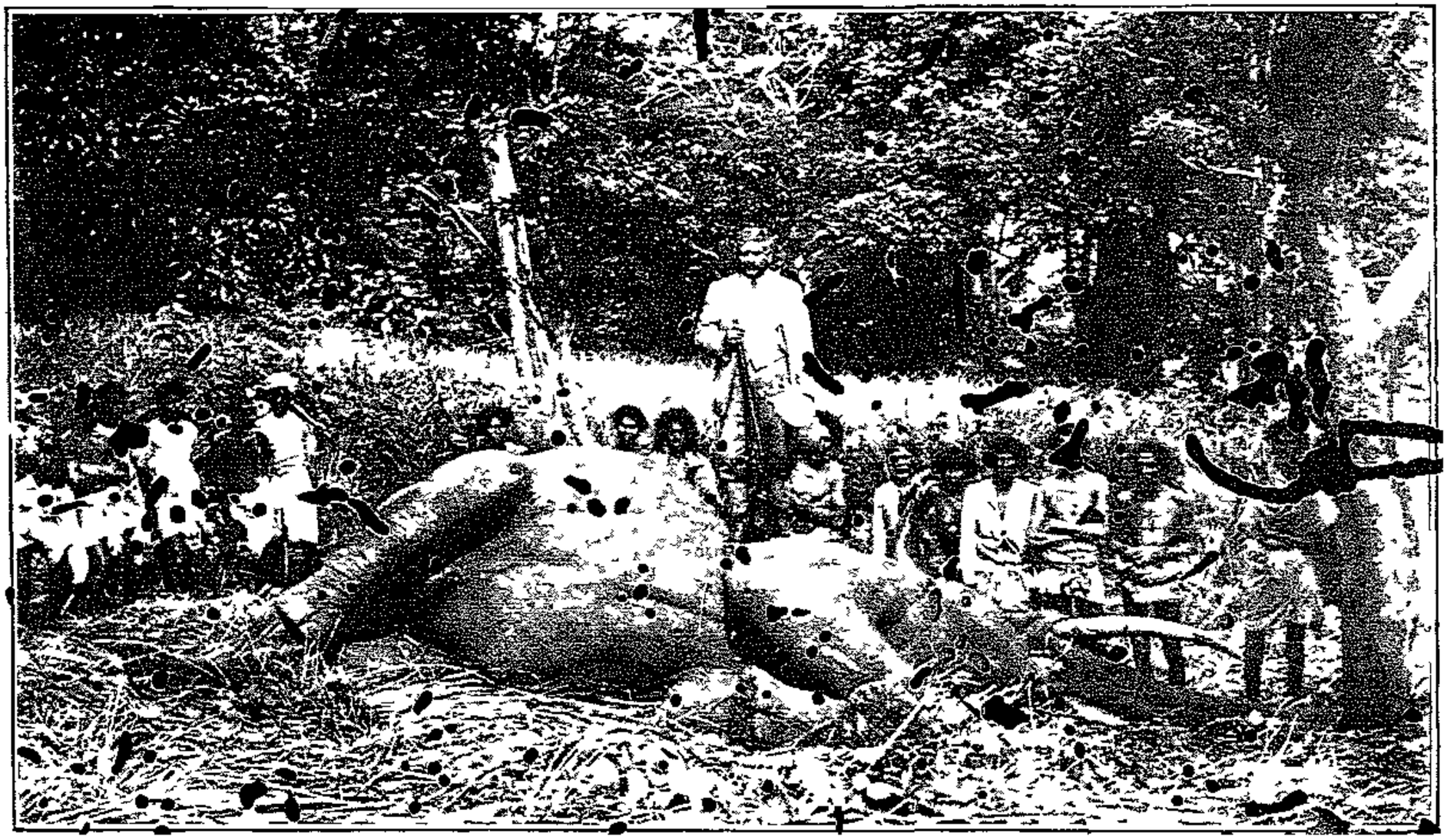

HIS HIGHNESS AND HIS ELEPHANT. *Frontispiece*

In Kerala

A Tour in the Record of India with Their Highnesses the Maharaja and Maharani Gaekwar, June-July, 1915

By

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER IV.

CHAPTER V.

CHAPTER VI

CHAPTER VII.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

[1] *Photo by Willie Burke, Ootacamund.*
Others by courtesy of the Travancore Government.

Days dawn on us that make amends for many,
Sometimes
When heaven and earth seem sweeter even than any
Man's rhymes.
And yet these days of subtler air and finer
Delight,
When lovelier looks the darkness, and diviner
The light—
The gift they give of all these golden hours,
Whose urn
Pours forth reverberate rays or shadowing showers
In turn—
Clouds, beams, and winds that make the live day's track
Seem living—
What were they did no spirit give them back
Thanksgiving?

—SWINBURNE. *The Interpreters.*

IN KERALA

CHAPTER I

Kollengode

We leave Ootacamund: visit Coimbatore and its Colleges: arrive at Kollengode: presentation of prizes at the Raja's High School: the Palaces: hospitality and entertainment: varied music: dances by girls and boys.

June 26.

Yesterday, at Ootacamund, we were in blissful enjoyment of cold winds, wearing the warmest clothes in our possession, cheered by blazing wood fires; to-day, in Kollengode, chasing fugitive breezes, we mop streaming brows. For it is hot here, notwithstanding the heavy rain which hailed our coming, and there is a steamy dampness abroad reminiscent of Baroda, what time the world painingly awaits a delaying monsoon.

Their Highnesses the Maharaja and Maharani Gaekwar have just set out on a tour which commencing with Kollengode, its hills and forests, its elephants and bison, is to continue, through Cochin and Travancore, even to Cape

Comorin in the far distant south. Great traveller as he is, the Maharaja has never yet been able to visit Kerala, land of wonder, of magic, of enchantment; now, opportunity taken by the forelock, full of eager expectation, we go thither by pleasantly easy stages.

Yesterday morning our procession of five motors made its way out of Woodstock's beautiful gardens, while guns boomed in farewell salute. It was raining hard; and the hood and side-curtains of the venerable car in which it was my lot to travel proved no sufficient shield against Nilgiri down-pourings. Their Highnesses led the way in the Rolls-Royce, the second car of that make running down empty, assurance against possible breakdowns. Through Coonoor and Wellington, by sharply curving roads and hair-pin bends, now shadowed by giant peaks, now skirting sheer descents into umbrageous valleys, over and under the line of rail, we travelled to Coimbatore. Long will that journey be remembered, if only for two scenes of rare beauty; the first, the Kateri Falls, swollen by the heavy rain of the past week, leaping with roar and tumult from boulder to boulder, caressed by down-leaning trees on its way, merrily splashing the cars as they

pass; the second, the foaming muddy-brown torrent of the Bhowani river, chafing at restraint of banks or bridge as a horse frets and fumes under the curb; and, in vivid contrast, the green of overhanging branches, the blue of the sky, now clear of all clouds save those which darkly frown on distant hill-tops.

I cannot say that the road was comfortable; the cars jolted and swayed, and we were even as those who affrightedly venture on a stormy sea, fearing the worst, yet stornly looking destiny in the face. At times, indeed, one feared that the best of springs must part, so strenuous were our experiences. The Rolls-Royce is, of course, above the sensation of road shock; but the other, lesser, cars are not.

Early in the afternoon we arrived at a point two miles or so out of Coimbatore, to turn off the main road to the Colleges of Agriculture and Forestry which His Highness had arranged to visit. The latter was not in actual working order, though in location and arrangement admirable enough; but the College of Agriculture was in open session, and received that meed of enthusiastic praise which certainly is its due. We found it staffed with European experts in the several branches, splendidly

equipped as to laboratories and libraries, museum and farm, and everything else to delight the practical student and observer. Quarters too there are for staff and students, quarters for every single being attached, or likely to be attached, to the College, in neat blocks connected by wide roads, and, in the near distance, fine large houses for the superior professorial staff. Here is a dream of the educationist in India on the way to realisation. The College completely self-contained, far removed from contaminating slums, set in the midst of wide spaces, complete—even to hospital and post office. The Principal, Mr. Wood, conducted the party around, both Maharaja and Maharani asking many pointed questions; not all distinguished visitors to a College show such continuously alert interest in work attempted or performed.

Leaving the Colleges, we drove round Coimbatore, not an imposing town, but characterised, none the less, by open streets and well-built houses—of which a large percentage are the habitations of members of the legal profession, if one may judge by the names and degrees of the owners, so prominently displayed for the information of the passer-by. We had little

time for enquiry, were behind our programme. So on to Podanur, passing over another river, full and running in spate; the bridge was under repair, and the temporary erection, with little or no respect for rulers, having vanished in the flood, it became necessary for all to descend, to walk across, the cars following with cautious hesitation. Tea we had in the refreshment-room at Podanur Station—but think not that we fared as ordinary travellers; the far-reaching hospitality of the Raja of Kollengode had so provided that we feasted at ease in a decorated room, china of valuable delicacy for our use, the good things of the earth at our instant service.

From Podanur to Kollengode, sixty miles or so, the motors carry us to the end of the first stage of our journey. The countryside is of a diversity most remarkable, typical Western Ghat scenery alternating with moist, softly green paddy fields, and dignified palm trees, these last recalling slumbering memories of wet Sunday afternoons long ago in England, and of two small boys who lay flat on stomachs, chins in hand, poring over old illustrated books on India, produced on such occasions only from the Rectory library. Approaching our destination

we come close under the grim hills, here and there silver lines of coursing waters standing out in high relief against the sombre background ; we are in a country new, full of invitation, land of the Matriarchate and Missionary endeavour, home of a delightful people.

We come to a toll-bar, to discover that Their Highnesses' car has not yet arrived — universal consternation! They have taken the wrong road at a turning fifteen miles back; but, no sooner is their absence discovered than they come, all is well again. Soon decorated roads make us aware that we are within the Raja's sphere ; we look ahead for signs of the town, at entrance to which we are to halt, that fitting welcome, with all due ceremony, may be offered to the Maharaja and Maharani. Many farms by the road-side, surrounded as to main buildings by high mud walls, with barns and cattle-sheds substantially built, give to the countryside an air of all-pervading prosperity comforting to the eye ; while from the road to the Ghats beyond is nothing but greens of paddy and of tree, and, here and there, touches of red from little house tops.

At last a concourse of people, sounds of music, we have arrived; the cars come to a

halt that the Raja and the local Brahmans may offer the customary garlands and other insignia of greeting; all around surges, respectfully curious, the population of Kollengode in festival temper. The Raja takes a seat in Their Highnesses' car, five towering elephants precede us, very slowly we go on our way, lit by flaring torches, flanked by lofty banners, approved by the gestures and exclamations of the multitude.

Nimbalkar and I had been compelled by a fortunate breakdown to occupy the second Rolls-Royce; this rejoices in a syren road-clearer of peculiar virulence, and in an Italian chauffeur with a sense of humour. The crowd was at its thickest, in its most cheerful mood; with an awe-inspiring howl the syren spoke—screamed piercingly; in horrified dismay the crowd fell back, mothers protectingly snatched at their children, all sought everywhere the cause of this devilish noise; once discovered, there rose from all, from men, women, and children, a gale of laughter, healthy, uproarious, extravagantly delighted.

The scene was at its picturesque height, I was busy storing in mind impressions entirely new, when, suddenly and without

warning, in torrents down came the rain; the motors having been opened, we were drowning, all was in confusion. The procession was abandoned, the crowds disappeared, we speeded to the Palace. A blaze of lights, seen dimly through a mist of rain, stout walls of stone around a shadowy compound indefinite in growing darkness, bring us to a Gate-House. We cross a storm-swept open courtyard to a further block of buildings where, in a pillared room, the ladies of the family offer the Maharaja and Maharani welcome with all the beauty of Eastern ritual.

June 27.

I have been reading a Government publication, and find it fascinating. It is the Malabar Gazetteer; hear what it includes in an account of the local Land Revenue system and its origins:—

"... the taxes upon which the Hindu Rajas depended for their revenues between the date of the departure of the last of the Perumals and the Mysorean invasion. Many of them were not so much taxes as feudal rights and prerogatives. The Raja levied customs duties upon exports and imports, and taxes

upon the houses of fishermen, tradesmen, and professional men. Criminal fines went to fill his coffers, and succession duties were levied upon the estates of deceased persons, especially those who held offices or rights over land. Outcaste women were a two-fold source of profit. They were made over to the Raja with a premium as compensation for looking after them, and they were sold by him as slaves or wives to Chettis. The estates of persons who died without heirs were escheated; nor could an heir be adopted without the Raja's consent, given of course at a price. Protection fees under various names were levied from dependants and strangers, and customary presents were his due on occasions of feast or funeral. Wrecks were his perquisite, and various animals his monopoly. Among such animals may be mentioned cows with three or five dugs, cattle that had killed a man or other animal, cattle with a white spot near the corner of the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants caught in traps, and wild hogs that had fallen into wells."

Or again, listen to the Gazetteer on the subject of our noble host, the Raja, his position and privileges :—

"Kollengode is the seat of the Venganad Nambidi whose family claim descent from an ancient Kshatriya Raja named Vira Ravi. The name Ravi Varma is accordingly still affixed to the names of all the male members of the family. Their former dominions

comprised eight amsams in or near Kollengode, and were eventually absorbed by the Zamorin when he conquered Naduvattam . . . . In this temple (Kachâmkurissi) . . . . all the Nambûdris of Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore, have to receive from the senior member of the Venganad family as preliminary to the performance of a sacrifice, the moon plant, the skin of a black buck, and a piece of wood known as 'karinkalli' (*Mimosa catechu*). The Valiya Nambidi holds this right as the representative of Gandharva and in virtue thereof is prohibited from walking barefooted. He also has the right of entering the Srikoyil of any temple, and of eating with Brahmins, though he does not wear the punul. These privileges are supposed to have been conferred by Parasu Rama with the title of Nambidi, which is borne by the two senior members of the family."

Now, having read what the Gazetteer has to say of the Raja, consider the fact that he bears his title as a personal distinction, that he is, or has just ceased to be, a member of the Legislative Council of the Governor of Madras, that he works continuously and successfully for the good of his estate, that he speaks excellent English, and is in every way a man of achievement and personal charm; contrast these things with what the Gazetteer has to say of his position; you will agree with me that between his present attributes and those of his ancestors,

there is a striking contrast—and yet, the Raja is exactly what his predecessors have been in relation to the Nambudris of the South, and doubtless fulfills his functions towards them with the same conscientious devotion that he has shown in taking part in the work of a Legislative Council. India is a land of contrasts, indeed; a perpetually interesting problem involving a meeting between ideals of East and West confessedly impossible, yet in a sense, a paradoxical sense, proven possible in experience.

The family estates extend over 100 square miles of arable land, and 150 of forest, and hills, the latter the home of a considerable tea and coffee industry, the Raja having five European planters as tenants.

The town consists of two straggling streets whence branch off, here and there, many mysterious lanes, avenues of approach to secluded homes; a large tank forms the centre, where this morning I watched an industrious mother vehemently washing her small, and most unwilling, son, while close by graceful women performed their ablutions, not at all abashed at distant observation. Prosperity is evidenced as much by the well fed, well clothed

appearance of the people, as by the neatness and orderly arrangement of houses and gardens.

But without doubt, it can rain in these parts. The lofty walls surrounding all considerable habitations, securing a most jealously guarded privacy, are moss-grown, oozing dampness to eye and touch ; the fields are, to-day at any rate, miniature irrigation tanks from which numbers of attractive little women, smilingly inquisitive, look up for a moment as the cars pass along the road, to speculate on the nature of these strange visitants, to rest the while limbs cramped with toil.

Yesterday morning, quite early, we were to have visited the locally famous temple of Kachamkurissi, but heavy rain caused the abandonment of the idea ; instead Their Highnesses explored the Palaces, old and new, and the Guest House, all separate, yet connected one with the other by covered ways, or open courtyards. Beyond the inner enclosure, in the outer grassy space which high walls protect from the inquisitive beyond the pale, stood the five elephants we had already met; at hand, huge balks of teak for use in the performance to be given by the mighty beasts, to be lifted, balanced, and carried, at word of command.

The skies having cleared, we went out to view, to be interested, to bring cameras into action.

While the Maharaja and Maharani were at breakfast—on this occasion a meal after the Malabar fashion—they were entertained by a famous exponent of the Veena, one Chitth Sabisan from Mayavaram.

Later in the morning the Collector of Malabar, Mr. Innes, called, followed by the Madras Director of Public Instruction, Mr. Duncan, the Sub-Collector, Mr. Hall, the Additional District Magistrate, Mr. Row, and the Head of the Sanskrit College at Pattambi, Punnesseri Neelakanta Sarma, also referred to as 'one of the leading Ayurvedic Physicians of Malabar.' After tea, all moved on to witness, or take part in, the important engagement of the day, the distribution of prizes by the Maharani to the proud girls and boys of the Raja's High School, an adequate building, shaped L-wise, glowing red in a sea of surrounding green. Full to overflowing with pupils and guests full too, to the brim, with enthusiasm and pleasure, the little school house was a memorable sight as small boys, excellently drilled, handsome and well-built, came forward to recite in English, Malayalum, and Sanskrit; to be followed by

pretty sisters, in the garb reserved for high days and holidays, who sing songs of welcome with daintily dignified gestures and swayings. Then Her Highness, with a smiling graciousness all her own, gave away prizes to those who had excelled, including one to our host's own daughter. On the dais with Their Highnesses, were the Dewan, the Collector, the Raja, and the Director.

The Head Master's Report, after giving an account of the School, its fortunes, and its present position, academic and financial, referred to the visitors whom the School delighted to honour as follows :—

"We, the teachers and students, take this opportunity of according a very hearty welcome to Your Highnesses on the occasion of your visit to our school. We feel proud that to-day we add to the distinguished galaxy of our visitors one who is the ruler of one of the most enlightened of Native States in India, and who has acquired a world-wide fame on account of sterling merit and many noble qualities of head and heart. We are specially proud of the presence of Her Highness the Maharani Saheb at to-day's function. We wish Your Highness a happy sojourn in this place, and hope you will both

carry away pleasant recollections of your visit to this Institution and to the Vengnad country."

His Highness, in reply, made a short, but none the less effective speech, received with much applause. He said :

"RAJA SAHEB, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—

It has given me the greatest pleasure to be able to accept the Raja Saheb's kind invitation to preside at this prize distribution to-day. The Head Master has said some extremely kind things about me. I wish I could feel that they were deserved. Yet I may claim the possession of a deep and lasting interest in the cause of Indian education, and you may be sure that to hear of the good work which has been, and is being done in this High School gives me the greatest pleasure. If there is one thing more than another of importance to the future of India it is the development of education, and the widening of its scope. I congratulate you, Mr. Head Master, on the excellent report you have been able to give of the School's progress.

May I further say what a pleasure it has been to me to make the acquaintance of your Raja. It is a sign of happiest augury for our country to find one of her leading noblemen

so deeply and personally interested in forwarding her moral and material interests. I have congratulated the Head Master on the steady progress shown in his Report; I must further, most sincerely and emphatically, congratulate the School and people of Kollengode on the possession of a Raja of such personal charm, whose marked gifts and attainments are so constantly devoted to their advancement.

On behalf of Her Highness, I thank you very much for your kind reference to her. We are both delighted with what we have seen of Kollengode, her Raja, and her people. We wish you all possible prosperity, and shall ever retain most pleasant memories of the kind reception given us today."

Followed votes of thanks, garlands, and flowers, cheers for Their Highnesses, and singing of the National Anthem; followed too, dramatic and touching, a call for "three cheers for our gallant soldiers at the Front" from the Raja, responded to with heartily sincere enthusiasm.

A little school-house in a comparatively small, far distant Indian town; just such an essentially Indian gathering as the perverted Teuton would expect to manifest violence of hostility to the British cause; and

three cheers, full of spontaneity, for those fighting "our" battles.

So we return to the Palace. A most interesting building of essentially Indian design; in the architect's mind, I am sure, not a single disturbing element of Westernism to rob his work of its characteristic charm. An outer house of two stories whence, in less settled days, watchmen kept ward over ingress and egress, privacy, if desired, obtained by the closing of wooden shutters, but otherwise open to all the winds that blow, used now as a place of reception; across an open court the old Palace may be reached, which only the privileged by birth may enter, from which, in these days, come much sound of music, many voices of merry childhood, a deal of laughter and singing. Its ceilings are supported on massive teak beams, flawless, everywhere adorned by the carved snake symbol, the hood wide displayed as in act to strike; its rooms have square platforms of polished stone, a vantage ground whence master or mistress may address retainers seeking orders standing below. I may not enter the Old Palace, home of the Household Gods; for me there is need to cross the courtyard towards the inner wall to pass

through a gateway into another, larger, court, to enter the New Palace, similar in design to the Old, yet larger, more ornamental. Here Their Highnesses are housed, while we, of the suite, are provided for in the Guest House adjoining, reached by a tapestry-hung veranda. The Maharaja and Maharani receive visitors and watch entertainments in an outer Hall of Audience, a spacious room of wood and stone, a low wall separating it from the courtyard on two sides, passages running through it at plinth level, below the raised platform, a solid block of black granite, hauled with difficulty from distant forests by the united labours of four elephants, and a hundred times four men. Here too, teak pillars support a shaped roof, and everywhere, on pillars, doorposts, cornices, and capitals, quaint carvings inspired by Puranic legends. Pass through the door which gives entrance to the Palace proper. You will come to a galleried square, in the centre a deep receptacle for water, forming as well a most desirable bathing pool; opposite, a flight of stairs, curiously carved, cunningly shaped, leads to the living rooms above; on your right, in deep shadow, there is a recessed room, smaller, but of similar

design, to the outer Hall. Go further, through yet more doors, still other galleried squares; you arrive at last at the service arrangements, there to see, with a gasp of delighted astonishment, a gaudy peacock sunning himself in splendour on a carved railing, a Byam Shaw illustration to the Arabian Nights.

In the open, at the removed end of the Palace, is the tank, screened from gaze; for, in it all members of the family, without exception, without regard for the seasons, must daily immerse themselves, failing which ceremony, duly performed, a bath is no bath, has no purifying power. More than this, all families must have their own private burning ground, for to the dead, as to the living, privacy is all; the rule has it that the tank shall be in the north-east, the burning ground in the south-east, of the compound.

A curious relic of olden time is the regulation, customary but none the less binding, that every compound shall preserve a patch of jungle which may not be disturbed, a reminder perhaps of the days when the family would seek for itself an isolated home, build it up in the jungle, there to struggle for existence; and in this reservation the snake is sacred; has set

there, in threatening granite, an image of itself.

The people of Malabar do not erect their houses with that excessive economy of space which characterises our towns and cities. The humblest of cottages has here some pretence at a surrounding compound, in which the daily ritual may be observed in accordance with ancient practice; in which, too, will always be found, in the centre, the plant of basil: the sacred *tulsi*. The Hindu of Malabar, of gentle birth and ancient lineage, like the proud Roman of old, has an inherent love of space and open air; as his classical prototype built his villa on four sides of an open courtyard, the *impluvium*, so does he erect his dwelling.

Another quaint piece of information comes from the Malabar Gazetteer: one has frequent cause to admire the warm touches given to the landscape by the ever-present red roofs; this would not have been possible in other days, for the use of tiles was then a sumptuary privilege of temples, and of the higher aristocracy:—

> It was a special favour that permission was given to the English merchants at Calicut by the Zamorin to tile their factory.

After dinner last night, in the room I have called, lacking a better title, 'The Hall of Audience', the Maharaja and Maharani were entertained with music by the ladies of the Raja's family. It is not given to all to appreciate Indian music; but there are few of any taste who would not have yielded to the enchantment of the performance of the daintily accomplished relatives of our host, as they played and sang to us. Nor did the charm lie only in the music. Dimness of lights, flickering shadows playing on walls and pillars, whence dream-like figures of Oriental allegory stepped from their wooden retreats, to live, and move, and have being; flowing draperies of white, graceful arms of bronze, dignity in all enjoyment; brooding melancholy in sound and surroundings. We were at vast distance from the routine of experience, from modernity, from materialism, removed magically to the India of legend, of heroes.

This morning, in the freshness of the early hours, we visited the Sitagundi Falls, where in ancient days, fair Sitasat and talked with Rama. Motors took us a part of the way, chairs borne by lusty porters the rest. A beautiful spot, picturesque and romantic.

And this afternoon, a miracle. For years I have utterly loathed and abhorred the sleep-banishing tom-tom, with all its hideous accompaniment of trumpet, horn and cymbal; suddenly I have been converted to a belief that they may sometimes be attractive. For the delectation of his guests the Raja had arranged what the official programme calls a display of "different kinds of tom-toms peculiar to Malabar." Comes forward in the courtyard a group of men, forms a semi-circle, the tom-tom expert in the centre; a sustained crescendo, from the longest horn ever made commences the concerto; four or five bars later, the tom-tom performer, who has meanwhile been fondly fingering his instrument, sweeps his right hand round a full circle, strikes it with a resonant thump, sending vibrating echoes the length and breadth of our world; his companions join in with bangings and tappings, their fingers protected as to the tips by silver thimbles, while yet others shriek piercingly through brass, bellow from horns, bending and genuflecting the while. The attraction, I become increasingly convinced, is due to lack of monotony. The listener shrinkingly steels

himself to receive, Spartan-wise, an ear-fracturing bang: come instead gentlest of caressing taps; lured to inattentive reflection by succession of murmuring sounds, he is suddenly made to bound from his seat by horrifying storms and lightnings. Perversely attractive, perhaps, but not to be recommended for chamber concerts.

Follows a more restrained performance, this time by a vocalist, a fine-looking gentleman, *with a distinctly good voice, judged by any* standard; but its effect spoilt for me by unscientific production, by the straining of vocal chords, by distortion of throat, by all the symptoms of excessive effort.

June 28.

This morning we enjoyed a rare experience. Arrive from schools in the town some jolly little boys, some fascinating little girls, to give of their best for our amusement. The girls first, as is their due, shyly mount the dais, and to the accompaniment of a portable instrument of torture called a harmonium—O, my country, you have much for which to answer—clash of cymbal, and beat of drum, go through a series of complicated dances without faltering, rather

with absolute perfection of grace and gesture. One in particular, the smallest, took my captivated fancy ; a tiny figurine from Tanagra, bangled as to wrists, strings of antique gold coins round her neck, miniature jacket of pink silk, flounced skirt of gauzy whiteness, glossily shining hair, aigrette surmounted, eyes of penetrating lustre,—and the whole not three feet high. Again and yet again, not once, but many times, would we see that dance.

The boys were a delight also. As was proper to their sex their doings were martial ; with small sticks, beating one on the other, they attack and counter-attack ; they wheel, and whirl, again to attack and counter-attack ; and, all the time, the steady, insistent, drum. Add as background a tapestry-hung room, teak-pillared, curious, quaint ; dignified yet approving spectators ; and without, sunlight flooding a courtyard flanked by ancient, white-faced, buildings, scene of so many other and similar doings in the years that are gone.

Now we make ready for the journey to the Hills, for the good sport there, we devoutly trust, to be found. Theobald, from Mysore, hunter of fame, Vithal Rao and Hakim, from Baroda, shikaris tested and proven, have joined

ts; rifles have been over-hauled, cartridges seen and approved; the Raja, prodigal always in hospitality, has erected villages for our reception, and five hundred of his men have been busy for weeks making straight for our feet the crooked places. It has stopped raining, and the sun shines cheerfully on a verdant world; trackers are on the heels of elephants which they declare are yonder in the forests in abundance. All is hopeful anticipation.

CHAPTER II

The Anamalis—Elephant and Bison

We depart for the Hills: the village called "The Hunters' New Home": the photographer and his conveyance: a picturesque stream and ferry: the Thekkadi Camp: the hunters depart: elephants are sighted: and killed: the Maharaja's good shot: congratulations and rejoicings: a Kadir village: snakes and scorpions: we move Camp: Her Highness shoots a bison.

June 28.

We have arrived at "the home of the elephant," for such is the interpretation of Anamalis as are called the hills wherein is pitched our camp. It conveys but little to say we have arrived; needs must I dwell on some details of a journey full of incident and memorable experience.

We left Kollengode this afternoon in the motors, their Highnesses leading the way in the Rolls-Royce, their host seated with them, Shamrao in attendance; the rest followed in cars not so impervious to shock, to sustain a spine-torturing shaking over thirty miles of pot-holes and ravines, and other refinements of the

roadmaker's art. Somewhat I exaggerate, for the way was not all bad. Allow something for the aches and pains which still possess me as I write.

At a village bearing the appalling name of Vettakavenpudhur, which we discover, however, to be one of good omen for our expedition, to mean "the hunters' new home," we halt to give the good folk of the district the opportunity of a glimpse of Their Highnesses for which they had petitioned. Clean swept roads, neat houses of solid construction, red-tiled, green-gardened; stalwart man, fair women, and handsome children in attentively silent crowds; green of the fields extending towards the yet deeper green of forest-covered foot-hills; still higher, blacks and browns of bare rock, jagged peaks, sharp cut against a brilliant background of infinitely blue sky. A genuinely hearty, yet entirely reverent, greeting, set in a perfect scene.

We come to Settumada, to have tea in the Forest Bungalow, to take manjil and chair, to proceed, swaying on the strong shoulders of the lusty men of Kollengode, our complaisant carriers. The manjil is best described as a hammock suspended to a long pole; cautiously

you stretch long limbs thereon; if, in your ignorance, anxious to see something of the passing show, you attempt to raise your head, the pole salutes it with stunning effect; if, on the other hand, you remain recumbent, you either slumber the happy hours away, as did our Doctor, or cramp seizes you. In the acquirement of the manjil habit, long experience and a natural aptitude are necessary. Possessing neither, I speedily abandoned the conveyance, preferring to walk, as also did Nimbalkar, and—when he had succeeded in compelling his carriers to a halt—Burke, the photographer. The plight of the latter was a great amusement to us, obviously not so to him. Having selected—as he thought with great cunning—an ancient chair, bound by the ends of its legs to bamboo poles, he led the way, high above the heads of his carriers, and of us who admired, even as the idol is taken in procession through village and town by the devout. The track was greasy from recent rain, the porters slipped and staggered under their burden of artistic genius; in endearing terms Burke appealed that they should use more care, go slowly—all to no purpose, for they understood him to be urging them on to fresh exertion,

hurried the more, the pathos of his adjurations becoming every moment more urgent.

A wonderful, if difficult walk. Eight miles of climbing, now steep, now easy, through glades shaded by bamboo and teak, along sandy water-courses, to rise high, to descend sharply, to rise again, brought us at evening to a mountain-stream, crossed on a ferry of bamboo branches, the ferryman hauling on a rope of cane made fast to tree trunks on either side the water. It was a pretty picture. A swiftly flowing rivulet, twenty or thirty feet across, boulder dotted; leisurely little men, carriers and porters, staying in mid-stream to enjoy to the full the coolness so grateful after the heat of the way; and, bending to kiss the surface, shadowy thickets of bamboo, most graceful of grasses. On rising ground close by is the camp of Thekkadi, in its centre a picturesque little chalet for the Maharaja and Maharani; the walls are covered with rich silks, mud floors are concealed by carpets of price, lamps are generously shaded, all is comfort and convenience; and all made by the Kadirs, the people of the Hills, from bamboos, with no other tools than bill-hook and mallet, their work, of course, supplemented by necessary provision of decorations and

furniture. And, *mutatis mutandis*, the same arrangements for the Staff, housed at a little distance in a series of huts, side by side.

Theobald is discussing the art of the hunter with Their Highnesses; a dinner of excellent savour has been enjoyed; in the verandah, under spirals of fragrance from cigar and cigarette, tales of derring-do pass from chair to chair; beyond, in those dimly-outlined hills, are elephants—the imagination dwells on the idea.

June 29.

A great day, to be heavily red-lettered in memory, the day of the killing of elephants, of the breaking of a record; for I dare swear that our Maharani is the first in history to stalk and kill an elephant—and on foot.

The morning dawned fine and clear, with wonderful colour effects on the trees and surrounding hills which environ us as in a cup the edges of which have here and there been broken. Curtains of vivid green high above tell of forest clearings in which, at times, with powerful binoculars, it is possible to see from distance elephants or bison in herds.

The trackers were in very early, quaint little bushy-haired men, aboriginal of type, with a

genius for their work. Distant howls one heard all night were signals from trackers on watch over the elephants to others stationed lower down, transmitting the information that the three tuskers which have been marked down for weeks are still those within reach.

Instant were the preparations, all was soon in readiness, and Theobald without delay led the line across the ferry, and on to the mysterious depths of a tropical forest. The Maharaja and Maharani started in manjils, to walk very soon, escorted by the Raja, who had never before penetrated so far into his family estates. More than that he is the first of his family to visit his forests.

Some of us, at starting, experience an unwonted quivering of nerves as we look ahead to the heights where dwells Behemoth, whom we dare audaciously to beard in his own retreat. Except Theobald, none of us know more of elephants than is gained from occasional visits to a circus, or the contemplation of them when tamed and submissive. But we have all read; and, for myself, the reading of the fearsome deeds of rogues has increased a respect for them already uncomfortably great.

In and out of clumps of feathery bamboos, whose cracklings in the morning breeze remind of the crashing charge or retreat of the forest monarch we are to meet; up and down steep —eks, where the bare-footed Mulsers and Kadirs are at an advantage over us booted people, who ever slip and skate as we go; by the edge of rippling streams, past deep pools smiling in sunlight, or silent in shade, the trees concealing nymphs and goddesses whose toilet our passing has disturbed; on—and on—and then suddenly a halt. The non-combatants are to wait here until further orders, Theobald having all the hunter's contempt for mere men of peace, insisting, for instance, that a camera is not a desirable adjunct to the stalking of wild beasts. As no one knows what dreadful fate may overtake him who disobeys, even Burke consents to be left behind here; the group, as it stands disconsolate under the relentless gaze of Nimbalkar, a grim warrior with rifle over arm, is suggestive of the Arena, of timid captives, centurion-guarded, awaiting the order, "throw them to the elephants."

The rest of the party go on slowly, for the way is not easy, until another halt is ordered some two miles from the first; by this time

excitement has become painfully intense. A short whispered consultation between Theobald and trackers, a warning passed round against any kind of noise, and our mentor moves stealthily forward, to be swallowed up immediately by the tall elephant grass and the ever present bamboo. We wait—and wait! Several eternities later—perhaps about five minutes—a little tracker suddenly appears from nowhere, rises from the ground, as it were beckons us on; stealthily we proceed, counting heart beats as we go, Their Highnesses leading. Theobald meets us, we halt; he has viewed the elephants, and now makes his final dispositions. The Raja and his attendants wait here; the Maharaja and Maharani, with Theobald, Hakim and Vithalrao, followed by gun carriers and shikaris, go on. Cautiously the party follows the trackers; no one speaks, to breathe is almost a sin, a stumble would, without doubt, be a crime of deepest dye; the moment approaches. Theobald, who leads, halts, beckons the Maharaja, and points; presently the Maharani joins them, and after her the rest. There are the elephants, three of them. One a swart majesty, glistening from recent bathing, nobly tusked, stands between two

smaller, but sufficiently large, companions. At a guess they are eighty yards away, almost at the summit of the hill we have been painfully climbing; hidden from us by the high grass save for heads and shoulders, with leisured dignity, they are strolling forward, feeding as they go. Suddenly signs of uneasiness appear, they have heard or scented enemies, or some wonderful instinct has told them of lurking danger, three trunks are raised in air, feeling for information. A tracker whispers to Theobald, who passes the information on; the big fellow is a tyrant of the hills, a rogue, with man-murder against him; wanton in destruction he has killed two of the Raja's men a few days back; doubtless his companions will develop the same tastes if they keep his company.

Foot by foot, inch by inch, with hunter's caution and skill, Theobald takes his charges nearer and nearer the elephants now below, until, at long last, the Maharaja is but thirty yards from his quarry, the Maharani a pace behind him. Follows again a period of nervous waiting for those who watch. Suppose the shot misses, suppose all three view the party and charge—suppose a hundred and one things. The Maharaja raises his ·500, takes

aim, we listen for the report, watch the elephant, hardly breathe; but the mark is not good enough, the rifle is lowered, His Highness joins the Maharani, the rest of us waiting and watching close at hand. Again the rifle is raised, again lowered; the huge beast half-conscious of hostile presences has again moved. At last the time comes, the rifle is rested against a convenient forked bough, a shot rings out, disturbing a thousand echoes, frightening a thousand birds. The rogue, his race run, staggers, falls, rolls over on ponderous side, the loudly rustling grass falling in swathes under him, struggles, and—is dead. The Maharaja had aimed true, his bullet entering the brain through the ear-hole. Her Highness, firing at the smaller beast, a second or two after the Maharaja's shot had sounded, hit him, but did not kill at once, it requiring a second well directed bullet to send him, boating the grass under him like some gigantic reaper, dying down the hill. It was not easy to follow him, for the jungle was thick and steep, all but impenetrable; we found him later, stiffly suspended in most extraordinary fashion across the trunk of a tree which bridged a small ravine, densely covered by bamboo.

I need say nothing of the congratulations and rejoicings ; nor need I tell of the gratitude of the forest dwellers, picturesquely expressed in voice and gesticulation, relieved of an ever-present terror to their goings and comings by night and by day. The mighty has fallen, the evil doer, the murderer, has met with fitting punishment, has been laid low. Burke, breathing as one who finishes a three-mile race, so fast has he come, rushes up, his cameras snapping like miniature machine guns ; and the Maharaja is photographed in approved style, standing on the enemy which, stuffed and set up, is destined to excite the wonder and admiration of the citizens of Baroda whenever they go to the Museum, to tell them and their children of the prowess of their ruler with the rifle.

All has been perfect, the skill of the hunters undeniable, the watchful care of our host all providing. We return, well satisfied with the fruits of our labours, to feast right royally, toasting the Maharaja, the Maharani, and the Rajkumar who is, I am convinced, more delighted with the success of his guests, than if it had fallen to his own lot to bring the elephants down. Measurements taken return the big rogue as standing 10·6 at the shoulder, while

his tusks weigh 97 pounds : Her Highness's elephant stood just under 9, with tusks smaller in proportion.

June 30.

The weather remains delightful, occasional showers, and the floating masses of vapour which now and then veil the tops of the peaks, alone reminding us that this is the Monsoon season. Early this morning the Dewan and I accompanied Theobald to the scene of yesterday's exploits. He had to go to give orders to his skinners, and, in a moment of rashness, I said I would go too. It certainly was a splendid walk, sometimes a crawl, even as yesterday's was ; but we were quicker to-day, having no stalking to do. A curious thing in these jungles is the number of rounded black rocks, isolated in the midst of the jungle, at first sight for all the world like the rounded back of an elephant in the distance ; modesty—or is it vanity?—prevents my relating how often I suddenly stayed my steps at sight of those rocks, thinking that my dreams were to come true after all, that I was to be chased headlong by a rogue. And then, after familiarity with this experience had hardened my heart,

and I had begun to survey the scene with the calm eye proper to the bold pioneer, we actually did come across an elephant! . . . It was tame—but how was I to know that?

We got wet through, saw some delightful scenery, had some splendid exercise, and acquired a keen edge to already sufficiently satisfactory appetites.

This afternoon we visited a neighbouring Kadir village, our unexpected arrival causing a flutter in many a bamboo hut. Simple unaffected people, these Kadirs of the forests and hills, the men clad in rude toga and breech clout, the women, comely enough, usually nude above the waist, but at sight of the strangers concealing their charms hastily. Willingly enough the population consent to be photographed, the shy emerging from thôir retreats at call of the more bold. They must suffer much from malaria, these dwellers in damp forests, and the doctor, medically inquisitive, finds a very high percentage of enlarged spleens amongst the children. In the centre of the village stands a larger building—the translator called it 'the club'—in which sleep, under guard of the elder men, the village bachelors, presumably that the hot

blood of youth may be under duo restraint; here too are entertained the communal guests. Most of the men I saw were married; they are easily distinguished by the fact that the middle top teeth have been chipped away to a sharp point with chisel and mallet—a rough and ready way of encouraging men to marry. Surrounding the village are deep elephant pits. To be thus trapped must be an uncomfortable experience for the elephant, for he falls head-first, and is left there till quiet enough to be hauled out in comparative safety It must be an interesting operation to watch from a distance.

In the intervals of forest tramps the camp is the scene of some measure of occasional excitement. Yesterday a six-foot cobra was caught and killed in the act of trying to make itself at home in Theobald's bed; a snake skin has just been discovered by the perturbed Nimbalkar on the floor of his bath room; and a scorpion of extraordinary dimensions was obliterated a few minutes ago in the verandah. These however are but ordinary incidents; even the watchful care of our noble host cannot have the success which attended Saint Patrick where snakes and scorpions are concerned. But—I have

given strict orders as to the examination of my hut and its contents before I enter it to-night? When reptiles are added to rogue elephants!—

July 2. Kachithody.

The party left Thekkadi yesterday morning, very early, a caravan of manjils and chairs, furniture and baggage, kitchen supplies and cartridge boxes, guns and bath tubs, porters, gun-bearers and trackers. A beautifully fine morning again pointed the truth of the assertion that, as to weather, Their Highnesses are royally fortunate. A journey of five miles or so, through typical forest scenes comparatively open, brought us to this new camp, laid out with that attentive care which distinguishes everything the Raja has done for us.

There had been hopes of encountering bison on our way, for the trackers reported their presence in great numbers; but it was high noon when we reached our destination, and they are not often to be seen late in the morning. The trackers came in soon after, to tell of them within two miles of the camp, and the Maharaja and Maharani went out in the afternoon in search; but, though a herd was seen, it contained

no shootable bull. It was therefore determined to make a very early start this morning.

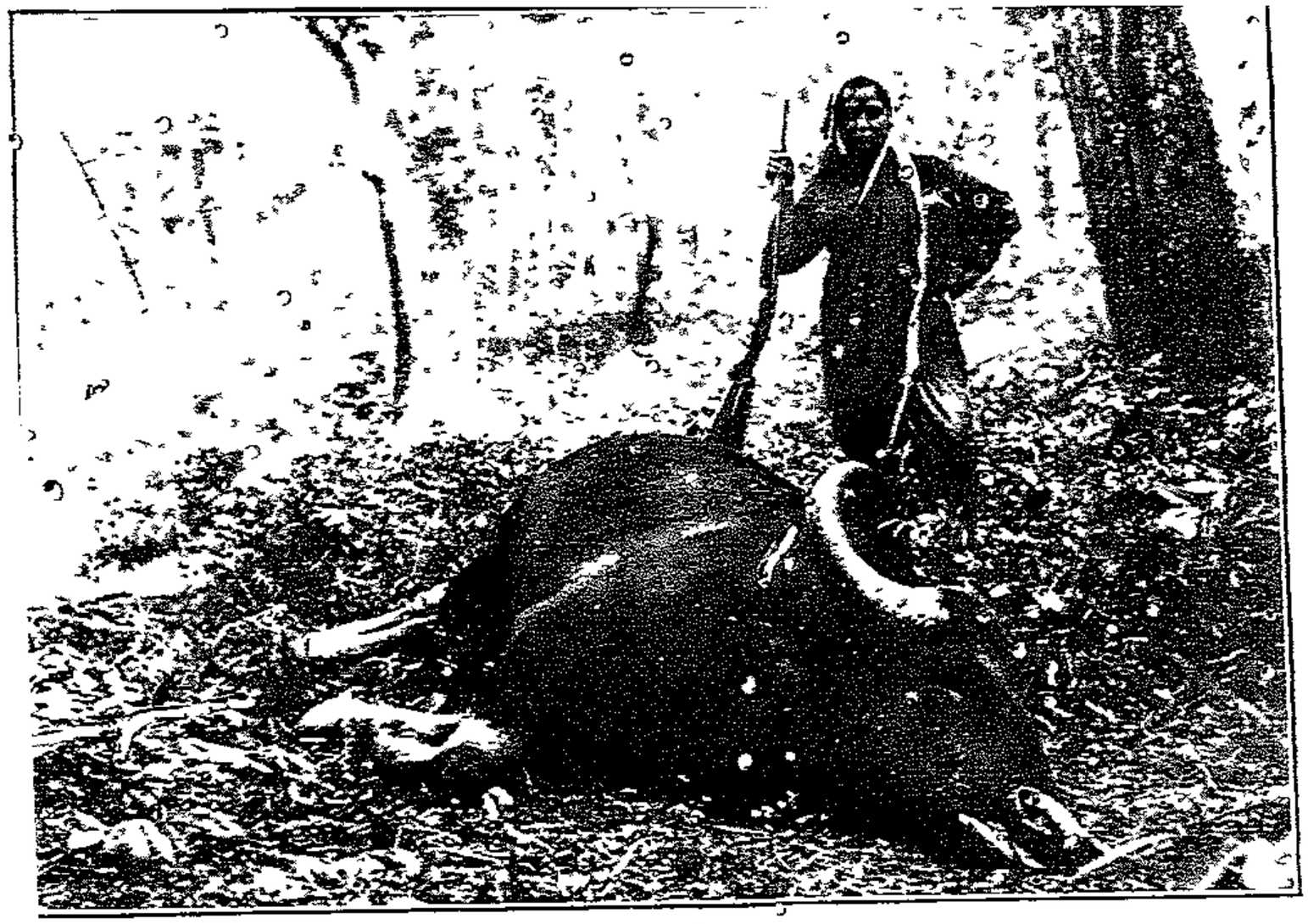
A tramp through park-like country, free from undergrowth, profusely covered by teak and bamboo, brought us to tracks which Theobald pronounced to be fresh, and to be followed. As they divided the party separated, Theobald and Hakim accompanying Her Highness, while Vithalrao and a shikari went with the Maharaja. The fortune of the day proved to be with the Maharani, for, a mile or so on, still other tracks, this time of a solitary bull, were found. For two miles these were followed, to lead the party to the spot where he was grazing in company with two others. The big head was furthest away, and the difficulty was to get within shot of him without alarming any of the three. Cautious and careful stalking from tree to tree brought the Maharani eventually within a hundred yards, at which distance she fired, the bull galloping hard away. At first it was thought that he had escaped unhurt, but blood tracks proved that he had been wounded, and deeply. These were followed for half a mile or more; nothing was to be seen, though all peered in every direction. At last Theobald saw a red eye and a lashing tail

behind a tree trunk; the brute was stalking the stalkers. He fired twice, but the shots were not decisive; it being found presently that they had taken effect in chest and hindquarters. Swiftly again the bison fled, again to take cover behind a tree.

This time Her Highness managed to approach him quite closely, fired, and hit him in the shoulder. He dropped, lay struggling, and two shots in the head finished him. His horns were 32½ spread, an excellent trophy. He too will presently stand in the Baroda Museum.

Meanwhile the Maharaja had, for once, no luck. The bulls seen were always almost out of range, difficult stalks, while the visual conditions were unfavourable. To-morrow we return to Kollengode by way of Thekkadi, where His Highness is feasting the kindly hill people who have helped in the shikar, with their relatives and friends, eight hundred or so in all.

A splendid place for a hunter, this. Ibex on the rugged peaks, elephant, bison, and bear in the forests, sambhar and spotted deer to be had for the trouble of going out with a rifle; but Their Highnesses must go on, for engagements in the next week or two are very heavy.



HER HIGHNESS'S LION

July 4. Kollengode.

We came back yesterday evening in triumph; for Their Highnessos' achievements in the Hills have been noised abroad far and wide, and all and sundry of the neighbourhood were determined to witness their return. Nimbalkar and I had come on ahead, as also had the Dewan Saheb; and I, idly walking the streets, encountered sword bearers, brandishing shields of ancient pattern, gaiety and holiday upon their countenances, as upon those of all I saw; at the Palace gate a unarmed sepoy, a medal on his breast—Burmah, 1887—speaking to honourable service; with dignified gestures he kept his post. Within the ladies of the family gave last instructions to a small choir of girls whose mission it was to sing odes of congratulatory welcome what time the distinguished guests arrived, their laurels thick upon them. Presently a distant tumult, growing ever louder; the advance guard of the crowd looking backwards as they ran; elephants and exploding petards; sword bearers and banner carriers; and Their Highnessos' car at last. A welcome to be remembered.

Bethink you. If in Scottish Highlands, with much ceremony, they hail the slayer of

the stag, with what rejoicings will they here greet those who come from the destroying of a rogue elephant? Remembering this, you will be able to form a mental picture of the arrival at the Palace last evening. It is fortunate, too, that I have been converted to an appreciation of the tom-tom; for it was there in full force to greet the safe return.

Some music by the ladies in the Old Palace after dinner was offered to, and much appreciated by, Their Highnesses. Worry there has been for them in receipt of news of Prince Dharyashil's motor accident near Bangalore; fortunately, however, later telegrams, reporting his complete escape from harm, reached them at the same time as those notifying the accident itself.

To-morrow we must say farewell to the Raja and his ladies. It would be difficult adequately to describe the length and breadth of the hospitality he has shown us, from Their Highnesses to the most humble of their party. Ere the chronicler leaves the subject of Kolengode, regretfully admitting the impossibility of doing it justice, let him put on record the fact that we are all very grateful, very pleased, very sorry to say farewell to such rare kindness.

CHAPTER III

Cochin

We leave Kollengode: Palghat: Trichur: the Vedakkumnathan Devaswom: Merry Lodge: arrival at Ernaculam and Bolghetty: Cochin appeals to the imagination: so does Bolghetty: Muttancherry, its Coronation Palace, its Jews, Hospital, and People: the Church a relic of Portuguese splendour: the State offices: the Goud Saraswat Brahmins: a Garden Party: dinner at the Residency: we leave Cochin.

July 5. Ernaculam.

This morning, as we sleepily surveyed a moist world at an absurdly early hour, we became conscious of impending changes; growing sensibility made us aware of need for instant haste, for a special train had to be caught at Shoranur, and the shouting and tumult below our windows indicated that all was ready for departure—save the voyagers. In depressed mood then, we complete preparations, descend, to be bundled hastily into our appointed corners, to be in motion ere yet we have said farewell to Kollengode, to hurtle through wet streets in a monotonously

bellowing motor. A long string of bullock carts on the narrow road compels a stop ; more reiteration of complaint from the horn ; streaming of rain oozing through the joints in our harness; vehemence of language from the cart drivers as they pull and push. In the end we are away again, to pass villages and towns, schools and police stations, dispensaries and hospitals ; to leap in air as we surmount road obstacles, to sway with violence as we swing round corners, or avoid wandering animals, to crawl through thickly crowded streets, occasionally delaying to ask the way. We notice that the men of a certain village point towards our car with gesticulation ; there is no time to stop for inquiries ; we discover later that a particularly large bundle, which had commenced the journey secured to the roof, is no longer there, has dropped into the road. No matter : there are other cars following, they will retake the deserter. Comes a brief digression at Palghat, to view, superficially enough, Fort, Hospital, and public buildings ; a great pity we cannot delay, for this is no inconsiderable town, second largest in the district, with an interesting history. The Fort, for instance, which we enter over a draw-bridge through massive

ramparts, to drive round, not staying for satisfaction of antiquarian longings ; it was built by Haider to secure his communications what time he marched from Coimbatore to storm and sack the cities of the Coast. Colonel Fullarton, who took it by assault, describes it, with deliciously naive modesty, as " a place of the first strength in India " ; it was then only held for eleven days, to be evacuated, and occupied by the *Zamorin's troops.*

The redoubtable Tippu found it necessary to take it, in his turn, guarding as it did, and does, the Pass through the Ghats. He, or his local commander, had a vein of ruthlessly sardonic humour. Pressed for time, not wishing to risk the loss of his own men involved in an assault, he hit on a means to compel a speedy surrender :—

> Tippu's soldiers did not trouble to lay regular siege to the Fort, but contented themselves with exposing daily the heads of many Brahmins in the sight of the defenders. ' Rather than witness such enormities ', it is said, ' the Zamorin chose to abandon Palghatcherry.'

In 1790 the Fort, then mounting sixty guns, was re-captured by the British who, however, did not adopt Tippu's methods.

We enter now on a stretch of country which in other days has witnessed the marching and counter-marching of countless armies. To Tippu the modern traveller should give tribute of passing thanks; for the roads on which his motor travels, with speed and comparative smoothness, were constructed by that martial spirit for the transport of his guns and columns of supply. Curious how the arts of war in all countries have developed those of peace. All great military commanders, from Hannibal to Napoleon, have deserved well of the world, in one sense at least, in that they have created, and left for our present use, arteries of inter-communication for the peoples.

So we come at length to Shoranur, cross a long bridge over wide waters, to find a special train, and officers of the Cochin State awaiting us.

A few sentences of greeting, garlands, and flowers in profusion; we have become guests of Cochin, and are on our way to Trichur, where we fall into the capably energetic hands of Mr. Davies, Director of Instruction to the State, specially deputed to watch over the comfort of Their Highnesses during their sojourn as guests of His Highness the Raja. On

the platform, a guard of honour, and effusive official welcome, without crowds of people, in holiday attire and mood, throng decorated streets, give an unofficial greeting, spontaneous and hearty.

At the station Their Highnesses were met by His Highness the ex-Raja, Sir Rama Varma, and by the Dewan of Cochin, with other officers of high standing. Motors drive us to the Residency, a stately building set in picturesque surroundings, used in these latter days as a residence for the Dewan when he happens Trichur-wards. Close by, in severe rectangular austerity, stands the Vadakkumnathan Devaswom, a temple with a more than local fame. Parasu Rama, having annihilated the Kshatryas twenty-one times, journeyed to the Himalayas, there to expiate his offence by prayer and meditation. Brahmins visited him, solicited alms; he, alas had none to give, yet could by no means refuse. With the help of Varuna, Kerala was reclaimed by him, and handed over to the Brahmins in perpetuity Siva was invited to visit the new territory. On the way thither with Parvathi, both seated on the Bull, they were compelled to rest, to settle at Trichur. The temple stands on the place of

their resting. It is a wealthy fane for, in other days, Brahmins, wishing to enjoy their wealth and at the same time preserve their good repute, would dedicate all they possessed to the temple, preserving only the usufruct.

A drive round the town, and a visit to the house of the Raja of Kollengode, who has built here a residence for his daughter who, under the matriarchate, belongs to another family than her father's; a visit also to "Merry Lodge," delightful place in which His Highness the ex-Raja spends days of leisured ease after the stress of rule; tea at the Residency, and back to the train. Two hours later we are here at Ernaculam, to be met by all that is high placed in Cochin society, guards of honour, bands, and the inevitable crowds. Decorated launches are ready, and the party goes across to Bolghatty, escorted by the ever-cheerful "snake boats," eyed by us, who have never seen such things before, with delighted curiosity.

Mr. and Mrs. Davies met Their Highnesses on the Bolghatty Jetty, the latter showing the Maharani her rooms, explaining the details of the history of the Residency. His Highness

of Cochin, who has received Their Highnesses at the station, and accompanied them to Bolghatty, takes his departure; the Dewan and I, for whom accommodation is provided on the mainland, are transported in swift launches, which are over going backwards and forwards, with hootings reminiscent of Port Said, and the praises thereof; and the Island gradually sinks to rest, while the curtain of night is drawn over the darkening waters of the lagoons.

July 6.

I write in a room of the delightful Guest House at Ernaculam, happily placed, flag-staff surmounted, on the shore of monsoon troubled waters. Semi-circular wise they stretch around; on the far side, cocoanut palms in green abundance form an effective background to Cochin with its red roofs; beyond, a line of white headed breakers denotes the bar, and the open sea. On the right, almost opposite is Bolghatty, in days of old a Dutch colonial mansion, more recently the occasional home of the Resident in Travancore and Cochin, now the temporary abode of Their Highnesses the Maharaja and Maharani Gaekwar.

Romance is here in abundance. Remembering that Cochin is the earliest European settlement in India, one has no need of spurs to the imagination; there, before one's eyes, the Portuguese fleet under Cabral, famous admiral, anchored in December, 1500, second of the expeditions sent by His Majesty of Portugal to carry further the investigations of Vasco Da Gama; a few years later, Da Gama landed himself, and signed a treaty with the Raja; d'Albuquerque built here, in 1503, the first European fort in India, by name Manuel, so-called after the then King of Portugal. St. Francis Xavier passed through Cochin on his way to his mission at Cape Comorin; here the first book printed in India was produced by the Jesuits; here the English traveller and adventurer, Ralph Fitch, stayed after his journey to India *via* Baghdad and the Gulf; here the East India Company built a factory in 1634, with Portuguese permission. How are the mighty fallen! Who thinks of Portugal now when permission is sought to start a new company, a new industry?

After the Portuguese came the Dutch, who were here for 132 years, and are said to have

improved the town greatly. About them thus the Malabar Gazetteer :—

In rebuilding the fort they took great care to leave the old Portuguese streets, now called by Dutch names, standing. The most important streets at that time were de Linde (Lime) Straat; Heere (Gentleman's) Straat; de Peterceelie Straat (Parsely Street); de Bree Straat (Broad Street); de Smee Straat (Smithe's Street); de Ose Straat (Ox Street); de Burgen Straat (Burghers Street); and de Calven Straat (Calf Street).

The Dutch garrisoned Cochin with five hundred and thirty Europeans, and thirty-seven natives. Day in his *Land of the Perumals*, says :—

The reduction in power caused the Dutch to fall considerably in the estimation of the natives, and they became but little feared by the surrounding people.

As a matter of fact the European troops were rarely above one-quarter Dutch. The remainder "were composed of English and French deserters, renegade Germans, and similar broken-down adventurers, who came for the purpose of making or mending their fortunes."

British Cochin passed into the hands of the English in 1795.

As to Bolghatty. Wide expanses of lawns of softest green, shady trees, paths of

milk-white sand, specially brought from a port twelve miles away, a lofty mansion whose deep embrasured windows give views of land and water, whose lofty pillared verandahs give ample shade; here all the resources of hospitable Cochin have been brought into play to make it, what it assuredly is, an ideal residence for guests of high distinction. One peoples the great house with ghosts of long departed Dutch Governors, merchants and soldiers, grandees of all kinds, and their dames and children; as the trees rustle in the monsoon breezes one imagines the centuries which have gone, all the changes they have brought, stirring incidents of high romance, court ceremonial, tragedy and comedy, in all of which those who dwelt herein played their parts.

Two motor launches are passing; they are gaily bedecked with flags and bunting, and have, as consorts, two snake boats, each propelled by the paddles of fifty men who raise cheerful chanty as they go. One stands insecure in the bows, addresses to the surrounding *a stirring solo, while his crew respond in* joyous unison at the tops of their voices, their paddles beating the water strenuously the while. Their Highnesses are on their way to

return the visit paid them this morning by His Highness the Raja of Cochin at Bolghatty.

They go to the Hill Palace, perched on a lofty rock, high above the town and lakes.

The programme for the visit to Cochin is necessarily very crowded, indeed uncomfortably so, for we have to do in one day what should occupy months ; I anticipate with some discomfort an attack of severe mental indigestion.

Their Highnesses had an ovation from the people, as apart from the official welcome, both at Trichur and at Ernaculam. Especially were they delighted to catch a glimpse of the Maharani, whose fame as a huntress of big game has spread far and wide. Hear the *Cochin Argus* on the subject :—

> The women folk of this town are excited and alarmed to hear that Her Highness the Maharani, during her shooting expedition in Venganad Hills in Malabar with her royal consort, shot a 9-foot tusker. This is no doubt a fact, but the Indian women cannot believe it.

One would like to hear the conversation in local households on this point ; yet the surprise felt by the ladies of Ernaculam is understandable, for it will doubtless be shared by most of their sex.

At the conclusion of the visit of His Highness the Raja to Their Highnesses this morning, the party crossed by launch, always accompanied by snake boats, to Muttancherry, or native Cochin, opposite Ernaculam. Here, at a gaily decorated jetty, we were met by Cochin officers, by a huge crowd, restrained by zealous police, the ancient, weather-beaten walls of the Coronation Palace serving as a background. Externally a somewhat commonplace building preserving the architectural ideals of the Portuguese who built it in 1550, handing it over as a present to the Raja, in grateful recognition of the protection and favour he had shown them, internally it is quaint indeed; mural paintings, though faded and worn, still visibly portray intimate domestic happenings with a frankness which belongs to centuries other than ours; an ever-burning lamp, archaic of pattern, marks the spot where three predecessors of the Raja were buried, within the walls. From the semi-darkness of the rooms of the Palace we emerge into a brilliancy of sunshine which hurts the eyes, and move on to visit the White Jews. A high antique gateway, and, through it, a paved courtyard where pigeons strut and preen;

beyond is the Synagogue, crowned with a clock-tower, a curious sundial on its side. Ere we enter the building, we glance to the left to see a long, narrow lane, half in deep shadow, half in full light, bordered by lofty, many-windowed, houses whence peer inquisitively faces of white women and children of the Dispersion, some of them fair to ruddiness. It is the Ghetto of Cochin, home of the descendants of those who, driven into exile after the fall of Jerusalem, found here hospitable asylum in a far country.

Within the Synagogue we are shown a wonderful floor of china tiles, each story-telling, each a miracle of blue colouring, hundreds of years old; an ancient Rabbi, in all detail worthy to be a Zangwill hero, shows us the original copperplate inscribed with the deed of gift which, in the eighth century, was given to one Joseph Rabbin, endowing him and his descendants with various rights and privileges to be by them enjoyed "as long as the moon shall rise upon the earth," putting them on terms of equality with the Naduvazhi chiefs. At that time the Jews were settled at Cranganore, then a harbour of such standing that its mariners might have been met with in far-off Rome, now

a hamlet, known only as the scene of an annual Cock Festival of more than doubtful decency; there they lived on terms of peaceful amity and mutual respect with their Hindu neighbours and friends for hundreds of years. But in 1550, there came a Pharoah who knew not Moses, in the shape of the Portuguese, to whom ancient charters and vested rights were as nothing compared with religious antagonism, who especially hated the Jew. The day of the Hebrew in Cranganore was numbered. After bitter persecution, which doubtless differed only in detail from countless others, the ancient colony was scattered, the homes of their fathers knew them no more. Shelter they sought, and obtained, in many places in Cochin and Travancore, especially here in Muttanchery. Since that disastrous time they have lived in peace, free to follow their bent, but in recent years have fallen off lamentably in prosperity. They are now, in fact, a fast failing people, decadent, easy victims to the local curse, elephantiasis, or "Cochin leg", several distressing examples of which are plainly to be seen as we pass. The White Jews, whom we have just visited, have as poor neighbours—they refuse to acknowledge their claim to be treated as poor

relations—the Black Jews. There are also Brown Jews, with their own Synagogue. The Black and Brown say they were the first settlers on the Coast, and that the darkness of their complexion is due to intermixture with Indian blood, and to long residence in the Tropics; to which the White scornfully make answer that the Black and Brown are merely the offspring of slaves, bought by their ancestors and converted to Judaism.

Modern scientific enquiry does not support this contention. There is in existence a tombstone of the Black Jews six hundred years old, while the oldest of the White is only two hundred; the Synagogue of the former dates from 1344, that of the latter from 1666; and the copperplate charter already referred to mentions the grantee, Joseph Rabbin, who, according to the record books of both communities, came from Yemen in Arabia; the presumption is that his complexion would not be that of the White Jews.

"According to Dr. Buchanan, ... they (the White Jews) had only the Bible written on parchment, and of modern appearance in their Synagogue, and he managed to get from the Black Jews much older manuscripts written on parchments, goat's skin and cotton

paper. Regarding the Black Jews, he says, 'It is only necessary to look to their countenance to be satisfied that their ancestors must have arrived in India many ages before the White Jews. Their Hindu complexion, and their very imperfect resemblance to the European Jews indicate that they have been detached from the parent stock in Judæa many ages before the Jews in the West, and that there have been marriages not Israelitish.'. . . . The real ancient Jews . . . . are the Black Jews, the descendants probably of Judæa Arabians and Indian proselytes."

Krishna Aiyar. "*The Cochin Tribes and Castes.*"

Whatever be the truth in a vexed question, surely Romance exists here in this corner of India. Yearly the Jews, whether Black or White, dressed in deepest mourning, with wailings and tears lament the fall of the Holy City. The daughters of Jerusalem, weep ye for them; they have had to wander far, weeping as they go.

Back from the Ghetto to India, a matter merely of passing out into the main street. We got into carriages and are driven very slowly through the dense crowds. Their Highnesses spent an interested quarter of an hour at the Women and Children's Hospital, guided round the wards by Dr. Coombes, the Chief Medical Officer, and Mrs. Mervyn Smith, the Lady

Doctor in charge. On again, suddenly to be greeted in a place of narrow streets. by shrill cheering, and a song of welcome in Gujarati. Here in Cochin there is a large and prosperous colony of Gujarati speaking folk; their children, in school assembled, are greeting the Maharaja and Maharani of Baroda. "Hip! Hip! Hurrah!" shout the boys and girls, a genuine, if exotic, welcome from little people; and their parents think, perhaps, as Their Highnesses come, of far-off homes.

On again, past wharves whence trade is done in spices and splendours to all the world, over a canal, and we are in British Cochin. Past warehouses and banks, speaking of wealth and commerce, we go on towards the sea, to make a brief halt at the Cathedral-like Church of St. Francis, ancient Portuguese foundation, whose walls bear stones commemorating the titles, families, and virtues of knights and grandees who found peace here, far from home, long ago. Now it is the English Church, and in it, surrounded, one would imagine, by many an unseen witness of another faith, the good Protestants of Cochin meet to worship. Facing the sea and the call of the west wind, the Church is a monument

to the decay of earthly ambition, to the former greatness of Portugal amongst the nations.

We drove on by the Beach Road, past a lofty lighthouse, to return by another route to the Jetty, and so back to Bolghatty.

After the visit to the Hill Palace mentioned above, His Highness returned to Bolghatty for tea, and later, accompanied by the Dewan, and the rest of his suite, visited the State Offices, the District and Chief Courts, the College and the General Hospital. The next engagement was the garden party at the Durbar Hall ; but an unofficial appointment had first to be kept. The Goud Saraswat Brahmins of Ernaculam, whose original home was in the Konkan, have Marathi as their literary language, and had invited His Highness to an entertainment at their school, the Subraya Pai Memorial. Most delightful to see the boys and girls of all ages in the foreground, their fathers and mothers in the background, supporting the elders of the community in pleased welcome to the premier Maratha ruler of India ; and, one is sure, it gave His Highness equal pleasure. Indeed, in the short Marathi speech with which he brought the proceedings to a close, he expressed this in

warm terms. Then on to the garden party at which all Ernaculam society, including some most picturesque friars and priests, were present to share in the hospitality of the Raja of Cochin. Tea and other refreshments were in ready abundance in the verandahs upstairs, a bright programme of music was played by the State Band and we enjoyed things vastly. A crowded day was brought to a close by a dinner at the Residency where a number of Europeans had the opportunity of meeting Their Highnesses. As the launches bringing the invited guests pant their hurrying way across the lagoon to Bolghatty, the curving lines of the shores are outlined in flickering flames from myriad torches; over the dark waters the yellow lights have a weird effect indeed.

July 7.

In spite of a cloudless dawn—and I would I might attempt a description of the wonders of a sunrise over the lagoons which comfort Ernaculam—rain was falling at the time fixed for our start from Bolghatty, and falling with a zeal which reminded of the prophecies of those who had foretold incessant bad weather

for our tour hereabouts in this season. First appeared a cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, from out the sea to the west; it widened and deepened, advanced very slowly, a rainbow ever preceding it over the water's surface; finally the storm broke on my devoted head as I crouched in the cabin of the launch on my way to Bolghatty. We were to start at 8, and His Highness the Raja, with his Heads of Departments, arrived some minutes earlier to bid farewell, to accompany Their Highnesses on their way as far as Ernaculam. The rain thrashed down on flags and banners, on guards of honour and band, on the gorgeously uniformed retainers of the Cochin State, exposed to its pleasantry; but the sun came out, the clouds passed, and we embarked, each on his appointed vessel, in fine weather. There are two large launches, in one of which Their Highnesses are to travel—it is the fastest on the Backwaters; and in the other, Nimbalker and I, with baggage and servants, settle down for the fourteen hours journey. There are, besides, a host of smaller craft, all provided for us by our hosts of Travancore, who have sent agents on ahead to assure themselves that all goes well. We are told that a refreshment

boat lies waiting some distance away, breakfast ready ; all we have to do for the rest of the day is to sit at ease on comfortable chairs and couches, observe the beauty of the passing scene, reflect and moralise in reason, and congratulate ourselves that we travel not as do those others who occasionally pass in crowded passenger-boats, whistles frantically blowing. A gun, another and another, twenty-one of them. The Maharaja has started. We follow in a long line, we say farewell to Cochin. Nothing could have been more generously kind than the welcome we have received, every one of us, from the officers and people of Cochin ; the arrangements ordered by His Highness the Raja Saheb, through his Dewan, and carried out by Mr. Davies and his staff, could not have been bettered.

CHAPTER IV

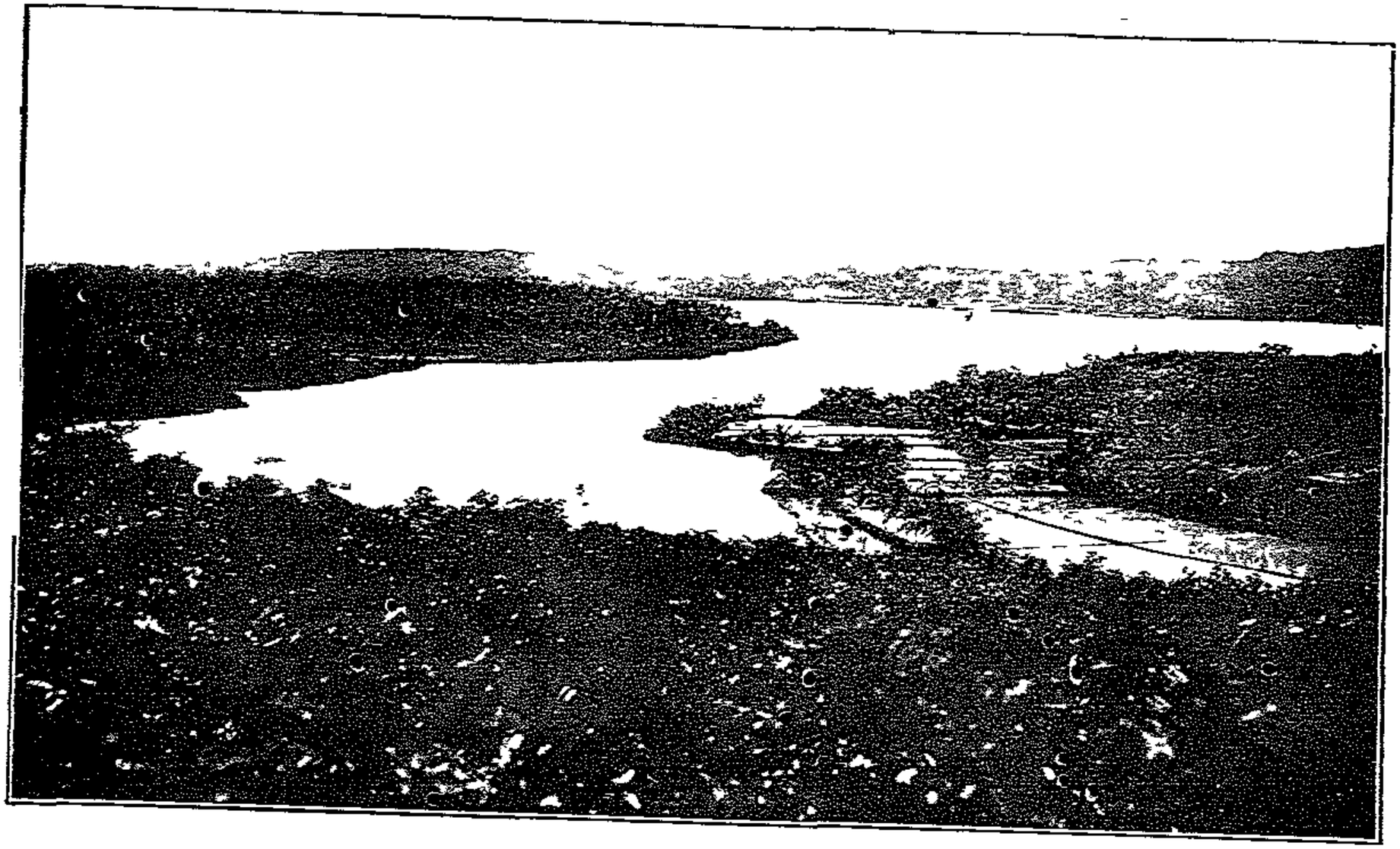
The Backwaters: Quilon

The launches: we breakfast luxuriously: smoke and reflect: observe the scenery and people: the Snake-Boats of Travancore: a late arrival at Quilon: early visitors, Christian and Moslem: the Matriarchate and the Tarwad.

July 7.

To call the good ship "Kohinoor", on which we travel to Quilon, a launch, is to invite misconception. Imagine a double-decked Thames steamer, no funnel, but with a wheel house perched on high, a collapsible box which can be removed in a few minutes what time low canal bridges have to be negotiated; flat bottomed, as having to navigate waters in places but three feet deep; cabins, fair sized, say twelve by seven, fore and aft; four-cylinder petrol engines propelling us at ten miles an hour with comfort. Their Highnesses are in the "Nollie," a similar craft, but larger and faster, and drawing more water, the latter fact the cause of some uneasiness to the pilots of the expedition, later to be justified.

At first we sit in the cabin forward. But the scenery is too fine to be missed in any



IN THE BACKWATERS — VIEW OF LAND AND WATER

Face page 60

detail, and one becomes impatient of peering from small windows. Happy thought! The fore-peak, reached by undignified scramble, provides a splendid position of vantage, whence an uninterrupted view of land and water, and all the wonders thereof, may be obtained. Here, then, we sit on chairs of ease, at first keenly observant and wide-awake, later reflective, monosyllabic in conversation. For maximum of comfort in travel give me a cushioned seat on a boat moving smoothly with no apparent effort over still waters.

But, though it seem inexcusable bathos, even in supremely delightful and romantic surroundings man must eat; so, having passed the frontier station, after which we are in Travancore, we come alongside the caterer's craft, larger than ours, are made fast to one side, while Their Highnesses' boat is on the other. The other launches cling tight to their big sisters' skirts, and thus, all moving on the while, that the breezes may freely refresh and revive, we devour an excellent meal, provided by Spencer of Madras.

Breakfast over, again we separate, Their Highnesses leading the way, the rest tailing

out behind. Again the chairs in the forepeak; again clouds of tobacco smoke and reflections; we are in as happy a plight as may well be imagined.

Thoughts come unmvited of this and of that; especially of the land we are traversing. Kerala! Truly India is a country of beautiful place names. The melting syllables suggest the soft smoothness, the glorious colours, of this land of many waters. Once a mighty Empire, with the Canaras of the North and South under its sway, with all Malabar, Cochin and Travancore, Kerala's capital was at Vanchi, now but a shadow of its former self, the modern Tiruvanchikulam, but in ancient days a world-famed centre of international trade and culture. Its rulers had imperial titles; they were *Cheraman Perumals*, the "strong men of Kera", and held sway from about the ninth century until the breaking up of their dominions into separate states.

Conspicuous figures in Indian history have been here before us. Vasco da Gama visited Cochin in 1502, for instance, and again in 1524, to die and be buried in the Church of St. Francis which we visited, though he lies there no more. If local legend be correct, St. Thomas

may well have preached hereabouts, though the scene of his traditional labours lies further to the south. Beyond question, in past centuries there have been happenings of romantic and historic import on these waterways; one imagines those other men and women of other days, other costumes and manners, all playing their parts for their time, to pass on making room for others. The motion is pleasant, the air drowsy, there is something of a glare on the waters; to declare ourselves awake would be an exaggeration. Suddenly a prolonged wail, followed by a shouting of many voices. Startled, we look up from digestive meditation; we are passing four crowded snake boats of prodigious length, a hundred men to each, with groups of village elders to hold aloft the umbrellas of red. of purple, of green and blue, the insignia of royalty. As the paddles fly the elders stamp, wave energetic hands to time the movements of the rowers, their bodies jerking regularly even as the company behind the dancing girl swayingly keep time to her dance; in the bows, right over the foaming waters which leap to touch his feet as the boat is urged along, a paddler astride, supported by rope stirrups; astern, a group of six or eight,

with massive swoops, keep the boat to her course, standing for the purpose on the snake's head high-roared.

Above all else, the song! Such a song, quickening the pulse, vikings of old roared, what time they came homeward with plunder and captives after successful raid; a line by some high voiced soloist repeated by the crews of all four boats in unison, each boat of the *motif* accented by the combined paddles. A royal welcome, again and again meeting Their Highnesses, every three or four miles.

We pass through lakes where the shore line is hardly visible, twelve or more miles distant, to narrow waters where overhanging branches touch the wooden awning overhead, and naked little boys and girls catch the oranges we throw them, with every sign of delight; a Hindu shrine, rude as to carving, pagoda-shaped, stands side by side with a little stone church in design typical of the ideals of Western Ecclesiastical architecture, denoting a Christian population, perhaps very ancient; triumphal arches at every village, strings of auspicious leaves hanging before the smallest hut, all in sign of greeting to the Maharaja

and Maharani. Thus we come to Karmadi, town of some importance, gay in decoration, with a troupe of sandal-pasted youth performing for our benefit a series of ancient movements with wooden sword and shield, sole relic of the old feudal system which ordered each locality to keep ready, and trained, bodies of armed men for the ruler's use at need. The system has gone, the need has gone, the occasional exhibition of trained skill remains.

At Karmadi the Dewan received a special welcome, first of many given him by the good folk of Travancore, in grateful memory of his past services on their behalf.

Again we go on, past Alleppey, port and commercial centre, without halting. The sun shines now in radiance, the shores are lined with smiling people, nearly all men; only occasionally does one catch a glimpse of a rural beauty, shyly bending round some protecting tree, or hut door, to see the strangers as they pass. Here and there hang melancholy gallows-like erections of long poles and nets, the "China nets," found nowhere else; suspended in face of a swiftly flowing current, they catch the fish forced in from the sea by the tide.

So the day passes. As it becomes darker, the mystery of the Backwaters becomes more pronounced, the shadows flung by tall palms longer, the white-clad, torch lit, groups at each village more picturesque. Now and again we encounter little families in long, narrow, dug-outs, paddling hard to avoid the wash from the launches, feverishly baling in preparation. One wonders where they come from, whither they are going, remembering that year in and year out, century after century, similarly dressed, or undressed, people have thus gone about their business on these waters, in boats whose pattern has not changed since the first navigator of inventive mind hollowed out the first tree trunk. Most impressive to the western mind this atmosphere of changelessness.

Sudden confusion ahead, whistles, hoarse shoutings; Their Highnesses' boat has gone aground. Long bamboo poles push in vain; but numbers of dug-outs appear as by magic, their crews with willing energy leap into the breast-deep water, to push and strain, as ants push and pull a bee. They succeed, and we go on, but soon after the "Nellie" is fast again; Their Highnesses' change into the "Kohinoor," leading the "Nellie" to her fate.

It is now late evening, the shores are indeterminate, dim shadows of trees and wide spaces, our lamps reflected from the waters add to the surrounding darkness, beacon lights here and there impress as part of an all-pervading unreality. We are overdue, regretting already the inconvenience we must be causing those who wait to greet us at Quilon, thinking too, perhaps, that the dinner hour is long past; on the horizon appear circling beams of light, signals from the Thangacherri light-house on the coast; we are nearing our destination. A rocket streams high up to watching stars, presumably to signal our passing, we turn a sharp corner—and are promptly in fairyland. Innumerable lights shine upon us, tall palaces are outlined in flickering flame; on an illuminated jetty waits a crowd of reception, a band begins to play; the launch glides shorewards, stops, we land at Quilon. A few words of welcome from the Dewan of Travancore, some hasty introductions, garlands and cheering; Their Highnesses retire to their rooms above, we of their party fare sumptuously below, and so—to bed.

July [redacted] Quilon.

Rooms of white stone, surprisingly high,

luxuriously spacious verandahs, an atmosphere of dignified age, such is the impression given by the Residency at Quilon, first resting place for the Maharaja and Maharani in Travancore. Attached to the main building by covered verandahs are two smaller houses, in former times habitations for the Resident's Assistant and Surgeon. Lawned and flowered gardens stretch sloping to the Backwater, terraced trees of noble size yield glimpses here and there of its glittering sheen under the morning sun; launches move fussily to and fro; on the far side, other masses of trees grow up to the walls of a white palace, of all his dwellings most favoured, I am told, by His Highness of Travancore.

Quilon has witnessed many stirring scenes, its name appears again and again in the history of the South. Here is a church, said to have been founded by St. Thomas himself, whom the local Syrian Christians believe to have landed at Cranganore in A. D. 52—of which Mr. Mackenzie, a former Resident, says, "There is in this tradition nothing that is improbable," supporting his remark by evidence more or less convincing, derived mainly from the writings of the early fathers.

The history of Christianity in the Travancore State is a subject of special interest, not only because there is ground to believe that from early times a Christian Church has been in existence on this coast, but also because at the present day nearly one-fourth of the people of Travancore are Christians. The Census of 1901 gave the population of the State as 2,951,132, of whom 6,97,387 or 23·6 per cent. were Christians.

"Of these Christians in Travancore, 451,570 or two-thirds of the whole number are shown in the Census returns as Syrian Christians. These Syrian Christians, so called, are the representatives of an ancient Oriental Church that flourished in this part of India. They are Hindus by race and they speak the Malayalam language which is spoken by their neighbours. This name Syrian is given to them in common parlance, not because of any racial traits, but because in their churches they still use Syriac or Chaldaic liturgies . . . . . they appear in the middle ages to have been Nestorian, but after the arrival of the Portuguese on this coast these Syrian Christians became Roman Catholic, and the bulk of them are so still following, however, their own Syriac Rite. When the Dutch took the place of the Portuguese on this coast, about one-third of the Syrian Christians

quitted the Roman obedience and passed under the Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch. After the English took the Dutch settlements on this coast, a portion of these Jacobite Syrians were influenced by the teaching of the C. M. S. Missionaries and broke off from Antioch. These are usually called the Reformed Syrians. Some thousands went further and formally became members of the Church of England, giving up their Syriac liturgy. Such are the present divisions of the Syrian Christians in Travancore. There is also a large number of Roman Catholics who follow the usual Latin Rite."

It is on record that in the year 825 two Bishops arrived at Quilon by sea, Mar Sapir and Mar Prodh, traditionally men of saintly conduct, and workers of miracles, of whom nothing else is known; it is however a fact that from the time of their coming there arose two divisions of Syrian Christians, the Northerners dating their years, months and days after the fashion ordained by Thomas Cana of Cranganore, the Southerners following the calendar of Quilon.

Hither, Alfred the Great of England, according to the Saxon Chronicle, sent alms to

Christian Churches in the year 883. Does this not seem to bridge the centuries? How did news of the existence of this far country, and the religion therein established, reach Alfred? What sort of men were they who brought it? How did they journey, and what was the manner of their reception?

Then in 1328, Pope John at Avignon,—the Church in Europe at that time being sore rent and torn—consecrated Friar Jordan as Bishop of Quilon, giving him a letter to the "chief of the Nazarene Christians at Quilon." History knows nought of the friar, as to whether he reached his destination or not. A few years later, there came to Quilon John de Marignoli, returning from a mission to China. His news of the place is still in existence. He says:

On Palm Sunday, 1348, we arrived at a very noble city of India called Quilon, where the whole world's pepper is produced. Now this pepper grows on a kind of vines which are planted just as in our vineyards. These vines produce clusters which at first are like those of the wild vine of a green colour and afterwards are almost like the bunches of our grapes, and they have in them a red wine which I have squeezed out on my plate as a condiment. When they have ripened they are left to dry on the tree and when shrivelled by the

excessive heat the dry clusters are knocked off with a stick and caught upon linen cloths and so the harvest is gathered. These are things that I have seen with mine eyes and handled with my hands during the fourteen months that I stayed there. And there is no roasting of the pepper as some authors have falsely asserted, nor does it grow in forests but in regular gardens, nor are the Saracens the proprietors but the Christians of St. Thomas. And these latter are the masters of the public weighing office (*qui habent stateram ponderis totius mundi*), from which I derived, as a perquisite of my office as Pope's Legate, every month a hundred gold fanams and a thousand when I left.

There is a Church of St. George there, of the Latin communion, at which I dwelt, and I adorned it with fine paintings, and taught there the Holy Law. And after I had been there some time I went beyond the glory of Alexander the Great, when he set up his column. For I erected a stone as my land-mark and memorial, and anointed it with oil. In sooth it was a marble pillar with a stone cross on it, intended to last till the world's end. And it had the Pope's arms and my own engraved on it with inscription both in Indian and in Latin characters. I consecrated and blessed it in the presence of an infinite multitude of people and I was carried on the shoulders of the chiefs in a litter or palanquin like Solomon's. So after a year and four months I took leave of the brethren (*valefaciens fratribus*).

As to this Mr. Mackenzie says :—

The pillar which Marignoli erected may be the pillar which the Dutch chaplain Baldaeus saw more than three centuries later :

" Upon the rocks near the sea-shore of Coulang stands a stone pillar, erected there, as the inhabitants report, by St. Thomas. I saw the pillar in 1662."

The pillar was still standing within the last century, being washed away at last in a storm.

The great Eastern traveller of the 14th Century was Ibn Batuta, *alias* Abu Abdulla Mahomed, who left Tanjiers on pilgrimage in 1324. He visited Afghanistan, and was there made Chief Judge. Came an embassy from China seeking permission to rebuild a Buddhist Temple in the Himalayas, for it was much frequented by Chinese pilgrims ; Ibn Batuta was selected to take back an answer, and, embarking at Cambay, put in at Calicut as a guest of the Zamorin. A great storm arose, his ships had to put out to sea, and Ibn was left on land, to travel by Backwater to Quilon, there to embark. His ships, however, were wrecked and the ambassador, deprived of the means of executing his mission, spent the next three years in Malabar. Hear what he says of Quilon.

It is "one of the finest cities in Malabar with magnificent markets and very wealthy merchants:" the king is "eminent for his strict and terrible justice." The king, it may be noted, was but one of "twelve kings, the greatest of whom has fifty thousand troops at his command; the least five thousand or thereabouts. That which separates the district of one king from that of another is a wooden gate upon which is written: 'The gate of safety of such an one'. For, when any criminal escapes from the district of one king and gets safely into that of another he is quite safe . . . ."

Motors had been provided by the State for Their Highnesses and party, first for the exploration of the town, and later for the journey to Trivendrum, the Capital. The local officials were all in most courteous attention on their Highnesses, including the Dewan, Mr. M. Krishna Nair, the Dewan Peishkar, the District Engineer, Mr. O. S. Barrow, the last of whom accompanied Their Highnesses' car, and explained the various objects of interest.

We drive out of the Residency Compound on to a wide maidan, over roads cut with careful rectangularity which causes one at once to

QUILON'S PICTURESQUE CANAL. [*Face page* 81.

suspect a military origin. Enquiry shows that Quilon was, not so very long ago, a considerable British Cantonment. Though glories of that kind have long departed, still it is a most attractively interesting town. We pass through wide streets, over picturesque canals crowded by straw canopied country boats, past the typical detached family houses, or tarwads, characteristic of Malabar and the coast, each surrounded by a wall of dried mud topped with a decoration of palm leaves; obvious prosperity shown everywhere in homes and people, in smiling crowds and fine buildings; and everywhere the green luxuriance to which our latter journeyings have accustomed us. Kerala is the home of the matriarchate, that most incomprehensible family system which regards maternity as the important point in family organisation, paternity as a mere biological necessity for the maintenance of satisfactory census returns. Each of the tarwads we pass represents, if it be a Nayar, a joint property to which all the members of the family have equal right, which is impartible; but—'The Tarwad consists of all the descendants of a common ancestress, in the female line only . . . children belong to the

same caste or sub-caste as their mother, not that of their father . . . . the offspring of the union belong to their mother's tarwad, and have no sort of claim, so far as the law of *marumakkat-tayam* (descent through sister's children) goes, to a share of their father's property, or to maintenance therefrom." Thus the Malabar Gazetteer.

Where a member of a tarwad marries a girl of a lower caste not only does she not become a member of her husband's family, but his children do not belong to him, have no claim upon him in law. We have met with cases where the father embracing his children, is, by that entirely natural and proper act, ceremonially polluted, must perform cleansing ceremonies before he can again greet his mother or sister. This seems to me a crowning absurdity, but I am scarcely in a position to appreciate the system; I look at it through patriarchal blinkers.

The State Manual tells me that "each house has its own name by which the members are known, and is called by the generic title of '*Illam*', the term used by Brahmins, or '*Mana*', which is the reverential expression of the Sudras and other classes. *Illam* is a Telegu

and *Mana* a Canarese word! Sometimes the two words are found combined in one name, e.g., *Itamana Illam*. . . . ."

"In the compound that surrounds this house trees, such as the tamarind, the mango, the jack and the laurel, grow in shady luxuriance . . . . A tank is an indispensable accompaniment and in rich houses (Namputiri) there are three or four of them, the largest being used for bathing and the other domestic purposes. Wells are to be avoided for bathing, as also must hot water. Each house has its snake reserve, its *Sarpakkavu*, in a patch of jungle, artificial sometimes, with granite cobra rearing its head in the centre."

Their Highnesses had asked if they might possibly visit a tarwad; this was arranged. Most kind of the master of the house to permit this invasion of his privacy; he, or his representative, was assiduously courteous in showing everything to us, explaining as we went. A series of square rooms, much ancient teak, couches of wood, very few chairs, high sills to all doorways, low ceilings, and occasional glimpses of flitting female figures, these are the impressions left with me of this visit.

It seems that when a house is to be built certain universal rules and rites have to be observed. The family astrologer is first consulted as to which day will be auspicious for the interview with the builder; this important matter settled, the latter pegs out a perfect square in the midst of the plot of land selected for the compound. He subdivides this square into four equal parts, these being again divided into triangles. The four squares are named, commencing from the south, *Agni-Kandum*, *Kanni-Kandum*, *Vayu-Kandum* and *Meena-Kandum*. Brahmins dwell in the first three, Sudras in the last, the greatest care being taken that the confines of the Brahmins' *Kandums* do not cross the line which marks the commencement of that designed for the Sudras.

With thanks to the good people of the Tarwad, we go on by the edge of the sea to Thangacherry. Here, from amidst palmyra groves, dotted with disordered heaps of stones, the ruins of a Portuguese town and fort, a lighthouse guides and warns ships making the Quilon roadstead.

Three miles further is Anjengo, once a place of importance, of some interest even now,

though sadly fallen from its old estate, in that it was the first settlement of the East India Company on the Malabar Coast.

On the way back to the Residency we find ourselves on the far side of the Backwater at the Thevalli Palace, a whiteness set up on high. The sun shines on waters sparkling responsively, there are vistas of beauty through leafy trees, we dream of "a book of verse, a jug of wine, and Thou"—and a punt on another Backwater we have in faithful memory, that which deviously wanders by green Cambridge lawns.

Steps of stone lead waterwards, inviting to plunge into limpid depths of coolness—until one hears of the alligators which infest them. Close by is a pillar which is at once a memorial and a warning. Thus runs the story, told me by one who cannot lie. To Quilon, in days of old, came a certain Englishman with a faithful dog, of which he was very fond. Bent on bathing, ignorant or forgetful of lurking danger, down the steps went he in appropriate garb; but the dog refused to leave his master, would impede his steps, affectionately warning. Impatiently he pushed him away, the dog fell in the water, into the open jaws of the alligator

which, otherwise, would have had the master. In gratitude the pillar was erected.

Cars are waiting to take us on to Trevandrum. Weeks, not hours, might have been profitably spent in exploration of these Backwaters, constant in charm.

CHAPTER V

Trevandrum

We journey from Quilon to Trevandrum: an official welcome: drive to "The Beach": the Museum, Library, and College for Boys: the Girls' College: State visit to the Maharaja of Travancore at the Durbar Hall: drive to Golf Links and Lunatic Asylum: apparent connection between golf and lunacy: ladies of Trevandrum present an address to Her Highness: Barracks and Central Prison: the weather and people: everyone can speak English: Christianity in the State: the Pariahs and Hinduism: Hospitals: Public Offices: entertainment at Caste Girls' School: Garden Party at Guest House: a dinner party: the Gardens and "Little Benjamin": Kovilum.

The road to Trevandrum from Quilon passes through country more open, less universally cultivated than that we have seen recently. On the whole flat, with an occasional stiff hill to break the monotony, it has an excellent motoring surface, enviable to us, indeed; for the roads in Baroda are, compared with those over which we have been passing, execrable, including those of the capital.

Nevertheless there was some tyre trouble, rather welcome than otherwise, as it usually occurred in a village, giving one opportunity for closer observation of the people than would otherwise have been possible.

Every house, however small, had its token of welcome to the Maharaja and Maharani, the road was hung from tree to tree with strings of flowers and leaves, neat school-houses—and every village seemed to possess one—had poured out twin floods of boys and girls, to line the roads, to wave paper flags, to cheer. It may be that all had been specially swept and garnished for the occasion; but even that would not explain entirely the astonishingly neat and well-kept appearance of the dwellings of the Travancore villagers and townsmen. Is it that the high standard of education in the State has encouraged greater attention to the amenities of communal life than exists in parts of the country whose inhabitants are satisfied entirely with such things as their fathers know?

One looks up from the car as one passes to see the entrance gateway of each Tarwad crowded with feminine greeting, little girls give dazzling smiles from wall top, while tiny babies

fair skinned and rolling in fat, are held up to take their share in the universal welcome. The men and boys, with the older girls, are without, or lining the road in front of the schools.

I suggest to those responsible for future tours of this kind the desirability of giving the Maharaja's car some easily identified token, such as a flag; this for the sake of the people. Each time the motor in which I was seated approached collected groups, adult or youthful, all began to cheer and wave flags; music rent the air; garlands were held out for acceptance, while children shrilled; the disappointment, when it became obvious that the Maharaja was not within, was as clearly visible as it was pathetic.

A row of mighty elephants royally caparisoned, heads and trunks sheathed in gold; green lawns and brightness of flowers; a double storied building with wide entrance porch, and, facing it, a scarlet clad guard of honour. We have arrived prompt to time, and, while guns roar in salute, His Highness of Travancore greets the ruler of Baroda and his Consort. Heads of Departments and distinguished personalities were there waiting, and

were duly introduced, while His Highness presented the members of his suite to the Maharaja of Travancore.

The Guest House, in which the Maharaja and Maharani are housed, is a building of which the State may well be proud, designed and erected by Mr. Jacob; though only half the planned erection has as yet been built, it is of magnificent proportions for its purpose, complete—to a collection of excellently chosen books, and a billiard table, electric lights, and fans. From its upper windows the favoured guests have splendid views of undulating downs sparsely populated, of occasional hills forest-covered, of sunset and sunrise uninterrupted.

In spite of their tiring day, Their Highnesses took a long motor drive this evening, through the town, to what is known as "the Beach"—an expanse of sand of a soft brown whereon the waves beat, monsoon lashed, a vivid sunset playing upon the whole the while. White-robed men devoutly pray beside the sea, and, in the strong wind, the few graceful palms which hold footing against encroaching sand bend and bow in sympathy; in the background slumbers a melancholy building, much favoured by a long-departed ruler of the State,

now no longer in use, stoutly shuttered as to windows, weather-beaten as to walls and roof.

We return through gathering darkness, past shadowy tanks, past the ancient Palace in the Fort, guarded residence of the Maharaja of Travancore, past the huge white block of public offices. After dinner some of the court musicians, deservedly be-lauded by Loti, entertained Their Highnesses. A greater than I has described them and their art.

July 9.

The Maharaja and Maharani left the Guest House early this morning, Mr. Vieyra, Chief Secretary to the Travancore Government, accompanying them in their motor. First we go to the Museum which, like our own in Baroda, is in the Public Gardens, and bears to it a strong family likeness; both were designed by Chisholm. In the fast falling rain the Gardens were not at their best, but even under conditions so adverse we were able to admire carefully trimmed borders, well weeded roads and paths, amply stocked flower-beds. Just within the gates a subsidiary museum, home of a small reference library and ethnological and archæological collection, was visited. Here are

some quaint old pictures relating episodes in the history of the State; specimens of mineral sands, recently discovered within Travancore territories, marketable at a profit; images of deities curiously carved, long lost to the light of day, brought from forgotten corners by the indefatigable Vieyra, who seems to be the guiding genius of most of the learned societies of the State. Both the Maharaja and Maharani showed great interest in everything shown them, were obviously anxious to miss nothing which might inform them of Travancore life and custom.

Then on to the Museum proper. One must pronounce this a genuinely useful collection, designed to exhibit Travancore, its manners, its arts and crafts, its fauna and flora, its all,—and nothing else. Not here the fatuous ambition to show everything, with resultant failure to show anything satisfactorily, nor the haphazard confusion of Arts and Sciences, East and West; books and carpets, porcelain and stuffed snakes, of many so-called museums of this land.

An old-time Resident, General Cullen, who lived here for twenty years in that capacity, leaving his impress on many things, in 1852 commenced the collection with specimens of

Travancore rocks. The present building was occupied in 1880. *The State Manual* says of it that "it answers all the purposes of light and ventilation, and retains some of the characteristics of native architecture on the Malabar coast." Some of these features may be seen in our Museum building, especially in the roofing arrangements.

Here are fascinating things for our curious observation. Amongst many others, a beautifully made model of a Tarwad, with figures of the inhabitants, correct in all detail, engaged in their normal occupations, at the well, tank, cooking-pots, account-books; ancient implements of torture, found years ago in Travancore, relics of a long past barbarism; little wooden figures, still having in head or eye the nails inserted by some vanished wizard, at request of clients desiring the ruin or death of private enemies.

Impossible to tell all the delights of this place. A hasty glance at excellent examples of work of rare beauty in silver, ivory, and sandalwood, and we must on, to pass through crowded streets, past fine large houses and spacious gardens, shops full of prosperity, churches, temples and mosques, to stop in front

of a handsome .building, the Trevandrum Library. Here Their Highnesses are met by Mr. Sloss, who combines the secretarial care of the Library with the duties of his Chair of English Literature at the College. The Library is exceedingly well organised, charging a nominal sum for membership, varying with the number of books desired at one time, having shelves filled with volumes selected with loving skill, and an excellent device which tells at a glance if that which is desired is 'in' or 'out'. Some rare old volumes I saw, and eagerly coveted, in the crabbed type dear to the first printers; one in particular, an ancient Ptolemy; one wonders what romantic history attaches to that veteran. Willingly indeed would I spend days in the Library of Trevandrum. On to the School of Art, housed in a rambling block of buildings, shortly to be transferred to a new habitation, more worthy. We admired the careful skill shown by the carvers in ivory, Her Highness making considerable purchases.

Thence to the College, wholly admirable in all respects, save that it seemed cramped as to pace for playing fields, and its hostels were unfitting their purpose. New blocks are in

course of erection. With but three hundred students, the College is very strong in staff and equipment. With laboratories of obvious efficiency, workshops staffed with practical workmen for minor repairs, and atmosphere of zeal, it is an inspiring place.

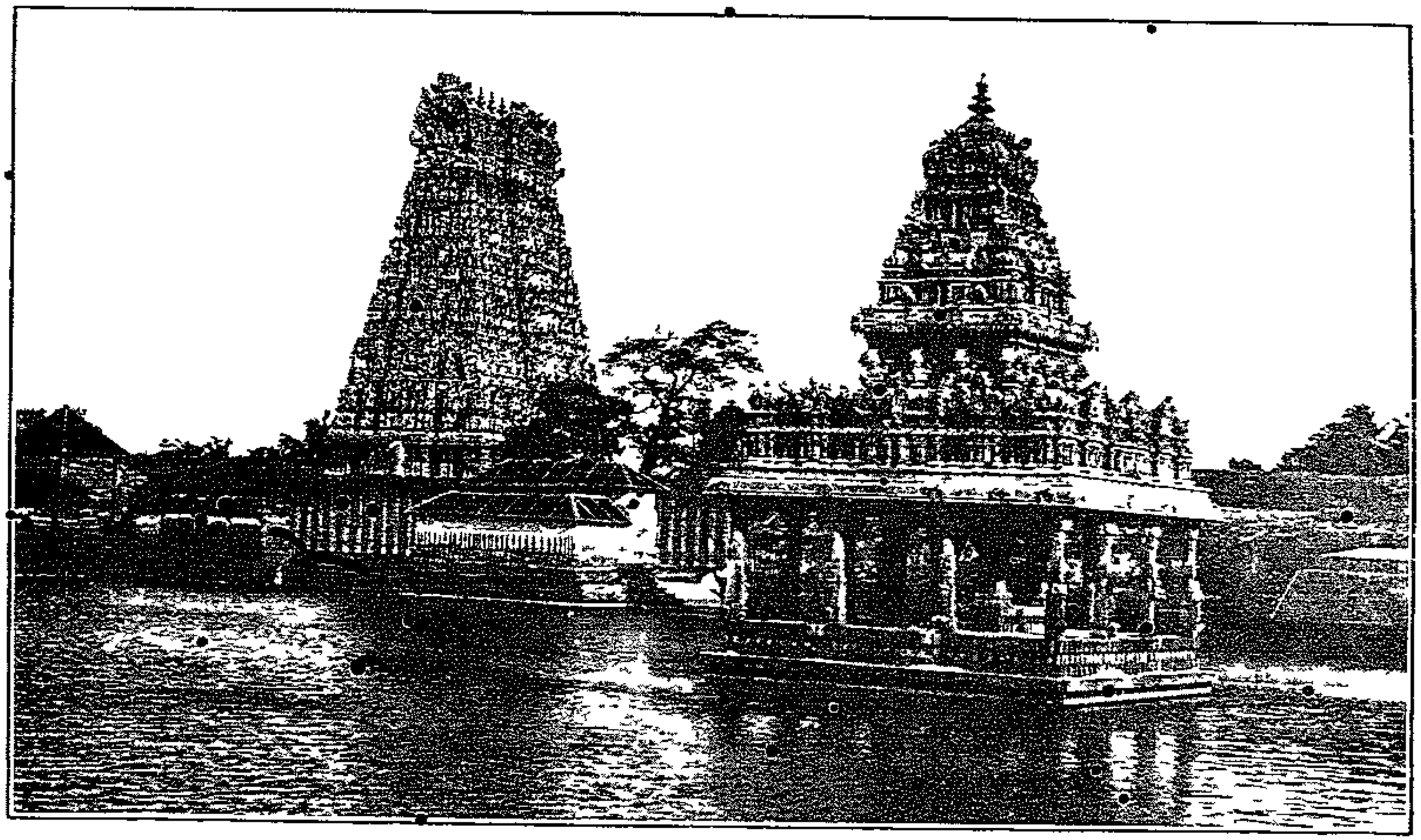
Just across the road, and we come to a home of wonder, a Women's College containing nearly a thousand students, of all ages, from the smallest of tots to the woman grown. Here they are educated to the standard required by the Intermediate Examination of the Madras University, which passed, if they so desire, they may join the Male College; in fact we have just seen nine or ten ex-students of the Women's College thus working. As Their Highnesses entered the building, a chorus sang the Baroda anthem in Malayalum, accompanied by piano and violins; the Lady Principal, Miss Watts, in cap, gown, and hood introduced her staff, similarly uniformed. Especially to be noted the absence of Adam from this Eve's paradise, for in Baroda our institutions for female education still are forced to employ the objectionable creature. A tour was made of all the classes. A splendid work is being done here, sure to have lasting effect

on the morale of rising generations, sure also to repay the State a thousand-fold for the expenditure involved. A pretty little function concluded the visit. Their Highnesses took their seats on a dias in the Hall, the girls came in, two by two, from the far doors, to bow and march out, charming, especially the smallest, in their shy upward glancings, their frankness of curiosity. Followed an action song. Two or three dozen marched in, took up appointed places, with infinite solemnity acted a day in the life of a school girl who wakes with a yawn, stretches lazy limbs, bathes in the tank, says her prayers, and so on. When they are gone, others come in, still smaller, and with vivid action, show us how, once upon a time,

> "When the pie was opened
> The birds began to sing. . .

More music, and the Baroda anthem again, and away we go to breakfast. Later Mr. Graham, the Resident, called on the Maharaja.

This evening His Highness paid a State visit, with all the pomp and ceremony proper to the occasion, on His Highness of Travancore at the Durbar Hall. This forms the centre of the handsome block of State Offices



A TRAVANCORE TEMPLE

[Face page 96

which, with its lofty pillars of white stone, catches our eyes whenever we drive through the town. A few gilt chairs are ranged right and left of the gloriously carved Masnid, the floor is of marble; on the walls, pictures of the Emperor and Empress, and of the royal race of Travancore. With His Highness were the Dewan, and Nimbalkar. Carriage and four, guard of honour with band and colours, streets lined by police and troops, the State elephants in grandeur decked,—in a word, all the panoply of courts.

Afterwards Their Highnesses drove out to the Golf Links, and visited the Lunatic Asylum. By the way, one imagines that the compiler of the programme is no follower of the Royal and Ancient game, for our horrified eyes behold therein the fact that, in his view, there is obvious connection between lunacy and golf; at least one goes to the Asylum *via* the links.

July 10.

The ladies of Trevandrum, this morning, presented an address to Her Highness in the feminine society of the city were gathered

there to pay their tribute of admiration and respect, with music and garlands, to one whom in all sincerity, they delighted to honour. It is a curious building, exactly like a large non-conformist chapel in a provincial English town, with the addition of a stage, the atmosphere being so suggestive that one looked round for the organ. It is however entirely adequate, such a building as we need sorely in Baroda for our less formal functions.

Mrs. Raman Tahpi read an address to the Maharani, of which the following is an extract :—

Your Highness's munificent contributions for the furtherance of education, your patient and selfless devotion to the cause of womankind, and the high and noble principles which guide you in your domestic and social life have written your name in our hearts in indelible characters. Sectarian considerations or geographical limitations do not circumscribe the sphere of your unostentatious beneficence. The Chimnabai Industrial Home in your Highness's State in as much the recipient of your bounty as several other charitable or benevolent institutions outside the continent of India.

His Highness replied on the Maharani's behalf. He said,—

"I am asked by Her Highness to say a few words on her behalf in reply to your very cordially worded address of welcome which Mrs. Raman Tampi has just read. I assure you that it has given Her Highness sincere pleasure to meet you all here. You have bestowed on her high encomiums ; she is doubtful if she deserves them. She is always glad to meet the women of India, because of the deeply responsible position they occupy in relation to our society, realising too the obvious necessity that the education of women should be developed and widened unceasingly.

Let all that you do be for the service of the country. I am of course aware that the State of Travancore has done much in many directions —especially in the education of the people. About 35 years ago, Raja Sir T. Madhavrao gave me the benefit of his experience here, and my present Minister also gives to Baroda the advantages gained by long labours both for Travancore and for Mysore. It has been a delight both to Her Highness and to me to have this opportunity of visiting your beautiful country, and to accept the splendid hospitality offered us by His Highness the Maharaja. We hope, at some future time, to have another

opportunity of meeting you all. Again let me thank you, on behalf of Her Highness, for the magnificent reception you have given her here this morning."

July 10.

This morning, before breakfast, there were visits to Barracks, and the Central Prison. Still it is very hot. Everyone encountered tells us that those who tempt Providence by wandering hereabouts at this time, must expect constant storms; yet the sun shines, Their Highnesses' good fortune still holding. May it continue to do so until we turn out steps homewards from Courtallum; assuredly we do not wish to motor through forests in torrential rain.

We are vastly interested in the people, so different in all ways from those of the North. Picturesque they are at all times, more especially at the slanting of the sun, and after its setting; for then colour effects are at their height, or, in the dusk. Comes a grey mystery which peoples the world with figures seen in dreams. Morning and evening we meet the inhabitants of the town and country-side coming from the tanks, arms and shoulders streaked with the paste of the sandalwood tree in accordance

with ritual; the men, tall figures of grace, with flowing hair of jet-black, loose-hanging, busy fingers combing as they go; the women sun-warmed and sensitive, fair in hue, rich in curved graces, slender arms caressing ebony locks; the children, rotund with good living—for these are a prosperous people—looking in frank curiosity up into one's face, quick to acknowledge the answering smile. At dusk, with the absence of colour, another spirit comes over the scene. No country can be more full of light and laughter than India, what time the rising or setting sun stabs the dust-laden world with golden spear-thrusts; nor can any be more sad, when the light is gone, and the weight of an immemorial past descends on the East. Then ghosts of ancient time walk the earth, mix with men, some of the figures which cross one's path may be real, some are surely shadow phantoms.

We meet an extraordinary number of people, obviously in an entirely menial or subordinate position, who are able to use correct colloquial English. The upper classes, one and all, speak it with marked correctness of accent. The European, in this part of the world, speaks to his servants in English, never thinks of

employing the Vernacular; and frequently, at a loss for the way back to my quarters after a walk in the town, I have asked the first man or boy met with, to receive a prompt and clear answer in English.

Perhaps the most arresting circumstance in Travancore is the number of, and the honour paid to, the Christians.

The State Manual says,—

"It is certainly remarkable that from the earliest periods of the history of Travancore, the Hindu, the Mussalman and the Christian have all equally enjoyed the protection, the friendship and sympathy of the Native Government, while on their part they have all willingly laboured for the well-being and prosperity of the commonwealth, without any of those fanatical outbursts of bigotry, or the unpleasant asperities and collisions, that have disfigured and disturbed the friendly relationship of their co-religionists elsewhere."

For instance, the honour paid officially to the Christian Bishops. At every official reception, whether in Cochin or Travancore, the pastors of the alien religion have been amongst the first to be introduced to Their Highnesses. Now, let us suppose that Christianity had completely triumphed on the Malabar Coast,

that the Portuguese were still here, do you suppose that the priests of Hinduism would be put in the fore-front on such occasions, supposing they wished it? The toleration of Christianity is as nothing compared to that of Hinduism, possibly—I wonder—because Hindus feel conscious superiority, have no proselytising zeal.

Which leads to another point, to me most astonishing. Travancore, most conservatively Hindu of all the States of India, has actually fewer Hindus by far under its rule than Hyderabad, the most conservatively Moslem. The barrier State of Hinduism has only 69·9 per cent. Hindus, while the barrier Moslem State has 89 per cent.

Partly this is due to missionary activity and the most significant feature of this successful proselytisation is that it occurs especially in that part of India where the Brahmanic caste system exists in its fullest vigour. All agree in asserting, what one indeed would expect, that converts are recruited almost entirely from the lowest classes of Hindus. Unless some extraordinary change takes place in the attitude of the higher castes towards the Pariahs, the untouchables, one must

anticipate their complete absorption, sooner or later, in other folds, Christian or Moslem. Christian missionaries here in Travancore are able to go into the homes of those unhappy people, to urge their acceptance of a creed which teaches the innate equality of all men before God, which offers, moreover, distinct and immediate material profit; for the Brahman who despises, refuses to associate with, the Pariah, while he is Hindu, will meet him in extra-domestic matters kindly and considerately as soon as he becomes Christian.

One would imagine that a Hinduism which annually permits so many of its adherents to be driven from its ranks was a religion harsh and intolerant; yet, after all, what does one know? I read the following in *The State Manual*; the reading leaves me perplexed.

> The 'Mild Hindu' is a term well-known to us all. He is not bigoted like the Mahomedan, nor stiff like the sectarian Christian. He lives, and lets others live. He bears peace and good-will to all mankind. This he is by birth, race, food, climate, and above all by religion. He has deep faith in his own creed, but tolerance to the followers of other creeds is his first and highest tenet . . . . A simple conformity to his fellows in outward form . . . . and a nominal allegiance to caste

rules is all that Hinduism expects of its followers. It is a gentle task-master, and one most easily pleased, as the discipline to be observed is neither stiff nor difficult.

What perplexes me is this. Is the Pariah within the Hindu fold, subject to "this gentle task-master," or not? If he is so subject, why does Hinduism frown on him while he remains Hindu, smile on him when he turns Christian? Quite possibly the converts deserve—many of them—the contemptuous description freely given them by many who say they are but "rice-Christians"; this does not explain things to me. The Pariahs are in process of becoming lost to Hinduism; does Hinduism care?

The General Hospital, and the Women and Children's Hospital were also visited this morning. Noteworthy about the Hospitals are the nursing arrangements. The General Hospital, for instance, has twelve European nurses, sisters of some religious order, nearly all Swiss. To me there is something pathetic in the meeting with a Belgian, French, or Swiss sister so far from her native land, for these peoples, more than most, cherish longing for the mother country; sad thoughts of distant homes must often visit these devoted women as they gaze over the seas whence they came.

This afternoon His Highness visited the High Court and the Huzur Offices. Wide verandahs, lofty spacious rooms, plenty of ventilation, assure that those who, under His Highness the Maharaja, are responsible for the carrying on of public affairs, are well and comfortably housed. The Maharaja was keenly interested in the methods of business here followed, and the Dewan and Vieyra traced out for him the fortunes of several "tippans" —as we should call them in Baroda—from the time they left the originating officer to the reception of final orders from His Highness himself. One notes that all the work is in the English language.

Later, His Highness called on the Resident, and afterwards, accompanied by Her Highness the Maharani, motored to the Caste Girls' School in the Fort. Driving through the ancient city we turned sharply at right angles into Romance. In front, a pagoda-shaped temple pointed gracefully upwards; on either side, shops and houses had poured forth men, women and children, intent on glimpsing the famous guests, sharing in the welcome given them. Figure to yourselves a brown road strown with auspicious white sand as to the

centre; houses red-roofed, invitingly warm; sky of profound blue above, an ancient temple before; and bare-headed happy-natured humanity massed around.

We come to the school building, not very imposing, but in keeping with its surroundings and purpose, under the shadow of the Maharaja's Palace. Flags, garlands, peacock-splendid bouquets, and gold tissue of price; ladies *in old-time costume, hair dressed in the national* tight-rolled style which makes the gravest, the most serious, assume an air of pleasant, entirely proper, audacity. Up a carved flight of wooden stairs, we enter a long low-ceilinged room decorated in letters of gold with mottoes of greeting and of loyalty.

This entertainment at the Caste Girls' School is entirely unforgettable. National dances, something after the model of those we saw at Kollengode, performed by dainty little maidens of a charm unsurpassable and ideal, who moved with classic grace through series of steps and figures, now with slow deliberation, and again with a dashing energy, as full of delight as it was so unexpectedly contrasted with what had gone before; clashing of cymbals, beating of sticks, round after round, measure after

measure, maze after maze, with a constant flowing of gauzy draperies and a constant flashing of shy demure eyes. A thousand pities if, in the passion for modernism which has overtaken India, those things of the past, those relics of that wholly delightful romance which once held this land, should be forgotten. Songs descriptive, songs religious, music, from instruments national and Western, performers of all ages, of youth, from the tiny person who performs the part of the youthful prince who is driven into the forest by an ungenerous stepmother, to the tall girl who plays the father's part; and that other who is the Rishi who magically brings the drama to its happy end, true to the demands of poetic justice.

A writer in *The Hindu* has recently deplored the fact that, on their visit to Travancore, Their Highnesses are to see nothing but Schools, Colleges, Prisons, and Lunatic Asylums, instead of witnessing something of the truly national, truly characteristic, such as devil dances, or similar delights. In many ways one is forced to confess to an agreement with these sentiments. But had we seen nought else, the visit to the Caste Girls' School would alone have been worth the long journey to the South.

So we go back to the Guest House. A Garden Party, especially when official, a State function, is a thing of beauty and a joy for ever. We are in a most romantic corner of India, have just come from an entertainment which has been full of vivid Eastern appeal, are straight transported into the land of pomp and circumstance, of top-hat and frock-coat, tea-tables and cakes, bands and tents, and stiffly correct groups of men and women. Beautifully managed, the function was a great success, of course; the kindly courteous people we met were charming; but—can you, with your hand on your heart, solemnly swear that garden parties appeal to you? There is in them a straining after effect, a transfer of the drawing room into the garden, a brass band where nature demands an æolian harp. You have no sooner become interested in him or her to whom you have just been presented than, a quick change, you find yourself in talk with some-one else; and I have never been able to rid myself of the feeling that that some one else has heard all I can possibly find to say, not once but a thousand times. Exaggerated? Of course: we all enjoyed things immensely.

Her Highness did not come down, remaining on the verandah to survey the scene from a point of vantage. The English ladies were introduced to her, however, and great was the interest shown in, many the questions asked about, the elephant and bison. The Maharajas of Baroda and Travancore walked here and there, talking with friends old and new, seemed to have much to discuss one with the other. The inevitable group was taken by Burke, who had to use his most enticing tones to persuade his sitters to sit—or whatever the photographic term may be ; and, when all is summed up, one will declare that it is pleasant indeed to meet, in such circumstances, so many delightful people whose shibboleths are other than our own.

One touch of local colour I must record. As His Highness of Travancore drove up to the Guest House, he passed his elephants, in line, saluting, their mahouts with hands held carefully before their mouths ; this they do that their breath may not pollute the atmosphere what time their royal master passes.

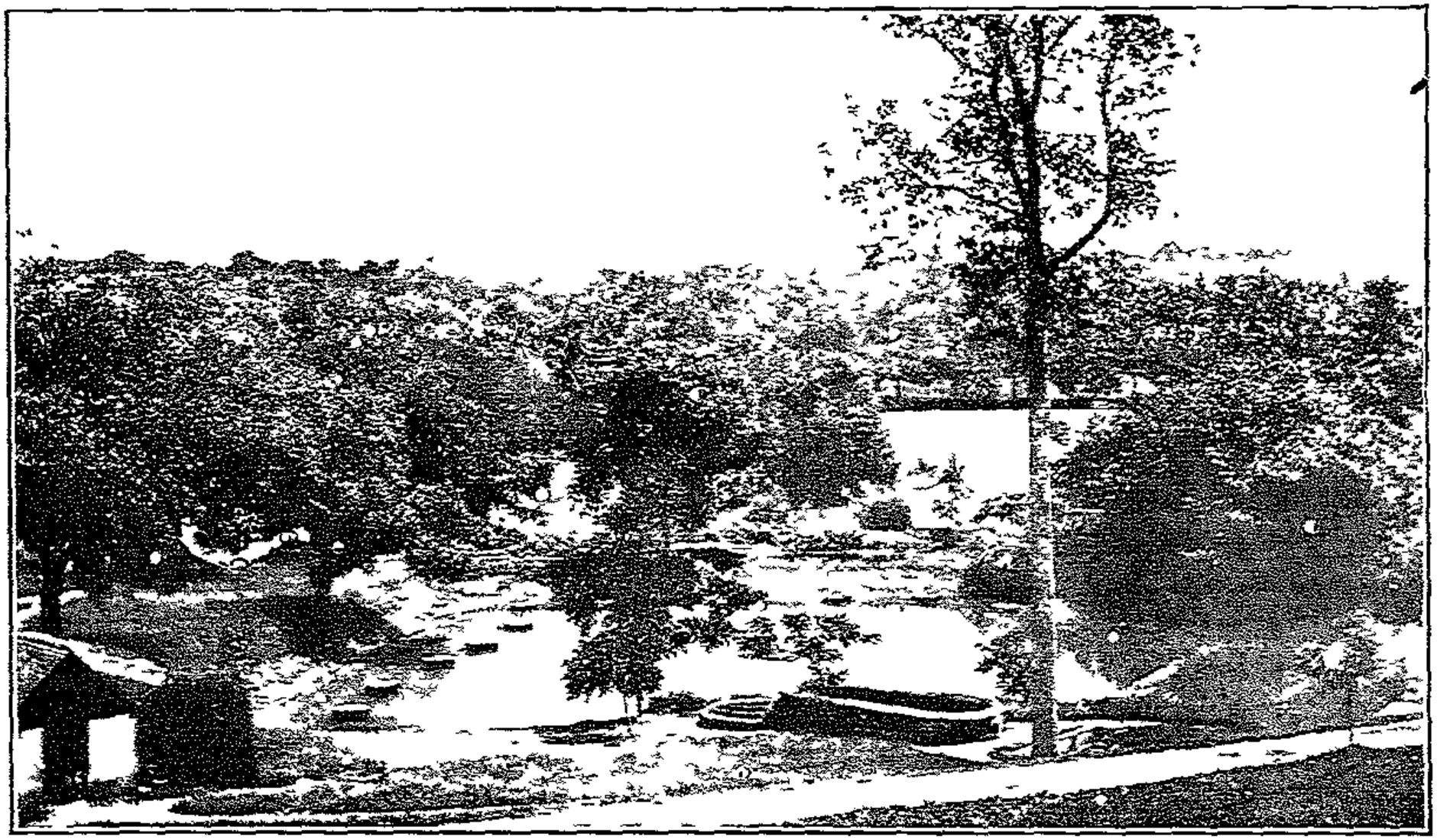
At dinner several English people had been invited to meet Their Highnesses ; the dining room being too small for a banquet, two parties have been arranged. Afterwards we witnessed

a devil dance by a good looking youth, his features hideously green-painted, his head crowned by a nightmare erection of gilt, his legs distorted by mis-shapen brass greaves. Usually these dances are, I believe, performed by six or more at a time, and are then, perhaps, more impressive. The trouble is that one does not know, cannot find out, what the words are which his attendants howl to the accompaniment of the local drum and dulcimer; I suppose they have some meaning, are possibly of very great antiquity, and, if so, of value to students of folklore. I trust some efforts are being made to collect these rapidly disappearing vestiges of old days, before they are forgotten, and the country of their origin knows them no more. Indians, one would think, would be more anxious to preserve their ancient songs and dances than they seem to be; but too often those I speak to about such things obviously regard them as inconsistent with any sort of claim to educated modernity, hide any knowledge they may possess, pass the questions off with a smile of pity at the folly and simplicity of past times. There are of course honourable and famous exceptions. But in the highways and byways of so ancient a State as this there

must be mines of precious old-time customs; think of the possibility of exploring them, and —mourn over lost opportunities.

July 11.

A comparatively quiet day has followed an early morning, hot and steamy beyond belief. In this atmosphere of a hot-house carefully kept up to a high temperature, we walked round the Gardens early to see Vfoyra's famous zoological collection. He is indeed a wonderful being, finding time, in midst of multifarious labours, to direct half-a-dozen institutions designed to add to the amenities of the life of the Travancore citizen, to add to his knowledge. Here in the Gardens, he acts as our most efficient cicerone, with tales to tell of the purchase or exchange by which he managed to secure each animal, having their life-histories at finger-tips, so to speak. Take, for instance, the Ourang-Outang, his pride, known to all and sundry as "Little Benjamin." Ask whence this affecting name: you will hear how a pair was bought, how they sickened and died, how by miraculous good fortune "Little Benjamin" arrived, a puling infant, how he was at once taken to the Chief



THE GARDENS AT TRIVANDRUM

Secretary's bosom, to be nursed and petted into a thriving maturity. Sturdy, incredibly ugly in a curiously perverted way, endowed with superlative strength he is object of vast curiosity to all and sundry. He comes to the bars of his cage when visitors approach, hoping for succulent plantains or bowls of milk; he relishes an occasional cigarette, but discards cheroots; shakes hands cordially with his keeper when in good mood, and, in brief, is a vision of Hercules, distorted and out of drawing. If you have nought to give him, he will, for your delectation, go through his muscle stretching exercises, folding himself in a ball and rolling, massaging biceps the while. The Maharaja's barber went, saw, was conquered; for him at least the illusion was complete, he will ever believe that the brute talked to him.

After breakfast, a restful reflective afternoon. The kindly Vieyra called to take me out to one of his chosen retreats by the sea. We crossed a wide river, foaming past palm covered banks, went on over a bad road, the only one in all our travels in Travancore which fell short of perfection, to arrive at a rock garden, on the summit of high cliffs, called Kovilum. Here

is a shaky bungalow, where men and maidens of a past generation doubtless flirted many an afternoon away, built long ago by General Cullen, now owned by a Roman brotherhood ; here too at our feet is a sandy cove famous for bathing, protected by mighty rocks from the violence of the waters which fret and growl without, in vain endeavour to force an entrance. In mid-July one saw no sign of the monsoon here save that, in the middle distance, a whiteness of foam was occasionally tossed in air above some hidden reef. From the recesses of the car came to light a capacious tiffin-basket ; Vieyra would produce the good things of the earth in abundance if wrecked on a desert island. It is Sunday afternoon, a period which for me has always suggested drowsy introspection ; and the murmurings of the sea, as it laps the shores below, aids the suggestion.

Towards evening we return, to find that Their Highnesses have been calling on the Ranis, and afterwards have gone for a drive. To-morrow we continue our pilgrimage.

CHAPTER VI

Cape Comorin

We motor to the Cape: sights and scenes on the road: Nagercoil: address to the Dewan: Madhavapuram: wind and sea, and refreshment thereform: visit to Vetta Kotta Fort: D'Lanoy, fort builder, prisoner of war, soldier of fortune, man of Romance: phenomenal number of newspaper correspondents: dancers: Bablu: the Convent and Belgian sisters: the rock which is "Land's End": Syrian Christians: Sankara Acharya: more dancers.

July 12.

When first our present tour was mooted, with eager curiosity I scanned the pages of Murray, especially in search of information concerning the mode of transit from Trovandrum to the Cape. Therein my worst fears were confirmed; according to that usually well-informed guide the journey was to be done in bullock-coaches, the road was a waste of sand, fifteen hours or more would separate the start from the finish. He is slightly inaccurate. The journey we undertook this morning was one of luxurious ease, in motors of excellence, over a road surpassing those of Kent, the best in

all my previous experience, and occupied less than three hours.

The engineers of Travancore have reason to be proud of their perfected labours. Broad and smooth, the highway, gently undulating, was free from jolt or jar to vehicles, clean-swept and watered, a joy to the devotee of the open road and swift travel. Through hamlet and town, over streams and rivers, shaded by forests of palm and teak, beside fields green-carpeted with richly maturing paddy, past temple and church, mosque and chapel, we, the fortunate pilgrims, rejoice as we go to the sea. On our left we are sheltered from the rising sun by the terraced fortresses of the Ghats, pursuing their irregular path to the ocean, sharp peaks of varying height alternating with smooth descents in verdure clad. Most noticeable the prosperity of the country-side, the wealth of the towns, the sleek health of the cattle, the smiling happiness of the people who line the roads, making of the eighty odd miles of our progress an avenue of welcoming humanity. If this be an exaggeration, it is but slight. Rare indeed to cover an hundred yards without hearing murmurs of greeting, without sight of waving flags.

We English have to some extent lost the primitive respect and awe which our predecessors had for royalty, for the anointed of the Lord, the ancient religious fear in presence of the depositary of divine right, preserving always deference and loyal attachment. It is thus difficult for us to realise the depth of reverence with which these less sophisticated ones greet the presence amongst them of His Highness the Gaekwar, who is to them, not only a ruling Prince of fame, but also Lord of Dwarka, a sacred shrine. To this latter fact nearly all the songs of welcome—and their name is legion—refer; the material West fails to measure adequately the importance of these things. Most of those we meet in our wanderings look up to the Maharaja as being literally the representative of the Divine Sanction; if we wish to appreciate the enthusiasm which hails him everywhere, we must keep this in mind. It is a country of ideals; Heaven grant it may keep them long, that an abuse of modern education may not cast it forth into the outer darkness of scepticism.

As I have already said some token should be prominently placed on the motor containing His Highness, when on a tour such as this.

Again one finds it pathetic to hear the rising tide of welcome hesitate, check, and die down, as it is painfully borne in on the minds of the waiting crowds that His Highness is not yet come. Especially I feel sorry for the tiny boys and girls who, carefully drilled, stand in long lines in every village and town, waiting to salute with flags and voices; I hope they will not be tired when, at last, the right car arrives; I know they will receive a glad and gracious recognition from Their Highnesses; and am convinced that, when each little thing returns to waiting relatives, he or she, in breathless sentences, will have much to say of the Maharaja and Maharani. At entrance to each village and town waits a group of village elders, a table of fruit and flowers before them, baskets of garlands ready at hand, the senior nervously coming the address he hopes to be able to read, more often than not a band of weird and wonderful brass and drum, conch and cymbal, breaking into tempestuous sound as each car passes. As often as possible the Maharaja's car will stop for a few moments, and one hopes many will not be disappointed. Vieyra is with them, and, with one eye on his watch, and the other on the programme for the day,

doubtless will halt as often as can be managed ; but if every place receives the attention for which it longs, Their Highnesses will never reach the Cape.

Especially to be remembered the town of Nagercoil, with its school and College, centre of wonderful missionary activity, provided with hospitals and dispensaries by the same benevolent agency, filled to overflowing with prosperity. It has a cleanness and neatness most attractive ; its buildings seem designed to stand for all time, lacking that appearance of impending ruin which seems to possess all erections elsewhere than in the South, so far as concerns the smaller towns and villages ; its inhabitants seem worthy, if one may judge by externals, of their high calling. The town, which has a population of 30,000, is made up of a grouping of four villages, now its suburbs, one of them Kottar, having been known in the market places of Rome itself ; it owes its prosperity to the success which attended the efforts of successive Maharajas to induce the weaving castes to settle therein, a circumstance which is attested by the fact that the streets are one and all called after the names of the royalties of Travancore from ancient days.

Small wonder that Nagercoil should be prosperous. It lies on the main way of communication from the Tinnevelly district of the Madras Presidency to the port of Colachel, it is the centre of a rich district, that called Padmanabhapuram, which represents historic Travancore, in which are included the old-time capitals, Thiruvamkod—to the Portuguese attempt to pronounce which name the State owes its designation on the maps—and Padmanabhapuram, with its ancient Palace and Fort. Irrigation plus exceptional natural advantages have made of the Division a huge granary, of which Nagercoil is the heart.

The town is a monument to the excellence of the work locally done by Christian missionaries, especially in the education of the people; *The State Manual* is interesting, in this connection.

"As elsewhere in India the Christian missionaries were the pioneers of English education in Travancore. Their advent in this State was at a very early date of the Christian era . . . . The Portuguese and the Dutch who preceded the English, and who were the first to visit this coast, left but little impression of their influence in Travancore, and the early missionaries, who were Catholics, do not seem to have much

interested themselves in the cause of education. . . . . of late, however, they have undertaken educational work in right earnest. They have now three High Schools at Changanacherry, Quilon, and Trevandrum, thirty-five English and Vernacular Schools and two-hundred and eighty-five Pariah Schools. They are greatly interesting themselves in the spread of female education, and their well-equipped convents are doing excellent work, of which the one at Trevandrum. . . . . gives instruction for girls up to the F. A. Standard. The Protestant Missionaries. . . . . were the first to introduce English education in the State."

At Nagercoil a missionary of the London Mission Society founded, in 1818, a "Seminary", the first institution in the State to give regular instruction in English ; this has grown to the College without whose walls we passed this morning. Here, as all feminine India knows, lace of super-excellence is made both in Convents, and in depots of the London Mission. The Salvation Army is also very active, its hospital, with surgeons and physicians from the first medical schools in the world, doing work of the greatest value. It is the fashion to decry the missionary and his work—at least amongst a certain circle—but when one thinks of the extent of his influence

for social advancement amongst the people one must cease scoffing; here, at any rate, in this corner of India, he needs no monument.

The Dewan received an address here on his way through in advance of the rest of the party. Mr. Madhavarao is immensely popular in Travancore, where his Dewanship is remembered with gratitude, judging from the references to it one hears on all sides, official and private.

As we leave Nagercoil, and on a broad straight road commence the last stage, nearly eleven miles, of the journey to the Cape, a change becomes apparent in the surrounding country. We have left the Malayalum peoples and languages behind, entering now on a Tamil environment. The villages are fewer, and at greater distance one from the other; palmyra palms rise in groves in midst of paddy fields of an indescribable green; from the hills, now descending gradually to sea level, come innumerable streamlets which the thrifty people everywhere turn to profitable use for the irrigation of their crops. A sharp turn to the left brings us to a long, handsome bridge, evidently new, for the remains of the more ancient erection are still plainly to be seen

alongside. Another turn to the right and, passing churches and temples, over a sandy road, we skirt an old tank, a temple edging it, and come to a decorated canvas shed, the usual group of notables within, awaiting Their Highnesses' arrival. A very few houses at a little distance; what place is this? One informs us that this is the village called Madhavapuram, erected in honour of our Dewan, and called after his name. It must be peculiar to pass through a place named in one's own honour, and the man is fortunate who has the experience; well for him too if his name lends itself in sound to the choice of the town planner.

A mile or two further, and we come to the sea, to the southern limit of India. The motors turn in at the Residency, a fine building, two-storied, with windows protected by double shutters and deep verandahs from the force of the gales which, at this season of the year, hurtle straight from the sea, sand and foam laden; a covered way of stone leads to an annexe where we, His Highness's officers, are housed. The grounds stretch to the shore, a stone wall and railing, here and there a gate, marking the line where the white sand

moots the green grass of the lawns. Before us is the sea, nothing but sea to a hazy horizon, swept by the good South-west wind, raised and hollowed by the long ground swell, opalescent under the noon-day sun.

It was hot when we left Trevandrum, hot on the journey, our energies and activities, mental and physical, have been lulled by the warm dampness to a lassitude uninspiring; comes a breath of the salt wind, a realisation of Varuna's presence, benign, encouraging, life bringing.

> All thy ways are good, O Wind, and all the world should fester,
> Were thy fourfold godhead quenched or stilled thy strife:
> Yet the waves and we desire too long the deep south-wester,
> Whence the waters quicken shoreward, clothed with life."

We stand on the verandah drinking it in, forgetful of all else. Truly it is wonderful I count six different colours of a perfection to be attained only by the Immortals on the greater canvases, opal and indigo, amethyst and sapphire, emerald and pearl—and the sun and sky, bountiful of light, over all.

Thus revived and refreshed, we go in to breakfast. The beneficent care of our hosts

has made of this outpost of Travancore a land of milk and honey, far as we are from Trevandrum, the base of supply. Their Highnessos, who started slightly after us, and spent a short time on the way in visiting the Dewan of Travancore in his fine house, arrive as we commence our meal; we learn from Vieyra that frequent stops were made for the gratification of the evident desire of the populace to do them honour; my friends, the small boys and girls, have not been deprived of the treat to which they had so long looked forward.

Breakfast over, a walk on the sands follows, a more detailed study of our surroundings. Square and strong the Residency looks out to the Ocean, as do also its neighbours, the ancient Temple, sacred to the virgin goddess—so jealously guarded against possible defilement that I, the *foreign barbarian*, am not permitted so much as a distant view of its procincts—the red-roofed Dak Bungalow, and the Christian Convent; and the sea, constant in purification, is here, open to all.

This afternoon Their Highnesses drove to Vattakotta Fort, *Vatta*, in the Vernacular meaning round, and *Kotta*, fort. In their car sat

also Mr. N. Subramanayia Aiyor, Senior Dowar Peishkar, an authority on revenue matters and past master in medicine and surgery, surely a rare combination. As compiler of the last Congis Report his dicta on Travancore matters are entitled to be heard with respect; but he has one or two views which strike one as curious in a man of such modern education. For instance, he is a stout supporter of the old fashioned collection of revenue in kind, a system which has only recently, in fact in the Dewanship of Mr. Madhavarao, given place to the now generally accepted collection in money. But not mine here to enter upon a discussion of the rights and wrongs of economic principles; mine rather to acknowledge, with gratitude, the thoughtful kindness the party experienced at his hands.

The inhabitants of Madhavapuram had wished to present an address to His Highness, and were waiting for us as we passed. Accordingly the cars drew up for a moment, the address was handed over, and taken as read, His Highness said a few gracious sentences, and on we went, for time was short, and our programme long. An answer to the address was later sent by His Highness to the villagers,

with an expression of his regret that he lacked opportunity to see more of a place in which he naturally took keen interest. The memorial consists of a well, over which is placed a stone testifying that it was "constructed in grateful remembrance of the beneficent and sympathetic administration of Mr. Madhavarao as Dewan of Travancore."

As we proceed I am yet again struck by the crowds which, in what are apparently most remote places, spring into being at every corner to see the Maharaja pass, to make reverent salutation to him. A sharp turn to the right brings us to a less frequented road, bordered on one side by an immense hedge, a hundred feet or so wide, of cactus and umbrella tree, absolutely impenetrable, which, in other days formed the customs barrier between Travancore and the neighbouring British territory. Presently, in the clear light of a descending sun, we see an ancient wall, with battlements and watch house, approached by a drawbridge over a deep moat; it is the Vettakotta, the round fort built two centuries ago by a Captain D'Lanoy, and still standing as a monument to him. Of him the History of Travancore has much to tell, interesting and romantic.

In 1740-1741 there was trouble between the Dutch at Cochin, and Travancore. Van Imhoff, the Dutch Governor, believed that the Maharaja of Travancore was acting against him in accordance with English advice, and threatened Travancore with a Dutch invasion :

> The Maharaja calmly replied that he was perfectly at liberty to do so, and reminded him of the unlikelihood of such an undertaking being crowned with success, and added that even if it should succeed, there were forests throughout Travancore into which the Maharaja could retire in safety. M. Van Imhoff scornfully said that the Dutch could follow His Highness wherever he went. The Maharaja closed the interview with the ironical retort that if M. Van Imhoff could carry into execution his threats, His Highness would also think of invading Europe with his Munchees (native boats) and fishermen.

Van Imhoff made his preparations, summoned help from Ceylon, and—an unfriendly act to Travancore—installed the Rani of Elayada Swaroopam as ruler of that minute State. The armies of Travancore marched against the Dutch, took possession of Elayada Swaroopam, captured the Dutch factories and all the goods found therein. In the meantime the Dutch from Ceylon had landed at Colachel, a port and

harbour in the south of the State, still in profitable use, ravaged and burnt, and advanced against Eraneel, a rich town on the coast side of the road from Trevandrum to the Cape. Followed the battle of Colachel, on August 10 1741, famous in Travancore annals.

The munchees surrounded the Dutch ship, anchored in the Colachel roads, and watched the landing of men and arms to assist the Dutch detachments then engaged in the battle. Rama Iyen Dalawah's army charged the Dutch line which was drawn up in fighting order against the Travancoreans. The Dutch line was broken through, the officers and men were driven from their positions, and the whole force was thrown into confusion and disorder. The Dutch having no cavalry, of which the Maharaja's force formed the largest portion, were placed in the greatest peril and after suffering much, they effected a precipitate retreat to the fort, leaving behind them several of their comrades dead, wounded and prisoners.

The Dutch prisoners were so overcome with the kind treatment they received at the hands of the Maharaja that they resolved to serve him in any capacity, and were enlisted in His Highness's army. Most of them distinguished themselves in His Highness's service as Captains, Majors, &c., and some of their descendants are still to be found in Travancore.

Of those prisoners the most distinguished was Eustatious D'Lanoy, soldier of fortune from Flanders, afterwards to be Captain of His Highness's body-guard, constructor of fortresses, leader of his armies. One wishes that D'Lanoy had left behind him his memoirs, for they would assuredly be most interesting reading. Perhaps some obscure corner of the Record Office of Travancore contains letters and reports, or some such material which would give information of him.

Within the walls of the Fort one sees how strong it must have been in old days. Built of ponderous granite, slab upon slab, it looks out to sea, commanding the approach to a small deep-water harbour, used as a port to this day. Indeed melancholy evidence of this last is afforded by the rusty wreck of a single-funnelled steamer which caught fire and was run aground a couple of years ago, a month or so after another had been lost trying to make the entrance. Standing on the seaward battlements, looking at the sunset, one wonders if D'Lanoy ever desired his home across the seas, as he, in his day, stood on this spot, and, surveying the finished work, felt that it was good.

We visit the port, which is nothing but a sandy beach, approached by a cart track, guarded by a customs' hut proud in possession of a flag-staff, whence hangs a lantern. The water is deep enough for ships of small draught only fourteen feet out, and a landing stage would, perhaps, be a sound investment; doubtless wiser than I have discussed its possibilities.

Back again to the Residency, and a stroll by the sea before it becomes quite dark. In the midst of the rocks, below the temple, and just beyond a sandstone-pillared erection such as one finds near all temples here,—a sort of temporary protection for travellers or, as here, bathers,—a little swimming pool has been cut, in and out of which the sea eddies and sways, with constant murmurings and chokings; against the high black rocks which protect it, the monsoon waves dash; overhead hangs perpetually a smoke of foam and sea-mist. For the pilgrim to bathe here is to be purified from all stain of body and of spirit, doubtless then the morrow will see many of our party making their way hither. An enclosure has been erected by our thoughtful hosts for Their Highnesses' convenience.

We turn away with reluctance. This is one of the few spots on earth whence one may see the glories of sunrise and sunset without change of position; across the waters the colours of departing day blend with those of coming night, wonderfully, beyond description. The sea wind is damp and chill, the lights that beckon from our quarters are inviting, we will in, to refresh and rest, in preparation for the morrow.

One curious phenomenon there is in these southern parts, the number of newspaper correspondents whose cards bear the names of the dailies of Madras. To the writer it has fallen to interview an increasing number of duly accredited reporters, to give them such information of the Maharaja's movements or impressions as he possesses. I imagine that every other educated man of Madras, and contiguous districts, becomes a correspondent of the *Madras Mail* or *Times*.

After dinner Vijaya has provided dancers of sorts from a neighbouring temple; but Their Highnesses, though they appreciate and enjoy the entertainment, are tired, and the Monsoon wind blows strong and invites to sleep; so all retire quite early. As we prepare

for the night, the roar of wind and wave comes forcefully against window and shutter, to lull to sleep, to be heard in dreams or in wakefulness until the dawn breaks, and the glories of the seascape at sunrise call us again without.

July 13.

This morning, at dawn, one watched tiny catamarans, little out-riggers, white sail bending curved mast, make comparatively smooth progress out to the fishing over waves tipped with foam and the colours of the rising sun; at this season one would not expect them to be able to venture out at all.

All preparations had been made for the Maharaja and Maharani to bathe, but they found the water very cold. The rest of the party took the plunge later in the day, including the smallest, but by no means least important, Bablu, Nimbalkar's tiny son. Without mention of him, and the tricks with which he has enlivened our journeyings, this record would indeed be incomplete. Can you touch your nose with the tip of your tongue, have you ever been able to do so? I am sure of an answer in the negative. Bablu can, and has set his grave and reverend seniors a-laughing

many times, as vainly they have tried; and has set them laughing yet again and again, with this and a thousand other tricks. For which, to Babu, much thanks.

Then came a visit to the neighbouring Convent where Belgian sisters, like those others, heroines of Kipling's verse, with 'glory in their eyes,' are enduring loneliness in exile in efforts on behalf of the orphan and destitute. These three nuns, living here at the end of India's world, are carrying on a technical school which teaches about 250 small people lace making, and the rudiments of the Vernacular. They made a present of some of their work to Their Highnesses, who were photographed in a group with them. Would that some poet of insight would sing of these sisters and their achievements. We made a small collection, and sent it to the Mother-Superior, 'in admiration of heroic Belgium.'

Turning from the Convent to return to the Residency one had a magnificent view of the Cape. The actual 'Land's End' is a small outlying rock, worn smooth as to the top by the dashing of thousands of monsoons, sheer as to the sides, against which waves break in thunder, rainbow clouds of spray floating high

above; upon this crag are still to be found remnants of an ancient temple which, centuries ago—so says Tradition—stood upon it, before some volcanic eruption made the sea to encroach upon the land, and swallow it up.

All upon the landward side of the rock are other rocks, with intervening stretches of waters foaming with rage and shifting discontent; rocks big and little, high and low, black or green with weed; and the white sand, dazzling under the morning sun.

Here, in these sands, is found Monazite, a precious thing, of which nearly two lakhs of rupees worth were last year exported.

Follow for Their Highnesses a few interviews and some reading of books and papers, with an evening drive to Tawkerkonum, the estate of the Consort to His Highness of Travancore. Some of the rest of us visit a Christian village, finding it most interesting. These Syrian Christians have a most extraordinary history, full of romance of fact, legend, and tradition; but long residence amongst a Hindu people has deprived their villages of any striking individuality. Their Church has the appearance of the temples of their Hindu neighbours, and in their intercourse with each other they have

developed many caste restrictions. They will not, for instance, permit a Hindu 'untouchable' to enter their houses; and certain of their women "wear clothes as the Nambudiri women do, move about screening themselves with huge umbrellas from the gaze of profane eyes as these women do, and will not marry, except perhaps in exceptional cases, and that only recently, but from among dignified families of similar aristocratic descent." *The State Manual* is eloquent on this subject :—

> I often wonder at the natural ease with which the Pulayas and Pariahs, particularly the women among them, walk the King's highways and barter on the road sides, as if they had enjoyed the privilege unmolested from the time of Parsurama. So easy has been the acquisition of freedom, so fast have they shaken off the thraldom of ages. I am not sure that those poor people are yet intellectually emancipated enough to appreciate the pearls of the Christian faith placed before them, but no man in his senses can for a moment doubt that they are living a new life and breathing a freer atmosphere. So much has the conversion to the Christian faith helped to raise them in the social scale, and naturally enough they gratefully swarm to swell the ranks of the classes embraced by missionary labours.

The importance of the work of Christian evangelization in Hindu Travancore, which has prospered so well

as to give His Highness the Maharaja to-day a population of 697,387 Christian subjects of all denominations, may be better understood if we bear in mind that the fact is of as much moment as, nay even greater than, if there were 8 millions of Hindus in England and Wales (which according to the Census of the 31st March 1901 returned a total population of 32½ millions) distributed over every county, district and parish, owning 30,000 temples, having endowments of lands, and gardens attached to every one of them, and severally dedicated to Siva or Vishnu of the Goddess Bhagwati, and having close by numerous tanks and rivers provided with neat and spacious bathing-ghats which only a Hindu could rightly appreciate, and wells reserved for cooking and drinking purposes, and groves of the *Ficus religiosa* and the *Nim* tree or their more congenial substitutes suitable to an English climate growing luxuriantly on their banks, with stone images of Ganesa and the snake-gods planted under them, and a perennial flow of devout Hindu worshippers, men in their multi-coloured dhoties and scarves and women in their charming silk saris and velvet bodices richly embroidered with gold lace and pearls, their raven black flowing hair smoothed with fragrant unguents and tied into large knots covered with the sweet-smelling jessamine and the rose, their foreheads beautified with the distinguishing caste-marks of either the ancient "tilakam" or the perfumed sandal or the crimson 'Kunkumam' illumining their gladsome faces, which remind you of the

milky way in the sky, "a meeting of gentle lights without a name", and carrying in their hands on well-cleaned silver basins flowers and fruit-offerings to the temple deities, and all laden from top to toe with elegantly wrought and resplendent jewels of gold and silver, diamonds and rubies after the fashion of their follow-religionists in India, making their morning rounds of prayer and *puja* to their heart's content, of celebrating the car-festival of the temple god or accompanying in thousands the procession of the idol with native music, sounding of bells and beat of drums with the usual accompaniments of torches, *cadinas* and pyrotechnics—all unmolested and unhindered, under the protection of the English police and the English magistracy, and let the reader fancy that this happy state of things has been going on in Christian England from A D. 52, what would be the impression that the scene will produce on the prosaic European mind, and what testimony may this not mean to the wisdom and tolerance of former English administrations since the time of the Druids? The same credit may, I think, be justly claimed on behalf of this Native Government for the present prosperous condition of its numerous Christian population.

With all this one most heartily agrees, I think."

One has time to-day to reflect on the different things one has seen and heard in wonderful

Travancore. For instance, the State was the scene of the birth and life of the great Sankara Acharyar, greatest of Vedantists. Born about A.D. 800 at Kalady, eight miles from Alwaye, on the northern bank of the river of that name, he was excommunicated by his caste, the Nambudiri Brahmans, because he dared to criticise their religious proceedings and Vedantic knowledge, and died, after the accomplishment of great things, at Badrikadarum near the Himalayas. To him are due, according to tradition, the rules which regulate the matrimonial observances of the Nambudiri Brahmans, which, are, says *The History of Travancore*, most rigid in their character. "The married female is not allowed to be seen by any males even of the family or of her caste people. She is to move under the screen or cover of a large-sized umbrella purposely constructed with the Tallipot palm leaf, and is always to be attended by a female servant, who goes before her whenever she steps out of doors. She is not permitted to adorn her person with costly ornaments and clothes; her ornaments consist of a pair of golden ear-rings of a peculiar make and description, different from the pattern worn by females of other

classes. She wears a string of neck ornaments called *Thalikottam*, and a number of brass bangles on both hands. She wears a long country made coarse cloth round her waist, and covers her body from the neck downwards with a coarse sheet of cloth. The costume, the ornaments and the condition of the Nambudiri females continue to this day just the same, without the least change from the original rules laid down for the sex by Sankara Acharya."

In the evening, more walks by the sea, and contemplation the wonders thereof, for to-morrow we are to leave the Cape for Trevandrum, thence to go by a forest road which is described to us by our Dewan as wonderful, to Courtallum Falls, there to bathe yet again, this time in fresh water.

After dinner another party of dancers and their musicians arrive from some distant temple; but, truth to tell, they are not in any way superior to those we have in Baroda, though in our innocence we had looked for something peculiar in this bulwark of ancient Hinduism. Still the circle of dancers, with their backing of male supporters, whose gesticulations and swayings were more to the fore even than those of the dancers themselves; the back ground of a

surf-smitten beach, whence came, with regular iteration, the clamour of many waters; the star-lit sky above changelessly looking down, as in past centuries, on temple, village, and sea; these will long be remembered.

CHAPTER VII

COURTALLUM AND BANGALORE

WE LEAVE THE CAPE: "HIP-HIP-HURRAH" A LOCAL CHEERING: VISIT TO KODYAR: RETURN TO TREVANDRUM: DINNER AT GUEST HOUSE: THE RANIS OF TRAVANCORE: THROUGH THE FORESTS TO COURTALLUM: SCENES EN ROUTE: THE FALLS ON A HOLIDAY: BATHERS; HOPES OF MORE HUNTING: DISAPPOINTMENT AND DOWNPOURINGS: SWOLLEN FALLS: SINGAMPATTI MANSION: AN OBNOXIOUS GRAMOPHONE: SOME LOCAL HISTORY: INCESSANT RAIN: IN A SPECIAL TRAIN: THE RAJA OF ETTAYAPURAM: SOME MORALISING: BANGALORE MUSEUM, LIBRARY, COLLEGE, AND OFFICES: SANSKRIT ACADEMY, AND A SPEECH BY HIS HIGHNESS: THE DEWAN'S GARDEN PARTY TO THEIR HIGHNESSES: WE LEAVE FOR HOSPET.

July 14.

THIS morning, with many backward glances at the friendly sea, we left the Cape. Owing to the absence of rain the road was dusty, and, as the pace was hot, the situation of those in the rearmost motors was scarcely comfortable. Before Their Highnesses left, a happy little ceremony was performed. They came down to find a group of country folk, gathered from villages as much as twelve miles away,

assembled to offer salutation and reverence. Of all ages, from the patriarch to the unbreeched youth, they presented the appearance of frank simplicity, of rustic dignity, which one expects from the unspoilt by cities. Garlands and presents of fruits, the auspicious limes, a few words of greeting in English from the Maharaja, translated into the vernacular by one of the local gentry, the "Hip, Hip, Hurrah"—what would the author of *Les Indes sans les Anglais* have said of these British cheers in the mouths of the peasantry of Cape Comorin?—and we are away.

On the road the same impressions as those gained on our journey outwards, the same admiration for its superb surface, the same surprise at the number of Churches, the same liking for the jolly little girls and boys, bearing under their arms their books and slates, always with flags, this time of farewell, near at hand.

One is immensely impressed with the possibilities of Travancore. The whole country-side tells of riches as yet largely undeveloped, every State paper one reads describes them. Indeed it is a fortunate land, destined to be heard of in the future of India.

Forty miles from the Cape the cars stop. That in which Their Highnesses travel turns off to the right on its way to the great Kodyar Irrigation Project, which is to bring unfailing supplies of water to nearly 70,000 acres of fertile lands, and which is estimated to cost 70 lakhs of rupees, and to give Government a return of about 3½ per cent. After inspection of the work, which greatly impressed them in its magnitude, and the far-seeing policy which has at last, after nearly 80 years of scheming and planning, been brought to the verge of successful fruition, Their Highnesses arrived at the Guest House, Trevandrum, a little after midday, to spend a quiet afternoon, varied by occasional interviews. In the evening the Maharaja went for a walk with the Dewan of Travancore, and at night there was a dinner at the Residency at which, besides Their Highnesses and party, the Resident, Mr. Graham, Mr. Austin, his Assistant, Major Oakes, Commandant, the Nayer Brigade, and Mrs. Oakes, Mr. Bastow, Chief Engineer, and Mrs. Bastow, Dr. Perkins, Chief Medical Officer, and Mrs. Perkins, and Miss Wilson were present. His Highness took Mrs. Oakes in to dinner, the Resident escorting Her Highness.

The State Band played during and after dinner, His Highness proposing the healths of the King-Emperor, and the Maharaja of Travancore, the Resident that of His Highness.

July 15.

This morning the Senior Rani called on Her Highness at the Guest House, followed an hour or so later by the Junior Rani; both spent a long time with Their Highnesses. These two exalted ladies occupy positions of great importance to the polity of Travancore, for under the matriarchal system the Consort of the Sovereign, and his own personal family, have no official position. The Ranis are his grand nieces, referred to in the *Travancore Almanac and Directory* as "Her Highness Setu Lakshmi Bayi, Senior Rani of Travancore (born 19th November, 1895)," and "Her Highness Setu Parvati Bayi, Junior Rani (born 8th November, 1896)." The heir to the Masnid is the son of the Junior Rani, "His Highness Rama Varma, Elaya Raja of Travancore," and was born November 7, 1912.

Both ladies speak English fluently, and are vastly interested in the affairs of the world beyond the boundaries of Travancore.

Visions there are of more hunting, for the Travancore forests are famed for elephants, and Theobald, Vithalrao, and Hakim, telegraphed for a few days back, arrived here last night with shikaris and rifles, travelling by Backwater from Ernaculam to Quilon in a launch specially put at their service by the kindness of the State, thence by motor. They seem to have had an exciting journey, their launch sticking fast in the centre of the big lake, all hands being called on to get overside and push, and, their efforts proving vain, spending the night on the shoal.

Staley, representing the commissariat, and Burke, the photographer, left well in advance, their car containing the refreshments which we looked to find at a spot delightfully called Camp Gorge, at the Western end of the narrow pass which leads through the Ghats to Courtallum. The rest started at intervals after them, Their Highnesses' car coming last, a break-down car following in case of accident. Lovely country it was, through which we passed. From the immediate outskirts of Trivandrum we were in forest almost continuous until, after passing the Gorge, we descended to the open plain beyond. Thick walls of leafy teak, feathery

A WILD SWEET MOUNTAIN TORRENT

La page

heights of bamboo piled on bamboo, high grass intervening ; a winding road now steeply climbing, now abruptly descending, ever and again passing through tiny hamlets where jungle folk, their prehistoric bows and arrows in their hands, stood in curious expectation of the Maharaja's coming, forest guards and officers shepherding them, doubtless explaining to them the why and wherefore of the day's excitement.

In the foothills below the Ghats there had been rain, sufficient to make the roads greasy in places, and, stopping to adjust a choked jet, we become aware of a police car coming towards us ; approaches us an old friend, the Quilon Dewan Peishkar, whom we last saw on the road from his headquarters to the capital ; he tells us that his car has capsized on the road, fortunately without doing any damage to life or limb, though the escape was a narrow one, adjures our chauffeur to be careful—for which I am thankful. We go on, presently to become aware of murmuring sound of rushing water, presently to see it, and run along beside it, a wide swift mountain torrent, swollen by recent rain, straining at its containing banks. We pull up for water for the car, descend to stretch

cramped legs, glad of the opportunity to observe the beauty of the scene. The sun shines through the overhanging trees, and gazing, we see—

the nymphs themselves:
Some by the water side, on bowery shelves
Leaning at will—some in the stream at play,
Some pelting the young fauns with buds of May,
Or half-asleep, pretending not to see
The latter in the brakes come creepingly,
While from their careless urns, lying aside
In the long grass, the straggling waters glide."

Close by are plantations of rubber, tea, or coffee, for I see a signboard pointing to 'Braemar Estate': happily named, whatever the Estate is, for the scenery is deliciously like that of the Highlands, and the stream, in other climes, would be full of salmon, a paradise for the fisherman.

But we must on, for it would never do to break down here in the forests, to be caught by night. On we go and there is no breakdown, and we arrive without mishap at Camp Gorge by the side of a railway line which, romantically enough, has carved for itself a way through the Ghats to Quilon. Here tea and other forms of refreshment await us; we do

justice to them, and presently go on, slowly now, for the road is steep and narrow, the descents sharp and sudden, through the Pass, under a Railway Bridge, to emerge suddenly on the plains. Through Shencottah, the outpost of Travancore on this side the Ghats, where we catch our first glimpse of the Falls in the distance, a silver line sharp-cut in a black and rocky hill side on the right; past more crowds and all the symptoms of eager welcome; past paddy fields glowing green in the rays of the declining sun; and we arrive at the village of Courtallum, straggling rows of poor looking houses, a general air of unkemptness. Turning away from the Falls, whose roar is now plain to the ear, we pass up a road bordered by paddy fields, with multitudes of gurgling streamlets passing through them irrigation-wise, under a green arch shouting welcome; we are at the Residency, another of the comfortable houses which Travancore in days of old, provided for the representatives of the Indian Government. It is dusk, lights shine all round, the compound is apparently enormous; we seek the bamboo dwelling which has been erected for our comfort in the immediate neighbourhood of the Residency. Their Highnesses arrive but a few

minutes later, after a very pleasant journey, to be received by a guard of honour of the State police.

While Nimbalkar and Vieyra go to see the arrangements which the Collector of Tinnevelly, most courteously, has caused to be specially made at the Falls for the comfort of Their Highnesses when bathing---the fact being that we are now in British jurisdiction, the Residency alone being in the Travancore State,---the rest of us settle down with a minimum of friction. The arrangements made by the Travancore officials are such as to leave us with a very lively sense of gratitude, as indeed has been the case since first we came within their genial influence. Harrison, of Madras, the caterer appointed, provides us with a most excellent dinner; after a brief interval in which we discuss the prospects of the morrow, for the local forest officer of Travancore has news of elephant but two miles from the road along which we have come, we retire, the monsoon breezes, blowing shrill through the Pass, lulling us to sleep.

July 16.

After a night of many dreams, caused perhaps by the ceaseless booming of the wind,

and the consequent rustling of the palm-leaved roofing overhead, one rose very early to look round the camp. It is a splendid morning, and the sunrise throws floods of warm colours on the hills, which are to our resting place as a shield and barrier against the insistent south-west Wind. As I look at them, I am reminded of stories of childhood, for it would seem to the imagination that some giant, annoyed at the obstacles they presented to his morning walk, had arisen in his wrath to smite them with mighty hatchet; for here and there are silvered fissures, deep cut by water courses large and small, all however dwarfed by the Falls we have come to see and enjoy. Plainly to be seen and heard from the camp, they hold the centre of the Ghats which, in an irregular semi-circle, stretch before us.

Later Their Highnesses with some of their party go down to the Falls. Approaching them, one comes to a great temple, curiously carved with god and goddess, quaint in attitude; one passes little shops, stocked with tea and biscuit, stocked with other devices to attract the savings of the holiday-making people, groups of women are washing clothes

in the running water below ; we cross a small stone bridge beneath which the stream pours, with roaring and strength, into little withdrawn backwaters of comparative silence where pilgrims are making their orisons to their Gods ; and above, in foam and tumult, in rush of colour, and leapings from rock to rock, the Falls come joyously into the appointed pool, deep cut to receive them, screened from observation. It is a holiday and there are crowds of devotees of both sexes and all ages awaiting the throwing open of the Falls ; a fact which Their Highnesses are quick to perceive, for they are prompt in expression of their wish that all should be allowed to enter to-day, the day of festival, the sacred day, without let or hindrance. The arrangements made for the convenience of the Maharaja and Maharani are perfect but to-day they are not inclined to bathe ; they take keen delight however, as do we all, in the scene which follows. Enters a group of young men ; fearlessly they make virile way beneath the main Fall, there to receive the full force of the descending waters on their heads, with gaspings and efforts for breath, afterwards to plunge

head-long into the pool, to swim to the other side, their bath completed.

You are shut in, left alone with
yourself and the goddess of bathing.
Here, *the pride of the bather*,
you roll in beaded sparklings,
Here into pure green depths
drop down from lofty ledges.

Follows a group of women, old and young, some with tiny children a-straddle on their hips. These do not submit themselves to the full force of the Falls, contenting themselves with the putting of their head and bodies beneath a smaller tributary which, separated from the main water by a jutting rocky ledge, makes its downward way with diminished force. One quite young girl there was, perhaps seventeen or eighteen, very fair and a delight to the eyes, perfectly classical in feature and outline, long to be remembered for the delicate grace of every movement as she stood upright to receive the waters upon her; and there are tiny children, held tight by careful mothers, who emerged completely water-logged to all appearance, soon, one hopes, to be restored to their normal selves.

A very happy choorful throng, with smiles and laughtor all around, dooply interosted in the distinguishod visitors, but most careful to respoct thoir privacy.

Walking backto the Rosidoncy we obsorved the extraordinary procossional cars, built up on massive wheols, carved in grotosque style as to the body, noticoablo adjunots to all South-Indian temples, big and littlo, usod on festival occasions whon happy devoteos oscort thom, with much beating of tom-toms, with hoarty blowing of conchos.

Mr. Hemingway, whose oxertions havo gone far to make Thoir Highnosses stay hore agreeablo, came to call on the Maharaja this morning; in the ovening Mr. Poako, the District Forest Officor, and Mr. Sayors, the D. S. P., called.

The day has boon quiot and uneventful, the hopes of the hunters boing concentrated on the news which the trackers, oven now at work on the slopes of the forest-covorod hills yondor, may bring of olophants. One rogue thero is, proclaimed and notorious, who yesterday made insolent invasion of an estato close by rejoicing in the namo of Kuravanthalum; one knows that Hor Highness would doarly like a shot at him, and great would be the rejoicing

of the planters at news of his destruction. Much depends on the weather, which shows signs of reporting its past good-nature, of preparing to treat us to a deluge ; should this happen, the lot of those of us who are dwelling in these bamboo houses will possibly be unpleasant.

July 17.

If yesterday was uneventful, to-day has been the reverse and, as to the afternoon and evening, at all events, not entirely pleasant ; unless one would call long toiling walks in tropical downpourings pleasant. The Maharaja and Maharani have just returned, both very wet, in spite of the efforts of everyone to devise some means to avoid it ; but, though wet, still quite cheerful and in best of spirits, though the object of the outing was not achieved.

News came late last night that a herd was only two or three miles from Camp Gorge, where on our journey hither we stopped for tea. Early this morning—very early—Theobald and the shikaris went on ahead to make enquiries.

The day dawned squally with occasional showers, and massed clouds on the heads of the hills pointed to the presence of heavy rain

thereabouts. This place is peculiarly situated. The South-west monsoon comes in full force up from the sea, is intercepted by the Ghats, and deposits inches—even feet—of rain on their Western slopes; but through the Pass, narrow as it is, as a rule only light showers come, with a current of air of such concentrated coolth that the temperature here is from ten to twelve degrees lower than that of places but twenty miles away. The Maharaja, the Dewan and the Doctor went off early to bathe under the Falls, the rest of us walking, reading, or writing the while.

Throughout the morning we waited for news from the advance guard, and, at last, early in the afternoon, Their Highnesses decided to go themselves. Motors took them as far as possible, then porters with chairs, until the paths became too stiff even for that form of conveyance, and they had to climb on foot, aided by stout sticks. The news which met them was to the effect that the rogue, previously mentioned, on whose head is a price, had been marauding a Mr. Stuart's rubber plantation, and had there been marked down. Full of hope the party, led by the Travancore Forest officer, Theobald, and trackers, moved on; suddenly the clouds broke above

their heads, rain descended in sheets which made it impossible to see, the forest tracks became impassable torrents. Fortunately shelter was near at hand, and the hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Stuart provided both protection from the storm and entertainment; the opportunity was taken to see a rubber factory at work, from the first process to the finished sheets.

As it was obviously impossible to get at the elephant, and as he obstinately refused to come to be shot, foolishly persisting in moving away from the hunters, there was nothing for it but to thank kind hosts, to seek the waiting motors, to return to the Residency, which was reached after dark. And it rained and rained; and Courtallam received such a downpour as the oldest inhabitant, with the delight which accompanies the telling of experience, assured me had previously been unknown. Vicyra, sitting in front in Their Highnesses' car, arrived without one dry spot upon him, shivering with cold. May he long live to remember the restorative which one, mindful of his patient fortitude, hasted to bring him in a lordly glass. But no harm was done; dry clothes and warm baths were in speedy readiness, and now the camp is wrapped in slumber, save that in one

bamboo shack a typewriter has been clicking to the accompaniment of the constantly streaming rain. That too will now cease.

July 18.

All night it poured, the rain dashing against the wall of my fragile dwelling in a fury of attack which bid fair to destroy it. To my excited imagination, each gust of wind removed yet another strip of roof; each moment added to the pool which had commenced to gather on the carpet beside the bed. The lamp went out, no matches were to be found, it seemed to me that all the world slept but I. Day dawned at last on a saturated world, the rain persisting, sheeting down as though never to cease. Theobald left as soon as it was light, to gain news of the elephants, to return later in the day, sore troubled by leeches, wet through, in general discontent with the weather and the roads, convinced that there was no possibility of sport, for to-day at least. Travancore officers come in, hooded to the eyes and wet notwithstanding, to tell us that eleven inches of rain have fallen in the hills during the night. They have a dismal story of bridges down, and communications broken, and the idea of a

shoot is definitely abandoned; ordinary folk could not make their way into the jungle to-day, to say nothing of Their Highnesses.

A small black monkey, wizened of features and long of hair, seemingly of abyssmal age, in reality quite a babe, is brought in as an offering to Her Highness. It is a *Nilgiri Langhur*, to look on which when first your eyes open after sleep is, in Travancore, most auspicious, ensuring a fortunate day.

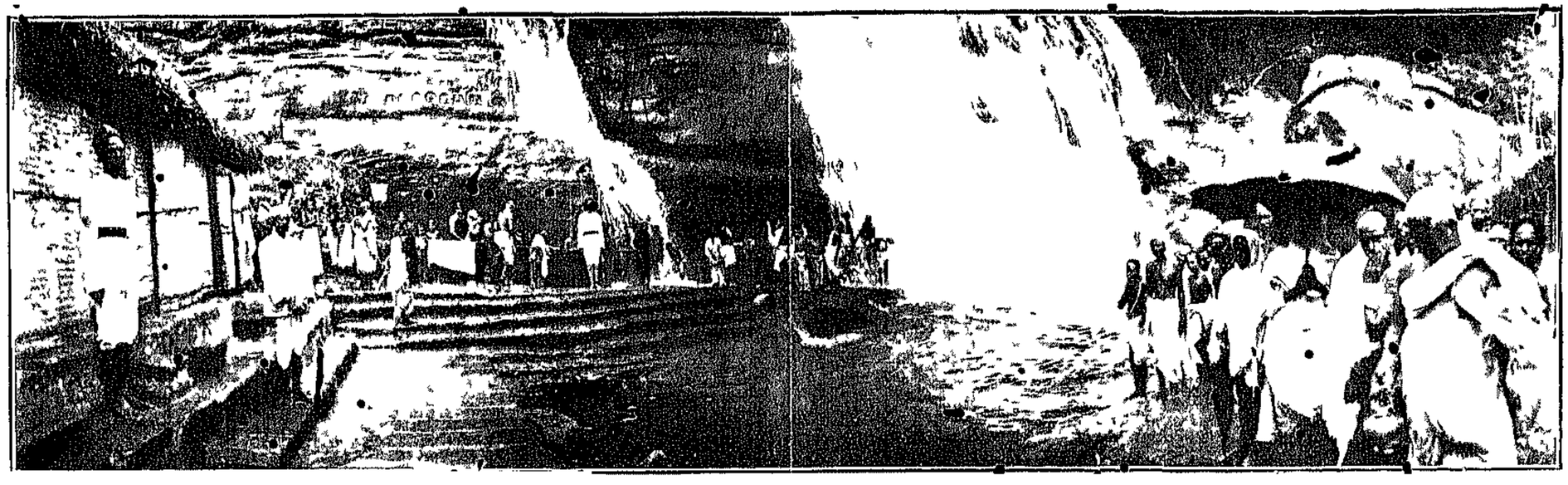
The question now arises, how we are to return to Baroda, whether by Madras or by Bangalore. Ensues a debate on the climate of Madras, one, wishing to go there, claiming for it an unnatural salubrity with which the temperature returns are unfortunately at variance, while another, wishing at all costs to avoid that city, gives to it epithets which would be appropriate to a Miltonic picture of the nether regions. His Highness decides on the route by Bangalore; follow lengthy consultation of time-tables, laborious calculations, Nimbalkar, his features expressive of one engaged on the pleasing task of squaring the circle, filling sheets of paper with hieroglyphics of mysterious import. It is discovered that we must stay in Courtallum until such time as a special

train may be arranged; and this cannot be done in an hour or two. By a miracle of good-fortune Mr. Cross, the Traffic Manager of the South Indian Railway, happened into Shencottah Station this morning, as Nimbalkar was there pursuing his enquiries. I call it a miracle: but, after all, these things do happen to Swari Kandars who, like poets, are born, not merely made.

We are to start from Shencottah on the 21st; and, there seems but little reason why we should not rejoice. If I have failed to make you understand that this is a most lovely spot, I have done my work badly indeed. Even the perfection of scenery, however, will pall if seen through a perpetual curtain of mist and rain.

His Highness and Shamrao bathed this morning, but it looks as though this had been the last opportunity; full-fed by the rain, the Falls are already swollen to thrice their normal volume, and, one is told, given a continuance of present weather conditions, it will be dangerous to stand beneath them.

Close by, almost within reach of the foaming spray, is a pretentious building—using the epithet in no invidious sense—called the



BATHERS AT THE FALLS.

CR[illegible]C[illegible]RLAM

[Face page 14

"Singampatti Mansion." Singampatti is a Zamindari in the vicinity, and the Zamindar came, this afternoon, to call on Their Highnesses, accompanied by his handsome little son. Maharaja and Maharani are to return the call to-morrow at the Mansion whence there is an ideal view of the Falls, which should be magnificent to see, should the downpour continue as it promises. Already one hears an overpowering roaring as of argumentative Titans, lower, more compelling, than the shrill clamour which comes to us unceasingly through the pass.

July 19.

This morning one looked abroad to find a Deluge. Without ceasing the floodgates have been opened; the roads are streams of running water, the gardens within the Residency, the paddy-fields without, are shoreless lakes. But I am glad it has thus rained, for I have been to see the Falls again—indeed I have seen them for the first time, now that they have become real Falls. Five—ten times the volume of water, and a curtain of misty foam covering all around, so that one becomes wet while still a hundred yards away from the Pool. There

to-day are no groups of joyous bathers, for the spirit of the waters has grown to giant's estate in a single night, is no more entirely playful and benevolent, is now in a mood to do mischief. From the heights above, from the haunts of the Gods of the Waters and Woods, with a roar of laughter he springs in air, to rest a moment hundreds of feet below in a boiling pool; thence again a spring, and he tears away the pitifully weak bamboo enclosure which seemed so secure yesterday, in haste to join a mightier than he, even Varuna, whose reckless mirth he is imitating. There is exhilaration in the contemplation of him—there would be danger in closer contact; there is enormous force in the battering masses of water which, in many monsoons, have carved such curious shapes in adjoining rocks, which are carving as one watches.

There are some extraordinary contrasts in our experiences. We approach the Falls, our ears full of Nature's harmonies from woods, winds and waters; suddenly a high penetrating buzz—a gramophone, by all the Gods, and in the very shade of the temple, in the small hut of a tea-seller, listened to by a closely packed and appreciative crowd. From it drones

what think you? It is a classic ditty :—

"I am the belle of New York,
The subject of all the town talk . . . ."

Would that I had had Loti in my company what time that raucous sound forced itself into my meditations there by the side of the Falls, the resort of Hindu worshippers morning, noon, and night. Imagine the Gallic fluency and fervour with which that gramophone would have been consigned to Hades!

I have devoted the wet afternoon to research in local history; one curious piece of information have I been able to gather. In 1751 Clivo was besieging Arcot, and the Nawab of the Carnatic held his position by virtue of the protection afforded him by British troops. In 1755, the Nawab wrote to Lord Pigot, the Madras Governor, that the Maharaja of Travancore had wrongly possessed himself of Carnatic lands in the Tinnevelly District. Upon this, Pigot wrote to the Maharaja asking why he had assisted the rebels against the Nawab. The Maharaja wrote the Governor the following letter :—

It is much to my satisfaction that these lands in dispute under the jurisdiction of Tinnevelly are now

entirely in the hands of the Hon'ble Company who ar my old and faithful friends, and from whom I am continually receiving great favours. From this consideration it was that, on March of the year 1755, as soon as I received a letter of Advice, fro the Colonel, the Commander-in-Chief of these Forces of the Hon'ble Company which were at Tinnevelly, I directly sent orders to my Forces. . . . to retreat to Towal (*N.B.*—the Pass of the Mountains into the Travancore Country) reflecting that it would be doing a great injury to lift up my arms against so firm a friend of mine. . . . besides this there is a District given us by the Aramane to open us a way thr' the Hills to pass all sorts of Merchandise named Chingotta—(Shencottah)—. . . . which you will be pleased to grant me.

But the Maharaja had to fight for his rights ; and in spite of a successful issue, had to perform ceremonies, in expiation of the sin "incurred by war and annexation of several petty states," which cost about four lakhs of rupees—in those times a large sum.

As I came through the narrow pass it seemed to me that there must have been much sanguinary fighting thereabouts in the days of ; it is so narrow, a Thermypolae.

But before all this the Maharaja had secured the help of a transcendental power, by the dedication of his kingdom to Sri

Padmanabhaswamy, the guardian saint of the royal house.

"On the morning of the 5th Makaram, 925 M. E. (January 1750) accompanied by the heir-apparent and all the other. . . . members of the Royal family, the Maharaja, with his Prime Minister, proceeded to Sri Padmanabha's temple where all the priests and Yogakkars had also been summoned. His Highness laid his State sword before the God on the *Ottakal Mantapam* and made over the whole territory to the Devaswam and assumed its management as the vassal of the deity."

There is in this, surely, a magnificence of idealism worthy of commemoration; true it has occurred in many states, both of the East and West, that the ruler, devotionally inspired, has made over his State to his God; none the less, the act, I think, takes possession of the imagination.

July 20.

As it has rained, almost without ceasing, since the 17th, there has not been much activity in the camp. Even picturesquely raging waterfalls tend to lose their charm, clothes feel damp and musty, and we are without means of drying them; the roof of my hut has begun to show signs of giving up its uneven

conflict with the elements, of retiring permanently, every gust removing yet another fragment.

Far be it from me to raise the voice of lamentation; our hosts have been so actively kind, that it seems ungrateful to grumble even about the weather, over which they assuredly had no control—though I am secretly surprised that Vieyra does not attend to this : for him it would be but a small matter.

Yesterday was completely blank, without an engagement, spent with books, of which we fortunately have brought a supply. The Maharaja disposed of some papers, and read a little logic ; and how many rulers, think you, will combine philosophy and the hunting of elephants, will take Hume and Spencer on their travels ?

This evening Their Highnesses paid a visit to the Zamindar of Singampatti, sat and talked for a while with his family, admired the view of the Falls from an upper verandah, and had tea.

The Dewan left us yesterday for Bangalore, there to organise his garden party in the Maharaja and Maharani's honour ; this morning the Doctor, Shamrao, and Vithalrao, donned the garb of pilgrimage, left for

Rameshwaram, to meet us again to-morrow at Madura. Thus we are now a diminished party, and there is in the camp an unquiet presence, a disturbing element, of packing up, of preparation for departure; for to-morrow morning we leave Shencottah by special for Bangalore, a journey of thirty hours. In the meantime the rain beats down on the just and the unjust, the Falls echo the laments of the wind, and the camp has the aspect of one who knows that on the morrow she will be abandoned, will be left desolate.

July 21.

We awoke this morning to find that the rain had ceased, congratulations thereon had no sooner been exchanged than it commenced again, but this time in gentler mood, shadow alternating with sunshine. An early start for the station was necessitated for an advance party, as rumour had it that the road was flooded, that Shencottah could not be reached, that—I know not where Rumour's alarums and excursions began and ended. However Shencottah was reached without incident, the train was waiting. Their Highnesses arrived at 11, half-an-hour before the time fixed for

departure; the rain ceased with their coming, the sun shone, the platform looked cheerful, the kindly officers of Travancore who have worked so hard for our comfort in these latter days were present. Amongst these who came to the station to bid farewell were the Rajah of Ramnad, Lord of Rameshwaram, a muscular figure of youth, the Zamindar of Singampatti, and, of course, Vieyra, the ever watchful. His Highness sent a farewell telegram to the Maharaja of Travancore at moment of leaving his territory, to convey his thanks and those of Her Highness for the splendid hospitality received; we were off, catching a glimpse of the Falls as we went, now a broad steam flashing silver gleams to us departing.

At Tinnevelly, a group of the local gentry garlanded His Highness, and at Koilpati, a decorated platform, scarlet and gold chobdars, mottoes, and the rest, evidenced the desire of the Raja of Ettayapuram to give to His Highness a cordial reception. To meet the Maharaja and Maharani, the Raja had been forced to interrupt a spiritual retreat from the world, a period of prayer and meditation. In the West there are some to whom renunciation

of the flesh-pots is an occasional or periodical duty ; but their number is small, while here they are as the sands of the sea for multitude. Imagine the dark recesses of a temple, and one who constantly is there in prayer ; to him comes news of the approach of Dwarka's lord, and the meeting is at once arranged, the retreat interrupted.

As I have said elsewhere, we are in a land of contrasts, none the less marked that they are so unconscious. No sooner had one appreciated the Eastern beauty of the ideas which associated themselves with this meeting of the Raja and His Highness of Baroda, than a warning whistle announced the imminent departure of the train, and—on the still and attar-laden air shrilled three cheers, exotic, alien, dream-shattering. True, doubtless that the tramping legions pass on, that India remains the same, changelessly dreaming ; but her sleep has some rude shocks, administered by rougher, ruder, customs than her own, suited to an atmosphere of cold North-easters and snow, not at all appropriate to scented southerly breezes, languidly moving.

So we pass on, leaving new-found friends behind; and the train disturbs immemorial

silences of ancient villages and towns, of ruined fortresses and temples, shrieking its way across ravine and river, through ploughland and fallow, lowland and upland, verdant and dusty. Evening comes, and the shadows deepen mysteriously, star-shine throwing faint light on landscapes of a sameness unutterable, pregnant of patience and suffering, full the while of hope for bright dawns and new life. Comes Madura, city of past and gone kingdoms, of temples of unrivalled splendour, where the inward-gazing Past stands face to face with local boards, town-planners, sanitary inspectors, minions of the Present and Future. One needs imagination what time one travels in India; its possession is not an unmixed blessing.

At Madura the pilgrims rejoin, to become mere tourists again. They are full of the wonders they have seen, of carven pillars, of halls of audience where, in ancient days, Princes and Kings did their business, lived their lives, whence now they have passed, leaving behind them no more than their names, and an inscription or two over which scientific archæologists wrangle. I would that I had seen Rameshwaram and Madura—but it was not

possible. Perhaps—but there is no virtue in that word.

July 22. Bangalore.

After many days we return to a land of newspapers and up-to-date information, to electric light and other such amenities. Their Highnesses are in the Palace which the Maharaja of Mysore has placed at their disposal, and we, their officers, are most comfortably housed in the Guest House.

The journey has not been so trying as it might well have been; happy is their lot who may avoid changes in the middle of the night, long waits at unknown junctions in strange lands, disjointed sleep and disturbed days, by travelling with princes in special trains. The one thing we have had in common with tourists of ordinary clay was the change, very early this morning, at Erode. There we arrived about 5 of a hot July morning, the station in darkness, some shadows lurkingly trying to light the platform lamps; another train in waiting—for here we had to change from metre to broad-gauge; a red carpet stretched from the Maharaja's carriage to the other waiting on other side of platform, giving

much healthy exercise as we jumped it peregrinating.

The compartment I occupied would have disgraced the notorious South-Eastern of England; true it was marked "returned for repairs," but it was too obvious that the sore-needed mending had not been done. Noted one thing of excellence, however. The trains which pass us, carrying passengers Ceylon-wards, are built corridor-fashion, even to the third-class carriages, a point in railway economy which I personally much admire.

At last, we come to Bangalore by steep ways which the train ascends with paintings and whistling. Arriving at the Cantonment station at 5, we find again a decorated platform, our own Dewan and officials of Mysore in waiting, cars to remove us and our belongings to our appointed places. The hospitality of the States of India is indescribable, embracing every detail, limitless, untiring.

It is dark, and clouds hang low above us. In comfortable chairs, beneath shaded lights, we sit and discuss past, present, and future; we dine luxuriously; have only to express a wish, a desire, to find that wished for magically produced, at our instant service.

July 23.

I have a great admiration for Bangalore. In climate it is most excellent, in general appearance, as to roads, houses and buildings, it is most pleasing. But it has not got a Museum or Library worthy of itself, or of the State ; at the Library, at midday, I found only a chuprassi in charge, no one to give information. Its College, on the other hand, is splendidly equipped, bountifully staffed : and the Public Offices, which His Highness and the Dewan visited this evening, are perfect models of what such places for conduct of public business should be, objects of envy to us, remembering our own, and *their sorry appearance.*

Their Highnesses had tea with the Senior Princess of Mysore.

A former Baroda official, Mr. Krumbeigal, is here as Director of State Gardens. His is an unhappy position in these troublous times, for, having been born a Saxon, in spite of his thirty years under the British flag, and his marriage to an Englishwoman, he has omitted the act of naturalisation, is the object of grave suspicion to the good people of Bangalore. This feeling is perfectly natural and defensible, in view of the abhorrence of everything Germanic

awakened in all men the world over; it is distinctly an awkward situation for Krumbeigal.

This afternoon the Jagirdar of Arni called on the Maharaja at the Palace.

A telephone keeps up communication between the palaces of Bangalore and Mysore, and, this morning, His Highness had a long conversation by its means with the Maharaja of Mysore.

To-morrow the party divides once more, the Maharaja and Maharani, the Dewan, Shamrao, and I, going to Hospet to visit the ruins of Vijayanagar, while the others go through to Bombay direct.

July 24.

This morning His Highness, with the Dewan and Nimbalkar in attendance, presided at the opening of a new Sanskrit Academy, to be known in future as the Indian Sanskrit Institute, and located miles away on the other side of Bangalore in the Shri Shankara Math. Professor Ranade, of the Fergusson College, gave an address on "Philosophy and the Upanishads."

In reply to an address of welcome and thanks, His Highness said :—

"I accepted the invitation to preside at

"to-day's meeting of this learned society with
"much pleasure.

"At the same time I confess that I was some-
"what embarrassed at hearing that a speech was
"expected from me; on such an occasion as this,
"in presence of so many acknowledged authori-
"ties in Sanskrit learning, I desire to receive,
"cannot aim at imparting, information and ideas.

"From time immemorial the world has debated
"philosophic questions with zealous partisanship.
"Rival systems of east and west have been urged,
"and have made converts. There are no signs
"of any slackening of interest in these matters;
"nor indeed would one wish to see them.

"It is most important and valuable to study
"our philosophy, and still more so to compare it
"with that of others. We may proudly defend
"our own, while always preserving the essential
"open mind which will permit us readily to
"perceive and admit points of superiority—if
"such there be—in others.

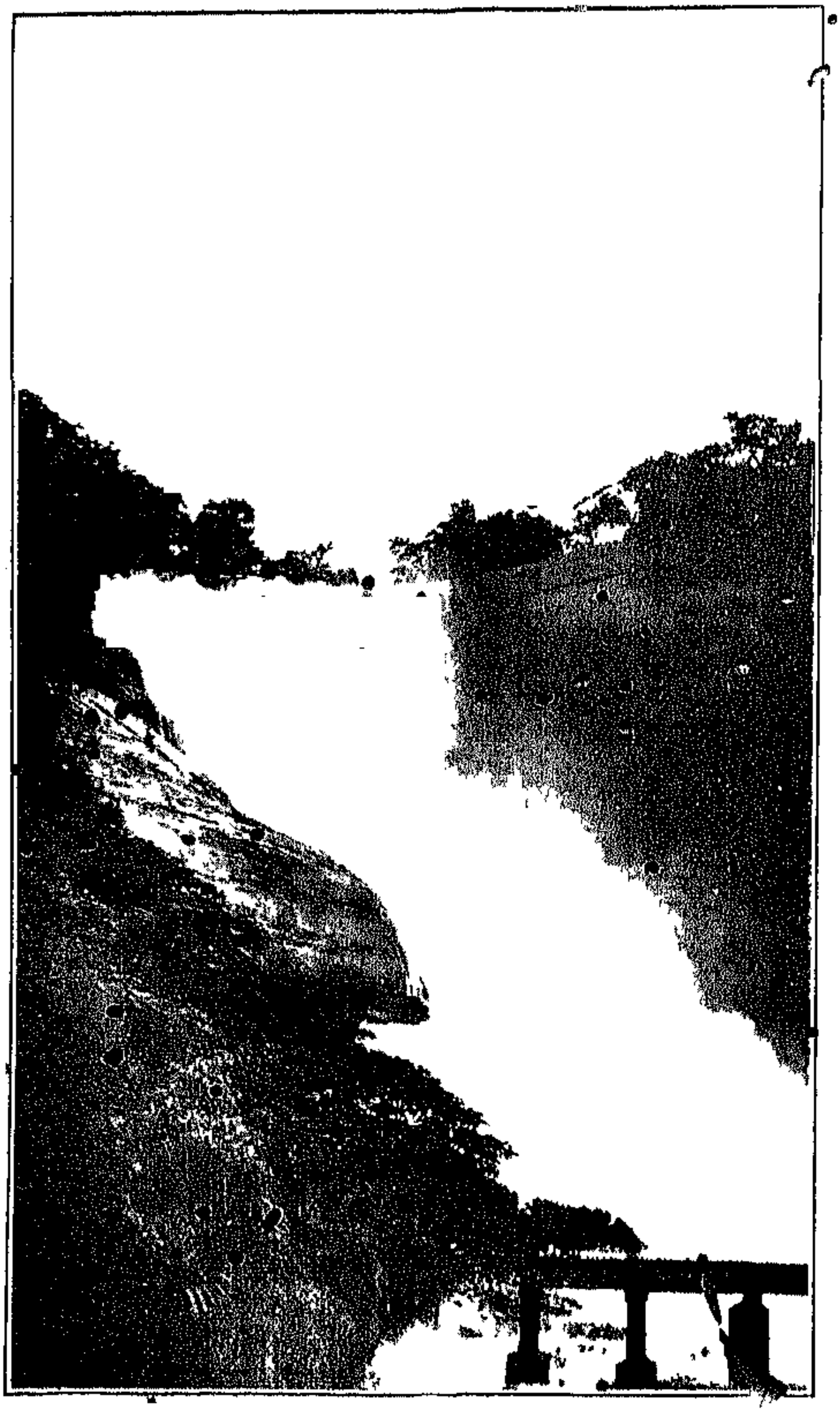
"I desire earnestly, however, to urge that our
"interest in philosophic discussions should not
"be permitted to absorb our attentions so far as
"to cause us to waste endeavour, to neglect
"matters of greater practical importance. There
"is a limit to human knowledge, and these are

" infinite questions. I beg of you to see that
" your labours are productive of something more
" than mere words and phrases.

" Mr. Mahabhagwat has referred in his speech
" to my endeavours in the cause of education. I
" attach the greatest importance to education as
" a means of developing our faculties, of throw-
" ing open to us the vast store-house of the
" knowledge of different countries which, with-
" out its aid, would remain closed to us for ever.
" We must do all in our power to spread education
" far and wide, not only in the palace but also
" in the cottage of the peasant; for on the latter's
" prosperity depends that of the ruler. If the
" progress of any community is to be healthy
" and permanent, knowledge must be given to
" all irrespective of caste or creed. One man, or
" a few men, may set up ideals, may shape
" policies, but it is for individuals, in their daily
" lives and practices, to give them real force and
" permanence.

" Possessed of such convictions as these, it is
" but natural that I should do my best to give
" them practical shape, especially in the develop-
" ment of Colleges, Schools, and Libraries.

" I thank you, gentlemen, for giving me this
opportunity of being amongst you. I wish all



COLISEUM PARIS AFTER THE RAIN.

success to the Committee in their efforts to "diffuse knowledge of Indian Philosophy and "Sanskrit Literature. But I would impress on "you that the benefits of these lectures and "addresses should not be confined to those few "who are so fortunate as to hear them; they "should be published both in English and the "Vernaculars so as to be within the reach of all.

"I thank you for your kindly reception of "the few random thoughts I have been able "to summon together this morning. I have "enjoyed a rare experience in meeting you "all, and in hearing the Professor's valuable "paper."

This afternoon the Dewan gave a delightful garden party at his pleasant Bangalore residence, Patan Bhavan, where a shaded garden, an enormous tree in the centre, afforded an ideal location for the entertainment of many guests of many creeds, gathered together by our host's hospitable summons to meet Their Highnesses. After introductions, the Maharaja and Maharani were invited to be seated; followed a charming entertainment in the invention of which Mr. Madhavarao and his coadjutor, Father Tabard, showed most praiseworthy ingenuity.

From the Convent of which the good father, a truly patriarchal figure, is the head, came a bevy of girls, each bearing a bouquet of flowers; sashes round their shoulders proclaimed the Virtues for which they stood, as they came forward, one by one, to recite a verse in praise, direct or indirect, of the Maharaja and Maharani. Pretty girls,—of a complexion testifying to the healthful climate of Bangalore, daughters of British parentage, their clear enunciation and perfection of accent speaking to the excellence of the education given in the Convent. The Ideal Indian Woman, represented by the eldest of them, dressed in rich sari brought up the rear with a quatrain in honour of the Maharani, the others being proclaimed by their devices as standing for Hygiene, Justice, Art, Philanthropy, Music and Education.

It was necessary to hurry away early—for trains will not wait on our pleasure—hastily to assemble our belongings, to rush to the station. His Highness sent a telegram of thanks and farewell greetings to Their Highnesses of Mysc

CHAPTER VIII

Vijayanagar

We make a pilgrimage to the ruined "City of Victory": Hospet, the ancient Nagalpur, a suburb of Vijayanagar; the way of desolation: the rise of the Empire: its interference in Moslem affairs: its fall: Vitthalasvami, a dream in stone: return to Baroda: the tour is accomplished.

July 25. Hospet.

After many hours spent in the midst of the noises and confusions which habitually accompany a cross-country journey at night in a fretful train, we came, towards midday, to this wayside station in a land of history.

Here an Empire greater than Austria crumbled of a sudden into nothingness so absolute that even its memory has all but passed; here, one day, was a glory comparable to that of Rome herself, and the next, nought but dust and ashes, the bitterness of a fall so great as to stagger the imagination.

The early years of the fourteenth century were marked by an apparently resistless tide of Mohammedan conquest over the whole of India; only the south remained under its

Hindu lords, petty chiefs for the most part, disunited, unable separately to hope to check the invaders of the hostile faith who, with fanatic rage, were bent on forcibly subduing the whole of the country. There was sending of messengers from court to court, much doubtful hesitation, all the symptoms of undecided fear. What could the Hindu Rajas of the south do? In 1310, Malik Kafur swept the Deccan clean of opposition, captured Warangal and Dvarasamudra, went on to the coast of Malabar, there to erect a mosque, to return with fabulous booty. Six years later, Mubarak of Delhi stormed Devagiri and flayed alive its unfortunate prince, Haripala Deva, setting up his head at the gate of his own city.

Imagine the feelings with which the news of these fearful proceedings were greeted by the southern Rajas and their courts; there seemed no hope of the preservation of their kingdoms from a devastation, a violence, beyond words. Above all what of the Hindu religion? Was this destined to be overthrown, to be replaced by that of the invader? The temples were filled, prayers arose from every town and village, from palace and from hut; would not the ancient Gods who had preserved

their fathers save them now? The miracle happened.

Nearest the advancing armies were three small states, Warangal, Dvarasamudra, and—most insignificant of all—Anegundi. Of these the first two had known defeat, had had dreadful experience of the enemy, probably lacked confidence; it fell, then, to the third to take up the victor's sword, to establish the Empire of Vijayanagar, which held back the threatened invasion for nearly three centuries, to which all the nations of the south submitted, and for the soundest of reasons, self-preservation.

Mid-way between Madras and Bombay on a straight line is a river which should be better known, the Tungabadhra. Forty miles or so from Bellary to the north-west this river cuts for itself a channel, sometimes very deep, always wide, through a country of rocks piled on rocks in striking confusion; on its north bank stood, in 1230, the town of Anegundi, known to Portuguese chroniclers as "Nagundym", residence of a petty chief whose family had ruled the tract of surrounding country for seven hundred years. Comes Muhammad Taghlaq from Delhi, himself and his army flushed with the pride of conquest, for Gujarat had by them

been added to the provinces of the Moslem Empire; he seizes the town and fortress, and slays the chief with all his family, leaving not one alive. A certain Deva Raya—known to subsequent fame as Harihara Deva I—had been Dewan of Anegundi and was now raised by Muhammad to be its chief—and one wonders whether he had been a traitor, thus to be rewarded, to be placed on a throne erected on the ruins of his dead master's hopes. However this may be, Deva Raya, guided by his friend and priest, Madhava, while professing gratitude and obedience to Delhi, was wise enough to erect for himself a new capital, putting the river between himself and his northern friends, using it as a great natural protection against them, unfordable at any point for miles.

This new city grew into Vijayanagar, truly a "City of Victory", rallying point of Hinduism, its sword and shield. Because of its greatness, Goa grew in wealth and importance, the Portuguese came to trade, the cities of the coast flourished. According to the envoy of Persia to the Vijayanagar court, the king, "is lord from the frontier of Serendib (Ceylon) to the extremities of the country of Kalbergah . . . . his troops amount in number to eleven lakks."

Fortunately for the historian and the curious tourist, some of the Portuguese who traded were also men of the pen; in the archives of Lisbon and Paris have been found their chronicles of Vijayanagar, its rulers, their greatness, state, and majesty, which are enchanting reading. Hear Domingo Paes who wrote about 1520:—

"The whole country is thickly populated with cities and towns and villages; the king allows them to be surrounded only with earthen walls for fear of their becoming too strong. But if a city is situated at the extremity of his territory he gives his consent to its having stone walls, but never the towns; so that they may make fortresses of the cities but not of the towns . . . . This city of Darcha (Dharwar?) is very well fortified by a wall, though not of stone, for the reason that I have already stated. On the western side which is towards India (Goa), it is surrounded by a very beautiful river, and on the other, eastern, side the interior of the country is all on one plain, and along the wall is its moat. This Darcha has a pagoda so beautiful that another as good of its kind could not be found within a great distance . . . . It has three entrance gates, which

gates are very large and beautiful, and the entrance from one of these sides, being towards the east, and facing the door of the pagoda, has some structures like verandahs, small and low, where sit the Jogis; and inside the enclosure . . . there is a stone like the mast of a ship, with its pedestal four-sided, and from thence to the top eight-sided, standing in the open air. I was not astonished at it, because I have seen the needle of St. Peter's at Rome (the Egyptian obelisk) . . . . The king is of medium height, and of fair complexion, and good figure, rather fat than thin; he has on his face the signs of small-pox. He is the most feared and perfect king that could possibly be, cheerful of disposition, and very merry; he is one that seeks to honour foreigners, and receives them kindly, asking about all their affairs whatever their condition may be. He is a great ruler and a man of much justice, but subject to sudden fits of rage, and this is his title—Crisnarao Macacao (Maha Sha), king of kings, lord of the greater lords of India, lord of the three seas and of the land' . . . . This king has twelve lawful wives, of whom there are three principal ones . . . . each of them has sixty maidens adorned as richly as could

possibly be with many jewels and rubies and diamonds and pearls and seed-pearls. . . . Within, with these maidens, they say there are twelve thousand women; for you must know there are women who handle sword and shield, and others who wrestle, and others who blow trumpets, and others pipes, and others instruments which are different from ours . . . . It may be gathered from this what a large enclosure there must be for these houses where so many people live, and what streets and lanes they have."

Now, be it remembered, Hospet, at whose dreary, sun-baked, station we have spent the day, is all that is left of Nagalpur, in days of old a suburb of Vijayanagar eight miles hence. Looking on its dingy streets, bordered by the usual lines of unæsthetic shops, it is difficult to realise that, in this very place, Krishna Rao, 'lord of the greater lords king of kings,' had his favourite residence, made merry, and did wisely or unwisely; that here lived his wives, and the 'women who handle sword and shield'; that, by those ways processions of hundreds of elephants, bands of amazons, great lords and nobles, kings and princes, soldiers and captains, victors and vanquished, have come and

gone. Paes went on from here to Vijayanagar along "a street as wide as a place of tourney, with both sides lined throughout with rows of houses and shops where they sell everything; and along this road are many trees that the king commanded to be planted, so as to afford shade to those that pass along. On this road he commanded to be erected a very beautiful temple of stone, and there are other pagodas that the captains and great lords caused to be erected." Along this same road we have but just now passed. Gone are the rows of houses and shops, now only heaps of abandoned, dust-covered, refuse by the side of what might well be called the way of desolation; trees there are still, and, here and there, we come across a great stone in startling isolation, part of an entrance gate opening into some noble's pleasance now a paddy field; 'the very beautiful temple' is still standing, a protected monument, under the carefully benevolent guardianship of the Public Works Department of Madras.

A kindly citizen of Bellary has lent his motor for Their Highnesses' use here, and it has been of greatest service. One must not forget too to thank the Collector, who made local arrangements, meeting us this morning at Bellary, to

accompany us hither to assure himself that all was well.

After breakfast in the refreshment-room at Hospet, Their Highnesses, with the Dewan, set out for Hampi, the pitiful hamlet set in encircling ruin, which to-day is all the name that Vijayanagar possesses. On the way they visited the District Conference, which happens to be sitting here, to exchange a few courteous words of welcome and thanks. Arrived within the ruins, with kindly thoughtfulness they sent the motor back for Shamrao and myself.

That a place which has once been filled with light and laughter, with life overflowing, should lie dead and deserted, would appeal even if its history were unimportant; the humblest abandoned village is impressive, filled as it is with

"Ghosts of dead years, whispering old
silent names
Through grass-grown pathways

But, if that ruin is all that is left of what was once an imperial capital, if you know that the mere heaps of dust and rubbish which lie before you, vacant desolations, were halls, palaces, and temples, homes of a splendour of magnificence even as that of Solomon in all

his glory, the force of the appeal is tremendous.

The sense of wreck, irretrievable, hopeless, is all-prevailing. The hills are strewn with fragmentary rock, giving to the surroundings the appearance of some giant fort which has been battered by heavy guns, its walls pulverised, no one stone left secure upon another. Approach the Humpi entrance to the ruins; you will see fortified lines, once of massive strength, now crumbling relics of vanished power; a small temple still stands just within four-square, defiant of time, decorated with emblems of Ganesh. Pass on, through a wide open space, a forum perhaps, into a broad grass-grown highway. On the left a huge Pagoda and processional car, mark the spot where Humpi stands, its few huts and shops existing for the convenience of the pilgrim. The Pagoda looks down on a scene such as is to be observed in but few places on earth, or a Pompeii transferred to the East. Remains of houses and shops, verandahs still in shaky existence, stone-built throughout, with flights of steps up and down which once went the citizens of the richest city of sixteenth century India, to be used no more, save by the

monkeys and lizards which haunt ancient ruins. Proceed, and you come to a rushing river, once lined with promenades of flagstones, still there in decrepitude, affording unsteady foothold for wandering tourist, or occasional engineer or archæologist. Brown water, bank-high, tearing at the black rocks which peer above its surface sharp-pointed; remains of summer-houses, perhaps bathing places, to be seen here and there; on the summits of the low hills hundreds of fanes of all sizes, rectangular, granite-pillared, the sancta surmounted by conical roofs, once curiously carved, now so weather beaten as to have lost all distinctive character. We arrive at last at a wonderful temple, that of Vitthalasvami, a dream expressed and perpetuated in stone, an artistic glory which has miraculously escaped the universal surrounding decay. Great pillars of granite blocks, on which devoted sculptors of a past age have carved the gods and goddesses as they were vishioned by their support massive roofs, severe in angle and arch, rigid, unbending. In the courtyard, a mighty processional car of stone, itself a carven ideal, before it two graven elephants. One stands in the middle of all this to people these waste places with

worshippers; one forgets the beauty of the carving in sympathy with the fate of those who carved, who built, who prayed. While Vitthalasvami stands Krishna, once lord of the City of Victory, shall not be without his memorial.

One has no time, in the course of a brief afternoon, to see the wonders of the place; for there are Palaces, Halls of Audience, Queen's Baths, Elephant Stables, and hundreds of gem-like buildings in all stages of decay, which one ought to visit. The sun sinks beyond the low-crested hills, evening comes on, shadows creep over what was once imperial grandeur, we must go. As we seek the waiting car, we turn for one last embracing look. No! It is not possible to express it in words; one must away with a consciousness of inevitable failure, for how can a passage or two of prose contain all the wonder that once was Vijayanagar, and now is nothing?

Paes tells us of the city as it was:—"You must know that before you arrive at the city gates there is a gate with a wall that encloses all the other enclosures of the city, and this wall is a very strong one and of massive stone-work; but at the present time it is injured in

some places. They do not fail to have citadels in it. This wall has a moat of water in some places, and in parts where it was constructed in low ground. And there is, separate from it, yet another defence made in the following manner. Certain pointed stones of great height are fixed in the ground as high as a man's breast; they are in breadth a lance-shaft and a half, with the same distance between them and the great wall. This wall rises in all the low ground till it reaches some hill or rocky land. From this first circuit until you enter the city there is a great distance, in which are fields in which they sow rice and have many gardens and much water, which water comes from two lakes. The water passes through this first line of wall, and there is much water in the lakes because of springs; and here there are orchards and a little grove of palms, and many houses . . . . going forward you have another gate with another line of wall, and it also encircles the city inside the first, and from here to the King's palace is all streets and rows of houses, very beautiful, and houses of captains and other rich and honourable men; you will see rows of houses with many figures and decorations pleasing to look at. Going

along the principal street, you have one of the chief gateways (the great entrance to the palace) which issues from a great open space in front of the king's palace; opposite this is another which passes along to the other side of the city. . . . This palace encloses a greater space than all the Castle of Lisbon . . . . Going forward, you have a broad and beautiful street full of rows of fine houses and streets of that sort I have described, and it is to be understood that the houses belong to men rich enough to have such. In this street live many merchants, and there you will find all sorts of rubies and diamonds, and emeralds and pearls . . . and every other sort of thing there is on earth and that you may wish to buy. Then you have every evening a fair where they sell many common horses and nags (*rocis e semdeiros*), and also many citrons, and limes, and oranges, and grapes, and every other kind of garden stuff, and wood; you have all this in the street. At the end of it you have another gate with its wall, which wall goes to meet the wall of the second gate, of which I have spoken, in such sort that this city has three fortresses with another which is the king's palace. Then

when this gate is passed you have another street where there are many craftsmen and they sell many things; and in this street there are two small temples. There are temples in every street, for these appertain to institutions like the confraternities you know of in our parts, of all the craftsmen and merchants; but the principal and greatest pagodas are outside the city.

On every Friday you have a fair there . . . . and in like manner a fair is held every day in different parts of the city. At the end of this street is the Moorish quarter, which is at the very end of the city, and of these Moors there are many who are natives of the country and who are paid by the king and belong to his guard. In this city you will find men belonging to every nation and people, because of the great trade which it has, and the many precious stones there, principally diamonds . . . . I climbed a great hill . . . . What I saw from there seemed to me as large as Rome, and very beautiful to the sight; . . . . The people in this city are countless in number, so much so that I do not wish to write it down for fear it should be thought fabulous; but I declare that no troops, horse or foot, could break their way

, through any street or lane, so great are the numbers of the people and the elephants . . . "

"Now I should like to describe to you how they were armed (the troops), and their decorations. The cavalry were mounted on horses fully caparisoned, and on their foreheads plates, some of silver, but most of them gilded, with fringes of twisted silk of all colours, and reins of the same; others had trappings of Mecca velvet, which is velvet of many colours with fringes and ornaments; others had them of other silks, such as satins and damask, and others of brocade from China and Persia.

Paes describes a multitude of wonders, all proving that, when he saw the city, it was marvellous as to buildings, splendour, and population. He mentions, for instance, a certain porch in the king's palace, "over which is a work of rubies and diamonds and all other kinds of precious stones, and pearls, and above the porch are two pendants of gold; all the precious stone-work is in heart-shapes, and, interweaved between one and another, is a twist of thick seed-pearl work; on the dome are pendants of the same." There is a lusciousness in the gloating over details, a smacking of lips over minutiæ, which gives

one to suspect that the worthy Paes was a connoiseur in jewels. The king has a bed "which had feet similar to the porch, the cross-bars covered with gold, and there was on it a mattress of black satin; it had all round it a railing of pearls a span wide . . . ."

Mighty and glorious, then, was the City of Victory in 1542, when the last king destined to use the Palace ascended the throne; a puppet, he was in the hands of Rama Raya, who kept him practically prisoner, conducting the affairs of the Empire himself both as to war and peace. Of war there was much.

Vijayanagar was interfering in Moslem politics, and, in alliance with Ali Adil Shah, Sultan of Bijapur, and Qutb Shah of Golconda, attacked Hussain, Sultan of Ahmednagar, in his own capital. Firishtah says,—

> The three sovereigns laid siege to Ahmednagar, and despatched detachments various ways to lay waste the country round. The Hindus of Beejanuggur committed the most outrageous devastations, burning and razing the buildings, putting up the horses in the mosques, and performing their idolatrous worship in the holy places . . . . Koolb Shaw also secretly corresponded with the besieged, to whom he privately sent in grain.

The siege was a failure, the allies separated,

each marching his armies homewards ; but, if Firishtah is to be believed, the action of Rama Raya in putting his troops in line side by side with those of the Moslem kings was the beginning of the end of the Vijayanagar Empire. The haughty pride of the Sultans had been deeply offended by some failure on Rama Raya's part to show them those courtesies which they considered their due.

Ramaraja also, at the conclusion of the expedition, looking on the Islamic sovereigns as of little consequence, refused proper honours to their ambassadors. When he admitted them to his presence, he did not suffer them to sit, and treated them with the most contemptuous reserve and haughtiness. He made them attend, when in public, in his train on foot, not allowing the mt• mount till he gave orders . . . . Adil Shaw at length resolved, if possible, to punish his insolence and curtail his power by a general league of the faithful against him ; for which purpose he convened an assembly of his friends and confidential advisers.

The league was made, four princes with their armies met at Bijapur, marched against Vijayanagar, lying secure in her girdle of river, hills, and walls, contemptuous of danger :—

He (Rama Raya) treated their ambassadors with scornful language, and regarded their enmity as of little moment.

Nevertheless there was military activity at Vijayanagar. The captains and leaders, under the Rama's younger brother, in command, with 20,000 cavalry, 100,000 infantry, and 500 elephants, were sent to guard all fords over the river; another large army followed, in support; and, finally, the entire strength, about 900,000 foot, and 100,000 horse, the Rama in supreme command marched against the enemy.

With so great a preponderance of numbers, the Rama felt he might well regard the puny efforts of the enemy with derision. But as Vijayanagar had risen by a miracle, so it fell. The Rama was very old and feeble—Couto, one of the Portuguese chroniclers, gives his age as ninety-six—and had to be carried in a litter; one of the hostile elephants ran away from its own lines, dashed straight on the spot whence he directed his armies; his bearers, in terror of the beast, dropped their burden, a body of hostile cavalry took the opportunity of the confusion, captured him, and dragged him, an aged cripple and a prisoner, before Hussain who, in accordance with the gentle custom of

the time, ordered that his old enemy should be decapitated and his head exhibited to the Hindu troops from a high spear.

It was enough. The armies of Vijayanagar, though twice the number of their enemy, broke, and fled. As to the head, Briggs, writing in 1829, gives an interesting piece of gruesome information.—

"The head, annually covered with oil and red pigment, has been exhibited to the pious Mahommedans of Ahmednagar, on the anniversary of the battle, for the last two hundred and fifty years, by the descendants of the executioner, in whose hands it has remained till the present period."

What of the city? The inhabitants had remained unperturbed by the military movements they had witnessed. It was not the first time that the forces of Vijayanagar had been set in motion, that the streets and barracks had resounded to martial music, that its men had said farewell to weeping women, heartening them with promises of much booty. The jewellers contemplated their stock of fabulous worth without a qualm; the priests, in serene pride, performed their daily offices, unconscious that but a few miles away the power of Hinduism had, for a time, been broken, that their

arch-enemy was even now preparing his onward march on the capital.

But the watchmen, high on the walls, spy of a sudden a distant cloud of dust resolving itself into a hurrying, spurring, horseman; come ten and twenties of his fellows after him, stained with the stress of the road, reeking still of the battle; they bring news of such staggering import that it cannot be realised. "What!" the people cry—"our army defeated, our Rama slain, the enemy coming upon us." Even as they clamour for tidings, the defeated princes arrive hot-foot, pale with fear, gather together such jewels and other valuables as lie ready to hand, pack up the coronation throne, and, with their households, and a small body of troops who had been left to do palace guard, hurry off on five hundred elephants to the distant fortress of Penukonda. They did not go in poverty; it has been estimated that they removed the equivalent of one hundred millions sterling.

So it was true, the Empire had fallen, the city was left defenceless, a prey to Moslem troops whose conduct towards other captured cities did not promise mercy to Vijayanagar or its inhabitants. The terrified people could do

nothing, could not even fly, for all animals and carts had been taken. The invading hosts did not hurry, but from the surrounding hills came marauding bands, quick to profit by the overthrow of all order, to loot and ravage, removing booty and slaves to their mountain recesses. The victorious Mahommedans arrived three days later, to remain five months, to leave the city what you see it to-day. Sewell, in *A Forgotten Empire*, says:—

"The enemy had come to destroy, and they carried out their object relentlessly. They slaughtered the people without mercy, broke down the temples and palaces; and wreaked such savage vengeance on the abode of the kings, that, with the exception of a few great stone-built temples and walls, nothing now remains to mark the spot where once the stately buildings stood but a heap of ruins. They demolished the statues, and even succeeded in breaking the limbs of the huge Narasimha monolith. Nothing seemed to escape them. They broke up the pavilions standing on the huge platform from which the kings used to watch the festivals, and overthrew all the carved work. They lit huge fires in the magnificently decorated buildings forming the temple of Vitthalasvami near the river, and smashed its exquisite stone sculptures. With fire and sword, with crowbars and axes, they carried on day and night their work of destruction.

So think that, but for the purposeless charge of a half mad elephant, and confusion on the part of humble litter-bearers, this destruction might not have been, the empire might have survived, the history of the country—thoughts such as these are profitless, leading nowhere.

One imagines the marauders, drunk with victory, hacking at the delicate sculptures in temple sanctuaries, the smoking flares of their bonfires reflected on the rustling stream; distracted priests, terrified people, in instant fear of death, hopelessly concealing themselves in recesses, tremblingly watching the relentless approach of the flaming torches which must betray them to the red death; the screams of women delivered over to shameful bondage, the oaths and shouts of those who plunder with license.

We return to Hospet, and the waiting train. On the road we meet the local peasantry; perhaps their ancestors were amongst those who watched from afar the smoke of the holocaust which had been Vijayanagar rising to the watching Heaven, who from their hiding places witnessed the dragging away of captives, the passing of the elephants laden with plunder of all kinds, from the heavy-eyed beauty, yesterday

a noble's favourite, to the precious stones whose value is handed down to us by tradition as something beyond the power of calculation.

So we leave Hampi. I would that my pen were more ready, were gifted with more power, for the spell of this place holds me fast, and I would pass its influence on to others.

Both the Maharaja and Maharani have covered great distances on foot this afternoon, seeming indefatigable in pursuit of information, hesitating not at all in face of the steepest of climbs, the most abrupt descents. Local officials, both Revenue and Public Works, were in unceasing attendance, were most assiduously helpful; to them, all thanks.

The saloon and compartment which have served as our resting places to-day are to be attached to the Hubli train to-night at the witching hour; we are weary, heads bewildered with effort to realise the unrealisable; we do not propose to watch for the train's arrival.

July 29. Baroda.

Leaving Hospet at mid-night, the noise of the train as it crossed the bridge spanning the historic river woke me; looking from the open window I was able to see that the broad-flashing

stream had changed its browns of the afternoon for a perfect silver under the moon, fortunately at the full. It was a glimpse of a faery river, appropriately coming to one leaving the lands of faery, returning from Romance to the Matter-of-fact.

Remains little to tell. Hubli, with its cotton industrialism, its municipal energies, Poona, known to all, Bombay, in our everyday experience, need no description.

Their Highnesses travelled, through storms of rain, by motor from Poona to Bombay, there to rest for a night in their palace by the sea, to arrive at Makarpura early this morning.

Thus have done, the tour is ended, to be a very pleasant memory of journeying in regions of the picturesque in delightful company, of meeting with hospitality most generous, never tiring.

To Their Highnesses this chronicler must needs offer grateful thanks for continuously considerate kindness; to the Dewan, kindly in conversation, a Nestor in counsel, much is due; to Nimbalkar, most efficient of Swari Kamdars, to the Doctor, skilled Aesculapius and entertaining companion, to Shamrao, goodness of nature and humour personified, to all, and sundry of our joyous company, all hail.

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