and carefully inspects the various courses, with a view, I presume, to future experiments. We went to bed early, just after a message came to ask if there was anything else we required, as the Raja's servants were going home. And sure enough in a few minutes Alan and I had the house to ourselves. A camp-bed is not the softest of sleeping places, and I went to sleep breathing a thanksgiving for a spring mattress.

Monday.—I woke agreeably surprised to find the house still there. Last night it had seemed so fairy-like that I half expected to find myself back in a hill-tent in the



morning, with a foot of snow around. Alan, with much regret, had his beard removed, and for the first time for weeks I got my hair curled: so when we descended for breakfast our shikaris hardly recognised us.

Daylight takes away none of the charm of this place. The town is built between two ranges of hills, on a little plain high above the river, and just big enough for a long grass polo ground. At either end the valley contracts, and is shut in by snow-topped mountains. The palace, a big white building, stands high up on the hill side. At one end of the town is a well-built, clean looking hospital. At the other end, shaded by fine trees, our house, the Residency. This latter is a large two-storied wooden chalet with wide verandahs, and balconies festooned with purple bougainvillias and other bright-hued creepers. It stands in a beautiful garden, high above the river, and bounded by a long terrace walk looking down the ravine.

In the afternoon we went to pay a visit of ceremony to the Maharaja. We pass the principal bazaar, which is built on two sides of the green, under long low stone colonnades, with steps leading down to it. Here grain and various wares are spread outside unguarded, while the shopkeepers, with simple faith, apparently pass most of their time chatting and amusing themselves elsewhere. No one seems very busy, yet all look cheery and well-to-do. A crowd of people pass to and fro dressed in every colour, bright red



and orange being perhaps predominant. The women draped in red and blue saris seem the busiest, and they hurry along with big baskets of fruit, or red earthenware water jars on their heads. Everywhere picturesque little corners, and lovely bits of colour, which make one long to stop and sketch.

Turning from the square, we enter a network of tiny lanes: a slightly wider street through two rows of carved wooden houses leading up to the palace. At the gate is the guard-house, with a few smartly-dressed wiry-looking soldiers standing around. An English word of command—"Attention," "Present arms," as the Maharaja and his brother Bhurie Singh appear, and give us a hearty welcome to Chamba. They are young, very good-looking men, dressed like English gentlemen, but wearing turbans of some soft-looking pale violet stuff, which makes a most becoming headdress. The Maharaja leads us into a large hall with deep-set stone windows glazed with bright stained glass. After a short conversation he invites us to see the palace, in which he evidently takes great interest. He has just built a new Durbar Hall capable of seating eight hundred people: the chair of State at the end is of silver. On tables round are spread curious old inlaid knives and pistols. Alan, who is a great collector of old arms, takes one up to examine it, and finds that it is fastened to the table by strong wire. I could not help saying that he was evidently expected.

THE MAHARAJA OF CHAMBA.

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HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJA OF CHAMBA.



We pass into another and interior quadrangle, in the centre a fountain and swimming bath, on which are several tame and wild ducks. The Maharaja tells us that during the winter, *real* wild ducks often come down, and that he has shot several in the middle of this enclosed yard. Another square has a sort of cloister or big open gallery round it. From all the windows are beautiful views, looking on the snowy mountains, and down the river and valley. Many of the windows are built with large bays and cushioned divans inside: just the place to lounge away a summer's day. Most of the rooms are painted white, sometimes with a little gilding, but a few anterooms are coloured and enamelled with pictures of native life. Long processions of soldiers, horses, and elephants, or shooting scenes, with peculiarly ferocious-looking tigers. The windows of the Zenana are in front, and look down on the polo ground, which is also the racecourse. So the ladies see more of the outside world than one thinks. Leaving Alan outside, I went to pay my respects to the Ranee, rather a shy little lady with beautiful big brown eyes. She was dressed in Indian fashion in bright green silk, with a large loose outer wrap of cloth of gold, one end of which is draped round her head. Of course she was covered with jewellery and precious stones, some of them being very fine emeralds. A jewelled ornament hung in the centre of her forehead, such as one sees in old engravings of beauties



of the early Victorian time. Two or three of the younger girls were very pretty, and quite fair. They made a charming group, dressed in pink, blue, green and silver tissue. They were all very shy, and evidently unaccustomed to see strangers. If I looked at one, half unconsciously she would draw her veil over her face, only to remove it as quickly at a reproving glance from the Ranee. This, as the Maharaja afterwards remarked, "is all a matter of custom," and he thinks that as Western ideas spread, the Purdah ladies will in time be quite as willing to show their pretty faces in public as any of their European sisters. Alan chaffingly said that he thought Rajpoots were much to be envied, and many Englishmen would be glad if they could shut their women-kind up within four stone walls. The Maharaja took him quite seriously, and said, "You are quite wrong. You would find that you wanted your wife to go about with you and be your companion." They told me a story of an Englishwoman trying to convince a high-caste Purdah lady of the absurdity of covering her face in public. "Mem-sahib," said the Ranee, "it is our dustoor (custom), but it is not our custom to hide our feet. We think it no shame to go about bare-footed. You do. How would you like to walk down the big street in Calcutta with your legs bare to the knee? Well, we should feel just the same if we showed our faces." I cannot help thinking that "dustoor" is a convenient word, and covers as many sins



THE MIAN SAHIB BHURLE SINGH.



of omission as “mañana” and “cosa d’España” do in Spain.

After taking leave of the Maharanee I returned to the public garden, and found the Raja, Bhurie Singh, and Alan waiting for me to play tennis. Both of our friends, the Raja especially, play an excellent game, and have a better cutting service than many English amateurs. Several of the townspeople stood around and watched us; and the steps of the adjoining bandstand were crowded with children in bright coloured dresses. They followed the game with evident interest. The Maharaja’s band was in attendance, and played the latest opéra-bouffe tunes. The bandmaster and men are nearly all natives of Chamba, and play really well. The Maharaja’s National Anthem is founded on a Scotch air, and, as becomes a Highland chieftain, he also has his pipers. I am not much of a judge of bagpipes, but they seemed to drone and skreel as well as the genuine Scotch article. Their weird notes are at all events in harmony with these wild mountains; which is certainly not the case inside a Scotch dining-room, when the Laird’s piper marches round and deafens the guests.

November 28th.—The Maharaja sends a message that last night a leopard was caught in a wooden trap. The beast is uninjured and the Maharaja proposes to let him loose and shoot him on the plain. Shortly after luncheon a bugle sounded, and the townspeople began to assemble to witness



the fun. By the time we arrived a big crowd had collected. Hundreds of picturesquely dressed natives were sitting and standing about on all sides; the children, like London street boys, perched on walls and trees to get a glimpse of the show. The leopard was enclosed in the cage in which he had been caught: a kind of gigantic mousetrap. The Maharaja, Bhurie Singh, and a couple of officials stood with us, about a couple of hundred yards away from the cage, and a man squatted just behind held the end of a long rope, a pull from which was to enlarge the quarry. This is, I suppose, the Chamba form of pigeon shooting. But it decidedly has a spice of danger which the poor defenceless Hurlingham pigeon does not afford. The Maharaja handed me a rifle, and begged that I would take the first shot. It was a nervous moment for an inexperienced markswoman before so many spectators, but he would not hear of a refusal. The cord was pulled and the leopard bounded out, then crouched seemingly level with the ground, and glared round, gnashing his teeth and lashing his tail, evidently hesitating which direction to take. I fired, and they all politely declared he was hit, but with a roar he slouched away towards the hill, while the spectators in his vicinity took to their heels and fled right and left. The Maharaja, Bhurie Singh, and Alan shot in quick succession, and the leopard rolled over motionless. Some shikaris with their dogs now ran towards him, but he never moved, and on going up we found he was quite



dead. Part of my bullet, a little .450, was found in his body, so I had the satisfaction of knowing that I really had not missed.

The Raja now took us to see the hospital and schools. They are very clean and well-kept; the former under the superintendence of an extremely clever native doctor, who spoke English well. He told me that last year nearly 14,000 cases were treated, and they are now adding a new ward.

Chamba is really a model town, so compact and pretty, with every public building and institution perfect after its kind. The Maharaja takes the keenest interest in every detail of his State, and spends all his income in improvements. This is not generally the case with the modern English-educated native prince, who more often squanders his revenue in the amusements of our own *jeunesse dorée*, or at best leaves his State to look after itself, while he hurries from one to another of the European pleasure resorts. I was told of one Indian Raja, ruling an important country, who begged the English Government to take over his Principality, and free him from the cares of State. All he asked was a fitting allowance, and the liberty to go where he pleased. Naturally he only obtained a paternal wiggling from the Viceroy, and a reminder that he must fulfil the duties of the high position in which it had pleased Providence to place him.

His Highness of Chamba, and his brother Bhurie Singh, had the advantage of being brought up from childhood by one of our ablest Punjab officials, who cared for them as though they were his own sons ; and, with the assistance of an excellent English tutor, educated them like English boys. They both speak our language perfectly, and without the slightest accent, and write a better and more grammatical letter than many of my acquaintances. The Maharaja also sings and plays well, and dances ; all of which accomplishments are an innovation in this country, where people usually pay others to dance and sing for their delectation.

As we walked back to our house across the Green, now and again a child would run up to the Raja, with a present of a few wild flowers, and never failed to get a kindly word or two in return. The people are evidently devoted to their chief, and fall back on each side, salaaming respectfully as he passes. Every one seems happy and contented ; even the English missionary, who has from fifty to sixty converts, and is, the Raja tells us, “a most worthy young man.” He is going to build him a chapel.

The “man of the world” received us with courtly ease at the door of the Residency, but Santan evidently stands in great awe of the Raja. He is too frightened to enter the room he is in, and at intervals puts his head round the door and speaks in a loud confidential whisper across



the floor to Alan. Like *Alice in Wonderland* "Don't say 'you' to a Queen," is his only rule when he is forced to address the Raja.

Wednesday.—About 10 A.M. Bhurie Singh comes for us. There is news of a man-eating leopard, some eight miles away. He has recently killed a woman, and we are going to try a drive for him. Alan and the others ride out; I go in a dandy. We pass a venerable-looking temple, with a much-respected little marble god inside. He is covered with valuable ornaments, and has standing respectfully in front of him a smaller god, brightly gilt. There are several other old temples along the road, of curious shape, like huge Chinese vases with the lids on.

At last we reach the scene of action, and halt in a gorge surrounded by wooded mountains. The day is overcast, and a large tent is pitched for shelter. The Maharaja works from seven to eleven every morning at State business, and is to follow us. He shortly arrives at a hard gallop, and as soon as he appears a bugle sounds a signal for the beaters to commence. Bhurie Singh tells us that they are so far away we are not likely to see anything for some time.

In about an hour a line of men appear quite suddenly all along the crest, and down both sides of the hill. They are so far off that they look little dots; but in spite of the distance you can hear them distinctly, and a terrible din



they make. The beaters are collected from the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages, and each village brings its private band. And such excruciating instruments of torture! Tom-toms, big drums, horns, whistles, and an occasional huge serpentine trumpet, which takes two men to carry and makes a roar like a steam siren. Now and again hoarse shrieks start from one end of this long line of men, and run up and down the ranks like the firing of a *feu-de-joie*. It would be a brave leopard who would face such a pandemonium of noise; and unless he breaks back through the advancing beaters, he must pass the narrow gorge in which we are posted.

Soon a perfect bouquet of rocketing hill pheasants scud across, high overhead, and one or two "gooral" (Himalayan chamois) rush past. A sounder of wild boar break through the line of beaters—but no leopard. Until we were certain he was not on foot, of course we would not shoot at smaller game; but evidently he was a beast of discrimination and had slipped away before the beat commenced.

A gooral now bounded down the rocks, and the Maharaja knocked him over. Another galloped past Alan, who brought him down with a long shot. By this time the beaters had closed up in a big semi-circle in front of us. Nothing had been seen of the leopard, but a black bear had charged back through the line, and mauled one poor man. Bhurie Singh was much annoyed at the leopard's

escape. It had done much damage, and appeared to bear a charmed life. However, we had all passed a pleasant day, and to me it was a novel experience and a very pretty sight.

We had been talking about the native style of cookery,



HEAD OF GOORAL OR HIMALAYAN CHAMOIS.

and the Maharaja promised to send us a real Indian dinner to-night. In the evening his servants arrived, bearing dozens of little dishes on their heads. There were about nine different kinds of curries—mutton, chicken and vege-



table. A pillau of fowl; and many sweets—sugared rice, pastry of almonds, and a sort of Turkish Delight, which was excellent. The curries were served in small bowls made of green leaves sewn together.

Thursday.—They all go shooting—a drive again, but I decide to stop at home and do some sketching. I take the Kashmir chuprassie with me to carry my easel. He is a most gallant person, and whenever I stop, insists upon spreading out his beautiful red and white overcoat for me to sit upon. He has one fault; he does not even feign an interest in art, whilst the “man of the world” affects intense admiration for my slightest daub.

Alan returns just before dinner. He shot two gooral, and the Maharaja one, but they saw no bears. We hear that the man the bear hurt yesterday was only slightly scratched. The Raja gave him twenty rupees—about six months’ pay—and he was overcome with joy.

Friday.—Very dull and overcast, with slight rain; so I again stop at home. About noon it comes down a perfect deluge, which lasts till dark. Alan returns at night very wet but successful. He shot a very large bear, and Bhurie Singh another nearly as large. After dinner we hear a loud shouting outside, and Santan comes to tell us the “stag” has arrived. It was in fact the bear; but he groups every description of big game under the generic term “stag.” We find a torch-light procession at the door



carrying the bears. They look enormous ; each is slung on two poles borne on the shoulders of eight or ten men.

Several men with flaming torches light up the scene.

December 2nd.—A most determined downpour which stopped all shooting, and lasted till evening. The other day the Raja asked if I would like to see the old palace, and this seemed a good opportunity to go. It stands on the other side of the old town, and is most picturesquely situated on the edge of the cliff. The Raja told me that his grandfather's widows live there. These boys are so English that it is difficult always to remember that they have social customs we have not, amongst others a plurality of wives ; and when I stupidly asked "How many?" it was with a confused idea floating through my brain that his grandfather might somehow have married twice. His simple answer "Sixteen," so startled me that I could only just stammer out how much pleasure it would give me to make their acquaintance.

This afternoon I started, attended by nearly all our household, including the cook, who never allows himself to be left out of anything, and now accompanies me in a dazzling white turban and long blue dressing-gown reaching to his heels. I am obliged to take the ayah, to act as interpreter, and she appeared in a gorgeous costume of red, yellow and blue. Alan's man turned out in the correct evening dress of an English butler, which contrasts queerly



with his black face. The "man of the world" always sticks to his knickerbockers and putties, but dons his gala coat—the cast-off red tunic of an English soldier. He and the other shikaris shoulder Alan's rifles, and hang themselves with every hunting-knife, telescope, field-glass and other shooting appliance we possess. Followed by this escort and the chuprassies, we make quite an imposing little show.

The palace is the dearest old building possible ! Hexagonal towers at each corner enclose a high, overhanging timber roof, with a row of little windows just underneath. The larger windows are filled with carved wooden lattices. Two, at the end, are strikingly quaint. In part oriel, they project more than in Gothic architecture, and are supported by a base shaped like a lotus flower.

The approach is up a long flight of steps with high walls on either side, then across a courtyard, at the opposite end of which is a small entrance door. This opens into a little dark room, whence a narrow stone staircase in the solid wall leads to the upper and living floors. A woman was waiting for me, dressed all in white, with several accordion-pleated linen skirts one over the other, which gave her the appearance of wearing a crinoline. She literally led me up the almost perpendicular staircase, for it was quite dark and unlighted, and each stone step some two feet high. I believe in the old days of war and anarchy



these were purposely made narrow and difficult of ascent, to guard against treachery and sudden attacks. In the event of a surprise, one man could, for a time, have easily defended this staircase against a hundred: an Oriental Horatius.

I emerged in an open gallery running round the four sides of an inner courtyard, shaded by big trees, with a well in the centre, covered by a gaily decorated well house.

The walls of the gallery are coloured bright crimson, with curious old Indian processions and scenes of sport depicted upon them in gold. The Raja's aunt received me here, and conducted me into a large room, or rather alcove—for the side next the gallery was only divided off by heavy curtains. The floor and chairs were covered with white cloths, and she herself and all the other ladies were dressed entirely in white.

My ayah at first was, or pretended to be, overcome with awe, and it was with some trouble I got her to translate a few civil words. Then she began to interpret with diffidence; and gradually acquired a hardened confidence which left me quite out of the conversation. Several times I had to stop her, and ask her what she was saying. For, while the Ranee was making a remark, the ayah would commence without any reference to me, or giving me any idea of the topic on which they talked.

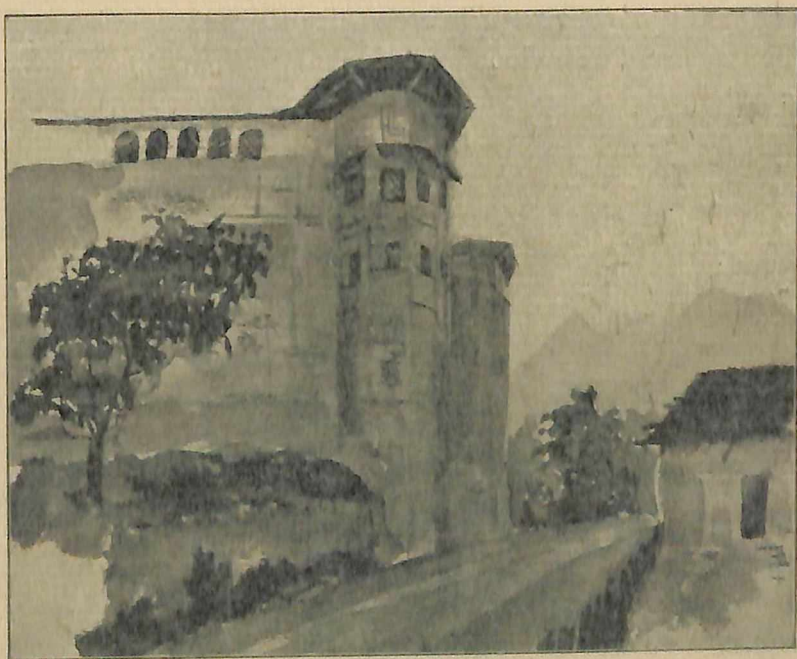


“Oh! she only asked if you were fond of needlework, and I told her No, you hated it, but did beautiful things painting.” Heaven only knows what she said of me during the rest of the interview, but I have no doubt it was in the same laudatory strain. These Indian servants have much *esprit-de-corps*, and make it a point of honour to maintain that the sahib they are serving is the greatest sahib in the world: probably because it adds to their own importance! I only hope the Ranee does not think the ayah’s gush is inspired by me, as in that case she must have a poor opinion of my sense of modesty.

I was sorry not to see the Maharaja’s own grandmother—the real Ranee; but she is over eighty and too old, or old-fashioned, to receive visitors. Before I left we went over the palace. Nearly all the rooms have one side open to the gallery, only screened off by quilted hangings, sometimes with a low door or rail in front, like a children’s nursery at home. Most of the walls are painted vermilion, with bright lacquer decorations. Little looking-glasses the size of a small window-pane are let into the plaster here and there, and line the embrasures of the windows.

The pierced lattice-work of these cushioned recesses permits a free view of the world outside; and at the same time perfectly conceals the observer within. Natur-

ally they are favourite resorts. As we pass through the rooms, from each deep window-bay two or three laughing or chattering girls or women flutter out. I did not like to inquire too closely about the relationship of these ladies to the late Maharaja. Their ages apparently varied from over eighty to under eighteen. But



THE OLD PALACE, CHAMBA.

if they were all his wives, the youngest could only have been a few years old at the time of his death.

This old palace is delightful—so evidently the typical untouched residence of the old-world Indian prince—but there is an absence of repair, and a presence of rubbish and weeds in the outer courts, which also characterised

the ancient *régime*. No doubt the Zenana is sacred against the modernising influence of the present Maharaja. Even the ayah noticed the state of decay, for seeing the Ranee look surprised, I inquired the cause: "Memsahib, I only told her this old house will tumble down on her head soon."

Once the Ranee pointed to a painting on the wall, representing a Hindoo god stepping from his chariot. I asked what she was saying. The ayah remarked with nonchalance, "I have asked her to point you out her god." I began heartily to wish my woman's shyness would return, for no part of the Ranee's life or occupations were sacred from her inquiries; and she occasionally seemed to translate enough to give an idea that it was I who prompted the questions. She ended by saying, "The Ranee tells me it is very kind of *us* to have come to see her." Her feelings were a little hurt when the Ranee did not shake hands with her at parting.

I have been rather consoled since by the Raja, who thinks it a great joke, and tells me the Ranee only speaks "Pahāri" (the Hill dialect), and understood little or nothing of the ayah's Hindustani. I am now lost in admiration of my ayah. She must have an imagination and power of lying that I should not have given her credit for in my wildest dreams.



CHAPTER VII.

Duck-shooting with the Maharaja—The “lone widower”—The happy valley—*En route* for Pathankôt—“Hubble-bubble toil and trouble”—The baboo stationmaster—An Indian “Joe Miller”—The baboo and the tiger—Lahore—The Fort—Jumma Musjid—Runjeet Singh’s bedroom—The “Lion of the Punjab”—The armoury—Runjeet Singh’s tomb—Pind-dadan-khan—The Tehsildar’s English—Enterprising mosquitoes—The oorial—Down a salt-mine—A transformation scene—On the road to Kalar Kahar—Lost!

December 3rd.—Alan went out duck-shooting with the Maharaja. Coming back in the evening, the latter suddenly stopped, and pointed out a bear on the opposite mountain across the valley. The Raja has certainly the most wonderful eyesight; the bear was so far away that even our shikaris could not see it at first, and with a fieldglass I could only just make out a small black speck. It was too late to attempt to stalk to-night, and to-morrow we were to start for Lahore. But the Raja offers to lay a dâk—so that we can do three days’ march in one—if we will stay to-morrow and drive for the bear. He was very anxious we should stop longer and have one big drive, but this necessitates a week’s delay—as two thousand coolies have to be collected—



and we cannot spare the time. To-day was lovely after the rain, and the valley looked prettier than ever. The fresh-fallen snow on the mountains came down almost to the town, and lit up at sunset like the red glare of a burning city.

December 4th.—We all go out after the bear, but, except a gooral Alan shot, saw nothing. In the afternoon they played polo, and afterwards the Maharaja and Bhurie Singh came to the Residency to bid us good-bye. It is charming to see how nice these two brothers are to each other. Whilst the elder seems only to remember that they are brothers, the younger never forgets the respect due to his Maharaja; nor sits down nor stands up, till his brother has first done so.

Nothing could possibly have exceeded their kindness to us during our stay. We both feel as if we were parting from old friends, and look forward to meeting them next summer, when they think of coming to England.

All our heavy luggage and servants started early this morning for the railway station at Pathankôt, about sixty miles' march, and we only kept behind Rahman and Khadra, who are to accompany us to-morrow on mules. The Maharaja's butler looked after us during the day; but after dinner regrets he cannot stop in the house at



night, as he is a "lone widower." I cannot quite follow his reasoning, but take it for granted, and we are left alone in the house.

Next morning we are called at 4 A.M. and get off about 5—still quite dark, save for a full moon. The road descends to the river, and then climbs up the steep mountain on the opposite side. At the top, we take a last look at Chamba—the last time I shall probably ever see this dear little happy valley. The day is just breaking, but the bright moon still throws a pale light on the white palace, and cuts with jet-black shadows the silent town beneath. Above the hill, the sky glows a bright pink behind the snow mountains. Then, as we cross the ridge, a ray of sun breaks on the mountain top, and Chamba is lost to view.

Alan is riding, and has relays of the Raja's horses every ten or twelve miles. I am carried in a dandy, with changes of bearers at shorter distances. It is bitterly cold, and my poor cavalry orderly, who rides behind the dandy at a foot's pace, must be frozen. I beg him to trot on, but he evidently considers himself responsible to the Maharaja for my safety, and persists in being a martyr to duty.

About twelve miles further, we find the mules and heavy baggage which were sent off yesterday; and Rahman busy transferring the packages to the riding mules the Raja has lent them. He explains in excited and broken English



that the baggage mules could not get on, and will, their owner says, take three days to get to Pathankôt. "I say you no be Pathankôt three days, you this minute Chamba back go." And he sent him.

We reach Motha about noon, and stop for luncheon at a pretty little bungalow hedged in with prickly pear, and approached by an avenue of cacti some fifteen feet in height. All the mountains around are covered with forests of rhododendrons, and it must be lovely when they are in flower in the spring.

We have ordered a sleeping carriage to be reserved by the midnight train from Pathankôt, and there still remain some fifty miles to cover; so we have little time to spare. In consequence of the break-down of the baggage mules, the shikaris have to walk; and Alan starts at a gallop for Nurpoor—the point where we leave the mountains, and reach a cart-road—to order ekkas to be in readiness for them and the other servants. My dandy progresses steadily at about five miles an hour; and every six miles or so, we find a relay of fresh bearers in waiting. The track descends with the river, and as the valley narrows, follows its bed, and we ford the stream from bank to bank some fifteen times. At this season the river is generally shallow, but the recent rains have swollen it, and the water often comes up to the men's waists.

At Nurpoor we at last reach the cart-road, and the



boundary of the Chamba State. I am very thankful for a cup of tea Alan has ordered to be prepared; and also to find the ekkas waiting, for the servants are some distance behind, and I begin to fear they will not reach Pathankôt to-night. I am very tired, and we still have twenty miles before us. Four men carry my dandy, and four more run beside, one of them with the common hubble-bubble from which they all in turns take a whiff. Every five or six minutes they change rounds, and then the in-going coolies rush for a farewell puff. At the end of a stage they all sit down together, and are an unconscionable time gurgling their pipe. When we once get under way they relieve one another almost without stopping, but before taking his turn, each man carefully arranges his turban, and folds up the cotton blanket he wears cloak fashion on his shoulder. When he comes out he reverses the process, and then with a grunt of satisfaction sits down and takes a pull at the hubble-bubble. After dusk, one man runs in front bearing a torch. This is simply made; at the end of a stick a few old rags are tied, on which kerosine oil is poured.

At intervals the light is fed from a bottle by pouring oil on the naked flame. It seems only a question of time before the man and his bottle are blown into space. About every hour, eight ghosts, all in white, rise out of the darkness, and prove to my delight that yet one more stage is past. At length, about eleven o'clock, the red light of an

unmistakable railway signal shows we have reached our journey's end.

It was a lonely little road-side station, quite deserted, not even a porter in sight. Alan appeared and took me to the sleeping carriage, where I *was* pleased to see my bed ready prepared. There had been great trouble about this carriage. It seems that the station-master—an excellent specimen of the English-speaking Bengali baboo—had not received our letter, and no carriage had been reserved. He could not even promise us one, but told Alan it was all right; the hill post was often a day late, and he would certainly receive our letter *to-morrow*. Then he gravely said, “And when, Sare, the letter shall arrive, I will endorse it, ‘Received too late to execute,’ and forward it to your address. So, Sare, everything will be in order.” His office-moulded mind was quite unable to grasp that a properly docketed correspondence would not compensate us for the loss of a night's rest. However, after some delay, Alan discovered and took possession of a carriage which he got put on the train.

I once read in an old book that “were we English to leave India, empty beer bottles would be the only relics of our rule.” To “beer bottles” should be added “baboos,” for they are the unique growth of our educational system grafted on to the Bengali brain. In Government and rail way offices the baboo is most useful—in fact as indispensable



as a type-writing machine—and, like it, he executes automatically and admirably the work of the groove in which he moves. But he is as incapable as any machine of acting on his own initiative, or assuming any responsibility. It would be as reasonable to suppose that a machine had volition, as to expect that a baboo would act independently in a situation not provided for by “Regulations and Standing Orders.” The smaller railway stations only boast as a rule two baboo specimens—the station-master and telegraph clerk.

There is an Indian “Joe Miller” that once a telegram was received by the traffic superintendent at Calcutta, from the baboo at some distant little railway station.

“Calcutta mail due, tiger at points. What shall do? Waiting orders.”

Then a minute later came a frantic appeal—

“Tiger in station. Baboo on roof. Wire instructions.”

I am afraid this is an old chestnut; but it typifies perfectly the baboo mind.

Lahore, December 7th.—We arrived here early in the morning, and for the next two or three days were very busy preparing for our expedition to the Salt Ranges. Our cook was home-sick, and wished to return to Kashmir; and with him we sent back Khadra—the second shikari, and the other coolies.



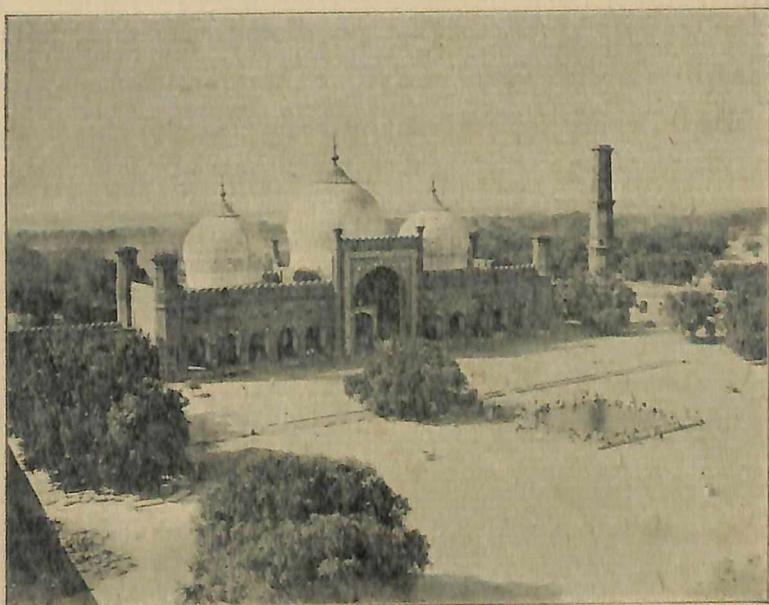
We only keep Rahman, who is indispensable ; Khaira, my tiffin coolie ; and Guffara the bheestie, a sort of odd man, not above putting his hand to any work required.

On Friday we went to see the Fort, and Jumma Musjid. The old citadel of Shah Jehan and abode of Runjeet Singh, is now one of the sights included in "Cook's Tours," and has often been described by far abler pens than mine. The Shish-mahal, or Hall of Mirrors, is a fine room, over one hundred feet long, decorated in the Eastern style with thousands of little looking-glasses, which, set very closely together in tiny panels, entirely cover the walls and ceiling. Runjeet Singh's bedroom is a small square apartment, with a fireplace on each of the four sides. Here the "Lion of the Punjab" used to sit, with four blazing fires around to keep out the raw cold of a Lahore winter.

The Armoury has some curious old weapons. Amongst the fire-arms is a curious old matchlock, some 150 years old, with four revolving chambers. So the revolver was not invented in America ! Several brass helmets and cuirasses have the Imperial French eagle embossed in front. They are said to have belonged to one of General Ventura's regiments, and were probably bought cheap after the downfall of the First Empire. The wall decorations of the Jumma Musjid are artistic and effective. On a white ground, bunches of conventional flowers in jars are enamelled in various tones of red with a surrounding arabesque pattern ;

somewhat reminding one of the old English damask basket design.

Adjoining is Runjeet Singh's tomb ; or rather the place where his ashes rest, for of course, like all Hindoos, his body was cremated. From the outside it looks a fine edifice, but, as usual, you have to creep up to it by a narrow



THE JUMMA MUSJID, LAHORE.

staircase in the wall. Once inside, the building is a curious mixture of the secular and sacred. Tombs on the first floor ; Sikh priests overhead ; servants, horses and cattle below. Runjeet's ashes are marked by a marble lotus flower, around which are smaller ones denoting the eleven ladies of his Zenana who were burnt with his corpse.

On one side of the cenotaph sat a priest, chanting

from the Sikh holy book, which, covered by a gold-embroidered cloth, lay in front of him. As we were leaving, we gave our guide a small donation, and the holy man interrupted his devotions, to remind us that he too was not above backsheesh.

December 11th. Pind-dadan-khan.—Yesterday evening we embarked our tents and belongings on the mail train; and, travelling all night, arrived here early this morning.

The Deputy Commissioner very kindly put the district bungalow at our disposal, and we are staying there until our arrangements for marching are completed. There is a native city of some 18,000 inhabitants close by, but no other English bungalow, not even a refreshment room at the little railway station.

We were just sitting down to breakfast when the Tehsildar arrived to pay his respects, and tell us that camels and horses would be ready to morrow. He spoke English fairly well, but with an odd way of tacking on terminations to his own words. We think of riding over this afternoon to see the salt mines at Khewra, and he told us he "would pleasesly (gladly) lend us horses, and would send to the superintendent of the mine to 'aware' him of our visit."

There is an English missionary here, and a tiny mission church; so I attended morning service. The congregation were all natives, principally women, and the



service in the Punjab dialect. The missionary and his wife are the only resident English. It must be very lonely for her; but she says that teaching the women reading, needlework, &c., fully occupies all her time.

December 12th.—This bungalow is very comfortable, with larger and better rooms than the Lahore hotel. But it harbours a peculiarly large and venomous breed of mosquitoes. I hardly slept a wink. Somehow they had managed to get through the mosquito curtains, and the bites of those within, and the clamorous humming of the less fortunate insects outside, kept me awake till dawn.

The district police officer passed through this morning on a tour of inspection, and came to pay us an early call.

He tells me that Pind-dadan-khan is notorious for the size and enterprise of its mosquitoes. *Now* they are bearable. But in the hot season all attempts at protection are absolutely useless. Two of the larger mosquitoes take it in turns to hold up the curtains, whilst the remainder go in and feast on the victim!

Our baggage went off on camels at daybreak to Saidan Shah—a march of about fourteen miles. The shikaris walked, but Santan and the ayah had a camel to themselves, and were seated on either side in panniers balanced across its back, like two babies on a seaside donkey. A rich Nawab (native gentleman) of the district



very kindly lent us a couple of riding horses, and, putting our own saddles on them, we cantered over to the salt mines. These are situated at Khewra, about five miles on the road to Saidan Shah, and on the edge of the mountainous district between the Jhelum and Indus, which goes by the name of the Salt Range. To the north of the Jhelum valley, these hills rise abruptly to a height of some 1,500 feet, and form a broken table-land dotted with peaks, few over 3,000 feet.

Between Khasalgarh and Kalabagh, these hills are more accentuated; and the Indus river, by a narrow gorge, breaks in a torrent through the range. But towards the north the highlands subside in gentler slopes. Everywhere the peaks or tors are cut and broken into fantastic shapes, ending below in deep precipitous ravines. Where the soil appears it is of a bright red colour; but at this season a great part of the hills is dotted with long standing yellow grass almost dried into hay. The ground is more or less impregnated with salt, which here and there leaves a white efflorescence on the surface, and nearly all the wells and streams are brackish. From Pind-dadan-khan the aspect of these hills is treeless, sterile and bare. But in the interior one constantly comes on a little well-wooded oasis, and every level yard of soil is now green with wheat. Alan says these hills are of recent formation—sandstone and marl—



deposited under the sea at a time when the mountains of Central India stood alone as an island, on an ocean bounded by the Himalayas. If they were subject to snow and ice, their soft rocks would soon crumble into undulating downs. Even now, they have the appearance of gradually washing away, and every slope is ankle-deep with the loose stone *débris* from above. This makes stalking very difficult, for it is almost impossible to walk silently. In places, what look like little stone tiles thickly cover the ground, and at every step rattle against each other like castanets.

Amongst the ravines of these hills are found the oorial, a species of wild sheep, which under different names inhabits the mountains bordering the Indus from Ladakh to Sindh. Although classed as sheep, they have little or no likeness to the domestic species. The does especially resemble rather an antelope or gazelle. The ram is of a light reddish-brown, becoming gray in old age; and his coat is of hair, not wool, with a beard in front like the ruff of a colley dog. The horns are thick, and curved somewhat like a common ram's, and in good specimens average from twenty-four to twenty-eight (23 1/2 to 29) inches in length. We heard of one shot on the other side of the Indus with horns said to be thirty-four inches long, but never met anybody who had seen them of this size.



On arriving at Khewra, we learnt that Mr. Douglas, the Assistant Commissioner, to whom we had a letter of introduction, was at the dâk bungalow, and found him, with Mrs. Douglas, just starting for our halting-place—Saidan Shah. It seems that they have a house there, the only one in the place, and they very kindly invited us to stay with them. This is lucky, as the road is bad, and it is doubtful if our baggage will arrive till late at night.

The superintendent of the Salt District now met us, and we all went on a trolley along the tramway leading to the mine. The line runs through a deep cutting for about half a mile, and then suddenly enters a tunnel in the mountain side.

The mine is quite unlike any I have seen. Nothing is on a small scale. No little shafts or passages to creep along bent double, but suite after suite of colossal halls a hundred and fifty feet in height. Everything is salt; steps, walls, doorways and floors: not the white opaque table salt we are accustomed to, but a transparent-looking rock, exactly like pink sugar-candy. You can see lights through it, from the workers in other passages, and as we entered each cave, fire balls and Bengal lights were let off to show it up. There are several little lakes embedded in these crystalline vaults, which under the glare of this red and green fire, reminded one strongly of the transformation scene in a Christmas pantomime. The simile is



banale, but it exactly conveys the effect of crude nature assisted by pyrotechnic art. Afterwards, fire balloons and rockets with magnesium stars were sent up, and cast a dim misty light over the depths, which at all events gave an impression of magnitude and grandeur. One tiny lake-let is shown through a kind of window. It has a roof only about twenty feet high, and is shut in all round. The walls sparkle with white crystals, and the low vaulted roof is hung with stalactites. Lit by the bright magnesium light, mirrored back again from the clear still water below, it conveyed the idea of a huge globe studded with diamonds.

As we walked through these dark caverns, lighted only by a single torch carried before us, here and there little sparks like glow-worms showed the miners at work. Each man carries a sort of oil night-light, which just serves to make the darkness visible. If it goes out, he sits down until he is found; unless, indeed, he cares to risk a fall of a hundred feet or so in the dark. His wife is always with him, which may be a consolation. Poor thing! she has the harder part, carrying on her head a heavy load of salt to the trucks, which he leisurely chips out. They tell a tale of a blind man who could find his way unassisted over all the workings; perhaps this may have originated the idea for Rudyard Kipling's charming little story.

They say these caves are comparatively cool even in

the height of the hot weather, when, outside, where the little bungalows of the officials are built, the burning heat is almost intolerable. One can quite imagine it; for the hill above slopes due south, with an Indian sun beating down on red-hot rocks destitute of vegetation, whilst below stretches a dried-up plain glaring with white salt.

The road to Saidan Shah, although bridged and graded, is not metalled. It is therefore designated as "kuchur." This expressive Indian adjective has no exact English equivalent; but means anything unripe, roughly finished, or imperfect. Its antithesis is "pukkar"; and their gradations, "kuchur-pukkar," and "pukkar-kuchur" are, I regret to say, beyond my vocabulary.

We cantered up the side of a barren mountain reminding one of Aden; and through a series of well-cultivated little valleys, surrounded by rocky hills. Then past a small lake gradually drying up after the rains. As the water recedes, every inch of mud is being sown with wheat.

At the further end, amongst the sedges, an occasional "quack-quack" betrays some teal and duck. But we have no time to wait, and, riding hard, did not reach Saidan Shah till dark.

We found the Douglasses' belongings still unpacked and scattered round the house. Their servants did not arrive

till past six; yet by eight o'clock we sat down to an excellent dinner, and everything was comfortably arranged for the night. Indian servants are certainly seen at their best when travelling and in camp.

Tuesday.—We sent our baggage to Kalar Kahar, where there is a house near a large lake. Alan started early to shoot duck. I waited for luncheon, and did not get away



KALAR KAHAR.

till four o'clock. The road was only a track, but, they told me, went straight to our destination. This was an eighteen or twenty miles' ride, so to save time I cantered off alone, thinking all the time how I should make myself understood if I took the wrong turn and had to inquire the way. Hardly had I gone a mile, when my stirrup leather broke. It was impossible to mend it, and I had



to ride on without one. Some miles further, all traces of a road gradually disappeared; and except the tracks of the camels, which had gone before, there was absolutely nothing to guide me. The sun went down, and the brief twilight soon faded into complete darkness, without even a moon. Naturally I lost my way. There were no people about, nor even a village light in the distance.

I had not the least idea where I was, and began to think it extremely probable that I should have to pass the night dinnerless *aux belles étoiles*. I made several fruitless attempts to find the track; but the night was pitch dark, and one was tolerably certain to wander away in a wrong direction. So I concluded that the better plan was to remain stationary, and trust to luck, or to Alan sending in search of me.

After a very unpleasant half-hour, the silence was broken by a jingle of bells. I rode to the sound, and found a friendly disposed native running at a jog-trot, and carrying a bag on a stick hung with iron rings. Evidently the district post-runner! Repeating "Kalar Kahar" to him several times, he pointed in the direction he was going, and we jogged on together. I could not understand a word he said, and could only hope we were on the right road.

When we had journeyed an hour or so, a light appeared

in the distance, and turned out to be a lantern carried by a syce, sent by Alan to meet me. I arrived to find everything ready, and dinner waiting. Alan had shot a lot of duck and geese, but, having no boat or dog, had great difficulty in getting them retrieved.



CHAPTER VIII.

Kalar Kahar—A pretty bungalow—A lake adventure—Stalking the oorial—Halāl—A Mahometan armoury—Santan and the ayah—Maira—A bargain in mutton—An oorial on “sentry go”—The “patient” camel—We reach Pail—A deluge in a hill tent—A native house—A plague of hornets—All hands to the “pumps”—A native village—The polite Lumbardar—The Indian washerman.

Wednesday. Kalar Kahar.—This is a pretty little bungalow in the midst of a garden planted with fruit trees, and surrounded on all sides by groves and avenues of bananas. Fifty feet below lies a large lake, black with wild fowl, and here and there a white streak which marks a flock of flamingoes. At times, frightened at something, myriads of duck rise with a noise like the distant rushing of a mighty wind.

In the garden and on the edge of the hill is a large rock; its top levelled to a small platform reached by steps hewn out of the solid stone. Tradition says this was done by order of the Emperor Baber, who also caused the trees to be planted and the garden made. On this rock he used to sit at evening and admire the landscape. The view is pretty, but nothing extraordinary; and in



summer, when the lake is a mass of black mud, must be almost ugly. But, *rara avis* in the Salt Range, a little spring of cold sweet water runs out of the hill above us, to which I suspect the trees and verdure owe their origin. There is, or rather was, a little boat on the lake, but in a sad state of repair. Alan tried to launch it yesterday, but several planks were missing and it filled with water. This was provoking, for the ducks remain masters of the situation. They are as wary as deer, and never leave the lake by day, taking care to keep just out of shot from the shore. If frightened they flutter to the middle of the lake, where, without a boat, they cannot be disturbed. The only way of getting a few is to wade through the mud at daybreak, when two or three late birds rise in flurried fashion out of the rushes within shot. Alan gave orders overnight to have the boat repaired, and we went down this morning to see it launched. Most of the villagers also assisted. Bushes and stones were laid down to make a pier, a path cut through the reeds, and more reeds put into the boat to form a screen from the ducks. The crowd gave an applauding murmur as Alan stepped in, and the boat was shoved off. "Stanley launching the first boat on Lake Victoria," was the least you would have imagined the occasion to have been, had you suddenly come round the corner on the group. But the speed with which he was shot out, was more than equalled by the haste with



which he returned. And he had just time to jump on shore, before, with a "whish," the boat disappeared beneath the water.

It seems that the simple natives, when putting in the reeds, had been careful to conceal the place where a plank was missing. They never use a boat themselves, and this one (a rough punt) had been built by some former English tenant of the bungalow. The villagers found the boards come in useful, and could not see that one more or less made much difference to the boat. Since last night they had been hard at work replacing such as they could find; but one falling short, they attempted to stuff up the hole with reeds. On more careful examination we found all the wood so rotten that we were obliged to give up the idea of getting the boat mended.

After breakfast we rode to some hills about five miles distant, where oorial are said to be. A couple of does scuttled away directly we got on the ground, but not a single ram was visible. Rahman proposed to go up a small peak, whence an extensive view could be had. After carefully scanning every likely spot with a telescope, we at last discovered two fine rams lying down in a glen on the opposite hill, and close to a clump of small thorn trees.

They were at least a mile off as the crow flies, and probably three by the *détour* it would be necessary to make in order to cross the valley unseen. I decided to remain on



the hill, whilst Alan and Rahman went round to try a stalk.

I watched through the glasses, and in about an hour they emerged above the oorial, but hidden from them by the rise of the ground. They stopped here for some little time. Evidently something had gone wrong. It appears that Rahman suddenly caught sight of the head and ears of a doe keeping sentry above. When they commenced the stalk she had not been visible; and now it was impossible to get within shot of the rams without her giving the alarm. They were obliged to retrace their steps and cross the ridge lower down; then, creeping through the broken ground, they managed to gain the thorn bushes, at the other end of which the two rams were still lying. They were about a hundred and fifty yards off, and had no means of getting nearer. Only the head and horns of one were visible above the line of ground, so Alan decided to wait till they got up. Suddenly both rams started to their feet, and, without an instant's delay, bounded into the nullah. I saw Alan take a quick shot, right and left, and one ram hesitate for a moment, then turn, and trot down towards the valley; whilst his companion went at an increased pace up the opposite hill, and disappeared over the crest. The first animal, which was the bigger, was evidently hit, and Khaira, who was with me, ran down the hill to keep him in sight. I followed as well as I could, but the going was awful. The

ground was covered with stones, not close enough together to walk upon, but quite big enough to trip one up. Then came acres of loose flat tiles, which slithered over one another like ice. Without a moment's notice your feet slipped from under you, and down one went on one's back.

After I had gone about half a mile, Alan and Rahman came up; and we saw Khaira still ahead, but walking slowly. He had lost sight of the wounded animal, and was following the trail. Alan ran towards him; when suddenly the ram jumped up from behind a rock some five hundred yards off, where it had evidently been lying down. It did not go far, and lay down again at the foot of a cliff above the dried-up bed of the stream. Alan went back, and round the hill, so as to get above it—for what little wind there was came from below—whilst we sat down and watched. In about ten minutes' time, we saw Alan and Rahman on the top of the cliff, directly over the wounded ram.

Alan took a steady shot, but nothing moved, till presently we saw Rahman tearing down the slope, evidently in a hurry to perform the last rites.

It was a fine ram, with horns twenty-eight inches long. The first shot hit him too far back, but Alan said he never stirred after the second, and was dead before Rahman got up to *halāl*.

This ceremony consists of repeating the Mahometan creed when cutting the animal's throat, and unless the rite

is performed whilst the victim is still alive, no true believer will eat the meat. Fortunately the conscience of the operator is generally very elastic, and he never admits that the animal is dead. To-night our Mahometan servants had certainly no scruples, for they finished off every scrap of the ram for supper.

Thursday.—Alan was out at daybreak, but not an oorial to be seen. There is very little ground for them here, but they say about fifteen miles further is an excellent place, and we decide to move our camp there after breakfast. Alan



SOME OF OUR 'CAMELS.

went off walking to shoot his way through the ravines, whilst I, riding with the camels, had to make a long *détour* by the only track round the broken ground.

Santan and the ayah, as usual, sat in panniers hung on each side of a camel, and, whether by accident or design, the former played his companion a nasty trick. At the first halt, the camel was made to sit down in order to tighten some strap. As it was getting up again Santan jumped out, and the ayah, having nothing to balance her weight, swung round underneath. The frightened camel began to prance



about in ungainly fashion, unaccustomed to a load being hung between his legs; whilst the wretched ayah, pitching from side to side, shrieked for help in an interesting assortment of dialects. We rescued her with some difficulty, and she then declared the camel dangerously vicious, and started to walk. This obliged Santan to go on foot; so she had her revenge, for he has a rooted objection to using his own legs when any others are available.

Rahman had Alan's horse, and rode after me to Maira. The track led in and out of a series of ravines, so we could only go slowly, but it was some hours before the baggage and servants arrived. Fortunately we had sent the tents off early; so they came up first, and with the assistance of the camel-men we set to work to pitch them. The servants and other camels did not arrive till past seven, with a pitiful story of how they had been wrongly directed, and got trapped in a precipitous *cul-de-sac*, up and down which they had wandered, unable to find an outlet.

There was only one spot available for a camp, and the earth, or rather sandy rock, grew a sort of creeping thistle which shed its prickles in a most disagreeable fashion. For days our bedding, carpets, and everything in the tents, bristled with sharp little spikes.

We remained at Maira for four days, but had very indifferent sport. The ground around is ruled like a copy-book with chasms. If one could imagine the ocean during a



storm suddenly frozen hard, and coloured red; it would give a slight idea of its appearance. We encamped on the edge of the table-land. About four miles off is a ridge of low hills, and the terrain between is cut up into long narrow ravines, the tops on a level with us, and the precipitous sides, some hundred feet deep, looking as if they had been slashed with a razor out of the solid ground. You have to climb in and out of twenty or thirty of these cañons to reach the hills.

There are a fair number of oorial about, but dreadfully wild; they have been so much shot at, that the sight of a man, even miles away, sends them galloping off. Every little village has one or two men with guns, who shoot does, fawns, and everything else they get a chance at. Their favourite time is the hot weather, when water becomes scarce. They then sit up all night over the little pools not yet dried up, and wait for the oorial to come and drink. Sometimes they slaughter ten or twelve does at a sitting.

Unless the does are protected, and a close time enforced, the oorial must inevitably soon become a rare beast, although they are well able to protect themselves against any but these poaching methods, for no animal is so shy and wary. The does guard their lord and master with positively painful loyalty, and, regardless of danger, post themselves around on every exposed side. Naturally they are the first victims of the pot-hunter. With fair shooting

the oorial would not seriously decrease, for their eyesight is wonderful, and any suspicious object, however far distant, sends them off. To a whiff of tainted air they are as sensitive as any deer; and unlike the ibex and markhor, the slightest noise or fall of a stone puts them on the alert. As I have already said, the ground they frequent makes it hard to approach noiselessly, and we found them the most difficult wild animal to shoot fairly that Alan had ever stalked.

We worked hard for two or three days, but shot nothing, although several good heads were seen. Alan for a whole day followed one ram, whose horns Rahman declared were as big as an *ovis ammon's*. Towards evening the animal settled down to feed, surrounded by fifteen or twenty does. The ground was favourable for stalking, and after a long and laborious walk Alan reached the place, but only to see the herd scampering over the next hill. The wind was right, and they had taken off their chupplies to walk more silently, but notwithstanding all their caution, the wily animals detected them in some way, and they never saw the ram again. Rahman, who has had much experience after all kinds of mountain animals in Kashmir and Thibet, fairly gave these oorial up as a bad job, and declared that he did not know how to circumyent them. He suggested that we should get a local shikari, and Alan wrote asking the Tehsildar of Pind-dadan-khan to send us a good man.

This morning Santan came to say we have no more fresh meat, and he wished to consult me regarding buying a sheep. As he invariably buys what he wants without reference to anybody, I felt pretty sure this only meant a prelude to some petty robbery. He thinks six rupees is too much for a lamb, and has offered five and a half, which the owner won't take. Mutton must be had, so I told him to give what the man wanted. Santan is evidently disappointed, having, I am since told, the idea that I should order him to take the beast, give what he thought fair (which would have been nothing), and charge us five and a half rupees. The owner of the sheep apparently had the same idea, for he had prudently driven it away, and Santan returned nearly in tears: "Hi, sheep gone back to jungle."

Shortly afterwards, when half-a-dozen people appeared with a lamb, I presumed the man had relented. Santan was not present, but the cook volunteered that the lamb was a beautiful one, "Very fat, very good, and only five and a half rupees." So he was bought. In about an hour another little procession came in sight, headed by Santan, also with a lamb, which he brought to me with pride, and pointed out all its good points. I was obliged to break to him that the cook had bought one, which could not be exchanged as it was already killed. Santan lifted up his voice and wept. The cook had stolen a march on him; and for the first time

I learnt that a bitter feud exists between our trusty servitors.

On our last morning here Alan and Rahman went out as usual before daybreak. Just as the sun was rising they saw a ram and four or five does about a mile off, on the low hills which slope down to the ravines. Alan determined to try a stalk by himself, and left Rahman behind. The first rays of the sun fell full on the hill-side where the oorial were grazing, and left the ravines below in deep shade. Running along their sandy bottoms, Alan managed without any difficulty to reach unperceived the steep foot of the hill.

Then, climbing the precipitous wall of the cañon, he got almost on a level with the herd. A sentry doe stood about two hundred yards off, taking an occasional mouthful of grass and evidently unsuspicious of any danger. The ram was not in sight, but, if he had not moved, would be about a hundred yards to the left of the doe. It was impossible to get past her, but between her and where the ram ought to be lay a piled-up mass of rocks which it might be possible to reach from a point lower down the ravine. Alan made up his mind to try this, and descending the ravine, ran along the bottom, and climbed up again opposite the rocks, which were here about a hundred and fifty yards from the chasm's brink.

The doe's head and ears could just be seen above the slope of the hill; and watching his time, whenever she bent



down to graze, Alan managed to crawl along the ground to the shelter of the rocks. Here he was quite safe from the doe, and, peering cautiously round a stone, he at last made out the ram, but at least five hundred yards distant.

There was no other male to be seen, but several does were feeding farther up the hill. The wind was light but steady, and blew straight from the oorial ; and they seemed to be feeding towards the rocks. It was impossible to get nearer, so Alan decided to lie quiet, on the chance of the ram coming within easy shooting distance. About a hundred and thirty yards off was a little shrub, and he determined to fire if the ram came in line with it. The oorial moved very slowly, cropping the grass all round them before advancing a step.

After a time, the ram had approached to within two hundred yards, when suddenly the sentry doe's head appeared above the ridge, and she trotted forward into view. Then she stood still, and looked steadfastly towards the broken country.

At first Alan was afraid that a puff of wind must have betrayed him ; and as the other does came trotting in like an outlying picket, he thought the herd was about to rush over the hill, and was half inclined to risk a shot. But they all stood still, with raised heads and ears pricked, gazing in the same direction as the doe. Looking round, Alan, to his intense disgust, saw a man, who must be one of his own

coolies, walking along the top of the broken ridges. Although fully a mile off, the bright sunlight behind marked him out, a distinct black dot against the skyline. Putting up the 200 yards sight, Alan determined to wait no longer, when one doe began to trot towards him, and then the whole herd moved slowly in the same direction. They evidently meant to go round the shoulder of the hill, and to do so must pass within a hundred yards of the rocks. The leading doe broke into a canter, and the rest following her, swept past, the ram last but one. Although going fast, he was barely a hundred yards off, and Alan, drawing a bead in front of his shoulder, had the satisfaction of seeing him roll head over heels like a rabbit. He ran forward ready to give another shot; but it was not required—the ram lay stone dead.

It was a young buck, with horns only eighteen inches long, but in good condition and very fat. By the time Rahman and the coolies arrived, it would be impossible even for *them* to pretend that a spark of life remained. So Alan thought he would try to save the meat, and see if they thought *his* performing the *halāl* was sufficient. When Rahman at last came up, followed by the coolies, puffing and blowing, he was delighted to see the dead ram, and without the slightest touch of jealousy that it had been killed without his assistance. He regretted however that, the ram not being *halālled*,



the meat would be wasted. Alan took him on one side, so that the coolies should not hear, and assured him that the halāl had been done in the most orthodox fashion, so hoped the Mussulman lōg would not object to it as food.

Rahman had no particular scruples for himself; and said certainly a Christian was not an idolater, still he feared one could not perform a Mahometan rite. He was sure none of these Punjābi Mahometans would eat the flesh. If he (Rahman) did, his co-religionists, who here are very bigoted, would be scandalised, and consider him an unbeliever.

We had a haunch for our dinner the next day. It was excellent, just like four-year-old Southdown mutton. But except our two Hindoo servants, none of the others would eat a bit of the ram.

December 19th.—Our time in these hills is now drawing to a close. The next two months we intend to devote to Rajputana, and every day is allotted to visits to different States. *En route*, we have promised to stay with the Lieutenant-Governor at Lahore, and are due there on Christmas Eve. We decide therefore to return by Pail to the hills below Nurpoor, which are a sort of preserve of the Salt Range officials, and conveniently situated only a day's journey from the railway.

Pail is a very long march, nearly twenty miles

across the hills. The camel-men say the road is too steep and rocky for their animals, and they must take an easier road, which is of course longer. So we sent them on with all the heavy baggage yesterday evening, and hired coolies to carry the tent and kit we are obliged to keep for the night by the shorter path across the hills.

It was late last night before I got to sleep, for the noise the camels make whilst being loaded is awful. They scream and roar, grunt and groan, like a menagerie of wild beasts at feeding time. Why they are called "patient" I could never understand. In reality they are most spiteful animals, and whilst being loaded not only complain loudly in their own fashion but snap and bite at everybody within reach.

If they do no more, it is only because out of their extreme stupidity they have been unable to evolve more practical means of displaying their impatience. The camel-men consider it due to their dignity not to make less noise than their beasts, and occasionally burst into fearful yells, varied by what I take to be a string of strange Punjābi oaths, whenever a camel attempts to get up, or turns his head to expostulate with his loader.

We ourselves started at daybreak : the track at first very bad, winding round, and in and out of ravines, without appearing to get much "farrarder." After about



three hours' ride we got to the hills, and then commenced a tedious climb over bare steep rocks, with apparently little foothold.

But our unshod little horses are wonderful! They never put a foot wrong. My pony climbed like a monkey, and it was all I could do to keep from slipping over his tail. The saddle shifted back several times, and had to be taken off and readjusted.

When the top was gained, we came on a fairly flat plain, and, following a good bridle path, reached Pail late in the evening. We found the camels already arrived and one of the tents up. This was lucky, for threatening clouds have been banking up for the last two or three days, and just after dark a drizzle set in, which ended in a perfect deluge of rain.

Tuesday.—The rain coming down in torrents! Wet weather is, to say the least, unpleasant in a little hill tent. The thin canvas soaks with water like a sponge, and though it does not actually drip inside, if anything is left leaning against the sides, or you touch the top with your head, a perfect stream of water trickles down. The sticky loam outside is ankle-deep in mud; and, until a ditch was dug round the tents, little puddles formed within, and threatened a universal inundation. My white umbrella is our only protection going from one tent to another. We are actually in the clouds. Dense masses



of mist surround us, and roll along almost touching the ground. It is quite useless to go out shooting, for you cannot see twenty yards before you. I sat all the morning wrapped in rugs, with my feet on a hot-water bottle, and managed to keep warm; but the poor servants look miserable and half frozen.

The Lumbardar (head-man of the village) called after breakfast, and offered us the shelter of a house. But only stern necessity could drive one to enter a native village, much less a house. Towards evening this necessity arose, for the rain became a deluge, and we were washed out of our tents; so, saddling our horses, we rode to the village. To enter the serai we had to pass through an outer shed which served as kitchen, then into a muddy yard, at the further end of which was the living house, consisting of one large room. There were no windows, only a few holes in the walls, now boarded up, and an open timber roof over the mud floor. In the middle of the room was a great iron pot filled with red-hot charcoal. The half-naked native squatted beside it looked like a pantomime demon, as he blew up the fire with bellows of inflated sheep-skin. The glare of the embers and a tiny native light (a bit of cotton floating in oil) just made the darkness visible. Part of the room had been hastily swept for us, but all around it was thick with the dust of ages. The brazier had to



be shifted occasionally, to escape the drip of water through the leaky roof, but we were comparatively dry and warm, and it was not till dinner was nearly ready that our troubles began. I had just brushed away an insect which in the darkness I thought was a big spider, when Alan called out that he was stung by something, which turned out to be a large yellow hornet. Another one, bigger and yellower, dropped from the ceiling as the ayah ran up with the lantern. And, looking above, the walls and roof were festooned with hundreds of venomous-looking insects, who, warmed into life by our fire, dropped one by one on the floor, and crawled about in a half-torpid state until thawed enough to fly.

Now commenced a brisk slaughter, all hands busily engaged with shoes and slippers. For half an hour we worked hard; but as we could not get at the myriads on the roof, the hornets did not seem to be appreciably diminished in numbers. At last one crawled over my ankle and bit me through the thick stocking; and the ayah at the same time unearthing a small scorpion, I gave in. Alan, having found half a dozen hornets under the pillow of his bed, and been stung a second time, agreed with me; and after a hurried, hornet-haunted dinner, we decided to return to our tents.

The Lumbardar, hearing of our intention, came back

hastily to say he would be eternally disgraced if we left his house to go out in the rain. "Would we try another house?" and to spare his feelings we consented. A native village is not a nice place to walk in by day, and at night—especially a wet night—it is unspeakable. Picking our way through the filth of the yard, we groped through the kitchen, where our shikaris and coolies rolled in blankets were asleep round the fire. Then along a narrow dirty lane, through which a stream resembling an open sewer now ran. At the end of this was the house, consisting of one room opening into the street. It was however nice and clean, the white walls painted native-fashion with soldiers and processions, and the door and shutters of carved teak. We went straight to bed, slightly uncertain whether the house was a tomb or a private temple.

Wednesday.—The rain has gone, and the sun is endeavouring to struggle through the fog-like clouds which still shroud us. I was obliged to dress with door and windows closed, for we evidently excited considerable interest in the village, and in the street outside were several mothers of families who had brought their numerous offspring to have a peep, I suppose on the same principle that the schoolmistress took her girls to the Duke of Wellington's funeral—that when they were old women they might be able to say they had seen him.

Later on we found the Lumbardar sitting on the steps. Alan thought it was out of politeness, and begged him not to wait. He said gently that his business detained him; and after some cross-examination we discovered our home was his office, and that he was transacting the village work on the steps.

Our breakfast now arrived in procession from the kitchen at the other end of the lane; and it was funny to see Santan, in spotless white costume, struggling to keep it and the dishes clean from the knee-deep mud. The ayah simply tucked her skirts up to her knees, and seemed quite in her element wading with bare feet and legs through the black slush.

There was plenty to observe from our door. The women, with red water-jars piled two or three high on their heads, went past in chattering troops to the well. Occasionally came little black donkeys, carrying bigger jars, slung on either side. Then flocks of goats and sheep going to graze, filing out of their masters' houses, where apparently, like Paddy's pigs, they pass the night.

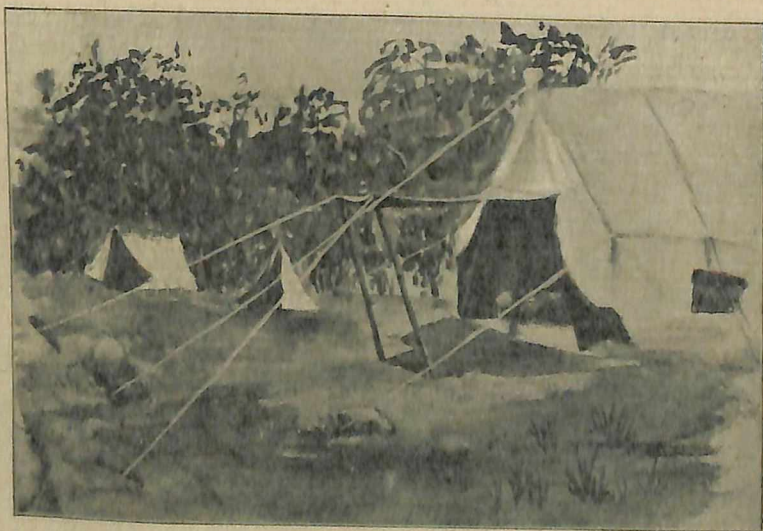


GOING TO THE WELL.

An observant little crowd of children are still outside, and they seem hurt when the increasing heat of the sun brings out more strongly the many and varied odours of the town, and hastens our return to camp. Some one

has observed about India that everything has its own particular smell—flowers excepted; and he is right.

The rain was evidently over, and we were glad to get back to our tents, which are pitched about half a mile off, in a charming spot surrounded by trees. The town we have just left, nestling at the foot of its hill, makes a picturesque background, and its little white houses look



"OUR CAMP IS NEAR A LARGE WELL."

quite clean and pretty. "Distance lends enchantment to the view," and to the smell also.

Our camp is near a large well, and all day long streams of women, boys, and donkeys come for water. The bheestie seems an admirer of *le beau sexe*, and passes great part of his time filling their earthenware water-jars. Just beyond, the drainage of the well forms a

small pond, in which our clothes are being washed. From the door of my tent I have a capital view of the proceedings, and discover the Indian washerman's method of getting up fine linen. It is very simple! He lays the garment on a big stone in the water, and beats it with another nearly as big, until the buttons begin to come off—then he knows it is done. It reminds me of the cooking recipes in a lady's newspaper! "When the sugar has arrived at crackling point it is done," and so is the garment, which is then handed over to the dhurzi to be repaired. By the time it has left his hands it is generally dirty enough to return to the washerman's.





CHAPTER IX.

A Punjabi shikari—Mahomet's strategy—Nurpoor—The Salt Revenue officer—A salt neighbourhood—After the oorial—Loading the camels—A farcical comedy in three acts—The ayah's courage of despair—A "bobbery" beast—Lilla railway station—"Merry Christmas, sare"—Platelayer sahib—The fatted calf—A funny railway story of a mid-day pill—Lahore—The Maharaja of Kuparthala—Sir Dennis Fitzpatrick—The Lahore "week"—Polo—The Maharaja of Putiala's team—Our camel carriage—Hunting the boar—Coursing with cheetahs—Amritza—The Golden Temple—A native carpet factory—Delhi—The fort—The Pearl Mosque—The Jumma Musjid.

THE Punjabi shikari, Nur Mahomet by name, arrived last night. He seems an intelligent man, and, like all his kind, was amply supplied with "chits." Alan went out with him after breakfast, accompanied by Rahman, who is curious to learn Mahomet's system of shikar.

They were not long before they saw a herd of oorial grazing about a mile off. Two or three does were as usual on sentry, and as usual also, saw them as soon as they were seen themselves. The herd, again as usual, began to move away, when Mahomet's strategy came into play. Seizing his stick with both hands, he commenced to thresh the bushes as if he were cutting wood; occasion-

ally breaking off small branches and collecting them into bundles. We followed his example; and the oorial, no doubt taking us to be village woodcutters, after a few suspicious glances settled down again to graze. We pretended to work hard for about a quarter of an hour, when,



HEAD OF OORIAL, SHOT AT NURPOOR.

the oorial seeming to be quite reassured, Mahomet and I placed our bundles of wood on our heads and slowly retired by the road we had come, Mahomet telling the others not to leave the place, and to continue to make a pretence of cutting grass and wood.

A turn of the road soon hid us from sight, and then

we settled our plan for a stalk. The oorial were on the top of a small range of hills, and not easy to approach, for between us lay a flat plain full in their view. We had to make a long circuit to get the wind, and cross beyond the open space. Then the slope of the hills concealed us, and, creeping and crawling through broken ground and good cover, we got to within sixty yards of the herd. There were two rams, one, the nearest, a splendid fellow with horns at least twenty-nine inches long.

As he stood still, looking quietly before him, I took, as I thought, a steady shot at his shoulder, and missed him clean. He was over the ridge before I could fire the second barrel.

There was nothing to do but to sit down and speculate how so easy a chance could have been missed. The "man of the world" advanced several consoling theories; but the less courtly Mahomet could not conceal his disgust and disappointment. Of course we never got another chance, and returned to camp before dark.

It was a bad beginning for our new shikari, and it would never do to let him have a mean opinion of our shooting. Shikaris—like the old story of the cockney's pointer running home—soon lose heart. Alan is really a good rifle shot; so, partly for practice, partly to reassure Mahomet, he put three empty bottles on a rock at a hundred yards' distance. The first two he broke right and



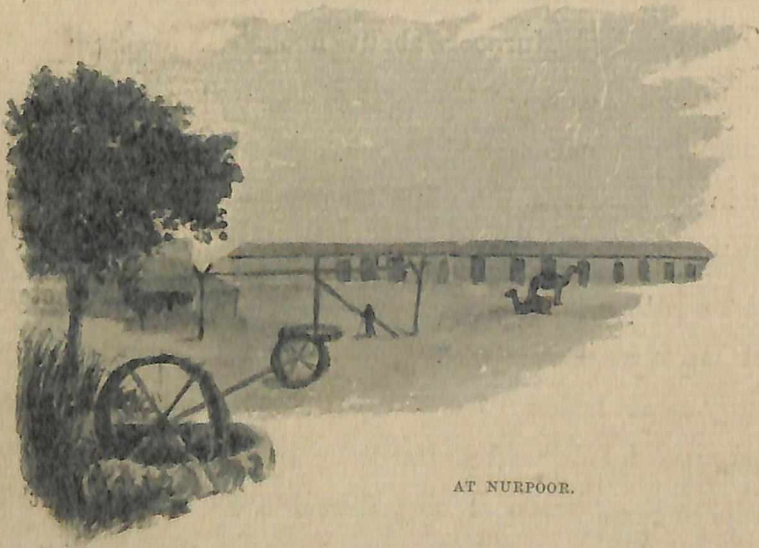
left, and hit the rock just underneath the third. Mahomet seemed better pleased, but was not to be consoled. "Wah, wah!" he kept repeating; "any of those shots would have killed that oorial dead."

Thursday.—We sent off our baggage and camels in the middle of the night to a valley below Nurpoor. It is a long march, and I left with Rahman soon after sunrise. Alan went with Mahomet to shoot his way across the hills.

We reached Nurpoor about noon. Just outside the village was a small bungalow belonging to the Salt Revenue officer, who was standing at the door and invited me in to luncheon. He has no companion, and for three months has not spoken a word of English, or seen any one but natives. Poor boy!—for he is only about nineteen, and had come to India straight from school—he was very cheery, and looking forward to passing his three days' Christmas holiday at the salt mines at Khewra. There are four Englishmen at that dismal little station, but to him it was apparently a little Paris of gaiety and pleasure. Here his only friends are a number of fox-terriers, and we went round to pay them a visit. Every dog was clothed in a little woollen coat to keep it from catching cold. With imported dogs I believe this is absolutely necessary; but it looks so funny! On our way back to the house we passed the native cook-shed, and I wish I had had the strength of mind to turn my head the other

way. The dirtiest Irish shanty was clean compared with it; round the fire several chickens and village dogs were amicably seated, and a goat warmed himself at the steam from a kettle.

From Nurpoor we left the hills, descending by a steep zigzag path down a ravine where leopards are sometimes found. At the foot we came to a little salt mine, around



AT NURPOOR.

which were a crowd of coolies waiting to load their little black donkeys with salt. Then we passed through a narrow, picturesque gorge, with high red precipices on either side, and here and there a white waterfall of dried-up salt pouring out of the cliff. At every point of vantage is a small guard-house of the revenue police; and I believe they form a cordon entirely round the salt district.



Everything is salt ; even the air has the peculiar salt smell of the seaside. The path along the bottom of the ravine fords the stream some twenty or thirty times. My horse sniffed the water, but would not drink ; it was salt as brine. Almost at the end of the pass a small spring of fresh water wells out of the rock, and near here we pitched our tents. Whilst we were waiting, a herd of oorial appeared for a moment on the hill above. They quickly vanished, and were probably coming with the intention of drinking at the spring.

Just as the sun was setting we heard a shot fired on the hills and then, shortly after dark, Alan arrived, very pleased at having killed a fine ram. They brought the head, with horns twenty-eight inches long, but it was so dark and the descent so bad that they had to leave the body behind. This was unfortunate, for with the exception of the usual stringy fowl we had no fresh meat to-night.

Alan and Mahomet had had a very long day, and although they saw two or three lots of oorial, not a single ram for a long time worth shooting. They were actually beginning to descend the hills towards where they knew our camp ought to be when Mahomet spied out a herd of oorial some distance below. They were feeding under a small cliff, and had luckily not seen them. With the glasses Alan made out three rams, one, the patriarch of the herd, an enormous fellow, almost white with age.



The stalk was very easy, and they were able to walk almost to the edge of the precipice. Directly beneath, standing by himself, was the father of the flock, and about fifty yards further were two fine rams, one with horns slightly bigger than the other. Mahomet kept reminding Alan, "Remember he is below you; don't fire over him"—which, by the way, a tyro aiming downhill is very apt to do—and then began to mutter prayers to Allah to grant him that big beast. Whether owing to his prayers or not, Alan dropped the patriarch dead in his tracks, and with the second barrel hit the bigger of the other rams as he galloped away. Unfortunately he was hit in the haunch, and although they tracked the blood for some distance, it soon grew so dark they were compelled to turn back.

Mahomet was so delighted that he volunteered to carry the patriarch back to camp, but thought better of it after a short struggle in the dark. So, cutting off the head, they hung the body on a small thorn tree, to save it from the jackals, whose melancholy howls we could hear all round.

The next day we went in search of the wounded ram, but although we followed his track downhill for over a mile, we never saw him again. In the daytime an orial hit behind is almost certain to be bagged. Having lost the power to get up hill, they are compelled to descend, or keep on level ground, and can be run down by an active man.



The next two days we got nothing, but on our last morning here Alan saw a young ram and two does trotting over the top of a ridge just as he reached its foot. Climbing the hill as quickly as possible, he got to the top just in time to see the oorial passing slowly over the next ridge, and fully two hundred and fifty yards away. They evidently meant to be off, so Alan took a long shot at the ram, and by good luck hit it high up on the hind leg. The does fled over the hill, but the wounded ram turned and went straight towards the valley. Mahomet rushed down the hill after him, and Alan ran across to try and cut him off. The ram gained the valley, and then, unable to descend further, followed the road which connects the Guard-houses of the Salt Police. Just in front was one of their posts, and the policemen, hearing the shot, turned out. Seeing the wounded ram running towards them, they formed a line, and caught and halalled him before Alan and Mahomet could come up. These Salt Police are a sporting lot of men, and were quite delighted when Alan gave them a small bucksheesh and told them to keep half of the ram.

Nurpoor.—Our camels went off to the railway station early this morning, and for the last time I watched them being loaded. No one who has not witnessed this process can conceive what a business it is. First, the beast is made to sit down, which it does only after much insistence,

groaning heavily all the while. Then a rope net is thrown over and held by the men so that two pockets are formed, one on either side of his back. As there are no girths or fastenings, the success of the undertaking depends on the weight of the two loads being tolerably equal. The camel-men, however, seem to go entirely by sight, and not by weight, and take a fiendish pleasure in putting the most fragile things at the bottom. On these they pile all the heavier boxes; so, provided only that you are not personally interested, camel packing is an amusing operation to watch.

To-day they began with Alan's cartridge-box. It looks like a leather dressing-case, so strikes them as an excellent foundation. That it weighs half-a-hundredweight seems of no consequence, particularly when to balance it a tin-kettle is placed in the opposite pocket. Then tents and boxes are heaped up, and the whole load securely bound together with cords. The camel is now permitted to rise; and gets up to find one load swinging under him, whilst he gains additional height, if not dignity, by the other being perched on his hump.

By the calm way the men sit down and contemplate their work, you would fancy that this was [precisely the effect they intended to produce. In reality they are face to face with a contingency they feel utterly unable to meet. To make the animal sit down again would be to smash



the load under him, whilst mounting on the roof seems the only way of moving the top load. The patient camel himself eventually solves the problem by kicking off the first and bucking down the second.

At the next attempt the cartridge-box is tied alone on one side, whilst all our bedding is piled up on the other. The effect is certainly odd, but the loads balance fairly well, and I should have passed it. Not so the camel-men; and they improve matters by putting the cartridge-box inside another roll of bedding. Camels two, three, four, and five, are then slowly packed, all subject to various little accidents, repacking, and other complications. The camel-men have only been at the trade all their lives, as have their fathers and grandfathers back to the time of Noah; so perhaps they cannot be expected to have yet mastered the secret of packing their animals. In other respects, generations of companionship have produced strange similarities of temperament. "Who drives fat oxen should himself be fat:" and the camel-man has imbibed much of the obstinate stupidity of his camel.

We met a young soldier at Lahore the other day who told us he was there to receive transport instructions. When I asked what he was learning, he said "to pack camels." I felt inclined to quote Arthur Cecil in *The Cabinet Minister*: "If you wish to keep temper, conscience, and honour unimpaired, don't be a politician!"



“Be a sailor, doctor, or even a lawyer, but don’t be a camel-man.”

On camel No. 6 all the kitchen things are put, with the kitchen tent, and the ayah’s box: the latter evidently the last straw. For the camel suddenly rises, overturns his master, and shakes off his load, showering pots and pans over his four companions and their drivers. The ayah’s box alone remains, seemingly tied to his back by a hair; and we watch its fate with breathless interest. Finding himself free, the camel rushes at a loaded brother and kicks him, sends another at a gallop down hill, bites the nearest man, and finally starts off towards the jungle with a howl of triumph.

The ayah, with the courage of despair, flings herself in his path, seizes his nose-rope, and brings him to a standstill, thereby producing precisely the catastrophe she has sought to avert. For the sudden halt loosens the hair, and her box rolls heavily down the mountain scattering her belongings on every side.

When these are recovered and repacked, the camel is persuaded to sit down again and his two forelegs tied together. His hind legs are then fastened, and his master stands on his head—the camel’s I mean—and at last the load is bound on and adjusted. This beast, I am informed, is often “bobbery” when being loaded. The Hindustani word is idiomatic, but seems to me to describe his behaviour mildly.



One would think we might now start. Not a bit of it! The careful "man of the world," having just finished his breakfast, strolls up and demands where the Sahib's cartridge-box has been put. He is too conscientious to take their word, and insists upon it being shown to him. This entails a general search and unpacking, for after the late excitement it has slipped their memories which beast carries it. At last the box is found, and Rahman carries it away with an air of having done his duty.

Now, I think, we shall at last get off, but Rahman, having taken out the few cartridges he wants, calmly suggests that the box should be re-fastened to its camel. I feel obliged to interfere, and telling the ayah to mount in her pannier, we place the cartridge-box to balance her on the other side.

After this brief description of the packing of only six animals, I am not surprised to hear that it takes a quarter-master-general and his assistants all their time to get the camels of their column under way. When at length they are started, if they are sure, they are decidedly slow, for their utmost pace does not exceed two miles an hour. Giving our camels a few miles start, I cantered in pursuit, first overtaking the ayah, nearly in hysterics, and horribly frightened that the cartridges are going to "make fire and kill." Nevertheless, she prefers the uncertainty of a sudden and violent death to the certainty of walking.



Somehow we have missed a day. It shows how pleasantly time passes in this wild life. We had accepted an invitation to pass Christmas with Sir Dennis Fitzpatrick at Lahore. But to our surprise, on arriving at Lilla railway station this morning, we were greeted by the Baboo with "Merry Christmas, Sare!" We thanked him, and said he had anticipated the day. But he clearly proved it was not himself, but we, who were out of our reckoning.

There is no traveller's bungalow or waiting-room at Lilla, and it would be some hours before our servants and baggage arrived, so the Baboo suggested that we should go to the "Platelayer sahib's" house. We could not make out who went by this strange designation; but presently an Englishman who came up turned out to be the gentleman in question, and was in reality the superintendent of this section of the line. He very kindly asked us to join his Christmas dinner. We had a most excellent plum-pudding, and our host insisted on opening a tin of preserved salmon, which in India is the equivalent to "killing the fatted calf."

Our train takes thirteen hours to do the ninety-five miles to Lahore—rather over seven miles an hour! This certainly includes a long stoppage at a junction; but on these little branch lines the speed never at any time exceeds twelve or thirteen miles an hour, and the guards

and drivers seem to stop and go on pretty much as they like. Our host told us a story which if it was not true might very easily have been so.

An Eurasian guard—nearly all the guards are half-castes—was hailed by a respectable-looking old man of



A NATIVE WATER-WHEEL.

the same race travelling in a second-class carriage, who begged him to awaken him should he be asleep when they got to (we will say) Lilla station. After about a couple of hours' journey the train arrived. But the guard completely forgot his compatriot's request, and it only flashed across his mind when they had steamed a mile or so beyond



the station. Well, thought the good-natured guard, the poor old gentleman shall not be put to inconvenience through my forgetfulness; and signalling to the driver to stop the train, he asked him to run back to Lilla. The engine driver made no difficulty, and they presently returned to that station.

"Here we are, sir—Lilla!" shouted the guard, waking the passenger up.

"Thank you very much," said the old man, smiling benignly, but not attempting to move.

"I said we had arrived at Lilla," repeated the guard, thinking him only half awake.

"Yes, yes; I am so obliged for your waking me," he replied, fumbling in his pockets.

"Well, we can't wait all day; please look sharp and get out," cried the slightly annoyed guard.

"Get out? Dear me!" exclaimed the nice old man, "I don't want to get out. My wife told me to be sure to wake up at Lilla, because it would be just the time to take my mid-day pill!"

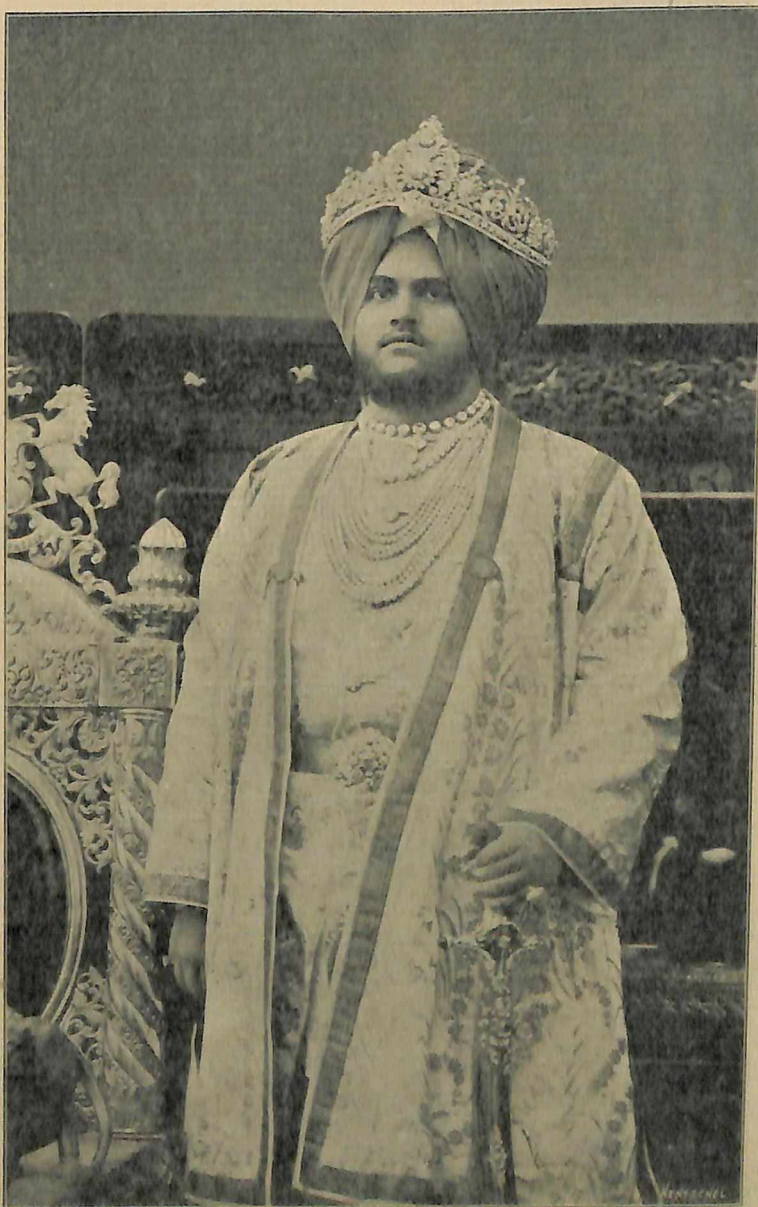
The Guard: ". !!!"

When our engine steamed into the station it was decorated with evergreens, and had a huge "Merry Christmas" in flowers in front, the work of a dusky heathen driver and his still duskier assistant.

We are due at Lahore about four o'clock to-morrow

THE MAHARAJA OF KAPURTHALA.

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HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJA OF KAPURTHALA.



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morning. But to get a couple of hours' more sleep, we arranged that our reserved carriage should be shunted on arrival. Towards what seemed the middle of the night we heard the train run into Lahore station, and congratulated ourselves on not having to turn out. Shortly afterwards we felt our carriage moving on with the train, and got up in time to see our surprised servants huddled together on the platform, whilst we were rushed off with the Calcutta Mail.

At Mian Mir station, only a few miles further, we begged to have our carriage taken off, but were told by the Baboo in charge that it could not be done; "for," he explained gravely, "yours is a composite carriage, and although your half is certainly marked 'to remain at Lahore,' the other half is for Calcutta." At the next station they assured us they could not meddle with the mail; and finally we were landed at Amritza at 8 A.M., with no luggage or servants. By the greatest good luck we *had* our clothes; but it was only because the ayah had forgotten to take them away.

By twelve o'clock we got back to Lahore, and drove to Government House, very glad to return to civilization for a few days. In the afternoon the Maharaja of Kapurthala came to call on Sir Dennis, and very kindly offered Alan a day's pig-sticking in his State, the capital of which is about five hours by rail from Lahore.



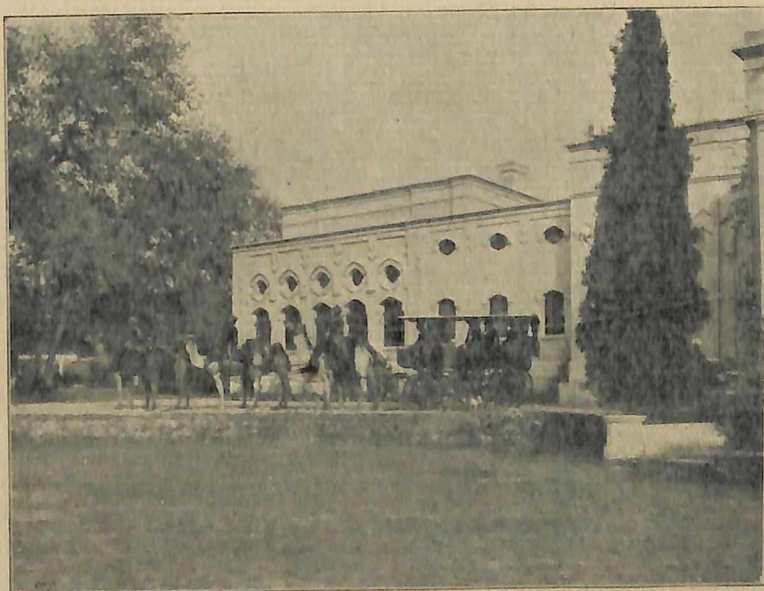
December 27th.—Alan and Mr. Davis—Sir Dennis's Private Secretary—started for Kapurthala. The rest of our party went to the races. This is the Lahore "week." Everybody for miles round comes in for it, and what with races, polo tournaments, gymkhanas and balls, our time was fully occupied.

There appear to be no bookmakers on the Lahore race-course, and betting is carried on by a "totalisator," which seems the same as the French *pari-mutuel*, the whole of the amount betted being divided amongst the backers of the winning horse. The excitement was great when an outsider called "Charing Cross" won. Only two had backed him, and five hundred rupees were divided between them.

In the evening we went to a ball at the Montgomery Hall, a fine building with a perfect dancing floor made of teak boards set edgeways.

Wednesday.—We went to the final polo match of the tournament, which was won by the Maharaja of Putiala's team. They are admirably mounted, and the Maharaja is a very fine player; but by far the best of any one was the new member of the Putiala team. He had been a native officer in one of our Indian cavalry regiments, and was well known as one of the best polo players in the country, and noted for his quick play and unerring eye. Putiala, determined to have the best team in India, "bought" him by making him colonel of his body-guard.

Thursday.—We went in state to the races in a great camel carriage, which was most imposing!—a very large barouche drawn by four camels with scarlet trappings and leopard-skin housings, each camel ridden by a man in scarlet and gold livery. In front and behind trotted the native lancer escort in their picturesque dress. The whole effect



"WE WENT IN STATE TO THE RACES IN A GREAT CAMEL CARRIAGE."

was very pretty, and would have created some excitement in Piccadilly.

Alan returned this evening, and had had a capital day's sport at Kapurthala. They speared one boar; and then had the cheetahs (hunting leopards) out, who ran down and killed two black buck (the Indian antelope). This coursing



with cheetahs is rather poor sport. The leopard, hooded, is taken in a bullock-cart as near as possible to the herd of antelopes; then unhooded and loosed. He either catches the buck in two or three tremendous bounds, or, if he fails, lies down and sulks. His keeper then runs up and pacifies him with that universal food of men and beasts—the Indian fowl. It began to pour with rain to-night again, and continued steadily all the next day.

Saturday.—We left Lahore by the 8 A.M. train, arrived at Amritza about noon, and drove at once to the Golden Temple. This city might almost be called the Sikh Rome, although those Hindoo Puritans are a decade of centuries after the Popes. At all events, it is their Holy City, and the Golden Temple the Holy of Holies. Even European visitors are required to take off their shoes before entering, and this rule is very properly sanctioned by the Indian Government, which everywhere impartially respects its subjects' religious prejudices.

The Temple, built in a tank, in the middle of a large open square, is not a striking specimen of Hindoo architecture, and I fancy owes much of its celebrity to the glamour of its name. I regret to record that the gold is pinchbeck, or rather the yellow plates with which roof and walls are covered are copper gilt.

This little carping criticism disposed of, I cannot find words to describe the oriental beauty of the scene. We can



hardly elbow our way through the dense crowd. Devotees and pilgrims, bunniahs and coolies jostle one another round the square. Above and at their feet flutter hundreds of sacred pigeons, so tame that they hardly take the trouble to hop on one side as you pass. The background is shut in by the palaces of Sikh potentates; and although somewhat in decay, their dingy walls, and even the green stagnant water in the tank, all tend to show off the shining brightness of the shrine.

After this we went to inspect the carpet manufactory of Davey Sai Chamba Lall. The workers, I believe, are, or are descended from, weavers of that once important industry—Kashmir shawls. The carpets made here are world-known, and beautiful in design and texture, but I regretted to see how largely aniline dyes and modern half-tone shades had supplanted the old bright characteristic eastern colours. Chamba Lall shared our regret, but said he was compelled to follow the taste of the large Paris and London retailers who are his chief customers. His showrooms are full of many beautiful woven and embroidered goods, and I recommend a visit to all with well-filled purses.

We left for Delhi by the 5 P.M. mail, and arrived there about nine o'clock the next morning. The tourist season has now set in. All the hotels were full, and we had some difficulty in getting rooms. Whether from lack of enterprise or capital I do not know, but the hotels all

RIFLE AND SPEAR WITH THE RAJPOOTS.

over India are very inferior. At Delhi some of them are the worst we have yet seen.

After breakfast we drove to the fort, which is built of red stone, and entered under an archway leading through an arcade lined with fruit-sellers' stalls. This citadel, like the old castles of European kings, was a palace as well as a fortress, and contains many beautiful halls and rooms. The Public Hall of Audience is a large vaulted roof, supported by three rows of red sandstone pillars. It is open to the winds on all sides but one, where stands the white marble-canopied throne.

The Private Hall of Audience is of white marble, inlaid with scrolls of mosaic flowers of agate, jasper, and other coloured stones. One side has windows, screened with marble tracery of beautiful design, through the open-work of which can be seen the red walls of the citadel.

Within the fort is the little "Moti Musjid," or Pearl Mosque. It is a gem of dazzling white marble, entirely without colouring, or any ornamentation except its exquisite carving and lace-like marble lattices. But the whole is as delicate and finely executed as a piece of jewellery.

The Jumma Musjid, outside, at once catches the eye, from its size and imposing position. The site is itself slightly above the surrounding level, and this height is increased by a huge platform of stone approached by three



flights of steps. On this stands the mosque,—a gigantic statue on a colossal pedestal. Within, sacred relics of the Prophet are enshrined, amongst them a hair of his beard. This is shown with much ceremony, and is set in a jewelled handle. It strongly resembles a bristle out of a clothes-brush.

In the afternoon we went to the Kootab, a drive of about ten miles from Delhi. Nearly all the way the road is dotted with mosques and ancient ruins. I will not attempt to describe the many interesting and beautiful buildings with which Delhi abounds, and shall say nothing of this old tower two hundred and forty feet high—except that I did not take the advice of the guide-books and ascend it. Close by stands a celebrated iron pillar, fifteen hundred years old, and which, because it is loose (*dihla*) in the ground, is said to have given Delhi its name.

In the evening we went to the shop of Tellery, an Austrian, who does a large trade in Indian art manufactures and curios. Unfortunately his best things were said to have been sent to the Chicago Exhibition, and the remainder seemed principally of that conventional class of goods manufactured for sale to the traveller, which you see in every Oriental bazar.

Monday.—We have sent our tents and heavy luggage to Aligarh, whence we intend to march to Ulwar

viâ Muttra and Deeg. It will take the servants a week or more to make the necessary arrangements. Meanwhile we are going on a visit to the Maharaja of Dholpur. His State is situated to the south of Agra, and about ten hours by rail from Delhi.



CHAPTER X.

Dholpur—Visit to the Maharaja—The Raja of Feridkôt—Hospitality in the East—The Maharaja as a sportsman—Dholpur the Leicestershire of India—A day's shooting—A pig-sticking experience—The Maharaja's stable and kennels—The old palace and city—A tye-khana—Black buck—The Maharaja's new house—*Argot* of the "Pink 'un"—The old fort—Agra jail—A model prison—The Secundra Bagh—The Taj—A dream that might become a nightmare—A dear little room—Jehangir's palace—Aligarh and its associations—A native dog-fancier—*En route* to Muttra—An antelope's sagacity—Duck's liver—A slight misunderstanding—After antelope—The black buck—The richest man in India.

WE left early this morning, and arrived at Dholpur at 4 P.M., after an uninteresting journey through a country as flat as a billiard table, without a hill or even mound as far as the eye could see. On the platform at Dholpur were drawn up a guard of honour and military band, which struck up "God Save the Queen" as the train stopped. Naturally this honour was not intended for us, and we hear that the son of the Raja of Feridkôt is a passenger by our train, and also on a visit to Dholpur. The Maharaja of Dholpur's English private secretary met us at the station and drove us to his house, where we are to stay, as the Feridkôt Raja

has the usual guests' house. A quarrel with his father has driven him from his home, and he has come here quite uninvited ; nevertheless he is made a welcome guest.

Hospitality in the East is almost a tenet of religion, and must be rather a burden on stay-at-home Rajas, who do not get their *quid pro quo*. Not only have the guest and his numerous followers to be entertained, but it is the etiquette—and a custom which has not yet been broken through—to allow the visitor a daily sum of pocket-money. This amount is fixed in proportion to his rank. I believe Feridkôt, junior, gets two hundred and fifty rupees a day. Had his father paid a visit, the sum would have been double. And on departure the cost of a special train home is also paid by the host.

The Maharaja of Dholpur came to pay us a visit in the evening, and seems a quiet, gentlemanlike young man. He dresses in the latest English fashion, with irreproachable boots and breeches, and altogether is better turned out than many of our smart young men.

Since a boy he has been devoted to hunting, and commenced with a pack of English foxhounds. In a bad-scenting unenclosed country this is poor fun, which he soon found out, and took to *the* sport of India—pig-sticking. By carefully preserving wild boar he has made Dholpur the Leicestershire of India, and although pig may not be

so plentiful as at Jhodpore, it is a far more difficult country to ride over. The Maharaja is perhaps the best rider after



THEIR HIGHNESSES THE MAHARAJA OF PUTIALA, THE MAHARAJA OF KAPURTHALA,
AND THE MAHARAJA RANA OF DHOLPUR.

pig in India, and has won many "Tent Club" cups, even against our hardest men. Of course unlimited money and the best horses it can buy, added to a light lithe figure,



go for much; but he is besides an extremely fine horseman, and would be in the first flight over any country.

I ought to explain that a "Tent Club" cup corresponds somewhat to a coursing cup in England—riders with spears representing the greyhounds. The competitors are told off to chase the boar by threes, and the one who gets "first spear" wins. The winners again ride against each other, until he who takes first spear in the last round wins the cup.

Tuesday.—The Maharaja called for Alan at daybreak to go out shooting. It was a dull morning, the country covered with a thick white mist, very like many a winter day in Essex. They rode out to a preserve of the Raja's, about twelve miles distant, where Alan shot four black buck and three neilghai—the large antelope called "blue bulls." I believe they could have shot any number of buck, for they are so preserved that a herd sometimes numbers four or five thousand.

The Maharaja, who is an excellent shot, has killed twenty-six in a few hours. But Alan thought it was rather like butchery, and was contented with shooting a few good heads. He returned alone, for the Maharaja had left him in order to pursue a wounded neilghai, which had taken refuge in a thick jungle.

After waiting some hours, the aide-de-camp and orderlies got rather uneasy, and set off to scour the country for their

master; who, however, returned alone in the afternoon. It appears that on leaving the jungle he took a wrong turn, deceived in the appearance of the country by the thick mist. After riding some distance he saw his mistake, and inquired his way of a peasant in a field. The countryman, looking at his costume, took him for an Englishman, and said, much to the Maharaja's amusement, "Oh! I suppose you are one of the Maharaja's guests. I hear he is shooting about here this morning. Well! I don't think much of you losing your way, topi-wallah (hat-wearer) though you are." One word to disclose who he was would have brought the peasant to his knees, but the Raja was too good-natured to undeceive him.

Wednesday.—We all went out pig-sticking this morning, and beat a jheel close by. I assisted, on an elephant, seated in a magnificent silver howdah. Several boar broke back, and our chances were not improved by the Feridkôt boy, who, although he does



DHOLPUR.

not ride, came out on an elephant in full English hunting costume. Followed on another elephant by an Italian musician he has picked up, they both calmly crossed right in front of the line of beaters.



At last a splendid gray boar broke, but in the wrong direction. They raced him hard for some distance, but he had too great a start, and finally beat them, getting safely away to the ravines by the river. The Maharaja asked us afterwards to go round his stable. He is very proud of his stud, and with reason, for it is almost perfect. We could hardly find a fault in any of the hundred and fifty horses which were paraded for our inspection. We next visited the kennels. Amongst many breeds of dogs he has some splendid Siberian wolf-hounds, somewhat similar in appearance to Scotch deerhounds, but half as big again. One Danish boarhound stood forty inches high, and looked as big as a pony. He always sleeps in the Maharaja's room, and will allow no one to enter until the keeper comes and takes him away. This dog is very fond of the Raja, who, however, told me that if he leaves the room he is obliged to take him out also. If left behind, the dog would not allow even him to enter again, and evidently considers that it is the room, not the Raja, that he is expected to guard.

Late last night a tent had to be pitched in our garden for Feridkôt's Italian pianoforte player. His master having taken umbrage at something he said, consigned him to the guard-room of the town. This might not quite count as a *casus belli* with Italy, still they thought it better to let the "enraged musician" out. When released he declared

himself afraid to return to his musical duties, so he is to be kept here until they return him to Calcutta.

Thursday we devoted to exploring the old palace and city, which, now deserted, is distant some miles from the modern town. We also went to see an ancient "tyekhana." This is an underground house, or more strictly a series of rooms, built below the earth, to get a little relief from the intense summer heat. Imagine a very large and



OLD GATE AND GARDEN, DHOLPUR.

deep masonry well, down which you descend by flights of stone steps. At some distance below the surface are rooms dug in the ground, with no openings except the doorways, on the staircase of the well. One room is only just above the level of the water at the bottom.

Alan went out nearly every day pig-sticking with the Raja, but it is too early yet for this sport. The old boars lie secluded by themselves apart from the sounders, and are difficult to find. One day they brought me a young black buck, which they had ridden after until it was so tired

they were able to catch it. It is such a pretty little thing, and not too frightened to drink milk out of an improvised feeding-bottle. They are said to be easily tamed, and I believe one Indian regiment has a full-grown buck which marches at the head of its band.

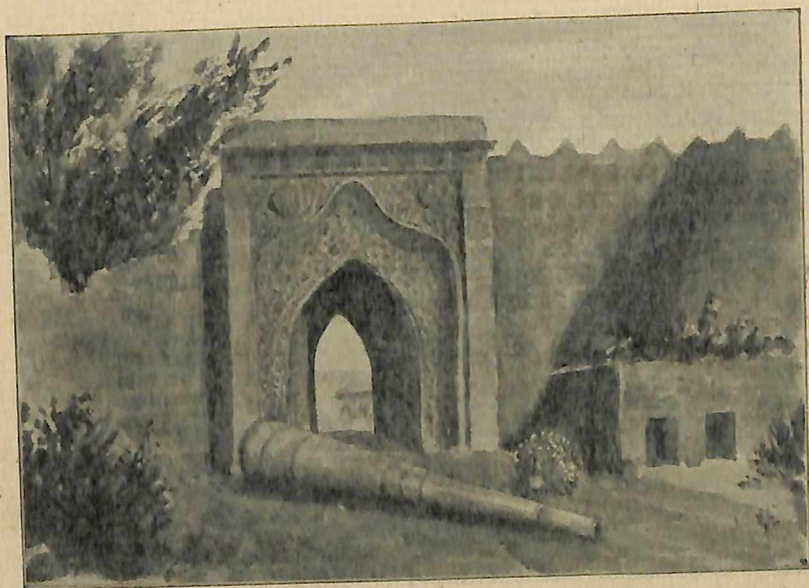
In the afternoon Alan went to see the Maharaja at his new house, which stands by itself on a hill, and is built on the model of a Governor or Commissioner's bungalow. It is connected by telephone with the Secretary's house. The posts and wires were at first placed on the *left* hand of the road going from the palace. But telegraph wires are favourite perches for the jays, and it would have been an extremely bad omen if the Raja should have seen a jay on the unlucky side. So the posts and wires were all taken down, and re-erected on the right of the road. All these young men are educated as well as an average English lad of the upper classes, and speak our language not only fluently, but with a knowledge of slang and the *argot* of the "pink 'un," which a British subaltern might envy. But the superstitions rooted for centuries are hard to eradicate, and continually crop up like weeds amongst modern cultivation. If any one should have the ill-luck to sneeze on his way out shooting or pig-sticking, he immediately returns home.

I drove to see the old fort, which is well worth a visit. It is fast becoming a ruin. The ravines cut out by the

THE OLD FORT, DHOLPUR.

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rains encroach on it every year more and more, and in places have already undermined the walls. There is a fine entrance gate still intact, and near it lies a rusty cannon some twenty feet long. Inside are the remains of a picturesque palace, and several old houses with beautifully carved façades. They are now tenantless, and



ANCIENT FORT, DHOLPUR.

deserted by all save the peacocks, who strut up and down, arrogant masters of the place.

January 6th, 1893.—We left Dholpur this morning for Agra. It is a journey of only thirty-five miles, but the mail train takes over two hours to accomplish it. In the afternoon we visited the Agra jail. It is not enough to say that like all Indian prisons this is a model one.



Everything is so clean, so comfortable, and so well arranged, that were I an Indian, I feel confident I should commit some fearful crime, to escape from my dirty native village into such a comparative Paradise of cleanly comfort.

The food is prepared by Brahmin prisoners. No caste can object to their cooking, and the enormous chappaties they were baking looked as appetising as I am sure they are indigestible. This jail was the first, or one of the first, to put its convicts to remunerative work, principally in the form of carpet-making. The carpets are as good, but do not seem cheaper, than those at Chamba Lall's manufactory in Lahore. But, when one remembers that the beautiful fabrics here are made by unskilled labour, what especially strikes one is the versatility and adaptability of the Indian native. Most of the convict workers are past their first youth, and come principally from the lowest classes—hewers of wood and drawers of water. Yet they quickly acquire this art, which, beyond the mechanical process, demands a certain amount of thought and skill.

The governor of the jail, who, as usual in India, is a medical man, very kindly took us round and explained the system of management. He agreed with us as to the modern colouring of the carpets, which generally is as *fade* as those at Amritza. They showed us two very large ones just finished for the German Emperor, which certainly had not this fault. And I trust their bright blues and



crude yellows will bring a little Indian sunshine into some sombre German Schloss.

Of course we visited the Secundra Bagh, I'tamud-daulah's tomb, and the many other beautiful buildings around Agra. But I will not insult the intelligence of my countrymen by trying to describe monuments they know from acquaintance or hearsay probably better than they do St. Paul's. It would be sheer folly if I attempted to picture the Taj. Taking it all in all, it is unique of its kind. But I cannot help thinking it owes too much to the minute perfection of its details: perhaps, also, to the glamour of a silver moon, or bright blue sky, and the fairylike background which they afford for its snowy marble. The jewel and its setting are in harmony! Londoners have sad experience how discordant these may sometimes be! Here, I can understand the Taj being called a "dream" in white marble. But popped down amongst our heterogeneous London monstrosities, or even contrasted with the classical regularity of Paris, it might easily become a "nightmare."

The Maharaja of Dholpur offered to lay us a dāk to Futtehpur Sikhri; but the horses were not ready on the appointed day, and unfortunately we could not wait. I can only hope that on another occasion I may visit Akbar's ruined city, on whose beauties men and books agree. I regret it the more, that the Moghul buildings of the Agra fort are to my mind the most interesting of its sights, and

I am told the architectural style of the Futtehpur palaces is very similar.

We had the advantage of being taken over the fort by a most intelligent warrant officer, to whom General Blood says it is almost a labour of love. It was quite delightful to escape the ordinary showman, and go round with one who took such a keen interest in the place, and was so well informed of its history. The usual native guide was not to be shaken off at first, and trotted behind, muttering his little set descriptions: "red marble," "black marble," "green stone," as he pointed them out, were evidently to his mind the principal objects of interest.

I cannot help mentioning one dear little room, opening off Shah Jehan's Hall of Audience. It is all painted with bright flowers, the floors and pillars white marble, the marble screens to its windows pierced and fretted like delicately-carved ivory. These open on the red walls of the citadel, above which the Taj gleams like frosted snow in the distance. The ceilings of the halls and principal rooms were originally richly coloured and gilt, but I suppose the expense of keeping them in decorative repair would be too great. Except a corner which was revived to give the Prince of Wales an idea of its past glories, the colours are everywhere faded or obliterated.

A yearly but insufficient sum is allowed for the maintenance of the *monuments historiques* of the Agra district.



The greater part of this amount has lately been devoted to the Taj, and the buildings in the fort have suffered accordingly. Part of Jehangir's palace is utilised as offices; the finest portion overlooking the river Jumna is untouched, but in a sad state of decay. The red sandstone of which it is built is fast crumbling, and the walls and colonnades are more or less in ruins. It stands on a commanding site, bordered by the bastioned river wall. This also is in a bad way, full of gaping rents, and bulging ominously outwards. Unless something is done, sooner or later it must topple over into the river, and bring down the Moghul palace in its fall.

Monday.—We left Agra by train, and arrived at Aligarh in time for luncheon, which our servants had ready waiting for us at the dāk bungalow. In the afternoon the Tehsildar called, and regretted he could not get horses until Wednesday, so we had to pass Tuesday here.

The neighbouring town goes by its ancient Hindoo name of Koil, but although undoubtedly of great antiquity, there is little of interest to see. It was at Aligarh, Scindiah organised his European drilled regiments, commanded by De Boigne, Perron, Thomas, and others. The fort is still in good preservation but uninteresting, and is in the style of fortification of the beginning of the century, with earthen ramparts and a wet ditch. Close by is Perron's house, in a lovely garden enclosed by lofty walls. The building,

a large two storied one, is now in ruins, and the garden neglected. In one corner a ryot lives, and cultivates part of the ground; but the flowers, the roses, jasmine, and gardenias have run wild, and are tangled together and matted in bushes like trees. It might have been the *Paradis* of the Abbé Mourét. The entrance is through a curious arched gateway with balconied rooms built over it; on either side are what once must have been guard-houses.



ALIGARH.

Over the gate Perron's name in Roman characters is still visible, and the date "1802."

There is a public library at Aligarh, but it does not appear to contain much beyond a few thumb-worn Indian newspapers. Two or three Baboos were squabbling over one of slightly later date, much as old gentlemen in a club at home clamour and intrigue for a "Special Edition" on the eve of an expected dissolution.



Now we are going to be in tents again I thought I should like to have a dog of my own. It is so sad to hear them barking in the village all round, and miss the yelp of one's own particular cur. Rahman, in whom I confided, declared there was no difficulty, and promised me a choice of every English breed. As yet the only result is a man who persecutes me with two little hybrid nondescripts. He tells me they are bull-dogs fresh from England, but as they have the coat of a retriever, the ears of a fox-terrier, and the nose of a greyhound, I feel slightly sceptical. His price was thirty rupees each. Tonight he returns, and acknowledges he has made a mistake. They are spaniels, and he will take one rupee for the two. It may have been a bargain, but I preferred my rupee.

Wednesday.—Three large bullock-carts containing our tents and luggage were started off at daybreak for Khera—our first march on the way to Muttra. We followed about eight o'clock, riding the Tehsildar's horses. A few miles along the road, the water percolating from the canal has formed a jheel, on which were large numbers of the small blue teal, and a few duck. The marshy water has no reeds or cover of any kind, and the teal were difficult to approach, but we managed to shoot sufficient for the pot.

We passed several herds of antelope, but all does, or very young bucks. At last, standing on some low sandhills, we saw one with a fine pair of horns, his coat glistening in

the sunshine like black satin. He was about seven or eight hundred yards off, and by himself. It is not often possible, in these flat open plains, to stalk the black buck, but here



A CAMEL CART.

there seemed a chance. So, riding quietly along the road until some bushes and dhāl fields hid us from view, Alan jumped off his horse, and, rifle in hand, turned back towards the buck, who was still in the same place, and evidently took us for ordinary wayfarers.

The antelope about here have been much harried by shooters, and are consequently very wild. But living as they do in cultivated, thickly populated districts, it would be useless for them to fly from every passer-by; for the country all around is dotted with people, either working in the fields, or coming to and from their villages. Practice and experience, joined to extraordinary keenness of vision, have developed wonderful sagacity and discretion in these animals. Native cultivators, bullock-carts, and travellers along the highway, they know are harmless. A herd will trot across the road close to the latter, or may be seen standing unconcerned within fifty yards of a peasant ploughing his field. But let a man with a gun, a white face, or in European clothing approach within half a mile, and they are off at top speed.

Our particular buck no doubt took us for a party of



native travellers, for we were riding at a foot's pace, muffled up against the cold, and surrounded by native followers.

Alan had noticed, as we passed, the earth-mound of a disused well not far from where the buck was standing ; and creeping back through the dhāl fields, he managed to get the mound between himself and the buck, and gain its shelter.

The buck was now about a couple of hundred yards off, but only his head and long spiral horns were visible over the sandhill. Waiting until it stooped down to crop a mouthful of grass, Alan ran two-double across the intervening space, and lay down under the sand ridge. The buck was now within eighty or ninety yards, and Alan had only to crawl up the bank and take care his head did not show before he fired. It was impossible to miss at this distance, and the buck fell over lifeless.

Khera was not far off, and on arrival we gave Santan our teal and buck, and ordered the liver of the buck to be broiled for dinner. Santan remonstrated that it would not be enough for a dish, but we only laughed at him. When dinner was served, and we were waiting, very hungry, after some indifferent soup, Santan appeared with a large dish, and, gravely uncovering it, displayed something in the centre about the size of a shilling. He had made a slight mistake, and thought we had said "duck".



instead of "buck." The latter he told us he always calls a "stag."

Thursday.—Alan went off after antelope, and I started to ride to the next halt—a village called Rayuh. Bullock-carts are easier to pack than camels, but certainly do not travel faster. To make certain of a tent being up on arrival we sent on one cart overnight. I had not cantered along the road ten minutes before I overtook this cart, which has established a record of doing a mile in fourteen hours. For the driver solemnly asserts he has never once stopped since we started!

It was a horrid little camping ground at Rayuh—the railway on one side, the prison on the second, a very dirty pond on the third, and the graveyard on the fourth. I tried to object, but was overruled by our people, who like to be near a village. They assured me "all Sahibs come here."

From the look of the fourth side, they seem to have remained.

They brought me a chair from the adjoining police station; but it was three hours before our bullock-carts arrived, and the ayah told me a piteous tale, how she and Santan and the cook had walked beside the oxen "beating them all the way, else they would never have arrived come." Alan, "arrived came" with quite a different tale. He had passed them halted on the road, each asleep on their



respective wagons, whilst the drivers sat round a little fire and sucked their pipes. One characteristic point about a native is that he never puts himself out when discovered in an untruth. Indeed, the bigger the lie, the better he seems pleased.

Alan managed to get a black buck, although they were extremely wild. They are much shot at, as the military station of Muttra is so near. After several unsuccessful attempts to get a shot, he saw a good buck about half a mile away, standing just outside a field. Riding, as usual, in the opposite direction until he was out of sight, he dismounted, and put a native rug cloak-fashion over his head and shoulders.

A ryot happened to be ploughing close by, and a small bribe induced him to gradually manœuvre his plough and oxen in the direction of the buck. Alan walked alongside, carefully concealing his rifle and face. But the buck apparently suspected some trick, and kept slowly walking on out of range. At last, by pretending to turn the oxen back and circling round, they managed to get within about a hundred yards. Alan knelt down to take a steady shot, telling the man to keep his oxen moving so as to attract the buck's attention. Of course he did just the contrary, and stopped them short. The buck at once started off at a gallop, but by a lucky shot Alan rolled him over dead.

Friday.—We started at 6 A.M. in a thick white fog.

Since we left Agra our road has led through a perfectly flat country, destitute of even the semblance of a hill, and not a stream, or even a piece of water bigger than a duckpond,



HEAD OF BLACK BUCK.

to break the monotony. Suddenly the sun broke through the grey clouds, and the mist rising like a curtain disclosed the valley of the Jumna and the sacred river flowing in its



deep-cut bed beneath. The white minarets of a mosque towered in the distance above the fog, and beneath lay the temples of Muttra, with their broad stone steps sloping to the water's edge. It was the first pretty picture our eyes had lit on for weeks, and came like an oasis in the wilderness.

The Arab horse which the Aligarh Tehsildar sent me was selected as being quiet and 'warranted to carry a lady.' He is a confidential animal, and with a new pair of forelegs might be a pleasant hack; but, whether from weakness or pure "cussedness," he stumbles at every other step, and comes on his head regularly every two or three minutes. Alan says all Arabs stumble at any pace but a gallop. This one sustains the racial reputation, and added to it by turning a complete somersault as I was cantering into Muttra. Fortunately he selected a soft place, and, beyond a crushed hat and a coating of white dust, I was not much the worse.

The dāk bungalow is a mile or more from the town, but close to the military cantonment, and closer still to the cemetery, which is next door. At the beginning of the century, Muttra was on the frontier of the old East India Company's territory; and this burial-ground contains many monuments to officers killed in the fights at Deeg and Bhurtpore. Some of the tombstones have quaint inscriptions. One is to "Mrs. Jones, the dearly loved *wife* of Mr. Jones, aged *thirteen* years."



We had an introduction to the Seth, or banker at Muttra, said to be the richest man in India, and worth twenty-three millions sterling. This is no doubt an exaggeration; but he keeps up almost regal state here, and has palaces, retainers, and sowars like a native prince. He is now away on a pilgrimage, but his vakeel called, and put carriages and horses at our disposal. I was not sorry to exchange the Tehsildar's Arab for a nice-looking little country-bred horse.

In the afternoon the Seth sent us a carriage to drive to Bindhaban, one of the most sacred places in Northern India, although most of its temples are modern, and none more than two or three hundred years old. Here, and along the Jumna's banks, lay the scenes of many of Krishna's exploits. The little pastoral episode with the Gopis, whose clothes he stole whilst they were bathing in the river, is said to have occurred at Bindhaban.



CHAPTER XI.

The city of Muttra—Seth's palace—Life sacred to a Brahman—The troublesome monkeys—Pilgrims and their strange vows—The sanctity of Bindhaban—The sacred tanks of Govindhun—A Hindoo Venice—Deeg—The Maharaja of Bhurtpore—A group of palaces—Early Hindoo-cum-Italian Renaissance-cum-Tottenham Court Road—In search of chinkara—Baroda—Colonel Fraser, the Political Resident—The Residency—The Ulwar tragedy—Major Ram Chunder hanged—An Indian version of Henry II. and Thomas à Becket—The Maharaja Jey Singh—Animal duels—The elephant stables—A savage brute—Tackling a panther—In search of the sambhur—The Maharaja's mothers—Performing horses—The old palace—Curious old arms—Show and squalor.

THE road to Bindhaban leads at first through Muttra, which is clean and well-paved, but not of especial interest. There are some fine houses, situated, as usual, in narrow streets, lined with dirty-looking shops. An occasional open door shows an old garden with palms, or a temple, or the courtyard of a great house. The millionaire Seth has a richly carved white stone palace; but even *his* verandah or ground floor is crowded with little shops whose whole stock in trade is not worth more than a few shillings; and through the narrow entrance one has to step over dogs, and pick one's way through

camels, oxen, and the other tame animals that lie about the streets everywhere. A wild animal, the monkey, is still more numerous, and being sacred must not be molested or even interfered with. He steals what he wants with impunity, and hardly takes the trouble to move out of the way of a passer-by. The tortoise is also sacred, and hundreds of them, some as big as turtles, are bobbing about in the water, or waiting to be fed at the foot of the ghâts which line the river front.

All life is sacred to a Brahman, except of course his fellow-man's. The sect called Jains carry this so far that they wear muslin veils over their mouths lest accidentally they might swallow a fly. Neither of the sacred pets here seems over-grateful. A hungry tortoise occasionally nips off a bather's finger or toe; and the monkeys evidently consider that the inhabitants hold their houses on sufferance. They tell a tale of a regiment of Ghoorkas passing through the city, who in some way considered they had been insulted by its populace. In revenge the soldiers scattered handfuls of grain on the tiled roofs of the houses. The monkeys crowded to feed, and, hunting for grains which had fallen between the chinks, pulled away tile after tile, until the houses were rapidly unroofed. No one, of course, dared to interfere with the monkeys, even when



they threw a stray tile or two on the heads of the dismayed spectators.

Bindhaban is about nine miles from Muttra, along a good road shaded on each side by trees. We pass several pilgrims on their way to the shrines. Several of them are accomplishing vows; some to crawl the whole way on their knees; others measure their length along the entire distance. This is done by lying down on the road with the head in the direction of Bindhaban. A mark is made in the dust where the top of the head reaches; then they rise, and, placing the feet on the mark, lie down again, and so on. The sanctity of Bindhaban must be great. Scindiah, the Begum of Bhopal, and other Rajas, have each their houses and temples. But to a sightseer the place is disappointing. These Hindoo buildings compare poorly with the magnificent edifices of the Mahomedan Moguls. The more modern temples look new and gimcrack; and, no doubt owing to the slowness of decay in this climate, their stone lacks the mellowing tone of age.

January 14th.—We left early this morning for Deeg, a ride of twenty-five miles. About halfway are the sacred tanks and temples of Govindhun. They are well worth a visit, although the picturesqueness of the whole scene is the chief attraction. The numerous buildings might interest the archæologist, but to an ordinary sightseer

they appear but little different from other Hindoo temples. The large tank is enclosed by buttressed walls, and shaded by fine old trees. Surrounding it on every side are temples, palaces, and shrines, all built in different styles and with great diversity of detail; but all have wide flights of steps descending to the water, or are built on piers jutting out into it.

We adjourned to a neighbouring garden for luncheon, and afforded much amusement to the hundreds of monkeys who inhabit it. The *coup d'œil* from here is very beautiful, and like a peep at some Hindoo Venice. Afterwards we rode to an old tank surrounded by temples now in ruins. It is some distance off, in the midst of a thick jungle, and so surrounded and shut in by trees that one might pass close by without noticing it. I suppose fashions change in temples as in other things; for, whilst the newer ones are crowded with Brahmans and priests, these old buildings seem deserted by all save the monkeys and peafowl.

Returning to the town, we mounted our horses and cantered on to Deeg, a ride of about twelve miles through a perfectly flat country. We are now in the State of the Maharaja of Bhurtpore, in whose uninhabited palace of Deeg we are going to stay. The palace, or rather group of palaces—for it consists of a number of detached pavilions enclosed by a high wall—is situated in a beautiful garden



full of roses and semi-tropical plants. At some height above the flowers, and intersecting one another at right angles, are many stone-paved walks, bordered by fine trees. The buildings are mostly of pale-coloured sandstone, every inch of which is covered with intricate patterns in relief, as sharply cut as fine wood-carving. The walls inside are lined with white marble, inlaid with mosaic flowers in the same style as the Taj. At one end of the garden is a large lake, over which stands the principal palace, its windows with projecting balconies overhanging the water. It is a fine building, shaded by an umbrella-shaped roof, and in a style which may be roughly described as early Hindoo grafted on to late Italian Renaissance. Its interior is spoilt by the very modern furniture, mostly of the Tottenham Court Road description. On the walls, above the beautiful marble mosaics, are hung a few common photographs and chromolithograph prints from the illustrated newspapers—a strange and unprepossessing jumble of the old and new eras.

One pavilion or summer-house is entirely of white marble, and on its roof is a large reservoir from which a sheet of water pours down all round. At the farther end of the lake is a dear old palace, fast falling into ruin. To the right of this is the zenana, from the roof of which there is a delightful view over the garden, fountains, and pavilions.

The top of an adjoining building forms a vast reservoir, some two hundred feet square, which supplies the water for

the numerous jets and fountains. It is filled in a primitive way by oxen, who draw the water in leathern bags from four wells—one at each corner of the tank.



HEAD OF CHINKARA, OR RAVINE DEER.

January 15th.—I devoted the day to sketching and visiting the old fortress, which has a nice half-ruined temple inside. Alan went off to some low hills a few miles away in search of chinkara or ravine deer—the Indian gazelle.



He returned in the evening with one, a fine buck, which he shot as it bounded out of a nullah.

January 16th.—We left early this morning for Baroda, a little village about thirty miles off, and only a short march from Ulwar, where we are going to stay with Colonel Fraser, the Political Resident. On the road we passed several herds of antelope, but could not get a shot. The ayah and heavy luggage were sent on last night; so on arrival at Baroda we found the tents pitched and tea ready.

Tuesday, January 17th.—Early in the morning we went to try for an antelope, and after some time got a shot at a fine black buck, but hit him too far back. At first Alan thought he had missed, for the buck bounded off as if none the worse. But Rahman was certain he had heard the thud of the bullet; so we raced after the herd as hard as we could go. After about a mile's gallop the buck separated from the does, and made for some high dhāl fields. He was still going strongly; we could not gain an inch on him, and soon lost sight of him in the tall crops. Alan raced round to the opposite side, in case he might go straight through, but he did not come out, and was probably hiding in the dense vegetation. Presently two or three of our men came up, and we sent them through the cover, whilst we waited at either end. It was a long time before they found the buck; but at last he jumped up in front of them, and bounded out into the open, close to my horse. Alan soon

joined me, and we rode hard after the buck for about a couple of miles. But he was evidently done, and we gained on him steadily. After several sharp turns, like a coursed hare, Alan managed to ride up alongside, and, holding his rifle like a pistol, shot him through the shoulder. He was a fine buck, with horns nearly twenty-five inches long.

After breakfast we rode on to Ulwar, and just outside the town found a carriage which Colonel Fraser had very kindly sent to meet us. We arrived at the Residency in time for dinner. It is a charming house, in the middle of beautiful grounds.

We find we have arrived on the day of the final act of the Ulwar tragedy. This morning Major Ram Chunder, the principal instigator of the Minister's murder, was hanged outside the jail. It was a curious case, in some way repeating the story of Henry II. and Thomas à Becket, and throws a strange light on the darker side of life at native Courts. Bahai Lal, the murdered man, one of the principal councillors of the late Maharaja, had fallen under his master's displeasure, and several courtiers, thinking to carry out their Sovereign's wishes, conspired to have him killed.

Ram Chunder, a major in one of the Maharaja's regiments, hired a bravo named Ahai Singh, who waited till the Minister went out for the usual afternoon drive, rode up to his carriage, and literally cut him to pieces. The sword was broken in two; and the broken end, found in a well



near the scene of the murder, fitted the hilt in the assassin's possession, and helped to bring the crime home to him. This outrage took place on the public road in broad daylight, yet no one seems to have interfered.

The Government of India ordered an investigation by a Special Court. Ahai Singh, the actual assassin, confessed, and got off with penal servitude for life. Major Ram Chunder was sentenced to death, and several natives of position who were proved to be implicated got various terms of imprisonment. A curious feature of the defence was the production by the accused of letters from the late Maharaja assenting to the plot against his Minister's life, and giving the conspirators to understand that they might rely upon his protection. They pleaded that these letters constituted a command from their Sovereign, and that they only obeyed his orders. This contention the Court overruled; but if the Maharaja had not died in the interim, no doubt he would have been deposed, or put upon his trial. I believe the difficulties in tracing the crime home to the instigators were almost insuperable, and but for Colonel Fraser's energy and knowledge of native character would never have been overcome.

Wednesday, January 18th.—Early this morning we all drove to the palace stables, and were met by Jey Singh, the present Maharaja, a bright-looking boy about twelve years old. After inspecting the horses, two fighting rams were

brought out, and, being let go some twenty yards apart, charged straight at each other, their skulls meeting with such a crash one would have thought they must have been stunned. But when separated they both seemed anxious for another round. Then two black bucks fought, seeming to fence with their long horns, and endeavouring to entangle one another's. They sometimes catch a wild buck by letting loose a tame one with a net or nooses on his horns. He joins a herd, and at once challenges the champion, whose horns are caught in the snares, so that he is easily captured.

We were next taken to the elephant stables. There must have been at least fifty enormous animals, most of them picketed in lines outside. One, a very savage beast, was fastened by chains round each of his legs. To give us an idea of his ferocity, they placed a dummy man with a mask like a Guy Fawkes on his back. No sooner did the elephant feel it astride him than he put up his trunk, pulled off the figure, and dashed it to the ground ; then, raising it, he brought it down with a tremendous crash. He now eyed it contemptuously for a moment, and, placing one huge foot on the body, with his trunk tore off one by one the legs, arms, and head. It was rather ghastly. The elephant did it so slowly and deliberately, occasionally giving a shrill shriek of rage. They told us that if a man got within reach of his trunk he would kill him in precisely the same way.



We left this brute to see a quail fight—rather a contrast. Then there was a fight between two partridges, and finally all the young elephants were let loose, and ran about the yard playing with their keepers. There is an enormous carriage here, said to be unique. It is in two stories, holds fifty people, and requires four elephants to draw it.

On our way back we went to look at a large panther trapped last night. It was growling in a corner, and tearing to shreds a cloth it had plucked from some native who had approached too near. As we came up, it sprang at the bars of the cage, and tried its utmost to break through. A few days back this brute killed a poor girl in one of the hill villages. This afternoon it is to be turned loose on the plain, and try its courage against horsemen armed with spears.

They say when tackled the panther has not the pluck of a wild boar, but Mrs. Fraser dislikes the idea of her husband and Alan riding. She considers it a dangerous amusement, giving so treacherous a beast a fairer chance than it deserves.

After luncheon we went to a large open plain outside the city. A crowd of natives, walking, driving, and riding, were waiting to see the sport. Mrs. Fraser, Jey Singh, and I, were on an elephant. Colonel Fraser, Alan, Yar Singh (the Master of the Horse), and a sowar, rode with spears. The manager of the shikar, or head gamekeeper, is a venerable-looking old man, named Hermiron Singh. Dressed in a long grey coat, a scanty pugaree coiled like a rope round his head,

and with a long staff in his hand, he looked like an ancient pilgrim. His son was killed by a tiger during the Duke of Connaught's visit, but this does not seem to have damped his love of sport. Shortly after our arrival, he appeared on an elephant, followed by a cart carrying a wooden cage containing the panther. This was put down some distance off on the ground, then two men, climbing on the top of the cage, piled up rugs and mats to hide themselves when the panther came out. They drew up the door, and I think also drew a sigh of relief, as the panther bounded away without seeing them. He is allowed a long start, then Colonel Fraser gives the signal, and all four riders race after him. We follow more slowly on the elephants.

Although the panther appeared only to amble along the ground, he goes quicker than one would fancy, and it was some time before the riders overtook him. Alan was first up, and speared him right through the body, but did not touch a vital spot; and the panther, crouching, gave two or three tremendous bounds after his horse. Alan was riding a clever little Arab, very quick on its legs, and although for a minute the panther was so close I thought it would touch the horse, he could not quite reach him, and slackening his speed subsided into a lolling canter again. Then Colonel Fraser and Yar Singh came up and speared him; and the panther, apparently badly hurt, lay down on the ground with his head raised, glaring all around. The sowar now

A PANTHER-SPEARING INCIDENT.

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"THE PANTHER WITH ONE BOUND SPRANG ON THE HORSE'S SHOULDER."



had a chance, and rode at him, but too slowly. Before he could touch him with the spear, the panther with one bound sprang on the horse's shoulder, and in a moment rider, horse, and panther, rolled over together. The others of course rode up. Yar Singh was first, but could not get his frightened horse near the panther, which, showing its teeth, crouched close to the ground, within a foot of where the man lay.

All this took place in a second, during which Alan had shot ahead, unable to turn quickly enough. Directly he did, his plucky little horse galloped straight to the panther, and Alan, driving his spear through the beast as it crouched for a spring, killed it on the spot. It was all over in an instant, but during that instant matters looked unpleasant for the sowar. The real danger consists in the wound from the panther's claws. The blow may not kill outright, but even a slight cut will often bring on blood-poisoning.

After this we go to see the *haras* and the young horses. The latter are regularly fed at the same place every evening. This is in a paddock divided by a ditch and a four-foot wall from the breeding ground. A bugler sounds the cavalry "feed," and immediately all the foals, and even the young mules and donkeys, come galloping up and clear the fence which divides them from their corn. It was a very pretty sight. Most of the foals took the wall

in good style, and only two or three refused. These were not allowed to feed until they had jumped the wall.

Thursday, 19th.—In the low hills beyond the town of Ulwar are a few sambhur deer; and Alan wished to add their big horns to his trophies. The sambhur is something like a red deer, and about the same size. His antlers are as big, but beside the brow points he has only two tines on each horn. They dwell in high grass and thick jungle on the hills, and are usually shot by driving with a long line of beaters and elephants. But the Archduke of Austria is coming here to shoot next month, and if these jungles were beaten now it would take away all chance of finding a tiger for him. So Colonel Fraser sent Alan to walk with old Hermiron Singh, and take his chance of getting a shot. It was like searching for a needle in a bundle of hay, but by good luck they *did* come on a herd. Alan could just see a stag's horns above the grass. It was about a hundred yards off, as far as he could judge, for its body was completely hidden.

Thinking the stag's head was turned towards them, Alan aimed low beneath the horns,—fired, and missed. On going up, the stag appeared to have been standing with its tail towards them, and they found the mark of the bullet on the ground between the footprints. They walked all day, but never saw another deer.

When they left the hill, and were riding homewards



across the plain, two black bucks came in sight, facing each other, and evidently engaged in combat. Slipping off his horse, Alan ran up behind some low bushes, and knocked them both over, right and left.

Mrs. Fraser drove the little Maharaja and me to an old palace called "Siliseer," where we had arranged to meet the shooters on their way back. The palace is built on the edge of a large lake surrounded by hills, and we passed the time whilst waiting, trying to catch fish. It seemed hardly fair sport, for they are quite tame, and come to the bank to be fed. A native sat on the brink and threw in pieces of meat crying "Aao, aao" (come, come), and they did come, in swarms of enormous fish. But although they almost jumped out of the water after the pieces of meat, they were too cunning to touch a baited hook. At last we gave it up, and went into the palace, where tea was ready for us on the terrace over the lake. Jey Singh, as a Rajpoot, has his food apart. At home he does not eat before the evening, but his attendants are anxious he should do the same as we do, so have spread out a cold repast on the table adjoining ours. It does not look very appetizing; cold curry is not particularly nice, and cold pancakes are decidedly nasty. But the boy was more occupied by some paint-boxes he was playing with. He said his *mothers* had given them to him: his mothers being all the wives of the late Raja. He is such a bright,



jolly little fellow, and speaks English perfectly. Colonel Fraser is his guardian, and the little Raja seems devoted to Mrs. Fraser.

Friday.—Early this morning we went to see the Raja's performing horses. Some are taught to step extravagantly high, raising their knees above their noses. Another walked, and danced on his hind legs. Then came one taught to jump over nothing; that is, he galloped down the road and, with a word from his rider, jumped up as if a gate were before him, then a brook, or a flight of hurdles, just as he was told.

The man who trained and rode the horses hardly gives one the idea of the conventional wiry rough-rider. On the contrary he is enormously stout, with a pair of calves which in England would be the despair of a top-boot maker. One dear little pony came up to us by itself, then sat down like a dog, and "gave us its paw." Presently the black bucks and fighting rams came out for a walk, each solemnly led by an attendant, and clothed with a thick rug to protect it against a chill. The men, too, were wrapped and muffled in blankets, and shivered at the fresh morning air. It was not really cold, but a native never seems thawed till the sun is well up.

The old palace of the Maharajas is situated in the town, a short drive from here, through an avenue of fine trees, which leads up to an arched gateway forming the



entrance to the city. The first view was distinctly striking. An amphitheatre of bare rocky mountains forms the background, and half encloses the palace and quaint-looking native buildings grouped around and below it. The crest of the hill is crowned by the old fort, and from this descend long lines of stone battlements, forming the outer defences of the town. Although thoroughly Indian in character, there is something in its fantastic crenellated walls, which strongly recalls Gustave Doré's mediæval castles. Beyond the gate, a long narrow street goes up hill through a picturesque bazaar, and passes under an arched cupola-roofed building in the centre of the town, which covers the *rond point* whence four streets radiate.

The palace is entered through high arched doors, opening into the outer courtyard. The buildings are in the same style of architecture as those at Deeg, with this advantage over the latter, that instead of sandstone they are built of white marble. They first show you the armoury, which holds a wealth of curious old arms. Many of the swords are jewelled all over, the blades as well as the handles. A few Damascus blades are even more valuable.

One plain steel sword originally cost 15,000 rupees. There are many varieties of hideous-looking daggers, used for thrusting, with steel side-pieces to protect the hand.

This kind is peculiar to Ulwar, and forms the crest on the coat-of-arms of the State. Some poignard-shaped knives have carved crystal hafts, and they all are exquisitely chased and inlaid with gold. One sword has loose pearls enclosed in a groove in the blade, and at each cut the pearls run from point to hilt.

At the back of the palace is a piece of water, bounded by the steep hill behind. The banks are enclosed with walls of masonry, and broad steps all round lead down to the water.

Above, temples and chattris crowd every bit of available space. The *coup d'œil*, with the rocky hill and castle in the background, is quite lovely.

The interior of the palace is little different from other royal abodes. There are the usual public and private halls of audience, and the inevitable Shish-mahal, with its looking-glass plastered walls. But a small ante-room beyond is really a gem of its kind. The walls are covered with decorations in gold and bright colours, as minutely executed as the illuminations to an old missal. Like the work of the patient monks, a labour of untold time, it is still in progress.

It is typical of the natives that the door of this gorgeous room should be off its hinges, and tied up with a piece of old rope! The Indian mind will not admit that "order is Heaven's first law," and you are quite likely to find



the cooking-pots being scoured in the flower garden, or, as we actually saw in one palace, a pile of dirty riding-boots being cleaned in a corner of the magnificent audience hall, into which we were ushered with much ceremony. I must not omit to mention the valuable collection of oriental manuscripts at Ulwar. One copy of the Koran is written and illuminated in gold and bound in a really artistic scarlet and gold cover. Ulwar is celebrated for the tooling and finish of its leather bindings, which command high prices even in these days of a deplorably depreciated rupee.

One of the sights of the palace is a solid silver table, of considerable size; and nearly every room has some special curiosity.

The late Maharaja seems to have spent his money in regal fashion. When in Calcutta he was taken to see the chandeliers, &c., at Osler's shop. "Yes, very pretty; I will buy them all," was his only remark. They tried to explain that it was possible to have too much of a good thing, even of cut crystal. But, "No, I will take it, I will buy it all," was his answer; and accordingly the contents of the shop were packed up and sent off to Ulwar. It is perfectly characteristic of the Oriental potentate that the huge packages remain unopened to this day in the precincts of the Maharaja's palace.



CHAPTER XII.

A panther ride—A visit to the Ranees—Suttee—Colonel Fraser's inspection tour—His camp—Neilghai—A panther—A pretty camp—Sketching a "rut"—Jey Singh's anxiety about an elephant—The rains—A demoralised camp—Hunting cheetahs and lynxes—Good-bye to the little Raja—*En route* for Jeypore—A Prime Minister *en déshabille*—A model town—Jeypore metal workers—The manufacture of "old" arms—Zafir—A simple old Brahman—A most superior person—Brahman hospitality—The palace—The public gardens—The museum—The old palaces at Amber—'Arry on an elephant—Pig-sticking *in excelsis*.

IN the afternoon we went to the Maidan to ride two more panthers they have trapped. The first panther was not very big, but wonderfully agile, and went off at a great pace, with tremendous bounds. They had to ride hard to catch him up, and then he kept crouching and springing from side to side. At last Yar Singh touched him lightly, then, just as the panther had given a tremendous bound forward, Alan raced up, and drove his spear right through its body, the bamboo of the shaft breaking in two as the panther turned round, trying to get at the horse.

Yar Singh again speared it and pinned it to the ground, but the panther, seizing the lance with its teeth, bit it clean in two. After this he crouched in some



thorn bushes, trying to spring at the horses as they came near, but the riders circled round at a gallop, and he was repeatedly speared, and soon killed.

The second panther was to be hunted by the Maharaja's dogs, a pack of savage-looking animals about the size of greyhounds. But the panther declined to leave his cage, and sat lashing his tail, with his head out of the door. It was not a pleasant time for the men on the top of the cage. If they had made the slightest movement, or betrayed their presence in any way, the panther would have sprung on them in a moment. Hermiron Singh was equal to the occasion. Standing up on his elephant, he called to the people to shout, and a yell went up from the crowd, discordant enough to scare even a tiger. Our panther at once bounded out. Only two dogs were let loose at first, and it was very pretty to see them coursing. One dog ran on either side, and they both kept making feints at the panther, all the while watching their opportunity. At last one seized the panther by the ear, then the other pinned him, and the two pulled him to the ground. They were wonderfully clever in avoiding his blows, one attracting his attention while the other went in. The courage of these hounds is extraordinary, for panthers are continually killing stray dogs, and this beast was three times their size, and very savage.

RIFLE AND SPEAR WITH THE RAJPOOTS.

The panther soon shook himself free, and then more dogs were let loose, and he was pulled down again. But they could not kill him; in fact, a panther has as many lives as a cat, and often takes several bullets before he is *hors de combat*. So one of the men rode up and gave the *coup de grâce* with his spear.

Late in the afternoon, Mrs. Fraser took me to see the Ranees (little Jey Singh's *mothers*). We first called on the principal wife, or rather widow, of the late Raja. She speaks a little English, and is the most advanced lady of the lot. Although Rajpoot ladies rarely show in public, this one used frequently to go out driving with the Raja, but since his death has never once quitted the palace. Until the Maharaja's body was burnt, all the wives had to be carefully watched, lest they should commit suttee, or throw themselves on the funeral pyre. As usual, one had to ascend flights of narrow perpendicular little stairs to reach the Ranee's room. It was a very small one; the only furniture a mattress on the floor, a small wooden sofa, and an ordinary cuckoo-clock, on which she seemed to set great store.

Another wife was a very portly lady, and had a more comfortable-looking apartment, the whole of one side opening into a little garden. Then we went to see the widow of the previous Maharaja. She was dressed in a white garment, with a big black border all round, and



reminded one of a French *faire part*. None of these ladies had the least pretension to good looks, and their lips and teeth were disfigured and stained black by the horrible habit of chewing betel-nut, in which all native women indulge.

We sent back our Kashmir servants to-day, and had quite an affecting parting from them. Khaira and the bheestie were almost reduced to tears. The former has lately constituted himself my palette boy, and takes a personal interest in my sketches, frequently giving me the benefit of his advice and criticism. He is going straight back to the Kashmir he so often talks about, but to which he now shows a strange reluctance to return. The "man of the world" stays with us, and says in a resigned voice "He fears he will suffer much from the heat."

January 21st.—Colonel Fraser is making a short tour of inspection through the State, and has asked us to accompany him. His tents were sent on yesterday to a place about fourteen miles from here, and at seven o'clock this morning we started to ride to the camp. We arrived about ten, and found it very different from our own little Kashmir encampment. Besides a large dining-tent, and another larger one for a drawing-room, each of us had a tent twenty feet square, as comfortably furnished as a bedroom at home. Colonel Fraser has also a durbar and office-tent, and there are many more

for officials and clerks. The servants have a separate encampment, and what with elephants, horses, camels, and bullock-carts we might be taken for an Indian Army Corps on the march.

After breakfast we went shooting on elephants, and beat a long plain of dry grass. We got a fair number of black partridge, and a few hares and sand grouse. In the evening Alan rode with Yar Singh and two native officers,



COLONEL FRASER'S CAMP.

and came across a wild boar in the open, which they speared after an exciting gallop.

January 22nd.—Our next halt is about fifteen miles distant, and a similar encampment to this one is waiting ready pitched. It was a raw morning when we started at about seven o'clock. In spite of a stove, we feel the cold more in these big tents than we did in our little hill ones. There are several jungles on the road, and



we took the elephants to beat through them. We saw a few neilghai (blue bull), one of which Colonel Fraser shot. And then we beat a grass cover of small extent, but extremely thick, situated in the midst of an open plain. We only expected to find black partridge, but, to our surprise, a large panther got up in front of Colonel Fraser's elephant. He only got a glimpse of the beast through the high grass, but the patch of jungle was so small that we felt certain of eventually shooting it. However, although eighteen elephants beat carefully through and through some ten times, the panther was never seen again. Where he got to was a mystery. The surrounding plain was alive with horsemen and beaters, who must have seen the panther if he had slipped away.

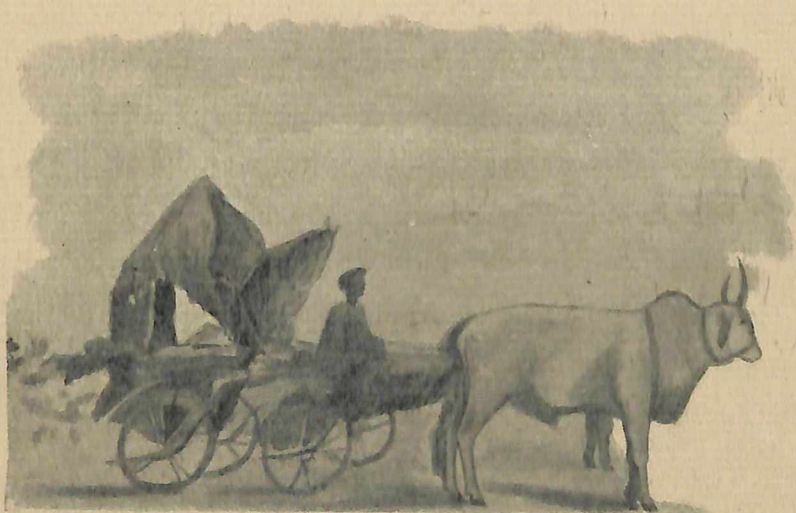
After breakfast the men went out to try for a wild boar. There are many of them in the jungles, but they found it impossible to drive them on to ridable ground. However they got two capital gallops after neilghai. One big blue bull was found in some dhāl fields, fully five miles away from the thick cover. At first he kept ahead easily, but after about four miles at racing speed, condition began to tell, and the bull came back to them. Alan and Yar Singh were close to him, and riding against each other for first spear.

Suddenly they came to a small clump of thick bushes, into which the bull darted and lay down. It took three or

four minutes to drive him out, during which time he got second wind, and went off with fresh vigour towards some low hills about a mile away. He gained these, but was quite done, and could only just trot up the steep rocks. The broken ground was almost unridable, but the bull was so blown, that, in spite of a fall each, they still managed to keep close to him. But he got over the hill with a slight start, and reached the thick jungle beyond in safety. The bull was now too exhausted to go out of trot; and although the grass was over their heads and the ground full of deep holes, they kept him in sight for some time, but eventually lost him, and had to give it up.

This is a pretty place for the camp, with a large stone well in front of the tents. The water is raised from it in the usual primitive fashion. Two yoked oxen walk down a slope pulling a rope fastened to their necks, which, running over a wooden roller, draws up a large leathern bag of water. When this reaches the top of the incline, it is tipped over into a hollow at the side and runs into a reservoir below, or is distributed directly into little ditches to irrigate the fields. The rollers and pulleys are all made of ungreased wood, and creak worse than the axles of a bullock-cart. All last night they were at work drawing water; but in spite of the groans and shrieks of the chafing wood, the monotonous splash of the water had a soothing effect, and soon sent me to sleep.

Mrs. Fraser and I passed the morning sketching a "rut." This is a light two-wheeled bullock-cart drawn by a pair of oxen, and supplies the place of a "village fly" to the native population. Over the top is a gaily-coloured canopy, with curtains drawn all round like a four-post bed. The driver squats on the pole, and urges on his cattle with a spiked stick, or guides them by twisting their tails. One often



A BULLOCK RUT.

passes them, with closely-drawn curtains hiding some rich villager's zenana, the bright eyes of the purdah women peering through the folds, taking furtive glances at the strange world outside.

To-morrow we march towards the hills, when we hope to get news of a tiger. Little Jey Singh is much worried as to which elephant he shall ride. One, he says, is very



handsome, with beautiful hairs on its head; but it is slow. Another is not so good-looking, but very fast. And the mahout (driver) of a third, which is neither fast nor handsome, tells him such pretty stories.

January 24th.—Awoke at 2 A.M. by the rain beating on the tents, and at six o'clock Colonel Fraser sends to say that the downpour has destroyed all chance of finding a tiger, and that they had decided to return home till the weather clears up. We are sixteen miles from the railway to Ulwar, and if we start immediately may catch the morning train. The Frasers went off at once on an elephant; and as soon as we were dressed, we galloped away in a tonga. It rained cats and dogs, and we passed a demoralised camp in full retreat. Camels, who can hardly keep their feet when the ground is wet and greasy, were slipping about wildly; elephants jogging as fast as the mahouts could drive them; riders and drivers muffled up on every kind of conveyance—none, if they can help it, on their own legs, for a native is like a cat in wet weather. We pass the clerks in their “ruts,” wrapped in gorgeous-coloured rezais, and looking very damp and dismal. All are making tracks for the railway station. The little Maharaja started with us, and came about a mile, but then felt so cold that he returned to his tent, where he has a tame hare, a black buck, and four little boys, as playfellows.

Ulwar, Wednesday.—A drizzling morning, but cleared



in the afternoon. We seized the opportunity to go up the mountain to the old castle. From the palace in the city, a steep, zigzag road, paved with rough stones, leads up the mountain. At first we go on an elephant, until the road becomes too steep, when dandies are waiting to carry us to the top. The fort or citadel on the summit is two thousand feet above the sea level, and contains an old palace. Here the late Maharaja used to take refuge from the steaming heat of the rainy season. The ascent is worth making for the view over the richly-cultivated plain beneath, which, bounded only by the horizon, stretches like a vast ocean as far as the eye can reach.

On our way back we stopped to see the hunting cheetahs and lynxes. Each of these animals lies on its own bedstead, to which it is chained. The lynxes are used for coursing hares. They seem unsociable brutes, and we were warned not to go too near, as they are very treacherous. The cheetahs were more friendly, and stepped down off their bedsteads to be patted and caressed.

January 26th.—We left this afternoon by train for Jeypore. On our way to the station we called at the new palace to bid good-bye to the little Raja. We found him playing with his toys in a room at the top of the house. It would have been a stiff pull up, but the architect has made the ascent in gentle slopes along inclined planes, instead of by the usual flights of stairs.

We arrived at Jeypore about eleven at night and drove to the hotel, where rooms had been ordered for us. I retract what I said in my haste of the Delhi hotels, and find there can be a still lower depth of discomfort and dirt. We were very hungry, and tried hard to get some supper. But the Portuguese manager regretted there was nothing in the hotel, not even a scrap of bread or cold meat. In desperation we ransacked the place for biscuits; but only succeeded in discovering several natives rolled up in blankets, asleep, under the dining-room table.

Jeypore, January 27th.—Colonel Peacock, the Resident, is away, but has left instructions for us to get some shooting; and this morning one of the Maharaja's carriages was placed at our disposal during our stay. After breakfast we drove to call on the Prime Minister, to whom we had a letter of introduction. I had a little discussion with Alan whether I should go in, but finally decided to remain in the carriage.

This was just as well, for Alan says the Minister appeared apologising for the "home dress" he wore. It seemed to have consisted of little more than an embroidered velvet skull cap and a pair of slippers, the latter of which he removed on entering the room.

Jeypore is considered a model native town. Its streets are broad, and laid out in rectangular blocks after the fashion of an American city. But the houses are low and



principally of plaster, coloured a light pink. The general effect from an artistic point of view is decidedly bad, and lacks the picturesqueness and variety of a narrow Indian thoroughfare. The breadth of the roads does little to facilitate traffic; for the inhabitants seem to regard them rather as a market-place or temporary camping-ground. Shopkeepers put their goods out for display, hucksters place their stalls, idlers loll on charpoys, and groups of smokers squat in the roadway, gurgling their hubble-bubbles and retailing scandal. Dogs, goats, and buffaloes mingle with the crowd, and share their food and blankets. Now and then a wedding procession passes, preceded by musicians, sometimes with Indian instruments, but occasionally with cornets-à-piston or trombones, playing a discordant jumble of English airs. The women follow chanting, surrounding the child-bride, who seldom seems more than five or six years old. Boy bridegrooms, gaudy with cotton velvet and tinsel, head rival shows, on horses with scarlet-dyed manes and tails. All is chaos, and the wild barbaric confusion of the scene baffles description.

A few wayfarers on camels or ponies thread their way through the crowd, which hardly gives place, and evidently considers them interlopers. But the Maharaja's landau and fast-trotting horses form a distinctly disturbing element. Whatever the citizens may think, our coachman is undoubtedly of opinion that the road is made for him and

his carriage, and tears along regardless of what may block the way. A syce runs before, shouting a weird cry which being interpreted means, "Save yourself, bullock-fellow!" "Out of the way, foot-fellow!" and so on, varied to the obstacle. Two more grooms, hanging on behind, repeat this cry with hideous shrillness in our ears.

Nothing stops us—the wedding guests are scattered right and left, stalls upset, and bullock-carts thrust on one side.

I felt quite relieved when we returned home safe and sound and without having killed anybody. On our way back we crossed the railway, and I am quite convinced that if a train had been passing our coachman would simply have shouted "Save yourself, engine-fellow!" and dashed on.

The Jeypore workers in metals, especially brass, are renowned for the excellence of their handiwork. Two or three of the bigger merchants have a large display of these goods, along with old arms, and other Indian curios. We were recommended to go to the shop of one Zafir. This was situated in a dirty back street, and appears to be a manufactory as well as a warehouse. The outer yards were full of workpeople making "old" arms, without any attempt at concealment. Zafir explains these are only for "wall decoration," and are not offered as genuine.

At the other end of the courtyard is a large house, every



room of which is crowded with Indian art goods. Some things are really beautiful. Most of the metal-work is richly inlaid with gold, silver, or coloured enamels. There were the usual handsome carpets and embroideries, and many *pulkaris*, or cotton cloths, which the native women cover with harmoniously-toned silk designs, so closely worked that it almost gives the effect of a rich brocade. This relates only to those carefully finished for their own use, which are not often offered for sale. The common ones are roughly turned out, and made only to sell cheaply to the tourist.

One Jeypore speciality is a large hammered brass tray, covered with bold *repoussé* patterns. Placed on carved wooden legs, this makes a charming little tea-table. We bought specimens of everything, amongst others a large fakir's lotah. An ordinary lotah is a small brass pot which every native carries to drink out of. The fakir, a holy mendicant subsisting on what he begs or steals, has a lotah some two feet high and proportionately big. He takes this round from door to door to collect handfuls of flour or other food. Usually they are of plain brass, but my lotah is chased all over with a flower pattern, enclosing deeply-engraved pictures of Indian life. At the risk of being thought a vandal I am going to have it silvered, which the natives do cheaply and well. They ask how many rupees thick, and you give them the number you



consider sufficient. These identical coins are dissolved and used for the electro-plating.

Mr. "Zafir" is a nice simple old Brahman, and informs us that he calls himself by this pseudonym "because that pretty name," his real one being quite different. He talks English indifferently, but his younger brother, who is also his partner, converses with ease and volubility. We were returning to the hotel for luncheon, but Zafir begged us to stay and try some native dishes for tiffin, whilst the *genuine* old armour is being got out for our inspection. The brother added, patronisingly, "I hope you will stop. All the lords and dukes have tiffin with us." His elder interrupted mildly, "No, it was only an archduke."

The younger brother is a most superior person, and tells us he was a long time in England pushing the sale of his goods. According to his account, he met everybody of any consideration. The Prince of Wales he of course places first. Next to His Royal Highness he puts Mr. Whiteley, the "Universal Provider." "They were both," he adds, "most kind to me."

He regrets extremely his brother's "bad manners." He ought not to say to ladies "See this," but "Madam, deign to glance at this article"; nor "Take a chair," but "Condescend, miss, to be seated," like "in English shops."

These two merchants are high-caste Brahmans, and touch no meat of any kind—fish, flesh, or fowl. So we were



curious to see what our tiffin would consist of. It did not look very appetising. There was nothing except vegetable curries floating in melted fat, and a variety of native sweets.

The first dish was potato curry swimming in ghee (clarified butter), which Alan was carefully avoiding, when, "Pray take plenty of grease," from old Zafir, called down much wrath from his young brother. "He means gravy," said the latter, plentifully pouring it on Alan's plate as he spoke. Under the eye of Zafir senior, who *would* wait on us, Alan ate it like a man.

"For the lady Sahib," said our host, "I have a bottle of port wine. And for the Sahib there is something stronger—a bottle of brandy, and another of whisky." I think he expected both to be finished, for Alan's modest "peg" evidently hurt his feelings.

The palace in the town is a gaudy, tawdry place, hardly worth a visit. But the public gardens and museum are most interesting. The building is good, and the gardens lovely. Inside the museum are arranged the products and manufactures of Jeypore, and many art objects from other native states. They are admirably classified, and give a capital idea of Indian art. The museum, and a school of art in connection with it, are under the superintendence of Dr. Hendry, the great authority on Indian art, to whose taste and knowledge the brass and pottery industries here

owe everything. By selecting the best models of Indian antiquity, the designs are kept from deteriorating, or, like the Japanese modern school, becoming a distorted reflection of western civilisation. At the same time, Dr. Hendry has suggested several new openings for the manufacturers. The



A STATE ELEPHANT.

charming brass tea-tables I have already mentioned are due to his idea of utilising an old Indian brass pattern.

The next day we started for the old palaces at Amber. It is a short drive beyond the city. The last part, up a slight hill, is done on an elephant. Why, we could not at



first conceive, for the carriage might well have driven the whole way. Amber is well worth seeing from the outside, and offers the usual pretty and quaint *coup d'œil* of masonry tanks, broad flights of steps, and marble buildings. Inside it is like most other ancient Indian palaces.

At this time of year Jeypore is crowded with tourists—Americans, colonists on their way home, and other varieties of our brother globe-trotters. It is on the route of Cook's tours, and Amber is one of the happy hunting-grounds of the "personally conducted." The tourist agents have an arrangement with the Maharaja to take their parties on his elephants, which affords an additional and "great attraction."

Every one would have been horrified if we had left Jeypore without seeing Amber; but I have come to the conclusion that I hate compulsory sight-seeing, and loathe my fellow-sightseers. To me, the great charm of marching and camping out, is that you unexpectedly light on an ancient building or a lovely view without being dragged to see them. There is no cicerone to jabber incorrect descriptions in broken English, and no "'Arry" to mar the beauty of the scene. And the Indian specimen of "'Arry" is quite as objectionable as his cockney prototype.

Think how exquisite the Taj would be if one suddenly came upon it alone in the jungle, instead of being hunted by guides and plagued to buy photographs. Lord Melbourne



put the Garter above all other orders, because there was no "humbug of merit about it." And somewhat on the same principle I regret Chamba, its lovely scenery, and its absence of all sights. All show places are to me detestable ! I except the respectable old ruins at home, that only serve as an excuse for a picnic, but draw the line when one is dragged about, a mere slave to the guide.

January 28th.—At three o'clock this morning the Maharaja's carriage came to drive us out to a grass jungle, about eight miles off, which is the principal Jeypore meet for pig-sticking. We arrived there before daybreak, and found horses ready waiting. The wild boars take refuge during the daytime in the ravines and broken ground near the river, but at night come out to feed on grain placed for them in the ridable grass land. The riders have to be on the ground by daybreak, and intercept the boars on their way back to the covers.

At first it was too dark to see anything, but as the dawn glimmered we made out a huge grey boar trotting quietly home, and not a couple of hundred yards away. I did not take a spear, so Alan had to do all the riding, and the grass being very thick and high, it was rather difficult to keep the boar in sight. Sometimes as we raced along we had nothing to guide us but the ripple of the grass at the top, as the boar galloped through it beneath. This one was a savage old beast, and did not go more than a mile before he turned



AFTER THE BOAR.

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"ALAN RACED AFTER US, AND THE BOAR, TURNING SLIGHTLY AS HE CAME UP, RECEIVED A SPEAR FULL BEHIND HIS SHOULDER."



round and showed fight. The first time he charged he was speared badly, and did not give much more trouble.

We had two capital gallops directly afterwards, in both cases killing our boar. The fourth boar, a gaunt-looking beast, with enormous tusks and very quick on his legs, gave us a long run. After he was speared he stood at bay in some prickly bushes, and nothing could induce him to come out. We galloped round and round shouting at him, but all to no purpose.

At last Alan got off his horse, and taking a couple of clods of earth, flung one of them right at the boar. His head happened to be in my direction, and, with a couple of snorts like the puff, puff, of a railway engine starting, he came straight at my horse. I had no spear, and should not have known how to use it if I had, so rode all I knew, and fled at the top speed I could get out of my old hunter, who, I feel certain, had the meanest opinion of me for not showing fight. Alan raced after us, and the boar, turning slightly as he came up, received a spear full behind his shoulder. The force of the shock sent the head right through the boar, who dropped dead in his tracks without another movement. The steel spear-head was broken clean off, and fell out on the opposite side. When they turned the boar over, it was found lying on the ground underneath him.

The fifth boar, a huge fellow, almost blue in colour,

charged Alan directly he got near. The spear caught him in the body and broke short off, but fortunately the blow turned the infuriated boar to one side, and the horse escaped being cut by his tusks. We were now defenceless, but rode after the boar for some time, hoping one of our men might catch us up with a fresh spear. But none appeared, and the boar gained his lair in safety.

On our way home we passed several black buck, but they were very wary, and up to every trick used to get near them. We tried walking behind a bullock-cart, and the buck quietly trotted in front of us just out of shot. At last Alan circumvented it by sending the bullock-cart in its direction, and going himself in a wide circle to the opposite side, having first wrapped himself in a cotton rug to look like a native. The buck's attention was taken up by the cart, and he hardly noticed Alan, who, taking advantage of the cover afforded by a clump of bushes, ran up to within a hundred and twenty yards and shot him dead.

We got back to the hotel in time for a late breakfast, the four wild boars and antelope arriving shortly afterwards piled up on an ekka. They created considerable excitement amongst the Cook's tourists, who seemed to consider it one of the sights provided by the "personal conductor."

CHAPTER XIII.

At a nautch dance—The Nonconformist Conscience—An embarrassing native custom—The bag of rupees—Indian railway accommodation—Arrival at Rajghur—Groundbait for tigers—In an elephant camp—Decorated elephants—A tiger drive—Hermiron Singh—The little Raja and his playfellows—Snake-charming and hypnotism—Charming the foxes—News of a panther—An amusing adventure—A sounder of wild boars—To Deoli in a dâk ghari—The Raja of Boondi's horoscope—His political economy theories—A fossil State—Arrival at Kotah—The town, the Residency, and the Maharaja's palace—Bagging an alligator—Oriental poetry and a contrast—A tragic story—A sambhur drive—Colonel Wyllie's camp—The Maharaja of Kotah.

IN the evening we went to Zafir's house to see a nautch. The inner court, covered over and carpeted, was brilliantly lit up by lamps and candles. We were conducted to an alcove at one end, where several well-dressed natives were already seated. Zafir and the men of his family sat by us, the women looking on from behind a



A NATIVE MUSICIAN.

screen in the gallery above. The dancing-girls squatted

RIFLE AND SPEAR WITH THE RAJPOOTS.

in the middle of the floor, with three musicians behind them. Two of these had string instruments, something like exaggerated banjos, played, or rather scraped, with a bow; the third had the native tòm-tom. When we entered, I thought the orchestra was tuning up, but learnt they were conscientiously executing a favourite Indian air. The dancers then began, but there was little of our own idea of dancing in their movements, and their poses were rigid and mechanical. The Indian poets liken the gait of their heroines to a "young elephant," or a "goose"—so perhaps they came up to their standard of gracefulness. Rising to their feet, they moved slowly round in the stiffest possible manner, all the while keeping to the same spot of ground, varied by an occasional shuffle towards us. The arms were outstretched, with the hands waving slowly backwards and forwards. One girl wore very full skirts of black and gold, and a pink and gold sari (scarf) with a mauve velvet border; the other had a red and gold dress, with a violet scarf. Both had heavy bracelets all up their arms, and a number of anklets and toe-rings, besides being loaded with all kinds of jewellery.

I must say I came to this nautch with some hesitation, and a vague idea there was a spice of impropriety about it. Never have I been so undeceived! The Nonconformist Conscience might have witnessed it undisturbed; and it is no exaggeration to say that a London ballet, after the strictest



supervision by the County Council, is a wild orgie in comparison with the scene of staid respectability we witnessed to-night. The nautch-girls were swathed in long robes which barely showed the tips of their feet, and even our London purists would have found it impossible to lengthen their skirts. Probably their efforts would be directed against the fashion of clothing—or want of it—above the waist. But as every native women—even of the highest rank—is dressed the same way, they would simply be waging a crusade against the costume of the country.

They tell me there are only two Indian tunes, and one of the two comes from Persia. This is the celebrated “Taza ba taza,” which means “fresh and green” and has something to do with a garden. The other song the nautch-girls accompany with pantomimic gestures as they move slowly round. It is called “Minni pinni puneah,” or sounds like it; and describes village girls going to the well to draw water. The tune has a strong family likeness to that of many early nursery ditties, and never varies. It was interminable, and lasted us out.

It is a native custom to hang wreaths of flowers, generally tuberoses, or some strong-scented blossoms, strung tightly together, round the guests’ neck and arms. Alan in addition was presented with a well-filled bag of rupees. Rajas and rich natives are in the habit of making presents of money to those who receive their hospitality.



At first I thought this was a similar gift, and was surprised at Alan's accepting it; until he explained that it was change for a cheque he had given Zafir in payment of his bill. I have little doubt however that my impression was the one intended to be conveyed, in order to give young Zafir's friends and retainers a higher idea of his importance.

January 31st.—This afternoon we had numerous callers to bid us farewell, including the Prime Minister. The latter took up the greater part of our little sitting-room, and, chairs running short, we had to send for a bedstead to sit upon.

Colonel Fraser wrote to us yesterday to say that if we joined him at his camp at Rajghur, we should probably get some tiger shooting; and we were delighted to have an opportunity of meeting our very kind friends again. The train leaves Jeypore at five o'clock in the morning; so we had our things put in a sleeping-carriage on a siding, went to bed after dinner, and are to be coupled on when the train arrives.

Indian railway companies are very liberal about reserved accommodation. They give you a whole carriage on payment of six first-class fares. We have more than that number of servants with us, so it only means paying the difference between their third and first-class fares.

February 1st.—We arrived at Rajghur at eight o'clock this morning, and found horses, elephants, and carts, waiting



to take our belongings to Colonel Fraser's camp at the foot of the hills, about twelve miles away. Alan and I galloped off at once, with a couple of sowars as guides, and arrived at the tents in time for breakfast.

Several young buffaloes and goats have been tied up to attract a tiger, in different spots on the hills. If he kills one, like Mr. Jorrocks he "likes to sleep where he sups," and rarely goes far away. Last night a buffalo was killed, but the tiger could not be marked down. They account for this by the unusually cold and cloudy weather, which keeps the tigers on the move. Old Hermiron Singh is very despondent, and thinks it is going to rain again. He has taken a great liking to Alan, and is most anxious to show him a tiger.

After breakfast we visited the elephant camp, and were shown different ways of getting on their backs. First, the elephant curled up his trunk slightly at the end, the mahout stood on it, and, holding on to the ears, was lifted with the trunk on to his back. Another way, the elephant bends a hind leg for the man to climb up. Some of the elephants did a few tricks, such as salāmming, and walking on their hind legs; but I think the intelligence you read about is as much a fraud as the patience of the camel, or the heat of India. The mahouts are very proud of their animals' heads of hair. To the uninitiated these appear to consist of a few isolated bristles, looking exactly like the stump of a worn-



out stable broom. But these scanty hairs are oiled and dressed most carefully, and occasionally dyed to increase the effect.

The elephants' faces and bodies are often painted for greater adornment—sometimes with black and white spots, or red, orange, and blue bands and stripes. One had an enormous pair of moustachios painted above his tusks; and another long-headed beast was coloured to look like Ally Sloper.

In the afternoon Alan went out shooting, and got two fine buck ravine deer stalking, besides shooting some green pigeons.

February 2nd.—No news of a tiger again this morning; but the shikaris have not returned from one beat, and Hermiron Singh advises we should not leave the camp till they arrive.

About noon we had almost made up our minds to go out after ravine deer, when a sowar galloped into camp saying a donkey had been killed last night near a village some five miles off, and the shikaris have marked the tiger down. In an instant the camp was thrown into the wildest excitement—servants running to and fro with guns, horses being saddled, and howdahs and pads strapped on the elephants. In ten minutes hardly a soul was left behind. Colonel Fraser was on one elephant, his cousin, Mr. J——, on another, and we had a third.



The tiger was lying in dense cover on some low hills. On one side of these was open country, which he was too clever to cross in the daylight, and on the other stretched miles of jungle and grass cover. The elephants with the guns went ahead to cut off the tiger's retreat, and the beaters and pad elephants formed line to drive the tiger towards them. He was soon on foot, but could not be made to break, and we only got an occasional glimpse as he ran through the thick jungle half-way up the hill side. Colonel Fraser and Alan took snap-shots at long distances, but without effect, till the tiger stood in the open for a moment opposite to Mr. J——, but fully two hundred yards from him. The latter made a good and wonderfully lucky shot, killing the tiger stone dead.

It was a cowardly brute, and had shown no fight, nor given the sport we expected. But the excitement at starting was nothing to that when the dead tiger was brought back to camp. It was dusk, and torches were lit, and every one crowded round; old Hermiron Singh leaning on his staff, with one foot on the tiger's head, and an air of pride which clearly said, "I alone did this."

February 3rd.—One of the "tie ups" was killed last night, but the tiger made off. So Alan went out after some neilghai they saw yesterday. He shot a large blue bull, and a ravine deer as he was coming home.

Mrs. Fraser and I went to see the little Raja, who got

up an impromptu entertainment for us, and the boys, his playfellows, showed off their gymnastic feats. They were very agile. First they held a slipper between both hands, and jumped easily over it backwards and forwards without letting it go. Then they grasped the left foot with the right hand, and hopped through on their right leg. One boy could bend backwards while standing until his head touched the ground.

After this the conjurers and snake-charmers came in. The latter went through the usual performance, playing on a sort of flageolet, to the shrill notes of which the snakes seemed to dance. One trick was clever. The charmer suddenly jumped up, rushed at a bystander, and pulled his turban off. Two or three long coiled-up snakes fell out on the ground. The chief conjurer was picturesquely clad in a long orange-coloured robe. His juggling and sleight-of-hand were not extraordinary, and he chattered all the while after the manner of his European *confrères*. Finally he hypnotised himself, and supposed he was bitten by a snake. He ran round and round in convulsions, and at last fell insensible to the ground, the blood pouring from his ears and nose. It was a horrid sight, and we begged it might be stopped, but were told that until he un hypnotised himself nothing could be done. So he was carried away, but came back shortly afterwards much hurt that his performance was not appreciated. To retrieve his reputation, he offered to



go out in the wilderness and charm the foxes and wild beasts. Elephants were sent for, and we adjourned to a jungle about two miles from camp, meeting Alan returning from shooting on our way.

The "jungle," I must add, is another Indian fraud. One pictures palms, bamboos, huge banyan-trees festooned with creepers—in short a dense forest of semi-tropical vegetation. Instead of which one sees (in Northern India at least) at the most a thicket of thorn trees, undergrown with long dried-up grass. Our jungle to-night was an endless uncultivated plain, sparsely dotted with stunted shrubs, and from an elephant one could see a considerable distance.

The conjurer told us to remain quiet, whilst he went forward about a hundred yards, and concealed himself behind a bush. He then began a muffled chuckling kind of call, which he kept up without ceasing. In about two minutes a fox came out of a little nullah close by, and, looking suspiciously about him, trotted towards the noise. Then came another, and presently two or three more ran in from different directions. Soon four or five appeared in the distance, followed by several others; and finally two big jackals, quite half a mile away, came galloping up, as if afraid of being too late for the fun. At last there must have been thirty or forty foxes and jackals clustered together like a pack of hounds not a hundred yards from the bush. They all looked frightened, and seemed to come against their

will; and the instant the man stopped his chant, every one of the animals fled, as if the spell were broken. The Maharaja was delighted, and Hermiron Singh promptly engaged the man on his staff of shikaris.

News of a panther came in the evening, and Mr. J—— went off to lie in wait for it. A goat was tied up near his hiding-place, and he is to wait all night on the chance of getting a shot.

February 4th.—Mr. J—— came back at daybreak without the panther. He gave us a most amusing description of his adventures. The shikari cannot speak English, and Mr. J—— does not know a word of Hindustani, and whenever he tried to gain a little information all his attempts were met by the shikari placing a finger on his lips, in token of silence. He was not allowed to move or stir for fear of frightening the panther, and was placed kneeling to watch through a hole in the screen. Before long he got cramp in his leg, and sat down to rub it. He was quickly stopped by his companion's contemptuous glance. It was bitterly cold, and he turned round for a coat, but was cowed by the look he got. Twice, thinking the shikari dozing, he attempted to crawl towards a blanket, and was each time checked by an imperative gesture. He had a flask, but did not dare to open it; smoking was of course quite out of the question. And when, about an hour later later, after several ineffectual attempts to smother it, he gave a loud sneeze, the shikari



pointed to the blankets, drew them back, and made signs to his victim to lie down; which he did very gladly. No sooner had he done so than a thickly-doubled blanket was thrown over his head, and muffled any further sounds. Mr. J—— remembered no more until he awoke, to find it broad daylight, the shikari sitting in the same immovable attitude, and the goat still bleating outside.

Since he returned, footprints of the panther were found close to the goat; and the shikari, being interrogated, said sadly, "Yes, the panther was very near, but the sahib had a bad cold."

February 5th.—Just beyond our camp the hills open and form a wide cultivated valley, some two miles broad and perhaps five or six long. The fields are covered with marks where wild boars have been grubbing for roots. But they return to the hills as soon as it gets light, and during the daytime we never came across one. Alan was anxious to try if they could be found before sunrise, so about three o'clock this morning he started off with Yar Singh and two or three sowars. They spread out, and rode quietly along the valley; but the dhāl fields were so high that although there was a bright moon it was difficult to see far. At length one of the sowars made out a sounder of hogs in the distance, on their way back to the hills. They all raced in pursuit, and gained on them sufficiently to distinguish three huge boars, besides several sows and smaller pigs. Just as

the foot of the hills were reached they were close to the boars, and in another couple of hundred yards would have speared them. But the broken ground was unridable, and the sounder trotted unmolested up the hill. One old boar, as if aware he was now in safety, calmly faced round, and stood on a projecting rock, regarding them. They managed to scramble their horses up towards him, but he quietly



"JUST BEYOND OUR CAMP THE HILLS OPEN OUT AND FORM A WIDE CULTIVATED VALLEY."

walked on to another point of vantage, and they were obliged to confess themselves beaten. On their way back Alan wounded a black buck, breaking its foreleg. They were all on fresh horses, and started to ride after the buck, who was going strongly, and kept up with the rest of the herd. For more than three miles they galloped as hard as their horses could go, but never gained a yard, and, the buck



reaching the ravines, they were compelled to give up the chase.

February 6th.—There is no chance of another tiger, so we all returned to Ulwar to-day. We now propose going on a visit to the Maharajas of Kotah and Oodeypore, and then to Jodhpore for some pig-sticking. We are asked to join the Archduke of Austria's tiger-shooting party here, but our time is now so short that we are obliged to abandon this and several other expeditions we should have liked to make. One invitation we especially regretted—to take part in an elephant-catching "Kheddah" in Nepaul.

We left Ulwar by rail on Monday afternoon, and arrived at Ajmere station at 3 A.M. After a bath and tea at the hotel, we drove to the cantonment of Nusserabad—about fourteen miles distant—where we breakfasted at the dâk office in the sanctum of the proprietor, a cheery old Parsee.

Kotah is about a hundred and twenty miles from Nusserabad. About half-way is the English cantonment of Deoli, where the celebrated Irregular force officered by Englishmen is stationed. As far as Deoli the road is metalled and in good repair; beyond, it is a mere unbridged track.

We had ordered a horse-dâk, to be laid to Deoli, and started about 9 A.M. in a nondescript carriage called a dâk ghari. A cross between a bathing-machine and a four-wheeled cab is the nearest approach to a description of it

which I can give. We sat inside. On the top our luggage was piled and two servants squatted. A pair of horses drew us along at the rate of about six miles an hour. The "man of the world," and a couple of boxes, went in an ekka. One pony is to draw this the whole distance, and we feared it would never arrive to-night. But the ekka driver thought differently, and, cheered by the promise of a little extra bucksheesh, declared he would be at Deoli before dark. He was even better than his word, and kept up with our dāk ghari the whole way. We had four changes of horses, and except for an hour's rest for luncheon, went straight through, doing the sixty miles in about ten hours. The little ekka pony was an ordinary country-bred beast, of no particular appearance or merit, but did the whole distance apparently with ease, and certainly without being urged on in any way. At the end he did not seem in the least distressed. We noticed during the halt that his driver gave him a sort of coarse flour cake to eat, and I am told that opium was mixed in it.

At the Banas river, about five miles from Deoli, we found a native officer with an invitation from Captain Bell, the Commandant. He also brought camels and a dandy to take me across the river, there being no bridge, and the ford too deep for a carriage. We stayed the night at Captain Bell's charming house, and started for Kotah early the next morning.



The Maharaja laid a dâk for us, and we drove in an open carriage something like a Victoria, but made especially strong for the road, or rather for the absence of one. Our luggage and servants follow on tongas.

About half-way is the small native state of Boondi. Its Raja is one of the old school, uneducated, and ignorant of any language except his own. His horoscope, drawn by the court astrologer, predicted an early death in a house. To avoid this fate he never enters one, living all the year round in tents. He has a strong prejudice against made roads, which he considers only serve to hurt horses' feet. Sandy tracks and bullock-carts were good enough for his forefathers and are good enough for him.

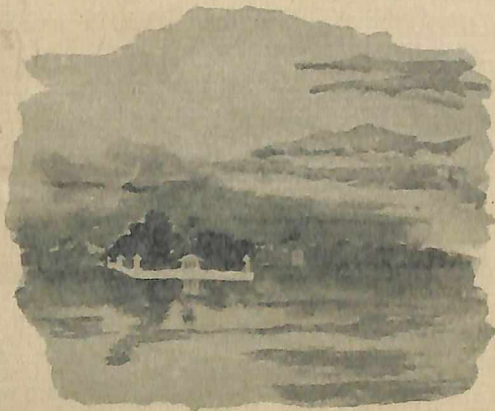
If anyone is in a hurry, why, horses were made for galloping !

His theories on political economy would hardly suit our Free Traders. Grain he forbids to be exported ; and meets the argument that without trade and exchange of commodities the wealth of his State will suffer, by stating that he wishes grain, the staple food of his poorer subjects, to remain cheap ; and is indifferent to a few merchants waxing rich on higher prices.

A twenty-mile drive takes us through this fossil little State, and into the territory of the Kotah Raja. Here we found a made road again, and a large carriage sent to meet us. The President of the Council was also waiting to bid us

welcome to the State ; and gave us a letter from Colonel Wyllie, the Political Agent, who is out in camp with the Maharaja. He invited us to pay him a visit, and very kindly placed his house at our disposal whilst we were at Kotah.

A drive of about six miles over a good road took us to the Chambul river, on the opposite bank of which the town of Kotah is situated. A steam launch was waiting to take



KOTAH.

us across to the Residency, which is built high above the banks, with a lovely view down the river. The gardens descend in terraces to the water's edge.

February 9th.—We went up to see the town, first driving through the beautiful public gardens. They border one side of a large lake, on whose bosom lies a white marble palace, and are like a well-wooded park, watered by little streams and lakelets, and dotted with parterres of bright



flowers and green English-looking lawns. There are many fine trees, and a dense tropical forest shelters two of the sides. Unfortunately in a hot climate all this spells fever; and during the heat of the rainy season it is dangerous even to drive through.

The Maharaja's palace is on a perfect site, in a bend of the river, with lovely views along the valley on both sides. The town is fortified in old Indian fashion, and the palace, as usual, within the citadel, is not built in the centre, but on the river side of the town, with its walls jutting into the water. The interior of the palace is very similar to many others, but the *coup d'œil* from many of the rooms is entrancing, and unlike anything I have yet seen in India. In the courtyard is a large tiger in a cage, and in front of the Hall of Audience a little tank with a barge on it almost as big as itself.

Beyond the town the banks of the river for miles are covered with thick jungle, in which tigers, panthers, and deer are often found during the hot season. At this time of the year, when water is plentiful over all the country, wild animals are naturally more scattered; but a panther has been heard of, and we are going after him this afternoon.

The launch was waiting for us at the foot of the Residency gardens, and we steamed down the river past the town and palace. Their situation and appearance vaguely

remind one of Windsor, if one could imagine that castle bristling with turrets, and broken by hundreds of fantastically-shaped windows, and with the gilt domes and white cupolas of an Indian city nestling at its foot, instead of the red roofs of English homes.

A few miles further down, the river flows between high, precipitous banks, leaving at times a strip of dense jungle between the cliffs and the water. Here, in the hot weather, is the retreat of tigers and big game. There are only two or three places where animals can ascend the cliffs; and these little gullies can be stopped, or enfiladed by rifles on the launch. We had no luck to-day, and although every likely spot was carefully beaten, the panther was not to be found.

The river is full of large alligators. One was lying on the edge of a rock as we passed, and Alan, with a wonderfully lucky shot, killed it. Generally these reptiles are very hard to bag, for if a spark of life is left they manage to slip into the water. We got this one into the boat, although the "man of the world" had doubts whether it was "pukkur shikar."

The Maharaja's band came up to play at the Residency during dinner, and played remarkably well. They are all natives except the bandmaster. The night was warm and starlit, and we sat out on the terrace over the river. The poetry of the scene was entrancing. Below flowed the



broad river, its darkness broken here and there by the bright reflection of a star. On either side, as far as the eye could reach, a pale green sheen shadowed the wild jungle. No sound or trace of man was visible, and, except for the melancholy howl of a jackal, the country might have been destitute of animal life. Suddenly the Maharaja's band struck up "Knocked 'em in the Old Kent Road," with much *verve* and spirit. The bathos was heart-breaking, and the contrast with the weird beauty of the scene almost made me cry—and the men swear.

This house has the reputation of being haunted, although I could not discover what form the ghost takes. During the Mutiny the room above us was the scene of a sad tragedy. The then Resident, Captain Burton, and his two children, were murdered in cold blood by a party of rebels. The ringleader was afterwards caught, and hanged in the room where the crime was committed.

February 10th.—Colonel Wyllie's camp is about forty miles by road from here, and near the Jalra-patan jungles. After breakfast the Raja's carriage came to drive us there, the servants and luggage following in tongas. One of the Kotah nobles, a Rajpoot named Apji Sahib of Paliata (the name of his fief) is coming with us, and has kindly promised to arrange some shooting on the way.

About ten miles from Kotah we found a tent pitched by the roadside, and luncheon ready. There are many



sambhur deer in the neighbouring jungles ; but the cover is so dense they can only be shot by driving with a long line of beaters. I did not go, but Alan says : "The undergrowth was very thick, and when standing on the ground it was impossible to see an animal a yard off, even were he as big as a sambhur. A charpoy [Indian bedstead] had however been tied across the branches of a tree ; and, seated on this, one could see over the lower bushes, and command some eighty yards around. To a native, used to squatting with his legs under him like a tailor, it was a comfortable-enough seat, and allowed him to turn and shoot quickly on either side ; but seated European fashion, it was almost impossible to shoot to the right, or get one's gun round quickly for a snap-shot on that side. Apji Sahib looked so comfortable cross-legged beside me that I attempted to imitate his position, but my legs soon got cramped, and a few minutes' trial was enough.

"Presently the beat commenced, and very soon we heard the crashing through the jungle of some heavy animal coming towards us. Several good sambhur stags had been marked down in these covers, and I looked eagerly through the bushes for the first glimpse of a big pair of horns. The footsteps grew closer, but, alas ! only four or five neilghai appeared. They were all hinds, and, unconscious of their danger, trotted quietly past us, not

thirty yards off. I would not fire, but Apji had no scruples, and quickly knocked two over, right and left.

“Just at that moment, about eighty yards off, and unfortunately to the right, a splendid sambhur stag galloped past. We only caught one glimpse of him, darting through the thick bushes, evidently frightened at



AT KOTAH.

the shots. Apji, who was on my right, was unloaded, and although I turned as quickly as possible, I felt the snap-shot had missed.

“After this nothing appeared, except a few hare and peafowl. We thought the beat over, and I began to descend the tree, very glad to stretch my legs. Just as I touched the ground, the bushes about five or six yards off moved as

if some animal were breaking through. I thought it was one of the beaters, when suddenly, as much to his astonishment as mine, a large black bear came out, so close that I could almost have touched him. The beaters were making a hideous noise not fifty yards behind, and, seeing me in front of him, the bear evidently thought his retreat was cut off. He stopped for just one second, half raised himself on his



COLONEL WYLLIE'S CAMP.

hind legs, and at the same time received a '500 solid bullet in the centre of the white horseshoe on his chest. That second was his last. He never moved again, and seemed to sink down as if his legs had suddenly been cut off. Apji, who was scrambling down the tree, did not know what had happened until he dropped on the ground, and saw the bear lying dead almost at his feet.



“After this we had another beat, but nothing broke except some sambhur hinds, at which, much to Apji's disgust, I would not fire. And shortly afterwards the head shikari told us that the stags I wanted to get had broken back through the beaters, and crossed to a large jungle a couple of miles away; so, very unwillingly, we returned to the tent.”

* * * * *

There is a good deal of spear grass in these jungles, and I am glad to find that we are not the only sufferers. Alan went to see if Paliata was ready to go on, and found him seated in the shut-up landau with nothing on but a blanket, whilst the servants were engaged pulling the prickly points out of his clothes.

We found Colonel and Mrs. Wyllie camped in a clearing in the forest, and a very comfortable tent ready for us. The Maharaja's camp is a few miles away. The Maharaja is a young man of about seventeen, and the adopted son of *feu le roi*. A short time back he was nobody—the younger son of a peasant—now he is the head of the State. There were two brothers, sons of a poor and distant relation of the late Maharaja, who was childless. It was known that the latter would exercise his right of adoption, and generally believed that the elder brother would be chosen. The English authorities therefore sent him to the college at Ajmere, and he was educated and brought up like other young Rajas.

Although a relation is preferred, Hindoos are very jealous of their right of choice being prejudiced. And whether the Maharaja thought this was being interfered with, or from some other cause, on his death-bed he named the younger brother as his heir. This boy was then about sixteen years old, and had run wild in his native village until he left it to rule the State. However, every one speaks well of him, and, with the help of an able tutor, he is working hard to fit himself for the duties of his position. The poor elder brother never got over the disappointment and is seriously ill ; some say dying.





CHAPTER XIV.

Shooting with the Maharaja—A curious shot—Boondi palace—The Raja's own room—The Raja's camp—At Deoli—The ayah is robbed—A mongoose story—Spearing crocodiles—By "shigram" to Nusserabad—Chittore, the "invincible city"—The Tower of Victory—Oodeypore—Colonel Miles—The Residency—The Oodeypore princes—Descendants of the Sun—The present Maharaja—In the old palace—The armoury—The new palace—A lovely scene.

February 11th.—Alan went off with Colonel Wyllie to a jungle some twelve miles distant, where they are going to shoot with the Maharaja. They had very bad luck, and never even saw a sambhur, the herd again breaking back through the line of beaters. A large hyena came out close to Alan, who killed it with one shot, and the Maharaja shot a wild boar. It is impossible to ride in these thick jungles, so boars are shot whenever they are wanted for food. Rajpoots, unlike Mahommedans, have no scruples against eating pork, or indeed any meat, except beef.

February 12th.—We started soon after daybreak to return to Kotah. Paliata again came with us to arrange the shooting. The first jungle we beat was composed of big trees, in some places growing very closely together, but with little or no undergrowth. The usual charpoy had been tied



up a tree, but Alan found he could see better and farther on the ground, and decided to stand at the foot of his tree. It was lucky he did, otherwise they would have lost the first bear. Apji Sahib posted himself in a tree about fifty yards off, and the beat had hardly commenced when he fired a shot; at what, it was impossible to see. But directly afterwards Rahman caught a glimpse of a bear which had evidently passed Apji, and was slowly cantering through the jungle behind. There was an open space in the direction in which it was going, and Alan set off to run towards it, in the hope of cutting the bear off. Just as he reached the open ground it was entering the thick jungle beyond, and about a hundred and fifty yards away. Alan had only time to fire a snap-shot, but by good luck the bear dropped in his tracks. They went up and flung stones, but it never moved and was quite dead.

When they examined the animal, they found three bullet wounds, which could not be accounted for, as only two shots were fired, one of which (Apji's) had missed. On taking the skin off the riddle was solved; and they found that Alan had made a very curious shot, and that only his *one* bullet had hit the bear. The ball had first struck behind, gone out at the thigh, and then entered the bear's body again, traversing it and lodging at the back of the skull.

The next beat, they stood on a rock in a defile by the

river. A very large bear came out of the jungle close to Alan, who wounded it, but not vitally. The bear then came straight at them, and began to scramble up the rock, but was knocked over by Alan's second barrel. It picked itself up, and was making off slowly through the jungle, when Alan ran up and killed it with a bullet through the side of the head. It was an enormous bear, and the biggest we have shot.

February 14th.—Kotah. We went down the river in the launch this morning, but saw nothing except a few alligators. In the afternoon Paliata's son came to call. He apologised for not coming before, and said he had only just returned from being married. As he is a man about thirty, and all Hindoos marry their first wife when mere boys, this is probably his third or fourth better "fraction"—one can hardly say "half."

We went afterwards to take a last look at the beautiful gardens, and on our way back ransacked the bazaar for old arms. In this out-of-the-way place we hoped to discover some good specimens. But although many were offered for sale, very few were worth buying.

February 15th.—At eight this morning we started on our way back to Deoli, and arrived at Boondi about noon, after a fearful jolting over the Boondi Raja's cart-track. During luncheon a present of several baskets of fruit and flowers was brought from the Raja, who also sent a carriage



in case we wished to visit the palace. He himself is living as usual, in tents outside the walls.

The situation of the palace and town of Boondi is very fine—built at the foot of a steep hill, on the top of which stands the old castle. In the centre of the town is a large piece of water, on the edge of which are built numerous houses of nobles and other rich natives. Temples abound on every side, and bougainvillias and scarlet chillies, on the flat-topped houses, lend considerable colour to the scene. The palace is on the side of the hill, and the road too steep for a carriage, so we were carried up in dandies.

The view from the palace windows is interesting, but there is little else to see. The walls of several rooms are decorated in fresco with the usual battle and hunting scenes, and what furniture there is seems of early Victorian make and taste. The Raja's own particular room was arranged something like the parlour of an English farmhouse, and, like it, looked as if it were seldom or never entered. A table, covered with a Manchester-printed tablecloth, has four books arranged at the corners, and scattered about are several of those "present from Brighton" paper-weights which display a miniature snow-storm when they are reversed. In the centre of the wall is one of those fearful German trick pictures. You look at it from one side and see the Queen, from the other side the portrait changes to the Prince of Wales.

On our way to Deoli we passed the Raja's camp, and went in to pay our respects. He was seated under an open tent, surrounded by his attendants in regular Durbar fashion, and received us with much formality. Round his neck he wore strings of really wonderful pearls and rubies, the latter flat and uncut. After an exchange of a few conventional remarks, we were hung with garlands of flowers and sprinkled with rose-water, a present of a piece of betel-nut concluding the interview.

We arrived at Deoli about 6 P.M. and drove straight to Captain Bell's house. He had very kindly asked us to stop and get a day's sambhur shooting. I found my ayah, who had been sent on yesterday evening, half hysterical with grief and excitement. She had been robbed during her journey last night, and gave me a graphic account of her adventures.

"Memsahib, I fast asleep feel my blanket pulled. I think it slipping, I pull, and see one man pulling too. Then I call to ghari-wallah (driver), and say, 'I robbed.' He say, 'You dream.' Then I see one hand put in carriage, and take my beautiful brass mug all made of copper. Then, Memsahib, I give ghari-wallah one push. He fell on road. I say, 'You go find my blanket; you not come back.' So he go, and says he sees man run away very fast. 'You not get your blanket again.'"

And she did not. No trace could be found of the thief,



who appears to have been watching, and seized the opportunity when the sowar in charge of the luggage had dropped behind to water his horse.

February 16th.—Alan went out shooting with Captain Bell. They saw a good stag, but could not get a shot. In the middle of the night I was awakened by a tame mongoose, a pet of Mrs. Bell's. It had hidden itself in my room, and I was suddenly aroused by, as I thought, an enormous rat running over my bed. To-day the mongoose has been in disgrace. Whilst we were out driving it seized the opportunity to pay a visit to the quail house, and bit off the heads of over twenty quail which were being fattened.

February 17th.—The mongoose has further distinguished itself. Mrs. Bell had a sitting of rare eggs sent her, which were put in a cupboard till a hen could be found. We heard a curious noise in the cupboard, and, opening it, discovered the mongoose seated on its hind legs eating the last of the eggs.

They are dreadfully mischievous little beasts, and not sociable like a dog or a cat. I could not help asking of what use they were, and was told the story of an inquisitive man in a railway carriage, who was trying to find out the contents of a basket carried by a fellow-passenger.

At last he was told it was a mongoose. "Yes, but what is the use of a mongoose?"

"Oh, it kills snakes," was the reply.



"But there are no snakes in England."

"Oh, yes; my brother occasionally has *delirium tremens*, and sees lots of snakes."

"But, my dear sir, what he sees are imaginary snakes."

"Well, and this is an imaginary mongoose," said the traveller (who must have been a Yankee), disclosing a perfectly empty basket.

In a country infested by deadly snakes like India, the mongoose is really a useful little animal. The most venomous cobra dreads him, and he kills down ordinary snakes like a cat does mice. It used to be supposed that the mongoose possessed some antidote against their bites, but in late years it has been clearly proved that they owe their immunity simply to their agility, and the quickness with which they seize a snake before it has time to strike.

There is a most exciting sport peculiar to Deoli—spearing crocodiles. But it is only possible in the dry season, when the lake they inhabit becomes shallow. The crocodiles then live in the mud at the bottom, and are speared, or rather harpooned, from the bow of a flat-bottomed boat. The butt of the harpoon is fastened to a strong line, and the crocodile played like a gigantic fish until exhausted enough to be led near the shore. Then the noose of a rope is slipped over his head, and he is hauled on land. Frequently the crocodile shows fight and charges the boat, or attacks the men drag-

ging him ashore. Some of these saurians are enormous brutes, at least twenty feet long.

Our next visit is to Oodeypore, and we started this afternoon for the railway station of Nusserabad. Captain Bell very kindly lent us his "shigram," which is an enormous carriage drawn by four camels, and long enough to sleep in comfortably. A dāk of camels was laid along the road, and we did the sixty miles in about ten hours. We stopped only once, for dinner, which we brought with us and ate by the roadside, whilst our beds were being made in the "shigram." Then we turned in and slept soundly, the carriage trotting along a smooth road to the railway station. The only disturbing element was an occasional "bobbery" camel.

The train leaves Nusserabad at 5 P.M. and arrives at Chittore (the nearest station to Oodeypore) about noon. We found one of the Maharaja of Oodeypore's carriages waiting at Chittore, and drove to the dāk bungalow, where we intend to stay for the night. It is a long drive, seventy or eighty miles, to Oodeypore, and to-day our time will be fully taken up visiting the ancient fortified town of Chittore. This used to be called the "invincible city," and for many years formed the stronghold of the Rajpoots in their struggles with the Mahommedan invaders.

Situated on a high rocky plateau, with sides nearly perpendicular, it was almost impregnable in the earlier days of firearms, and was not only the capital of Meywar, but the



centre of resistance of the Oodeypore princes. Besieged seven times, it was sacked nearly as often. Once it held out for nearly ten years, and was only taken when further resistance was hopeless. But the Mahommedan conquerors reaped a barren booty. Women, jewels, gold, all the Rajpoot warriors possessed, all the town held of value, were heaped in one great funeral pyre and burnt to ashes. Then the men, sallying forth, threw themselves on the invaders, and died sword in hand. The town was again sacked after a long siege by the Emperor Akbar, who put every living being to death, and left the city in ruins. It has never been restored, and, as a Rajpoot historian describes, "this royal abode, which for a thousand years has towered above all other towns of Hindustan, has become the haunt of wild beasts, and its temples desecrated and in ruins."

The hill of Chittore is on the opposite side of the river to the dāk bungalow, and we rode there on an elephant sent by the Maharaja's vakeel. A fine bridge is now in ruins, and the stream has to be forded. The outer walls of the old town are little above the level of the plain, and a good road leads up the hill through embattled gates, and past several inner lines of fortification which bar the way to the summit.

Although the Government of Meywar has been moved to the modern town of Oodeypore, a body of the Maharaja's

sepoys still guard the old ruined capital, and turned out smartly as we passed the gate. The walls are also in places being rebuilt, or prevented from falling into decay, more, I presume, from sentiment, than for any use the place could be against modern artillery. It would be well if the splendid ruins of the town were as well cared for. In places they are fast crumbling away, and their stones being dislodged by the roots of climbers and parasitic plants.

Even the celebrated Tower of Victory shows signs of neglect. This is to be regretted, for it is a fine instance of early Hindoo architecture, and should be valued by Rajpoots as a historic monument of their bravery and bygone conquests. Standing over a hundred feet high, the tower is built in nine stories, the upper one projecting, pagoda fashion, with overhanging cornices and balconies. The rich carving with which the stone is profusely decorated is still sharp and bold, and everywhere statues, ornaments, and quaint details cover the outside and break its outline. Inside, the ascent is by a narrow winding staircase, said to be infested in the summer by small venomous snakes. If this be true, the cold weather has now driven them to take refuge in the numerous holes and chinks in the stones. A more or less sacred idol receives you at each landing, and one of probably greater importance has a temple at the foot of the tower. Indeed,



priests and Brahmans are plentiful, and seem to be the principal inhabitants of these ruins.

The plateau which formed the seat of the ancient city is about two miles long, but although the remains of the causeways and paved streets can still be traced, the houses are level with the ground, and only an occasional stone threshold marks what was once the habitation of man. A few ryots guide their ploughs between the *débris* of centuries, and where they have not cultivated the land it is overgrown with jungle. Numerous large masonry tanks, stone fountains, and reservoirs for water prove the bygone existence of a densely populated city; and all around the remains of palaces, temples, and towers testify to its past grandeur.

February 19th.—Most of our servants and luggage went off on ekkas to Oodeypore last night, and at eight o'clock this morning a carriage of the Maharaja's came to take us. It was drawn by four artillery horses, ridden by their drivers, and under charge of a sub-officer of the same corps. Attired in the undress uniform of a gunner, he sat on the box, and directed the movements of our team. The drivers started by word of command, and after each change of horses received the orders, "Attention," "Trot," "March." At the last stage the horses refused to "trot," or even to "march," and after a short but sharp tussle broke the pole of the carriage. This delayed us about an hour,

while the broken pieces were being lashed together, but about 6 P.M. we reached the Oodeypore hills. The town is



HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJA OF OODEYPORE.

situated in a large valley, entirely surrounded by mountains. The approach is through a narrow defile, barred by a high crenellated wall, which closes the opening, and runs up both



sides of the adjacent hills. No doubt in the days of matchlocks this formed a formidable obstacle.

Shortly after driving under an arched and fortified gate the hills recede, and you enter a wild and fertile valley. Some miles farther, and near the opposite mountains, is the city of Oodeypore. Colonel Miles, the Political Agent, has kindly asked us to stay with him, and we drove straight to the Residency, a nice house covered with lovely Maréchal Niel roses.

February 21st.—The Maharaja sent this morning to inquire after us, and asked Alan to meet him at the palace. The Oodeypore princes are of the oldest family in India, and claim descent from the Sun. During the generations they have been dwellers on our earth they can boast of many distinguished and less mythical ancestors, and are undoubtedly descended by marriage from the ancient kings of Persia and the later Roman emperors. The State has been ruled by the present dynasty since the eighth century. But of course the line was not unbroken, and owes its continuity to the ancient Hindoo custom of adoption—failing male issue. The adopted son is always of the same tribe, and generally of the same family as the ruling Maharaja; but, like the Kotah Raja I have before mentioned, may often have passed his youth in obscurity, or been little higher than a peasant in the social scale.

The present Maharaja of Oodeypore is himself the

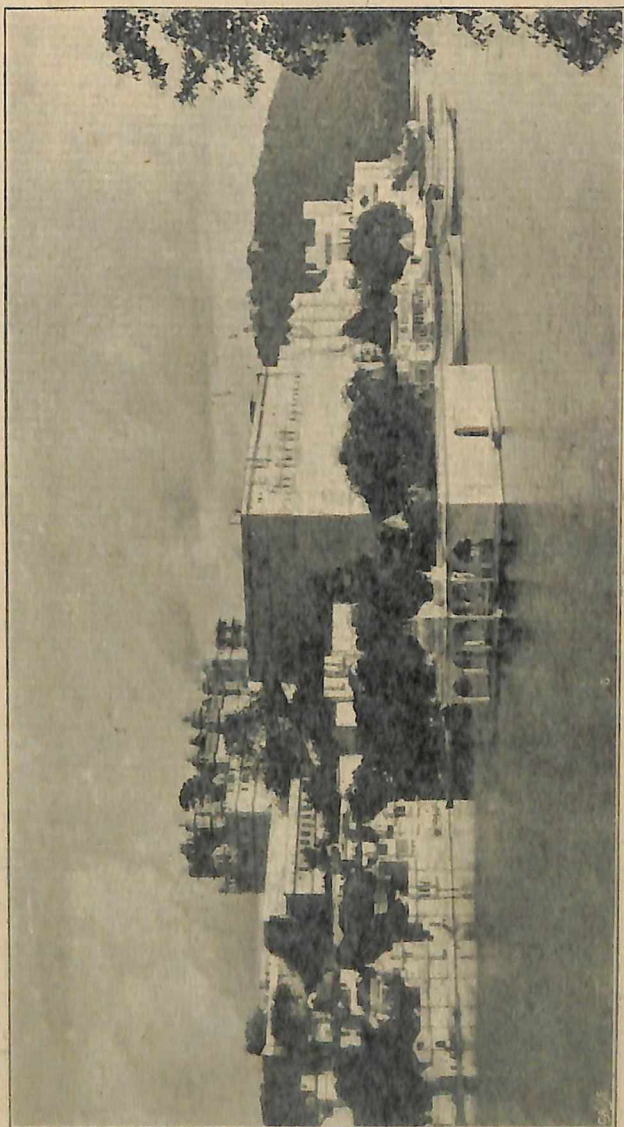
adopted son of the late chief, and was not chosen till long past boyhood. He has consequently not had the English education of a modern Raja, but in compensation is said to possess all the good qualities of the ancient chiefs. Like all Rajpoots he is quiet and dignified, yet with a charming manner. His one passion is the chase. Once, in the pursuit of a boar over those rocky plains, his horse fell with such force that as the Maharaja came to the ground a sharp stone was driven through his temple. He ought to have been killed, but seems to have been but little affected. The skull was trepanned, and he rides as hard as ever. He is also an excellent shot, especially with the rifle.

In the afternoon we drove to the palace, said to be the largest in India, and certainly on the loveliest site. The oldest portion of the palace was originally built on a small hill facing the lake. From time to time as it was added to, the wings outgrew the hill, and have been carried on the same level, supported by three tiers of arches. A new wing is now in the course of construction, built on this plan. The approach from the town leads up a steep hill, and the courtyard of the palace is entered under a handsome marble gateway, pierced by three Moorish-looking arches, and surmounted by a cupola. As usual, one's ideas of congruity are shocked. In front of this principal door live the elephants; and horses are stabled all round the courtyard.

We first visited the Armoury, which possesses a unique

THE PALACE ON OODEYPORE LAKE.

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THE PALACE ON OODEYPORE LAKE.



collection of Indian arms of every size, shape, and kind. One sword has a crystal handle set with rubies and diamonds. The blade of another is jewelled, and the hilt of blue enamel and diamonds. Altogether, nearly two hundred swords are set with valuable precious stones in every conceivable way. A shield of buffalo skin is ornamented with large crosses of diamonds, another is studded with amethysts. One shield has two pistols contrived to fire through it, and a dagger that opens like a pair of scissors. In the midst of these barbaric weapons, we found Thornhill's familiar name on a case of English swords given by the Prince of Wales to the Maharaja.

There are a great many fine rooms decorated in the usual Indian style. One little chamber is lined throughout with Dutch tiles, painted in blue with the ordinary Scriptural subjects. This is the first of the kind we have seen, and I endeavoured—but in vain—to discover its origin and history. It must have been done the best part of a century ago.

Adjoining the old palace, but forming a separate building, is the modern or English palace, furnished throughout in European fashion. In one suite of rooms everything is made of glass—beds, tables, chairs—everything. Apart from these Eastern eccentricities, the palace, especially for its situation and surroundings, is alone worth a visit from England.



In the distance are the purple mountains of the Arivales, forming the background to the clear blue lake, which, shut in by the hills on all sides, washes the walls and terraces of the palace. In the middle of its waters rise three white marble palaces, which might have been raised by the genie of Aladdin's lamp. The islands which form their foundations are invisible, covered entirely by graceful fairylike palaces, whose arches, cupolas and terraces project far into the lake beyond. From an inner garden of one pavilion, tall, waving palms shoot up, standing out darkly against the setting sun. Seen through the flowers and trees on the palace terrace it was like a dream of fairyland. I have seen nothing so lovely on Maggiore or Como, or even on the beautiful and more-talked-of lakes of Kashmir.

A boat was waiting to row us to the water palaces. I should have preferred not to have gone, and would rather have let them rest in my memory distant and unknown. But, alas ! the sightseer has no freedom of choice. And the beauty of the evening on the lake somewhat compensated for the disillusionment of one's ideas.

One palace was the refuge of many Englishwomen during the Mutiny. They were sheltered here by the then Maharaja, and all the boats on the lake removed, so that the rebels could not reach them. This pavilion is held above the waters on the backs of elephants carved in stone. An inner garden is laid out in the pattern of a Kashmir



shawl, but without paths, and in their place there is water, the flower beds being raised in stone basins above the level of the lake.

The Indian buildings on another island are not improved by a nineteenth-century Grecian temple, added by a late resident.

It was nearly dark before we ended our explorations, and we were lighted by torches along the passages and terraces. One room is painted with pictures of the Ranees, and another with a panoramic view of a tiger hunt. My advice to future tourists who wish to visit them is—don't.

It was night when we turned homewards ; but the fires along the shore and lit-up temples on the water's edge served to guide us. The colour, noise, and movement as we rowed up to the quay dimly recalled a Venice evening in carnival time.



CHAPTER XV.

Pig-sticking with the Maharaja—The clannishness of the Rajpoots—A story of an Oodeypore prince—Struggles for precedence—A visit to the jail—Afternoon tea with General Nixon—His daughter's native dresses—The Maharaja's farewell dinner to us—Salvationists in India—Ajmere—*En route* for Jodhpore—A station made out of an old tomb—Sir Pertab Singh—Jodhpore—Pig-sticking with Major Beatson—The Maharaja's zenana—The old palace—Some splendid jewels—A fetish—The Raja's silver bed—A Jodhpore nautch—Sons of the Moon—Pig-sticking with the Archduke of Austria—Calling back a train.

February 22nd.—Alan went out pig-sticking with the Maharaja at daybreak. The wild boars have to be driven by beaters from the hills, and very little of the ground is practicable for horses. They had a gallop after one boar, but it got away in the ravines. Afterwards they beat a hill, and shot a hyena and several wild boars, it being impossible to ride them here.

The Maharaja came to the Residency this evening to return Alan's call. He was accompanied by a numerous suite of courtiers and servants—rather a wild-looking lot, but all with a manly independence of bearing. The Rajpoots are said to be of Scythian origin, and, whether this be true or not, are undoubtedly the finest race in India.



Clannish as a Highlander, they are as proud of their pedigrees. And like the Jews, the poorest tribesman can trace a descent unmixed with Gentile blood. The Mahomedans with some truth retort, that in great families the blood, if pure, has (owing to the custom of adoption) flowed through many mean channels.

Although beaten by the Moghuls, the spirit of the Meywar tribes was never subdued, and Oodeypore to this day proudly boasts that it never gave a daughter to the victor's harem. To this—more fortunate than other Rajpoot reigning families—and to their undoubtedly ancient lineage, the Maharajas owe their precedence over the other princes of Rajpootana. Unfortunately for the Oodeypore Maharajas, their revenue is not equal to their pride of race. So, although they regard modern potentates, like Scindiah, Holkar, and the Guicowar, as mushroom upstarts, the wealth and dominions of these princes nowadays put Oodeypore in the background. I candidly confess I like the Rajpoots.

Even the country people have the independent bearing of an Englishman, with just a *soupçon* of Gallic courtesy to take away its roughness. The Irish only lack stamina to be the Rajpoots of the West. An Indian official (who was present at the scene) told me a story of the last Oodeypore prince which I think bears out my predilection.

On arrival at a Viceroy's Durbar, the Maharaja found



that his chair had been placed below one of those he characterises as upstarts. At first he resolved to return home; but this official, whose duty it was to arrange the ceremony, represented to him the difficulty of reconciling conflicting interests, and pointed out that his absence from the Durbar would be an insult to his Empress. He acquiesced and remained, but stipulated that he should be allowed to stand. It should never be said that a king of Oodeypore sat below Rajas of lower lineage. And, although he was an old man, my informant told me he remained standing throughout a ceremony of many hours' duration.

One cannot help admiring the loyalty and stubbornness of the old Rajpoot prince; but I confess that some of the stories I have heard of Hindoo Rajas' struggles for precedence savour more of the trickery of a schoolboy. One Raja had to be severely admonished for a juggle of this description tried on his Political Agent. This officer represents the Viceroy, and sits on an equality with the Raja, to whose Court he is accredited. And this particular Raja, in order to boast that he sat higher than the "Agent Sahib," prepared him a special chair, with legs cut an inch lower than his own.

February 23rd.—Alan drove off with the Maharaja to shoot some jungles twelve miles away. I was taken to see the jail, where a peculiar and rather pretty cotton carpet is made. We then went round the quarters of the female



prisoners. One of them is a woman of rank, and was convicted of having instigated the murder of her husband, and received a sentence of twenty years' imprisonment. It is said she paid a servant 20,000 rupees to have him poisoned. Her daughter, a girl of six, has passed her short life in the jail with her mother. This year, in accordance with Indian custom, she is of age to be married. So the Governor of the jail is arranging to have a husband found for her.

We went to tea with General Nixon, who formerly used to be the Resident here. After leaving the service he tried England and the Colonies, but thinks India the best place to reside in, and has finally made his home in Oodeypore, where he passed so many years previously. He now lives in a charming old palace of the Maharaja's. His daughter is with him, and shares his liking for India. She is a great friend of the Ranees, and a frequent visitor to the Zenana. Amongst other curiosities, she has several beautiful native dresses, facsimiles of those worn by purdah ladies of rank. One was of fine orange-coloured muslin, with a broad border of woven silver. The skirt measured over two hundred feet round the hem. The jacket and sari were of the same coloured silk, trimmed with silver. She has also the whole of a native lady's outfit, including jewellery and the large silver box they use to hold betel-nut, and the henna for staining their hands.



To-night we were entertained at a farewell dinner given by the Maharaja, and all the Europeans in Oodeypore, about twenty people, were invited to meet us.

February 24th.—This morning we started on our way back to the railway, drawn by the artillery post-horses. It was a very unpleasant drive, for shortly after leaving Oodeypore the rain came down in torrents. The carriage was a kind of barouche with a dickey behind, and had only the usual hood to protect one. To supplement this, a large sheet of waterproof was produced, and stretched over the carriage, first covering the men on the box seat, and then passing over the hood and servants in the dickey, so that we were all in a sort of tent.

We dined at the dāk bungalow at Chittore, and then went to bed in our sleeping carriage, which is to be picked up by the mail train at 2 A.M. It is very curious that all Indian trains seem to arrive or depart in the middle of the night. Just as I was falling asleep, a sound of native music aroused me. But the nasal singing and tom-tom accompaniment had a strange likeness to English popular airs. Alan stepped out on the platform, and to his surprise found that the tom-tom supplied the place of "General" Booth's big drum, and the singers were native Salvationists. They were on tour through the country accompanied—or led—by an English girl.

No doubt in the slums of English cities the good done



by the Salvation Army is great, but in this country I cannot help thinking they are a mistake. The Mahommedans only laugh at them, or are rather pleased at the seeming degradation of the "Sahib-logs'" religion. But the educated Hindoos are ripe for conversion to a purer faith. The more intellectual spirits are already seeking one, or are manufacturing it for themselves. And a proud, high-spirited race like the Rajpoots can only be disgusted with this hysterical tomfoolery, and despise a religion which allows its women to live unprotected with men of a lower race. It was not in this way St. Paul set forth to convert the Gentiles.

A people can only be bettered by appealing to their better instincts. With the Rajpoots these are courage and chivalry, and they were ever ready to die a thousand deaths rather than one of *their* women should lose caste. Far be it from me to say that these poor English Salvationist girls do not do their duty according to their lights; but they gain little credit from the natives they seek to convert, the Rajpoots especially, by living with the dregs of a populace whose ideas of delicacy are fathoms below the level of the author of *Tom Jones*.

February 25th.—We arrived at Ajmere this morning, and had just time for a drive round the bazaar and fort before our train left for Jodhpore. The chief features of Ajmere are a large artificial lake and the perpendicular

mountainous cliff which overshadows the town. There is also a fine old mosque, said to have been built at the same time as the Kootub at Delhi, and well worth a visit. Ajmere is English territory, and has been in our possession since the beginning of the century. The town and fort were the scene of many battles between the Rajpoots and Mahommedans, and were often in the possession of the latter, who have left many interesting traces of their occupation.

In the afternoon we left by train for Jodhpore. At Marwar Junction, where we arrive about 7 P.M., we change on to the Jodhpore-Bikaner railway, and finally reach Jodhpore about 2 P.M. to-morrow. We had dinner in what was said to be the only refreshment-room on the line, in a station constructed out of an old tomb. The dinner might have been of the same age as the tomb; and having assuaged as best we could a fine appetite on most villainous food, we found to our annoyance that Sir Pertab Singh had very kindly sent our dinner to Marwar. On arrival there we were met by cooks and servants, and conducted to a carefully-prepared little repast, to which we were unfortunately not able to do justice. The train to Jodhpore does not leave until nine o'clock to-morrow morning, so we had our beds made up in the waiting-room, and slept there.

February 26th.—On our way to Jodhpore we had an ex-



cellent luncheon in the train, cooked by Sir Pertab's servants in the guard's van. They clambered along the footboard to our carriage to serve each course. All the time the train was steaming on its way, although the pace was not very alarming—barely twelve miles an hour.

Sir Pertab Singh met us at Jodhpore, and took us to one of his houses. After he left, Major Beatson, to whom we had a letter of introduction, and several others, came to call. Jodhpore is an extraordinary-looking country. There are no rivers or lakes, and the only water to be seen is in an artificial reservoir. Neither are there any trees, nor any cultivation visible from our house, and the landscape all around is flat and bare. The country looks like a Sahara, only broken by two or three tall, red brick houses, which stand out of the white dusty plain with startling abruptness. Behind the city is the ancient rock fortress. And everything—castle, city, plain—looks as if it had been distempered with a light wash of yellow ochre.

I believe the climate is healthy; and no doubt habit is second nature, for one of the English officers told me that he felt stifled in a city after having lived on these open plains. The streets and houses of London seemed to him a prison, and he longed again for the air and space of Jodhpore.

Wild boars are very numerous, and of late years Jodhpore has become famous for its pig-sticking, owing to Sir Pertab Singh's encouragement of this and indeed every kind of

sport. Formerly the wild boars were shot in the hills they inhabit, and no attempt was made to drive them on to ridable ground. Now large sums are yearly spent in preserving and feeding them; and they are enticed into the best riding country by an ingenious plan.

At first grain was laid at the foot of the hills, and the pigs came down readily during the night to feed. Then it was placed further off, until little by little the sounders were induced to search for food in the middle of the plain. The riders start long before daybreak, and conceal themselves behind clumps of bushes, well out in the open. As the dawn breaks, the old boars are seen trotting quietly back to the hills, and are generally ridden down and speared before they reach them. They are very savage, especially in the hot season, when they will frequently attack men without provocation. It takes very little to make an old boar show fight, and when he does he is the pluckiest animal in creation. He will wriggle himself up the spear to get at you, and if the spear breaks, his long tusks are sharp as a razor, and slash like an Indian sword.

February 27th.—Alan went out pig-sticking with Major Beatson, the officer in charge of the Imperial Service Troops. They started about three o'clock in the early morning, and rode to a valley about ten miles off, where they duly waited for the boars. Their number was incredible. Directly it got light enough to see, sounder after sounder cantered past



on their way home ; and sometimes two or three gigantic boars would be seen hastening back in different directions, to reach the hills before sunrise.

They got several capital gallops, and altogether killed six fine boars. One was an enormous fellow, and after he had been slightly speared went into some thorn bushes and kept turning round facing the horses, so that they could not get at him. At last, with a grunt of defiance, he charged out, and, breaking Alan's spear, cut his horse badly above the hock. Alan was riding a very nice little Australian mare, who, curiously enough, was badly cut by a charging boar the last time she was ridden, and had been laid up from the wound for three months. Major Beatson also had his horse severely cut by another boar, although it was so badly speared that it died shortly afterwards.

In the afternoon we went out after the little Indian gazelle (chinkara). Several herds were grazing in the ravines within a mile or two of our house. They were very shy, but we managed to shoot two bucks with good heads.

February 28th.—A salute of cannon announced the Archduke of Austria's arrival this morning. A large camp has been prepared for him in the public gardens, which are closed for the occasion. There is to be no pig-sticking to-day, so we set off to inspect the old castle and palace. They form a most curious and interesting pile of buildings, standing on the summit of a steep scarped hill, above the



native city. One side of the castle is built on the edge of the precipice, and the walls almost seem a continuation of the cliff. Seen from the distance, the palace and citadel look bare and plain; but as you ascend the long, winding road, masses of beautiful carvings reveal themselves, and the front becomes broken with quaint windows and picturesque overhanging galleries.

As you enter by the arched gateway, lumps of dried clay in rows down its pillars at once catch the eye. They are silvered, or gilt over, and each bears the impress of a small hand—the last mark of a Ranee before she went forth to perform suttee, and throw herself on the funeral pyre. The Maharaja's Zenana is still situated in the fort, and here the ladies of his family now live.

Part of the old palace surrounds a courtyard built of red sandstone perfectly covered with carving and tracery, so finely executed that it looks more like the work of a jeweller than a stonemason. Another pavilion at the side is of marble, also beautifully carved and decorated. Inside it is little different from other Indian palaces. There is the inevitable Shish-mahal, and the usual heterogeneous collection of indifferent furniture. But the jewel-room is a wonderful sight! In the centre are many glass-cases filled with every description of ornament; diamonds without number, and ropes of pearls as common as strings of onions. All round the room are shelves and cupboards piled up with gold



armour, gold shields, gold caparisons for elephants, gold housing for horses, gold cooking pots—in fact, gold everything, except a large bath, which is only of silver.

The jewels are splendid. One necklace of pearls is made in ten rows, the lowest reaching to the waist, and from each row hangs a big emerald at least three inches long. Three rows of huge emeralds pierced and strung like beads make another neck ornament. A third consists of a string of large round pearls, from each of which hangs a pear-shaped pearl as big as a pigeon's egg. There are four necklaces of enormous diamonds, and any number of aigrettes, tiaras, bracelets, and anklets—in fact, every personal ornament you can think of. To a European eye the jewels, especially the emeralds, are spoilt by being uncut. Even the diamonds are flat, and lack the sparkle and shine of brilliants.

None of these lovely things are locked away in cases; and what makes it more fascinating to a woman, one can handle them, and examine their beauties closely. The brightest jewel seen through a glass loses some of its attraction; and even the Royal Regalia in the Tower might be mere coloured glass and tinsel, viewed as it is at a distance, behind barricades and gratings.

We were also shown a little common-looking shell, on which great store is set. It only differs from others of its kind (not worth a farthing) in that its inward curl bends to the right instead of to the left. Of course it is a fetish, and



is supposed to bring luck to its possessor. The only other thing of interest is the Raja's bed. It is of solid silver, but without legs, and suspended by silver chains from the ceiling, with the intention of rocking him to sleep.

In the afternoon there was a game of polo for the Archduke, and a big dinner at night, when everybody in the place was asked to meet him. After dinner there was a nautch in the large durbar tent. Jodhpore is celebrated for its nautch-girls and its national dances. Although these dances have little poetry of motion to boast of, they certainly have some life and spirit, which is far from being the case with the ordinary Indian nautch.

There were at least a hundred girls dancing, who moved together with considerable precision, chanting a chorus the while. The savage-sounding music is deepened by a large bass drum, whose constant "boum-boum!" marks the changes in the measures. Numbers of unkempt, dishevelled-looking men with flaming torches follow every movement of the dancers, advancing and retreating with them, and casting a barbaric glare of light through the smoke and gloom. And when the drum thundered and the women threw up their arms together with a sort of death shriek, the scene was intensely wild and dramatic.

Like all Rajpoot States, the history of Marwar teems with tales of victory and defeat in its struggles against the Mahommedan invaders, and I believe this dance commemor-



ates some national disaster. The Jodhpore Raja ranks below His Highness of Oodeypore, and the latter having appropriated the Sun, the Jodhpore family is obliged to content itself with the Moon for an ancestor.

Wednesday.—Early this morning Alan went pig-sticking with the Archduke's party. At first they waited as usual at daybreak for the homeward-bound boar, and then there was a drive of all the hills around on a large scale, with several thousand beaters. They had wonderfully good sport, getting many good runs, and altogether spearing twenty-six large boars. Three or four horses and one man were cut by their tushes. A charging boar got right under Alan's horse, and remained for half a minute, moving him up and down like a boat at sea. The poor horse bounded and plunged, and at last kicked itself free. Directly the boar was killed they looked at the horse, expecting to find it badly injured, but except for a few scratches it was little the worse.

Thursday.—We left Jodhpore by the 2 P.M. train, and very nearly missed it. It had already started, and we should have been left behind if Sir Pertab Singh's aide-de-camp had not ridden after the express and brought it back. Fancy galloping after the "Wild Irishman" or "Flying Scotchman" on such a quest, or any quest at all!



CHAPTER XVI.

Arrival at Baroda—With Colonel Biddulph at the Residency—The late Guicowar's crime—Baroda sights—A cosmopolitan style of architecture—Quaint effect—With Lord Harris at Bombay—A charming place—Homeward-bound—M. le Capitaine and the Greeks—The "Barn-door Polka"—The ship's engines break down—Arrival at Aden—Colonial Britishers—Marseilles—Calais—And home.

Friday.—We arrived at Baroda this afternoon, after a wearying journey of twenty-four hours in the train. As the season advances, and we get further south, the weather has turned decidedly warmer, and we were glad to exchange a stuffy railway carriage for a cool house. Colonel Biddulph, the Political Officer, very kindly asked us to stay with him, and we drove straight to the Residency. It is a nice, roomy, old-fashioned Indian house. We have the suite of rooms used by the former Resident, who was nearly poisoned by the late Guicowar.

It came out at the trial that a servant was bribed to mix finely-powdered diamond dust with the lemonade this officer drank at night. Whether correctly or not, this is supposed by the natives to be a deadly poison, and to make it still more certain a strong dose of arsenic was added. "That," as a native gentleman who told us



the story remarked, "was a mistake." For the Resident at once detected the taste, and did not finish the glass.

Saturday.—We went round the Baroda sights. The old palace in the city contains a perfectly splendid collection of jewellery, besides the celebrated gold and silver cannon. On State occasions these are brought out, drawn by white oxen with gilded horns.

The Guicowar's present residence, a curious and unattractive building, is in a pretty and well-laid-out park, at some distance from the town. The inside is badly arranged, ill adapted for hot weather, and so cramped for space that the Maharaja already talks of building a third palace. I hope he may be more fortunate next time, for an uglier building or a more incongruous jumble of styles than this displays I have never seen. Hindoo and Mahomedan, Italian and Gothic architecture mixed confusedly together accentuate and magnify each other's eccentricities. I suppose the author would term his elevation eclectic. It is certainly cosmopolitan, and has the salient features of a Hindoo temple, an English church, and a mosque, amalgamated into the exterior of the South Kensington Museum. The interior decorations are in keeping. Elaborate carvings and costly marble columns are mixed up with Tottenham Court Road embellishments. Venetian mosaics, regardless of effect, meet the eye in unexpected spots. The interior wall of

a verandah is covered with a huge tessellated picture of some sacred story, where plain stone would have been of sufficient importance. The subject also is rather queerly treated. Black angels, even if they have white wings, are not generally associated with blessings, and a couple of swarthy-looking cherubim hover above, bestowing their benediction on the mortals below. The mosaic is well enough executed, and it is supposed that the Italian artist, as a delicate compliment to his employer, purposely darkened the angels' complexion to an Indian tint. He has succeeded in producing an effect which is simply ludicrous.

Tuesday.—We have settled to return to England by the Messageries Maritimes line, and Lord Harris has very kindly asked us to stay at Bombay until the boat sails. Yesterday evening we left Baroda by the mail train, and awoke at six o'clock this morning to find ourselves in the Liverpool of the East, and one of His Excellency's carriages waiting to take us to Government House. The Governor has two residences at Bombay. One in the town is not used, and he lives at Malabar Point, in the ideal of what a house agent would call a "Marine Villa." Malabar Point is a long, narrow peninsula jutting far into the sea, and covered with palms and tropical vegetation. At the extremity of the Point, and surrounded on three sides by the sea, is Government House,



or rather Houses, for it consists of a number of detached bungalows connected by covered verandahs. The central building is used for receptions, dinners, &c., and the others are appropriated severally to the Governor, his aides-de camp, and visitors.

We passed several pleasant days in this charming place, and thoroughly enjoyed the luxury of rest in a lovely climate. The weather was perfect; a clear blue sky, without a cloud from morning to evening, and just warm enough to make the shelter of a house pleasant. We had a punkah at dinner-time, but it really was not needed, and during the daytime the sea breezes which blow from all sides keep the air deliciously cool.

Messageries Maritimes SS. La Seyne.—This is a most comfortable little boat, built originally for the Khedive, and sold when Ismail abdicated. She only goes as far as Aden, and we then change into one of the homeward-bound Australian liners. The *cuisine* is excellent for a ship, and far superior to that of most English boats.

There is a strange mixture of nationalities on board, and the number of different languages chattered at dinner give one a faint idea of the Tower of Babel. Near me are two Americans who have made their "pile," and are "going round." Beyond, three Portuguese priests, and a Spanish lawyer. Then a German with an American wife, and one or two Frenchmen, besides the ship's officers.



Alan sits next to a very pretty Greek girl, who talks all languages indifferently well, and is returning to Smyrna with her sister and brother-in-law. The British Isles are represented by an Irish doctor, a Scotchman, two Anglo-Indians, and a Yorkshire engineer with the broadest of north-country burrs.

M. le Capitaine (or Commandant as they call him) prides himself on his knowledge of English, which, like his mother-tongue, he speaks with a strong Marseillaise accent. The Yorkshireman is anxious to exercise his French, so they endeavour to improve each other's knowledge of their respective languages. But the Provençal patois of the one was as great a stumbling-block as the dialect of "cannie Newcassel" to the other; and their attempts at conversation ended in failure.

M. le Commandant holds the two Greek gentlemen *en grippe*, and at dinner to-night there was a slight altercation. The captain began a sentence with "*Différemment vous autres Turcs*" ("teurs" he pronounced it). The Greek fiercely expostulated that he was not a Turk, but a Greek "*Tout ce qu'il y a de plus Européen.*"

Le Commandant: "*Mais, monsieur, vous habitez Smyrne, une ville turque au 'mouains.'*"

I expected the Greek to explain that habitation of a stable does not necessarily turn one into a horse; but argument failed him, and all his objections were met



by the captain's "*Et 'autrefois,' monsieur, vous habitez Smyrne, au 'moussins.'*"

We got up a most successful dance after dinner, although the different "steps" were as varied as the nationalities. Every dance, from a valse to a cancan, was tried in turns, and I won a fleeting fame by inaugurating the "Barn-Door Polka." It was a great success, and everybody begged to be taught *la gigue Anglaise*. The Highland Schottische was a failure, and had to be changed into Sir Roger de Coverley, which lasted until the ship's engines suddenly broke down. A "heated bearing" is the usual explanation for stoppages at sea; but nobody seemed to know what had happened now, so the Yorkshire engineer went below to investigate. He returned in half an hour, very black and grimy, to say that after what he had seen he was rather inclined to feel surprised that we had got so far. At 2 A.M. we made a start, but stopped again in a couple of hours. This time it *was* a "heated bearing," and the lower decks were flooded with water. However we started slowly in the afternoon, and arrived at Aden with only one more breakdown.

Here we changed into one of the new Australian steamers—a magnificent boat of nearly 7,000 tons, and most comfortably fitted. *Déjeuner* was served *à la carte*, and at the hour you ordered it. Life at sea is so



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monotonous that it was quite an excitement to consider and order the morning repast, and certainly a great comfort to have only the *plats* you want, and not to be surrounded by "Irish stew," "tripe and onions," and similar simple but savoury dishes which frequently figure at an early hour on the table of an English steamer.

This boat was crammed with Australians on their way to the mother-country. Britannia once more ruled the waves, and swamped our little cosmopolitan crew with a flood of colonial Britishers.

After a very pleasant and pretty passage through the Straits of Messina and Bonifacio, we landed at Marseilles, transhipped into the *Rapide* for Calais, and so ended an expedition which I only regret we are not to-day commencing.

THE END.

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