

BELOW THE SURFACE

The greatest insult you can offer a man in your country is to call him a liar. Now that is all different in India. Our infancy is passed in an atmosphere of lies; and if we do wrong, we are taught not to confess it, but make lying excuses. We are brought up amongst home influences prejudicial to telling the truth; we lie and are lied for. This is the ordinary routine. Consequently, with the absence of all public opinion against lying, our bringing up, surroundings, the atmosphere in which we live, are totally different to yours; and then you judge us, and condemn us, according to your moral code! Is it any matter of surprise that a man brought up in an atmosphere of deceit, and educated to consider peculation as venial, is untrustworthy and dishonest? Why should you expect these men, merely from the fact of being employed in a certain line, to have a higher morality than that prevailing in the environment in which they were bred? You talk about the bribe-taking, and the dishonesty of native officials, but what more do you do than talk? You suspect all, honest as well as dishonest men. The latter care little for your opinions, knowing well they are not followed up by any action, so make the most of their

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advantages. The former are disheartened, for they get neither credit for honesty nor the gains of the dishonest, and are often superseded by notoriously dishonest men. Your officers all the land over know of chowkydars and patwaris on five rupees a month, paying a hundred rupees for their appointments; of red-coated chuprassies, retiring as landholders with thousands of rupees to their credit; of police inspectors and tahsildars keeping up establishments costing more than treble their pay, and none of these men are prosecuted. How do you make your appointments? You know as well as I do a man wanting an appointment, either in the English or Vernacular Office, goes to the head clerk or the superintendent and makes a bid. If the sum is adequate, he enlists the sympathy and assistance of one or other of these officials. An application is sent to the district officer strongly backed by his subordinate, then the district officers' servants are got at to intercede indirectly as advocates. These measures rarely fail of success. The man is duly appointed, and forthwith he begins to prey on the suitors and those who daily attend the courts, and levies blackmail to make good what he has had to pay for his friends' intercession

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on his behalf to secure him the post. Look at your bailiff (Kurk Ameen) system. Does not the Government know all about this? Well, if they don't, it is not for the want of telling. These men, you know, rob right and left. They get an attachment order, and go off to seize the judgment debtor's property; the latter pays up so as to save keeping the bailiff for days; the bailiff pockets the decree money and reports there was no property to attach! Have not the talukdars petitioned the Government? Have not questions been asked about this matter at the Legislative Council meetings? Have not the people said this work was better done by the Nazarat staff, and to what purpose? None, save an increase in the number of bailiffs. If you acted more, and talked less, matters would sooner be mended."

This is an enlightened native's view of the matter, and who can say it is not a correct view? Still, there are marked signs of progress, and things are, let us hope, not quite as dark as he paints them. There is, as the facts detailed in these pages show, a dark side to the picture, but there is also a bright side. In every province from Peshawar to Mandalay there are, amongst the educated and uneducated

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natives, as honest, earnest, philanthropic, disinterested men as any in the world; and we know in the long run what a little leaven can do. I have had means of forming an opinion, and I assert that there is a manifest difference between the official integrity of the better educated native officials of the present day and that of the older school of a generation ago. There were even in older days honourable exceptions amongst the latter, just as there are dishonourable exceptions amongst the former even to-day; but, taking it all round, there is perceptibly an advance on the lines of honesty.

Nowadays each Capital has its University, affiliated to which are colleges, and English high schools, in towns, and in many of the villages there are English middle-class schools. True these might be made more useful if facilities for technical, artistic, and commercial training were fostered, instead of being neglected. Still, the moral tone of such institutions as the Presidency Colleges, the Alyghur College, the Canning College, the Colvin School, the high schools at all centres, and numerous missionary schools in towns, is higher than anything ever experienced under any native régime, and must, in time, tend to good results. As for mission-

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ary schools, as educators and social reformers, they have done, and are doing, incalculable good, effecting slowly but surely changes the world little wots of, advancing social reform by the slow, silent processes of individual reformation. The way is long, the task is difficult, but there are plenty of reasons for encouragement.

I daresay we do not always consider the question from the point of view at which my native friend looked at it. We may be in a measure to blame, in a wider sense, at not understanding the character and modes of thought of natives better than we do; but the fault is not entirely on our side. Do they try to understand us? The English character is easier to understand, and far less complex, than that of the Oriental. But this is, as Kipling says, "another story."

I will hark back to my instances of some of the natives' ways of doing justice—ways, which I fear me, are somewhat dark. I quite agree with my friend, we ought to prosecute the dishonest, and promote the honest. I once tried a case that had been committed by a native magistrate, where it was obvious that that official had taken a deal of trouble to let off the real culprits, and commit about the only

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one of the three accused who had had nothing to do with the murder. The assessors, very properly, acquitted the unfortunate man who had been sent up for trial, and remarked that the two men who had been released by the magistrate were undoubtedly the culprits. I said : " They are not under trial, are not before us, and have not been heard, so we can say nothing about them ; but, of course, they can be rearrested and committed if the record shows a *prima facie* case against them. I wonder why they were not committed along with the present accused." The assessors evidently, I could see by their open, rustic manner, thought me very simple, and said almost with one voice, " They were not committed, sahib, because they were Brahmins " ; and so was the native magistrate. The man who was committed was a poor chamar ploughman. Anyhow, we had these Brahmins duly committed ; they were found guilty and sentenced. I am not in a position to say whether, in this case, the original *douceur* paid for their release was refunded or not. Probably not ; for as the Brahmins were hanged, there was no chance of their telling tales. This magistrate was never detected, and retired a wealthy man. If only

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one or two of these rascally magistrates were treated in the same manner that Chief Justice Thorpe was, in the reign of Edward III., and hanged straight away, the evil might be checked. Only last year we had the case of a native judge in the Punjab, who had made a pretty large pile; he knew how to fleece the unfortunate natives from maharajahs downwards, and never so much as made a false step in his lucid judgments.

And later still, we have had the scandal of a native magistrate in the North-Western Provinces. As far as education went, this man was a thick-headed, uneducated mule. I had known him since 1874; and if Government did not know his character and his ways, it was not for the want of being told. You had only to speak to the man for five minutes to see that it was absolutely impossible for him to write himself the judgments attached to his case work; he was not only incompetent, he was a hardened drunkard, and notorious taker of bribes. A somewhat expensive commission inquired into this official's case, with the result that he was found guilty of having his case work done for him, having his judgments written for him, and of bringing a false charge of theft

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against his private clerk. The Government accepted this decision, and dismissed the magistrate from the Service. The latter retired into private life with the ill-gotten loot of seventeen years, and—so I have seen in the papers—a *compassionate allowance of 1,200 rupees a year!* This man's original appointment was a mistake. His retention in office for seventeen years had done a good deal to discredit the Government. The policy, under the circumstances, of retirement on a compassionate allowance could hardly commend itself to any one; the natives looked on it as placing a premium on dishonesty, amounting almost to weakness. The culprit closed one eye and said "Wah!"

"So our virtues,
Lie in the interpretation of the time."

The facility with which false evidence can be procured in India, and the unscrupulousness with which false charges are trumped up, is notorious. Nice men, these magistrates, to sift any kind of charges. I remember at Pertabgurh once a man on oath swore to having seen a landholder murdered; said he had been forced to aid in disposing of the body, which had been buried on the banks of a jhil, or lake. He took the police to the spot, and sure enough they

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dug up a skeleton ; but unfortunately for the prosecution, the medical testimony certified the skeleton to be that of a female.

In a case at Lucknow, some years ago, two men were tried and convicted of murder on evidence that appeared genuine—evidence that could not be shaken on cross-examination. The judge refused to pass sentence of death on the accused, because the body of the murdered man was not forthcoming ; it was alleged to have been thrown into the Ganges by the murderers. The accused were sentenced to transportation for life. About twelve months afterwards the supposed murdered man turned up. He had left home and taken service in Burmah, and had just returned on leave.

I mention these two cases out of many, because Sir William Rattigan, in the *New Century Review*, has described two cases he came across in his practice in the Punjab, almost identically the same kind of perjury. So you see the instances I have selected are by no means unique or uncommon. These and similar fabrications are common daily all over the land. A large portion of the criminal work is performed by native magistrates ; and the better class of these magistrates, those who have come in of later

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years, apparently suffer from disqualifications common to the race from which they are taken. They are less impartial, more timid of responsibility, more susceptible to extraneous influences, such as the vernacular Press and the native Bar, and more nervously afraid of European barristers than are European officers; more sensitive in having their cases upset on appeal; and, instead of acting independently, try to work up to the trend of what they think the bent of their appellate judge; hence, instead of helping the police they hinder them, and if they possibly can, they acquit; because, to begin with, it is so much easier to acquit than to go to the bottom of a case and convict, and because there is much less chance, under the former circumstances, of their work coming under the eyes of the higher courts. *Native magistrates we must have.* We have promised the people a share in their own Government, and have, for nearly half a century, educated them towards this end. Right, justice, and financial considerations all demand the continuation of this policy; but I do think greater strictness and caution should be observed in the first appointments to the lower posts of the magistracy, and more supervision exercised over the progress and work of

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subordinate magistrates. More heed should be paid by Government to the reports of their district officers as to a magistrate's work, character, and fitness, and more assistance should be given than is rendered at present in weeding out black sheep. No promotion should be made to a higher grade unless a man bears a character for honesty, zeal, and efficiency ; and anything like proved corruption should be uncompromisingly punished by forfeiture of appointment. We owe this much to the public, the magistrates themselves deserve nothing less. What we ought to strive for is to save our name from being tarnished by the misconduct of unworthy agents, by carefully selecting as good material as possible to do the necessary work ; for, in the long run, the work is that of those who actually do it, and not of the over-worked heads who supervise the doing.

Chapter XVIII

SOME LUCKNOW FORGERIES

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."
St Paul.

ONE day, about 11 o'clock, just after I had reached office, the head clerk came to me with a release warrant, received that morning by post from the Central Jail, and said nothing was known about this release order in the office. It was evident that this release warrant was a forgery. The magistrate's and the clerk of Courts' signatures had been admirably forged, and the imitation of the Court seal was good enough to have deceived any ordinary observer. The prisoner who had thus got out of jail was one Charles Williams, a half-caste. Williams was re-arrested the same night, having only enjoyed two days' liberty. No information could be obtained from him; he pretended to be exceedingly astonished on hearing that the warrant for his

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release was a forgery. From inquiries made, suspicion fell on one Maitra, a fellow-prisoner, undergoing imprisonment for forgery. What was Maitra's motive for getting Williams out of jail? How could he, in jail, have procured means to carry such a project into execution? and how could he have got the papers out of jail and posted to the superintendent? These were some of the problems which required solution. Maitra, it was ascertained, had been employed as head pressman in the jail press, where he had the means of obtaining pen, ink, and paper, and was engaged in the printing of release warrant forms, as well as other forms. Maitra was, it appears, a friend of the jail ticket clerk, and on the latter's house being searched, amongst other papers were found letters from Maitra to his lady-love. So there was a tinge of romance in this crime, the universal "she" being involved as usual. Subsequent inquiry showed that Maitra had just completed his substantive term of imprisonment, and had six months more to serve in default of payment of fine; he was anxious to get his fine paid, and get out of jail at once to his loved one. Williams was a nephew of Maitra's mistress, and he made out there was

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a rich Begum in love with him, who would willingly pay up Maitra's fine if only he (Williams) could get at his Begum to persuade her. As soon as Williams was free, he sent word to Maitra that the Begum was dead! When arrested, Williams turned Queen's evidence, and told all, in hopes of a pardon: how Maitra obtained the warrant-form, made the counterfeit Court seal, and forged the authorities' signatures. Maitra, finding himself in for another bout of jail, made the following voluntary confession:—

“In June, 1868, when in Bombay with the 3rd Punjab Muleteer Corps, after its return from Abyssinia, I made the acquaintance of a young woman, a European, disguised as a Mahomedan. She told me that she had been carried off from Delhi during the Mutiny by a native merchant, and had finally been abandoned at Bombay. She told me her real name was Wilhelmina Rose. In September, 1868, when my regiment was ordered to Mooltan, this woman accompanied me: we went by steamer to Kurrachee, and by flotilla from thence to Mooltan. At Mooltan the corps was disbanded. I then went to Lahore, and obtained employment in the D.P.W. Controller's

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Office in March, 1869. We remained at Lahore until July, 1869, when I resigned my appointment, and we found our way back to Bombay. At Bombay we put up at the Byculla Hotel; we lived upstairs, and occupied two rooms. Suspecting Wilhelmina of infidelity, I watched her, and one day caught her with a visitor. A fit of jealousy seized me, and I determined to get rid of her. One evening, when sitting in our room as usual, about 9 p.m., drinking some brandy and water, I poisoned her. I mixed 1 drachm of *aqua lauro-cerasi* and 10 to 15 grains of strychnine with her cup, and this I gave her to drink in a tumbler one-third full of brandy and water. Nothing suspecting, she drank the brandy and water at one draught, and immediately retired to bed. I made myself drunk and lay down, and slept on the sofa in the sitting-room. The next morning I found the woman dead. I went to the market and purchased a large wooden chest, made of mango wood, for five rupees. This I brought back on the top of a gharry to the hotel, and had it taken up to my sitting-room. When I was alone I placed the woman's body in this chest and fastened down the box. I then went to breakfast, and had the box re-

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placed on the gharry. After breakfast I drove to the Boree Bunder, hired a boat, and was rowed out of the harbour. Four native boatmen rowed the boat. I bribed the boatmen with twenty-five rupees each—100 the four—threw the chest into the sea, returned to the hotel, sold off all Wilhelmina's things in the market, and left for Calcutta by a boat of the British India Steam Navigation Company. This was in the month of September, 1869. I make this confession so as to rid my conscience of a crime that has haunted me since the day I committed it."

It did not follow as a matter of course that Maitra had done all he said. He already expected transportation for life for various little matters in which he had been engaged. He would hardly fear hanging on account of a murder committed a long time ago, and made the subject of a spontaneous confession; but, as a very ingenious young person, he evidently calculated that if he were sent to Bombay to be tried for murder, something might turn up to give him a chance of escape. • The Bombay authorities and Maitra's old commanding officer were communicated with. The former could not obtain the smallest confirmation of any of

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the facts spoken of by Maitra; the latter wrote me that Maitra was an incorrigible thief, and that his present trumped-up story about the Bombay murder showed him to be an incorrigible liar as well. Maitra, though young in years, was old in villainy. When about fourteen years old, he ran away from his father's house at Lahore, and enlisted as a muleteer in the levy then on its way to Abyssinia. During the short time he was with the Muleteer Corps, he was constantly punished for thieving. On his way from Kurrachee to Mooltan, he robbed Captain Basevi, R.A., of some eighty rupees. Shortly after his arrival at Mooltan he deserted, carrying off stolen property. On his return from Lahore, in the beginning of 1869, he was employed in the Controller's Office as an accountant. Within a few weeks he was reduced for neglect of duty, whereupon he took French leave, and went off to seek fresh fields and pastures new. He was next heard of as a standing member of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Calcutta, and freely admitted to the "love feasts" of that communion. Having received letters of commendation from the American Mission in

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Calcutta, he came to Lucknow, where he forged Mr. Conningham's name for 1,100 rupees, for which little mental aberration he was undergoing three-and-a-half-years' imprisonment, when he committed the daring and partially successful forgery herein related, which gained him no little notoriety. Under all these circumstances, I think we are justified in expecting to hear more of this young man, if he lives to come out of jail.

I remember another and far more deeply laid forgery, one that cost the Government a loss of thousands of rupees, and was not detected for nearly twenty years. One morning a police Inspector from Calcutta turned up at my bungalow in Lucknow, and produced two Government Court fee stamps of 100 rupees value each, which he said were forgeries. A man had brought these to the Collector's office at Calcutta to try and get their value in cash; his story was he had won them from a stranger at cards. Suspecting something wrong, the man was told to call for his money the next day. In the meantime the stamps were sent to the Commissioner of Stamps, who pronounced them to be forgeries. On his appearance the next day, the presenter of these

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forged stamps was arrested, but was able to point out, and prove the identity of, the man who had passed them on to him for a gambling debt. This last individual was a resident of Lucknow; he was detained in custody at Calcutta, and the police Inspector in question deputed to make inquiries in Lucknow. I took the Inspector with me to the different courts and offices in Lucknow, and in the course of that and the following day we discovered some three lacs' worth of forged 100 rupee Court fee labels on the files in the record rooms of the different courts and offices. Here was a state of things! and apparently these forgeries had been regularly passed off on the public through the Government Stamp Department for some twenty years.

I will first describe how Government stamps were procured and sold. The Collector of the district indents for all his requirements of stamps on the Commissioner of Stamps in Calcutta. The packets of stamps on being received are counted by the Treasury officer, entered in the stamp registers, and placed for safe custody in a strong room under double lock. As stamps are required for sale to the public, they are indented for by the treasurer,

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counted and given out by the Treasury officer ; a daily record of sales is kept, which is at the close of every day tested by the Treasury officer. Once a month these registers are examined by the Collector of the district, and the stamps in stock counted by him. No stamp of a higher value than ten rupees is sold except at the Government Treasury. So that there can be no collusion ; a man who wants, say, a 100 rupee stamp pays the money into the Treasury Office, obtains a receipt for the amount, and gets an order on the treasurer's assistant in another part of the building to supply him with stamps to the value of the amount paid into the Treasury Office.

It was quite evident that some of the Government Treasury officials must have been partners in this fraud. It is needless to go into details of the lengthened inquiry into this case ; it will be sufficient to give the result. It was found that one Hossein Bux was the forger. He made and supplied the stamps to the treasurer's assistant. The latter, when a 100 rupee stamp was wanted, gave a forged 100 rupee stamp, and sometimes, when a 200 rupee stamp was required, gave two forged 100 rupee stamps,

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and a certificate to say he had no single stamp of 200 rupees value. Naturally the question arises: But as the buyer had already paid the full amount into the Treasury, how did the assistant treasurer recoup himself for the forged stamps? He did so by taking from his store of stamps small value stamps of 8 annas and 1 rupee, to the amount of the forged stamps sold, and entering in his sale register the number of small value stamps taken for this purpose; so that his accounts tallied with the stamps given out to him by the Treasury officer, the values entered as sold, and the balance in hand. The smaller value stamps so extracted he sold to stamp vendors at 5 per cent. discount, thus doing a roaring trade; he and the forger, Hossein Bux, dividing the 95 per cent. between themselves. They had a whole gang of confederates amongst the stamp vendors in Lucknow, Allahabad, Benares, Bareilly, and half over the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, and the man who paid a gambling debt with the forged stamp in Calcutta was a confederate, trying to open out a market for the conspirators in Bengal. Ultimately the forger, Hossein Bux, confessed all, and sat down in my verandah and forged a stamp for me, which I sent to the

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Financial Department of the Government of India at Simla.

The process was simple in the extreme, the tools used for the purpose primitive. On a large pane of glass the forger pasted the original stamp; over this he placed a sheet of tracing paper, and copied in the Queen's head, figuring, and beading device; he then cut off the tracing and wetted the back of the paper, and scratched in the water-mark, with an ordinary native nail-scraper, or instrument used by barbers for paring nails, called *nakhungiri*. This done, he made the colouring material from ordinary bazaar ingredients, and finished off the stamp by brushing liquid gum over the back with a camel's-hair brush. *Black* was produced by mixing shisham charcoal with lamp-black and varnish; *green* consisted of indigo and yellow orpiment (hartal) ground, and mixed in varnish; *blue* was ordinary indigo mixed with varnish; *yellow*, the yellow orpiment (hartal) mixed in varnish. Varnish was used as the solvent in preparing all the colours, and to give them firmness and gloss. The lamp-black was prepared by burning oil.

One morning, when the forger was at work, I introduced the Government Commissioner of

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Stamps to him. He looked at the Government official, and said, "What do they pay you?" The Commissioner replied, "Two thousand rupees a month." "Two thousand rupees a month," said Hossein Bux, "and you don't know a forged stamp when you see it! If they will give me 200 rupees a month, I'll do your work for them, and point out every forged stamp in the country, and tell them how the forgery was done." A sporting offer, and no mistake; but the offer was not accepted.

Hossein Bux told me he had been brought up to this business from the age of twelve. First apprenticed to a watchmaker to learn mechanism, next working as a photographer's assistant to learn all about chemicals, and how to take photographs of deeds, seals, etc., he was called on to forge. Later on, under an Italian artist at the King of Oudh's Court, he learnt all about mixing colours, and finally, taking advantage of his training in all these Departments, he had set up on his own account, and thriven on the fat of the land as a forger for some twenty years. I was fortunate enough to net some eighteen of this gang, get them committed to the Court of Sessions, where they were one and all convicted and met their deserts

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For twenty years they had been doing a thriving business ; but the time came to them, as it comes to all, to realize that—

“Though the mills of God grind slowly,
They grind exceeding small.”

They had sown forgeries, and they reaped the treadmill.

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an opinion "as to the channel through which the malaria parasite finds its access into the blood." This was enough—I opened no more covers. Like Mr. Forward of Whiteley's, the night before a Bank Holiday, when he has served his last customer, I called out "Sign" to my assistant, who was undertaking my duties during my brief absence. He was a smooth-faced, pink-cheeked prodigy of three hot weathers in India and some nineteen summers at home; the type of young man who knows everything and is equal to teach anybody anything. I once heard him inculcating an old American lady missionary with his views as to the line to be taken to work up the heathen to a higher level. Though somewhat unorthodox, his ideas certainly had the charm of novelty. All the old lady said was, "Well, young man, I guess you'll know less as you grow older!" So in the matter of mosquitoes and their haunts and ways I meant him to go to work while he knew everything, and before the Secretariat claimed him. Even if he could obtain no facts, I could trust him to form a theory as to the flight of the "*Anopheles cixicidæ*" (as he called them) across the briny ocean; putting up at Meteorological Observatory stations for a rest and a bite, until

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they reached the Indian swamp, and commenced in earnest on the naked pagan whose only protection against their ravages was a loin-cloth ; a theory likely to be far more interesting than anything facts could ever supply. As to the latter part of the query, about the parasite's pathway through cuticles to blood, I suggested that he might sleep out on the banks of a swamp for a week, without mosquito curtains, and then come in and be looked over by the Civil surgeon with a microscope in the Dispensary dissecting-room, and afterwards have himself sprinkled over with a solution of quinine. As he was a young man with no sense of humour, and took life and himself seriously, he went off to his labours with as great glee as I went off on my holiday tour. The joy to have left behind the voluble vakils, the droning munshi, the monotonous cry of "Nubby Bux Hazr-hai," the hourly clang of the cracked police gong, and the shrill screeching of the brain-fever bird. The joy of a night under canvas in a forest cutting, beneath a clear, starry sky, where the near bark of a cheetal or the distant call of a sambur fell faintly on one's drowsy ear.

The awakening next morning from such refreshing sleep as a charpoy in the forest affords;

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the plunge into the calm waters of the snow-fed mountain stream, and an appetite for breakfast unknown for many a long day; the pipe after breakfast, as one sits on an upturned bucket watching the horses being groomed; the ramble through the woods after jungle fowl; the sudden coming on the broad river where the only living thing in view was a huge alligator basking in the mid-day sun on the edge of a sandbank, all around "as silent as the water's voiceless flow"; and in the distance against the sky the lofty peaks of the Snowy Range! The peace, the charm, the spell of such a scene cannot be portrayed in words. Wandering homeward, as I crossed a murmuring stream and came out on a rising glade, on a projecting woodland knoll, under a solitary bhur tree, I came upon the ruins of a rude jungle shrine, which sent one's thoughts back to far-off times, when the rude Tanganoi, before the Rajput inroad or the Islamic conquest, were in these parts, rearing stout little Tanghan ponies. Did they build this shrine? or was it the tribute of some Mongolian Tharus of later date to their jungle goddess, as with axe and sword they cleared these jungle haunts? Who can tell—

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“Whose were the hands that toiled this pile to raise
Of rough-hewn stone in long-forgotten days?
To what wild music sung, in what strange tongue,
The forest folk their uncouth idols praise?”

As the shadows began to lengthen and the sun dipped down behind the distant range of snows, I roamed campward through the ever-darkening wood. As I smoked my pipe after dinner, watching the camp fires here and there about the precincts of the camp, I felt that it was selfish to enjoy these delights alone. I also felt it would be too rude a shock to drop clean away back into the outer, work-a-day world from this draught of the exquisite beauties of surrounding nature. So I wrote off and asked Capper and Stuart of the East Lancashires, then stationed at Sitapur, to come and share my forest joys, and have a shoot; and, remembering the catastrophe at Sohelwa, thought it prudent to invite the Civil surgeon to make one of our party for the inside of a week.

They came. Grunting Kahars, armed with evil-smelling torches, carried them in palkis across vast plains of sand to the Chowkha's banks, and thence through swamp and forest they rode on elephants. They arrived in camp in misty dawn, fairly numb with cold; but a

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blazing log fire and some hot coffee soon revived them. A bath, then breakfast, and we were in our howdahs and off, little dreaming of the surprise the kind Fates had in store for us.

"Inshalla!" the Fates are kind at times! The order of the day was to shoot at everything that got up. We first beat over some neighbouring low Kadir jungle for gond—got a couple. About noon, after crossing a maidan, where some small herd boys were tending buffaloes, we came to a long piece of low, swampy grass, about two miles in length by two hundred yards broad, running right away to the main block of forest. We had seventeen elephants in line.

For a mile we plodded slowly along our oozy way, shooting pea fowl, swamp partridge, parah and pig, shouting to each other, and every few minutes shedding a native from the howdah-back, to pick up the game,—when all of a sudden a large tiger, who had been taking his mid-day siesta after a gorge of pig, and had slept soundly through all the approaching din, sprang up, and with a loud roar charged through the line. He had made a "drowsy" mistake, for the line cut him off from the forest behind, and before him, beyond the grass we had come through, was only high, open ground, and no

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cover to speak of. Wheeling the line right about, we followed him up as fast as we could. Firing a volley into the moving grass some thirty yards ahead, a chance shot planted a smooth 12-bore bullet into the tiger's spine. His rage as he roared and tore up the ground with his teeth was a sight to behold. We bagged him and padded him, and started back to camp, which we reached just before nightfall.

After a pleasant day, we spent a pleasant evening, relating tales of bygone exploits. Capper's theme was the delights of the best and fastest of polo games; the virtues of his two ponies, Gibraltar Kitten and Cyprus Rat; and a polo helmet he was going to patent and call "Bob's Bahadur." Stuart, who was qualifying for a gymnasium instructor, thought that to form the apex of a human triangle of "Tommies" on a barrack table was the next most exciting situation to tiger-shooting.

Then the Doctor spoke. He said: "Look here, you chaps; here was a hand I had dealt me at piquet the other night. Queen, knave, ten of spades. Queen, knave ten of hearts. King, queen, knave of clubs, and ace, king of diamonds. I was elder hand. Now what would have been your discard?" We got out

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a pack of cards, placed the cards on a teapoy, and studied the hand by the light of a hurricane lamp. Our unanimous discard was knave and ten of hearts, knave of clubs, and king and ten of diamonds.

"Not a bit of it," he replied. "I discarded king and knave of clubs, and ace, king, ten of diamonds, and drew in ace and king of spades, ace and king of hearts and ten of clubs, and scored 154." We sighed with envy, and said, "But how did you know what you were going to draw in?" "Ah," he said, "it's a wicked world. This was the last hand in the game, and my last chance of saving my rubicon. One had to make a bid—that's where the brilliant player comes in!" We put away the cards, sent away the lantern, and didn't offer to play him piquet at rupee points, or any other points.

My own humble reminiscences went back to when I was quartered at Cawnpore in 1859 with the 1st Dumpies, of "Our Bobbery pack!" consisting of dogs, belonging to the officers and men of the Regiment, with which we hunted the wily jackal. Of our "Tent Club" doings, over the pig jungle at Tannah on the opposite side of the Ganges, in the Unao district, where for

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miles the low-lying Kadir country was covered with patches of grass and thorn jungle. The river was crossed, in those days, by a bridge of boats just above the ghat where the Nana treacherously assassinated Wheeler's garrison, and with in sight of the ruins of the "slaughter house" where the unfortunate women and children were cruelly done to death.

My tales were evidently being swallowed with many grains of salt; so I rubbed it in, that a good burst across country, over rat holes, blind wells, hidden banks, and invisible watercourses, with, at the end, a spear thrust into a charging boar, was, as are the Eternal Snows to the snow on a lodging-house doorstep, as pigsticking is to the shooting a skulking tiger from a howdah. Still my audience bore me no malice, only asked for another pull at the hot grog.

We spent a very enjoyable week after part-ridge, hare, snipe, duck, cheetal, and gond, until the time came for our return, when we did thirty miles after dinner on pad elephants to catch the 6 a.m. train at Kheri. A ride to be remembered—our mahouts hadn't bathed or changed their linen for about a month, had driven during the day, and slept at night in the same garments for over a week. A mahout,

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in these conditions, is not a savoury morsel to sit behind in a head wind; he can give an ordinary Mahomedan a dead rat in his pocket, and win in a canter. Fortunately the frosty air somewhat froze the scent—a scent that Piesse & Lubin could not possibly procure any sale for, however well advertised; an odour mixture fit only for killing beetles in your larder, and even then the public would probably prefer the beetles to the cure. This was not all we had to suffer. The cold had given some of the mahouts chest splutterings, which when freely indulged in reminded one of the sounds one hears amongst the passengers of a Channel steamer on a rough crossing. But it came to an end at last—this evil-smelling, throat-choking ride—and our recreation days were over and past—

“As a camp that is struck, as a
Tent that is gathered and gone
From the sands that were lamplit at eve,
And at morning are level and lone.”

Chapter XX

THE DUMPY MUTINY AT ALLAHABAD

"The Cottage is sure to suffer for every error of the Court, the Cabinet, or the Camp."—*Cotton*.

ON the principle that sometimes "the first is last, and the last first," this, really the first of my Indian experiences, comes last, because the other chapters all deal, more or less, with a different subject, so the "Dumpies" had to wait.

It was the end of 1858, a batch of "griffs"—that is, youngsters of about seventeen years of age—had just landed in Calcutta from the P. & O. steamer *Bengal*; they were located temporarily with friends and relations in and about Chowringhee, until posted and sent off to Regiments up-country. One of them had been that morning to the Fort Adjutant at Fort William to find out our several destinations. Got up in bright new uniform of light-blue

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and silver, he was ushered into the busy Fort Adjutant's room. "Oh, yes, Mr. Shakespeare," said that functionary; "just arrived by the *Bengal*, I presume? Had a good voyage? You want to know where you are posted? Well, the two Bengal Cavalry subalterns by this mail proceed at once to Allahabad, to the 1st European Bengal Light Cavalry. Here are your passes. You can get as far as Ranigunge by rail, after that you travel by dak." This was more or less Hebrew to Shakespeare; he grasped how he was to get to Ranigunge, but it was some 500 miles from there to Allahabad, and he hadn't the remotest idea what kind of an animal a "dak" was—had never heard of one. So he began to stammer something about "how he was to get on from Ranigunge?" The Fort Adjutant, who was busy, said curtly, "Good-morning, sir" "I beg your pardon, sir," said Shakespeare, "but how am I to proceed from Ranigunge?" "I've told you, sir, already," said the Adjutant; "lay a dak." Shakespeare, looking at him with mouth and eyes wide open, replied: "Lay a dak! You might as well tell me to lay an egg! What is a dak?" This was too much for the Adjutant, who, in roars of laughter,

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turned him out and said, "Go and ask your grandmother."

Shakespeare returned with the orders and passes and somewhat of a worried look. But with the aid of relations, friends, and advisers, letters were written to the magistrate at Rangunee, and a "dak" duly laid. We started together, Shakespeare and I, reaching Rangunee early one winter morning. Here we put up in a small whitewashed room, had a bath, which consisted of sitting on a board and getting a bhisti to souse us with water from his "mashak," breakfasted off a spatchcock murghi, a tough old cock that had been hunted round the compound and caught for cooking just after our arrival; he was all spurs and sinews, and about as toothsome as a piece of dry wood. At 4 p.m. the dak arrived.

Ah, the first experience of the "dak" we had been told to "lay"! Railways now have pretty well superseded that mode of travelling, but at what loss of experience to the Western traveller! The said "dak" consisted of (1) a kind of horse-box with sliding doors, with a ledge in front for drinks, baccy pouches, and commissariat supplies—a network kind of "sponge bag" hanging from the ceiling for

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odds and ends—a dirty wool-filled mattress laid across the inside. On this mattress we placed our pillows and rugs, and made up a kind of bed. (2) Two ill-fed ponies, dotted about with bursatee marks and tied up with rotten country harness, rusty buckles, and pieces of rope and string, bred apparently to do their level best to avoid the purpose for which they were created. (3) A Jehu with one eye, a blanket and a horn, and a lean-looking coolie for syce, full dressed in a waistcloth. The harnessing of these ponies to the dak-gharry was an acquired art. This accomplished, the Jehu took his seat, the syce dragged at the ponies' mouths, the dak bungalow servants shoved at the wheels, the Jehu blew his horn, all the natives shouted, the ponies turned round and looked into the gharry! No, we were not off yet, not for some time; but once we started to the sounds of whacks, horn-blowing, and shouts, we went for some six or seven miles headlong, as though it were the Derby. Then a change of ponies, and so on, with intervals of racing speed, post-horn, sullen obstructiveness, and jibbings on the ponies' side, good, round, native abuse and persuasive whacks on the Jehu's side.

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It was a case of about eighty miles a day, with an occasional stop now and again owing to the axles getting heated, and a pull up at the first roadside village to pour garrahs of water over said axles, a halt for some hours at a roadside bungalow, the same kind of dry old fowl for every meal, and the same old smoked buffalo milk with our tea. On the fourth day we caught up a traveller who was going north and had started from Ranigunge some twelve hours before us. Our dak-gharries for this stage arrived about the same time; the stranger was ready to start, we were not, so we let him go ahead. It's a funny world—one in which it is as well to be sometimes a bit late. That night the stranger, as he was approaching the Soan River, ran against a roving band of mutineers, was pulled out of his gharry, and had his throat cut. Some hours later, as we arrived at the same spot, we found the road patrolled by some of the 77th, who were encamped on the further bank of the Soan, who kindly took us children under their protection, and would not let us proceed on to Benares until the road was proclaimed all safe for travellers. Very nice and kind they were to us, and initiated us into

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mysteries which had no place in our nursery or school experiences.

Our journey to Allahabad was safely concluded, and we were at once put into the riding-school of the "1st Dumpies," as they were called. We had found the cushions of the dak-gharry pretty hard, but they were nothing to the bare back of a raw waler. The Regular *Native* Cavalry Regiments had mutinied, and had shot down a fair number of their officers while at mess, or at church, or otherwise engaged. In their places five European Bengal Cavalry Regiments were being raised, officered by the remnant of the ten old Bengal Cavalry Regiments' officers. The Crown had taken over India from the East India Company a few weeks previously. As some of the Line Cavalry Regiments returned to England, volunteers from these Regiments joined the European Bengal Cavalry Regiments. I remember being twice sent to take over such volunteers. Once we got about 120 men from the 9th Lancers, and at another time 80 men from a Hussar Regiment. On arrival in camp, these men were marched up to the paymaster's tent, and received the gratuity for volunteering to remain in India. The same kind of thing was going

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on in the old Bengal Fusilier Regiments. Then the Dumpies and Bengal Fusilier Regiments got talking, and said, "Why shouldn't we get bounties for being turned over to Queen's from Company's Regiments?" Very natural, surely. Men used to say to me, "This ain't fair; why are we turned over like a flock of sheep? Let's have something to drink to the Queen's health in." Again, surely, a very proper sentiment. But the authorities got their backs up, and said it was rank mutiny. At first the men sulked, then they broke out in barracks, and tried to break into the canteen.

One night, as we were sitting at mess at Papamhow, an orderly came galloping up, and reported that the men had broken out in barracks, had armed themselves with their carbines, and were trying to break into the canteen. We were all ordered down to the barracks, and slept that night in the open, on the road-side, under the trees, after having put a cordon of other troops in garrison, round the barracks. The next morning the men quieted down, but utterly refused to attend stables, or do any duty. Of course, very childish and very wrong of them; but they felt they had a genuine grievance, that Government was snubbing them,

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and this is how they showed their resentment. The men told me over and over again : " We want our rights ; them coves as come to us got their bounty ; give us 5 rupees or 10 rupees each, a dinner and a drink, *something* to show we 'ave been turned over from Company's to Queen's. God bless Her Majesty, we'd die for her ; only let's know we are her'n." This was their refrain. I didn't know then, and I'm blessed if I know now, why the men's reasonable demands were not met in a fair spirit. Sir John Inglis, commanding at Cawnpore, came down to Allahabad, had out all the troops and the 1st Bengal European Light Cavalry, and 4th Bengal European Infantry, and roundly rated these last two regiments ; but the men stuck to their guns, and refused to do "stables" or duty, and said Government might shoot them, or blow them away from the cannon's mouth, if they chose. The 1st Bengal Light Cavalry were marched off to Cawnpore in a blazing June, and located in some old mud-built thatch-roofed kind of stables, so as to separate them from the 4th Bengal Infantry left at Allahabad. The action of the authorities, instead of allaying, fomented a mutinous spirit. Lord Clyde left, Sir Hugh Rose suc-

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ceeded. He said the first case of mutinous conduct reported to him should be court-martialled; and if found guilty, the culprit should be shot straight away. He kept his word.

An unfortunate youth, of some nineteen summers, by name Jackson, at Burhampur, in one of the Bengal Fusilier Regiments, was impertinent to a lance-corporal, when told to arrest and take a comrade to the cells; he was reported, tried, found guilty, and shot. But they couldn't shoot the whole of the Cavalry and Infantry Regiments, and so they disbanded them. The 1st Bengal Cavalry were sent down by river from Cawnpore to Chinsurah. Before being sent off, they were drawn up on parade, and harangued, and told that none of them would ever be enlisted again, or allowed to serve Her Majesty. This threat was as idle as the previous action had been suicidal. The men did not believe it; they knew that in the main they were in the right as regarded principle, though doubtless wrong as regarded practice; but they were Englishmen, and they were not going to be snubbed and sat on. They were *not disloyal*; they were willing to fight and die for their Queen—many of them have done so since.

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It was a somewhat fateful journey from Allahabad to Chinsurah by river. We started, 500 rank and file, and 6 officers, by rail to Cawnpore, where we were shipped; the men on a large "flat," the officers on a small steamer. Cholera had been raging at Cawnpore. When we started, the men had a clean bill of health, but some of them had the disease latent, quietly germinating. We left Cawnpore about noon; that same afternoon some six or seven men were brought on to deck on the flat, in the grip of the "real thing," and no mistake. I was on duty that afternoon. Caird, the surgeon, and I, sat by the poor chaps; all we could do was to moisten their lips and rub their limbs. All six were dead by midnight, and other men had been brought up on deck, suffering from choleraic symptoms. Chapman, the adjutant, and I, with a fatigue party took the dead men, sewn up in their saleetas, and buried them on the Ganges banks, Chapman reading the funeral service by the light of a flickering lantern. The stars were shining overhead in a clear sky, the river rushing past, with here and there the distant splashing sound of sandbanks falling; jackals howling all around; the steamer and flat lying anchored in the stream;

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a young moon's rays falling now and again, as the thick clouds swept by, on the silent water's voiceless flow; the plainly-expressed sentiments of the fatigue party, in "Tommy's" expressive language, and six dead comrades wrapped in their last sleep at our feet. it was a weird experience.

Next day we landed at Benares some twenty-five men more or less ill with choleraic symptoms, sent them up to the hospital, and went on our way. Cholera is a puzzler—jumping and skipping about without any apparent reason; down this side of a row of barracks, leaving the other side untouched; echeloning across the road, taking this troop, and leaving that, and so on. After we left Benares, we never had another single case. We were at Chinsurah about a month, and were then sent down to Calcutta to be sent home on two sailing ships *via* the Cape. The China war had just broken out. The General Commanding at Calcutta came on board our transports, and offered any men who would volunteer for China a gratuity, and engagement for the period the war lasted; after which they would obtain a free passage home. Who said they should never serve Her Majesty again? The

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men would have none of this offer; it only strengthened their case. They respectfully said they had been disbanded because they stuck out for what they considered fair. Well, they would go home, and after a holiday enlist again. Three-fourths of these men were re-enlisted in the Thames and the Mersey before ever they landed; got their passage home, got their bounty, and got re-engaged. Who said never no more should they serve Her Majesty? What did this little folly cost the nation? The men would have been quite content, if in January, 1859, they had been paid in India the bounty paid them about May the following year in England. This would have saved the hiring a number of ships to bring them to England, and giving them there what they were ready to accept in India. It would have saved Jackson's mother a breadwinner; for the youth, who was shot at the age of nineteen, used to remit a portion of his monthly pay for his mother's support. There was a grievous mistake somewhere. You may have volumes of Blue Books explaining it was all right, but these are the simple facts. Most of those who were responsible for this mistake are dead and gone; and, perhaps, explaining to Jackson &

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Co., there, what no one can understand the reason for here. They understand Tommy Atkins better nowadays, thanks in no small measure to Rudyard Kipling; understanding him better, they treat him more as a reasonable being, and Tommy responds like a man and a brother. He don't shirk hard work, and he don't mind hard words, he says,—

“We're used to ‘damn’ and curse,
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The woods are round us, heaped and dim

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