THE STORY OF MY LIFE

COLONEL MEADOWS TAYLOR 1873.

By permission of Messrs. Chancellor & Son, Dublin.

Frontispiece.

THE
STORY OF MY LIFE

BY THE LATE

COLONEL PHILIP MEADOWS TAYLOR

AUTHOR OF

'CONFESSIONS OF A THUG', 'TARA: A MAHRATTA TALE', ETC.

EDITED BY HIS DAUGHTER

WITH A PREFACE BY HENRY REEVE

(1877)

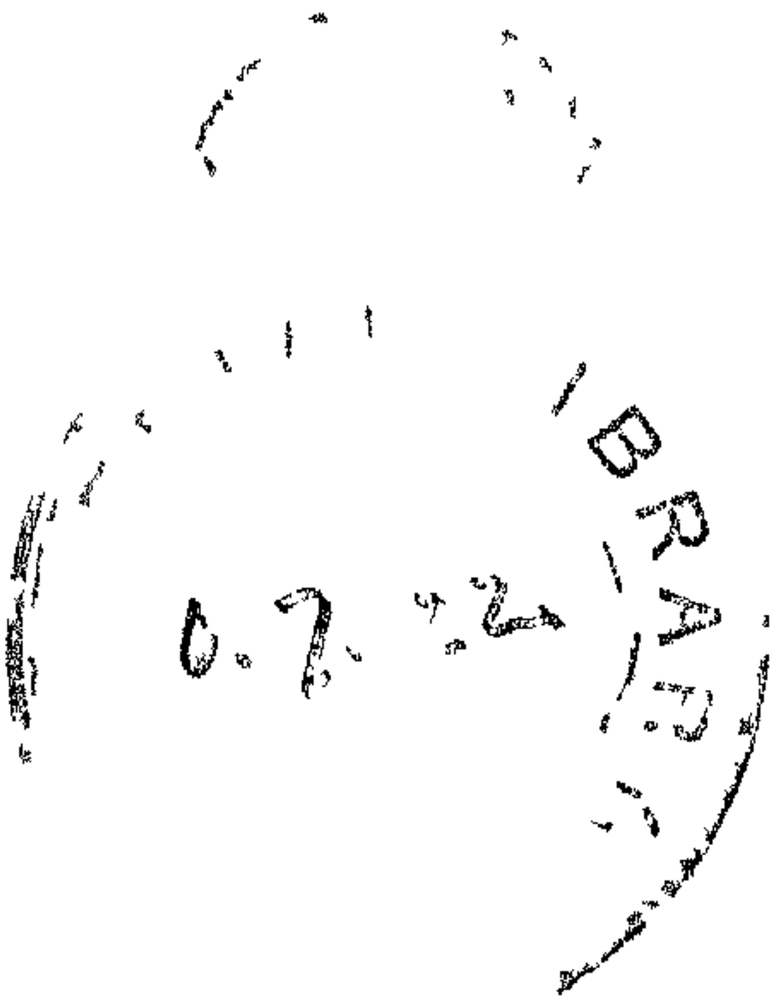
NEW EDITION, WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

HENRY BRUCE

AUTHOR OF 'LETTERS FROM MALABAR', ETC.

HUMPHREY MILFORD
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON EDINBURGH GLASGOW NEW YORK
TORONTO MELBOURNE CAPE TOWN BOMBAY
1920



INTRODUCTION

THIS *Story of my Life* has always seemed to me to be an illustration of Longfellow's catch :

> What is an autobiography ?
> It is what a biography ought to be.

The interest in this case is chiefly literary and romantic. Meadows Taylor has been called, while the word still kept a noble meaning, the last of the Adventurers. Here is a surprisingly well-written record of the wanderer, so frequent in English life since Plassey, who 'runs away early to the tropics, and is at home with palms and banyans '.

I was glad to be asked, before sitting down to write about him, why Colonel Taylor should be reprinted at this date by the Oxford University Press. The least thought provides a sufficient answer : For the rare beauty of his character, and as the author of the autobiography and of his three earlier novels, *Confessions of a Thug*, *Tippoo Sultaun*, and *Tara*. Of his other three novels there will be a little to say in the right place. But I have not a word to say for them as literature. Instead of helping Taylor's claim to be remembered they cruelly hamper it. Inferior work can never be merely indifferent ; and the three later novels must have put off many who honestly wanted to sample the writer.

As to the *History of India*, that is fully dealt with in a note. The lavish extracts made from it throughout this volume suggest the good things of which it is full—touches springing from Taylor's happy personality, accounts of places and of people he knew. Never will another History of India be attempted by any one with such a loving knowledge of its

people, although the work does not meet modern standards of accuracy.

When in September 1875 Meadows Taylor, just sixty-seven, sailed from his native Liverpool on the unfortunate last trip to India, I, aged eleven, was among the few passengers. These were herded together into the old-fashioned cabin for the first meal. I remember the watery light at the end of day, the heaving of the estuary. For the only time my revolving seat was beside the old man's. In getting into his seat, being then bulky and nearly blind, he collided with me. I was surprised at the suavity, the consideration, with which he turned and apologised. I can see him standing in the dim cabin, wavering, with his face of apostolic beauty, but faded by several years from the time of that in the frontispiece. It was perhaps more like another portrait, printed in the earlier editions of the autobiography, and preserved in glass as St. Peter in one of the windows of Mitford church. Little did I then think that I should ever have the true honour of editing Meadows Taylor.

During the voyage he usually sat apart on the deck, a rug over his knees, in some suffering, not caring to be read to, or to speak much. 'Ah,' he once said, 'it is hard to have to sit like this, with folded hands, after a life of activity.' One afternoon his ribbon of the Star of India, in which he took a pride, was brought out in response to requests, and shown around. He was tended by a devoted daughter, and by his servant John. I remember John's surprise that the Red Sea was not red. 'Shure,' he said as the *Guy Mannering* steamed out of Suez, 'an' the wather's as green as Dublin.'

It is useless to go beyond Taylor's time for the beginnings of fiction in India. He has described Mohammedans much more largely, and possibly with more sympathy, than Hindus. There is an obvious reason for this in the matter of common diet, which seems, if only by illusion, to bring the Moslem world closer to European readers. This is illustrated by two early passages in Taylor, everything passing among natives of India. 'The food of us poor Hindoos would be tasteless to my lord, and therefore we have had the repast cooked by the best *bawurchees* of the town' (cookers of meat). Again: 'My mind misgives me that we . . . shall be obliged to put up in one

of these wretched villages, where the *kafir* inhabitants never kill meat ; and we shall have to eat dry bread or perhaps dry rice, which is worse, after this fatigue.'

As the Moslem world is everywhere one, it is necessary just to mention the over-praised *Hajji Baba*, which was supposed to reveal it to Europe in 1824, fifteen years before Taylor's first book. The nature there portrayed is remote from human nature. Amid all the amazing things revealed by Taylor there is nothing comparable to the unaccountable way in which Hajji Baba's mother seeks his life at the end. The elemental emotions always hold true in Taylor. He owes more, and yet not very much, to the greatest book of Asia, as the discerning count it, *The Arabian Nights*.

Nor does Taylor derive in any degree from a book of Western India published in 1826, and the only possible rival to the claim of the *Thug* to be the earliest Indian novel. *Pandurang Hari : or Memoirs of a Hindoo* is not a novel but an ineptitude. Its author, William Browne Hockley, a dismissed Civil servant, does not inspire a wish for better acquaintance. Yet even in *Pandurang Hari* the few scenes from Moslem life are less ineffective, more human, than the rest.

But let those praise *Pandurang Hari* who have not read it, or who do not know the Maratha country. Taylor knew the Marathas whom he helped to administer. He speaks repeatedly of the combined turbulence and cunning of their character ; but one also sees the smile which seeks to make the best of things.

The thirties of the nineteenth century, between the setting of Scott and the full rising of Dickens, were a poor time for novelists outside France. Balzac was at his height ; but that did not help things in England. It was therefore a little miracle when in 1837, in a cantonment on the borders of the jungle, a lieutenant of the Nizam, hardly twenty-nine, with no education to speak of, wrote on the arms of a long chair the *Confessions of a Thug*, published in 1839. He had been much shaken by illnesses and deaths in his little family, and was precariously recovering from an attack of the malaria which pursued him through forty years. But with the instinct of a creator he turned to the subject which had lately most stirred the world around him, making a sensation which

reached to America. This was the discovery of Thuggee by his friend Major Sleeman, a discovery which Taylor had narrowly missed making himself at an earlier date. He had taken an eager part, though not in the front line, in the measures for suppressing Thuggee, which revealed still fresh atrocities. The word Thug has the meaning of deceiver. The system had flourished in India for many centuries, producing the strangest amalgam of Hindus and Mohammedans in a cryptic sect devoted to the goddess of many names, commonly called by them Bhowani. Taylor's imagination was moved by the facts which he was helping to bring to light, and in particular by a Thug informer whom he examined, a man of seven hundred murders, the original of Ameer Ali. So he wrote 'with his eye on the object'.

The *Thug* need not be read hereafter save in the delightful reprint in the World's Classics, where it rightly belongs. Even Dryasdust feels this to be a fascinating novel. It abounds in scenes and descriptions in which the lover of India must always delight. There are few of the forty-eight chapters which do not contain something distinctly good.

The theme is terrifying in its revelations of character. Ameer Ali seems to me to be a masterpiece in his suave ferocity, his sense of fate, often memorably expressed, and the conviction with which he devotes himself to evil. The entire narrative is put into his mouth, relieved by some highly artful snatches of conversation with the examining magistrate. He is a dandy, besides being all that is expressed in India by *a respectable man*. 'Have I ever broken a social tie? ever been unfaithful or unkind to a comrade? ever failed in my duty or in my trust? ever neglected a rite or ceremony of my religion? I tell you, Sahib, the man breathes not who could point his finger at me on any one of these points. And if you think on them, they are those which, if rigidly kept, gain for a man esteem and honour in the world.'

No wonder Taylor is left reflecting, till he cries aloud:

'"'Pshaw! 'tis vain to attempt to account for it, but Thuggee seems to be the offspring of fatalism and superstition, cherished and perfected by the wildest excitement that ever urged human beings to deeds at which humanity shudders."

'"Did Khodawund call?" said a bearer, who had gradually

nodded to sleep as he pulled the punkah above my head, and who was roused by my exclamation. "Did the Sahib call?"

'"No, Boodun, I did not; but since you are awake, bid some one bring me a *chilum* [hooka]. My nerves require to be composed."'

In a later passage the Thug says: 'After all, Sahib, cannot you now understand the excitement which possesses the soul of a Thug in his pursuit of men? Cannot you feel with us, as you hear my story, and follow us in my recital?'

This the reader can certainly do. The book is, of its essence, brilliant picaresque, consisting but of expeditions along the road. A little later a young man in London, some years the junior of Meadows Taylor, and more forlornly neglected in childhood, was producing perhaps the most entrancing picaresque scenes in the language, those in *The Old Curiosity Shop*. The *genre* may not be the highest, but in the *Thug* it was inevitable, and never seems inadequate. Ameer Ali's working life is spent in ruthless trips from Hindustan proper, south, west, north, and even to the east.

Delicate readers have been prevented from finishing the *Thug*, not from lack of interest, but because of its too terrible intensity. Gruesome the theme must be called, though not the handling. This is of a remarkable strength and skill. All must admit that it is well done if it had to be done at all. And his subject was imposed upon Taylor. He did not delight in horrors for their own sake, like the authors of *Timon of Athens* and too many others. He had a criminal institution to expose and to expound, as well as a story to tell.

There is no lack of variety, nor are the hues of love, both light and true, missing. Ameer Ali is outwardly an attractive youth as he issues, at eighteen, from his village after the effective episode of his slaying of the tiger. Though within the nineteenth century, those were the days when the young bloods of India, as much as the Gothic warriors in the Gaul of Sidonius some fourteen centuries earlier, delighted in putting their spare gold and silver upon their embossed shields—it is a detail that these were of rhinoceros hide. The first expedition, the most important in the development of Ameer Ali's character, naturally fills nearly half the book. He

quickly excels in his grisly trade, so as to take pride in the fact that his victim is usually dead before falling to the ground. Yet his affair with Zora has something of the poignancy of 'Whom first we love, you know, we never wed.'

On his return from slippering the mother of Zora :

'"For the love of Alla, young man," cried a low and sweet voice as I passed under the gateway of a respectable-looking house ; "for the love of Alla, enter and save my mistress ! "

'Fresh adventures, thought I as I looked at the speaker, a young girl, dressed like a slave. "Who are you ? "

'"It matters not," said the speaker ; "did you not pass this way yesterday afternoon, in company with two others ? "

'"I did, and what of that ? "

'"Everything ; my mistress, who is more beautiful than the moon at its full, saw you, and has gone mad about you."

'"I am sorry," said I, "but I do not see how I can help her."

'"But you must," said the girl ; "you must, or she will *die ; follow me, and I will lead you to her.*" '

You are at once in the atmosphere of the Arabian Nights. Azima, the unhappy wife who flees from Hyderabad with Ameer Ali, never does another bold deed. 'She is tender in her love, and of an affectionate and kind disposition,' he says to the father whom he joins upon the road ; 'you must see her to-morrow ; she is now fatigued with travel.' This father, Ismail, who had murdered the parents of Ameer Ali and adopted him in early childhood, is winsomely kind. 'And you must be fatigued also, my son, and hungry too. I have a rare *pilau* ready for you.' Azima and Ameer Ali, trusting to the difficulty of Indian communications, venture to marry, and have the tenderest domestic life. His third recorded affair is with a handsome widow who shocks him by flinging herself at him upon a journey so persistently that she has to be destroyed for the safety of all.

For sheer power and pathos perhaps the climax is reached in the twenty-third and twenty-fourth chapters, relating the unavoidable doom of Nawab Subzee Khan, a warrior of rank and fame, called Subzee from his devotion to *bhang*. His is a gallant figure, suggesting that of Marmion. Unique, for the East, is the 'young good-looking girl mounted on a spirited pony' who rides openly beside Subzee Khan and prepares his favourite drink. As they near the jungles beyond Ellichpur,

the place where the story was written, the Nawab says it would be a sorry fate for him to fall in an unknown spot, after a life spent in battle-fields. 'And you will do so . . . your death-blow will reach you in that jungle you dread, and no monument will mark the spot where the remains of Subzee Khan will lie.' It is amusing to hear him abusing the hardly human Gonds in a skirmish: 'Come on and try your cowardly arrows against stout hearts and ready weapons! Base-born *kafirs* are ye, and cowards; Inshalla! your sisters are vile, and asses have loved your mothers.'

On the destined day the Nawab sorely longs for shade. 'Here have I, Subzee Khan, gone without my usual sherbet for three days on this very account. By Alla! I am now as thirsty as a crow in the hot weather, and my mouth opens in spite of me. Oh, that we could light on a river or a well in this parched desert! I would have a glorious draught.'

The place is reached, and he begins to exult. 'There breathes not in the ten kingdoms of Hind a slave so skilled in the art of preparing *subzee* as Kureena yonder. . . . All the world knows that Subzee Khan drinks *bhang*, and is not the worse soldier for it. Now with a few fair girls to sing a *ghazul* or two to us, methinks a heaven might be made out of this wild spot.' That is FitzGerald before his day, and doubtless from the same source.

So the warrior fell before the cowardly assassins who always allowed three or four men to a victim. 'I had thrown the cloth about his neck, Surfuraz Khan still held his hand, and my father pulled at his legs with all his force. . . . Subzee Khan was dead—I had destroyed the slayer of hundreds!

'But no one had thought of his poor slave girl, who at some distance, and with her back turned to us, had been busily engaged in preparing another rich draught for her now unconscious master. She had not heard the noise of our scuffle, nor the deep groans which had escaped from some of the Nuwab's people, and she approached the spot where Surfuraz Khan was now employed in stripping the armour and dress from the dead body.

'Ya Alla! Sahib, what a piercing shriek escaped her, when she saw what had been done! I shall never forget it, nor her look of horror and misery as she rushed forward and threw herself on the body. Although master and slave, Sahib, they had loved. . . .

'"He cannot be dead! he cannot be dead!" cried the fair girl,—for she was beautiful to look on, Sahib, as she partly rose and brushed back her dishevelled hair from her eyes; "and yet he moves not—he speaks not"—and she gazed on his features for a moment. "Ah!" she screamed, "look at his eyes—look at them—they will fall out of his head! and his countenance, 'tis not my own lord's—those are not the lips which have often spoken kind words to his poor Kureena! Oh, my heart, what a pain is there!"'

The pages following would be too distressing to quote. Surfuraz Khan, who loves the girl, says: 'I have no wife, no child: thou shalt be both to me if thou wilt rise and follow me. . . . Before this assembly I promise thee life and a happy home.' But she struggles violently and he strikes her so that her beauty is spoiled. Finally he strangles her; but goes a sorrowing man to his grave.

Whether or not Meadows Taylor's name deserves to live may well be judged by these scenes. The realism here, as in other places, is relentless. But it is pity which is aroused, not needless horror. He has something of the poetical touch; and the images which he calls up are as clear-cut as the khaki landscape of India. There is art in the headings to the chapters, in the way in which these break off and go on, and in the occasional verse mottoes. He had assimilated such things in hours of study which must have been scanty. The *Thug* and *Tippoo Sultaun* are spirited imitations of a few good models. Scott, with a little of Shakespeare, and, above all, something to say, made Taylor's literary equipment. Sustained spirit in story-telling is one of the most difficult things; and it is strongest in the *Thug*.

This is shown by the way in which the story heightens. If it dips for six or eight chapters after the first expedition, it steadily increases in depth of interest, and in terror, throughout the third volume. In fact, both the early novels are wound up in interest to the end, instead of being allowed to run down.

The *Thug* is also a historical novel when Ameer Ali, with his later comrades, rides on two expeditions of mere plunder half across India with the Pindharis. The swing and momentum of these movements are well rendered: the same thing remains to be done in fiction for the more important expeditions of the Marathas. Many a student of Indian history

may have wished to know a little more of the Pindhari leader Chitu, who might have left a principality like Tonk, but who 'fled to the jungles, and was killed by a tiger'. He is here in a full-length portrait, a competent man for whom the reader, like Ameer Ali, feels some respect. But even the Pindharis cannot stand the Thugs, who are soon at their old trick of strangling those who trust them.

The Thug has been eminently a criminal on horseback. But before Ameer Ali is old the institution begins to crumble, and the world becomes a bad place for Thugs. Azima, ignorant of her husband's life, is killed by the shame of the exposure, when her father-in-law is executed by being trampled to death by an elephant, in the midst of her daughter's marriage ceremonies. To the end, which is not yet, the interest never flags. 'He shall tell you the tale himself. Mashalla! he tells it with much spirit, and 'tis worth hearing.'

This is probably the least faulty of Taylor's novels, the best written, the most holding. *Tara*, of a quarter of a century later, competes with it for general excellence, but it has not the same qualities. The few points of style which afterwards became a mannerism with Taylor do not appear in the *Thug*. The English in which it is written, as the above extracts show, is pretty nearly faultless. Here are countless sentences, as lucid as a brook, with few words of Latin origin.

Tippoo Sultaun was a publisher's idea, and a good one. In 1839, behind the most picturesque figure of all history, which intervened, Tippoo still lowered from forty years before as the national foe. He was a farcical antagonist, yet terrible in his day, who had compelled us to conquer India. It must be remembered that Tippoo is one of the best-documented tyrants in history, with memoirs by himself and by others.

There is no need to apologise for *Tippoo Sultaun*, published in 1840, for having been written in haste, as it actually was, during the last winter of Taylor's exciting visit home. The haste seems to tell in the quality of impetus, which all his subsequent novels missed. The sub-title is 'A Tale of the Mysore War'. This furnished an admirable climax in the feat of arms at Seringapatam which made an abiding impression upon imaginations both in India and in Europe. But it took

Taylor out of his own country, which is the Deccan. He had passed once across Mysore and back again on the journey to Ooty when he met Macaulay and lost his earlier children. Never having seen the Himalayas, he was impressed by the sheer bulk of the Nilgiris, of which good use is made in the novel. Except for such memories, the *Mysore* of Colonel Mark Wilks was practically his sole authority. Tippoo's hunting of elephants and tigers in Malabar, the night attack upon the wall, and many a following scene are taken straight out of Wilks, supplemented by a fine youthful imagination.

In the nature of things *Tippoo Sultaun* has not the uniqueness of the *Thug*. In form it is an imitation of the historical romance of Scott, such as was attempted hundreds of times in that generation, but seldom so effectively. For it is a success, the story does come off. The writing is not identical with that of the *Thug*, nor quite so good. There is at times an approach to *ce style coulant, si cher aux bourgeois*. At other times there is rhetoric, though good of its kind; and there is a cardinal fault in the construction.

The main plot, the Indian story, begins eleven years before the fall of Seringapatam. But the interesting journey thither is twice broken by episodes of four chapters each, relating to a fresh set of characters who are never vitalised. The first has its scene in England, the second treats of the landing in Bombay and the unhappy expedition of Mathews to Bednore, all at a date four or five years before the journey; and there are two further chapters in England. Anything may be justified in fiction by the result. But this arrangement is cumbrous because it puts the reader out, setting him to look up dates in order to reconcile the order of events.

Here one comes up against an undoubted limitation in Taylor. Any arrangement could be carried off by arresting characters. Taylor probably brought in these English figures in the hope of making his story seem less strange to readers at home. But he could not then or at any time portray his own country-people well. The scenes in England, within the eighteenth century, are, like those in *Ralph Darnell*, of a curious badness. They 'have the cruel misfortune of resembling the novels of Miss Edgeworth.' Not in Scott's faintest conventional scenes do the characters have more

unexceptionable pedigrees and sentiments. Yet here Taylor was only trying to depict a period some half-century or so before that in which he wrote. The half-dozen English chapters in *Tippoo Sultaun* are best omitted in re-readings.

Taylor's English officers, wooden and didactic like few whom he can have known, are less objectionable in India. It was necessary to set them forth, in the humiliating parts of prisoners and victims, before they became conquerors. The details of the Bednore expedition, as told with spirit enough in the novel, differ essentially from the same story as told in Taylor's *History* a generation later, while both accounts differ to a baffling degree from other modern compilers. I sought a disentanglement of this question, without quite attaining it, through *The Times Literary Supplement* in 1917. An extensive correspondence, both printed and private, which followed, brought me some information. The subject is a side issue to the literary study of Meadows Taylor. It awaits, without inviting, whoever cares to tackle one of the most difficult and discreditable periods of English history in India, the early eighties of the eighteenth century on the Bombay side.

For literary purposes Taylor's native heath was only Indian life and character. Except for the English interpolations, *Tippoo Sultaun* opens, continues, and ends strongly. The introductory chapters tell of the party of benighted travellers, the monsoon storm, and the rescue of Ameena from the flooded river bed by Kasim Ali the village headman. Kasim Ali Patel is one of Taylor's two or three taking young Moslem heroes. In his village he has had no chance to learn anything save marksmanship and a little Persian poetry. Some appreciation of landscape is attributed to him, admittedly against probability. But he has seen, saved, and loved the bride Ameena, hardly fifteen. In gratitude her husband carries him onward to 'the city', into the service of Tippoo.

Though this novel solicits extract less than its predecessor, the following passage is of great beauty. Abdul Rhymun Khan, nearing Seringapatam, feels obliged to confess that he has there two other wives.

'"Methinks now, to see these grey hairs and this grey beard," and he touched them as he spoke, "so near thy soft

and waving tresses, I seem more like a father to thee than a husband: and yet thou art mine, Ameena. I would thou wert older, fair one!"

'"And if I were, I should not be so fair," she said artlessly.

'"I care not, so that we had grown old together; at least I should have seen thy beauty, and the remembrance of it would have been with me."

'Ameena sighed; her thoughts wandered to Kasim's noble figure and youthful yet expressive countenance; in spite of herself and almost unconsciously she drew her hand across her eyes, as if to shut something ideal from her sight.

'The Khan heard her sigh; he would rather not have heard it, though his own remark he knew had provoked it. "I have said the truth, Ameena, and thou wouldst rather I were a younger man," he said, looking at her intently. "But what matter? these idle words do but pain thee. It is our destiny, sweet one, and we must work it out together."

'"Ay, it is our destiny," she said.

'"The will of Alla!" continued the Khan, looking up devoutly, "which hath joined two beings together so unsuited in age, but not in temper I think, Ameena. Thou art not as others, wilful and perverse—heavy burdens—hard to carry—and from which there is no deliverance; but a sweet and lovely flower, which a monarch might wear in his heart and be proud of. So thou truly art to Rhyman Khan, and ever wilt be, even though enemies should come between us."'

Yet the frontispiece shows the same Khan, generous yet ignorant and sensual, for whom one feels the utmost sympathy, cutting down Ameena with his curved sword, himself to fall broken-hearted in the next day's battle. Alas for the end of sentimental love in the East!

Ameena is one of Taylor's happiest creations. Two chapters of extreme though differing excellence are those in which Kasim Ali lies wounded on the battle-field, the beasts succeeding to the birds of prey as night comes on; and then is nursed to life again in Abdul Rhyman Khan's zenana. Taylor is best at depicting humble and very human character; the meetings of travellers on the road, the humours of servants, wives who cannot read, the workings of the souls of untaught if not always poor people. The cook Zoolficar, Zoolfoo for short, is admirable. 'O coward! thou art not alone; see, thou hast the hero of the night [Kasim Ali] lying beside thee—one who has slain some men since he last ate; whereas thou hast not even slain a fowl.' One can see the flash of

Taylor's eye, hear his burst of kindly laughter at such a saying.

He has often to exaggerate the soul of goodness in such people in order to have a story to tell at all. Yet the wickedness of the East is relentlessly brought out. Peculiarly well done are the Khan's two other wives, one worse than the other, with her mother and attendants, their plottings and enchantments against Ameena. There is a quite triumphant scene of homely *diablerie*. Ameena is not killed by her husband, but awaits Kasim Ali with a persistent true love which is rewarded by happiness. Such love must be allowed even if not in the drawing; as must also Kasim Ali's candour in telling his English friends all about it at the end of the book, with the remark: 'You know, Sahib, we Moslems are not given to speaking of our wives or families.'

It is not until the original second volume of the novel that Kasim Ali beholds his master Tippoo:

'The figure of the Sultaun was of middle height, and stout; his complexion was darker than that of most of those who surrounded him, and he sat with an affected air of royalty, which, though it at first impressed the spectator with awe, yet that passed away in a great measure upon the contemplation of his face, which wanted the dignity of expression that his body assumed. His eyes were full and prominent, but the whites of them were of a dull yellowish tint, which, with their restless and suspicious expression, gave them a disagreeable look, and one which bespoke a mind of perpetual but not profound thought; his nose was small and straight, and, with his mouth, would have been good-looking, except for the habitual sneer which sat on both; his eyebrows and mustachios were trimmed most carefully into arched lines, and he wore no beard. In his hand there was a large rosary of beautiful pearls, with emeralds at the regular distances, which he kept perpetually counting mechanically with the fingers of his right hand.'

Henceforth his is the dominant figure. There is a good enough villain; but Tippoo is much more than that. Taylor's minute portraiture of him is one of much mastery, and will not be superseded while men care to read at all of such a being. Not grand enough to be daemonic, now monster, now monkey, grotesque and terrible, Tippoo is perhaps best explained by a sentence from a Moslem writer, quoted in the *History of India*: 'The most intelligent and sincere well-wishers of the house

concurred in the opinion of his father, that his head and heart were both defective, however covered by a plausible and imposing flow of words.'

For this being is a chatterer, and that in a dialect of his own, a heresiarch, one who walks with spirits and relates his dreams. His gushing speeches, glowing with an uncertain eloquence, are highly amusing because conceived with genuine humour. Tippoo had his qualities, enterprise, courage enough for most occasions, a brilliant reputation during the first half of his reign. There is a tent scene before battle, when he is visited by the ghosts of those whom he has slain, including Mathews, and calls upon the spirit of his ever victorious father, which is no mean rendering of that in Richard III., with the addition of a loving girl who incites and comforts Tippoo. True pathos is in the scene where Kasim Ali, a fine fellow who cannot stand such doings, takes leave of his master. 'There sat before him the benefactor and the steady friend of years. He continued gazing on him, and often he felt the tears rush to his eyes, as though they would have had vent.' Yet Tippoo sends after him to slay him, and 'the love that was between us is broken forever'.

It is an unforgettable, ineffaceable figure, really almost as unique as that of the Thug. To this day one may commonly see a loose-limbed tiger in black and yellow, with grinning face turned around at one, ramping for ornament upon a white-washed Indian wall. That is how Tippoo, the Tiger of the Faith, survives in history and in this novel.

It is to be observed how Meadows Taylor dwells upon the likenesses, not the unlikenesses, between his readers and his characters. That is the way to command the utmost possible interest. Not too much is made of the climate, which nothing can alter, and which Indians do not mind; nor of complexions, which can never be white, though there is a tendency to seek the lightest possible, as 'a ruddy brown' or 'a light bamboo'; nor of the fact that most of the characters go about barefooted, sitting and sleeping on the ground, preferring to cook as well as to eat with their own fingers. Yet there are differences of mind which have to be shown, as Taylor shows them, because these mean character. In the comparatively recent India, as in antiquity, minds were strangely

occupied by superstitious considerations, by omens, by everything that would render not absurd the words of Tippoo : 'There is much in having lucky herbs boiled under the influence of salutary planets.'

These two novels made a notable production for a young man before returning to twenty years of killing drudgery under the sun. 'Shabash! Shabash! well done, gallant fellow!' as the English officers cried to Kasim Ali.

Not all parts of the complex records of India lend themselves to fiction. In his own *History* Taylor has some discerning remarks on this subject. In Akbar's character 'romance prevails from the earliest dawn'. Under his great-grandson Aurungzeb romance lies in resistance. 'But little romance has ever attached itself to the characters of Indian history; and in this respect the difference between the Moors of Spain, and the early Mahomedans of India, is very remarkable. During the cruel and gloomy reigns, with few exceptions, of the Afghan dynasties of India, there was little scope for romantic incident, or the development of any free or chivalrous spirit among the people, and it is to the research of Colonel Tod, the Froissart of the Rajpoot clans and States, that the history of all that existed among them, exceptional as it was, is due.'

Meadows Taylor had a cultus for the enlightened Deccan dynasty of Bahmani, which four or five centuries ago ruled over many of the places of Taylor's youth. Of them he says: 'There are occasional pleasant glimpses of quiet times, and their beneficial effects, which are not to be found' in the records of Delhi. This cultus was continued for their most important successors, the Sultans of Bijapur, who had an unusual historian in Ferishta, and of whose 'superb Saracenic architecture' Taylor possibly made too much. Now it was immediately against Bijapur that Shivaji the Maratha arose to make a name in deeds of imperishable romance.

Taylor was rather obsessed by the fancied interval of just a century between the slaying of Afzul Khan and Plassey; as later by the exact century between Plassey and the critical June of the Mutiny, with the Indian prophecies on the subject. Thus there came into being his scheme for a trilogy of historical novels, *Tara*, *Ralph Darnell*, and *Seeta*. These were to set forth respectively the rise of the Maratha power, 1657 or

near enough; the rise of the English power, 1757; and the desperate effort to overthrow the English power, 1857.

It matters little for fiction that Shivaji's act of treachery took place in 1659, or that Aurungzeb, who overhangs the admirable narrative from a distance without entering into it, is here Emperor and Alamgir somewhat before the right dates. The plan was a good plan, had it been well executed. But *Ralph Darnell* and *Seeta* simply fail to fit into the trilogy, owing to poor workmanship. *Tara* is the only member of the set which has claims to remembrance.

Tara: a Mahratta Tale, was older and sounder than the trilogy scheme. It was suggested for *Blackwood's Magazine* by Christopher North in 1839, and soon after tentatively begun. But time and tide rushed in between. The entire twenty years of Taylor's service on end in India without furlough, resented by his friends if not by himself, intervened, followed by some years of illness. He had done his life's work as an administrator, as fascinatingly told in the autobiography. But he had lost his chance to make the utmost of the literary gift that was in him, the two things being mutually exclusive.

Seldom has a book meant so much in the writer's life. For Taylor was nursing the idea of his interrupted *Tara* through a quarter of a century of vicissitudes, perfecting his ideal, bringing the story to the rare mellowness which is its trait All those twenty years spent near the Maratha country went, in a way, to the making of it: his early mental vigour held, for this purpose, across the gap, and was triumphantly carried over. Only thus can be explained the *tour de force* by which, in 1863, he was able to turn out *Tara* with enjoyment for a new generation of Blackwoods. To the generosity of that firm is due the possibility of this edition of the *Story of My Life* before their copyright has expired.

Perhaps I am prejudiced in favour of *Tara*, since this, read amid Maratha hills, was the second novel of my life, *Guy Mannering* being the first. The graceful figure of the soft-eyed Brahmin girl, child-widow and rescued Sati, loyal to her faith until she becomes its victim, with her upright simplicity of character, has filled a place apart in many hearts. In one of Mrs. Croker's novels there is an English general settled in India who names his daughter Tara.

Here undoubtedly Taylor has captured the shy spirit of the true romance. It is pedantic to forbid the use of the phrase Maratha Brahmin, for that is what Tara and her family were. The only familiar line of classic English verse about India relates to these same hills:

Where in wild Mahratta battle fell my father evil-starred.

That is the romance which lives within these pages, though before the advent, for any purpose worth mentioning, of Europeans in India. Englishmen had not then founded Bombay or Calcutta, nor was the popular Indian consciousness aware of them. The stirring events of *Tara*, so intensely realised before they were recorded, pass in a world untroubled by the existence of any Europe. Taylor had for theme the conflict of the two faiths which make the woof and web of Indian life. As he says with his large humanity: 'The actors in my story are Hindus and Mahomedans; but the same passions and affections exist among them as among ourselves, and thus the motives and deeds of my characters may, at least, be intelligible.'

Tara is the longest of his novels, reaching the generous limit of a quarter of a million words. In addition there is a certain spaciousness of treatment, a wideness of handling about it. This must be called Taylor's masterpiece, and probably the greatest Indian novel. Two subsequent novels may be mentioned in competition with it which are stronger in some respects, yet are helped out in their appeal by European characters—*On the Face of the Waters* and *Kim*: but even the inspiration of the last is largely extra-Indian.

Tara is quite as well written as its predecessors, yet differently. The sparkle is absent, nor is it missed. The brilliance of the *Thug* has here passed into a mellow general excellence, expressed in Saxon words so prevailingly short that there are constantly sixteen of them to a printed line. There is not the same temptation to quote, since neither sentences nor episodes are easily detached from the text, which is all of a piece, and all good through nearly one hundred chapters. The slight later tricks of style just begin to appear, but not to a degree as yet worth mentioning.

Though *The Times* praised *Tara* for its 'rapid action,'

there is here little impetus. Action there is in abundance, sometimes melodramatic, with yet more admirable character and description, with plain conversations which are a delight to the true Indian. But the progression is undoubtedly leisurely, ' without o'erflowing full '.

Tara has reached the age of sixteen in an anomalous position, in the steep little town of Tuljapur, a place with which Meadows Taylor had unforgettable associations, but which is unimportant except in his pages. It has famous temples of the same goddess Bhowani of Ameer Ali's strange cult, here, and nearly two centuries earlier, called Kali or Tulja, ' the goddess in the glen ', Tuljamata, the mysterious mother feared by both creeds. Taylor, who was apt to overdo his architecture, has given too detailed accounts of these temples, as of the buildings of Bijapur.

Tara's father, the chief priest of the temples, was a prosperous man, still young. Yet ' Vyas Shastree had two great cares which pressed upon him heavily, and were shared by his wife. The first was that he had no son ; the second, that his beautiful daughter was already a virgin widow. And these were heavy griefs.' His wife Anunda, a splendid example of the untaught Hindu wife, urges him to marry again for offspring, seeking out a bride who shall be as a sister to her. ' As she said to herself, if there is a marriage, my lord shall have a good one.'

The bride obtained is the Brahmin girl Radha, fourteen but passing for twelve, from the western mountains. She cherishes a passion for her prince, Shivaji, who as a Maratha could never marry her, and early increased his supernatural renown by turning aside from women. Radha's brother, Moro Trimmul, an agent of Shivaji, makes, with his pursuit of Tara, a satisfying villain to the end ; as his accomplice Gunga, the temple girl or Murali, is a good relenting villainess. Tara, not knowing what to do, has given herself to the goddess ; yet not as the other temple girls. ' I am not a Moorlee to love,' she says. This convulsive devotion on her part, which is a passing phase, and the similar worship on the part of Shivaji's mother, make the least pleasant portions of the book.

Again I can wait in the rain, beneath the withered banyan on the little hill, with the three robbers who are waylaying the

amusingly cowardly and optimistic Lalla, escaping with stolen letters from the desk of Aurungzeb. They take him to the mud castle of the robber baron, Pahar Singh: these scenes, though minute, are full of spirit. The hunchback twin brothers, Rama and Lukshmun, are a pair. Rama is killed at Tuljapur; but Lukshmun becomes singularly endearing, to Tara and to all concerned with him.

Taylor made an attempt to draw a picture of Bijapur, somewhat idealised, a generation before its extinction, in the huge episode which follows. It reaches to one hundred and seventy broad pages, the amount of many a modern novel. Pahar Singh enters Bijapur disguised as a loathly fakir, first Hindu, then Moslem, to sell the stolen papers to the promising young king, and to save him from a conspiracy of the vizier. One can still hear his cry, *Ulla dilaya to leonga* (If God give I will take), echoing through the unprotected palace. It is all closely knit narrative, not wordy, which improves with each reading. The trouble is that these Bijapur scenes are too much like a novel by themselves, with a separate atmosphere, and even a telling climax, the death of the handsome Persian adventurer on the spot where he had caused many another to be executed:

> 'A shiver seemed to pass through him as he closed his eyes slowly. Not of fear, for the man, a Fatalist by creed and habit, was meeting his doom stoically as a brave Moslem can do; but a thought had crossed him which would not be put back—a vision of love and peace—of his girl wife in her rosy beauty, and of her fair boy, far away at his own village and home, in the blue mountains of Khorassan and of a fond aged mother who lived with them. This season they were to have come to him. Who now would tell them of his fate?'

This inset in the larger novel, as it seems, covers but the space of twenty-four remarkably well-filled hours. It is cleverly done. One becomes intimate with a wholesome Moslem household, that of Afzul Khan the Afghan, who takes up the gage of battle against the Marathas. Afzul Khan was a complete chucklehead, else he would not hold the place which he does in history. He pretty fairly represented Bijapur. Yet he was a lovable domestic character. His daughter Zyne, fourteen, with her mother's 'bright Georgian

complexion' gone somewhat browner in these latitudes, is truly engaging. She is betrothed to the vizier's son, a negro, which shows the way races deteriorate. Her brother Fazil is, together with Kasim Ali and perhaps the youthful Ameer Ali, one of Taylor's only two or three attractive Moslem lovers. Fazil Khan is weaker, yet a charming fellow. Taylor shared Scott's tolerance of a bore, to judge by the astrological chatter of Lurlee Khanum, the stepmother. Yet she is sound-hearted. There is also a capital family nurse. The entire household, especially in their treatment of Tara, who twice over falls into their hands, are an honour to human nature.

The closest companion of Afzul Khan is the Peer Sahib or priest, the holy man, inciting to the war of faith, pouring out texts of bloodshed. He is akin to the Covenanters; and it is a satisfaction to see him finally cut down upon the mountain-side along with the bluff Afzul Khan, for whom one grieves.

While Tara is being carried off at midnight from the temples by Moro Trimmul, both fall into the hands of Fazil Khan during the sacking of Tuljapur which he cannot prevent. This is how he breaks to her the news which he believes to be true: 'Sit down as thou wast, and may God keep thy heart, as I tell thee of thy misery. Yesterday there were a father, a mother, another wife, and thyself, in a happy home. Now three are gone, and thou art here.'

Tara's family has been scattered, not killed. The two mothers, Radha now settled into a good little wife, first seek and find Vyas Shastree. Sorely wounded in the defence of the temple, he has been taken into the house of the Putwari or village accountant of Sindphul. I would like to draw attention to the whole of the sixty-fifth chapter, narrating the family upsetting, with a dead negro lying in Tara's garden above, as an example of the merit to which Taylor can attain by extreme simplicity. All who have known family life must feel the following:

'For a little time, and as they silently sat beside him . . . they did not miss Tara; but Anunda's mind suddenly misgave her. Her husband, whom her arrival had aroused, had again fallen into a doze, and she went outside to ask for her. The whole court had been left to them, and the door of the outer one was closed. "Tara," she called gently, several times,

but there was no reply. She might be asleep, she thought, in one of the rooms which opened into it, and she searched in each in succession. There was no one. Radha joined her. "Where is Tara?" she said. "She should have been with him." True, she should have been with her father, but she was not.

'The women turned sick at heart and sat down. A nameless terror seized them, so absorbing, that they could say nothing, but that she was not. Anunda dare not ask. Of the two, Radha was most self-possessed. Looking through the door, she saw the old Putwari's wife sitting outside it. . . .

'"The gods have given thee one precious object, sister, and taken the other," she said. "Be thankful for what is spared thee."'

Then after an interval, when definite word has been brought that Tara is a guest in Afzul Khan's household:

'Now, for once, there was no indecision or vacillation in the Shastree's mind. *He could bear easy travelling in a litter*; and Radha should have it by-and-by, when he grew stronger. He would not delay, and they could yet overtake the army at Wye, or soon afterwards. Very little of the household property had been lost, after all; and Anunda's store of money was at last to prove useful. That night, as with thankful hearts they spoke of their lost child, they arranged plans for setting out to reclaim her; and their friends, who crowded about them with congratulations next day, soon completed the necessary arrangements. The third day was a lucky one, according to the planets; and they moved down the pass to Sindphul, followed by many friends, and the good wishes and prayers of all who had known Tara from childhood.'

From the attack on Tuljapur, when the two streams of narrative unite, the story flows onward with a majestic current through about the last two-fifths of the novel, the interest never flagging. The country covered looks limited on the map, specially for India, being little more than a hundred miles in any direction. Yet the atmosphere is large enough to contain clashing faiths and the rise of a nationality. Two episodes in particular are of the first importance.

One is the relation, as if by an eye-witness, of the destruction of the Moslem host, treated as retribution for the sacking of Tuljapur. This was quoted to the length of five pages by the *Edinburgh Review*. As Shivaji says: 'O, the blind confidence of these Beejapoor swine! They have neither eyes nor ears, else they had guessed we are not as we seem.

But the goddess Mother has blinded and deafened them, and it is as my mother said it would be.'

The picture of Shivaji is implicit throughout the story, and the more abiding for not being on the surface. This leader vitalised Hindu history, and was so far a superman that he believed himself to be, and is believed by his countrymen to have been, more than human. Shivaji's companion, Tannaji Maloosray, with his soft black eyes, his grave deliberate manner, is impressive in Taylor's chapters, as in the Maratha ballads.

The other cardinal episode is Tara's Sati at Wye. The rescue by Fazil Khan and Lukshmun makes a gallant scene. '"I never kill Brahmuns," he said through his teeth, "but thou art a devil;" and he struck at Moro Trimmul's bare neck with all his force. As the wretched man sank to the earth under the terrible wound, the hunchback sprang to his horse, clambered upon it like a cat, and flourishing his bloody sword, though he struck no one, rode by Fazil's side onwards, unharmed.'

A historical novel after the best models, *Tara* again becomes minute yet absorbing domestic drama concerning two families; and the end is only wistfully sad. A lifetime of observation is here: 'the occasional piping of sleepless plovers', 'the huge broad leaf of the teak tree'. The conversations of humble folk are richly true to Indian life. One would like to meet that merchant of Karad, 'a pleasant-looking man, dressed in flowing Arab robes and a green turban', who so cordially receives Afzul Khan's family in gratitude for former favours.

So the book is packed with good things, though these are often latent, not salient. The reason why the frontispiece in the still current edition is distressing is that the Brahmins are seated apparently upon benches as in a dissenting chapel, not upon the ground. *Tara* must be called Taylor's best and great novel, the one most representative of India.

On the strength of these three novels, the *Thug*, *Tippoo*, and *Tara*, Taylor appeals for remembrance. It is a world that he has vividly depicted in them. In the one-volume editions they amount to some fifteen hundred pages, or about the bulk of the work which Charlotte Brontë has left.

A few minds, such as Walter Scott's, hold lights like those in cathedral windows, with banners yellow, glorious, golden. While the mind of Meadows Taylor hardly holds cathedral colours, it clearly transmits the light of heaven, which is as much as can be asked in most cases. He has vigour, humour, and poetical feeling, though he could not write good verses.

It would be fatuous for any other novelist to try to portray certain figures which Taylor has given at full length. While men care at all to consider the Thug, the mad Tippoo, and the youthful Shivaji, Taylor's portraits occupy the available space. The most that could be attempted would be the different figure of the older Shivaji, defying Aurungzeb in full durbar. Taylor had the knowledge for his purposes, plus the fusing imagination. He says once that he did not understand ancient Sanskrit. If he had not studied this, which for that matter contains little of the romantic spirit outside Kalhana, he had to listen to Sanskrit deeds in his daily work.

As Taylor's younger, more successful, and loyal kinsman, Henry Reeve, wrote in reviewing *Tara*, romance may be found in the Maratha country, but seems to flee from the vast, enervating plains of Bengal. Taylor had never been within a thousand miles of these. Yet it was precisely here that he must, in pursuance of his scheme, place the climax of his next novel. He seems to flee in spirit himself from Bengal, for less than one half of *Ralph Darnell* is located there, and that without conviction. The best touch is in the mention of Clive's 'active, hardy Mahrattas, so far from their dear western mountains, looking over the sacred river which it had been their envied fate to see. How many a tale of it would be told amidst the rocky crags and deep jungles of Maharashtra, when the gallant Bombay Sepoys should return!'

There is a gulf, not in time, but in intellect, between *Tara*, 1863, and *Ralph Darnell*, 1865. The miracle of *Tara* was not repeated in fiction. The 'temporary cessation of brain power', due to overwork in India, of which Dr. Richard Garnett writes in a sympathetic article on Meadows Taylor in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, is apparent in *Ralph Darnell*.

In fleeing from Bengal Taylor rested in the England of the eighteenth century, which he had not the requisite

knowledge to depict. He tried to insert loving references to his mother's family, the Mitfords ; and he knew the Northumbrian speech well. But it is impossible to remember one of his north-country young gentlemen as distinct from the other. The best figure is that of Roger Darnell, the East India merchant whose fellows were then founding an empire. For good reasons he has his nephew kidnapped, on one of his own ships, and brought to Calcutta. The figure of Clive, a stout colonel of thirty, lacks grandeur ; nor is anything made of his young companion Warren Hastings. There is a perhaps sufficient account of the Black Hole, and of Plassey, which was less than a feat of arms. Surajah Dowlah appears at some length, with the Acte attendant upon every Nero—in this case an Afghan girl devoid of charm. The hopeless thing is the marriage of General Smithson (Ralph Darnell) to the widow of Surajah Dowlah, and the way in which, after her death, he cherishes a bedizened image of her in a mysterious bedroom.

To write, as in this novel, 'Sir Horace Walpole,' Jacobin for Jacobite, and Don for Dom ; or, as in the *History of India*, 'all sexes and ages', 'the *el Chico blanco*', 'Monsieurs', and 'Edward' Pottinger for the defender of Herat—to do, or to allow printers to do, this sort of thing, is to live in a world of blurred outlines, where nothing much matters. It is idle to say that such things are unimportant : they make the works where they occur seem unimportant.

All writers sometimes have to say 'you', but a snare lurks in any possible use of the 'we'. It is easy to tell, from one conspicuous result, two of the authors whom Taylor was reading during the writing of *Ralph Darnell* and of *Seeta*. 'If I had the power and the ingenuity of Mr. Trollope', these conversations of English folk would be more workmanlike. 'If I had the genius of the late Mr. Thackeray, I' could have given a more convincing picture of the middle of the eighteenth century. Taylor caught from them the hateful habit of buttonholing the dear reader, which barely appears at the end of *Tara*. He exaggerated it well-nigh beyond belief, even to 'O patient reader'.

In 1870 appeared his *History of India* ; and in 1872 *Seeta*, the third member of the trilogy.

This novel is not as *Ralph Darnell* and *A Noble Queen*. It

is a pathetic tale of woman's love; and Miss Taylor has testified to its popularity among women readers. *Seeta* is also of importance in the development of the Indian novel as the parent of a progeny. While not the earliest novel of the Mutiny, it was long the most notable. It also set the key, in many respects, for the novel of true love in India. The mixed marriage which seems so promising yet gradually becomes less so, the deliverance from an impossible position by the heroine dying for her husband, even the placing of her among the most attractive and light-coloured of the trade castes, the goldsmiths, if one wants to avoid the incessant Brahmins—these details quickly became formulas for the imitative.

Seeta is thus pioneer work, of more historical than substantive value. The execution is fumbling. Strange to say, Taylor, who had lived memorably through the Mutiny, whose account of it in his autobiography, though not in his *History*, is so good, failed to render it impressively in fiction. The country where things happen is indeterminate. It is largely Taylor's own Berar, yet is stated to be some hundreds of miles to the north, where Hindi is spoken. Taylor's Anglo-Indians of the Mutiny are not so amateur as his English men and women of a century earlier; but they do not live. The novel begins tolerably, as is easy. It even holds for the first quarter or so, until the marriage. Nothing here is better than the figure of Seeta's grandfather. Seeta is a sweet and noble character, over whom many tears have been shed.

On his last voyage to India Colonel Taylor had with him a copy of *Seeta*, then his latest novel in book form, which went the rounds of his fellow-passengers. His skill in describing female dress, European and Indian, was much noted. This is specially evident in his later writings; though he is never so trying as George Eliot in certain chapters, where she early betrays her sex.

At this time *A Noble Queen* was appearing serially: it came out in volumes in 1878. This work leaves a mere blur in the mind, after the most conscientious readings. It is the story of a local heroine of Bijapur and Ahmednagar. The date is about 1600, some two generations earlier than *Tara*. Europeans are here represented by the Portuguese on the coast. Portuguese names and traits are confounded with Spanish;

and indeed this was the perplexing period when Portugal was exploited by Spain. Nothing is made, on the one hand, of the terrors of the Portuguese Inquisition, or on the other of the Emperor Akbar, then growing old, yet eager of heart, and campaigning, for the only time, on the dusty plains of the Deccan: even the great negro minister of Ahmednagar is left out. The day for attempting such figures had passed. It would be a mistake ever to reprint *Ralph Darnell* and *A Noble Queen*.

The six novels here discussed appeared at the dates given, first in three volumes and afterwards in one each. Together with the *History of India* and the autobiography, they make up Taylor's independent work in book form. Search by a helper has disclosed at the India Office scraps not to be found even in the British Museum catalogue, such as *The Fatal Armlet: a Legend of Ellichpur, Deccan*, reprinted at Bombay in 1872. There are reprinted lectures, articles, with contributions to architectural and other works, sometimes specimens of the actual sketching which Taylor always loved.

The Story of my Life was completed in 1874. It depended, not on an old man's uncertain recollections, but on the mass of correspondence which had passed between Taylor and his father. The style is equal to that of his best early work, strong, supple, varied, although when he wrote it he was beset by many infirmities and blindness was approaching. In the inferior books his style is often woolly, Latinistic, and confused, amounting to a confusion of thought; nor does he realise the weakening effect of such insertions as 'almost', 'perhaps', 'as it were', 'so to speak'. There is also a curious insecurity in the use of pronouns of reference, of which an isolated example occurs in the autobiography: 'I stopped the elephants, and the Resident addressed them.'

The *Life* was brought out by Blackwood in 1877, under Miss Meadows Taylor's supervision; and this is the text which, by kind permission of Messrs. Blackwood, is here followed. The one-volume edition of 1878 and the convenient abridged edition of 1882 were brought out altogether from the publisher's office.

While working at this labour of love during the last two years I have been confined to the near neighbourhood of Land's

End, and not had access to the large libraries. But Meadows Taylor, an author neither learned nor recondite, should not be heavily annotated. I could have done more with pleasure, and hope I have not done too much. In addition to the annotation I have nothing to say. Every time I go through the *Life* it seems to me more beautifully done, and of absorbing interest. No wonder that the people whom Meadows Taylor ruled in India loved him. Here was a man with heart and with brain. He is apt to be particularly good when telling a ghost story, a tiger or an elephant story. Can a better recommendation be desired ?

In a world where so many things matter, spelling, certainly the spelling of Indian names, luckily does not matter. It is only a point of convenience. Yet for this reason it is well to follow thankfully, though not pedantically, and without the accents, that Hunterian system which in its beginnings vexed Taylor half a century ago. To this I have brought the Indian names in *The Story of my Life*, yet respectfully and regretfully, not with precision. I have left untouched only a few words, such as Beydur, which seemed too much bound up with Taylor's life; Ooty, one of the prettiest of names for one of the prettiest of places, of which I am able to print an original impression by Macaulay's nephew; or old poetical streams like the Nurbudda and the Krishna. But the only rule of safety, for those who do not wish to give their minds to such things, is to agree as quickly as may be with the *Imperial Gazetteer*.

To the same great compilation I am proud to be indebted for the beautifully clear map, at the end of this volume, of Hyderabad State, where Meadows Taylor's working life was spent.

Paragraphing and punctuation are unchanged. Several mistakes, probably of printers, natural in a posthumous work, have been indicated; while others have been quietly set right. Miss Taylor admirably carried out her loving labour in the editing of the original edition. To Taylor's very few footnotes I have put his initials, M. T.

If I mentioned all who have helped me the list would be, as old Colonel Wilks says, 'long and respectable'. First of all, thanks are due to Messrs. Blackwood for the permission to

reprint; to Miss Meadows Taylor for similar permission, and for many contributions; and to Henry Reeve's daughter, Mrs. Ogilvie of Chesters, Anerum, for permission to use her father's Preface. Further thanks are given to Messrs. Allen & Unwin for the illustrative extracts from *Seeta* and from *A Noble Queen*; to Messrs. Longmans for the extracts made from Taylor's *History* and from the *Life of Henry Reeve*; to Mr. Murray for similar use of the *Life of Brian Houghton Hodgson*; to Mr. C. E. Buckland, among other things, for the unrestricted use of his indispensable *Dictionary of Anglo-Indian Biography*; to Mr. F. H. Skrine for the matter in his *Life of Sir W. W. Hunter* which fits in so well as an additional chapter to Taylor's autobiography, and for other help; to Dr. William Crooke for the note which he has contributed on the modern Beydurs, and for other help; and to Sir George Trevelyan for the account of Macaulay's stay at Ooty and for his own impression of the place a generation later. The frontispiece portrait of Colonel Taylor is used with the kind permission of the photographers, Messrs. Chancellor, of Dublin, while this and the interesting sketch of Captain Taylor by Count D'Orsay eighty years ago were contributed by Miss Taylor.

There has been some trouble in getting answers to letters. One important communication turned up from India after a twelvemonth. The oldest of the serious students of Indian history, Sir George Birdwood, died while trying to assist me; while the contributions of the youngest, Miss Lilian M Penson, are noted in the following pages.

HENRY BRUCE.

SENNEN, CORNWALL,
July 1918.

PREFACE

For several years before his death, the writer of these Memoirs had been urged by his friends to leave on record some account of his adventurous and useful life. The materials at hand were authentic and abundant; for, not only was he possessed of an excellent memory and great powers of retaining and narrating numerous and complicated details with entire accuracy, but during the forty years he spent in India, he carried on a copious correspondence with his father and other members of his family, and a great portion of these voluminous letters has been not only preserved, but carefully transcribed in England. I venture, therefore, to say that nothing is related in these volumes upon vague recollection or traditional evidence, but every incident is told as it happened.

Although it was not the fate of Meadows Taylor to rise to a high rank in the civil or military administration of India, and he cannot lay claim to the distinction and fame which belong to the illustrious founders and servants of the British Empire in the East, there were circumstances in his career not less remarkable than in the lives of greater men. He was one of the last of those who went out to India as simple adventurers—to use the term in no disparaging sense, for Clive and Dupleix were no more—and who achieved whatever success he had in life solely by his own energy and perseverance, independent of the patronage of the great Company or the authority of the Crown. A lad of fifteen, after a few years spent at a second-rate school, and a few months in the drudgery of a Liverpool merchant's counting-house, is sent to Bombay upon a vague and fallacious promise of mercantile employment. It was long before the days of Indian examinations and

Competition Wallahs. Arrived at Bombay, the house of business he was to enter proved to be no better than a shop, and its chief an embarrassed tradesman. By the influence and assistance of a kinsman, a commission was obtained for the misfortune-stricken boy in the Nizam's military contingent. Thus only he started in life. But the stress of circumstances and the tenacity of his own character had already taught him the all-important lesson of self-reliance and independence. Already, on the voyage, he had commenced the study of Eastern languages, to which he applied himself with extreme assiduity in his new position, perceiving that until a man has mastered the language of a country, he can know little of its inhabitants, and may remain for ever a stranger to the intelligence and the hearts of those over whom he exercises authority. His perfect acquaintance with the languages of Southern India, Telugu, and Marathi, as well as Hindustani, was no doubt the foundation of his extraordinary influence over the natives of the country, and of his insight into their motives and character. It was also the first step to his advancement in his profession. At seventeen he was employed as interpreter on courts-martial, and recommended for much higher duty by the Resident; and at eighteen he found himself Assistant Police Superintendent of a district comprising a population of a million souls. Nor were the duties of that office light. They involved not only direct authority over the ordinary relations of society, but the active pursuit of bands of dacoits, Thugs, and robbers, who infested a half-civilised territory. Occasionally, military expeditions were necessary to reduce some lawless chief of higher degree to obedience. The head of the police was, in short, the representative of law and order in a wild country. These duties, at this early age, Meadows Taylor performed, and with such success as to merit the notice of the sagacious old Minister of the Nizam, Chandu Lal, and the approval of the Resident.

It would be superfluous in this preface to notice the details of his advancement in life, which are more fully related by himself in the following pages. But I may venture to point out one or two considerations on which the simplicity and modesty of his own nature forbade him to dwell. By mere

perseverance and industry, he carried on the work of self-education through life, with very remarkable results; and this, chiefly, at military stations in the interior of the Deccan, with no advantages of books or European society. Having mastered the native languages, he soon found that the government of an Indian district and population means that English intelligence, integrity, and foresight are to supply all that is wanting in these respects to a less civilised people; and he applied himself to make good from such resources as he possessed all these deficiencies. Thus he taught himself the art, and even invented a new method, of land-surveying, because the revenue settlement of the country depends upon it; and without augmenting the burdens of the people, he largely increased the revenue of the State in several districts. He taught himself engineering, because the construction of roads, tanks, and buildings was an essential part of the improvement of the country. He acquired a considerable knowledge of law, both Hindu, Mohammedan, and English, because he had to administer justice to the people; and he framed for himself a simple code and rules of procedure applicable to a country where there were no courts of law and no written laws at all. He studied geology and botany, because he observed the direct bearing of these sciences on the productiveness of the soil. He brought to the knowledge of Europe the curious antiquities of Southern India, so nearly allied in form to some of the remains of Ireland, Cornwall, and France. He beguiled his leisure hours with painting and music, in which he had, I know not how, acquired considerable proficiency; and he cultivated literature with no mean success, as is proved by the series of novels, beginning with the *Confessions of a Thug*, in which the manners and superstitions of India are portrayed with wonderful fidelity, and by the *Manual of Indian History*, which is the most complete summary in existence of the annals of that country. His various literary productions, which have stood the test of time, and still exercise a fascinating power over the reader, are not so much works of imagination as living pictures of the men and women amongst whom he dwelt. There is hardly a character in these volumes that was not drawn from some real person, whom he had seen and known in his various

expeditions or in the repression of crime. And he acquired, as if by nature, an extraordinary force and flexibility of style, which brings the native of India, with his peculiar forms of language, his superstitions, his virtues, and his crimes, within the range of the English reader, as no other work has done. The tales of *Tara*, *Ralph Darnell*, *Tippoo Sultaun*, and *Seeta*, were designed by their author to mark the principal epochs of Indian history at long intervals of time, and the state of society in each of them; and they form a complete work, which deserves to retain a lasting place in English literature. And when it is considered that they were for the most part written by a young officer who spent his life in active service, remote from all literary society, they are an astonishing proof of natural genius. I mention these things, not by way of panegyric, but because I hope that many a young Englishman may enter upon the duties of an Indian career with this book in his pocket, and may learn from it what may be done, in the course of a single life, to develop and improve his own character and attainments, and to promote the welfare of the people committed to his charge.

But there is a higher element and a more important lesson in this record of a life spent in the service of India. Meadows Taylor gave to the people of India not only his head, but his heart. He had the liveliest sympathy and affection for the natives of India. Thoroughly understanding their traditions and their manners, he treated men and women of all ranks with the consideration and respect due to an ancient society. The wild Beydurs whom he encountered upon his first arrival at Shorapur—men who were the terror of the country and the myrmidons of the court—said to him, after their first interview, 'We perceive that you respect us, and we will be faithful to you for ever.' And in the more polished spheres of Indian life he touched the pride of the native nobility with so light and kindly a hand, that they were as eager to court his friendship, as the peasantry were to receive his counsel and his benefits. British rule in India has, beyond all doubt, conferred the great benefits of peace and civilisation on the country; but it is sometimes wanting in gentleness and sympathy. There lies probably its greatest danger in the future. Some examples there are of men who have

touched the hearts of the natives and enjoyed in return their enthusiastic and devoted regard, such as the Lawrences, Outram, and Malcolm; but they are rare. I think the author of these recollections was one of them. Wherever he went, the natives knew and believed that they had a protector and a friend. The sphere of his power and influence was not wide, at least in comparison with the vast extent and population of the Indian Empire; but as far as it extended they were complete. Probably there were few men in India who, at the moment of the Mutiny of 1857, could have crossed the river into Berar without troops, and held a firm grasp on the passions of an excited people: and the confidence inspired by men of this character largely contributed to save the south of India from the calamities which were devastating the North-Western Provinces of Bengal. Not only was the maintenance of peace in the Deccan a matter of the utmost importance to the suppression of the disturbances in the North-West, but Colonel Taylor was able most materially to assist the operations of Sir Hugh Rose's army by moving up cattle and supplies, which were indispensable to the sustenance of the troops.

The chief object we have in view in giving these volumes to the world, and the chief object of the author in writing them, is to impress upon those who may be called upon to take any part in the administration of India, and especially on the young men who now annually leave our schools and examination papers for that purpose, that their ability, happiness, and success in the great work before them, will depend very much on the estimate they form of the native character, and on the respect and regard they show to the natives in the several ranks of society. The highest are on a par with the oldest and proudest aristocracy in the world. The lowest are entitled to be treated as members of an old and civilised society.[1]

Meadows Taylor was never, properly speaking, in the civil service of the East India Company or the Crown, nor did he

[1] In *Tippoo Sultaun* Taylor makes one of his young Indian officers, at home on leave, insist, as he himself did (see opening of Chapter VI. below) upon the 'highly civilised and cultivated character' of the people of the country.

hold any military appointment in the British Indian Army. He was through life an officer of the Nizam. He never even visited Calcutta or Bengal. But, the administration of the Nizam, *both civil and military, is, to a certain extent*, that of a protected government, and is largely influenced by the decisions and policy of the Governor-General of India in Council. When it became a question of appointing an officer to administer a province, though that province might be a dependency of the Nizam, it was not unnatural that the selection of an English servant of that prince, without rank in the British service, should be viewed with some hesitation and jealousy, both at the India Board and at Calcutta. It was probably owing to this cause that during the administration of Sir H. Hardinge, and when Captain Meadows Taylor had barely surmounted his first difficulties at Shorapur, he was disagreeably surprised by a note from the private secretary of the Governor-General informing him that the appointment of another agent at Shorapur, unconnected with the recent events in that State, was required, and in contemplation. Upon the receipt of this intelligence, no motive having been assigned for the intended change, Captain Taylor's friends in England took steps to ascertain whether there were grounds to justify it. I find among my own papers the following letter to myself from the late Mr John Stuart Mill, better known to the world for his philosophical writings, than for the eminent public services he rendered for so many years, in the capacity of Examiner, or Political Secretary, to the East India Company. It may be inserted here as the highest testimony to the merits of Captain Taylor as an administrator, from a most competent observer :—

INDIA HOUSE, 23*d Sept.* 1845.

MY DEAR SIR,—You can hardly feel more interested in preventing the removal of Captain Meadows Taylor from Shorapur than I do myself, because (to say nothing of personal considerations) I have a very high opinion of the merits of his administration of Shorapur. I may say, indeed, that his being at Shorapur now is owing to me, for some expressions of approval and praise in a despatch written by me was what induced the Indian Government to suspend their intention of replacing him by a civil servant of the Company, and to refer the matter home. I have endeavoured to induce the

Court of Directors to negative the proposition. I do not, however, expect to obtain anything so decided, as they do not think it right to fetter the Indian Government in its choice of instruments. But as the Court will certainly give no encouragement to the project, I think it will blow over, and Captain Taylor will remain.—Very truly yours,

J. S. Mill.

And in a second letter, written by Mr. Mill a few days later, he added :—

Whatever may be the cause that is working against Captain Taylor, I am convinced that Fraser (the Resident at Hyderabad) has nothing to do with it. Fraser, as far as I know, has always written to Government very much in his favour. Captain Taylor is quite in error if he supposes that the Nazarana[1] business has done him any harm. Fraser did not agree with him on that subject, but the home authorities and Sir H. Hardinge did, and do most strenuously.

The cloud did blow over. Captain Taylor's merits were acknowledged at home and at Calcutta, and he remained at Shorapur many years. Indeed, when the arrangement was made with the Nizam for the liquidation of the claims of the British Government by the cession of certain portions of territory, the district of Western Berar was placed under the management of Captain Taylor ; and the services rendered by him were so far eventually recognised by the Government of India, that he retired, after more than thirty-eight years' service,[2] with the pension of his rank in the British service, not unaccompanied with honorary distinctions, which he valued.

The time is past when so adventurous and singular a career is possible in India or elsewhere. The world grows

[1] Occasional dues, especially upon accession. As will be seen in the text, these had been an excuse for great extortion by the Nizam's Government against Shorapur. Taylor was keen to defend the interests of the lesser State.

[2] This would run quite to the end of 1862, more than two years after Taylor had left India in 1860.

more methodical, and routine takes the place of individual effort. But the same qualities of head and heart are still the only guides to success in the government of a people different from ourselves in race, religion, and manners, but united to Great Britain by a common allegiance and common duties.

HENRY REEVE.

FOXHOLES, *25th Sept.* 1877.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER IV

1829-37

CHAPTER V

1838

CHAPTER VI

1838–41

CHAPTER VII

1841-42

CHAPTER VIII

1843–44

CHAPTER IX

1844-45

CHAPTER X

1846

CHAPTER XI

1847–50

CHAPTER XII

1851–53

CHAPTER XIII

1853 57

CHAPTER XIV

1857 58

CHAPTER XV

1858

CHAPTER XVI

1858 59

CHAPTER XVII

1859–60

CHAPTER XVIII

1860–74

CHAPTER XIX

1871–76

NOTES

ILLUSTRATIONS

THE STORY OF MY LIFE

CHAPTER I

1808–24

I WAS born in Slater Street, Liverpool, on the 25th day of September 1808. My father, Mr. Philip Meadows Taylor, was the only surviving son of the Rev. Philip Taylor, of Old Court, Harold's Cross, in the county of Dublin.[1] My mother was the youngest daughter of Bertram Mitford, Esq., of Mitford Castle, in the county of Northumberland, one of the most ancient Saxon families of England, which still flourishes, from its origin, beyond the Conquest, to the

[1] This useful pedigree has been kindly extracted for me by the Reverend Canon Taylor, vicar of St. Just in Penwith, from the *Familiae Minorum Gentium*, page 1104, published by the Harleian Society.

John Taylor, D.D., of Norwich, d. 1761. = Eliz. Jenkins.

Richard Taylor of Norwich, merchant, d. 1762. = Margaret Meadows.

Philip Taylor of Dublin, minister of religion, b. 1747, d. 1831. = Anna Maria, dau. of Isaac Weld, D.D.

John Taylor of Norwich, merchant, d. 1826. = Susanna, dau. of John Cooke.

Philip Meadows Taylor. = Dec. 1807, Jane Honora, dau. of Bertram Mitford, of Mitford Castle, Co. Northumberland.

Sarah = John Austin, author of *Jurisprudence*.

Susan = Henry Reeve, M.D.

Philip Meadows Taylor, b. 25th Sept. 1808, d. 13th May 1876.

present time, in the enjoyment of its ancient privileges and estates.[1]

My father's ancestors were of a North Lancashire family, and have been traced to Lancaster, where they were known in the fifteenth century. They reckoned many men of sterling worth and reputation among their number; and one, Dr. John Taylor, author of the *Hebrew Concordance*, is well known to this day.[2] The Taylors intermarried with the Martineau family, after the former had removed to Norwich, which became their stronghold; and there the pleasant friendly gatherings and intercourse with Mr. and Mrs. Barbauld, Sir J. E. Smith, and other celebrities of the time, are not yet *forgotten*.[3]

Without making any boast of pedigree, I can at least claim descent from two ancient families of England—one Puritan, the other Royalist—and my parents faithfully preserved these hereditary distinctions to the last.

My father was educated partly in Germany, and there learnt to appreciate the advantages of rifles over ordinary muskets. He assisted in raising a volunteer rifle corps in Liverpool, which he commanded as executive captain, the Earl of Derby being the colonel; and thus had, I believe, the merit of being the first to introduce the rifle system into England. This fact was recognised by the War Office at a comparatively late period. In 1807 my father and mother were married at Walton Church, Lancashire. Five sons were

[1] In *Ralph Darnell*, chapter x., is a paragraph describing Mitford Castle. 'The site combines the utmost picturesque effect with natural strength at a period when artillery was unknown, and when bowmen, and rude engines for casting stones, could have had little effect upon defenders protected by those massive walls. . . . The beautiful Wansbeck babbles by; the rooks swing and caw in the great trees by the little church; and the Mitfords still possess those noble ancestral properties they have held round their castle for a thousand years—nay more, far back into the dim period of Saxon possession.' Again: 'If they had, like the Mitfords, indeed, all their lands about them.'

[2] This was the dissenting divine, 1694–1761, who seems to have done some good work in Hebrew scholarship.

[3] The two other families mentioned in this sentence are familiar enough. Meadows Taylor, himself a botanist, could appreciate the importance of Sir James Edward Smith, 1759–1828, who founded the Linnaean Society in 1788, and who produced an *English Botany* in thirty-six volumes. There is much about this family in the *Life of Henry Reeve*.

the issue of this marriage, three of whom survive, I being the eldest.

Soon after my birth my father removed from Slater Street to Brookfield, a pretty country-house near Liverpool; and later, for convenience in business, then very prosperous, to a house in Rodney Street, the most fashionable locality in the town at that time. I remember but little of Brookfield; and indeed my first memories of Rodney Street are dim and vague. The chief one is of my being attacked with croup, followed by a long severe illness, which changed me from a healthy, sturdy child into an ailing, delicate one, and necessitated my being sent to Ireland, to the care of my grandfather and aunts, for change of air. I grew querulous and weak, and, I fear, was a trouble in the house. I had named myself 'King Pippin', and remember lying on the rug in the room I am now sitting in, piping out miserably that 'King can't' or 'King won't' when required to do anything. I grew stronger, however, and soon became my grandfather's constant companion in his strolls about the garden, holding on by his finger, and gradually losing my awe of his deep sonorous voice and imposing manner, as was proved by a speech recorded against me, when, as he was seized by a violent fit of sneezing, I looked up in my grandfather's face, and said, gravely, 'Grandpapa, what a chap you are for sneezing.'

In due course I returned to my parents in Rodney Street, and many memories flit across me while I write. On one occasion, while on a pond with some skaters at Street Court, Herefordshire, where my mother's sister resided, I had a narrow escape of my life. The ice broke under me, and I was with difficulty rescued—my cry being, 'Help King! help King!'

I believe I could at this time read fairly, and could repeat a good deal by heart at the age of five. No great feat, truly; but I was never set up as a prodigy, nor did I begin Greek at three years old, like Mr. Stuart Mill!

My wish was to become a merchant in those days, and, watching my opportunity, I ran away to find 'papa's counting-house', and was discovered by a friend of my father's crying in the street, and restored to my dear mother, whose agony when she found I was missing was extreme. She feared

I had been decoyed away for my beauty, and that she would never see me more. I was ordered to bed, without supper, by my father; but I well remember, as I lay there sobbing, that my mother stole into the nursery with a bowl of hot bread-and-milk in her hand, and gave earnest thanks for my restoration to her beside my little bed.

Soon after this escapade, my brother Robert and myself were sent to a day-school to keep us out of mischief. Of what we learnt at the Rev. Mr. Fearon's I remember but little. I suppose the rudiments of English and the earliest lessons in Latin; but we were very happy, and it was the beginning of the little education I ever received.

Among the most distinct memories of these early days is that splendid illumination of Liverpool, the year of the peace of 1814. We elder boys were taken by our parents through the streets of the town; and although those were not the days of gas and other brilliant effects, very beautiful devices were arranged with coloured oil-lamps, and our delight was unbounded.

Nor have I forgotten the chairing of Mr. Canning and General Gascoigne,[1] on their return as Members for Liverpool, after a severely-contested election. I remember my mother presenting a nosegay of flowers (bouquet would be the word used now) to Mr. Canning, and the scarlet streamers with which it was tied, and how we children, standing on the steps, were cheering with all our might, and were shown to him. I remember his laughing face and shiny bald head as he kissed hands to my mother and drove on—the flags too, the shouting crowds, the bands of music, and the windows filled with gaily-dressed ladies; and I remember how my mother, a true Mitford, insisted that her boys should wear the Tory colours, red and blue, in opposition to my father, whose sympathies were with the pink or Whig colours of the Seftons.[2]

The same year I accompanied my parents to Norwich, where there was a gathering of the Taylor family; of this

[1] Isaac Gascoyne (thus in *Dictionary of National Biography*), 1770–1841, a general without military record in those great days, had some peculiar pull upon Liverpool, which he represented from 1802 to 1830. Canning was of the same age, and, although so bald, only forty-four.

[2] Sefton Park, Liverpool

I have little recollection; but of our stay in London—including being taken in a wherry to Greenwich, and seeing Madame Saqui dance on a tight-rope sixty feet high[1]—I have a very distinct impression, and also that I was a hero in the eyes of my brothers on my return.

It must have been about the year 1815–16 that my father's affairs became involved. He rejected all tempting offers to reinstate his business on borrowed moneys, which were freely pressed upon him; and having honourably discharged every claim, and given up the luxurious home in Rodney Street, to which his previous position had entitled him, he took a pleasant little villa called Olive Vale Cottage, about three miles from Liverpool, to which he removed his family. My mother accepted her change of fortune with all the resignation, devotion, and nobility of her character, and was ever the true helper and comforter of her husband.

At Olive Vale Cottage we boys lived a very happy life. There was a pretty flower-garden which was our mother's great delight, and her carnations, pinks, and auriculas were the finest of their kind; a magnolia and scarlet japonica were trained round the drawing-room windows, and showed her exquisite taste. There was a capital fruit and vegetable garden, which was my father's pride, and where he laboured diligently when he returned each day from his work in Liverpool. There was a poplar-tree too, in the highest branches of which we established a sort of nest to which we mysteriously climbed, to my mother's great dismay, and I remember my father calling to us to 'Come down, you monkeys, and don't frighten your mother', while he at the same time betrayed no small pleasure in our accomplishing so manly an exploit. Although they were very poor, my parents were very happy, and very proud of their troop of noisy boys, who throve well in the sweet country air.

The next event was my being sent to school. The one selected was kept by Mr. Barron at Holt Hall, near Prescot, and I entered as a boarder. There were, I believe, about a hundred boys, and the school had a wide reputation. It

[1] From an advertisement reprinted in *The Times of 1818* it appears that Madame Saqui was still an attraction at Vauxhall Gardens.

was a rough place, although scarcely equal to the Yorkshire school of Mr. Squeers; but I, fresh from the gentle presence and teachings of my mother, felt the change keenly, and was almost inconsolable—so much so, that I was sent home after a while, and when I returned to Mr. Barron's, it was as a parlour boarder, a distinction which caused much jealousy, and subjected me to much torment. I was the youngest boy in the school, teased and bullied by all; but after I had received an enormous cake from home, which was divided among the boys, I grew more into favour, and even became a 'pet' among them.

We rose at six in summer, partially dressed ourselves, and, with our jackets over our arms, went down to a stone bench in the yard, where stood a long row of pewter basins filled with water, and often in the winter with ice. Here, in all weathers, we washed our faces and hands, combed and brushed our hair, and went into the schoolroom a while to study; then were let out to play till the bell rang for breakfast, consisting of fresh new milk, and a good lump of bread. At ten we were all in school again, and work went on, only interrupted by the instances of severe punishment which but too often occurred. The rod was not sparingly used, as many a bleeding back could testify, and I have often been obliged to pick the splinters of the rods from my hands.

We were well fed on meat, cabbage, and potatoes, and rice or some plain pudding; on Sundays we had invariably roast beef and Yorkshire pudding. We went into school again at three. At five school broke up, and at seven we had our suppers of bread and milk; afterwards we could study or go out within bounds as we pleased. Good Mrs. Barron attended to our personal cleanliness and to our health; and at stated seasons, especially in spring, we were all gathered together in the dining-hall, where the old lady stood at the end of the room at a small table, on which was a large bowl of that most horrible compound brimstone and treacle. The scene rises vividly before me, as we all stood with our hands behind our backs, opened our mouths and received each our spoonful, swallowed it down as best we could—and had to lick the spoon clean too! Surely this was a refinement of cruelty! I presume I learnt something while at this school,

for before me lies a letter from my father, praising me for the good conduct and diligence I had shown, and exhorting me to further exertions, with much sound advice on many points. A like letter was also received from my grandfather, the replies to which I had to write with great care and no blots, and which was afterwards found carefully preserved among his papers.

I could not have remained at Mr. Barron's school longer than the close of the year 1817. The ill-usage I received increased, and I ran home at last and showed my mother my bleeding hands, and also my father when he came in. The distance I had run was no great feat for me, who was always selected 'hare' in our games at 'hare and hounds'. Thus the Barron bubble burst. What was to be done with me next? Had I really learned anything, except spelling, which was well knocked into me, and has stood me in good stead all my life? I doubt whether I really had profited much.

My brother attended a small day-school in the village of Wavertree, and when I got home I was also placed there under Mr. Newby's care. I believe he was a competent teacher if he chose, but he was incorrigibly sleepy and lazy; and when her husband fell asleep and we boys became uproarious, Mrs. Newby walked in, quelled the tumult, and read her lazy helpmeet a sound lecture, which used to afford us intense amusement. She was a tall grim woman, with decided beard and moustache, and a strong Cumberland accent; but she was very kind to us boys. A short time after my attendance at this school began, I received a bite from a dog as we were going along the lane one morning. It proved a very severe one, and I was very ill; my parents were much alarmed, as I was delirious for some time, and it was three months before the wound healed. How vividly I remember my dear mother's anxious face and gentle loving care, and my little brother Selby throwing himself down on the grass and crying that he saw the sky open and the beautiful angels hovering over him and saying to him, 'Meadows won't die!' What did the child see? Long years after I questioned him about this, and he said the vision was firmly rooted in his memory!

Time passed on, but I fear my father's affairs did not

improve, and there were many anxieties and privations at the Cottage; and at length, after a visit to Dublin, on which I accompanied him, my father accepted the charge of a large brewery in James Street, of which he was to be executive manager.

Does any reader remember the Dublin and Liverpool packets of fifty years ago? Stout cutters, with one narrow cabin for passengers and berths all round it; no wonder no one went across who could avoid it. We were three days and nights at sea; and as provisions were reduced to salt junk and ship's biscuit, we amused ourselves by catching gurnards off the Kish Bank, and these split and broiled were very good. After a short stay in Ireland we returned to Olive Vale Cottage. My father wound up his affairs in Liverpool, and we embarked with all our belongings for Dublin.

The house we occupied in James Street was large and handsome, and the brewery was a source of constant and varied delight. We helped, or imagined we helped, John Reilly, the cooper, to make and mend casks; and often shared his dinner of salt herring, potatoes, and butter, with old Segrave, the porter at the gate, who had a wooden leg.

My brother and I attended Dr. Hutton's school as day-scholars. Dr. Hutton taught Latin and Greek himself, and there were masters for French and mathematics. The discipline here, too, was very severe. Was everything I learned always to be beaten into me? I made but little progress in classics, but delighted in mathematics and French, and even gained prizes in these.

There was little variety in our Dublin life. I well recollect the entry of King George IV., the procession, his portly figure, and gracious salutations to the ladies in the windows, and the deafening cheers of the crowd, on that glorious summer day. The event was a remarkable one in the history of Ireland, and its people accorded to their King a right royal welcome.

All this time my dear mother's religious teachings to us became, it seems to me now, more earnest and constant than before. From her I learnt the doctrines of the Church and the sublime sacrifice and atonement of our Lord; and how lovingly and carefully she taught us will, I am sure, never be

forgotten by my brother or myself, and led to the feelings I have all my life experienced of love and humble devotion to our glorious Church.

In those days it was considered effeminate to teach boys to draw, or sing, or play on any instrument; accomplishments, therefore, were denied us. I had much desire to learn both music and drawing, but it was not allowed. I was getting on with Latin and Greek, had entered the first class, and took a goodly number of prizes in French and mathematics.

Every boy, I suppose, has one decisive fight to record; mine was with a big boy, the bully of the school. We had one encounter, in which I was severely handled. My father encouraged me, however, not to give in, and gave me private instruction, until I began to 'see my way into science'. Reckoning on another easy victory, my enemy one day called me a coward, and hit me. I returned the blow sharply. The odds were scarcely fair, as my adversary had on a jacket with a row of metal buttons down the front; however, I fought on, hitting out as my father had taught me, and at last my foe lay down, begging my forgiveness, which of course was accorded. When I got home it was very evident what had occurred.

'You have been fighting again, sir,' said my father, severely.

'Yes, sir, with J——,' I replied.

'Did you lick him?'

'I did, father, though he had buttons on his jacket.'

'Bravo, my boy, here's half-a-crown for you. Go off and treat your backers, and J—— too, if you like.'

And so I did.

I do not know how it came about, but at the close of that half-year I was told that I was to go to Liverpool and enter the office of Messrs. Yates Brothers & Co., West India merchants, and be articled to them for seven years. I did not like the prospect at all. I should leave my darling mother and my studies, in which I was beginning to take such pleasure. Why was I sent away? I am at a loss to imagine, and it is useless to speculate now, but so it was; and to the intense grief of my mother, I was taken away, young and utterly inexperienced, and placed as a boarder and lodger with

Mr. Hassal, a clerk in some office in Liverpool, who had been recommended to my father. I was duly introduced to Messrs. Yates's office, in which were several young boys—learners like myself. Mr. Ashton Yates, the senior partner, was invariably good to me, and I have a grateful memory of his kindness while I remained in the office. At first I was set to copy circulars, and such easy work; then I was promoted to being post-office clerk—not an easy task in those days, as the postage on letters sent and received was of considerable amount and variety. I afterwards became one of the clerks for attending the discharge of cargoes, sitting in all weathers in a wooden shed with the Custom-house landing-waiter, entering, under their various marks, cotton bales, sugar hogsheads, and goods of all descriptions from the East and West Indies. It was a hard life; and day after day, in snow, frost, or rain, I have sat for hours together, shivering and benumbed with cold, being allowed an hour for my dinner, in which time I had to run two miles to eat it, and run back again. Sometimes a friendly captain would ask me to partake of his meal; and I have frequently shared a landing waiter's lunch when offered. Our nominal hour for closing office was six o'clock; but I have often been kept till ten when there was a press of work. My last office was 'assistant dunner', as it was called *i.e.* the collection of moneys due; and late in the dark evenings have I, mere boy as I was, been walking the streets of Liverpool with thousands of pounds in bills, notes, and gold in my pocket. I was getting on; but I had enemies—why, I know not—who played me many a scurvy trick. My petty cash was often pilfered, my desk being opened by other keys. I was ordered on private errands for other clerks, and when I refused to execute them, I was 'paid off' by extra work and malicious accusations. These were, however, entirely disproved. I had a steady friend in Mr. Yates, and persevered in my work. The pleasantest part of my duty was arranging the samples of cotton according to their quality; and I have been often called into the 'parlour' to assist the partners in their decisions. I had a fine sense of touch, and became an adept in the manipulation of samples.

One incident I have never forgotten. I was returning to the office late one evening, when, passing by the door of

a chapel, and hearing groans and cries, I looked in. A person stationed at the door invited me to enter and 'save my soul'. The place, a large one, was in profound darkness; a candle here and there only made the gloom more impenetrable. People of both sexes were sitting in the pews, and shrill piercing cries arose of 'Save me!' 'I'm going to hell!' 'I'm damned!' 'The devil has me!' 'I'm burning, burning!' 'Go away, Satan!' 'Jesus has got me!' and the like, with prayers so profane and shocking that I dare not write them down. Sometimes one got up, man or woman, and gave his or her experience of sins and crimes, horrible to hear, but which, nevertheless, fascinated me. I know not how long I stayed, but a girl sat down by me at last and whispered, 'Come and kiss me, you beautiful boy—come away.' I gained the door, and fled rapidly in the darkness up the street.

Early in 1824 the wretchedness I endured in the office reached its highest pitch, and malicious tales against me increased frightfully, accompanied by threats. I retorted by saying to those who were badgering me, that if I were not let alone I would tell certain things I knew of them. I was of course defied; but I felt ill—I had a fearful cough, and the doctor said I was threatened with consumption; so I wrote the whole story to my father, who had left Dublin and was settled at Apsley, near Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire, telling him that I must come home for change of air at once.

I went into the 'parlour' to consult Mr. Yates, who agreed I had better go for a while. I was not strong enough for work, and my enemies in the office were very malicious.

'And', he added, 'tell your father, if there is any other opening for you he likes better, or that you wish yourself, I will give up your indentures.'

I had enough money of my own to pay my journey; and on a bitterly cold morning I mounted the roof of the London coach at the Saracen's Head, Dale Street, with a thankful heart, and was in my mother's arms on the following afternoon. How happy I need not say.

My indentures were returned by Mr. Yates, after some correspondence with my father, and I had ended that phase of my life, richer in experience and general knowledge, but

weak and delicate in health. With home care this soon improved.

I was not long in suspense as to my future. My father became acquainted with Mr. Baxter, a Bombay merchant, who wanted a young man to assist in the house at Bombay, and proposed to me to go out at once. It had been previously decided that I should go to Madeira for my health, so the proposal fitted admirably. We dined with Mr. Baxter, who lived in splendid style, and the terms offered seemed to me and to my father exceptionally good.

I was to receive a large and yearly increasing salary, live in Mr. Baxter's family, and to be admitted as an eighth partner when I became of age. My mother's cousin, Mr. Newnham,[1] was holding the high office of Chief Secretary to Government at Bombay, and would no doubt look after me; and I was considered a very lucky boy with excellent prospects.

My outfit was at once ordered, my passage taken in the *Upton Castle*, permission having been obtained for me to reside in India, and I returned for a few short precious days to Apsley. I will not dwell on this period; it is even yet sacred to me; but at length the 15th April came, and I parted from my dear mother in bitter grief, never to see her again. My father took me down to Greenwich in a wherry, with my boxes, and we found the *Upton Castle* there. We dined at the Falcon, and in the evening went on board. My father gave me much excellent advice and bid me good-bye, both he and I firmly believing that I should return in 'no time', rich and prosperous, a partner in Baxter's house.[2]

[1] I am indebted to Miss Lilian M. Penson for information about William Newnham. He is not mentioned in several books of reference consulted, but according to Dodswell & Miles, *Bombay Civil Servants, 1798–1838*, he was appointed in 1804, and after holding various appointments, became Chief Secretary to Government in 1823, and Member of Council 1829–1834. In 1835 he was living in England.

[2] There is a delightful Regency flavour, tempting to a novelist, about this too brief account of Taylor's childhood, with Mr. Baxter. His father, who might be a character in some early novel of Dickens, lived on for half a century, in a singularly happy intimacy with his son. But for Meadows Taylor's continuous letters to him from India, treasured up until they had served their final purpose, this autobiography would not have been what it is.

It should not be omitted that the novelist's full name was Philip

When I awoke next morning, our ship was anchored off Gravesend waiting for the captain and some of the passengers: when these arrived, we put to sea. So ended my boyhood in England. I had completed my fifteenth year the previous September.

THE MEADOWS TAYLORS

By Miss Meadows Taylor

The name Meadows has been carried on ever since two Miss Meadows married, one a Taylor, the other a Martineau. The name Meadows has been perpetuated in both families ever since. There is a valuable silver mug now in the keeping of Mrs. Mitford Taylor, widow of the Rev. Robert Taylor, only son of my father's brother, Rev. Robert Mitford Taylor, for forty years vicar of Hunmanby, Yorkshire. This mug (so goes the legend) was the property of one Sir Philip Meadows, who was in a high position in Portugal in King Charles's reign. The mug was left to his brother by my father, and descended to his son and his family.

My grandfather Taylor had great charm of manner, and was a favourite everywhere. He was not fortunate in business, and led a very chequered life. He married Miss Mitford, of Mitford, Northumberland. She was one of a large family who all married and have left descendants, so that our connections on that side are very numerous. Her brother, Admiral Mitford, was the father of the Dowager Lady Amherst of Hackney, and these cousins have always been most dear and valued.

On his father's side my father had no relatives so near, as except for his brother Rev. Robert Mitford Taylor, the remaining three were unmarried. The five brothers were Meadows; Robert; Weld, who took up lithography and latterly lived a retired life at Wimborne, Dorset; Selby and Glanville, who died within six months of each other in Ceylon, quite young men. Of these my uncle Robert and his family were the most intimate always; one of his daughters, Mrs. Robinson, lives near me now.

My grandfather's first cousins were a brilliant and talented

Meadows Taylor. The ancestor mentioned by Miss Taylor just below was Sir Philip Meadows, called 'the elder', 1626–1718, who was appointed Latin secretary to relieve Milton, and while still a young man represented Cromwell at Lisbon. He was afterwards envoy to Denmark and to Sweden, and published an account of the wars between those countries. His son, Sir Philip Meadows the younger, was long before his father's death knighted, and envoy to Holland and to the Emperor, dying in 1757, evidently at a great age.

lot, amongst them Mrs. Reeve, mother of Henry Reeve; Mrs Austin, mother of Lady Duff Gordon, whose daughter, Mrs Ross, has written an account of that branch of the Taylor family, called 'Three Generations of English Women', which is most interesting. Others of that large family were Philip Taylor of Marseilles; John Taylor, mining engineer; Edward, Gresham Professor of Music. All were notable in their way; and with many of them, especially Henry Reeve, cousinly intercourse was kept up. But the Mitford relatives always seemed the nearest to us, and we were thrown more amongst them.

My father and grandfather lived always on the most affectionate terms. My father always spoke of his mother as so lovable, and he revered her memory. His grandfather, Rev. Philip Taylor, left Norwich to take a nonconformist pulpit in Dublin. There he married a Miss Weld, who was heiress to the Harold's Cross property, then considerable. The house and what was left of the property came down to my father eventually; and we loved the old place with its delicious garden and fields adjoining. There we lived till my father's death; when, circumstances being quite altered, my sister and I sold it. It is now, I believe, covered with small houses, but the old house itself still remains. Hunmanby Vicarage is now occupied by the Rev. Edward Mitford, a distant cousin.

CHAPTER II

1824

We knocked about for a week in the Channel owing to strong adverse winds, and at last anchored off Spithead to wait for a fair breeze, and I wrote to my brother a long cheery letter detailing many a 'castle in the air', and hope of great things to come. On the 26th April we finally put to sea. We reached Funchal, Madeira, on the 26th May. I had excellent introductions from my father's relations, Mr. and Mrs. Leacock, and I was very kindly received on my arrival. I saw a great deal of the island, many new sights and much wonderful scenery, which I find described in a long letter written to my mother. We were about ten days at Madeira taking in wine for India. I was on shore all the time, and I believe some of the passengers were surprised to find 'the boy for Baxter's' at dinner-parties and the chief houses of the island. Certainly, several who had not before noticed me now began to do so. The captain and chief officer taught me the use of the sextant and to make observations, and I was soon able to be of use. Some one lent me Gilchrist's *Hindustani Grammar*, and taught me to pronounce the words, so I was able to make some progress.

The *Upton Castle* was frigate-built, and carried eighteen guns, and it was necessary to keep a good look-out against pirate cruisers about the latitude of the Azores. We were all told off to quarters, and I was constituted captain of the mizzen-top, my favourite resort for reading, and which now was garrisoned by six stout boys besides myself. One night I was keeping the first watch with Mr. Duggan the second officer, when just as the lights were being put out I raised the glass, and saw a large felucca close to us on the windward quarter. I raised an alarm, and although we hailed her

several times, no answer was given. I think I hear now Mr. Duggan's order to me to 'fire', and see the long dark ship, with all its moving dusky forms, plunging past us. I fired two muskets in rapid succession; but the stranger did not turn, and we sent a parting shot after her. Our ship was in a state of wild excitement, and groups of passengers, ladies and gentlemen in every variety of costume, were gathered on deck. We had no further alarms after this. We were becalmed on the line for nearly three weeks, dull and insufferably hot. We welcomed Neptune and Mrs. Neptune on board in the approved old fashion, and I was scraped with a hoop and well ducked, but was spared the tarring.

We had one terrible gale off the Cape, but got off without much damage. I had a narrow escape of my life one day: I was upon the dolphin-striker and had struck two and hit a third, and the 'quiver' held; but instead of disengaging the line from my arm, it became twisted round my wrist, and had I not been lashed to the dolphin-striker I must have been inevitably dragged into the sea. The wounded fish turned in a last struggle, and I got the line free. My arm was very painful for some time, and I made no further attempts to strike dolphins.

As we neared Bombay one of the passengers took me aside, and asked me concerning my past life and future prospects very kindly. I told him all, and the arrangements which had been made for me in Baxter's house, and that I believed it to be a great mercantile firm. On this point I was now undeceived, as my friend said Mr. Baxter's was simply a large shop; that they had been in a fair way of business, but that Mr. Baxter's extravagance in London had been such that it was possible the firm might no longer even exist. However, he added, you have made many friends among us; we are all interested in you, and will help you if we can. I told him of my letters to Mr. Newnham and others, and he said it was impossible to have a better or more influential friend. 'I think', he said, 'you will not be long at Baxter's, and we shall soon see you take your proper place in society.' Among the ladies, especially, I had excited an interest by rescuing one of them, a lovely girl, from a watery grave. She had incautiously opened her port-hole during a storm, keeping the cabin-door

shut. A great green sea poured in, flooding the whole place. I fortunately heard the rush of water, and forcing open the door of her cabin, found her lying face downwards in the water, which was pouring over the steerage deck. I carried her to the cabin of another lady and put her in, and next day was very sweetly thanked for my services.

All things considered, my voyage had been a very pleasant one. We anchored in Bombay harbour on the night of the 1st of September 1824, having been four months and a half at sea, and the whole of that glorious panorama opened on my sight as I rose early in the morning to have 'a look at India'.

I find a long letter written to my mother, dated September 3, part of which I am tempted to insert as my first impressions of Bombay :—

'Bombay, *September* 3, 1824.

'My dearest Mother,—After a long but fine passage of four months and some days, I have arrived at the house of Mr. Osborne, with whom I have every expectation of being extremely comfortable; but having been only here a day, I can hardly judge how I shall like the business that I am about to embark in, in the town of Bombay.

'I have arrived at a very good time of the year, as the weather, with the exception of next month, which is a hot one, will get cooler and cooler every day. Even now the evenings and mornings, which is the only time you can stir out, except in a palankeen, are delightfully cool and pleasant.

'But one of the greatest annoyances here are the mosquitoes, which bite terribly; but as yet I have escaped their torments.

'At about half-past ten on the morning of the 1st, land was descried from the mast-head, which proved to be the high land outside Bombay harbour.

'I was employed below, packing up all my goods and chattels, so that I did not come on deck till about three in the afternoon, when by that time we were close to it. It is fine high land, and is covered with green in many places—a welcome sight for us who had been so long at sea. We passed, also, two very pretty small islands, called Henery and Kenery, all covered with trees to the water's edge; but as it was by this time six o'clock, we could not see the beautiful verdure of the trees;[1] and as we entered the harbour by night, we

[1] These scraps of islands, of the size of the lesser Scillies, are about a dozen miles due south from Bombay. Henery is rightly Underi, and Kenery Khanderi. They were the scenes of fine confused pirate fighting,

missed a very fine sight, as the entrance to the harbour is reckoned one of the finest in the world. At half-past twelve we cast anchor in Bombay roads, about three miles from the town, intending to drop down early in the morning. Accordingly, when the pilot came on board about four o'clock, we weighed, and dropped down opposite the town, where we cast anchor for good about a mile from the shore. As soon as we had come to an anchor, we were surrounded by boats filled with black fellows, naked excepting a piece of cotton-stuff tied round their waist, offering fruit, eggs, milk, etc., of which you may be sure we all ate very heartily by way of a treat. About twelve o'clock I hired a boat and went ashore, taking with me all the clean clothes I had, which had dwindled to about half-a-dozen clean shirts, as many stockings, and one pair of trousers—rather a slender stock! The moment I got ashore, I hired a palankeen and went to Baxter Bros., where I was received by Mr. Osborne, the manager, who did not know of my appointment, but was very kind. He offered me his palankeen to go about in, and recommended me to deliver my letters; and I set out for Mr. Newnham's, who was very kind, offered me his advice whenever I stood in need, and told me if he could do me any service, he would with the greatest pleasure. I then went to Mr. Wodehouse, who asked me if I was entirely engaged to Baxter's; and when I told him I believed I was, I thought he looked disappointed.

'. . . Nothing goes down here but the "Company", and it is indeed an excellent service. (There are the writers, for instance; as soon as they arrive in India, they have their three hundred rupees a-month, and nothing to do but to learn the Hindustani and Persian languages, and ride about in palankeens, with a score of black fellows at their heels. In this country there are lots of servants, and they are the laziest lot of rascals under the sun. One fellow will not do two things. If you have a fellow to brush your shoes, he will not go on an errand.[1] One of our passengers hired eighteen servants

---

yet on the smallest scale, in the days when three other Powers tried to crowd the English off the island of Bombay. Kenery passed to us with the other Maratha possessions in 1818; but it is startling to think that Henery, the island nearer the mainland, for some reason did not lapse, and was the scene of certain atrocities, until 1840, years after Taylor wrote this description.

[1] This subdivision of domestic service is one of the first points to strike a griffin. In one of the Anglo-Indian books most packed with good stories, the author, on landing at Calcutta in 1858 in circumstances very different from those of Meadows Taylor a generation earlier, is thus instructed by a family friend who did not like India: 'Caste, my dear child, is the bane of this country. Why, the fellow who cleans my boots, blowed if he will clean my shoes' (J. H. Rivett-Carnac's *Many Memories*: Blackwood).

the moment he landed! But their wages are very cheap. You get these fellows for 2, 3, 4, and 6 rupees a-month, and have not to clothe them or anything. . . . A shirt here lasts only a day—sometimes not even that. Fortunately washing is very cheap, only three rupees a-month, and you may dirty as many things as you like. I think the climate will agree with me; I do not find the heat oppressive. . . . Last night I had a walk on the esplanade, which was crowded with vehicles, carriages, gigs, and buggies, of all sorts, shapes, and sizes.' Bombay is a fort; but the fortifications are not in good order. It is a pleasant walk round the top of the ramparts. I have not seen any of the passengers since I came ashore. I suppose they will all be too proud to speak to me now; but, fortunately, there was not one I cared twopence for, except young Shepheard; that's a comfort. . . . The language is not difficult to get a knowledge of; but to be a good grammatical scholar is difficult, as it is not a written language. But Gilchrist, of London, has invented a way of writing it in English letters.[1] The natives transact their business in Persian, which is a written language. This is a festival day, and the natives walk in a sort of procession, with a kind of drum, making a terrible noise. They dress up in the most ridiculous manner, carry torches in their hands, and go on with all sorts of antics.[2] . . . I have written

[1] The boy informs his mother with sufficient correctness. John Borthwick Gilchrist, 1759–1841, was, like several contemporary pioneers in Indian studies, a member of the medical service. His *Hindustani Grammar* appeared in 1796; and it was the discerning Marquis Wellesley who gave him a larger chance. Gilchrist was the predecessor, at Hindustani text-books, of the better-known Duncan Forbes, then a young man.

[2] In his *History*, speaking of seven years earlier, Taylor says: 'The annual festival of the Dussera was to take place on October 19, and is an occasion, in every Hindu State, not only for a military display in commemoration of the capture of Ceylon by King Rama, but for taking the annual muster of troops.' Near the opening of the *Thug* Ameer Ali says: 'As it still wanted two days to the festival of the Dussera, my inauguration was postponed to that day; for it is esteemed a particularly fortunate one by the Thugs, and indeed by all classes. On it, you are already aware, that all great undertakings are commenced by armies, and, in like manner, by us Thugs; for the breaking up of the rains gives us a hope that the adventure will not be impeded by them; and the continuance of fine weather which follows it, allows the band to travel in comfort, and with better hope of booty from the chance of falling in with travellers, who also take advantage of the break in the weather to commence long journeys. Above all, it is a day peculiarly sacred to Bhowanee, our patroness and goddess.' Yet asking his father why Hindu festivals should be acknowledged and kept by Musalmans, Ameer Ali is told: 'The Dussera is the only

you a long letter, and told you all I could think of. I shall be in daily expectation of hearing from you, and can assure you there is nothing so disappointing as a ship from England without a letter from yourself.—I am your affectionate son,

M. T.

'*P.S.*—Pray give my love to all friends at home and in London, where, I daresay, they have not forgotten me. Also to all dear friends in Dublin. When you see the boys, kiss them for me, and tell them the black fellows are such queer "jummies", with large bracelets on their arms and thighs made of silver, and rings through their noses, and strings of *beads round their necks, and almost naked.*

'Kiss dear Johnny for me a hundred times. I daresay he still remembers me; and give my love to Bella.

'We are going to have a new Governor, as Mr. Elphinstone is going to Madras, and a Mr. Lushington of the Treasury is coming out to succeed him.[1] The present Governor is very much liked, and the inhabitants will be sorry to part with him.

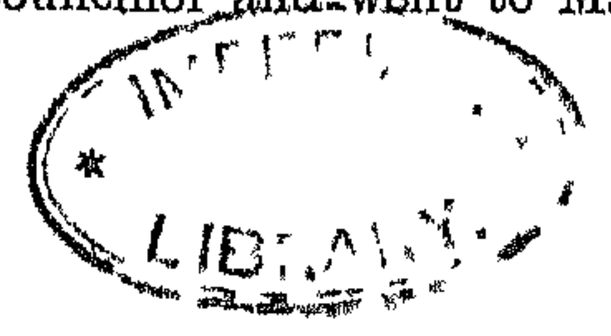
'Mr. Osborne lives in a very pleasant part of the town, fronting the esplanade, close to the fort-walls. We can see the sea—in fact it is close by—so that we have the sea-breeze all day long, without which it would be miserably hot. The houses are all built very large—large rooms, etc.; and the staircases are wide and airy.

'And now, dearest mother, I must close this letter, wishing you health and happiness; and that God may send His blessing upon you and my dear father is the constant prayer of your affectionate son.'

---

one which is observed; and the reason of this is, that it is the fittest time of the year to commence our enterprises, and has been invariably kept sacred by all Hindu Thugs.'

[1] This is quite wrong, though doubtless a rumour of the day, explained by the fact that Mountstuart Elphinstone (1779–1859) had then nearly completed the normal five years as Governor of Bombay. When Taylor landed in 1824 Elphinstone, still a youngish man, bachelor, scholar, valetudinarian, enjoyed a towering reputation as having so lately and so largely directed the annexation of that 'Maratha Continent' which had always overshadowed and confined the aspiring 'Presidency'. Elphinstone remained Governor for fully three years longer, refusing further office: his nephew it was who, in the same post, showed kindness to Taylor leaving India in poor health in 1860. Stephen Rumbold Lushington, 1776–1868, once of the Madras Civil Service, son-in-law and biographer of the first Lord Harris, the conqueror of Tippoo, was a Parliamentary politician important enough to bargain for an Indian governorship. He never went to Bombay. He was joint secretary to the Treasury from 1824 to 1827. In that year he became Privy Councillor and went to Madras as Governor for the five years following.



I had a comfortable room at Mr. Osborne's, and lived with him and his wife. He was in much perplexity about me, as he continued to receive no instructions, and the affairs of the house grew worse and worse. I could be given no salary, and as to the eighth share which I was to receive after five years, Mr. Osborne considered it purely imaginary, and his hope seemed to be that Mr. Newnham or Mr. Wodehouse would provide for me and relieve him of the responsibility. I did not write home any complaints or misgivings, but set to work to give what I could in return for the food, shelter, and indeed clothing that Mr. Osborne kindly supplied me with. I could do but little in the office, or help in accounts I did not understand at first. I could, however, make out bills for goods supplied—wine, beer, and groceries; could draft copies of outstanding accounts, and letters for Mr. Osborne to sign. I had to sell in the shop both to ladies and gentlemen. I even one day sold some articles to the young lady I had rescued on board, and she presented me to her father, Colonel ——, with a pretty little speech, telling him the story; and the old gentleman shook me warmly by the hand and thanked me.

I often breakfasted with Mr. Newnham, but Mr. Wodehouse seemed almost more anxious on my account, and often looked into the shop. So I plodded on, Mr. Osborne looking anxiously for letters about me that never came, and vexing himself by vain regrets.

My time of deliverance was not far distant. Mr. Newnham one morning sent his palankeen for me, with a note saying he had something to tell me, and he showed me a letter from Sir Charles Metcalfe, then Resident at Hyderabad,[1] stating

[1] Charles Theophilus Metcalfe, 1785-1846, third baronet, and Lord Metcalfe in the last year of his life, 'the liberator of the Indian Press', was from 1820 to 1825 Resident at Hyderabad, where he 'had to deal with the case of the banking firm of Palmer & Co.' He left before Taylor could have met him, returning to his former charge of Delhi: the one-volume edition of the *Dictionary of National Biography* wrongly keeps him at Hyderabad during these two years. 'The three greatest dependencies of the British Crown were successively entrusted to his care'—as Macaulay could write of India, Jamaica, and the small Canada of that day. His natural son, Colonel James Metcalfe, was an Indian officer somewhat prominent in the following generation; while the young Sir Theophilus Metcalfe, renowned in the history of Delhi, was his great-nephew.

that he had procured me a commission in his Highness the Nizam's army, and the sooner I went up to Aurungabad the better. I was of course astonished at this, but without any hesitation I accepted it at once, feeling very sure I had found a better opening than before. Only, how to get free of Baxter's? Mr. Newnham wrote to Mr. Osborne asking that my indentures might be cancelled. Of course Mr. Osborne was surprised, but very kindly said he would not stand in my way; that I was a fortunate fellow to have such a friend and get such an appointment, and next day gave me back my indentures.

I find in a letter from Mr. Newnham to my mother that 'he is happy to tell her, her son will now quit the shop and move in his proper sphere. The Nizam's service', he continues, 'holds out the most flattering prospects; and if he qualifies himself in points of duty and in acquaintance with the native languages, the road to high and lucrative employment will be open to him. He will remove to my house, where he will remain till he is ready to proceed to Aurungabad, where his military service will commence. I shall be very happy if this change in his circumstances should prove agreeable to you and Mr. Taylor. He is a fine intelligent lad, and I saw him, with regret, articled to a house which is not in as flourishing a state as you were led to believe.—Yours very faithfully, WILLIAM NEWNHAM.'

I removed to a small bungalow within Mr. Newnham's 'compound', and a Parsi servant was appointed to attend me, who spoke good English; but I had not been idle, and could make myself understood pretty well, my ear guiding me to a good pronunciation. Arrangements for my military outfit proceeded. I needed of course uniform, tents, clothes, etc., and my generous friend, Mr. Newnham, gave me a splendid chestnut Arab, which had belonged to his late wife. How pleased he was that I was out of 'that shop'—that I was no longer 'Baxter's boy!' indeed I am sure he felt his own dignity insulted as long as I was there. 'Now', he said, 'you are Lieutenant Meadows Taylor of his Highness the Nizam's service, and we all drink your health and wish you success.'[1]

[1] 'Some men pass their lives in getting and losing chances, but Taylor was of the sort to make befriending him a pleasing office; winning,

One other temptation assailed me. Mr. Shotton, the head of the great mercantile firm of that name, pressed me to throw aside military service and join his House. The prospects were very tempting, and Mr. Newnham was greatly troubled as to what was best for me to do. Finally it was arranged that Mr. Newnham and Mr. Wodehouse should decide; and their fiat went forth that I was to be a soldier. They were right; the great House perished too, and I should have been again on the world.

So when my kit was ready I left Bombay. Mr. Newnham had generously advanced every rupee of my outfit, and I was to repay him as I could; and on the 18th November 1824 I started for Aurungabad.

HYDERABAD STATE

Our Faithful Ally, his Exalted Highness the Nizam, holds, not merely by these titles, a different position from the other princes of India. The title of a Victorian novel, *Her Majesty's Greatest Subject*, most obviously suggests the Nizam. He has been picturesquely called 'The Turk at Hyderabad'. The people of the adjoining British districts speak of *the Mogulai*, where missionaries and their agents go over the borders, among the fanatical populace, at some risk.

---

active, eager, and industrious, every one took kindly to the lad, and his high-placed relation had the discernment to see that influence and generosity exerted in his case would be repaid by the result. . . . The Nizam's army, as it was then called, now the Hyderabad Contingent, was that part of the Nizam's armed forces which had been supplied with a staff of British officers, and brought under regular military training and discipline. It comprised about a dozen regiments of infantry and cavalry with some batteries of artillery, to which were attached about one hundred European officers, most of whom belonged to the regular establishment of the Indian Army, and were detached to the Nizam's service by way of staff employ, but some of whom, like Meadows Taylor, were appointed on the nomination of the Resident, and whose commissions carried no authority beyond the Nizam's army itself.' Much is made of the unfair difference between the regular officers, who sought 'this coveted service' for 'the increased pay and promotion it conferred', and outsiders who had to enter by the back door; as also of the truly gorgeous uniforms. 'Did an officer appear at a levee at St. James's with an exceptional amount of gold lace and embroidery on his coat, he would usually be found to belong to the Hyderabad Contingent' (*Edinburgh Review* article, 'The Story of an Indian Life', October 1877).

For this is the surviving fragment, always the greatest in area and truly grandiose, from the Empire of the Moguls. It was once yet larger, stretching to the north and to the south, and to the eastern sea. 'For a century before British colonies thought of calling themselves by that name, 'the Dominions' was a familiar phrase for those of his Highness the Nizam. No Indian State can hold its head up to these Dominions. This was hardly true while the kingdom of Oudh lasted. But for more than six decades there has been no competitor.

The mere area of Hyderabad is 82,700 square miles, or as nearly as need be that of Great Britain without Wales. This area is approached by that of Jammu with Kashmir, largely mountain ranges; or even by the deserts of Kalat. But practically the whole of Hyderabad territory is good fertile country, though tending to dryness and requiring the storage of water. In the matter of population, which counts for much more, the primacy is Hyderabad's. By the census of 1911, as given in *The Oxford Survey of the British Empire*, and in the volumes of the Hyderabad Census Returns, the population was then an increasing 13,000,000. Mysore, the second State, and greatly better administered, has less than one half these figures for either population or area; while the several States following in importance have difficulty in keeping above 3,000,000.

The eighty pages of the article on Hyderabad State in the *Imperial Gazetteer* contain little that need be quoted. The statistics in the current edition have long been devoid of significance, as based upon the census of 1901. The entire State maintains a certain level above the sea, rising in places even above three thousand feet. 'It is divided into two large and nearly equal divisions, geologically and ethnologically distinct, separated from each other by the rivers Manjra and Godavari.' Of both these divisions Meadows Taylor came to have administrative experience. The portion to the north and west is trap, with black soil, a land of wheat and cotton, inhabited by the speakers of Marathi and Kanarese. This includes the Balaghat, the upper ranges which Taylor enjoyed in life, and to which he has given a poetical touch in *Tara*. The southern portion of the State, much the larger, is granitic, with bare hills and fantastic boulders, a land of rice and tanks. It is called Telingana, and the people speak Telugu.

'A greater variety of wild animals and feathered game', says the *Gazetteer*, 'is not met with in any other part of India, excepting perhaps the Mysore State.' There is a taking list, beginning with tigers and leopards, occasional bison and elephants, including wolves, tiger-cats, bears, porcupine, peafowl with blue and green pigeon, and ending with florican and flamingo on the banks of the Godavery and Krishna.

But the climate is prevailingly feverish. This is not surprising, since the mean temperature of the State is 81 degrees. There is a world of difference between that and an average temperature of a dozen, or fewer, degrees lower, that is bound to prove a burden to any European constitution; and it ruined Taylor's, within thirty-six years.

Hyderabad is, historically, the continuation of the lesser Deccan kingdom of Golconda. Taylor has told, in his *History*, how the king of Golconda, who had long felt crowded, began in 1589 to build the present city of Hyderabad, on the right bank of the Musi river, about eight miles from the fort. It was first named Bhagnagar, after a favourite Hindu mistress, Bhagmati; and when she died, after his son Hyder. 'The city was well laid out with broad streets, then sheltered by rows of trees, and the supply of water from a dam in the river above Golconda was, and continues to be, abundant.' This city has now reached half a million, and the sanitation has been much improved since Taylor's day.

About a century after the founding of the city, the Golconda kingdom was absorbed in the Mogul Empire, which was already tottering. For an uncertain generation it remained attached to Delhi. The date at which, in the first quarter of the eighteenth century, Hyderabad fell off from the empire into an independent orbit is variously stated, but is usually written as being 1724.

The founder of the State, who did with abiding success what so many Indian governors and Persian satraps tried to do, was a Turkoman nobleman or adventurer named Asaf Jah, among other names, and earlier a distinguished general under Aurungzeb. He was the first Nizam-ul-Mulk, 'regenerator of the State'. Amid the welter of the first half of the eighteenth century in India Asaf Jah strikes the imagination by his stability, and by the way he lived on, always competent though sometimes defeated. He died in 1748, 'having attained', says Taylor, 'the wonderful age of 104 years.'

His three successors, who are counted as the second, third, and fourth Nizams, assisted, during only about a dozen years, at the rise of the British power. They were all, with those after them for a century and a half, as characterless as he was full of character. The tradition of fidelity to the English took some time to get established. The Nizams of the eighteenth century were no more than just sufficiently faithful to be tolerated in the part. Their survival was largely a matter of bigness, of the attraction of gravitation, of sitting tight. Whatever provinces they lost, they held the balance in the Deccan. The real fighters, the Marathas, the Mysoreans, the English, despised but could not ignore them. Hyderabad State seems steadily to have been guiltless of any distinction, prevailing merely by mass and by inaction.

The Nizams respectively of *Tippoo Sultaun* and of the *Thug*, with two others under whom Taylor chiefly served, are as follows:

Nizam Ali, also called Nizam-ul-Mulk and Asaf Jah, counted as the fifth Nizam, was the fourth son of the founder of the line, and reigned from 1761 to 1803. As he was after all but in the second generation, exactly like Tippoo Sultan, he need not so excessively have scorned the marriage overtures from Tippoo as the son of an upstart. The Nizams had been longer on a throne, through a number of successions. Perhaps a feeling of race came in. The grandson of this Nizam Ali had still (see below, Chapter 4) 'a fair skin, ruddy complexion, and blue Tartar eyes', while Hyder was notoriously black, and his son nearly so. Perhaps also there was the feeling of the Sunni, the orthodox champion, against the fantastic zealots of the south. This ruler, who had the longest adult reign of any in Hyderabad, came to seem, by endurance and accretion, 'the great Nizam Ali' before he died.

Sikandar Jah, or Shah, the sixth Nizam, reigned from 1803 to 1829, with no more salient traits than those indicated in the *Thug*. It was his service that Meadows Taylor entered in 1824.

Nasir-ud-Daula, the seventh Nizam, reigned from 1829 to 1857, through the largest part of Taylor's service. There is no personal reference to him save the opening glimpse of a tall, ruddy, blue-eyed youth.

Afzal-ud-Daula succeeded at the crisis of the Mutiny as the eighth Nizam, and reigned for a dozen years, covering Taylor's last years in India. He was father of the late Nizam, and grandfather of the present youthful ruler. All these successions have been from father to son.

As the *Confessions of a Thug* can be so easily obtained it will be more amusing to give the references in *Tippoo Sultaun*, published 1840.

The incidents are, on an average, a generation earlier than in the *Thug*. The ruler of the Deccan, his power not yet consolidated, is here Nizam Ali, the father of Sikandar Jah; and all passes within the eighteenth century.

At the opening, 1788, a servant laments having ever 'been seduced to leave the noble city of Hyderabad', a recurrent phrase. The author speaks, among the contending powers, of 'the Nizam, whose armies, ill-paid and ill-conducted, were generally worsted in all engagements; but who still struggled on against his enemies, and in whose service titles were readily to be won, sometimes, but rarely, accompanied by more substantial benefits.' 'I like not the service of the Nizam,' says Kasim Ali, whose father had been in it. 'The Mahrattas . . . are every day making encroachments upon Nizam Ali's power, which totters upon an insecure foundation.'

The same servant boasts: 'Ay, now, at my city we have the real shooting; there, over the plains of Surroo Nuggur, thousands of antelopes are bounding with no one to molest them, except Nizam Ali, who goes out with the nobles and shoots a hundred sometimes in a day. . . . I say it is a dish for the Huzoor, and such an one as I have often cooked for his zenana.' 'Then thou wast in the kitchen of Nizam Ali?' 'Even so, Meer Sahib; there is plenty to eat, but little pay; so I left the Huzoor. . . . Ere I was a cook I was a barber; and Hyderabad is not an indifferent place to learn how to dress wounds. Mashalla! our young men are rare hands at street brawls. . . . Gradually the difficulties of the Government caused all the salaries to the officers to fall into arrears. Then came with that a train of distresses; the elephant was sold, some jewels pledged. . . . This daughter Ameena, was marriageable, and her great beauty was known; they had many offers for her, but they looked high; they thought the Huzoor himself might ask for her, and that the fortunes of the house might rise.'

As one proceeds southward 'the city' comes to mean Seringapatam. Yet that upstart place looks to Hyderabad, famous for more than its singers, with some feeling of loadyism. Tippoo knows that the Nizam is anxious to turn against the English in order to avoid fulfilling certain treaty obligations. Through intrigue Tippoo secures the sending to himself of a longed-for embassy from Hyderabad, bearing a splendid Koran, and seeming to recognise him as the head of Islam. But he spoils a promising plan.

'He had long been solicitous', says Taylor, 'of allying himself by marriage with the princely family of the Dekhan, but had never had an opportunity of proposing it; now, when the Nizam had sought him—when, humbled by the English and in dread of the Mahratta power, that prince had asked aid against both from his brother in the faith—he thought he could make that a condition of compliance. . . . But the Nizam's ambassadors were men of sound judgment; they knew that their prince had lowered himself already in sending the embassy to a self-constituted Sultaun—a low-born upstart. . . . They answered the demand in cold and haughty terms, and, requesting their dismissal, soon after left his camp.' Tippoo refuses to recall them. 'Tippoo's message was received with indignation by the Nizam,' who throws himself entirely into the cause of the English. 'Inshalla!' declares Tippoo, 'alone we will do what Nizam Ali Khan will wonder at in his zenana, as he sits smoking like an eunuch.'

There is a personal reminiscence in Taylor's account of 'that noble white-faced elephant Hyder (which was taken at the siege of Seringapatam, and still adorns, if he be not recently dead, the processions of the present Nizam)'. He

is almost a character, far exceeding the other elephants in height, raising 'his white trunk high into the air' at the approach of tigers. Tippoo again speaks of 'the imbecile ruler of Hyderabad' who was drifting into that primacy of position which Tippoo might so easily have kept.

'The polite and courtly character' of the nobles of Hyderabad is elsewhere mentioned. There is a good deal about the Nizam's force in the first campaign of Cornwallis against Tippoo. 'It presented a most gorgeous Eastern display.' Half the tribes of Asia were here 'mingled with a wild confusion—men hardly belonging to any corps, and clustered round every leader's standard, apparently as fancy, or caprice, or hope of plunder dictated. The force was utterly inefficient, however, for the purposes of the war.' Its leader was bribed to inaction by Tippoo; but in the second campaign it had a more honest commander. Seven years later, at Malvilly, Tippoo exults at the sight of the green standard of Hyderabad, with 'the white crescent and ball beneath it', among his enemies. ''Tis they—the effeminate Dekhanees!—men who are no better than eunuchs . . . the renegades from the Faith!'

CHAPTER III

1824–29

WHAT was I to see in the new strange world now opening before me? What was I to do and to be? My heart was full of hope, and my ambitions ran high that morning as I parted from my kind friend Mr. Newnham, whose last words rang in my ears—'As soon as you have proved that you *can* be useful, you will be *made* useful,' he said; 'be diligent and be steady, and I have no fear for you. Now go.' My things had been sent on in advance, and what little I had with me was already in the boat at the Apollo Bunder, in charge of Dorabji, my Parsi servant. We pushed off as I entered the boat, and dashed away over the clear water. The harbour was gay with shipping, and the giant Ghats in the background were wreathed with fleecy white clouds about their summits. I was in wild spirits, and could scarcely restrain myself, it was so glorious and so beautiful.

I found my horse and pony, tents and baggage, at Panvel,[1] where I landed, and in the evening went on to Chauk. There I had the first sight of a splendid Indian encampment; the Resident at Nagpur, Sir Richard Jenkins,[2] being on his way

[1] Panvel town, now of some 10,000 inhabitants, is the headquarters of the taluk of the same name in Kolaba District, Bombay. The *Imperial Gazetteer* says: 'The chief local industry is the construction of cart-wheels, of which it is said that every cart from the Deccan carries away a pair. . . . Panvel port is mentioned as carrying on trade with Europe in 1570; and it probably rose to importance along with Bombay, as it is on the direct Bombay-Deccan route.' It was at Panvel, some twenty years before Taylor's landing, that Pandurang Hari, in the novel of that name, took boat for Bombay.

Chauk, although without an article to itself, is conspicuous on the map of the environs of Bombay, the end of the first day's stage, well along the road to Poona.

[2] This is one of the figures of that triumphant epoch in India whom

to Bombay. The scene was very strange to me. The stately white tents, the camels depositing their burthens, the huge elephants, the native gentlemen arriving in palankeens, surrounded by their numberless attendants, the camp bazaar, with its booths and stalls, the variety of dresses, colours, and equipments—all formed a scene of Eastern splendour such as I could never have imagined.

As I was strolling idly along, I was accosted by an officer, and we fell into friendly chat; and when he knew where I was going, and who I was, he invited me to breakfast, assuring me that any friend of Mr. Newnham's would be welcome to Sir Richard.

I was kindly received by the Resident, and again invited to dinner in the evening, and I felt no small gratification at such kind notice being bestowed on me.

Next morning I reached the foot of the Ghats, and proceeded by the military road. How grand it was! Deep glens and ravines, bounded by tremendous precipices; trees and flowers all new to me; and fresh invigorating air, so cold and bracing, and so like, I thought, to dear old England!

On the 24th November I arrived at Poona, and was hospitably entertained by the officers of H.M. 67th Regiment at

---

one could most wish to recover in some detail. Richard Jenkins was born in 1785, the same year as Metcalfe, dying at a later age in 1853. Like Metcalfe, he came out to India in 1800, when barely fifteen; so that as far as that goes, Meadows Taylor was not exceptional in the age at which he was shipped off.

Though Nagpur was not then annexed, Jenkins, still a young man, emerged from the last Maratha war with a reputation only second to that of Elphinstone. During practically two decades he was in charge of Nagpur—for the second of these ruling in the name of the infant Raja. Of this work Taylor says: 'Material prosperity, and cultivation, had increased to an extent never before known in Berar; but the prosperity of the people only served to incite exaction, and in a comparatively short period the last memorials of Mr. Jenkins' benevolent administration had been utterly eradicated.' Incidentally, Jenkins 'suggested annihilation of Pindaris'.

After his return to England, a little past forty, he sought, with more weight than many Anglo-Indians, yet with hardly more result, to impress himself upon the public life of his countrymen. Yet he was twice M.P. for Shrewsbury, chairman of the East India Company in 1839, G.C.B., and D.C.L. of Oxford. Jenkins was probably the most eminent man whom Taylor had yet encountered.

their mess. I was shown all the sights during our evening rides, and the temple where the 'Peshwa' sat in state to see the English annihilated by his army, which, instead, was defeated at Kirki,[1] in 1817,—and many other scenes of interest; but I knew little then of Dekhan history.

We reached Ahmednagar[2] on the 29th, and were hospitably

[1] Of Kirki, Taylor in his *History* says: 'No one knew the Mahrattas better than Mr. Elphinstone: and instead of allowing Colonel Burr, the officer in command of the brigade, to await attack, he directed him to move at once on the Mahratta forces. Beyond one brilliant charge . . . the vast host of the Mahratta army did nothing; and as the British brigade still advanced, the whole took to flight.' But it is of Koregaon that the *History* relates: 'The Peshwah witnessed the fight all day from a distant eminence, and seeing the successive failures of those on whom he had relied, bitterly upbraided them for having misled him. He had now no refuge but in flight, and the British divisions allowed him no rest.'

[2] Ahmednagar District borders on the west the dominions of the Nizam, whom Meadows Taylor was to serve during some thirty-six years to follow. As it is at the core of Deccan history, the references to it in his various writings are innumerable.

Ahmednagar city lies in a plain on the left bank of the Sina, some seventy miles from Poona, and within ten miles of the nearest territory of the Nizam. In his *History* Taylor describes its founding, about 1490, by the revolting officer of the Bahmani kingdom after whom it is named. It is now a flourishing town of well over 40,000 inhabitants. About one tenth of these are Christians, the place being notable for the century-long labours of the American Marathi Mission.

Ahmednagar held her own as she could among the Deccan kingdoms for less than a century and a half. The most famous of the reigning house was Chand Bibi, 'a woman of heroic spirit, who, when the city was besieged by Murad, a son of Akbar, in 1596, defended in person the breach in the rampart, and compelled the assailants to raise the siege.' This is the protagonist of the latest of Taylor's romances, *A Noble Queen*, 1875.

In 1600 (1599 according to Taylor), Ahmednagar was captured by another son of Akbar, Daniyal Mirza, at the head of a Mogul army. 'Nominal kings continued to exercise a feeble sway' until Shah Jehan finally overthrew the dynasty. In 1707 Aurungzeb, the Philip II. of India, who ruined an empire for the sake of religion (see Stanley Lane-Poole's admirable volume in the *Rulers of India* series), died in Ahmednagar. His heart is buried in the so-called Alamgir's Darga, near the adjacent town of Bhingar.

Ahmednagar was successively under the Peshwa and under Sindia. It possesses a circular fort of stone, a mile and a half around, with a wide and deep moat, more notable in its taking than in its building—for it was captured after a severe bombardment by Sir Arthur Wellesley in 1803.

entertained by Mr. Seton, Assistant Commissioner. I spent a most interesting day there, and finally arrived at Aurungabad[1] on the 5th December.

The last marches had been through dull dreary country, endless stony plains, with scarcely a tree to break the monotony. But as I approached Aurungabad, I saw the beautiful dome and minarets of the tomb of Aurungzeb's daughter glistening in the sun, and troops at drill in the parade-ground. My tent was pitched near the mess-house; but Dr. Young came forward to meet me, and hospitably insisted that I should be his guest till I had a house of my own. I reported myself to the officer in command after breakfast, was put in orders, and directed to attend drill.

A few days later, it was arranged that I should live with Lieutenant John Stirling, who had recently joined the 6th Regiment from the Bombay army, and who had a house much too large for him. He was a noble fellow, both in person and disposition, and his untimely death ended, too soon, a friendship to which I look back as one of my greatest pleasures.

I was not long in learning my drill, and was put in charge of the two centre companies, was shown how to keep the books and pay accounts, which soon became very easy to me. The

[1] This was Meadows Taylor's first station, and always an important place in his Indian life. The name Aurungabad covers the north-western division of Hyderabad State, then the district, the taluk, and the city, which ranked until 1911 as the second in the State, now the third though without a tithe of the population of the capital. According to the Hyderabad Census, 1911, Aurungabad has 35,000 inhabitants, fewer than ten years before. During the reign of Aurungzeb the population is believed to have been 200,000, a figure which is borne out by the scale of the ruins still existing.

Aurungabad was founded as lately as 1610, under another name, by Malik Ambar, a minister of the last kings of Ahmednagar. Aurungzeb, who was appointed viceroy of the Deccan in 1635, and again in 1653, changed the name of his headquarters to Aurungabad. The first Nizam, Asaf Jah, came here some two centuries ago, before making Hyderabad his capital.

The tomb of Aurungzeb's daughter at Aurungabad, twice mentioned in this autobiography, does not appear in the *Imperial Gazetteer*. But at Khuldabad village, fourteen miles away, are certain tombs of unsurpassed interest in Indian history—those of Malik Ambar, the great negro minister of Ahmednagar; of Aurungzeb, whose heart is buried near Ahmednagar; and of Asaf Jah, the centenarian founder of Hyderabad State.

adjutant took great pains with me; and I engaged a Munshi or native teacher, and began Hindustani in earnest.

I witnessed a curious spectacle at Aurungabad, in the shape of a miracle-play, which was annually performed under the auspices of one Major Freeman, who commanded the invalid battalion at Aurungabad. During the early Musalman period, the kings of Bijapur had received and endowed many Portuguese Christian missions, and one had been located at Aurungabad, where delicious oranges and purple and white grapes still attest the fact of its former presence. A miracle-play of the life of our Lord was performed there by them, beginning with the scene of His birth, and ending with the Crucifixion. Although, no doubt, it could not bear comparison with that of Ammergau, yet it was very curious and strange. Portuguese monks chanted the story in their own tongue, interspersed with bad Hindustani, but the effect was very impressive; and the last scene, a real man hanging to the cross, was the signal for wailing and groaning from the spectators, who looked on with awe and wonder.

The ceremony may have died out with its patron and supporter, Major Freeman, but when I saw it the spectacle was complete. This Major Freeman was a strange character. When his wife was very ill, a religious friend offered to read and pray beside her, but he declined, saying, in his broken English, 'My dear friends, I do not want yous. I'se got Catholic priests, they prays for my wife; Brahmins makes *japs*[1] for my wife; Gosains sits in de water for my wife; Musalmans fakeers makes prayers for my wife; I prays myself for my wife. Little of alls is best, dear friend. Now you goes away, if you please.'

I must apologise for the above digression, and continue my story.

We were often out shooting and coursing, and one day heard of a noble boar at a village some twelve miles off. We determined to slay him without delay; and sure enough I soon saw the great grey brute emerge from behind a bush, and Stirling and I dashed after him. My horse, however, struck his chest against the opposite bank in attempting to clear a small water-course, and both he and I were a good

[1] *Incantations.* [M. T.]

deal bruised. But I followed Stirling as soon as I could, and met him on foot covered with blood. 'The beast has upset me and my horse,' he said; 'go and kill him.' I rode on some little way, and encountered the hog with Stirling's spear sticking through him behind the ear. My own spear had been broken in my fall, and was useless, and I sent for another. Meantime the brute took to a sugar-cane field, and could not be dislodged, charging all who ventured near him; and at last, when one poor fellow had been badly wounded, I thought it better to send for my gun, and I fired exactly between the two fierce red eyes that I saw glaring at me a few yards off, and the huge beast rolled over dead. What a reception I had! I shall never forget it. Stirling abused me soundly for spoiling the fame of the affair by shooting the hog, and it was quite in vain that I protested that no amount of 'bakshish' would induce the beaters to go near the sugar-cane. At last he was pacified, and we set off home again. My friend's wound was a bad one, and we had it properly dressed. The boar arrived soon afterwards, slung on two poles, and the whole station, ladies and all, came out to see it. I killed many a hog afterwards, but never one so large.

These were jolly days—plenty of hunting and coursing, and association with many bright, noble hearts now gone to their last long home. Erskine, Harris, Seton, James Outram,[1] and others whom I proudly called my friends, were among that goodly-spirited company. Who of them are left now?

This is no place to detail hunting exploits or tales of hard riding; but I am sure my association with these bold, true sportsmen gave a manlier, hardier tone to my mind, and was of great service to me.

[1] *Of these early companions of Meadows Taylor two elude me.* Of Outram there will be enough at the end of Chapter 10. The Harris mentioned was probably Sir William Cornwallis Harris, 1807–1848, a mighty hunter whose name is embedded in the *Dictionary of National Biography* as well as in Buckland. A year older than Taylor, he came out a year before him to join the Bombay Engineers. He was twice Superintending Engineer in Bombay. He made use of the despised leave to the Cape to do notable exploring and big game shooting in the interior of Africa, later negotiating a commercial treaty with Shoa in Abyssinia, for which he was knighted in 1844. Harris published several works, including *Portraits of the Game Animals of South Africa.* He died untimely of fever in India.

I suppose I acquitted myself well as a soldier, for I was chosen for detachment duty in the rainy season of 1825, and ordered to Kanhar, with 200 men, to support a detachment of the Company's 23rd Regiment, then acting against the Bhils, who were in rebellion. I do not remember that we caught any of the rebels, although we followed them into their fastnesses; but instead, I caught very severe jungle fever, which nearly put an end to me. I partially recovered, but had a relapse on my return to Aurungabad, and barely escaped with my life. I was allowed four months' leave, and my kind friend Mr. Newnham wished me to come to him. I was put into a palankeen, but was so ill at Ahmednagar that I was given over. At Poona I was again despaired of; but I reached Bombay at length, and the pure sea air and Mr. Newnham's kind nursing soon restored me, and I regained my strength rapidly. My financial affairs were by no means satisfactory. No pay had been given by the Nizam's Government for the last six months, and there was no such thing as getting it. I had been obliged to borrow very considerably; and it was a weary business perpetually borrowing at from 24 to 35 per cent when my pay would have covered all expenses had I been able to get it. I explained all this to Mr. Newnham, and also the rumours current that the East India Company were bent upon doing away with the Nizam's force altogether. He had heard the same, but bid me not despair. He thought things would improve, and there was always 'Shotton's House', then flourishing, to fall back upon.

I remained with Mr. Newnham for three months, and then returned well and strong to Aurungabad. I found letters from home awaiting me. I do not think my father liked my change of profession much. He thought we had decided hastily; and there was also a very curious letter from my grandfather, who had a remarkable dislike to a military career. 'He could only protest', he wrote, 'that it was against the laws of God that men should deliberately slay their fellow-men; and what would my feelings be if I had to kill a man (though he might be a black one) with my own hand?' and much more to the same effect. My dear mother, however, encouraged me to persevere diligently in the career I had adopted, and her counsels had most weight with me, and her words went straight to my heart.

Major Sayer had succeeded to the command of the Aurungabad Division, and proved a very valuable friend to me. He assisted me in my Persian and Hindustani studies, and told me to bring him my translations occasionally to look over. What could be kinder! I was a stranger to him, and had no introduction; but he interested himself about me, and encouraged me to work on. With his help I soon made considerable progress. There were no formal examinations in those days; but as a test of efficiency, I was directed to superintend regimental courts-martial, and record the evidence in English, and the finding of the court. In these I took my turn with Lieutenant Johnston, the adjutant, and as a reward the command of the Light Company was bestowed upon me for 'good conduct'.

With the exception of one month's leave, which I spent out tiger-shooting with a friend, I was very busy at home. I enjoyed my month's sport very much. We slew several tigers, and an occasional hog-hunt was not wanting. Small game, too, abounded—partridges and quail, peafowl and hares—and our bags were often heavy. One accomplishment I began to practise at this time. My friend was an artist, and took beautiful sketches from nature. He encouraged me to try also, and from this period dates one of the greatest pleasures of my life. He taught me as far as he could. I have the original sketches of that time—very minute, and highly finished with a fine pen—the buildings rather on the incline, and the style stiff and formal; but everything has a beginning. When my leave expired I returned to Aurungabad, and began a course of reading with Colonel Sayer, which was of great use to me. Better times came—my pay was more regular, and the debt to Mr. Newnham was almost paid off. I was very comfortable—had a good house and pleasant garden, plenty of friends, and a hopeful spirit.

About the middle of the year I was appointed interpreter to a general court-martial on a native officer of artillery—the highest linguistic test that could be applied to me in those days. I had some misgivings as to the result, but I ultimately performed my task so much to the satisfaction of the officer who had conducted the trial, that he wrote a special letter on the subject, commending my usefulness to him in 'this

protracted and difficult investigation'. 'Now you are fit for any staff duty,' said the colonel, 'and I hope you won't be long without it'—a wish I devoutly echoed.

My Light Company was a fine one—mostly picked men from Oudh [1] and Bihar, handsome and athletic. I worked hard, and my men seconded me well, and the result was to me very satisfactory. We were reviewed, and I received the following flattering compliment from the officer in command: 'I beg', he said to our colonel, 'you will convey to the officer in charge of your Light Company my very best thanks, and tell him his performance this morning has been of the highest credit to him. I have noticed, with particular satisfaction, his unwearied exertions during the whole of the morning; and the appearance of the men under his command, and their steady conduct, bear testimony to his zeal as an officer.' This to me! and before every one too! Need I say how full my heart was?

About this time Mr. Martin,[2] now Resident at Hyderabad,

[1] Readers of the *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence* may recall how the magnificent region of Oudh, 'the garden, the granary, and the queen-province of India', used to impress his imagination, even more than by its wealth and its history, as being 'the native province of some three-fourths of our Bengal Sepoys—the nursery of that fine race of soldiers', etc. (Chapter xix.) Taylor, though never in Oudh, always admired the men from there as representing the finest physical type in India.

[2] Not in Buckland, or in most Histories of India. This reduction of a paragraph, page 616, in Taylor's own *History*, written nearly half a century later, indicates the course of local affairs at the beginning of his service, during the five years following 1824:

'After Sir Charles Metcalfe's departure, the office of Resident at Hyderabad was conferred upon Mr. Byam Martin, a Bengal civilian of large experience in "regulation" judicial affairs. The European agency for the administration of the dominions of his Highness the Nizam, established by Sir Charles Metcalfe, was considerably enlarged, and with very beneficial results to the people. . . . The great object to which the employment of the English officers was directed . . . was to prevent exaction. . . . The protection to the people ensured by these means resulted in an immense increase of cultivation. So long as the old Nizam, Sikunder Jah, lived, no change was made; for he had thoroughly appreciated results which had indeed become self-evident, in the check which they imposed upon the rapacity of the minister, Chundu Lall. But on his demise in 1829, and the succession of his son, Nasir-ood-Dowlah, a demand was somewhat rudely made

who also, *ex officio*, commanded the whole army, issued an order, 'that he was about to start on a tour of inspection, and with a view to rewarding merit wherever it should be found, he should advance such officers as were specially brought to his notice, and as a proof thereof, had selected Lieutenant Hampton from the whole army to the honorary post of commander of his escort', etc. Now Hampton was only a local officer like myself, and I, like many others, began to speculate on the possibilities of good things in store.

Meanwhile I was very busy. Colonel Sayer had wished me to acquire some knowledge of military surveying and fortification, and I had made a survey of the cantonment with only a compass, a chain and cross-staff, and a perambulator. I should have done my work better with a sextant; but there was not one to be had. However, as it was, I received thanks for my report when it reached the Residency at Hyderabad, and I was much gratified.

At last the Resident arrived with a brilliant staff; the station was very gay, and I was presented with all the other officers. Hampton had been promoted, and therefore the command of the escort was vacant. The Resident's camp was to move on next morning. After dinner Colonel Sayer took me up to Mr. Martin, saying, 'Allow me, sir, specially to introduce my young friend here, of whom I have had already occasion to report favourably, officially; I beg you to keep him in mind.' 'Will you take the command of my escort by way of a beginning?' said the Resident. 'I shall be happy to have you on my personal staff if you are sufficiently acquainted with the native language.' This the good colonel answered for, and I was told to prepare without further delay. I don't know how I got away: I only remember trying to keep down a big lump that rose in my throat, and the colonel saying to me, 'Now you've got a start—you will never disappoint me, I know.'

All the ladies and gentlemen of the station were present, and crowded round me with congratulations; one of my

---

by him at the instigation of Chundu Lall, who had become impatient of control, for a sudden recall of all English officers employed in civil duties; and the people soon, and very bitterly, experienced the deplorable change which the measure involved.'

friends came back with me to my house; my things were packed; we sent to the city for camels for my tents and baggage, which were despatched as quickly as possible. The night passed—I do not think I slept—and by dawn I was in my saddle, and joined the officers of the Resident's staff as they were starting on their morning stage. It was a sudden change in my life: what might be the next?

The Resident expressed himself much pleased when I presented myself at breakfast when the camp halted at a short stage from Aurungabad. We had killed two foxes by the way, my dogs having been posted beforehand. 'So you can ride,' said one of my new companions. I was then 9 stone 8 lb., and well mounted, as I had my chestnut, and a splendid bay hunter which Stirling had given to me. Yes; I could ride.

After breakfast Mr. Martin sent for me, and asked me about my family and what I could do. He then set me to converse with his Munshi, which I found very easy. I had learned to speak Hindustani like a gentleman; and here let me impress upon all beginners the great advantage it is to learn to speak in a gentlemanly fashion. It may be a little more difficult to acquire the idioms; but it is well worth while. There are modes of address suitable to all ranks and classes, and often our people unintentionally insult a native gentleman by speaking to him as they would to their servants, through ignorance of the proper form of address.

I was also examined in Persian, and Mr. Martin complimented me on my diligence. The march was delightful, and the sport plentiful; small game abounded, and we had an occasional stalk after antelope—sometimes, too, a tiger was reported. The Resident always gave me some work to do, and the days flew by very pleasantly. We halted at Mominabad,[1] a large cavalry station, where there were brilliant reviews, and *levées* of native officers, and much feasting. My dear friend Stirling had been promoted to the civil depart-

[1] *Mominabad is a taluk* and a town in the Bhir District of Hyderabad. According to the Hyderabad Census the town had in 1911 a population of 11,000, having come down from some 12,000 and 14,000 at previous decennial periods. It is described in the *Imperial Gazetteer* under the alternative name of Amba. Until 1903 it was a cantonment. Near by are a number of ruined cave temples, both Brahminical and Jain.

ment, and was Superintendent of a large district to the south; but the day after we reached Mominabad, the Resident received an express stating that Stirling had been killed in a fight with some Arabs who had gained possession of the town of Danduti;[1] that Major Sutherland was about to march there with his whole force, and if the Resident had any instructions to give, they were to be sent to meet him at Ausa.[2] I was inexpressibly shocked at this sad occurrence: not only had Stirling been very dear to me as a friend, but he was in all respects a *preux chevalier*, whom it had been my wish to imitate. On consulting the map I found Ausa was not more than thirty-five miles distant, and that I could ride on there and join the force. I went to Mr. Martin and entreated permission to go; and I prevailed. Before leaving him, he said very kindly, 'I find you quite qualified for civil employ, and shall therefore nominate you to succeed your friend; but the appointment must be confirmed by the Supreme Government, so you had better come to me at Hyderabad straight from Danduti.'

I was fairly astonished. The department into which I was to be transferred was the height of my ambition; the pay was 1500 rupees a-month! How I thanked Mr. Martin, or how I got away, I know not; and between my sorrow for my friend and my own unexpected stroke of fortune, my head was in a whirl. I left the camp that afternoon with two troopers as escort, but the road was unfamiliar, and we were often misled, and it was not till early morning that we reached the cavalry camp as the bugles were sounding to 'boot and saddle'. We were just in time to join the forces and ride on with them another twenty *coss*, or forty miles. Of course Major Sutherland was surprised to see me, but the letters I had with me explained everything; and after a cup of coffee we rode on. We had a good rest at the end of

[1] Danduti, probably more a fort than a town, is neither in the text of the *Imperial Gazetteer*, nor on the map of Hyderabad State, nor yet in the long list of towns in the State in the Hyderabad Census of 1911.

[2] Ausa is the headquarters town of the eastern taluk of Osmanabad District, which in Taylor's day was called Naldrug District. The population by 1911 had come down to some 5,000 from 6,000. There is a moated square fort, dating from the Bijapur kings, and once captured by Malik Ambar.

the stage, and then proceeded to Gulbarga,[1] another twenty miles, whence, after resting, we were to go on to Danduti, eighteen miles further. It had been arranged that the Arabs in possession of the fort were to be at once summoned to lay down their arms and submit unconditionally; if they refused, the place was to be stormed at daylight next morning. To me was allotted one division of the stormers with their native officers, and all preliminaries were arranged. I think few of the Arabs would have been left had the attack been made, as Stirling was very popular and all were anxious to avenge his death; but as we approached the town we heard the beat of the Arab drum and saw the enemy moving off with their colours flying, by the Hyderabad road. The Commissioner had given permission to the Arabs to depart in peace, and thus they escaped our vengeance.

I had not felt tired, and even came in first in a race proposed by one of the officers. As I slid from my horse, however, I felt very stiff, and sitting on the ground, found I had no power to rise. The surgeon declared my condition to be caused by tem porary paralysis of the spine consequent on my long ride of 113 miles, and I did not recover at all till the afternoon of the next day, when a painful tingling sensation set in in my legs and back, and I soon was able to sit up. It was very clear if we had had anything to do, I should have been unable to join in it.

After-investigation proved that my poor friend Stirling had met his death by his own rashness, in proceeding alone to force the gate of the town with only twelve men against more than a hundred Arabs. As soon as the gate was opened, he fell dead, riddled by four balls which pierced his chest.

[1] This famous name applies to a division, a district, a taluk and a town in the south-west of Hyderabad State. It comes fourth among the Nizam's towns, with a population, in 1911, of 32,000—a considerable increase over former returns. Here reigned the Bahmani kings from 1347 until they removed to Bidar. Their tombs at Gulbarga are square domed buildings, heavy and gloomy, roughly but strongly built. There is a fort once remarkable, with fifteen towers and a gun twenty-five feet long. Towards the end of his life Meadows Taylor was to write much about Gulbarga, in his *History* and in *A Noble Queen*. He considers that the architecture of the dynasty improved after the removal to Bidar. 'The country was probably as well cultivated and populated as it is at present.' The modern Gulbarga is a rising commercial centre, a rival of Sholapur.

In a few days the inquiry ended, and there being nothing to detain me, I was to proceed to Hyderabad. The evening before, Major Sutherland came to me as I was sitting on the grass near poor Stirling's grave, and said,[1] 'I know you have been appointed by the Resident to succeed Stirling, and that you are only awaiting the confirmation of your appointment by the Supreme Government. Now this is very creditable to you; but I have considered the matter very deeply, and I do not think it likely that your appointment will be confirmed. Mr. Martin's patronage in the civil department will be curtailed considerably; and what I propose to you is this—do not go to Hyderabad. I want an adjutant here for one of the regiments. I will appoint you, pending your final transfer to the cavalry. You ride well, our men like you, and the pay is very good.'

It was a tempting proposal. My first wish had been to join the cavalry, and yet, when the offer was made, could I give up the chance of the coveted civil employ and the splendid opening it afforded me? Nor could I find out that my kind friend was sure of his nomination being confirmed either. How, too, could I disappoint the Resident? or how encounter the heavy expenses of a rich cavalry uniform with equipment and chargers? All this flashed through my mind in a moment, and I was not long in making my decision. I could only thank Major Sutherland, and say that 'if I did not succeed in obtaining the civil appointment, I would request Mr. Martin to put me into the cavalry'.

[1] This good friend of Taylor's youth was no mere major, but a predecessor of Sir William Lee-Warner as an authority upon the Native States. He was the author of *Sketches of the Relations subsisting between the British Government in India and the different Native States* (1833). See p. 122. In 1839 he was sent to Jodhpur to restore quiet, and held the capital for five months (J. Burgess, *Chronology of Modern India*). I am informed that further information concerning him exists in MS. in the Record Department of the India Office, to which inquirers may be referred.

P.S., March 1919.—Interesting communications from the present Resident at Gwalior supplement these facts. John Sutherland seems to have died in harness at Bharatpur in 1848; there is a statue of him in the public gardens at Ajmer. In 1843 he sailed for the Cape of Good Hope, and before returning to India three years later compiled for the Cape Government a *Memoir on the Kaffirs, Hottentots and Bosjmans of South Africa*, published in 1847.

'It will be too late then, Taylor,' he said, smiling; 'the Military Secretary will fill up the appointment at once, and I wanted you.'

'I cannot give up,' I replied, 'what may be already settled for aught I know.'

'Be it so,' he answered, 'I can say no more.' Then he, his brother, and I discussed the matter in all its bearings, and they thought I was right in adhering to my resolve.

So next morning I started; but at a place called Pargi [1] I was taken ill, and but for the kindness of the native Talukdar, Nawab Fateh Jah Khan, who sent his physician to me and nursed me tenderly, it would have gone hard with me. At last he sent his own palankeen, with orders that I was to be brought to his house for change of air. In vain I pleaded weakness and want of time. He would take no denial, and I went. This was my first introduction to the house of a native gentleman. 'You are to be one of the family,' said my host; 'you are only a boy, and the ladies will not mind you. My wife will look after you, and the children shall play with you, and I will send on your letters to Hyderabad.'

I stayed with these good people for a week, and was entertained most hospitably, and on leaving, presented my host with my old gun, to which he took a great fancy. He gave me a valuable sword and embroidered sword-belt, while his good lady begged my acceptance of a beautiful patchwork quilt and the bed I had slept in, which had very elaborately painted and gilt feet. I used these as long as they lasted.[2]

When I arrived at Hyderabad Mr. Martin sent for me.

[1] Pargi, a village of some two thousand inhabitants, is the headquarters of the taluk of the same name in the Mahbubnagar District of Hyderabad.

[2] This experience, as it well might, made an ineffaceable impression upon Taylor's *heart and imagination. It has not happened to many* of the administrators of India; and it could not happen in a Hindu household. Though he is reticent in relating it, its influence may, without fancifulness, be traced in various scenes of his subsequent novels, specially in the chapters of *Tippoo Sultan* (xxxii. and xxxiii.), where the sorely wounded Kasim Ali is sought on the battlefield and then taken to be nursed into the household, almost into the harem, of the jovial old Abdul Rhyman Khan. Taylor had a natural sympathy, developed by happy experience, with the better elements of Musalman life, to which his marriage gave him affinity.

My appointment had not been confirmed, and he was very sore about it; I told him then what Major Sutherland had offered me. 'Ah,' said he, 'bad luck pursues you: thinking you were surely provided for, I gave the cavalry adjutancy away where, indeed, it was already promised. You must not leave me though; if you will join my household I will have you returned "on special duty", till something offers worth giving you.' Yes,—it was a great fall of all my castles in the air; I was not to be a civil superintendent, I was not to be an adjutant of cavalry, and I had nothing to do but to wait on, I hope patiently.

Mr. Martin was very kind to me. I did what I could to help him in return, and found his splendid library an inexhaustible treasure-field.

The State of Hyderabad in itself is by far the largest and most important Musalman dominion in India. The city is walled all round, and cannot, therefore, be enlarged, but the adjacent suburbs increase rapidly, and the population cannot now be less than 350,000 souls.[1] I enjoyed my early rides, free from parade and other morning duties, and came upon many a picturesque scene, especially along the river, with the city walls and bastions on the one hand, and the native houses of the Begum Bazaar, with their fine trees, on the other. The river-bed, too, is always a stirring sight, with its countless groups of people bathing, washing clothes, or carrying away water from holes scooped in the sand; elephants being washed or scrubbed with sand by their keepers, and evidently enjoying the operation. These, and many other objects, formed glowing pictures of colour and native costume of endless variety. The scenery, too, is very striking. From one favourite point of view of mine, the city lies stretched before you, the graceful 'Char Minar' or gate of the 'Four Minarets' in its centre;[2] the gigantic 'Mecca

[1] By the Census of 1911, Hyderabad is at last a 'half million city'.

[2] In a rather dull section of Taylor's *History* the narrative suddenly becomes personal, as well as more detailed, when it reaches the fine adventure of Bussy at Hyderabad in 1756. 'The Char Minar, a noble edifice of the Kootub Shahy period, consisted of four open arches of great size, with a lofty minaret at each corner, and formed a conspicuous object from all points of view. The roof was a large terrace, and was nearly a hundred feet from the ground. The place commanded the

mosque'[1] standing out nobly; while the large tank of 'Mir Alam'[2] lies at your feet, and the bold rock of the Fort of Golconda rises in the distance. From hence, a rising sun gradually lighting up every object in the clear morning air, and the glowing glittering landscape terminating in the tender blue of the distance, is inexpressibly beautiful.[3] There is also a

---

whole of the city within gun-shot, and was entirely unassailable; and, manned by guns on the terrace above as well as below, was quite impregnable.'

[1] The Mecca Mosque, completed by Aurungzeb, stands to the south-west of the Char Minar. It is 225 feet long, 180 broad, and 75 high, with domes rising 100 feet higher. Nizam Ali, the ruler of long reign preceding the one whose service Meadows Taylor entered, and all his successors are buried here.

[2] After the Husain Sagar, the chief water-supply of Hyderabad. It had been built by French engineers only a few decades earlier for the predominating Minister, Mir Alam, ancestor of the Salar Jang family. The tank was built from his share in the prize money of Seringapatam, the dam alone costing eight lakhs.

[3] Here is another impression of Hyderabad and its approaches (1900): 'Il n'y a plus de verdure, plus de grandes palmes; la terre n'est plus rouge; il fait presque froid. . . . On arrive ce matin sur le plateau central de l'Inde, au milieu des steppes de pierre, et tout est changé. . . . Des landes brûlées, des plaines grisâtres, alternent avec des champs de mil, qui sont vastes comme des petites mers. . . . Des villages, qui ont eux-mêmes changé d'aspect pour prendre un faux air arabe. L'Islam a posé son empreinte ici sur les choses,—l'Islam qui d'ailleurs se complaît toujours aux régions mornes, à l'étincellement des déserts. Changement aussi dans les costumes. . . . Au coucher du soleil, Hyderabad enfin apparaît, très blanche dans un poudroiement de poussière blanche, et très musulmane avec ses toits en terrasses, ses minarets légers.

'. . . Hyderabad la blanche, dominant sa rivière presque tarie, où ses troupeaux d'éléphants sont descendus dans la vase encore fraîche. . . . On ne s'attendait point, en arrivant à travers tant de tristes solitudes, on ne s'attendait point à trouver si vivante et si follement colorée cette ville perdue au milieu des terres, au milieu des steppes pierreux et gris. . . . Ce qui éblouit les yeux tout d'abord, c'est le luxe et l'infinie diversité des turbans; ils sont roses, d'un rose de saumon, ou de cerise, ou de fleur de pêcher; ils sont lilas, amarante, jonquille ou bouton d'or; ils se portent très large, démesurément larges; ils s'enroulent autour des petits bonnets pointus, et, par derrière, l'extrémité retombe, pour flotter sur la robe. . . . Les femmes, invisibles puisque nous sommes en pays de Mahomet, passent ensevelies du haut en bas sous une housse blanche. . . . Vers le coucher du soleil enfin, des personnages des *Mille et une Nuits* commencent à sortir, des élégants aux yeux cerclés de peinture bleue, à la barbe teinte de vermillon, qui portent des robes

favourite place of resort of an evening for Musalman gentlemen of the city on a knoll to the right of the Masulipatam road; and I was often asked to sit down with them while their carpets were spread, and their attendants brought hookahs. Even thus early in my life, I began associating with native gentlemen, and observing their manners and customs, modes of speech and conversation. The glorious view, the air filled with golden light, the gorgeous sunsets, the mellowness which softened every object, made, I think, the evening even more beautiful than the morning. I loved to go there quietly and dream dreams. I was growing out of boyhood, and that period is always a momentous one to every man. I was sensitive and shy, and no doubt romantic. Mr. Martin was always kind, and bade me be hopeful; but I had been sorely disappointed, and felt often sad and dejected as to my prospects. At this time I was often at the house of Mr. William Palmer,[1] where I met the most intelligent members of Hyderabad society, both native and European, and the pleasant gatherings at his most hospitable house were a great relief from the state and formality of the Residency.[2]

---

de brocart ou de velours chamarré d'or, des colliers des pierreries ou des perles, et qui tiennent sur le poing gauche un oiseau apprivoisé.' —Pierre Loti, *L'Inde sans les Anglais*, pages 231-240.

[1] This man, 1780–1867, who became Taylor's father-in-law, had a lifelong fascination for him. He must have had some remarkable qualities, if only to inspire the affection which appears throughout the autobiography. He was younger brother of John Palmer of Calcutta, the 'Prince of British merchants', about whom there is a subsequent note.

Their father, General William Palmer, had been Military Secretary to Warren Hastings for several years before 1782, when he became Resident at Lucknow. He had married, evidently in youth, a Princess of the Delhi house, after a fashion not obscurely shadowed in the happy Indian marriage of General Smithson (Darnell) in *Ralph Darnell*.

Of the younger William Palmer Mr. Buckland writes: 'Founded, 1814, the great banking-house of Palmer & Co. at Hyderabad, in which the Rumbolds were partners: his heavy financial transactions with the Nizam ended in his ruin, and in the censure of the Governor-General.' It is but fair to state that the Palmers were succeeded in Berar by native farmers-general as oppressive, and as intimate with Chandu Lal, who had brought Hyderabad well-nigh to bankruptcy before he relaxed his hold.

[2] 'The magnificent mansion of the Resident' (*Thug*, chapter xviii.). 'The Residency is situated on the left bank of the Musi, opposite to the north-eastern corner of the city. The building is an imposing one, and

I was not long destined to be idle. One day Mr. Martin sent for me and told me that, under a recent arrangement in the military department, a small appointment on the general staff was at his disposal if I liked to accept it. I was delighted at the idea of having anything to do, and thanked him cordially for his kindness.

The appointment was Superintendent of Bazaars at Bolarum,[1] a cantonment of the Nizam's troops twelve miles north of the Residency, on higher ground, and consequently cooler and more bracing. My duties were simple enough. I had to regulate the markets and the prices of grain in conjunction with the principal merchants and grain-dealers. I was to decide all civil cases, try, and punish all breaches of the peace, and make daily reports to my superior officer at ten o'clock every morning in person. I was to inspect all meat killed, both for the use of the troops and private consumption; in fact, I was a sort of magistrate for the cantonment and its environs; and, as one of the Division Staff, had to attend the 'Brigadier' at all parades and on field-days.

I was, on the whole, well pleased with my office. Of course it was monotonous. What Indian staff appointment, with a daily routine of work, is not?

I was enabled to discover and check various irregularities in the prices of grain and *ghi* or boiled butter, which had escaped my predecessor, and this made the sepoys my friends. The stores of grain were kept up at their full complement, and the force could have taken the field at an hour's notice. Every one pronounced the meat and bread better than before; and as I had established a free market for vegetables, they were always plentiful and fresh.

Still, it was a troublesome post. Disputes often arose between masters and servants, debts by individuals, and the like; but I believe I firmly gained the colonel's goodwill by settling a dangerous quarrel between two infantry regiments which had arisen at one of the festivals. During the inquiry

---

stands in the midst of a beautiful park-like expanse, with handsomely laid-out gardens. It was commenced in 1800 . . . and was completed about 1807' (*Imperial Gazetteer*, article 'Hyderabad City').

[1] Now no longer a cantonment, but a part of Secunderabad.

that followed, over which I presided, I found an opportunity of reconciliation, of which I availed myself, and the quarrel was made up out of hand.

I did not enter much into general society at this period. High play was the chief amusement which prevailed, and I never was at that time or at any time fond of cards, or did I ever play for money, except for the veriest trifle.

I worked on as well as I could, taking care not to neglect my Persian studies, and occasionally reading with a Munshi or native teacher, and looked forward hopefully to the time when, by some possibility, I might gain an entrance into the Civil Service. The day came at length. An officer, who was Assistant Superintendent of Police in the S.W. district of the country, got tired of his solitary life, and proposed to exchange with me. Mr. Martin at once consented to the step, and wrote to me very kindly on the subject, expressing his desire to serve me to the utmost of his power, and recommending me to accept the exchange.

My arrangements were soon complete. I was to become proprietor of Captain L.'s bungalow at Sadaseopet,[1] with one or two tents; he, of my 'buggy' and horse, which I no longer needed. Furniture on both sides was valued; and when we were respectively in 'orders', I betook myself to my new duties, of which the Resident and his secretary gave me an outline; but nothing very precise could be laid down respecting them, and I was left very much to exercise my own judgment.

I left Bolarum with many expressions of kind regret from the colonel, who thanked me for my services, and declared himself well satisfied with me on all points, offering me a testimonial of good conduct and ability in case of my requiring one at any time.

Now at last I was free!—literally my own master. I had an immense tract of country to overlook, of which I knew

[1] A large emporium, with a flourishing trade in both exports and imports, in the Medak District of Hyderabad. In 1911 it had risen, unlike many towns in the State, to a population of 8,000 from 6,000 a decade before. Sadaseopet is no such distance from Hyderabad City as might be implied from the 'fourth day' below (short marches), being not necessarily more than a morning's ride to the *north*-west.

nothing, except that in going to Danduti I had crossed part of it. I took leave of the Resident and of the Nizam's Minister, Chandu Lal, who were both very kind to me; but of all the counsel and direction I received, I owe most of what was useful to me afterwards to Mr. Palmer, and he offered to assist me by letter if I were in need of help. His grand-looking old mother, the Begum Sahib, blessed me, and tied a rupee in a silk handkerchief round my arm, praying the saints to have me in their holy keeping; and I started on my journey, accompanied by my escort of police, and reached Sadaseopet on the fourth day. I had not completed my eighteenth year.

The northern boundary of my district may have been 250 miles in length, extending from Hyderabad to Parenda [1] with stations at various intervals, of which Tuljapur was one of the most important. Its general southern boundary was the Bhima river, to its junction with the Krishna, and its greatest breadth was from 50 to 60 miles, narrowing at either end. In all it may have included from 10,000 to 12,000 square miles, and its population must have exceeded one million souls.

My duties in the Revenue Department were not to begin till the Superintendent made his tour through the district after the monsoon. My police duties were very clear. There were stations as nearly as possible every 40 miles, where twelve mounted and ten foot police were posted; and these went periodical patrols from their own station to the next, returning every fortnight.

Foot police were stationed in villages averaging three miles asunder, and patrolled their beat every day: If anything occurred it was reported to the jemadar, and by him to me, if important; otherwise, it was entered in the diary, which was transmitted to me weekly.

I had altogether 50 mounted and 150 foot police under my command. The road was an important one—the highroad

[1] Prominent on the map, close to British territory, the headquarters village of Parenda taluk in the west of Osmanabad District, with some 3,000 inhabitants. It is more notable than other villages of the size as having a fort, and as having been for a short time the capital of the Nizam Shahi kings after their expulsion from Ahmednagar, early in the seventeenth century. The ruins in the neighbourhood of Parenda testify to its former populousness.

to Bombay—and the patrols had had the effect of keeping off gangs of highway robbers and *dacoits*,[1] which before the establishment of the force had become very bold and dangerous.

My predecessor had been enjoined to take active measures for the suppression of these pests, but, so far as I could ascertain, had really done nothing.

I assembled all my jemadars and native officers, and endeavoured to find out their views of what was most feasible to be done; but I found most of them were men from a distance, and possessed little, if any, local knowledge.

A district lay between the tract of land over which I had jurisdiction, and the river Manjra to the north, and it soon became plain to me that unless I had command over this as well, I could do very little to check the depredations of the dacoits, who had, as was evident from the records, become the terror of this part of the country. I therefore applied for, and obtained, the necessary permission, and was soon free to act in all directions needful to my purpose.

My position was a very pleasant one. My little bungalow was situated at the edge of a mango-grove, which lies behind the present travellers' bungalow. It consisted of one centre room, with a division all round, forming a dressing-room, bath-room, and store-room. Without, at a little distance, were the offices and kitchen, and stabling for five horses. I could not immediately start on my tour through the district, as it was the rainy season, but I had ample occupation. I gathered all the information I could with regard to thieves and robbers. I made a large collection of birds and insects for my uncle, Mr. Prideaux Selby, of Twizell House, Northumberland, who was engaged upon his great work on Ornithology.[2] Tree birds of all kinds abounded, while the tanks or reservoirs teemed with water-fowl of seemingly endless variety.

[1] *Dacoity*, robbery with violence. [M. T.]

[2] There is an article in the *Dictionary of National Biography* on Prideaux John Selby, 'naturalist', 1788–1867; high sheriff for Northumberland; published *Illustrations of British Ornithology* and *British Forest Trees*. A favourite young brother of Meadows Taylor was named Selby (see p. 7). In *Ralph Darnell* there is a reference to 'Twizell Dean, surr—that's Mister Selby's, ye ken. It's a fine place.' Again: 'They pass Twizell gates, and look up the Dean and its hanging woods, and Mr. Selby's old-fashioned snug manor-house.'

I sent to Bombay for a Marathi grammar, and began the study of that language, without which I plainly saw I could not get on. Telugu was the language of the people about Sadaseopet, and it changed to Kanarese a little distance further; but neither was a language of business. Marathi was evidently the most useful of all.

I had plenty to do. Every morning brought in reports from my officers and men, which had to be answered and investigated. Then my early bag of birds had to be skinned and prepared; English correspondence and my Marathi lesson followed; and I had always a box of books from the Secunderabad [1] or Bolarum library to occupy my evenings. I kept Mr. Newnham well informed of my doings, and his delight when I obtained this appointment was very sincere.

I rode in to Hyderabad towards the close of the monsoon to see Mr. Martin, and I told him what I was doing, and that I was collecting all the information I could about the district. He desired me to march quietly up to a spot near the western frontier, as he might have occasion to employ me actively, but said he could not be more explicit just then. So, at the beginning of October, I joyfully betook myself to my tent-life, with a sense of freedom and of joy which I still can vividly recall.

I journeyed leisurely on. The country was open and beautiful, the various crops were being sown, the air felt dry and fresh, and the march was very enjoyable. I halted near Homnabad,[2] and rode over to see the old city of Bidar,[3]

[1] A combined cantonment, covering 22 square miles, named after the Nizam then living. Secunderabad, with Bolarum, had in 1911 a population of 113,000, counted in the half-million of Hyderabad.

[2] The Nizam's State Railway has diverted the trade which Taylor describes; and Homnabad is a not very flourishing town in the Gulbarga District, with a population going down from 7,000.

[3] The later capital of the Bahmanis, some 2,500 feet above the sea. Ahmed Shah Wali, the tenth Bahmani king, founded the city of Bidar and built the fort, removing the court here from Gulbarga in 1430. It was taken from the next dynasty by Aurungzeb in 1656. The population in 1911 was 12,000. It is the headquarters of a district, as formerly of the Gulbarga Division, in Hyderabad State. In his *History* Meadows Taylor describes Bidar at much length, and with enthusiasm:

'There is no more healthy or beautiful site for a city in the Deccan

than which, I think, nothing could be more picturesque. Homnabad was a central point, where was concentrated all the trade in salt and spices from the western coast for Berar, receiving in return cotton, oil-seed, ginger, grain, etc. I found I could serve the merchants considerably, and one, Seth Atmaram, became my good friend; but first we had a quarrel. Some of my escort complained of short weight in their flour, and I had the persons who sold it fined; whereupon the other flour and retail grain dealers shut their shops, and went in a body to a grove, where they declared they would remain till I went away. I was certainly not to be intimidated; so I set up a bazaar of my own, which was well supplied by some Brinjaris, the old chief of whom had certificates from the Duke of Wellington for services in the Maratha war. Provision-sellers came from other villages, and I was independent. An effort was made to induce me to send for the fugitives, but I refused; then a complaint reached the Minister at Hyderabad, Raja Chandu Lal, that I had desolated the town by my violence, and extorted large sums of money from the chief merchants. Mr. Martin requested an explanation from me, which I, of course, gave at once. Meantime my friends began to think they had gone too far, and brought a petition to the effect that I had been misled, and that they knew the real culprits, with whom I could deal as I pleased, etc. Mr. Martin was now satisfied, and I received his commendation. The Minister sent down a special officer, who used a very lofty tone to the merchants, threatened a fine of 10,000 rupees, which I begged off; and he departed finally, with, no doubt, a very handsome private *douceur* in his pocket. When I next visited Hyderabad, old Chandu

---

than Beeder. . . . The fortifications, still perfect, are truly noble. . . . Inside the fort, the royal palaces overlooked the walls; and their present ruins attest their great extent and former magnificence. To the west extended a level plain covered with groves of mango and tamarind trees. . . . In every respect, whether as regards climate, which is much cooler and healthier than that of Goolburgah, or situation, the new capital was far preferable to the old one. At the present time . . . there is no city of the Deccan which better repays a visit from the traveller than Beeder.'

There is a spirited account of Bidar, where Ameer Ali gets married, in chapter xxii. of the *Thug*.

Lal, giving me a poke in the ribs, said grimly, 'Ah, Taylor Sahib! you should have let me put the screw on those Homnabad people. You had them down so completely—and they always defied me—I might have got a lakh out of them.' 'And lost your good name, Maharaj,' I replied. 'You should bestow half a lakh on *me* for being so careful of your good name and honour!'[1]

There were no more complaints of false weights. The Dean of Guild and Town Council were made answerable for them, and the police had authority to inspect them from time to time.

My next halt was at Tuljapur, which I found a most picturesque, delightful spot. I have made it the scene of my

[1] The Maharaja Chandu Lal, 1766-1845, stands out, not only in this autobiography, as an unmistakable figure. Buckland says: 'Chandu Lal ruled Hyderabad for about 35 years: retired Sep. 1843, from the Peshkarship, on a monthly pension of Rs. 30,000.' There are some hundred pages between the first and the last mentions of him in Taylor's *History*. He was an ancestor of the Maharaja Sir Kishen Peshkar Pershad.

In that highly contentious volume, the *Life of General James Stuart Fraser*, who was later for a dozen years Taylor's chief at Hyderabad (see notes below), are more references to Chandu Lal than need be followed up. 'With an interval of less than five years . . . filled up by Charles Metcalfe's persistent attack, in spite of the displeasure of Lord Hastings, on the Palmer and Rumbold combination, the policy of the Residents at Hyderabad for more than thirty years, down to the date of Colonel Fraser's appointment, seems to have been confined to the unflinching support of the Minister, Rajah Chundoo Lall, against all his rivals, and even against his own sovereign.' He was never actually invested with the office of Diwan. He is stated to have been 'the great obstacle to reform,—the incubus that weighed heavily upon the Hyderabad State, sunk in uneasy slumbers,—and yet the removal of that obstacle seemed a more and more delicate and troublesome operation'.

General Fraser's account of his meeting Chandu Lal in 1838 is more of a picture than he often achieved, though he seems to exaggerate his age: 'Chundoo Lall, the Minister, is a remarkable man. Above seventy-seven years of age, attenuated to a mere shadow, and bent nearly double, he has yet all the active intelligence of earlier life, and the same keen and expressive eye, with that pleasing and benevolent smile that never abandons him. When he called upon me he was obliged, on alighting from his elephant, to be borne up the steps of the Residency in a tonjon [sedan chair]. He conversed with me for an hour in the most animated way possible, speaking Hindustani and Persian with equal fluency.'

historical romance, *Tara*, because of its beauty and of its history, when in 1657 its temple was plundered by Afzul Khan, whose subsequent murder by Sivaji is still considered by the people as but a fitting retribution.[1] The day I arrived, a Brahmin entered my *kacheri*, or office-tent, sat down quietly in a corner, and after remaining a while silent, rose and said—

'I hear you speak Marathi; is it so?'

'I am only a beginner,' I replied; 'but I daresay I can follow you.'

'I am struck with your face,' he continued, 'and I should like to see your hand and cast your horoscope. Do you know when you were born?'

I gave him the date, and he proceeded to examine first my forehead and then my left hand. 'It is a long and happy life on the whole,' he said; 'but there are some crosses and some deep sorrows. You are not yet married, but you soon will be, and you will have children—not many—some of whom you will lose. You will never be rich, nor ever poor; and yet much, very much, money will pass through your hands. You will not now stay long here; but after many years you will return, and rule over us. Fear nothing; your destiny is under the planet Jupiter, and you will surely prosper.'

He added further details when he brought my horoscope some hours later, one which especially struck me being that I should become a Raja, and rule over a large tract of country to the south.

[1] Tuljapur taluk, in the west of the Osmanabad District, has had the former Naldrug taluk added to it since 1905. The population of the town in 1911, 5,000, had gone down by over a thousand since the previous census.

It is in the realm of romance that Tuljapur lives. There is a description, reaching to pages, in chapter iii. of *Tara*, and onwards. 'The quaint old town, hanging literally on the mountain edge; the deep gloomy ravine of the temple opening out to the larger one; the precipices and rugged hills to the west and north, and the beautiful undulating plain to the south, over which the eye wanders as over a map for fifty miles or more, checkered with thriving villages and their rich fields and gardens,—form a striking assemblage of objects.' 'All she saw was the terraces of the houses of the town gradually descending into the great ravine; the crags and precipices of the further side; with the trees, and gilded spires and pinnacles of the temple between.'

I thought the affair curious enough, and wrote out a translation of it, which I sent home; but, to my regret, have failed to find more than allusions to it in my father's letters to me.

During that day my tent was beset by hundreds of pilgrims and travellers, crying loudly for justice against the flour-sellers, who not only gave short weight in flour, but adulterated it so distressingly with sand, that the cakes made of it were uneatable, and had to be thrown away. I sent for the civil officer of the town, who declared the flour-sellers to be incorrigible, and that the complaint was perfectly true; so I determined to take my own course.

That evening I told some reliable men of my escort to go quietly into the bazaars, and each buy flour at a separate shop, being careful to note whose shop it was. The flour was brought to me. I tested every sample, and found it full of sand as I passed it under my teeth. I then desired that all the persons named in my list should be sent to me, with their baskets of flour, their weights and scales. Shortly afterwards they arrived, evidently suspecting nothing, and were placed in a row, seated on the grass before my tent.

'Now,' said I, gravely, 'each of you are to weigh out a seer (two pounds) of your flour,' which was done.

'Is it for the pilgrims?' asked one.

'No,' said I, quietly, though I had much difficulty to keep my countenance. 'You must eat it yourselves.'

They saw that I was in earnest, and offered to pay any fine I imposed.

'Not so,' I returned; 'you have made many eat your flour, why should you object to eat it yourselves?'

They were horribly frightened; and, amid the jeers and screams of laughter of the bystanders, some of them actually began to eat, sputtering out the half-moistened flour, which could be heard crunching between their teeth. At last some of them flung themselves on their faces, abjectly beseeching pardon.

'Swear,' I cried, 'swear by the holy mother in yonder temple, that you will not fill the mouths of her worshippers with dirt! You have brought this on yourselves, and there is not a man in all the country who will not laugh at the

banias (flour-sellers), who could not eat their own flour because it broke their teeth.'

So this episode terminated, and I heard no more complaints of bad flour.[1]

I received notice soon after that I was to proceed to Parenda and take charge of a squadron of cavalry, which was to meet me there, and that I was to co-operate with the civil authorities of the Bombay Presidency for the suppression of the rebellion of Umaji Naik—this being the special service that Mr. Martin had hinted to me. I marched at once, and found the squadron already there—two troops and their native officers. We were not idle. Umaji Naik seemed to be ubiquitous, and we had many a weary, fruitless search for this noted and most mischievous brigand, whose robberies, often attended with violence, cattle-lifting, and all manner of villany, had become the terror of the country. Umaji had a spite against all authority, hated both priestly and secular Brahmins, and enjoyed nothing more, if he could catch one, than cutting off his nose and ears. By his own people he was considered a hero. He was hunted down at last, after many years, by an English officer, who captured him as he was bathing in the river Bhima. He led us many a dance through the country, and often we were misled on false information. I scoured the hills and plains equally in vain, and became notorious by wearing a pair of red cloth trousers, made by a native artist, having worn out my own riding trousers completely. At last Umaji found the place was getting too hot for him, and withdrew, and we were released from our harassing work.

I paid a pleasant visit to the Collector of Sholâpur,[2] who,

[1] This story was quoted in connection with food troubles by a Plymouth paper in 1917.

[2] The hot and prosperous district of Bombay Presidency, bordering the Nizam's Dominions to the west, south of Ahmednagar. Sholapur ('sixteen villages') has been singularly poor in history, passing alternately, during two centuries, from the Ahmednagar Sultan on the north to the Bijapur Sultan on the south. The city of Sholapur, taken by siege in 1818, is now best known by its cotton mills. It had in 1901 a population of 75,000. This had fallen to 61,000 by 1911, according to the Gazetteer of Towns in the *Oxford Survey of the British Empire*, vol. ii., 'Asia'. The name Sholapur differs by one letter from that of

I remember, was much surprised at my youthful appearance, and we discussed together the best way to repress the great crime of cattle-lifting, which had been actively carried on for years. I was amused to meet at the hospitable Collector's table some of my old shipmates of the *Upton Castle*, and to witness their surprise to see 'Baxter's shop-boy' transformed into a grave Political Agent for the whole of the Nizam's frontier. They all congratulated me, and showed me every possible attention during my stay. Mr. Newnham wrote me a very gratifying letter, saying he had heard me praised officially, and that he was quite satisfied with my progress.

I returned to my own quarters, and on consulting with my native friends, found I had not sufficient power to carry out my scheme of organising the police as I wished, at once; but I was advised to take one *pargana*, or county, work that first, and then gradually extend my system. My district was much cut up by private estates, whose owners or managers defied or evaded the orders of the Nizam's executive government, and would only obey their own masters, some of whom were powerful nobles of Hyderabad, who jealously resented any interference by the executive minister, while their agents were well-known protectors of thieves and robbers, whose booty they shared. Evidently mine was no easy task, and I must make sure my footing before I could establish or carry out any measures of reform.

I had a note from the Collector of Sholapur requesting me to meet him at a town called Barsi,[1] which I did; killing two splendid hogs on the road, single-handed, and receiving much commendation from my friend, one of the greatest sportsmen of the Bombay side. A complaint was made to us by one of the native officers about the executive department of the Revenue Survey, which was then proceeding: it was averred that bribes were taken and other corrupt practices

---

Shorapur, the wild little State in the south-west of the Nizam's Dominions, with which Taylor was later to be so uniquely associated: the names are once confused in the original edition.

[1] An important town of Sholapur District, population in 1901, 24,000, conspicuous on the map as an inset into Hyderabad territory, between Parenda and Osmanabad. Barsi has a temple of Bhagwan and a big reservoir.

carried on, and numerous documents were sent in as proof. We looked into the matter, and found not only much ground for complaint, but also that a great deal of the work was good for nothing. I had the pleasure afterwards of learning, through Mr. Newnham, that I had been the means of bringing heavy frauds to light, and had done essential service.

In regard to my plan of frontier police, the Collector saw many difficulties, unless, indeed, a regular force were organised; and I had yet much to learn.

I determined, therefore, to begin at my own end of the district first, quietly feeling my way. In some places my orders had met with a hearty response, in others they were totally disregarded.

My camp was pitched at Ekeli,[1] when one afternoon I saw some persons carrying a native bedstead, which was put down opposite my tent: there was something lying upon it concealed by a bloody sheet; when this was withdrawn, I saw a young Brahmin literally covered with sabre-cuts. He was very faint, but after the barber had dressed his wounds, he told his story, saying that the night before, the Raja, as he was called, of Karamkot had attacked his house, had murdered his father, uncle, and grandmother, and had then proceeded to plunder the dwelling; that the Raja was still abroad, and purposed committing another dacoity that night at a village he named.

There was no time to lose; this at any rate might be prevented. I had ten mounted men and five available foot police, and I prepared in all haste.

The perpetrator of the outrage was a noted character, Narayan Rao, and I had heard of him as being a very dangerous man. His village was very strong, and he had recently repaired the *garhi* or castle, with its gates and bastions, and it held a strong garrison of desperadoes. I was determined to have him if I could. My friend, Balram Singh, knew the country well, and was our guide. We had thirty miles to march, but eventually the night's work proved far more.

It was dark as we neared the village of Kulur, where the proposed dacoity was to take place, and leaving four men

[1] A town approaching 6,000 inhabitants in 1911, Bidar District.

for its protection I took on the other nine, including Balram Singh and another jemadar of police; I had also two grooms who rode my baggage-ponies; and these constituted my little party.

We rode first to a town called Sulupet, where Narayan Rao was reported to have been seen in the bazaar; but we were at fault, as he had left it and gone, the people said, to Kulur; but as there was no other road than the one by which we had just come, we knew this could not be the case. Balram Singh fancied the Raja must have heard of the wounded Brahmin having been brought to me, and therefore had retired to his fort; and he was right. We all partook of some refreshment, as we were tired, and then started for Karamkot —the Raja's village.

It looked very strong as we approached in the early morning; the fort stood out in the centre with its large bastions and loopholed walls, all in excellent repair. We halted under a little grove of mango-trees, and when the gate was opened to allow the cattle to come out, we rode in boldly, and though the guard seized their matchlocks, no one attempted to fire. In reply to their questions I answered, 'I have been travelling all night and am tired, and intend to rest here a while.'

'We will send word to the Raja,' said several.

'No,' I answered, 'I will speak to him myself'; and we rode up the main street. I thought for a moment that it was rather a rash proceeding, for on the bastions of the fort many men appeared, showing themselves on the parapet and calling to us to go back. The Raja lived in the fort, and some men came out and stood on the steps leading up to it, and asked me what I wanted

'The Sahib Bahadur wishes to see your Raja Sahib,' said my jemadar, 'and he is tired,—he has ridden all night.'

'My master is asleep,' rejoined the man, 'and I dare not disturb him.'

'I must see him, and at once,' I said; 'if he does not come, I shall go in myself,' and the spokesman went in, returning directly with a young fair man, who was tying a handkerchief round his head.

He saluted me, and inquired haughtily, 'why I had come

into his town, into which no Feringhi had ever before entered without his leave ? '

I stooped down and said in his ear, ' You are my prisoner, and must come quietly with me ; if you or your people resist, I will drive my spear through your body. Now we will go, if you please.'

The street was narrow, and as my horsemen spread themselves behin l us, no one could get near us. I do not remember ever feeling so excited as I did when the Raja and I went down to the gate by which we had entered. He said nothing ; but his men were crowding on the walls and house-tops, all armed and calling to each other. Perhaps they noticed that my long hog spear was within six inches of their Raja's back !

When we reached the gate he merely said to the guard, ' Don't follow, I shall return soon ' ; and we all passed out safely.

' Now,' said I to one of my men, ' let the Sahib ride, Bhadrinath ' ; [1] and as he dismounted from his mare, I bade Narayan Rao get up

' If you don't, you're a dead man,' I said ; and Balram Singh advised him to obey ; ' for ', said he, ' if you do not do as my master orders you, he will put his spear through you.'

So the Raja mounted, and as this was seen from the gate towers not a hundred and fifty yards from us, one of my men happening to look round, called out, ' They are going to fire ' ; and we had scarcely time to put our weary horses into a canter, when a regular volley was discharged, knocking up the dust behind us.

Bhadrinath had scrambled up behind the Raja with a merry laugh, and kept consoling his companion by telling him the shot would hit him first. Narayan Rao, however, maintained perfect silence, and told me afterwards he expected to have been hung upon the first tree, and supposed this to be my reason for ordering him to mount.

Now I had my prisoner, where was I to put him ? My camp was forty miles distant, and I resolved at last to take him to Chincholi,[2] where there was a fortified court-house,

[1] This name was transferred to one of the best drawn characters in the *Thug*, the fat Brahmin inveigler, Bhudrinath, so suave and callous.

[2] Headquarters of the north-eastern taluk of Gulbarga District. Chincholi is in hilly country ; in 1901 it had a population of 4,000.

which could be easily defended in case of a rescue being attempted; and when we reached it the Raja was safely located there, having been first put in irons.

The surviving relations of the murdered Brahmins came that evening, and were confronted with the Raja, who did not attempt to deny the murders. The family were his own near relations, but they had a good deal of silver plate, which had excited his cupidity.

All that night we were kept in constant alarm. Shots were fired at our gates and bastions, and dismal and unearthly shriekings and howlings were kept up by our enemies. I was glad when morning came, and brought my servants with clean clothes and a guard of five soldiers. It was a busy day; people crowded in with complaints and accusations against the prisoner for exactions and dacoity. Strange to say, he admitted them all, and directed us where to find the plunder. I sent for it, and it was brought; massive silver, copper, and brass vessels, and a quantity of valuable cloths and silk. The villagers sent me eight men who had assisted at the dacoity, and their confessions enabled me to apprehend ten more.

I determined to take the wretch himself to Hyderabad. This he heard of, and sent me a private note, which ran thus:—

'You are all-powerful and merciful. Send the enclosed to Homnabad, and you can get cash or bills for 24,000 rupees. When you get this, allow me to depart.'

'So that is your game, my friend,' I thought; 'perhaps you may be corrupting my people.' So I ordered my bed to be taken down and placed across his door, and talked to him most of the night.

'I was a fool', he said, 'not to shut the gate when you were inside. My people would have killed you.'

'It wouldn't have helped you much,' I replied; 'your village would soon have been knocked about your ears, and you would have been hanged. Now you are safe. Chandu Lal will not hang a Brahmin.'

'Not unless your gentlemen make him,' he said, 'as you do your own people when murder is done. I hated them. I only killed my uncle. He was the worst.'

'And your grandmother?'

'Ah!' he said, and was silent. He then asked if I had sent for the 24,000 rupees in money or bills?

'No,' I said, 'English gentlemen do not take bribes. The Minister will get the money at Hyderabad.'

'God forbid!' he exclaimed; 'take 50,000, take a lakh. Ah, sir! for your mother's sake let me go. I cannot go to Hyderabad alive!'

It struck me he might have poison concealed about him, so I had him stripped and searched. I told him frankly, he must go to Hyderabad, for that I had no power to deal with him.

But it did not seem an easy matter to get him there. My scouts brought in word that the Raja's people were out in great numbers on the road, and intended to dispute my passage. My escort was very weak; I had nineteen prisoners. But a happy solution occurred to my difficulties. My men on the look-out reported that some English troops had arrived, and going up myself, I saw the flags of an English regiment being set out for an encampment. I dressed quickly and went to the officer in command, who at once ordered a native officer and twenty men to accompany the prisoners. I started early next morning, and made a long march, clearing the jungly tract in which the rescue had been planned, and which would very possibly have succeeded had my escort remained as it was. I reached Hyderabad on the third day, and was immediately summoned to the Residency, red trousers and all; told Mr. Martin my story, which amused him very much, and showed him the order for the 24,000 rupees. He desired me to go at once to the Minister, and we did, hot and travel-stained as we were. Chandu Lal was very cordial and gracious, and his keen grey eyes twinkled when I handed him the order for the 24,000 rupees, and he laughed heartily at my account of the whole scene.

'Why did you not get the lakh, Taylor?' he said; 'now it will be hidden.'

Narayan Rao sat trembling in the corner, making frantic appeals for justice, and I took my leave as I heard the order given for 'close imprisonment'.

'The Minister might have given you a present out of the money you brought,' said Mr. Martin; and indeed I thought so too, especially as three of my best horses died soon after.

I received a very handsome official acknowledgment from Mr. Martin for the service I had rendered, praising my 'zeal and promptitude in an arduous and trying business', and much more that was very flattering and pleasant. I left Hyderabad within a week; but, alas! my horses had been in an infected stable, and I lost all except my white pony. It was in vain that I asked for some help to replace them, although they had done valuable service, and were a loss of 3,000 rupees.

I mentioned my loss when writing to Mr. Newnham, and he sent me most kindly and generously a magnificent bay—a timely gift, and one I highly prized.

When I returned to my district, in company with my chief, Mr. Colvin,[1] we determined to look into the revenue settlement of the country. We stayed a few delicious days at Bidar, roaming through the grand old city, revelling in its beauty, and recalling its past histories. We could have stayed there dreaming on, but work was before us, and we pushed on to Homnabad.

I am not going to inflict details of revenue settlement on my readers. We found the Bengal system, with which Mr. Colvin was familiar, would not suit the country at all, and that the best plan was to continue the former settlements, with here and there some slight alterations; and as I could do this alone, he left me. I worked at this and my registration of village police in every county and along the road, getting on as well as I could, and my old hope of having a district to myself was renewed, as Mr. Colvin was dissatisfied and would not stay, and thought it likely that I might be appointed in his place.

[1] John Russell Colvin, 1807–1857. In 1827 Colvin was appointed second assistant to the Resident at Hyderabad. Here he regretted 'the old common village responsibility for payment of land revenue', with collection through the village headmen.

Colvin is believed, as secretary, to have had too much influence in Lord Auckland's Afghan policy. Mr. Buckland writes: 'He worked with extraordinary industry, and greatly increased the business of the Government.' Colvin succeeded Thomason as Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces in 1853, dying in the midst of the Mutiny, and leaving behind him a heated controversy. No reader of *Forty-one Years in India*, where so few unkind things are said, can forget the scathing picture of the state of things at Agra in 1857.

Some very curious and difficult cases of disputed inheritance came before me. One [1] I very well remember, in which two families claimed the same land under a grant from King Yusaf Adil Shah, who began to reign A.D. 1480. The papers were exactly similar. No forgery could be detected either in the registries or seals; both seemed genuine, and we were fairly puzzled, till, after dinner, holding up the paper to the light, I saw an unmistakable water-mark—a figure of an angel, with 'Goa' underneath. Now, Goa had only been taken by the Portuguese in A.D. 1510; therefore, there could have been no Goa paper in existence in 1488, and Indian paper has never any water-mark. The falsification, therefore, of the deed written on Portuguese paper was conclusive.[2]

Mr. Colvin was obliged to go back to Hyderabad, as his health was suffering, and I had an immense increase of work; but I determined to make myself acquainted with every detail, in order to fit myself to succeed him if he should leave.

Returning after an absence of a month through my district, I was met by some very startling revelations. The police, and chiefly my faithful Balram Singh, had reported some very unusual occurrences. Dead bodies, evidently strangled, and in no instance recognised, were found by the roadside, and no clue could be discovered as to the perpetrators of their death. In two places, jackals or hyenas had rooted up newly-made graves, in one of which were found four bodies and in another two, much eaten and disfigured.

The whole country was in alarm, and the villagers had constantly patrolled their roads, but as yet in vain. All we could learn was, that some time before, two bodies of men

[1] 'Readers of Miss Edgeworth's novels will remember a similar case described in *Patronage*' (*Edinburgh Review* article, 'The Story of an Indian Life', October 1877).

[2] In *Tara* the forgery of a horoscope is thus described: 'The paper on which it was written was new, but it was not paper of that part of the country; it was from his own district. An ornamental border was quickly drawn round it. in red, black, and yellow lines; the signatures of the witnesses were carefully copied; finally, the whole document was held over wood-smoke till it was of a proper brown colour, then rubbed and frayed at the edges, and creased here and there as if it had been often examined; and, lastly, it was perfumed with camphor to remove the smell of wood-smoke, and with the odour of benzoin and sweet pastille.'

had passed through the district, purporting to be merchants from the north going southwards, but that they appeared quiet and respectable, above suspicion. During these inquiries it transpired that numbers of persons of that part of my district were absent every year from their homes at stated periods. These were for the most part Musalmans, who carried on a trade with Belgaum, Dharwar, and Mysore, bringing back wearing apparel, copper and brass vessels, and the like. Who could these be? Day after day I tried to sift the mystery, but could not. I registered their names, and enjoined Balram Singh to have the parties watched on their return home. But as the monsoon opened that year with much violence, I was obliged, most reluctantly, to go back to my bungalow at Sadaseopet.[1]

I was very anxious about this time also on another point. Lord William Bentinck, then Governor-General, had adopted as one of his political measures the alteration of the treaties between several native States with the Honourable East India Company, which provided for the support of Contingent forces established during Lord Hastings' govern-ment. When it was known that the Nagpur force had been abolished, and all the officers of the Company's army remanded to their regiments, and the local officers discharged

[1] One of the earliest references in English to the mere name of the Thugs, before anything characteristic was known about them, occurs in *Pandurang Hari*, chapter xi. The date of the incident is within the first decade of the nineteenth century; the novel was published in 1826. Pandurang relates to the village headman how he and his party had been robbed with violence, having sallied out in the morning while it was still unaccountably dark.

'He replied, "If you will be so rash as to set out on such a journey in the dead of night, you must expect to be robbed." "Dead of night!" I exclaimed; "what do you mean? I heard the birds chirping in the trees, and felt assured morning was about to dawn." "*Arry!*" exclaimed the potail; "you have fallen in with the *Thugs!*" Upon inquiring who they were, he told me a class of persons in that part of the country who lived by plundering travellers; and, to avail themselves of the darkness of the night, the better to conceal themselves and carry on their predatory schemes with surer success, they mounted into the trees and shook the branches. The birds at roost on them, being thus disturbed, begin immediately to chirp, as if it were near daybreak; and thus travellers, who are resting for the night in villages or farm-dwellings, are too often deceived and fall an easy prey.'

with gratuities of a few months' pay each, it was impossible not to feel the direst anxiety as to the fate of the Nizam's Contingent, which occupied a perfectly similar position.

It was expected that we should receive four months' pay each, and then I should be thrown again upon the world.

Had the old Nizam lived, or had he been in a condition to transact business, he might have yielded to the offers made him; for the force was a very expensive one, costing forty lakhs or more, and it was expected the Nizam would gladly pay twenty or thirty as an escape from further liability. But his end was now approaching, and for a time we had a respite.

Mr. Newnham wrote to me bidding me 'come to him again and he would do his best to further my interests'; and in the event of our force being abolished I should have done so. Mr. Palmer advised my remaining at Hyderabad and becoming a merchant, and promised me a rapid fortune. So waiting and speculating I kept on, often very weary and anxious.

The old Nizam, Sikandar Jah, died at the end of June 1829, and was succeeded by his eldest son, not of the highest degree of marriage; but he was favoured by the Minister, Chandu Lal, and was confirmed as his father's successor at Calcutta.

The first use he made of his power was, at the 'durbar' which the Resident attended to congratulate him on his accession, to demand roughly, 'that the Feringhis, who were interfering in his country, should be recalled'. Of course no immediate reply could be given, as the establishment of the civil control had been at the request of his father, who was sufficiently wise to see that the best chance of prosperity for his country was its being placed under English gentlemen.

It was the general opinion that the withdrawal of the civil officers would be the prelude to the total abolition of the Contingent. Reference was made to Calcutta, and it was decided to accede to the wishes of the Nizam. After living some months in a state of feverish anxiety as to my fate, I received orders in October to rejoin my regiment at Hyderabad as the civil control was to be discontinued. I earnestly entreated to be allowed to remain even a short time to prosecute

my inquiries respecting the mysterious murders which had been perpetrated in my district. At first the Resident listened to me incredulously as I unfolded my tale; but he soon saw I was in earnest, and he wrote to the Minister to request permission for me to stay: but Chandu Lal replied that the Nizam had become so impatient and imperious that he dare not sanction my continuance; and with a very heavy heart I rejoined my regiment, the 6th, stationed at Bolarum. Had I been allowed to remain, I should have been the first to disclose the horrible crime of Thuggee to the world;[1] but it fell to the good fortune of Major Sleeman to do so afterwards. My inquiries were very active, and I found that parties of apparently most respectable Musalmans

[1] Taylor missed this, and without complaining; but missed it so completely that his name is not in the list of more than a score of officers to whom Sleeman makes final acknowledgment, in a note at the end of chapter 13 of his *Rambles and Recollections*, as having 'aided in the good cause'. All these, however, were either of the Civil Service or of the regular army. So far as can be told in the absence of initials from this list, it includes four men who were Residents in Hyderabad while lor served there in a subordinate capacity—Mr. Martin, Colonels Stewart and Low, and General Fraser, besides Taylor's friend Sutherland.

One might think it would have been a pleasure to Sleeman to mention Taylor, who was his acquaintance, and who always praised him. The English officer before whom Ameer Ali is taken at Saugor may or may not be meant for Sleeman: 'A tall, noble-looking person he was, and from the severe glance he cast on me I thought my hour was come, and that ere night I should cease to exist.' In the Introduction to the *Thug*, dated July 1839, Taylor quotes a passage 'from Colonel Sleeman's introduction to his own most curious and able work'. He also acknowledges 'the obligations I am under to Colonel Sleeman for much valuable information, and also for a copy of his work'. In Taylor's *History of India*, written long after Sleeman's death, are two capital paragraphs, setting forth Sleeman's achievement, and never mentioning himself.

William Henry Sleeman, 1788–1856, had published at Calcutta in 1836 a Vocabulary of the peculiar language used by the Thugs, called *Ramaseeana*, a book of sufficient interest to be pirated in America. This should be the book referred to by Taylor, who wrote almost entirely from first-hand material. In 1840, the year after the *Thug* was out in London, Sleeman published at Calcutta his famous *Report on the Depredations committed by the Thug Gangs of Upper and Central India, from the Cold Season of 1836–7, etc.* The year before he had also issued from the Serampore Press a minor *Report on the System of Megapunnaism*. This is one of the varieties of Thuggee which Taylor mentions in his

occasionally passed through the district, having charms, amulets, and medicines to sell. 'Our trade', said one to me, 'is to take with us from Aland,[1] old and new *saris* and waist-bands and trade with them, getting in exchange brass and copper pots, and gold or silver ornaments; these we exchange again when the rains begin. We don't take our wives; they and the children remain at home as hostages for the rent we owe.' What could seem more plausible; and who could conceive the horrible crimes that were concealed under so fair a semblance?

The subject haunted me; why should so many men follow the same calling? Where did they go? Were they speaking the truth? My people were at fault, and Balram Singh shared my suspicions. He and Bhadrinath volunteered to follow and watch these men, and they were both absent disguised as fakirs when I was recalled to my regiment, and thus the mystery remained unsolved!

All chance of civil employ was now over, but still the service was safe, as the Nizam had promptly refused to do away with the Contingent and substitute a payment of twenty lakhs, as had been suggested. He took pride in the force, and the English Government now declared that it should not be disturbed, but that its cost should be lessened by sundry reforms. The pay was made to assimilate with that

---

Introduction as having been brought to light since the *Thug* was written: 'The most refined in guilt are those who murder parents for the sake of their children, to sell them as household slaves, or to dancing women to be brought up to prostitution.'

The two Indian classics bearing upon Thuggee have been issued from the Oxford University Press. Sleeman is represented not by any of his Reports, but by the book of his whole life, the racy *Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official* (1844). Thuggee here occupies only a chapter of a dozen pages, called 'Thugs and Poisoners', with a note at the end of the volume by Sleeman's grandson. The *Times* in reviewing this edition, in the Indian Series, 1915, said essentially that Sleeman's revelations would not have gone far had not Meadows Taylor, in his novel, given them wings to fly with. This *tour de force*, the *Confessions of a Thug*, appeared in the World's Classics in 1916, with a map, a better glossary than before, and an excellent short Introduction by Mr. C. W. Stewart.

[1] A town of some 10,000 inhabitants in the west of the Nizam's State, Gulbarga District. 'Aland is a commercial centre of some importance.' The name recurs continually in *Tara*.

of the Company's army, without any consideration of the pensions, passage-money, and other advantages of the Company's service: we 'locals' were to have our bare pay only—in my case as a lieutenant it was 290 rupees a-month instead of 400. New regulations were drawn up providing promotion to the rank of captain after twelve years' service: but no pension was allowed; and the whole was summed up by a sentence which carried despair to many a heart—

'The Nizam's Government can grant no furlough to Europe.'

No more sight of home! no future meeting with my mother! never again to visit England, unless I left the service and returned to be a burden to my people. I can never forget the numbness which crept over me as I thought of it, now that all pleasant anticipations were gone, and my congenial employment exchanged for the dull routine of regimental duty. My old company received me with affectionate greeting, and I made up my mind, for the present at least, to remain. I was now twenty-one.[1]

[1] In his *History*, p. 630, Taylor tells how Lord William Bentinck's principle of non-intervention, carried too far, 'served to weaken the paramount authority and prestige of British power in India. In Hyderabad, a wasteful minister was allowed to weary the people by exactions and want of faith, which seriously impaired the revenue, and created a horde of usurers, Arab chiefs, Patans, and native bankers, whose extortions from the people of the districts assigned to them, in payment of loans and advances, are remembered with terror. As a relief to the State, an offer was made by the governor-general to disband the contingent, for a partial equivalent in money payment; but the services of this force were invaluable to the Nizam's Government, as a counterpoise to its own turbulent feudatories and military chiefs, and *the offer . . . was declined. The pay and allowances of the contingent* were, however, reduced to the standard of the company's forces.'

In 1835 a remonstrance came from the Court of Directors. 'These remonstrances had, however, little practical effect, and the minister, taking courage from the prevailing non-interferent policy, made no change in his system.'

CHAPTER IV

1829–37

I HAVE, perhaps, no right to intrude upon my readers the doubts and fears, crude hopes and impossible aspirations that filled my mind, as was only natural in one so young. I had met with some disappointments, bitter ones, already; but I had courage and good health remaining, and I always look upon this period as a turning-point in my life. I was exposed to much temptation. In those days in India men drank hard and deep, and high play was the rule, not the exception. However, I cared for none of these things, and kept much aloof; I was esteemed exclusive and unsociable, but I did not mind. I had my own recreations after my own taste; among these my boat on the large Husain Sagar Tank [1] was my chief one, and scarcely an evening passed that I did not drive over from Bolarum to have a sail. I had rigged her myself with three sprit-sails, after the fashion of the Liverpool ferry-boats, and I fully enjoyed sailing her in company with the other tiny yachts which were always out. I studied Persian and Marathi, and if I had been drawing all day long I could not have complied with the requests that were made to me to fill the albums of my fair friends.

[1] This, 'the far-famed Hoosain Sagor, or, as it is more often called, Secunderabad', described with evident personal delight in the *Thug*, was built by a Sultan of Golconda, in the sixteenth century, before Hyderabad was fairly founded.

'The Husain Sagar, a large sheet of water, which when full extends over an area of 8 square miles, lies between Secunderabad on the north and Saifabad, a portion of Hyderabad, on the south, and is the source of water-supply for the Residency and suburbs north of the Musi river. The dam is 2,500 yards long, and forms the road connecting the northern suburbs with Secunderabad' (*Imperial Gazetteer*, article 'Hyderabad City').

Mr. Martin was removed from the Residency at Hyderabad and transferred to an appointment at Delhi. He had never been popular, and his manner was cold and formal except to those he really liked. To me he had been invariably kind, and the tears stood in his eyes when I took leave of him. 'I would have done more for you if I could,' he said; 'I feel as if you were among the few really true to me.' He soon afterwards took furlough to England, and did not resume his public life.

In November 1830, Colonel Stewart, formerly Resident at Gwalior, was promoted to Hyderabad. From him and his charming family I experienced kindness and hospitality unbounded. He was generous and open-hearted, and belonged to the school of 'non-interference' politicians. The Nizam expressed himself anxious to effect reform in many departments, but ended by doing very little.

At the end of the Maratha war of 1818, the finances of the Nizam's State were in the utmost disorder, and the Government of the Nizam had no credit whatever in the money market. Had it not been for the continuous loans made to it by Messrs. Wm. Palmer & Co., it must have become bankrupt in all its State obligations. The Nizam had large private hoards, but these he refused to allow his Minister to touch for any public purpose. The loan of £600,000, authorised by the Indian Government, from the house of Wm. Palmer & Co., did for a while satisfy some pressing needs; but no attempt was made to introduce economical reform, or to raise depressed revenue to the ordinary standard. Therefore, financial distress continued. Villages were deserted; large tracts left uncultivated; rebellions ensued which the Government was too weak to check; and it was when things were in this condition that Sir Charles Metcalfe proposed the introduction of the superintendence of English officers into the civil departments—a measure sanctioned by the Court of Directors, and approved by the old Nizam.

The measures enforced by these officers were the settlement for five years of every village which duly received its lease. Waste lands were let at small increasing rents, till a fair average should be attained in five or seven years; cultivation increased rapidly; emigrants returned; much good was done,

and much exaction prevented. The officers of the Nizam's Government made the collections, and generally managed their own districts, but no demand for extra cesses or oppression of any kind was left unnoticed. These native officers considered the check and superintendence of the English a great grievance, and appeals were entered against them; but on the whole, the system worked harmoniously and beneficially to the people.

Now, however, that the civil control of the English was abolished, the country was thrown open to the Minister and his creatures, and the old scenes were enacted anew. The fine rich cotton-growing country of Berar suffered terribly, and many more likewise. Districts were farmed out to speculators, or money-lenders—whoever chose to make the highest advance; and it was a grim joke at Hyderabad that every man who took a district rode the first stage with his face to his horse's tail, to see who was following him.

To Chandu Lal's policy Colonel Stewart appeared indifferent. The Nizam had been offered power to dismiss his Minister, and had refused to do so, professing himself perfectly satisfied; so things grew worse and worse.

I have not yet mentioned the prosecution of Obid Hussein, the late Resident's Munshi, on the part of the trustees of the house of Wm. Palmer & Co. This person had been an immense favourite of Mr. Martin, I think But for his influence the Resident would have given Mr. Palmer every assistance in the recovery and liquidation of the large sums lent by the House to the Nizam's Government: but from the moment of his arrival there was a perceptible difference; and not only was no help given in recovering sums which had already been decided in favour of the House by the Musalman Civil Court of Hyderabad, but every difficulty that ingenuity could suggest was thrown in the way, and Chandu Lal and others amused themselves by telling Mr. Palmer how much money they were giving to the Munshi to get the claims altogether quashed. Sir Charles Metcalfe's opinions were adverse to the House, and debates ran high. There were Palmerites and Metcalfites; and I, young as I was, took part in the discussions, maintaining only that 'if the whole of the claims were dishonest, why did Government pay any

of them? Why had the English Government applied to the Court of King's Bench for a mandamus to adopt a despatch in Messrs. Wm. Palmer & Co.'s favour? And why had the Hyderabad Courts given awards in their favour amounting to £100,000, the payment of which was hindered by the intrigues of Mr. Martin's Munshi?' No doubt I spoke as a lad, and with all the zeal of youth; but now, forty-four years after,[1] I find my opinion unchanged.

Mr. Palmer's house continued my chief resort. There was a fascination about him quite irresistible to me, his knowledge was so varied—classical, historical, and political. His father, who had been secretary to Warren Hastings, had taken part in all the most eventful scenes of early Anglo-Indian history, and had married, as was very usual then among English gentlemen, a lady of high rank, one of the Princesses of the royal house of Delhi; and his fund of knowledge and great store of anecdote made him a delightful and improving companion.

In 1830 (I forget the exact date), my prospects brightened. The adjutant of my regiment, having completed twelve years' service, was promoted to the rank of captain. I was the next in seniority, and my claims were recognised by the Resident, Colonel Stewart. I passed my examination in Hindustani 'with credit', and my name appearing in orders, I assumed my new duties. My pay was increased considerably; and I was much amused, when I asked a young lady to dance at a ball one night, to overhear her ask her mother's permission, 'as I was now an adjutant'.

'Are you quite sure, dear?' said mamma; 'if you are, you may do so. He is quite eligible *now*.'

I could not repress a smile as I led the young lady out to our dance. Are mammas still so watchful?

During the rainy season of 1830, I met with a very severe accident in riding after a panther, which led us a long chase. He got away through some high grass at last, and mounting my horse, with my gun in my hand, I made after him. My horse put his fore legs into a deep hole, as we were going at speed, and I was shot out of my saddle, and thrown on my shoulder with great violence. I got up directly, ran on to the garden where the panther had taken refuge, and pushing

[1] 1874.

through the hedge I saw a fine young sepoy keeping him down with his bayonet, and another poor fellow sitting at a little distance holding his arm, which was nearly severed above the elbow. I tied his arm up with my handkerchief, and soon after the doctor arrived. He asked me if I were likewise hurt, remarking I looked very pale, and I owned to much pain in my right shoulder. On examination it turned out that I had not only broken my collar-bone, but also the scapula and the socket of my right arm. I did not recover the use of it for many months.

At the close of the year, H.H. the Nizam expressed a desire to review the whole of the troops at Secunderabad and Bolarum. I had then charge of my regiment; and the unusual size of our men, and their steadiness, excited the envy of officers of the Madras corps. As the Prince passed slowly on his elephant we dropped our colours, which no other regiment had done; and he then learned, perhaps for the first time, that such troops belonged to him. After parade we were all to breakfast with his Highness. I was late, and could not easily find a seat, which the Resident observing, offered me one close to himself. The Nizam, a fine-looking man over six feet in height, with a fair skin, ruddy complexion, and blue Tartar eyes, at once recognised me and inquired my name. 'He has already done me a delicate but important service,' he said to Colonel Stewart, 'and I am glad to have this opportunity of thanking him. He will tell you what it was.'

So I related how, one evening, my camp being pitched at the town of Kalyani,[1] I was told that a lady of rank, attended by her secretary and a few followers, was without,

[1] A jagir town in Bidar District, with a population of 13,000 in 1891, but 11,000 at the two following decennial periods. Kalyani has a notable history. It was the seat of the Chalukyan kingdom about the period of the Norman kings in England. It was the birthplace (*Imperial Gazetteer*) 'of Basava who founded the Lingayat sect'. In his *History* Taylor has a long paragraph on the story of this 'Brahmin named Busappa', whose faith 'became the means of accomplishing a great dynastic and religious revolution'. His tenets 'remain to the present time, professed by perhaps the majority of the middle classes in Southern and South-Western India'. When Kalyani was no longer a great capital it belonged to various kingdoms, was sacked by the Moguls, and the fortress taken by Aurungzeb in 1656. Its fine temples have been demolished or changed into mosques.

in a palankeen, asking to see me. I went out at once, and my fair visitor told me that she was the youngest sister of the Nizam, married to the Lord of Kalyani, who had ill-used and even struck her; that she had left his fort, daring his people to molest her; and had come to my camp, where she was sure the English flag would protect her. Now she wanted an escort of police-horse to conduct her to Hyderabad. This I gave her, and provided escorts from stage to stage until she reached Hyderabad.

'Did you report this?' asked the Resident.

'No,' I replied; 'the Begum especially desired the matter should be kept private. I have recorded it in my Mahratta diary, but it is not a circumstance I could report officially.'

'You are right,' he said; 'and you see your service has not been forgotten.'

The Nizam was quite at his ease, conversing with Colonel Stewart, and occasionally asking me various questions about the country and what I had done.

Shortly after this, the Nizam's brother, Mubariz-u-Dowla, collected a number of Arabs and Afghans, strengthened his house in the city, and proceeded to press claims against his brother which could not be for one moment entertained. The case becoming serious, and disturbances being imminent, Colonel Stewart was called upon to repress the disorder by sending in a force from Bolarum. I was still in charge of my regiment, and, preceded by two guns, we marched into the city. Had there been any fighting we should have fared badly in those narrow streets, lined with terraced houses, all covered with armed men; but happily not a shot was fired, though the guns at the palace gates were unlimbered. The officer commanding the brigade had preceded us and induced the rebel to proceed according to orders to Golconda, and to trust to his brother's generosity to settle all disputed claims; and so, for a time, there was a hollow peace patched up.

Mubariz-u-Dowla, however, could not rest content, and the Minister had overlooked the fact that in his personal retainers he possessed the means of doing much mischief. The treasury at the Fort of Golconda [1] is one of the most ancient in the

[1] The fame of Golconda is not wholly due to its association with diamonds, which were never found in the near neighbourhood. It is

State, and at this time contained 100 lakhs, or a million sterling ; and the Nizam, wishing to remove some of the money, sent his treasurer, with a small guard, for the purpose. Mubariz-u-Dowla refused admittance, and the others, being too weak to fight, placed a guard at the entrance. There was great consternation at Hyderabad. Five thousand Arabs, Rohillas, Sikhs, and other foreign levies, including some of the old French 'Ligne', were marched out to Golconda, and took up a position in the outer *enceinte* ; but they made no impression on the Prince, and indeed were supposed to be well affected towards him. After days of useless negotiation, the Minister, on the part of the Nizam, requested the assistance of the Bolarum Contingent ; so we all marched out on the 6th January 1831, and encamped opposite the north or Delhi gate, on the plain on which stand the noble mausoleums of the Kutb Shahi Kings. It was an absurd state of affairs. The interior was held by the rebel Prince, the outer *enceinte* by the Nizam's levies, who also treated us as enemies, not only refusing to allow us to enter, but threatening to fire on

a fortress and ruined city five miles to the west of its daughter city, Hyderabad. The fort was built by a Raja of Warangal, who ceded it to the ruler of Gulbarga. 'In 1512 the place passed from the Bahmanis to the Kutb Shahis, who had their capital here till the foundation of Hyderabad. In 1687 the city was taken by Aurungzeb after a siege of eight months, and the last of the Kutb Shahis was deported to Daulatabad' (*Imperial Gazetteer*).

The fort is over three miles round. The granite tombs are crumbling, while the enamelled tiles have been stolen from them. The fort is garrisoned now, much as in Taylor's day, by a few Arabs and by the special Golconda Brigade.

It is at Golconda, as a convenient point outside Hyderabad, that, in chapter xxi. of the *Thug*, Ameer Ali has tryst with Azima, whom he marries. 'As we passed over the brow of an eminence, the tombs of the kings of Golconda broke on our sight, occupying the whole of a rising ground in front. . . . I was astonished at their size and magnificence, even from that distance; how much more so when we approached them nearer! . . . Their immense size, and the beautiful groups which they assumed as our point of view shifted, struck forcibly on the mind, while the desolation around them added to their solemn appearance. . . . From the other side of the terrace the whole of the large tombs were seen at a glance—each by itself a noble and striking object; but rendered still more so when grouped with others of smaller size, whose contrast increased their massiveness.'

Loti has a graceful, sentimental chapter on Golconda (*L'Inde*, 1903).

us, and training the fort guns on the wall so as to command our camp. I rode to the edge of the counterscarp one morning, but was warned off. However, I managed to have a look at the ditch, and saw that it was wide and deep; and by dint of exchanging good-humoured 'chaff' with the men, escaped unharmed.

We remained inactive until the 15th February, when we were suddenly ordered into the fort, and the Nizam's troops at the same time ordered to leave it. We took up a position not far from the Prince's palace, between it and the treasury, and pickets were immediately posted. I held the advanced picket with two guns and four companies. I had my guns loaded with a double charge of grape each, and as the Prince's men were watching us very closely, they must have seen that we were in earnest.

The Nizam's people began removing the treasure, but it was slow work, and for four days and nights I had not even time to change my clothes; the weather, too, was very hot. I believe mine was the post of honour, as it would have been of danger had any fighting occurred. But it was annoying to be kept there perpetually on the stretch, with constant alarms that the Arabs were coming to attack us, and with the sound of their peculiar drum and their war-songs constantly in our ears.[1]

I was not sorry when, on the fifth morning, one of the staff rode up and told me I might withdraw my men, for the Prince

[1] *What were so many Arabs still doing in Deccan history?* They were survivors from the anarchy which had been ended only a dozen years before. Taylor resented their continued intrusion in Hyderabad affairs, their fanatic influence, and their manners. Chapter 5 gives a picture of the Arabs at Aden, just before its annexation, swaggering about 'stroking their moustaches in very Hyderabad fashion'. There is also a significant passage in the *History of India*, telling how 'all the fugitive Arab mercenaries had collected', in 1818, at the fort of Malegaon in Khandesh. After a notable defence they were allowed, writes Taylor, 'to march out under promise of payment of their arrears of pay, and a free passage to Arabia. This generous treatment was, however, misunderstood. The Arabs considered they had had the best of the contest; and the result ever since then has been held up as an instance of successful resistance by Arabs to English troops which could not be overcome, and at Hyderabad and elsewhere has produced many bad consequences.' Loti notes the Arabs in Hyderabad.

had agreed to send away his levies and keep only his immediate retainers.

A scene followed which affected me very deeply. I had drawn up my four companies, and released the guns from their position, when the men burst into loud shouts of—

'Bolo, Mahadeo Baba Ke Jey!' ('Victory to the son of Mahadeo!')

I hardly understood it at first; but my friend S., who came to look after his guns, clapped me on the back and said, 'I do congratulate you, Taylor, with all my heart; no truer proof could have been given you of the men's affection; you will never lose your title—it will follow you all your life.' 'Bolo, Mahadeo Baba Ke Jey!' he shouted to the men, and heartily did they respond; while, as I proceeded to dismiss them from parade, the cry was taken up by hundreds of both the regiments present.

Even our chief came out to say a few kind words. Captain S. was right, my *sobriquet* never left me, not even in the Mutiny, and it may still linger among the descendants of those who conferred it.

The force was to return to cantonments, but the request of the Nizam was complied with that six companies should remain in charge of the fort, and I was appointed to take command. I was to see that no levies joined the Prince, and I was to be the medium of communication between the Prince and the Resident. 'You can read Persian,' the Resident said to me, as he gave me my orders, 'and you are to open and read all letters the Prince sends you, whether to the Nizam, the Minister, or me: what he has hitherto written are so insolent in tone, that if the others are like them, you need not forward them. If you can make up this quarrel between the brothers, do so, and I shall be obliged to you; but on no account make it worse.'

So I remained at my post, and for a few days no notice was taken. I sent for my boat, and used to sail about on the fine tank which washed the walls of the fort, and see the Prince spying at me through a telescope. At length his Munshi came out, and I offered him a sail one evening. In return, dishes arrived for breakfast and dinner, delightfully cooked, and I reported this friendly intercourse to the Resident.

At last letters were sent—one to the Resident, another to the Nizam, very violent in tone, which I returned; others followed daily for more than a fortnight, gradually improving in tone, but not right yet. 'You've hooked your fish, Taylor,' said the Resident, laughing, 'but he is too strong to land yet; I'll not help you or interfere at all;' and I was very glad he did not.

By-and-by my friend grew sulky, but this did not last long; and one evening the Munshi arrived with some extra good dishes for me, and food for the whole detachment. 'Would I be pleased to draft a letter that would satisfy all parties—his honour was in my hands,' this was the message delivered by the Munshi. I did draft a letter, and the Prince flew into a violent rage over it, and abused me for having so small an idea of his dignity. We wrangled over it for a week, and he ended by placing his case unreservedly in my hands, and writing what I dictated. I made the draft in English so as to be sure of my meaning, and it was afterwards translated by me into Urdu with my own hand, to assure the Prince that it was really mine. The letters were brought to me the next afternoon; and as the Munshi and I sailed about, the Prince waved a white flag by way of salute, which we answered from the 'Zora', with twelve shots from her little pieces.

I took the letters next morning to the Residency. That to the Nizam was forwarded at once, and was pronounced very satisfactory. He would send his mother directly to Golconda with his assurances, and would make proper arrangements for his brother's return. When I returned to Golconda, I found the old Begum Sahiba had already arrived, and two female servants were sent to my tent to report that she and her son had fallen on each other's necks and wept much; and in a day or two Mubariz-u-Dowla was escorted to the city with all possible respect.

I received the thanks of the Nizam for having 'for the second time rendered a service to his family'.

Mubariz-u-Dowla sent his secretary to me afterwards, when my intended marriage was announced, with a 'Fard' or memorandum in Persian, which was presented on a silver salver covered with a napkin of cloth-of-gold. He hoped I would accept for my future wife the articles mentioned in

the list, as a mark of the gratitude he felt for the services I had rendered him. The presents he wished to give were very valuable, including shawls, necklaces, ornaments for the head, bracelets of diamonds and other gems, a zone of gold set with precious stones, and a necklace of seven rows of pearls with diamond pendant, the aggregate value about 20,000 rupees; but alas! I could only thank him for his kindness, and tell him I was not permitted to accept his gifts. He afterwards got into trouble by his connection with the Wahabi conspiracy of 1839, and eventually died a State prisoner at Golconda. During my stay I was only once permitted to ascend the hill whereon the fort stands, and I wrote my name in the mosque, now disused; but I never could even enter the gates afterwards, nor, since the temporary occupation of the place in 1831, has any Englishman ever been allowed to enter its precincts.

On the 25th August the following year, I was married to Mary Palmer, daughter of Wm. Palmer, Esq., Hyderabad, by the Rev. W. J. Aislabie, chaplain of the station, at Secunderabad Church; and in December of that year my regiment was ordered to Hingoli, where we took up our abode.

Hingoli was a dreary place enough [1]—scarcely a tree near it, no gardens, and altogether desolate. There was no amusement to be had at the station, and we passed our evenings in reading French and Italian, and my wife tried to teach me to play the harp; but suddenly one day the sounding-board and back split up under the heat, and my progress was rudely interrupted.

On the 4th of June 1833 we were ordered to march to a place called Goligaon, the chief of which, Jaluji Naik, had rebelled against the Government, garrisoned his fort, and was plundering the country. The town was reported to be forty miles distant, and we started under a blazing sun,

[1] 'The account of Hingoli town and taluk, Parbhani District, in the *Imperial Gazetteer* bears out Taylor's description. The town is the eighth in the State, with 17,000 inhabitants. 'It was a cantonment of the Hyderabad Contingent up to 1903. Since the removal of the Contingent, some of the Nizam's troops have been stationed here. Hingoli is a great cotton mart, and is famous as one of the first places in the Deccan where operations for the suppression of *thagi* were commenced about 1833.'

We were obliged to halt several times, but by dint of resting during the heat of the day and going on at night, we at last sighted the place, lying in a hollow beneath us, and keeping up a sharp fire from its walls. We had, in reality, come upwards of a hundred miles, and the thermometer had been 114° under the shade of a thick banian-tree at our last halting-place. How our men, laden with forty rounds of ammunition and two days' provisions each, did it I don't know. I helped them as much as I could by dispensing with pantaloons, which were tied up in bundles and placed on the spare carriage-bullocks. Many a Hindu song was sung in chorus as we marched, relieved by the old cry, 'Bolo, Mahadeo Baba Ke Jey!' and on calling the roll, when we reached the camping-ground, I found that, with the exception of five men who had been left to burn a man that had died of cholera on the road, every one was present, and apparently fresh.

Jaluji Naik, the rebel, was still in the fort, and maintained a continuous fire, some of the balls cutting the branches of the tree we were under; and it was arranged that we should attack the fort the following day. It was a very strong place—a square mass, with a large bastion at each corner, loopholed for musketry and wall-pieces. The height of the wall was fifty-two feet from the parapet to the ground; the whole was in excellent repair.

We held a council of war, and arranged matters as follows:

First, the fort was to be shelled by the howitzer. I was to occupy the crest of a rising ground opposite the village, and advance through the village in case the shells did not take effect, and attack the outworks. Captain T—— was to set fire to the village, so that the sparks and burning thatch might be carried over the fort by the wind, which was very strong.

I reconnoitred my post that evening, and had a narrow escape, a ball passing through my cap; but I saw enough to show me the place was 'ugly', and might prove tough work for us. I think we all felt it so, though little was said as we parted for the night. We were to take up our position at earliest dawn. The stars were very bright, and the ceaseless firing kept up from the parapets of the fort had, I remember, a very beautiful effect. The place seemed full of men.

Suddenly a sentry challenged, and we all sprang to our feet. I called out not to fire, and ran forward with some of my men. A moment later, a short figure advanced and threw himself at my feet, and I found it was Jaluji Naik himself, with five or six attendants, who all gave up their arms. I sent him in at once to Captain T——'s tent, and received orders from him to take two companies and occupy the fort at daylight. I felt very thankful for this termination to the affair, especially when I saw the place we were to have attacked. As soon as it was light we marched to the entrance-gate, and desired the garrison to come out singly, first depositing their arms inside. There were eighty-five men only, as the remainder of the three hundred were absent at the Mohurrum festival, not expecting our visit. What a place it was! The courts and their entrance-gates grew narrower and narrower, till the last one would not admit two men abreast. There were store-houses filled with grain, rice, and *ghi*, stables and cattle-sheds, stores of forage and provisions. It seemed deserted now, except for a few women; and my men began to remove as much as possible of the grain and other property, which was sold at the drum-head, and the proceeds divided among them. I secured the rebel's household gods for my share, and a matchlock inlaid with gold.

Some camp-followers had set fire to a house in the village, and the wind blowing strong towards the fort, brought with it pieces of burning thatch and volumes of smoke. The stacks of forage took fire, and the wood-work of the buildings followed. I was about to depart when I fancied I heard the wail of an infant, and searching hurriedly about, I found a young woman lying insensible upon a bed, with a very young baby beside her. I took both in my arms, and staggered out through the fire and smoke, and meeting two of my men, who were anxious about me, they relieved me of my burden, and we left the place to the flames. The rebel Raja was told of the rescue of his wife and child, but he only replied, 'They had better have died,' and relapsed into sullen silence. His atrocities had been fearful. Persons had been suspended by the heels over the battlements of the fort; others had had their ears stuffed with gunpowder, which was ignited; but I may spare the reader these. He

was made over to the Civil Superintendent of the district, and I do not know what his fate was eventually. His surrender alone prevented his being hanged on a bastion of the fort.

We returned to Hingoli on the 21st June by twelve easy stages, instead of the three we had marched the distance in before. Some rain had fallen, and it was cooler.

Now I became very busy. Those famous discoveries in regard to the practice of Thuggee had recently been made at Jubbulpore and Saugor by (then) Captain Sleeman, which made a sensation in India never to be forgotten.[1] By the confessions of one gang who were apprehended, many Thugs in Central India were brought to justice; and at last the Thugs of the Deccan were denounced by these approvers, and as many lived near Hingoli, they were at once arrested.[2] I volunteered my services in the labour of collecting evidence, and they were accepted. Day after day I recorded tales of murder, which, though horribly monotonous, possessed an intense interest; and as fast as new approvers came in, new

[1] 'The town of Saugor was, and is now, a large and busy place, built on the edge of an immense lake, nearly as large as that of the Hoosein Sagor; the cooling breezes which travel over it make it a delightful spot. . . . The country between Jubbulpoor and Nagpoor is a wild waste. Villages are not met with for miles and miles, the road is stony and uneven, and the jungle thick and dangerous for nearly the whole way. On this account the tract has always been a favourite resort of Thugs, and more affairs have come off in those few marches than perhaps in any other part of the country frequented by us' (*Confessions of a Thug*).

[2] 'At the cantonment of Hingolee, the leader of the Thugs of that district, Hurree Singh, was a respectable merchant of the place, one with whom I myself, in common with many others, have had dealings. On one occasion he applied to the officer in civil charge of the district, Captain Reynolds, for a pass to bring some *cloths* from Bombay, which he knew were on their way accompanied by their owner, a merchant of a town not far from Hingolee; he murdered this person, his attendants, and cattle-drivers, brought the merchandise up to Hingolee under the pass he had obtained, and sold it openly in the cantonment; nor would this have ever been discovered had he not confessed it after his apprehension, and gloried in it as a good joke. By this man too and his gang many persons were murdered *in the very bazar of the cantonment*, within one hundred yards of the main guard, and were buried hardly five hundred yards from the line of sentries! I was myself present at the opening of several of these unblessed graves (each containing several bodies),' etc. (Author's Introduction to the *Thug*, London, July 1839).

mysteries were unravelled and new crimes confessed. Names of Thugs all over the Deccan were registered, and I found one list containing the names of nearly all those whom I had suspected in my old district. The reader will remember my intense anxiety on this subject in 1829, and my conviction that deadly crime existed and was only awaiting discovery; now it was all cleared, but I felt sore that it had not fallen to my lot to win the fame of the affair.

Some men of the artillery and some camp-followers deserted at this time. They were also Thugs; and it was a horrible thought that these miscreants had been in our midst, and it made many in the station, and especially the ladies, very nervous. We had searched for bodies of murdered people wherever we were told to look by the approvers, and invariably found them, sometimes singly, sometimes whole parties, and the details were so sickening we resolved to open no more graves. I wrote and sent home to my father an article on Thuggee, which was shown to Sir Edward Bulwer, who sent me word that had he possessed any local knowledge of India or its people, he would write a romance on the subject; why did I not do so? I pondered over this advice, and hence my novel, *Confessions of a Thug*.[1]

The year did not end pleasantly. A horrible plot, said to be of Wahabi contrivance, to murder all Europeans at Bangalore, and sell their women as slaves, was discovered. There were disturbances in Oudh and other northern provinces, and famine was rapidly spreading from Kathiawar and Guzerat over the Deccan. We did what we could at Hingoli, first individually, then by general subscription. A Brahmin cook was engaged, whose bread and boiled pulse all would eat, and a good meal was given to each person once a-day. The system worked well, and our relief-books showed that three thousand persons received food daily and were all in good health. But in the rural districts thousands of people and cattle must have perished; the gaunt attenuated forms

[1] This was an interesting genesis for a first novel in so remote a part of the world. I have always wondered if Taylor saw anything of the first Lord Lytton when at home a few years later, at Gore House or elsewhere; but no record of such a meeting could be found by the Earl of Lytton, who kindly examined his grandfather's papers.

of some who arrived to ask for aid were pitiful to behold, and the roads were strewn with the bodies of those who died on their way from weakness and starvation.

'During the next three years I had much domestic trouble. The birth and subsequent death of two dear children,[1] the severe and continued illness of my wife, and my own very narrow escape with my life from terrible jungle fever, contracted at Gudalur,[2] at the foot of the Nilgiri Hills, whither we had been ordered by the doctors for change of air for my wife,—all these events saddened our lives and caused us much distress.[3]

Of the beauty of the scenery on the Hills I need not speak here. It has often been described and enlarged upon since, but at that time it was less familiar to those at home; and I find my letters teeming with descriptions of our journey—of wooded hills and towering mountains, of trees and waterfalls, of precipitous crags and deep wooded glens, of ferns and blackberries and violets to remind us of dear old England, of sunsets and sunrises, rolling mists and cool fresh breezes—and, above all, of gratitude for my wife's returning health. My enemy, the fever, however, came back when I was at Ootacamund with renewed violence, and the medical men looked grave, and spoke of a voyage to England as my only hope of life. How could this be accomplished? Furlough was prohibited, and the only chance was a voyage to the Cape—

[1] Two boys. No record exists of the births of Colonel Taylor's children. Indeed, as has now been brought to light, there was no system of registration of births in India until more than a generation later.

[2] There is nothing vital in the *Imperial Gazetteer* about Gudalur, the headquarters of the western taluk of the Nilgiri District. It lies much lower than the rest of the district, on the road from Ootacamund to Calicut, with a dwindling population largely speaking Malayalam. The region is reverting to jungle since the decline of the coffee industry and the mining for gold and mica. In the *Oxford Survey of the British Empire*, vol. ii., 'Asia', is a striking photograph of Gudulur (*sic*), Madras, showing the development of, apparently, feathery bamboos.

[3] The journey by road of the harassed young man, through half-a-dozen degrees of latitude southward from Hyderabad, yet towards the saving altitudes, right across the tableland of Mysore, made an ineffaceable impression. There are traces of it in his second novel, *Tippoo Sultaun*, written some five years later.

dreary enough, but still it must be tried ;[1] and meantime we stayed on, mostly at Coonoor, where I amused myself trying to sketch some of the most striking views, and was always enchanted with its beauty, so varied and so picturesque on every side. It was at this time, when I was in sore trouble at the loss of my second child, that I had the good fortune to be introduced to the then Governor-General, Lord William Bentinck. He was staying at the Hills and had often noticed my boy, not knowing whose child he was. When he died, he wrote me a kind letter of sympathy, asking me to come and see him. I did so as soon as I was able, and so faint and weak was I that I could not stand when I entered his room. He took me in his arms, laid me down on a sofa, and sent for some wine. I told him, when I was stronger, that I had two letters for him which I had been unable to deliver before—one from Mr. Newnham,[2] and the other from my uncle, Captain Robert Mitford.

'You don't mean it,' he said, as his face beamed with pleasure ; 'he is one of my dearest friends ; why did you not come to me at once ? '

'I have only just received this letter,' I replied, 'and I did not like to intrude before having received an introduction.'

'Now what can I do for you ?' he asked.

I mentioned that the Paymastership at Hingoli would soon be vacant—could he appoint me ? and he promised to assist me if he could. 'Only', I added, 'I fear I shall be obliged to go to the Cape on leave, this fever has so shattered my health.'

'Why not to England ? ' he asked.

[1] The time when Taylor contemplated the Cape was not far from the days when the isolation and crudeness of life there were such that no worse threat could be made to Napoleon's followers when troublesome at St. Helena than that of being taken to the Cape and dropped. Yet it was glorious shikar country—a fact of which Taylor's friend Cornwallis Harris was even then making good account.

[2] This is the last mention in the autobiography of the kind friend (retired, 1835). *Tippoo Sultaun*, 1840, (and it must have been a satisfaction to Taylor) bears the inscription : 'To William Newnham, Esq., my best and earliest friend in India, this volume is with grateful esteem dedicated.' Miss Taylor believes that he died soon after ; but has no further knowledge of him or of his descendants.

Then I poured forth the tale of the furlough grievance, and he could scarcely credit that such an order had been passed. He sent his secretary for a copy of the orders, and saw it was all true.

'I shall put in a minute at the next Council,' he said; 'we can get over this, and I shall record that my friend Mr. Taylor is to be allowed leave to England when necessary. That will be enough for you.'

'But, my lord,' I said, 'though I am more grateful than I can express for your kind consideration towards me, my case alone will not help my brother-officers. May I plead for them as well?'

'Certainly,' said Lord William, 'you are quite right; and though my minute as regards yourself will stand in case of urgent necessity, yet all of you shall be released soon from this restriction. Write to-day to the senior officer of your "locals", bid him send in a memorial without delay, and I will have it passed.'[1]

The friend I wrote to despatched the memorial as soon as he could obtain the signatures, and the question passed through Council without difficulty.

After this interview I dined frequently with the Governor-General, meeting there many charming and interesting characters, amongst others the then Mr. Macaulay, whose conversation I found intensely fascinating; his seemingly boundless

[1] This reception of the ailing subaltern was altogether worthy of the way in which Bentinck had received Victor Jacquemont (1801–1832) in Calcutta in 1829. In 1834 he was sixty, and himself ill, which was the reason for his being at Ooty: he died five years later. Only this once, through all the century, could a Governor-General have been found residing in South India.

Bentinck seems to have been the only Governor-General whom Meadows Taylor met, though he had correspondence with others. His administration of nearly seven years occupies some twenty pages in the *History*. The brilliant triumphs of earlier English rulers 'are wanting in the peculiar and hitherto non-existent charm which is attached to the memory of Lord William Bentinck. During his incumbency, there were no glorious victories to be recorded, for no enemies remained to be overcome; but the successful development of moral force, and the conversion of long-existing prejudices into a steady policy of improvement and advancement, is a triumph even more transcendent in the aggregate than that of successful war.'

knowledge of life, his acquaintance with history and philosophy, his fiery zeal in argument, and his calm eloquence in oratory, opened to me new subjects of thought for future study.[1] Oh, if I had been among such men always, I thought, I should have been very different!

I grew stronger in health, and my regiment being ordered to Ellichpur [2] at the end of December, we left the Hills about October 10. We did not return by the way we had come, for we had only too much cause to dread it, but went by Coonoor and Coimbatore,[3] where there was a most extraordinary

[1] It is this meeting with Macaulay which stands out in the early record of Taylor's life, as it did in reality. In the summer of 1834 he was a young man not quite thirty-four, spending June to September with the Governor-General before both proceeded to Calcutta where they belonged. It is still the chief literary memory of Ootacamund. I have put at the end of this chapter a note on Macaulay at Ooty, compiled by permission from the *Life and Letters*, with an original impression of the place contributed by Sir George Trevelyan.

Macaulay was seeing so much, or rather seeing with such effect the surface, of Indian things. He was also missing so much; as in Calcutta he missed the documents, lying under his hand, which would have justified Warren Hastings. He saw enough for his literary purposes; and for the two essays, written years later. These have been called Indian history masquerading on the field of the Cloth of Gold. This may apply to the *Clive*; but the *Hastings* is not history at all. To test the *Hastings* by facts is to begin to feel a queer shakiness about the *History of England*, which, however, is constructed on different principles.

A letter to Hunter, in Skrine's admirable *Life*, throws light upon 'the true causes of the feeling which arose' against Macaulay in Calcutta. 'The subsequent change in feeling was partly due to what you say—the limited conversational powers of Calcutta society and its inability to appreciate Macaulay, and he was not slow in expressing his disgust. Then the lawyers began to grow irritated with a bird which was fouling his own nest, as they said, and who was said to have called them a tribe of horse-leeches.'

[2] Ellichpur town, with a population of some 26,000, was until 1905 the headquarters of a district of the same name. It is hard to tell which was ever the capital of Berar, where no one place predominates. Taylor later on distinctly calls Buldana (quite a small place) the head station. The *Imperial Gazetteer* says: 'Until the Assignment in 1853, when Amraoti became the administrative headquarters of the province, Ellichpur was always regarded as the capital of Berar,' although in Akbar's time Balapur became 'the headquarters of the Imperial army of the Deccan'.

It was here that the *Thug* was written some years later.

[3] 'Coimbatore, picturesquely situated on the left bank of the Noyil

collection of large figures of horses in terra-cotta. I have never heard of these in any other part of India, and could obtain no tradition of their construction or their origin. They were reverenced by the people as offerings to a divinity they locally worship, but possess no particular value.

At Bangalore I was pressed to stay and act as interpreter to a court-martial about to sit, as, strange to say, no competent linguist was available; but I could not do it without much loss of time, so we pushed on, and finally reached Ellichpur on the 3rd February. We found two infantry regiments, one cavalry, and some artillery, at the station, so that there was no lack of society. I practised my drawing, and began to paint in oils, victimising many friends to sit for their portraits, and finding endless occupation and delight. Thus with military duties, and shooting, and excursions to various places of interest within reach, our time passed pleasantly.

It is not fitting for me here to undertake political discussions, or to comment on the career of the illustrious man who at this time quitted India; but I feel I must add my tribute to his integrity of purpose, liberality of action, and the commencement of that system of progress which is now bearing ample fruit. No more eloquent tribute to a statesman was ever written than that by Mr. Macaulay, engraved on the pedestal of Lord William Bentinck's statue at Calcutta. It contains no flattery, but a simple record of the real motives of the man 'whose constant study it was to elevate the moral and intellectual character of the Government intrusted to his care'. To me individually, and to our service, he had rendered inestimable benefit. I was told a testimonial was to be presented to me for what I had done, but I checked the scheme as soon as I heard of it. There was only one man to whom gratitude could be expressed, and that was the Governor-General. He was succeeded by Sir Charles Metcalfe.

Mr. Palmer's affairs seemed mending. An award was made by Mr. Macleod [1] for a portion of the debt, and twenty-

river, . . . is a healthy and pleasant town with a light annual rainfall and moderate mean temperature' (*Oxford Survey*). Yet the population has been going down from about 50,000.

[1] 'As soon as the dispatch reached India, the Governor-General appointed an umpire, Mr., now Sir John, Macleod, an able member of

four lakhs were paid in, the Nizam advancing most of the money, and the creditors were repaid in full. But the other awards of the civil courts against other debtors, for whom the Nizam's Government was security, were not adjusted; and these, together with the first balance of twenty lakhs upon the great loan, remained to be settled.

The balance was not disputed, and they were left for payment, and still remain unadjusted and due, in spite of many memorials to successive governments, which have been hitherto without effect.

In December[1] I was promoted to the rank of captain, having completed twelve years' service; but I was allowed for a time to fulfil the duties of adjutant.

The following year I began my tale *Confessions of a Thug*. I had never attempted any work of the kind before, and I found it intensely fascinating—the work seemed to grow so rapidly in my thoughts and under my hands, and I enjoyed the sensation ardently. I remember giving the first few chapters to one of my brother-officers to read, and his constant demands for 'more', and his perpetual scoldings for my 'laziness' in writing so slowly, were accepted by me as a high compliment.

Mr. Palmer, too, encouraged me to proceed. He criticised, and commended, and his marginal notes were of great use to me, and often very amusing.[2]

---

the Civil Service, who proceeded to Hyderabad,' etc. (Taylor's *History*, p. 626). Sir John Macpherson Macleod, 1792–1881, was a fellow Law Commissioner with Macaulay.

[1] 1836.

[2] Here may be best inserted a passage from Taylor's preface to the 1873 edition of the *Thug* (Kegan Paul), testifying both to the extraordinary demand for the book when first published, and to the more extraordinary spirit of the fever-stricken, untaught youth (he was not twenty-nine until towards the end of 1837) who wrote it.

'Few authors can perhaps look back so long to their first essay in literary occupation with more satisfaction and gratitude than myself. In 1837, when serving with my regiment at Ellichpur, in Berar—weakened and distressed by repeated attacks of jungle fever—I wrote the Confessions to amuse myself, reclining in an easy-chair, with a board on my knees, for I was too weak to sit up much—little thinking, or perhaps even hoping, that they would ever be printed. I was sent to England to recover; and in 1839 the first edition appeared, published

In 1837 we made a charming excursion to Burhanpur. My old friend Major Sutherland had been appointed Resident at Gwalior, and invited a party to meet him and shoot tigers. It was a very beautiful journey, and I could fill pages with descriptions of all the places of interest through which we passed. I took several sketches at Burhanpur, every street and turning abounding in subjects for the pencil, so that the difficulty was in knowing where to begin.

Burhanpur had been always famous for its brocade weaving.[1] We visited some of the looms, and watched how the gold and silver threads were deftly woven in. But the most interesting part of the work was the making of the gold thread itself, which we followed through all its stages.

A piece of silver about the length and thickness of the middle finger is first gilt several times, according to the value of the thread to be produced. It is then hammered out into a long bar, as it were, and drawn through plates of fine steel, perforated with holes, which are changed each time to one smaller, till the wire becomes as fine as a hair. This is then drawn, two wires at a time, through a still finer plate, over a bright steel anvil by a man who hits each a sharp blow with a steel hammer. Thus the whole becomes a flattened wire of exquisite fineness and ductility, which is then wound on a reel. A long and very thin silk thread, with a spindle at the end, is now passed over a hook in the ceiling, and a man, giving the spindle a dexterous twirl, applies the gold wire to it,

---

by the late Mr. Richard Bentley. The subject was new, strange, and exciting, and at once gained a place in the public mind. No attempt, except in "Pandurang Hari", had ever been made to depict, in a familiar or dramatic aspect, the manners, customs, and thoughts of Indian people, or the scenes in which they live; and more perhaps for this reason, than the recital of the Thug's Confessions, terrible as they are, was the work received with favour, which indeed was little short of fascination. The old editions are now entirely out of print, and have so completely disappeared that it was found impossible to procure one for the re-printing of the present, and I was obliged to devote the only copy I possessed to the purpose.'

[1] Two thousand persons are still supported by this industry at Burhanpur (on the Tapti, Nimar District, Central Provinces). Taylor's *History* speaks of the architecture here as showing 'an appreciation of comfort in fresh air and ventilation foreign to the habits of the present people of India'.

which he runs up as far as practicable. The gold thread thus made is wound upon a reel, and the next length begun. The manual dexterity shown, and rapidity with which the process is accomplished, is very curious. I have never read any description of it, and hence am tempted to make this digression.

We had capital sport and a series of tiger-hunts while enjoying the splendid hospitality of the Resident. One incident occurred which amused us all. I had given up my seat on Major Sutherland's elephant, and my guns also, to another gentleman, as I was disinclined to go out that day, when one of the sirdars came up and asked me why I was not going.

'Oh,' said he, 'take my elephant and see the fun, even if you do not shoot. He is very small, but very easy, and will not jolt you.'

I accepted his offer, and mounted the little beast, on which I sat comfortably astride on a well-stuffed pad. As I passed my tent I called for my sun-hat, and my old tent-pitcher ran out, crying—

'You are not surely going without a gun, sahib? Take mine; I have just cleaned it, and I will load it for you with ball to shoot the tiger.'

This ancient weapon was a French musket of the last century, only known to explode on rare occasions. I had myself seen its owner sitting behind a bush snapping it at a hare which was calmly sitting at a short distance quite unmoved, but he was unable to get it to go off, and when it did, the hare had taken its departure after all. This venerable piece, which had taken part in the wars of Bussy, was brought to me.

'It will kick a bit,' said the old man, as he placed it in my hands; 'but you won't mind that when you kill the tiger.' He then made a salaam to it, patted it, and said to it: 'Do well, my son; you will be with the master'; and we started, I flourishing my weapon, and being not a little 'chaffed' on my accoutrements.

'Never mind,' said I, 'I'll kill the tiger'; but at the same time I had not the smallest intention of discharging the gun at all.

The place was reached—the tiger found. Every one fired—no one hit him. I retired to a piece of waste ground some distance off to be out of the way, when, with a great roar, the tiger dashed forward, ready to spring, within a few yards of my little elephant, which stood like a rock. I fired instinctively, I think, though the recoil nearly knocked me backwards, but the tiger did not move. I told my driver to get off, as he was going to spring, when the man exclaimed—

'He's dead, sahib quite dead!' and as he spoke, the *fierce grim head fell to one side. The old 'Frenchman'* had for once done his duty, and the triumph was adjudged to me.

I had had a very narrow escape, for my little elephant was not higher than the door of a room, and the result must have been terrible had the tiger made his spring.

The hot-weather season was especially trying, and brought back my fever, with severe neuralgia, and I was racked by pain.

'This won't do,' said the doctor. 'You must go away; we can do no more here.'

My wife answered quietly, 'Yes, doctor, we will go'; and so it was settled: and on the 1st November I received my certificate and three years' leave of absence.

Had the old furlough rule still existed, I must, humanly speaking, have died.

We travelled on by easy stages, visiting Ajanta and its marvellous caves, now so well known by photographs, and Major Gill's splendid fresco-paintings, which met so untimely a fate in the great fire at the Crystal Palace.

We also visited the Ellora caves,[1] and the cool air invigor-

[1] The articles on Ajanta and Ellora in the *Imperial Gazetteer* are full of information. But Loti is preferable when attainable. He has a long chapter on 'Les Épouvantables Grottes' (*L'Inde*, 1903) at Ellora, which he had to reach by night in a bullock cart.

'Elles sont consacrées à toutes les divinités des Pouranas; mais les plus immenses sont à Siva, Dieu de la mort. Des hommes, dont le rêve fut terrible et colossal, s'acharnèrent jadis, durant des siècles, à les tailler dans des montagnes de granit. Il en est de bouddhiques, de brahmaniques, d'autres qui remontent au temps des rois Jaïnas. . . . Siva, toujours Siva. . . . Ces éléphants cariatides, alignés pour soutenir les édifices du centre, étonnaient dans ce lieu par leur tranquillité.

ated me, and brought back a feeling of health to which I had been long a stranger. At length we reached Bombay, pitching our tents on the esplanade.

I had been ordered not to proceed direct to England, but to linger in Egypt or Arabia on account of their dry climate, and I set to work to see how this could be effected.

The only steamer about to start was already full, cabin accommodation being very limited. Various schemes were thought of and failed. At last my agents told me one day that an Armenian gentleman had taken his passage on board a large Arab 'buggalow', bound for Mocha, which had capital accommodation, and we could manage well if we took our servants.

We went to see the ship, a large one of her class, about 400 tons burthen. She had come from Batavia, and was going to Mocha, with a light cargo. She had a poop and stern cabin, which occupied the whole breadth of the ship, with a bathroom attached. In front, the cuddy and two cabins—one for the captain, the other for our Armenian fellow-passenger, who, fortunately, spoke Arabic like a native.

We found our servants very willing to go with us, and we laid in our stock of provisions, live stock and liquors, not forgetting abundance of bottled water, several goats, two small tents, carpets and rugs.

Some of our friends thought us very rash, but I argued if a vessel could come safely from Java, she could go to Mocha with a dead fair wind, and we felt no alarm. So early in January [1] we sailed out of the harbour, all things promising us a fair voyage.

. . . Les temples monolithes du milieu étaient polychromes, eux aussi, en leur temps; des nuances comme on en voit à Thèbes ou à Memphis, des blancs, des rouges, des ocres jaunes y persistent encore aux places abritées.'

Mr. Bernhard Berenson has written to me of the frescoes at Ajanta as constituting 'India's greatest pictorial achievement'. He adds: 'I have a weakness for Indian art before say 1200. Since then it has gone from bad to worse, and fallen at last into the lowest degradations of pornography.'

[1] 1838.

MACAULAY AT OOTY

By Sir George Otto Trevelyan, Bart., O.M.

. . . By the evening of the 24th June [1834] he was once more on the road; and, about noon on the following day, he began to ascend the Neilgherries, through scenery which, for the benefit of readers who had never seen the Pyrenees or the Italian slopes of an Alpine pass, he likened to 'the vegetation of Windsor Forest, or Blenheim, spread over the mountains of Cumberland'. After reaching the summit of the tableland, he passed through a wilderness where for eighteen miles together he met nothing more human than a monkey, until a turn of the road disclosed the pleasant surprise of an amphitheatre of green hills encircling a small lake, whose banks were dotted with red-tiled cottages surrounding a pretty Gothic church. The whole station presented 'very much the look of a rising English watering-place. The largest house is occupied by the Governor-General. It is a spacious and handsome building of stone. To this I was carried, and immediately ushered into his Lordship's presence. I found him sitting by a fire in a carpeted library. He received me with the greatest kindness, frankness, and hospitality. He is, as far as I can yet judge, all that I have heard; that is, rectitude, openness, and good-nature personified.' Many months of close friendship and common labours did but confirm Macaulay in this first view of Lord William Bentinck.

'You need not get your map to see where Ootacamund is; for it has not found its way into the maps. It is a new discovery; a place to which Europeans resort for their health, or, as it is called by the Company's servants,—blessings on their learning—a sanaterion. It lies at the height of 7,000 feet above the sea. My bed is heaped with blankets, and my black servants are coughing. I travelled the whole four hundred miles between this and Madras on men's shoulders. I had an agreeable journey on the whole. . . .

'I am very comfortable here. The Governor-General is the frankest and best-natured of men. The chief functionaries, who have attended him hither, are clever people, but not exactly on a par as to general attainments with the society to which I belonged in London. I thought, however, even at Madras, that I could have formed a very agreeable circle of acquaintances; and I am assured that at Calcutta I shall find things far better. After all, the best rule in all parts of the world, as in London itself, is to be independent of other people's minds.'

'If I live, I shall get rich fast. . . . At Christmas I shall send home a thousand, or twelve hundred, pounds for my

father, and you all. I cannot tell you what a comfort it is to me to find that I shall be able to do this. It reconciles me to all the pains—acute enough, sometimes, God knows—of banishment.'

The months of July and August Macaulay spent on the Neilgherries, in a climate equable as Madeira and invigorating as Braemar; where thickets of rhododendron fill the glades and clothe the ridges; and where the air is heavy with the scent of rose-trees of a size more fitted for an orchard than a flower-bed, and bushes of heliotrope thirty paces round. The glories of the forests and of the gardens touched him in spite of his profound botanical ignorance, and he dilates more than once upon his 'cottage buried in laburnums, or something very like them, and geraniums which grow in the open air'. He had the more leisure for the natural beauties of the place, as there was not much else to interest even a traveller fresh from England. . . .

Unfortunately Macaulay's stay on the Neilgherries coincided with the monsoon. 'The rain streamed down in floods. It was very seldom that I could see a hundred yards in front of me. During a month together I did not get two hours' walking.' He began to be bored, for the first and last time in his life; while his companions, who had not his resources, were ready to hang themselves for very dulness. The ordinary amusements with which, in the more settled parts of India, our countrymen beguile the rainy season, were wanting in a settlement that had only lately been reclaimed from the desert; in the immediate vicinity of which you still ran the chance of being 'trod into the shape of half a crown by a wild elephant, or eaten by the tigers, which prefer this situation to the plains below for the same reason that takes so many Europeans to India; they encounter an uncongenial climate for the sake of what they can get'. There were no books in the place except those that Macaulay had brought with him, among which, most luckily, was *Clarissa Harlowe*. Aided by the rain outside, he soon talked his favourite romance into general favour. . . .

'When I was in India I passed one hot season in the Hills; and there were the Governor-General, and the Secretary of Government, and the Commander-in-Chief, and their wives. I had *Clarissa* with me; and, as soon as they began to read, the whole station was in a passion of excitement about Miss Harlowe, and her misfortunes, and her scoundrelly Lovelace. The Governor's wife seized the book; the Secretary waited for it; the Chief Justice could not read it for tears.'

An old Scotch doctor, a Jacobin and a free-thinker, who could only be got to attend church by the positive orders of the Governor-General, cried over the last volume until he was too ill to appear at dinner. The Chief Secretary—afterwards,

as Sir William Macnaughten, the hero and the victim of the darkest episode in our Indian history, —declared that reading this copy of *Clarissa*, under the inspiration of its owner's enthusiasm, was nothing less than an epoch in his life. After the lapse of thirty years . . . the tradition of Macaulay and his novel still lingered on with a tenacity most unusual in the ever-shifting society of an Indian station. —*Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay*, chapter vi.

I never shall forget the three months I passed at Ooty in 1863. I used to think that looking down on the plains, stewing below, must have been like looking down from the floating island in the account of Laputa by Gulliver (*Letter to Editor*).

CHAPTER V

1838

I AWOKE the next morning and went early on deck. How delicious it was, the cool pleasant breeze and the ship rolling lazily along under her enormous sail! The captain, mate, and some others were on the poop, and I was greeted with a general 'salaam alickoom', which I returned, Arab fashion, and we all sat down. Presently the captain's breakfast was brought, rice and fried fish. 'Bismilla, sit down with us,' cried he; 'here we are all one, Arabs and Christians. Thank God! we have got away from those Kafirs of Bombay, who were no better than Hindus! Come, sir, and eat with us.'[1] I did eat heartily, and found the viands very good indeed.

[1] A fascinating monograph might be written, by one with sufficient knowledge of the subject, upon the interactions of Hinduism and Islam. Some of these have taken forms surpassingly strange—none stranger than the devotion to Bhavani on the part of Mohammedan Thugs during at least several centuries. This has been already touched upon in a note on the Dasara festival. In the *Thug* Ameer Ali's sympathetic adoptive father delightfully expounds the muddle which had been made of two faiths. 'I am a Thug, a member of that glorious profession which has been transmitted from the remotest periods, to the few selected by Alla for his unerring purposes. In it, the Hindoo and the Moslim both unite as brothers: among them bad faith is never known: a sure proof, that our calling is blessed and sanctioned by the divine authority. . . . Besides, it is Fate,—the decree of the blessed Alla! and who can withstand it?'

On another occasion Ismail instructs his son as to the origin of 'our profession, which is intimately connected with the faith of the Hindoos, and by whom we Moosulmans have been instructed in the art of Thuggee'. 'This is wonderful; how do you reconcile any connexion between the faith of unbelievers and that of the blessed Prophet?' 'I cannot pretend to solve the difficulty; but as their religion is far more ancient than ours, and no doubt had a divine origin, there are many points in

At noon the mate, to my surprise, brought out a sextant, took the sun's altitude, and worked it out in English figures. He had three chronometers for longitude, and said he would take a lunar for correction in a day or two. All seemed so perfectly regular—for I had checked the calculations—that I was quite satisfied we could come to no harm through bad navigation. We had plenty of air and room, our own servants, and in our Armenian fellow-passenger an intelligent, agreeable companion. He had brought with him large stores of

it which one of the true faith may follow without offence, so that he does not join them in all their forms and professions. Indeed this is impossible, as no one can become a Hindoo [only partly true]; but, as I told you before, Thuggee is one of the means by which Alla works out his own ends,' etc.

In the exchange between the creeds the older, the more intellectual and literate faith has given stronger impressions than it has received. To be sure the veiling of women, nowhere indigenous in India, was adopted in some parts. On the other hand, the Indian reverence for animal life has influenced both Parsis and Mohammedans, so far as to preserve the curs of Constantinople. Vishnu has been confounded to some degree with the Imams. And many Indian Musalmans claim to observe some sort of caste, which would prevent their sitting down, at least under observation, to eat with Europeans.

This point of commensality, of being able to eat together, counts for almost everything in the way of good fellowship and of social intimacy. It makes it possible to chum up with fellow-travellers in a way that Englishmen have always enjoyed doing with Turks and Arabs, and to a lesser degree in India.

Even to the spellings of names, I have not meddled with the descriptions which follow of Arabia and of Egypt lands outside Meadows Taylor's beat, and singularly inferior to India in originality, in variety, in true charm, to say nothing of size. Egypt, nearer to Europe, enjoyed better material conditions than India eighty years ago: Taylor notes that the temples were better built, the dancing girls more accomplished, and remarks on the apparently lavish scale of living among the people. Here again commensality came in to assist intercourse. Save for the ophthalmia, things seemed to conspire to give an enchanted time of rest and change to Captain Taylor, not yet thirty, jaded with the thirteen years of his first stay in India, carrying home with him his first and most brilliant novel. There even seem signs of that unique thing, a cultus of the Red Sea. But by his return voyage the happy balance of circumstances had vanished, and he writes: 'To Suez, down the Red Sea, always hot and uncomfortable'.

In the September of 1838, at the opening of which year Taylor sailed upon his three years' furlough, his future master for a dozen years, General James Stuart Fraser, entered upon his unprecedented period of fourteen years as Resident at Hyderabad.

Armenian beef, which was delicious, and is prepared in this wise.

'Take pieces of lean, but good juicy beef, two or three cubic inches in size, boil them partially, then rub in salt, pepper, and a *soupçon* of onion. Fry in melted butter, or lard, or oil. Put loosely into jars, and pour boiling water over all till the jar is full. The beef will keep for years if closely covered.'

Altogether it was like travelling in one's own yacht, and was most enjoyable. I had told the captain that I belonged to H.H. the Nizam's service, and knew all the Arab sirdars of his court—Abdula ben Ali, Umr ben Uz, and others—and he said I should find their names very useful to me on my journey.

We sailed past Cape Partak, with its grand bold precipices descending into the sea, and its perpetually varying colours and tints. Then headland after headland, all of the same bold type, succeeded, until we cast anchor not far from shore opposite the town of Shahar.

Presently the sheikh left the fort, and his procession looked very gay as it wound down to the beach, where several boats were waiting; they then put off with slow, measured stroke, the rowers singing in chorus as they approached our vessel. The sheikh, a fine old man, courteously invited us on shore and made us welcome. My wife was carried off to the women's apartments, and I conversed with our host, gravely smoking *nargailés* (water pipes) and sipping coffee the while. In the evening he took us to his garden without the town, and after that more pipes and more coffee, till the sun went down, when one of the men cried the invocation to prayer: carpets were spread, and all present performed their devotions. We then took our leave and returned to the ship, the starlight being more brilliant than I ever remember seeing it before.

We continued our voyage next day, having landed our cargo and halted at Macullah. This proved a very picturesque and curious place, lying at the foot of huge mountains dipping into the sea. We went ashore, but the sheikh here was surly and indifferent, and after pipes and coffee we took our leave. The captain told us the sheikh was in a bad humour about the 'Aden affair', and we should soon find out all about it at

Aden, which we reached in due time, casting anchor in the back harbour as the sun was setting.[1]

'I do not see any English ships,' said the captain; 'I wonder there are not some here.'

Next morning he and I landed, and took donkeys to ride into the town. When we came to the barrier fortifications, the guard at the gates refused to let us pass, but eventually allowed us to sit in the guard-room till permission should be obtained from the sheikh for our entrance.

The sheikh himself soon appeared, followed by a numerous company, and sitting down ordered pipes and coffee. I did not like his look or that of his people, who swaggered about stroking their moustaches in a very Hyderabad fashion. I was not noticed; and in a conversation which ensued between the sheikh and our captain, I saw the face of the latter become very grave, and my Arab servant, as he handed me some coffee, stooped down and whispered, 'You must get back quickly or they will seize you.' This was not a pleasant prospect, as the gate was closed and resistance would have been hopeless. I could not understand a word of what was going on. At last I heard 'Nizam' and 'Abdula ben Ali', occurring in the wrangle; and after a while the captain told me I might go, and with a smile the sheikh offered me his hand and bade me 'depart in peace'.

*

[1] There is need to say little about this 'peninsula, isthmus, and fortified town' on the southern coast of Yemen, well known as a part of the Bombay Presidency. According to the *Imperial Gazetteer* the total area is 80 square miles, the population 44,000. 'It is a well-ascertained fact that long residence impairs the faculties and undermines the constitution of Europeans, and even natives of India suffer from the effects.' But a few further extracts will show into what a pretty kettle of fish Captain Taylor fell, sailing from Bombay just when he did.

'In 1829 the Court of Directors thought of making it [Aden] a coaling station, but abandoned the idea owing to the difficulty of procuring labour. . . . The chief soon afterwards committed an outrage on the passengers and crew of a British buggalow wrecked in the neighbourhood; and in *January, 1838*, Captain Haines, on behalf of the Government of Bombay, demanded restitution. It was arranged that the peninsula should be ceded for a consideration to the British. But various acts of treachery supervened; and it was captured in January, 1839 . . . the first accession of territory in the reign of Queen Victoria.'

'Go at once,' said the captain. 'I will tell you all afterwards.'

You may be sure I was only too thankful to make my way back to the ship, and I learned afterwards that my being in the Nizam's service and knowing two of his Arab chieftains intimately, had alone saved me from a very unpleasant detention. The English, said the sheikh, had been intriguing with a member of his family to get possession of the place, and he disapproved of the whole transaction. The English had fired from their ships and killed many people, and he had determined to keep me in irons till an indemnity had been paid.

What an escape I had had! The people were much excited, and but for my Hyderabad friends, I had a poor chance of getting away. I was indeed very very thankful for the great mercy shown to me, and we were heartily glad when the captain weighed anchor and we left the dreary rock behind us.

We continued our voyage to Mocha, where we parted company with our good captain, who transferred us to another Arab vessel commanded by a friend of his, Salim ben Ahmed, son of a rich merchant at Jeddah. At Mocha I found an English agency house, and some officers of the Indian Navy, who scarcely believed that I had visited Aden and had got out of it again. I had been in the greatest danger, for, as soon as a force could be sent, Aden was to be attacked, and my life would surely have been forfeited.

Our new captain was anxious to proceed. We were to sail inside the reefs in smooth water, by day only. It was strange work threading our way in and out of the reefs. The weather was delicious, and every evening we made for some rocky island and were moored to it for the night. We often, in the evenings, took the boat and went out among the islands, occasionally landing to collect the lovely shells which abounded, or we took out our lines to fish, and were generally very successful. Such strange creatures we fished up! Such varied forms and brilliant colours! I began to make a collection of drawings of them, which I afterwards exhibited at the meeting of the British Association at Newcastle-on-Tyne, and eventually presented to the Linnæan Society, for which I received the distinction of being elected an honorary member.

The beauty of the beds of coral on these still evenings was indescribable: they were like huge beds of flowers -pink, red, emerald, yellow, and purple, mingled with grey and brown; and the extraordinary clearness of the water gave us a feeling of hanging in the air which was very strange. We were really sorry when we neared Jeddah, and cast anchor in the harbour. Salim and I had concocted a scheme that I was to leave my wife at his house at Jeddah under the care of his mother, while he and I went to Mecca to see the *haj* (pilgrimage). 'No one will recognise you,' he said; 'you are browner than I am, and I will lend you clothes: we shall do the journey in the night.' So we landed, and next day we were to start. We had, we thought, kept the secret safe; but it had leaked out somehow, and our consul at Jeddah came to me and told me the Pacha had sent for him, and asked him whether I was going to Mecca.

'He will be in danger without a firman from the Sultan, tell him,' said the Pacha, 'and I cannot give one.'

'You had better come and tell the Pacha you will give it up,' said the consul, 'for the gates will now be carefully watched, and you are not safe.'

I saw there was no use resisting, and very reluctantly I went to the Pacha. He laughed heartily when I assured him I would not go, and answered in French—

'I do not care, but others do, and your life would be in peril.'

An English ship lay at anchor in the harbour, and proved to belong to Messrs. Palmer of Calcutta, my wife's relations.[1]

[1] Mrs. Meadows Taylor's uncle, John Palmer, 1767–1836, was only two years dead. He it was who was styled in his day the 'Prince of British merchants', and on his tomb 'the friend of the poor', his bust also standing in the Calcutta town hall. His name was brought up at the opening of 1917 by the death, at a great age, of his grandson, Sir Charles Parry Hobhouse, third baronet, born in Calcutta, January 2, 1825. John Palmer was a much older brother of Taylor's invariably stimulating and beloved father-in-law at Hyderabad. Mr. Buckland, who gives no authorities, but who is priceless upon many an occasion such as this, says that John Palmer left the Navy in 1783 and joined the firm of Burgh, Barber & Co., becoming sole manager as Palmer & Co. 'He had great public spirit, and gave his support to J. S. Buckingham' in a notable contest for the liberty of the press the year before Taylor reached India, but with which he expresses sympathy in his *History*. Palmer died, 'universally respected and regretted', January 21, 1836.

The captain insisted on our coming at once on board, and we lived there most luxuriously for nearly a month. I had little hope of getting on to Suez during the *haj*, and our good friend, Captain Hill, offered to send us on to Tor, at the entrance of the Gulf of Akaba, in the beautiful long-boat, in which a cabin could easily be rigged up by awnings, and which would be under the command of the boatswain; but this plan was frustrated by Captain Hill receiving orders to return sooner than he expected, and the long-boat would not have time to rejoin the ship.

I heard of a good *buggalow* about to sail for Suez. We took our passages in her, and left our kind friends with regret. We intended to land at Tor, go to Mount Sinai, and thence to Jerusalem for Easter.

The morning we sailed I awoke hearing an unusual shuffling of feet and a buzz of many voices. On going on deck, to my horror I found it and the poop both crowded with pilgrims from Mecca, who, the captain said, had been sent on board by order of the Pacha.

In vain I remonstrated, representing that I had taken the whole poop. The captain would or could do nothing, and I told him I should appeal to the authorities at Yembo for redress. On arriving there, I sent my servant to the Pacha, requesting him to come and see the plight we were in. Men and women constantly intruding into our cabin, a frightful crowd, the effluvia and vermin from which were sickening, and quite impossible to describe; added to this, we suffered terrible abuse for being 'infidels', and my wife was afraid to leave her cabin.

The pilgrims lived mostly on dry biscuit, and very pungent bitter cheese. Few only had the privilege of cooking any food; and I very much feared that some frightful epidemic would break out among them soon.

At length a Kavas, one of the Pacha's messengers, arrived, with the servant that I had sent before; he brought a kind message from his master, entreating us to come ashore at once. This was impossible, as we durst not leave our baggage; but the Kavas carried off our captain, who was in a terrible fright, and then returned with a handsome boat belonging to the Pacha, and orders to take us and all our belongings to a

Government vessel, where, he said, the Pacha would meet us in the morning. We were not long in complying with this civility; we once more breathed the fresh air, and the last I saw of the vessel was a scramble among the crowd to get near our cabin and flock into it.

Next morning the Pacha visited us, accompanied by his secretary and staff. He was dressed beautifully, in a costume made of fine brown cloth, with a profusion of braiding of a darker shade of the same colour, and had several decorations on his breast. He spoke French with fluency, and a little English, and nothing could exceed his courtesy and kindness. 'I am afraid to treat this rascal as he deserves,' he said. 'If I had the power, I would have bastinadoed him severely; but he belongs to the English agent at Suez, and I dare not; but I can at least release you from your present uncomfortable position. I will put a crew and Reis on whom you may depend on board this vessel, and you can dismiss them whenever you please. All you have to do is to give them their wages and food, which amount to very little. Take the ship to Tor, and if the wind is against you, you can take her on to Kosseir.' I accepted his kindness most gratefully. That afternoon our new Reis arrived, and early next morning we left Yembo with a handsome present of dates, Turkish sweetmeats, and new live-stock, fodder for our goats, and all we needed, from our kind friend.

I was now my own commander, with a crew of twenty-four men and a pilot. I could go where I pleased, and the Reis proved a good navigator. Yembo, from the sea, was the handsomest Arab town I had yet seen. It is built on the margin of the shore, up a rising ground, and the lines of whitewashed houses had a pretty effect. This town is the port of Medina, and the residence of the provincial governor, and there seemed to be a good number of Turkish troops stationed there. We gave passages, at their earnest solicitation, to a Turk and his wife, who had been with us on our former trip. He was old, and in bad health, and their state was really pitiable. His wife promised to be useful, and proved eminently so during our voyage.

We had a delicious sail up to Tor, between the reefs and the mainland, and at night we made fast to one of the islands,

or cast anchor in shallow water, and then went off in the boat seeking endless treasures in shells, fish, and coral. The colours of the shallows seemed to grow more intense and vivid—of all shades, from the deepest violet and purple blue, to the most brilliant turquoise, emerald green, and red; and as we threaded the often narrow channels the effects were charming. The coast up to Yembo had been comparatively flat and uninteresting, but from thence it grew much bolder in character. Fine headlands were seen in front of us dipping into the sea, and the voyage increased each day in interest, till at length the rocky peaks and precipices of the Jebel Antar range stood out before us, and behind them lay the Gulf of Akaba. In this portion of our little voyage the scenery was very striking, and the atmospheric effects wonderful, as the sun ran its course, and the shadows of the peaks and ravines changed till all was merged in a soft violet tint as evening closed in. We were alone; we saw no fishing-boats or other craft, no sign of dwelling or life upon the shore, which looked utterly desolate and barren in its grandeur. Very grand, too, is the mouth of the Gulf of Akaba, with the range of Jebel Antar to the south, and the far more lofty and imposing mountains of the Peninsula of Sinai to the north. The gulf itself was like a large lake shimmering in the mid-day sun as we entered it, the ranges of mountains on either side being veiled in lovely violet mist.

Very soon the little town of Tor lay before us, and as we anchored, and hoisted our English flag, a boat put off with one likewise flying at her stern; and we found our visitor was the secretary to the English agent, who brought his chief's compliments, and asked what he could do for us.

We ordered pipes and coffee, and sat down to talk.

'If this wind holds', said our friend, 'you can go on to Suez; but if a *shimal* or north wind blows, you may be kept here for a fortnight; the sea is dangerous then for your small vessel.'

'And Akaba?' I asked.

'Impossible,' he answered; 'even the Sultan's firman is at present useless. The Arabs are fighting, and the passes quite closed. You must give up that idea.'

'Well, then, can we get to Mount Sinai, and to Jerusalem?'

'I fear not,' he replied; 'but I will go on shore and ask the sheikh. Perhaps you will come with me?' and I went

The old English agent was very civil, ordered pipes and coffee, and we proceeded to discuss the business, the Arab chiefs having come in.

'You could only do it by yourself,' they said; 'we could not carry you there with the lady: you would not fear a few shots if you were alone. Have you a firman from the Sultan?'

'No,' I said; 'only a passport from the Bombay Government.'

'Ah!' said they all, 'that is of no use; we could not be responsible for any Englishman without one from Constantinople.'

So Sinai was given up, and a *shimal* coming on, the Reis said we could not stay where we were; there was no use in staying the wind would soon moderate, and we could cross over to Kosseir very quickly and safely. So next morning we started with a fresh cool breeze, and we had, at least, the whole of Egypt before us, and the sights that we had to see would be ample compensation for our disappointment.

Our voyage was most propitious; we reached Kosseir very quickly, without touching a rope. On our arrival we found no difficulty in procuring camels; and my servant Abdula, who had been there before, and knew several of the principal people, was a great help to me. We remained on board our ship till all our preparations were complete, and our tents pitched under some date-trees near the town. Then we landed, and walked through the place, once the ancient Berenice, with no trace left now of its former greatness, except the ruins which lay on either hand.

No accommodation for my wife's journey could be devised, except large *kajaveas* or panniers, slung upon a huge camel, with an awning above to keep off the sun; and with soft bedding these were made endurable enough. For myself, I had a camel, and two donkeys in reserve. The Turk rode a donkey, and his wife a camel, on which were all their worldly goods.

So we set out on our first march into the desert which lies between Kosseir and Kench, the old beaten track of Egyptian, Greek, and Roman traders, each in their turn

through ages of the past. My previous idea of a desert was that it would be flat and sandy, but instead our road lay through a hollow, with considerable hills on either side, affording striking and pretty views at every turn. Here and there the valleys were very narrow, and high precipices towered on either hand. Again they widened into lateral ravines, which seemed interminable. In many places the rocks had Egyptian, Greek, or Roman characters carved upon them. Does any one know of these, and of their purport ? [1]

It was not very hot, for the north wind blew cool and fresh, and we could travel all day. I had never left my camel, and towards evening became very tired. I lay down on some warm sand near our tents, and gradually stiffened, to the great alarm of my wife ; but my servant and the camel-men said they would soon cure me. I was turned on my face, and my back rubbed with castor-oil well heated. By this time some large cakes of *dhoura* meal had been prepared and partly baked, and these smeared with oil were bound on my back, the whole length of the spine, and partially covering my ribs. They were almost too hot to bear, but I obeyed orders, and allowed myself to be swathed up like a mummy. Next morning, to my great delight, I had neither pain nor ache ; the remedy, rough though it was, had been effectual.

On the fourth morning we met some men driving camels, and carrying water-melons on their heads—how refreshing they were ! I think I see now our old Turk, whose lips were much chapped by the dry wind, sitting on a stone, intensely appreciative of the large slice I handed to him. A few miles

[1] Though not attempting to annotate the Egyptian journey, it struck me how well it would be if this one question, and another about the good physician who saved Taylor's eyesight at Cairo a few weeks later, could be answered by the first living authority. And here is what Dr. W. M. Flinders Petrie has kindly contributed. I have not consulted the work mentioned, which is out of my reach.

'The Qeneh-Qosseyr road is always known in archaeology as the Wady Hammamat. The inscriptions are of various ages, and have been often published, the most complete record being by J. Couyat and P. Montet, 1914, in *Memoirs of the French Institute of Oriental Archaeology*. This deals with the Egyptian writings, and the later ones have not been completely collected.

'I have not many details about Dr. Abbott. He was American, I believe, but died long before I went out in 1880, I believe before 1864.'

further, from the crest of the pass, we had our first look at Egypt.

It was very beautiful; the cultivation reached nearly to the foot of the descent, of a vivid green, and most luxuriant; wheat, barley, pulse, cotton, and sugar-cane, with fields of yellow and blue lupins in flower, patches of crimson clover, with date-trees, and sycamore, and our Indian *babul*, or mimosa, everywhere.

My Hindu servant cried out, excitedly, 'India! again India! are we come back to it?' No, it was not India certainly, but it was inexpressibly lovely; and our hearts were full of gratitude to God for His goodness in bringing us so far in health and safety. No more rough travelling, no more privation; but instead, a sojourn among glorious scenes of antiquity and beauty which we had longed to see.

A few miles more and we had reached Kench, which seemed exactly like an Indian (Deccan) town, with its clay-roofed terraced houses; and we were taken at once to the house of the English agent, who placed very comfortable rooms at our disposal, and took all the trouble of dismissing my camel-men off my hands.

The house was scrupulously clean, and our friend's wife was a first-rate cook. I remember two dishes in particular—one of quails, fried somehow in vine-leaves, and another of long cucumbers, stuffed with delicately-flavoured mince-meat—that would have satisfied much daintier palates than ours. We often wished to be able to converse with our host, who was a Copt, apparently a merchant, in good circumstances; but the only mode of communication was Italian, of which he knew a very little, so we did not make much progress.

I had some pleasant shooting—quail were plentiful, and I found snipe, too, in the little swamps, so that my bag was generally a good one. One day we sent out our tents a little distance from the town, and had a picnic, spending a quiet, dreamy day under the shade, enjoying the delicious cool wind, the great river flowing past us, and the peaceful scenery beyond. 'You must see Dendera to-morrow,' said our host; and we went, crossing by a ferry-boat, and finding donkeys waiting for us on the other side. We breakfasted at the vestibule of the temple, and then set to work to examine

knew whether we were doing right or doing wrong—we had only acted to the best of our judgment and capacity; but for some time past I had begun to find the Resident very reticent, and apparently unwilling to take further responsibility on himself.

For my own part, I was satisfied I had done my duty to the utmost of my power. I had reported all irregularities and their consequences; I had requested special and detailed instructions as to the wishes of Government, and I had received none beyond what I have already given here. Lord Hardinge was now Governor-General. I wrote to his private secretary, and pleaded what I had already done; showed what further measures I had in view, and their results, for the good of the State, if they were carried out; and left my case in the hands of the Governor-General, awaiting an answer with considerable anxiety.

It came at length, and was unfavourable. It ran as follows:—

'DEAR SIR,—In reply to your letter of the 12th instant, I am directed to state that the arrangements contemplated by the Governor-General for the arrangement of the Shorapur affairs will require the appointment of another agent unconnected with the recent events which have passed in that State, and I very much regret that I cannot hold out any expectations that the retention of your services will come within the scope of the measures now under consideration.'

(Signed) 'C. S. HARDINGE,[1]
Private Secy.

'CALCUTTA, 28*th May* 1845.'

However, I was determined not to let the matter rest here. What I had at first written was in general terms; what I wrote the second time were more particulars referring to the many despatches I had forwarded, in which I had made urgent application for the instructions of Government as to the arrangements of the Shorapur State. This letter, like the first one, was transmitted through the Resident, General Fraser, and he wrote a long despatch on the subject, which, Captain Malcolm informed me, was the clearest and most

[1] Charles Stewart, second Viscount Hardinge, 1822–1894. He was his father's only private secretary in India; and wrote the volume on Hardinge in the *Rulers of India* series.

THE END

Printed by R. & R. Clark, Limited, *Edinburgh.*

HYDERABAD

Scale 1 1000000 or 15 Miles to an Inch

English Miles

0 20 40 60 80 100

DIVISIONS OF HYDERABAD

1 AURANGABAD DIVISION
2 GULBARGA DIVISION
3 GULSHANABAD (MEDAK) DIVISION
4 WARANGAL DIVISION

Railways Canals

Longitude East from Greenwich

The Edinburgh Geographical Institute

John Bartholomew & Son, Ltd

Sincerely yours,
Thurlow Weed