

Here, There And Everywhere

Lord Frederic Hamilton

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HERE, THERE AND EVERYWHERE

BY

LORD FREDERIC HAMILTON

TO MY GALLANT CANADIAN FRIEND GERALD RUTHERFORD, M.C. OF WINNIPEG

FOREWORD

So kindly a reception have the public accorded to "The Days Before Yesterday" that I have ventured into print yet again.

This is less a book of reminiscences than a recapitulation of various personal experiences in many lands, some of which may be viewed from unaccustomed angles.

The descriptions in Chapter VIII of cattle-working and of horse-breaking on an Argentine estancia have already appeared in slightly different form in an earlier book of mine, now out of print.

F. H.

London, 1921.

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HERE, THERE AND EVERYWHERE

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The drawbacks of advancing years are so painfully obvious to those who have to shoulder the burden of a long tale of summers, that there is no need to enlarge upon them.

The elderly have one compensation, however; they have well-filled store-houses of reminiscences, chests of memories which are the resting-place of so many recollections that their owner can at will re-travel in one second as much of the surface of this globe as it has been his good fortune to visit, and this, too, under the most comfortable conditions imaginable.

Not for him the rattle of the wheels of the train as they grind the interminable miles away; not for him the insistent thump of the engines as they relentlessly drive the great liner through angry Atlantic surges to her far-off destination in smiling Southern seas. The muffled echoes of London traffic, filtering through the drawn curtains, are undisturbed by such grossly material reminders of modern engineering triumphs, for the elderly traveller journeys in a comfortable easy-chair before a glowing fire, a cigar in his mouth, and a long tumbler conveniently accessible to his hand.

The street outside is shrouded in November fog; under the steady drizzle, the dripping pavements reflect with clammy insistence the flickering gas-lamps, and everything, as Mr. Mantalini would have put it, "is demnition moist and unpleasant," whilst a few feet away, a grey-haired traveller is basking in the hot sunshine of a white coral strand, with the cocoa-nut palms overhead whispering their endless secrets to each other as they toss their emerald-green fronds in the strong Trade winds, the little blue wavelets of the Caribbean Sea lap-lapping as they pretend to break on the gleaming milk-white beach.

It is really an ideal form of travel! No discomforts, no hurrying to catch connections, no passports required, no passage money, and no hotel bills! What more could any one ask? The journeys can be varied indefinitely, provided that the owner of the storehouse has been careful to keep its shelves tidily arranged. India? The second shelf on the left. South Africa? The one immediately below it. Canada? South America? The West Indies? There they all are, each one in its proper place!

This private Thomas Cook & Son's office has the further advantage of being eminently portable. Wherever its owner goes, it goes, too. For the elderly this seems the most practical form of Travel Bureau, and it is incontestably the most economical one in these days when prices soar sky-high.

There is so much to see in this world of ours, and just one short lifetime in which to see it! I am fully conscious of the difficulty of conveying to others impressions which remain intensely vivid to myself, and am also acutely alive to the fact that matters which appear most interesting to one person, drive others to martyrdoms of boredom.

In attempting to reproduce various personal experiences on paper, I shall claim the roaming freedom of the fireside muser, for he can in one second skip from Continent to Continent and vault over gaps of thirty years and more, just as the spirit moves him; indeed, to change the metaphor, before one record has played itself out, he can turn on a totally different one without rising from his chair, adjusting a new needle, or troubling to re-wind the machine, for this convenient mental apparatus reproduces automatically from its repertory whatever air is required.

Having claimed the privilege of roaming at will far from my subject, I may say that ever since my boyhood I had longed to take part in a big-game shoot, so when the late Maharajah of Cooch Behar invited me in 1891 to one of his famous shooting-parties, I accepted with alacrity, for the Cooch Behar shoots were justly famed throughout India. The rhinoceros was found there, tigers, as Mrs. O'Dowd of Vanity Fair would have remarked, "were as plentiful as cabbages"; there were bears, too, leopards and water buffaloes, everything, in short, that the heart of man could desire. It was no invitation to travel five hundred miles for two days' shooting only, there were to be five solid weeks of it in camp, and few people entertained on so princely a scale as the Maharajah. It was distinctly an invitation to be treasured--and gratefully accepted.

The five-hundred-mile journey between Calcutta and Cooch Behar was unquestionably a varied one. There were four hours' train on the broad-gauge railway, an hour's steamer to cross the Ganges, ten hours' train on a narrow-gauge railway, three hours' propelling by poles in a native house-boat down a branch of the Brahmaputra, six miles of swamp to traverse on elephants, thirty miles to travel on the Maharajah's private two-and-a-half-feet-gauge toy railway, and, to conclude with, a twenty-five-mile drive.

Cooch Behar is now, I believe, directly linked up with Calcutta by rail.

We left Calcutta a party of four. My nephew, General Sir Henry Streatfeild, and his wife, another of the Viceroy's aides-de-camp, myself, and a certain genial Calcutta business magnate, most popular of Anglo-Indians. As we had a connection to catch at a junction on the narrow-gauge railway, an interminable wait at a big station in the early morning was disconcerting, for the connection would probably be missed. The jovial, burly Englishman occupied the second sleeping-berth in my compartment. As the delay lengthened, he, having some official connection with the East Bengal State Railway, jumped

out of bed and went on to the platform in Anglo-Indian fashion, clad merely in pyjamas and slippers. Approaching the immensely pompous native station-master he upbraided him in no measured terms for the long halt. Through the window I could hear every word of their dialogue. "This delay is perfectly scandalous, station-master. I shall certainly report it in Calcutta." "Would you care, sir, to enter offeicial complaint in book kept for that purpose?" "By George! I will!" answered the man of jute and indigo, hot with indignation. He was conducted through long passages to the station-master's office at the back of the building, where a strongly worded complaint was entered in the book. "And now, may I ask," questioned the irate business man, "when you mean to start this infernal train?" "Oh, the terain, sir, has already deeparted these five minutes," answered the bland native. Fortunately there was a goods train immediately following the mail, and some four hours afterwards our big friend alighted from a goods brake-van in a furious temper. He had had nothing whatever to eat, and was still in pyjamas, bare feet and slippers at ten in the morning. We had delayed the branch train as no one seemed in any particular hurry, so all was well.

During a subsequent journey over the same line, we had an awful experience. Through the Alipore suburb of Calcutta there runs a little affluent of the Hooghly known as Tolly Gunge. For some reason this insignificant stream is regarded as peculiarly sacred by Hindoos, and every five years vast numbers of pilgrims come to bathe in and drink Tolly Gunge. The stream is nothing now but an open sewer, but no warnings of the doctors, and no Government edicts can prevent natives from regarding this as a place of pilgrimage, rank poison though the waters of Tolly Gunge must be.

A party of us left Calcutta on a shooting expedition during one of these quinquennial pilgrimages. We found the huge Sealdah station packed with dense crowds of home-going pilgrims. The station-master was at his wits' end to provide accommodation, for every third-class carriage was already full to overflowing, and still endless hordes of devotees kept arriving. He finally had a number of covered trucks coupled on to the train, into which the pilgrims were wedged as tightly as possible, a second engine was attached, and we started. Next morning I was awakened by a nephew of mine, who cried with an awestruck face, "My God! It is perfectly awful! Look out of the window!" It was a fearful sight. The waters of Tolly Gunge had done their work, and cholera had broken out during the night amongst the densely packed pilgrims. Men were carrying out dead bodies from the train; there were already at least fifty corpses laid on the platform, and the tale of dead increased every minute. Others, stricken with the fell disease, were lying on the platform, still alive, but in a state of collapse, or in the agonising cramps of this swift-slaying scourge. There happened to be two white doctors in the train, who did all that was possible for the sufferers, but, beyond the administration of opium, medical science is powerless in cholera cases. The horrors of that railway platform fixed themselves indelibly on my memory. I can never forget it.

The late Maharajah of Cooch Behar had had a long minority, the soil of his principality was very fertile and well-cultivated, and so efficiently was the little State administered by the British Resident that the Maharajah found himself at his majority the fortunate possessor of vast sums of ready money. The Government of India had erected him out of his surplus revenues a gigantic palace of

red-brick, a singularly infelicitous building material for that burning climate. Nor can it be said that the English architect had been very successful in his elevation. He had apparently anticipated the design of the Victoria and Albert Museum, and had managed to produce a building even less satisfactory to the eye than the vast pile at the corner of Cromwell Road. He had also crowned his edifice with a great dome. The one practical feature of the building was that it was only one room thick, and that every room was protected by a broad double verandah on both sides. The direct rays of the sun were, therefore, powerless to penetrate to the interior, and with the double verandahs the faintest breath of air sent a draught through every room in the house.

We reached Cooch Behar after dark, and it was somewhat of a surprise to find the Maharajah and his entire family roller-skating in the great central domed hall of the palace, to the strains of a really excellent string band. The Maharajah having a great liking for European music, had a private orchestra of thirty-five natives who, under the skilled tuition of a Viennese conductor, had learnt to play with all the fire and vim of one of those unapproachable Austrian bands, which were formerly (I emphasise the were) the delight of every foreigner in Vienna. These native players had acquired in playing dance music the real Austrian "broken time," and could make their violins wail out the characteristic "thirds" and "sixths" in the harmonies of little airy, light "Wiener Couplets" nearly as effectively as Johann Strauss' famous orchestra in the "Volks-Garten" in Vienna.

The whole scene was rather unexpected in the home of a native prince in the wilds of East Bengal.

The Maharajah had fixed on a great tract of jungle in Assam, over the frontier of India proper, as the field of operations for his big-game shoot of 1891, on account of the rhinoceros and buffaloes that frequented the swamps there. As he did not do things by halves, he had had a rough road made connecting Cooch Behar with his great camp, and had caused temporary bridges to be built over all the streams on the way. Owing to the convenient bamboo, this is fairly easy of achievement, for the bamboo is at the same time tough and pliable, and bamboo bridges, in spite of their flimsy appearance, can carry great weights, and can be run up in no time, and kindly Nature furnishes in Bengal an endless supply of this adaptable building material.

Our Calcutta party were driven out to the camp by the Maharajah's Australian trainer in a brake-and-four. I had heard before of the recklessness and skill of Australian stage-coach drivers, but had had no previous personal experience of it. Frankly, it is not an experience I should care to repeat indefinitely. I have my own suspicions that that big Australian was trying, if I may be pardoned a vulgarism, "to put the wind up us." Bang! against a tree-trunk on the off-side. Crash! against another on the near-side; down a steep hill at full gallop, and over a creaking, swaying, loudly protesting bamboo bridge that seemed bound to collapse under the impact; up the corresponding ascent as hard as the four Walers could lay leg to the ground; off the track, tearing through the scrub on two wheels, righting again to shave a big tree by a mere hair's-breadth; it certainly was a fine exhibition of nerve and of recklessness redeemed by skill, but I do not think that elderly ladies would have preferred it to their customary jog-trot behind two fat and confidential old

slugs. One wondered how the harness held together under our Australian Jehu's vagaries.

The Maharajah had chosen the site of his camp well. On a bare _maidan_ overhanging a turbulent river a veritable city of white tents gleamed in the sunshine, all neatly ranged in streets and lanes. The river was not, as most Indian rivers in the dry season, a mere trickle of muddy water meandering through a broad expanse of stones and sand-spits, but a clear, rushing stream, tumbling and laughing on its way as gaily as any Scotch salmon river, and forming deep pools where great mahseer lurked under the waving fringes of water-weeds, fat fish who could be entrapped with a spoon in the early morning.

Each guest had a great Indian double tent, bigger than most London drawing-rooms. The one tent was pitched inside the other after the fashion of the country, with an air-space of about one foot between to keep out the fierce sun. Indeed, triple-tent would be a more fitting expression, for the inner tent had a lining dependent from it of that Indian cotton fabric printed in reds and blues which we use for bed quilts. Every tent was carpeted with cotton dhurees, and completely furnished with dressing-tables and chests of drawers, as well as writing-table, sofa and arm-chairs; whilst there was a little covered canvas porch outside, fitted with chairs in which to take the air, and a small attendant satellite of a tent served as a bath-room, with big tin tub and a little trench dug to carry the water away. Nothing could be more complete, but I found my watchful old "bearer" already at work raising all my trunks, gun-cases, and other possessions on little stilts of bamboo, for his quick eye had detected signs of white ants. By the end of our stay in camp I had reason to congratulate myself on my faithful "bearer's" foresight, for none of my own things were touched, whilst every one else was bemoaning the havoc the white ants had played with their belongings. The guest-tents formed three sides of a square facing the river, and in the centre of the open space stood a large _shamyannah_, or flat-roofed tent with open sides, which served as dining-room and general living-room. There are certainly distinct advantages in a climate so settled that periods of daily sunshine or of daily rain really form part of the calendar, and can be predicted with mathematical certainty.

It so happened that the Census of 1891 was taken whilst we were in camp, so I can give the exact number of retainers whom the Maharajah brought with him. It totalled 473, including mahouts and elephant-tenders, grooms, armourers, taxidermists, tailors, shoemakers, a native doctor and a dispenser, and boatmen, not to mention the Viennese conductor and the thirty-five members of the orchestra, cooks, bakers, and table-waiters. The Maharajah certainly did things on a grand scale. One of the English guests gave, with perfect truth, his place of birth as required in the Indian Census Return as "a first-class carriage on the London and North-Western Railway, somewhere between Bletchley and Euston; the precise spot being unnoticed either by myself or the other person principally concerned."

The daily routine of life in the camp was something like this: We men all rose at daybreak, some going for a ride, others endeavouring with a spoon to lure the cunning mahseer in the swift-running river, or going for a three-mile walk through the jungle tracks. Then a bath, and breakfast followed at nine, when the various _shikaries_ came in with their reports. Should a tiger have made a "kill," he would be

found, with any luck, during the heat of the day close to the body of his victim. The "howdah" elephants would all be sent on to the appointed rendezvous, the entire party going out to meet them on "pad" elephants. I do not believe that more uncomfortable means of progression could possibly be devised. A pad elephant has a large mattress strapped on to its back, over which runs a network of stout cords. Four or five people half-sit, half-recline on this mattress, hanging on for dear life to the cord network. The European, being unused to this attitude, will soon feel violent cramps shooting through his limbs, added to which there is a disconcerting feeling of instability in spite of the tightly grasped cords. Nothing, on the other hand, can be more comfortable than a well-appointed howdah, where one is quite alone except for the mahout perched on the elephant's neck. The Maharajah's howdahs were all of cane-work, with a softly padded seat and a leather-strap back, which yielded to the motion of the great beast. In front was a gun-rack holding five guns and rifles, and large pockets at the side thoughtfully contained bottles of lemonade (the openers of which were never forgotten) and emergency packets of biscuits.

The Maharajah owned about sixty elephants, in which he took the greatest pride, and he was most careful in providing his guests with proved "tiger-staunch" animals. These were oddly enough invariably lady-elephants, the males being apt to lose their heads in the excitement of meeting their hereditary enemies, and consequently apt to run amok.

My particular elephant, which I rode daily for five weeks, was an elderly and highly respectable female named "Chota Begum." Had she only happened to have been born without a tail, and with two legs instead of four, she would have worn silver-rimmed spectacles and a large cap with cherries in it; would have knitted stockings all day long and have taken a deep interest in the Church Missionary Society.

I soon got on very friendly terms with "Chota Begum." She was inordinately fond of oranges, which, of course, were difficult to procure in the jungle, so I daily brought her a present of half-a-dozen of these delicacies, supplementing the gift at luncheon-time with a few bananas. Chota Begum was deeply touched by these attentions, and one morning my mahout informed me that she wished, out of gratitude, to lift me into the howdah with her trunk. I cannot conceive how he found this out, but I naturally was averse to wounding the elephant's feelings by refusing the proffered courtesy, though I should infinitely have preferred getting into the howdah in the ordinary manner. The mahout, after the mysterious manner of his kind, was giving his charge minute directions to be very careful with me, when I suddenly felt myself seized by Chota Begum's trunk, lifted into the air, and held upside down at the extreme length of that member, for, it seemed to me, at least five minutes. Rupees and small change rained from my pockets to the ground, cigar case, cigarette case, matches and cartridge extractor streamed down to earth in clattering showers from their abiding places; the blood rushed to my head till I was on the very verge of apoplexy, and still Chota Begum, remembering her instructions to be careful, held me up aloft, until slowly, very slowly indeed, she lowered me into the howdah, dizzy and stupid with blood to the head. The attention was well-meant, but it was distinctly not one to be repeated indefinitely. In my youth there was a popular song recounting the misfortunes of one Mr. Brown:

"Old man Brown, upside down,

With his legs sticking up in the air";
but I never imagined that I should share his unpleasant experiences.

I never enquired too minutely as to how the "kubber" of the whereabouts of a tiger was obtained, but I have a strong suspicion that unhappy goats played a part in it, and that they were tethered in different parts of the jungle, for, as we all know, "the bleating of the kid excites the tiger."

A tiger being thus located by his "kill," the long line of beating elephants, riderless except for their mahouts, goes crashing through the burnt-up jungle-growth, until a trumpeting from one of the elephants announces the neighbourhood of "stripes," for an elephant has an abnormally keen sense of smell. The various guns are posted on their elephants in any open spot where a good view of the beast can be obtained when he breaks cover. I have explained elsewhere how I personally always preferred an ordinary shot-gun loaded with a lead ball, to a rifle for either tigers or bears. The reason being that both these animals are usually shot at very close quarters whilst they are moving rapidly. Time is lost in getting the sights of a rifle on to a swift-moving objective, and there is so little time to lose, for it is most inadvisable to wound a tiger without killing him; whereas with a shot-gun one simply raises it, looks down the barrels and fires as one would do at a rabbit, and a solid lead bullet has enormous stopping power. I took with me daily in the howdah one shot-gun loaded with ball, another with No. 5 shot for birds, an Express rifle, and one of the Maharajah's terrific 4-bore elephant-rifles; this latter's charge was 14-1/2 drachms of black powder; the kick seemed to break every bone in one's shoulder, and I was frightened to death every time that I fired it off.

On that Assam shoot I was quite extraordinarily lucky, for on the very first day the beating elephants announced the presence of a tiger by trumpeting almost at once, and suddenly, with a roar, a great streak of orange and black leaped into the sunlight from the jungle straight in front of me. The tiger came straight for my elephant, who stood firm as a rock, and I waited with the smooth-bore till he got within twenty feet of me and I knew that I could not possibly miss him, and then fired at his shoulder. The tiger fell dead. This was a very easy shot, but it did me great service with my mahout. These men, perched as they are on the elephant's neck, carry their lives in their hand, for should the tiger be wounded only, he will certainly make a spring for the elephant's head, and then the mahout is a dead man. Incidentally the "gun" in the howdah will not fare much better in that case. The mahout, should he have but small confidence in his passenger's marksmanship, will make the elephant fidget so that it becomes impossible to fire.

Two days later we were beating a patch of jungle, when, through the thick undergrowth, I could just see four legs, moving very, very slowly amongst the reeds, the body above them being invisible. "Bagh" (tiger), whispered the mahout, turning round. I was so excited that I snatched up the heavy elephant-rifle instead of the Express, and fired just above those slow-slouching legs. The big rifle went off with a noise like an air-raid, and knocked me with mangled shoulder-blades into the seat of the howdah. I was sure that I had missed altogether, and thought no more about it, but when the beat came up half an hour later, a huge tiger was lying there stone dead. That, of course, was an absolute piece of luck, a mere fluke, as I had never even seen the

brute. As soon as the Maharajah and his men had examined the big tiger's teeth they at once pronounced him a man-eater, and there was great rejoicing, for a man-eating tiger had been taking toll of the villagers in one of the jungle clearings. I believe that tigers only take to eating men when they are growing old and their teeth begin to fail them, a man being easier to catch than a bullock or goat. The skins of these two tigers have lain on my drawing-room carpet for thirty years now.

On our second day the Maharajah shot a leopard. He was only wounded, and I have never seen an animal fight so fiercely or with such indomitable courage. Of course, the whole cat-tribe are very tenacious of life, but that leopard had five bullets in him, and still he roared and hissed and spat, though his life was ebbing from him fast. We must have worked round in a circle nearer to the camp, for whilst we were watching the leopard's furious fight the strains of the Maharajah's orchestra practising "The Gondoliers," floated down-wind to us quite clearly. I remember it well, for as we dismounted to look at the dead beast the cornet solo, "Take a pair of sparkling eyes," began. There was such a startling incongruity between an almost untrodden virgin jungle in Assam, with a dead leopard lying in the foreground, and that familiar strain of Sullivan's, so beloved of amateur tenors, that it gave a curious sense of unreality to the whole scene.

This admirable orchestra made the evenings very pleasant. We put on white ties and tail-coats every night for dinner in the open _shamyanah_, where the Maharajah provided us with an excellent European repast served on solid silver plates. As the endless resources of this wonderful camp included an ice-making machine, he also gave us iced champagne every evening. As an example of how thorough the Maharajah was in his arrangements, he had brought three of his _mallees_, or native gardeners, with him, their sole function being to gather wild jungle-flowers daily, and to decorate the tables and tents with them.

Neither the Maharajah nor his family ever touched any of the European food, though, as they were not Hindoos, but belonged to the Bramo-Somaj religion, there were no caste-laws to prevent their doing so. Half-way through dinner the servants brought in large square silver boxes, some of rice, others of various curries: hot curries, dry curries, Ceylon curries, and green vegetable curries; these constituted their dinner, and most excellent they were.

I really must pay a tribute to the graceful and delightful Maharanee, who presided with such dignity and charm at these gatherings. I had first met the Maharanee in London, in 1887, at the festivities in connection with Queen Victoria's Jubilee. The Maharanee, the daughter of a very ancient Bengal family, was then quite young. She had only emerged "from behind the curtain," as natives of India say, for six months. In other words, she had just emancipated herself from the seclusion of the Zenana, where she had lived since her marriage. She had then very delicate features, and most lovely eyes, with exquisitely moulded hands and arms. Very wisely she had not adopted European fashions in their entirety, but had retained the becoming _saree_ of gold or silver tissue or brocade, throwing the end of it over her head as a veil, and looking perfectly charming in it. Everything in England must have seemed strange to her, the climate, the habits, and the mode of living, and yet this little Princess behaved as though she had been used to it all her life, and still

managed to retain the innate dignity of the high-caste native lady.

As one travels through life certain pictures remain vividly clear-cut in the memory. The evenings in that shooting-camp are amongst these. I can still imagine myself strolling with an extremely comely lady along the stretches of natural lawn that crowned the bluff above the river, the gurgle and splashing of the stream loud in our ears as we looked over the unending expanse of jungle below us, vast and full of mystery under the brilliant moonlight of India. In India the moonlight is golden, not silvery as with us. The great grey sea of scrub, with an occasional prominent tree catching this golden light on its clear-cut outline, had something awe-inspiring about it, for here one was face to face with real Nature. A faint and distant roar was also a reminder that the jungle had its inhabitants, and through it all came the quaintly incongruous strains of the orchestra playing a selection from "The Mikado":

"My object all sublime, I shall achieve in time,
To make the punishment fit the crime,
The punishment fit the crime."

The moonlit jungle night-scene, and the familiar air with its London associations were such endless thousands of miles apart.

On the floor of my drawing-room, in Westminster, the skin of a bear reposes close to those of two tigers. This is how he came there: We were at breakfast when _kubber_ of a bear only two miles away was brought in. The Maharajah at once ordered the howdah-elephants round. Opposite me on the breakfast-table stood a large plate of buns, which the camp baker made most admirably. Ever since my earliest childhood I had gone on every possible occasion to the Zoological Gardens in Regent's Park, and was therefore in a position to know what was the favourite food of the ursine race. That they did not exist on buns in the jungle was due to a lack of opportunity rather than to a lack of inclination, so I argued that the dainty would prove just as irresistible to a bear in the jungle as it did to his brethren in the big pit near the entrance to the Zoo, and ignoring the rather cheap gibes of the rest of the party, I provided myself with half-a-dozen buns, three of which I attached by long strings to the front of my howdah, where they swung about like an edible pawnbroker's sign. The bear was lying in a very small patch of bamboo, and broke cover at once. As I had anticipated, the three swinging buns proved absolutely irresistible to him. He came straight up to me, I shot him with a smooth-bore, and he is most decorative in his present position, but it was all due to the buns. The Maharajah told me, much to my surprise, that far more natives were killed by bears than by tigers in that part of India.

The jungle was very diversified: in places it consisted of flat tablelands of scrub, varied with broad open spaces broken by thick clumps ("topes" they are called by Anglo-Indians) of bamboo. In other parts there were rocky ravines covered with forest growth, and on the low ground far-stretching and evil-smelling swamps spread themselves, the home of the rhinoceros and water buffalo.

I had no idea of an elephant's climbing powers. These huge beasts make their way quite easily up rocky ascents no horse could negotiate. In coming down steep declivities, the wise creatures extend their hind-legs, using them as brakes. Cautious old Chota Begum would never

ford any river without sounding the depth with her trunk at every step. On one occasion two of the Maharajah's fishermen were paddling native dug-outs down-stream as we approached a river. Chota Begum, who had never before seen a dug-out, took them for crocodiles, trumpeted loudly with alarm, and refused to enter the water until they were quite out of sight. The curious intelligence of the animal is seen when they are ordered to remove a tree which blocks the road. Chota Begum would place her right foot against the trunk and give a little tentative shove. Not satisfied with the leverage, she would shift her foot again and again until she had found the right spot, then, throwing her whole weight on to her foot, the tree would snap off like a wooden match.

There was a great amount of bird-life in the jungle. It abounded in peacocks, and these birds are a glorious sight sailing down-wind through the sunlight with their tails streaming behind them, at a pace which would leave any pheasant standing. As peacocks are regarded as sacred by Hindoos, the Maharajah had particularly begged us not to shoot any. There were plenty of other birds, snipe, partridges, florican and jungle-cocks, the two latter greatly esteemed for their flesh. I shot a jungle-cock, and was quite disappointed at finding him a facsimile of our barndoor game-cock, for I had imagined that he would have the velvety black wing starred with cream-coloured eyes, which we associate with the "jungle-cock wing" of salmon flies. The so-called "jungle-cock" in a "Jock Scott" fly is furnished by a bird found, I believe, only round Madras. An animal peculiar to this part of Assam is the pigmy hob, the smallest of the swine family. These little beasts, no larger than guinea-pigs, go about in droves of about fifty, and move through the grass with such incredible rapidity that the eye is unable to follow them. The elephants, oddly enough, are scared to death by the pigmy hogs, for the little creatures have tushes as sharp as razors, and gash the elephants' feet with them as they run past them.

I think that we all regretted the Maharajah's keenness about water-buffalo and rhinos, for this entailed long days of plodding on elephants through steamy, fetid swamps, where the grass was twenty feet high and met over one's head, where the heat was intolerable, without one breath of air, and the mosquitoes maddening. A day in the swamps entailed, too, a big dose of quinine at bedtime. Between ourselves, I was terrified at the prospect of having to fire off the heavy four-bore elephant-rifle. The "kick" of fourteen-and-a-half drachms of black-powder is tremendous, and one's shoulder ached for two hours afterwards, though I do not regret the "kick" in surveying the water-buffalo which has hung now in my hall for thirty years. I have only seen two wild rhinoceroses in my life, and of the first one I had only a very brief glimpse. We were outside the swamp, when down a jungle-track came a charging rhinoceros, his head down and an evil look in his eye. One look was enough for Chota Begum. That most respectable of old ladies had quite evidently no love for rhinos. She lost her nerve completely, and ran away for two miles as hard as her ungainly limbs could lay leg to the ground. It is no joke to be on a runaway elephant maddened with fright, and it is extremely difficult to keep one's seat. The mahout and I hung on with both hands for dear life, the guns and rifles crashing together with a deafening clamour of ironmongery, and I was most thankful that there were no trees anywhere near, for the terrified animal's first impulse would have been to knock off both howdah and mahout under the overhanging branch of a tree. When Chota Begum at length pulled up, she had to listen to

some terrible home-truths about her ancestry from the mahout, who was bitterly disappointed in his beloved charge. As to questions of lineage, and the morals of Chota Begum's immediate progenitors, I can only hope that the mahout exaggerated, for he certainly opened up appalling perspectives. Any old lady would have got scared at seeing so hideous a monster preparing to rip her open, and under the circumstances you and I would have run away just as fast as Chota Begum did.

The only other wild rhinoceros I ever saw was on the very last day of our stay in Assam. We were returning home on elephants, when they began to trumpet loudly, as we approached a little dip. My nephew, General Sir Henry Streatfeild, called out to me to be ready, as there was probably a bear in the hollow. Next moment a rhinoceros charged out and made straight for his elephant. Sir Henry fired with a heavy four-bore rifle, and by an extraordinary piece of good luck hit the rhino in the one little spot where he is vulnerable, otherwise he must have been killed. The huge beast rolled over like a shot hare, stone-dead.

One evening on our way back to camp, we thought that we would ride our elephants ourselves, and told the mahouts to get down. They had no fancy for walking two miles back to camp, and accordingly, in some mysterious manner of which they have the secret, gave their charges private but definite orders. I seated myself on Chota Begum's neck, put my feet in the string stirrups, and took the big ankus in my hand. The others did the same. I then ordered Chota Begum to go on, using the exact words the mahout did. Chota Begum commenced walking round and round in a small circle, and the eight other elephants all did the same. I tried cajoling her as the mahout did, and assured her that she was a "Pearl" and my "Heart's Delight." Chota Begum continued walking round and round in a small circle, as did all the other elephants. I changed my tactics, and made the most unmerited insinuations as to her mother's personal character, at the same time giving her a slight hint with the blunt end of the ankus. Chota Begum continued stolidly walking round and round. Meanwhile language most unsuited to a Sunday School arose from other members of the party, who were also careering round and round in small circles. Finally an Irish A.D.C. summed up the situation by crying, "These mahouts have us beat," whereupon we capitulated, and a simultaneous shout went up, "Ohe, Mahout-log!" It is but seldom that one sees a native of India laughing, but those mahouts, when they emerged from the cover of some bamboos, were simply bent double with laughter. How they had conveyed their wishes to the elephants beats me still.

The best of things must come to an end, and so did the Cooch Behar shoot. It is an experience that I would not have missed for anything, especially as I am now too old to hope to be able to repeat it.

The Maharajah was good enough to invite me again the next year, 1892, but by that time I was seated in an editorial chair, and could not leave London. In the place of the brilliant sunshine of Assam, the grimy, murky London atmosphere; instead of the distant roars from the jungle, the low thunder of the big "machines" in the basement, as they began to revolve, grinding out fresh reading-matter for the insatiable British public.

The memories, however, remain. Blazing sunlight; splendid sport; endless tracts of khaki-coloured jungle; princely hospitality;

pleasant fellowship; cheery company.

What more can any one ask?

CHAPTER II

Mighty Kinchinjanga--The inconceivable splendours of a Himalayan sunrise--The last Indian telegraph-office--The irrepressible British Tommy--An improvised garden--An improvised Durbar Hall--A splendid ceremony--A native dinner--The disguised Europeans--Our shocking table-manners--Incidents--Two impersonations; one successful, the other reverse--I come off badly--Indian jugglers--The rope-trick--The juggler, the rope, and the boy--An inexplicable incident--A performing cobra scores a success--Ceylon "Devil Dancers"--Their performance--The Temple of the Tooth--The uncovering of the Tooth--Details concerning--An abominable libel--Tea and coffee--Peradeniya Gardens--The upas tree of Java--Colombo an Eastern Clapham Junction--The French lady and the savages--The small Bermudian and the inhabitants of England.

During our early morning walks through the jungle-tracts of Assam, on clear days we occasionally caught a brief glimpse of a glittering white cone on the horizon. This was mighty Kinchinjanga, the second highest mountain in the world, distant then from us I should be afraid to say how many miles.

To see Kinchinjanga to perfection, one must go to Darjeeling. What a godsend this cool hill-station is to Calcutta, for in twenty hours the par-boiled Europeans by the Hooghly can find themselves in a temperature like that of an English April. At Silliguri, where the East Bengal Railway ends, some humorist has erected, close to the station, a sign-post inscribed "To Lhasa 359 miles." The sign-post has omitted to state that this entails an ascent of 16,500 feet. The Darjeeling-Himalayan Railway, an intrepid little mountain-climber, looks as though it had come out of a toy-shop, for the gauge is only two feet, and the diminutive engines and carriages could almost be pulled about with a string. As the little train pants its leisurely way up 6000 feet, it is worth while noticing how the type of the country people changes. The brown-skinned Aryan type of the plains is soon replaced by the yellow, flat-faced Mongolian type of the hills, and the women actually have a tinge of red in their cheeks.

The first time that I was at Darjeeling it was veiled in perpetual mists; on the last occasion, to compensate for this, there were ten days of continual clear weather. Then it is that it is worth while getting up at 5.30 a.m. and going down into a frost-nipped garden, there to wait patiently in the dark. In the eastern sky there is that faintest of jade-green glimmers, known as the "false dawn"; below it the deep valleys are still wrapped in dark purple shadows, when quite suddenly Homer's "rosy-fingered dawn," *_rododachtulos Aeos_*, (was ever more beautiful epithet coined?) lays one shy, tentative finger-tip of blazing, flaming crimson on a vast unseen bulk, towering up 28,000 feet into the air. Then quickly comes a second flaming finger-tip, and a third, until you are fronting a colossal pyramid of the most intensely vivid rose-colour imaginable. It is a glorious

sight! Suddenly, in one minute, the crimson splendour is replaced by the most dazzling, intense white, and as much as the eye can grasp of the two-thousand-mile-long mountain-rampart springs into light, peak after peak, blazing with white radiance, whilst the world below is still slumbering in the half-shadows, and the valleys are filled with purple darkness. I do not believe that there is any more splendidly sublime sight to be seen in the whole world. For a while the eternal snows, unchanging in their calm majesty, dominate the puny world below, and then, because perhaps it would not be good to gaze for long on so magnificent a spectacle, the mists fall and the whole scene is blotted out, leaving in the memory a revelation of unspeakable grandeur. I saw this sunrise daily for a week, and its glories seemed greater every day. For some reason that I cannot explain it always recalled to me a passage in Job xxxviii, "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

No one has ever yet succeeded in scaling Kinchinjanga, and I do not suppose that any one ever will.

Darjeeling itself, in spite of its magnificent surroundings, looks like a portion of a transplanted London suburb, but there is a certain piquancy in reflecting that it is only fifteen miles from the borders of Tibet. The trim, smug villas of Dalhousie and Auckland Roads may have electric light, and neat gardens full of primroses; fifteen miles away civilisation, as we understand the term, ends. There are neither roads, post-offices, telegraphs nor policemen; these tidy commonplace "Belle Vues," "Claremonts" and "Montpeliers" are on the very threshold of the mysterious Forbidden Land. An Army doctor told me that he had been up at the last frontier telegraph-office of India. It is well above the line of snows, and one would imagine it a terrible place of captivity for the Sergeant and four Privates (all white men) in charge of it, but the spirits of the British Tommy are unquenchable. The men had amused themselves by painting notices, and the perpetual snow round the telegraph-office was dotted with boards: "this way to the swings and boats"; "the public are requested not to walk on the newly sown grass"; "try our famous shilling teas"; "all season-tickets must be shown at the barrier," and many more like them. It takes a great deal to depress the average British soldier.

Natives of India are extraordinarily good at "camouflaging" improvised surroundings, for they have been used to doing it for centuries. I was once talking to Lord Kitchener at his official house in Fort William, Calcutta, when he asked me to come and have a look at the garden. He informed me that he was giving a garden-party to fifteen hundred guests in three days' time, and wondered whether the space were sufficient for it. I told him that I was certain that it was not, and that I doubted whether half that number could get in. "Very well," said Lord Kitchener, "I shall have the whole of the Fort ditch turned into a garden to-morrow." Next day he had eight hundred coolies at work. They levelled the rough sand, marked out with pegs walks of pounded bricks, which they flattened, sowed the sand with mustard and cress and watered it abundantly to counterfeit lawns, and finally brought cartloads of growing flowers, shrubs and palms, which they "plunged" in the mustard-and-cress lawns, and in thirty-six hours there was a garden apparently established for years. It is true that the mustard-and-cress lawns did not bear close inspection, but, on the other hand, you could eat them, which you cannot do with ours. Lord Kitchener was fond of saying that he had never been intended for a soldier, but for an architect and house-decorator. Certainly the

additions made to his official house, which were all carried out from his own designs, were very effective and in excellent taste.

In a country like India, where so much takes place out of doors, wonderful effects can be produced, as Lord Kitchener said, with some rupees, some native boys, and a good many yards of insulated wire. The boys are sent climbing up the trees; they drop long pieces of twine to which the electric wires are tied; they haul them up, and proceed to wire the trees and to fix coloured bulbs up to their very tops. Night comes; a switch is pressed, and every tree in the garden is a blaze of ruby, sapphire, or emerald, with the most admirable result.

Lord Minto was holding a large Investiture of the "Star of India" the last time that I was in Calcutta. He wished to have at least two thousand people present, and large as are the rooms at Government House, not one of them would contain anything like that number, so Lord Minto had an immense canvas Durbar Hall constructed. Here again the useful factor comes in of knowing to a day when the earliest possible shower of rain is due. The tent, a huge flat-topped "Shamyana," was, when finished, roughly paved with bricks, over which were spread priceless Persian and Indian carpets from the "Tosho Khana" or Treasury. The sides and roof were stretched at one end with sulphur-coloured Indian silk, at the other with pale blue silk, the yellow silk with a two-foot border of silver tinsel, the blue edged with gold tinsel. Cunning craftsmen from Agra fashioned "camouflage" doorways and columns of plaster, coloured and gilt in the style of the arabesques in the Alhambra, and the thing was done; almost literally,

"Out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose like an exhalation,"

and it would be impossible to imagine a more splendid setting for a great pageant. Some one on the Viceroy's staff must have had a great gift for stage-management, for every detail had been carefully thought out. The scarlet and gold of the Troopers of the Body-guard, standing motionless as brown statues, the mace-men with their gilt standards, the entry of the Rajahs, all in full gala costume, with half the amount of our pre-war National Debt hanging round their necks in the shape of diamonds and of uncut rubies and emeralds, the Knights of the Star of India in their pale-blue mantles, the Viceroy seated on his silver-gilt throne at the top of a flight of steps, on which all the Durbar carpets of woven gold were displayed, made, under the blaze of electric light, an amazingly gorgeous spectacle only possible in the East, and it would be difficult for any European to have equalled the immense dignity of the Native Princes.

Custom forbids the Viceroy's wife to dine out, but it had been long agreed between Lady Lansdowne and the Maharanee of Cooch Behar, that should she ever return to India as a private person she should come to a dinner served native fashion, "on the floor." My sister having returned to Calcutta for her son's marriage in 1909, the Maharanee reminded her of this promise. Upon arriving at the house, Lady Lansdowne and two other European ladies were conducted up-stairs to be arrayed in native garb, whilst the Maharajah's sons with great glee took charge of myself, of yet another nephew of mine, and of the Viceroy's head aide-de-camp. Although it can hardly be taken as a compliment, truth compels me to confess that the young Cooch Behars considered my figure reminiscent of that of a Bengalee gentleman. With some slight shock to my modesty, I was persuaded to discard my

trousers, being draped in their place with over thirty yards of white muslin, wound round and round, and in and out of my lower limbs. A dark blue silk tunic, and a flat turban completed my transformation into a Bengalee country squire, or his equivalent. My nephew, being very slight and tall, was at once turned into a Sikh, with skin-tight trousers, a very high turban, and the tightest of cloth-of-gold tunics, whilst the other young man, a good-looking dark young fellow, became a Rajput prince, and shimmered with silver brocades. I must own that European ladies do not show up to advantage in the native saree. Their colouring looks all wrong, and they have not the knack of balancing their unaccustomed draperies. Our ladies all looked as though they were terrified that their voluminous folds would suddenly slip off (which, indeed, they owned was the case), leaving them most indelicately lightly clad. One could not help observing the contrast between the nervousness of the three European ladies, draped respectively in white and gold, pink and silver, and blue and gold, and the grace with which the Maharanee, with the ease of long practice, wore her becoming saree of brown and cloth of gold. As it had been agreed that strict native fashion was to be observed, we were all shoeless. The Maharanee, laughing like a child, sprinkled us with rose-water, and threw garlands of flowers and wreaths of tinsel round our necks. I felt like a walking Christmas-tree as we went down to dinner.

Round a large, empty, marble-paved room, twelve little red-silk beds were disposed, one for each guest. In front of each bed stood an assemblage of some thirty silver bowls, big and little, all grouped round a large silver platter, piled a foot high with a pyramid of rice. This was the entire dinner, and there were, of course, neither knives nor forks. No one who has not tried it can have any idea of the difficulty of plunging the right hand into a pile of rice, of attempting to form a ball of it, and then dipping it at haphazard into one of the silver bowls of mysterious preparations. Very little of my rice ever reached my mouth, for it insisted on spreading itself greasily over the marble floor, and I was gratified at noting that the European ladies managed no better than I did. Added to which, half-lying, half-reclining on the little silk beds, the unaccustomed European gets attacked by violent cramps; one is also conscious of the presence of bones in the most unexpected portions of one's anatomy, and these bones begin aching furiously in the novel position. Some native dishes are excellent; others must certainly be acquired tastes. For instance, after a long course of apprenticeship one might be in a position to appreciate snipe stewed in rose-water, and I am convinced that asafoetida as a dressing to chicken must be delicious to those trained to it from their infancy. A quaint sweet, compounded of cocoa-nut cream and rose-water, and gilded all over with gold-leaf, lingers in my memory. As hands naturally get greasy, eating in this novel fashion, two servants were constantly ready with a silver basin and a long-necked silver ewer, with which to pour water over soiled hands. This basin and ewer delighted me, for in shape they were exactly like the ones that "the little captive maid" was offering to Naaman's wife in a picture which hung in my nursery as a child, I liked watching the graceful play of the wrists and arms of the Maharanee and her daughters as they conveyed food to their mouths; it was a contrast to the clumsy, ineffectual efforts of the Europeans.

The aide-de-camp looked so wonderfully natural as a Rajput prince (and that, too, without any brown make-up) that we wished him to dress-up in the same clothes next day and to go and write his name on the

Viceroy, to see if he could avoid detection.

These sorts of impersonations have to be done very thoroughly if they are to succeed. I have recounted elsewhere how my father won the rowing championship of the Mediterranean with his four-oar, in 1866. The course being such a severe one, his crew had to train very rigorously. It occurred to my father, who was extremely fond of boxing himself, that a little daily practice with the gloves might with advantage form part of the training. He accordingly had four pairs of boxing-gloves sent out from England, and he and the crew had daily bouts in our coach-house. The Duc de Vallombrosa was a great friend of my family's, and used to watch this boxing with immense interest. The Duc was a huge man, very powerfully built, but had had no experience with the gloves. The present Sir David Erskine was the youngest member of the crew, and was very slender and light built, and it struck my father one day that it would be interesting to see this comparative stripling put on the gloves with the great burly Frenchman. Sir David realised that his only chance with his huge brawny opponent was to tire him out, for should this formidable Colossus once get home on him, he would be done. He made great play with his foot-work, skipping round his big opponent and pommelling every inch of his anatomy that he could reach, and successfully dodging the smashing blows that his slow-moving antagonist tried to deal him. Suddenly, and quite unexpectedly, the big Frenchman collapsed. The Duc de Vallombrosa took his defeat in the most sportsmanlike fashion, but he remembered who had originally proposed the match.

A week later my father was riding home from a picnic with some ladies. As their horses were tired, he proposed that they should save a long round by riding along the railway line and over a railway bridge. The Duc de Vallombrosa heard of this. Some few nights later two gendarmes in full uniform appeared at our villa after dark, and the bigger of the two demanded in the most peremptory fashion to be taken in to my father at once, leaving the younger one to watch the front door, where we could all see him marching up and down. When ushered in to my father, the gendarme, a huge, fiercely bearded man, adopted the most truculent manner. It had come to the knowledge of the police, he said, that my father had ridden on horse-back over a railway bridge, and along the line. Did he admit it? My father at once owned that he had done so, but pleaded ignorance, should he have broken any rule. Ignorance was no excuse, retorted the gendarme, even foreigners were supposed to know the law. The big bearded gendarme, whose tone became more hectoring and bullying every moment, went on to say that my father had broken Article 382 of the French Penal Code, a very serious offence indeed, punishable with from three to six months' imprisonment. My father smiled, and drawing out his pocket-book, said that he imagined that the offence could be compounded. The stern officer of the law grew absolutely furious; did my father suppose that a French gendarme could be bribed into forgetting his duty? He would now take my father to the lock-up to pass the night there until the _proces verbal_ should be drawn up, and though he regretted it, his orders in similar cases were always to handcuff his prisoners. The family, who had gathered together on hearing the loud altercation, were struck with consternation. The idea of our parent being led in fetters through a French town, and then flung into a French dungeon, was so unspeakably painful to us that we were nearly throwing ourselves at the big policeman's feet to implore him to spare our progenitor, when the burly gendarme suddenly pulled off his false beard, revealing the extensive but familiar features of the Duc de

Vallombrosa. The second slight-built gendarme at the door, proved to be General Sir George Higginson, most admirably made up. My father insisted on the two gendarmes dining with us. As our servants were not in the secret, the presence of two French policemen in uniform at the family dinner-table must have rather surprised them.

I must plead guilty myself to another attempt at impersonation. During my father's second term of office as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, my mother had a severe nervous breakdown, due to the unexpected death of a very favourite sister of mine. One of the principal duties of a Lord Lieutenant is (or rather was) to entertain ceaselessly, and private mourning was not supposed to interfere with this all-important task. So, after a respite of four months, the endless round of dinners, dances, and balls recommenced, but my mother could not forget her loss, and had no heart for any festivities, nor did she wish to meet strangers. My father took a house for her on the sea-coast near Dublin, to which she retired, and my only remaining unmarried sister took, with Queen Victoria's permission, my mother's place as Lady Lieutenant for two years.

A brother cannot be an impartial judge of his sister's personal appearance, but I have always understood that my seven sisters were regarded by most people as ranking only second to the peerless Moncrieffe sisters as regards beauty. Certainly I thought this particular sister, the late Lady Winterton, surpassed the others in outward appearance, for she had beautiful and very refined features, and the most exquisite skin and complexion. I thought her a most lovely apparition when covered with my mother's jewels.

In those days (how far off they seem!) one of the great events of the Dublin Season was the Gala-night at the theatre, or "Command Night" as it was called, when all the men wore uniform or Court dress, and the ladies their very best clothes. When the Lord and Lady Lieutenant entered the State box, attended by the various members of their Household, the audience stood up, the band playing "God Save the Queen!" (yes, that was in Dublin in 1875!), and the Viceregal pair then bowed their acknowledgments to the house from their box.

On the "Command Night" in 1875 my sister took my mother's place, and, as I have already said, diamonds were exceedingly becoming to her. According to custom, she went to the front of the box, and made a low sweeping curtsey to the audience. Ten days later she received a letter from an unknown correspondent, together with a photograph of a portly elderly man with large grey whiskers. He had been taken in an unusual position, for he was making a low bow and holding his high hat at arm's length from him. The writer explained that on the Command Night my sister had bowed to him in the most marked way. So taken aback was he, that he had not acknowledged it. He, therefore, to make amends, had had himself photographed in an attitude of perpetual salutation. Other letters rained in on my sister from the eccentric individual, and he sent her almost weekly fresh presentments of his unprepossessing exterior, but always in a bowing attitude. We made, naturally, inquiries about this person, and found that he was an elderly widower, a hatter by trade, who had retired from business after making a considerable fortune, and was living in Rathmines, a South Dublin suburb. The hatter was undoubtedly mad, a mental infirmity for which there is, of course, ample precedent in the case of gentlemen of his profession.

On one occasion, when my sister was leaving for England, the hatter, having purchased a number of fireworks, chartered a rowing-boat, and as the mail-steamer cleared the Kingstown pier-heads, a _bouquet_ of rockets and Roman candles coruscated before the eyes of the astonished passengers. I was then eighteen, and as none of us had set eyes on the hatter, it occurred to me that it would be rather fun to impersonate him, so, taking a photograph with me as guide, I got his bald grey head and long grey whiskers accurately copied by a Dublin theatrical wig-maker. It would have been difficult to carry out my idea at the Viceregal Lodge, for in the hall there, in addition to the regular hall-porter, there was always a constable in uniform and a plain-clothes man on duty, to prevent the entry of unauthorised persons, so I waited until we had moved to Baron's Court. Here I made careful preparations, and arranged to dress and makeup at the house of the Head-Keeper, a great ally of mine. I was met here by a hack-car ordered from the neighbouring town, and drove up to the front door armed with a nosegay the size of a cart-wheel, composed of dahlias, hollyhocks and sunflowers. I gave the hatter's name at the door, and was ushered by the unsuspecting footman into a library, where I waited an interminable time--with my gigantic bouquet in my hand. At length the door opened, but instead of my sister, as I had anticipated, it admitted my father, and my father had a hunting-crop in his hand, and to the crop was attached a heavy thong. His first words left me in no doubt as to his attitude. "So, sir," he thundered, "you are the individual who has had the impertinence to pester my daughter with your attentions. I am going to give you, sir, a lesson that you will remember to the end of your life," and the crop was lifted. Fortunately the room was crowded with furniture, so, crouching between tables, and dodging behind sofas, I was able to elude the thong until I had tugged my wig off. The spirit-gum manufactured in those days must have been vastly superior to that made now, for nothing would induce my whiskers to part company with my face. Yelling out my identity, in spite of the hatter's tactlessly adhesive whiskers, I made one bolt for the open window, having successfully evaded the whirling crop every time, but it was a lamentably tame ending to a carefully planned drama.

Remembering these family incidents, we decided that it would be as well to abandon the idea of a visit to Government House by a distinguished Rajput nobleman.

I may possibly have been unfortunate in my personal experiences of Indian jugglers, but I have never seen them perform any trick that was difficult of explanation. For instance, the greatly over-rated Mango trick, as I have seen it, was an almost childish performance. Having made his heap of sand, inserted the mango-stone, and watered it, the juggler covered it with a large basket, and _put his hands under the basket_. He did this between each stage of the growth of the tree. The plants in their various stages of growth were, of course, twisted round the inside of the basket, and he merely substituted one for another.

Colonel Barnard, at one time Chief of Police in Calcutta, told me a most curious story. We have all heard of the Indian "rope-trick," but none of us have met a person who actually saw it with his own eyes: the story never reaches us at first-hand, but always at second- or third-hand, exactly like the accounts one heard from credulous people in 1914 of the passage of the 75,000 Russian soldiers through England. No one had actually seen them, but every one knew somebody else whose

wife's cousin had actually conversed with these mysterious Muscovites, or had seen trains with closely veiled windows rushing at dead of night towards London, crammed to overflowing with Russian warriors.

In the same way Colonel Barnard had never met an eye-witness of the rope-trick, but his policemen had received orders to report to him the arrival in Calcutta of any juggler professing to do it. At length one of the police informed him that a man able to perform the trick had reached Calcutta. He would show it on one condition: that Colonel Barnard should be accompanied by one friend only. The Colonel took with him one of his English subordinates; he also took with him his Kodak, into which he had inserted a new roll of films. They arrived at a poor house in the native quarter, where they were ushered into a small courtyard thick with the dense smoke arising from two braziers burning mysterious compounds. The juggler, naked except for his loin-cloth, appeared and commenced salaaming profoundly, continuing his exaggerated salaams for some little while. Eventually he produced a long coil of rope. To Colonel Barnard's inexpressible surprise, the rope began paying away, as sailors would say, out of the juggler's hand of its own accord, and went straight up into the air. Colonel Barnard kodaked it. It went up and up, till their eyes could no longer follow it. Colonel Barnard kodaked it again. Then a small boy, standing by the juggler, commenced climbing up this rope, suspended to nothing, supported by nothing. He was kodaked. The boy went up and up, till he disappeared from view. The smoke from the herbs smouldering in the braziers seemed almost to blot out the courtyard from view. The juggler, professing himself angry with the boy for his dilatoriness, started in pursuit of him up this rope, hanging on nothing. He was kodaked, too. Finally the man descended the rope, and wiped a blood-stained knife, explaining that he had killed the boy for disobeying his orders. He then pulled the rope down and coiled it up, and suddenly the boy reappeared, and together with his master, began salaaming profoundly. The trick was over.

The two Europeans returned home absolutely mystified. With their own eyes they had seen the impossible, the incredible. Then Colonel Barnard went into his dark room and developed his negatives, with an astounding result. _Neither the juggler, nor the boy, nor the rope had moved at all_. The photographs of the ascending rope, of the boy climbing it, and of the man following him, were simply blanks, showing the details of the courtyard and nothing else. Nothing whatever had happened, but how, in the name of all that is wonderful had the impression been conveyed to two hard-headed, matter-of-fact Englishmen? Possibly the braziers contained cunning preparations of hemp or opium, unknown to European science, or may have been burning some more subtle brain-stealer; possibly the deep salaams of the juggler masked hypnotic passes, but somehow he had forced two Europeans to see what he wished them to see.

On one occasion in Colombo, in Ceylon, there was an unrehearsed episode in a juggler's performance. I was seated on the verandah of the Grand Oriental Hotel which was crowded with French passengers from an outward-bound Messageries boat which had arrived that morning. A snake-charmer was showing off his tricks and reaping a rich harvest. The juggler went round with his collecting bowl, leaving his performing cobras in their basket. One cobra, probably devoid of the artistic temperament, or finding stage-life uncongenial to him, hungered for freedom, and, leaving his basket, glided swiftly on to the crowded verandah. He certainly occupied the middle of the stage at

that moment and had the "spot-light" full on him, for every eye was riveted on the snake, and never was such a scene of consternation witnessed. Every one jumped on to the tables, women fainted and screamed, and the Frenchmen, for some unknown reason, all drew their revolvers. It turned out afterwards that the performing cobras had all had their poison-fangs drawn, and were consequently harmless.

Its inhabitants declare that Ceylon is the most beautiful island in the world. Those who have seen Jamaica will, I think, dispute this claim, though Kandy, nestling round its pretty little lake, and surrounded by low hills, is one of the loveliest spots imaginable. It is also the most snake-infested spot I ever set foot in.

The Colonial Secretary, Sir Hugh Clifford, whom I had previously met in Trinidad, had succeeded with some difficulty in persuading a band of "Devil Dancers" to leave their jungle fastnesses, and to give an exhibition of their uncanny dances in his garden; for, as a rule, these people dislike any Europeans seeing them engaged in their mysterious rites. The Colonial Secretary's dining-room was as picturesque in its setting as any stage scene. The room was surrounded with open arches, through which peeped the blue-velvet night sky and dim silhouettes of unfamiliar tropical growths; in the place of electric or mechanical punkahs, a tall red-and-gold clad Cingalee stood behind every guest waving continuously a long-handled, painted palm-leaf fan. The simultaneous rhythmic motion of the fans recalled the temple scene at the end of the first Act of *Aida*. We found the "Devil Dancers" grouped in the garden, some thirty in number. The men were all short and very dark-skinned; they wore a species of kilt made of narrow strips of some white metal, which clashed furiously when they moved. Their legs and chests were naked except for festoons of white shells worn necklace-wise. On their heads they had curious helmets of white metal, branching into antlers, and these headdresses were covered with loose, jangling, metallic strips. The men had their faces, limbs, and bodies painted in white arabesques, which, against the dark skins, effectually destroyed any likeness to human beings. It would be difficult to conceive of anything more uncanny and less human than the appearance of these Devil Dancers as they stood against a background of palms in the black night, their painted faces lit up by the flickering glare of smoky torches. As soon as the raucous horns blared out and the tom-toms began throbbing in their maddening, syncopated rhythm, the pandemonium that ensued, when thirty men, whirling themselves in circles with a prodigious clatter of metals, began shrieking like devils possessed, as they leaped into the air, was quite sufficient to account for the terror of the Cingalee servants, who ran and hid themselves, convinced that they were face to face with real demons escaped from the Pit.

Like all Oriental performances it was far too long. The dancers shrieked and whirled themselves into a state of hysteria, and would have continued dancing all night, had they not been summarily dismissed. As far as I could make out, this was less of an attempt to propitiate local devils than an endeavour to frighten them away by sheer terror. It was unquestionably a horribly uncanny performance, what with the white streaked faces and limbs, and the clang of the metal dresses; the surroundings, too, added to the weird, unearthly effect, the dark moonless night, the dim masses of forest closing in on the garden, and the uncertain flare of the resinous torches.

Amongst others invited to see the Devil Dancers was a French

traveller, a M. Des Etangs, a singularly cultivated man, who had just made a tour of all the French possessions in India. M. Des Etangs was full of curiosity about the so-called "Sacred Tooth" of Buddha, which is enshrined in the "Temple of the Tooth," and makes Kandy a peculiarly sacred place to the Buddhist world.

The temple, a small but very picturesque building, overhangs the lake, and is surrounded by a moat, full of the fattest carp and tortoises I ever saw. Every pilgrim to the shrine throws rice to these carp, and the unfortunate fish have grown to such aldermanic amplitude of outline that they can only just waddle, rather than swim, through the water.

The Buddhist community must be of a most accommodating temperament. The original tooth of Buddha was brought to Ceylon in A.D. 411. It was captured about 1315 and taken to India, but was eventually restored to Kandy. The Portuguese captured it again in 1560, burnt it, and ground it to powder, but the resourceful Vikrama Bahu at once manufactured a new tooth out of a piece of ivory, and the Buddhists readily accepted this false tooth as a worthy successor to the real one, extended the same veneration to it as they did to its predecessor, and, more important than all, increased rather than diminished their offerings to the "Temple of the Tooth."

M. Des Etangs had the whole history of the tooth at his fingers' end, and Sir Hugh Clifford, who as Colonial Secretary was the official protector of the tooth, very kindly offered to have it uncovered for us in two days' time. He added that the priests were by no means averse to receiving such an official order, for they would telegraph the news all over the island, and thousands of pilgrims would arrive to view the exposed tooth, each one, of course, leaving an offering, to the great benefit of the temple.

Sir Hugh invited M. Des Etangs, the late General Oliphant and myself to be present at the uncovering, which had to take place at seven in the morning, in order to afford a sufficiently long day for the exposition. He implored us all, in view of the immense veneration with which the Buddhists regarded the ceremony of the uncovering, to keep perfectly serious, and to adopt a becoming attitude of respect, and he begged us all to give a slight bow when the Buddhists made their prostrations.

Accordingly, two days later at 7 a.m., M. Des Etangs, General Oliphant and I found ourselves in a lower room of the temple, the actual sanctuary of the tooth itself, into which Christians are not generally admitted. We were, of course, the only Europeans present.

Never have I felt anything like the heat of that sanctuary. We dripped and poured with perspiration. The room was entirely lined with copper, walls and roof alike, and the closed shutters were also copper-sheathed. Every scrap of light and air was excluded; there must have been at least two hundred candles alight, the place was thick with incense and heavy with the overpowering scent of the frangipani, or "temple-flower" as it is called in Ceylon, which lay in piled white heaps on silver dishes all round the room. The place was crowded with priests and leading Buddhists, and we Europeans panted and gasped for air in that stifling, over-scented atmosphere. Presently the Hereditary Keeper of the Tooth, who was not a priest but the lineal descendant of the old Kings of Kandy, knelt down and recited a long

prayer. At its conclusion eight men staggered across the room, bearing a vast bell-shaped shrine of copper about seven feet high. This was the outer case of the tooth. The Hereditary Keeper produced an archaic key, and the outer case was unlocked. The eight men shuffled off with their heavy burden, and the next covering, a much smaller, bell-shaped case of gold, stood revealed. All the natives present prostrated themselves, and we, in accordance with our orders, bowed our heads. This was repeated six times, the cases growing richer and more heavily jewelled as we approached the final one. The seventh case was composed entirely of cut rubies and diamonds, a shimmering and beautiful piece of work, presented by the Buddhists of Burmah, but made, oddly enough, in Bond Street, W.1.

When opened, this disclosed the largest emerald known, carved into the shape of a Buddha, and this emerald Buddha held the tooth in his hand. After prolonged prostrations, the Hereditary Keeper took a lotus-flower, beautifully fashioned out of pure gold without alloy, and placed the tooth in it, on a little altar heaped with frangipani flowers. The uncovering was over; we three Europeans left the room in a half-fainting condition, gasping for air, suffocated with the terrific heat, and stifled with the heavy perfumes.

The octagonal tower over the lake, familiar to all visitors to Kandy, contains the finest Buddhist theological library in the world. The books are all in manuscript, each one encased in a lacquer box, though the bookcases themselves containing these treasures were supplied by a well-known firm in the Tottenham Court Road.

A singularly intelligent young priest, speaking English perfectly, showed me the most exquisitely illuminated old Chinese manuscripts, as well as treatises in ten other Oriental languages, which only made me deplore my ignorance, since I was unable to read a word of any of them. The illuminations, though, struck me as fully equal to the finest fourteenth-century European work in their extreme minuteness and wonderful delicacy of detail. The young priest, whom I should suspect of being what is termed in ecclesiastical circles "a spike," was evidently very familiar with the Liturgy of the Church of England, but it came with somewhat of a shock to hear him apply to Buddha terms which we are accustomed to use in a different connection.

The material prosperity of Ceylon is due to tea and rubber, and the admirable Public Works of the colony, roads, bridges and railways, seem to indicate that these two commodities produce a satisfactory budget. During the Kandy cricket week young planters trooped into the place by hundreds. Planters are divided locally into three categories: the managers, "Peria Dorai," or "big masters," spoken of as "P. D.'s," the assistants, "Sinna Dorai," or "little masters," labelled "S. D.'s," and the premium-pupils, known as "creepers."

Personally I am inclined to discredit the local legend that all male children born of white parents in Ceylon come into the world with abnormal strength of the right wrist, and a slight inherited callosity of the left elbow. This is supposed to be due to their parents having rested their left elbows on bar-counters for so many hours of their lives; the development of the right wrist being attributed in the same way to the number of glasses their fathers have lifted with it. This, if authenticated by scientific evidence, would be an interesting example of heredity, but I suspect it to be an exaggeration. The bar-room in the hotel at Kandy was certainly of vast dimensions, and

was continuously packed to overflowing during the cricket week, and an unusual notice conspicuously displayed, asking "gentlemen to refrain from singing in the passages and bedrooms at night," seemed to hint that undue conviviality was not unknown in the hotel; but it must be remembered that these young fellows work very hard, and lead most solitary existences. An assistant-manager on a tea estate may see no white man for weeks except his own boss, or "P. D.," so it is perfectly natural that when they foregather with other young Englishmen of their own age during Colombo race week, or Kandy cricket week, they should grow a little uproarious, or even at times exceed the strict bounds of moderation, and small blame to them!

Ceylon was formerly a great coffee-producing island, and the introduction of tea culture only dates from about 1882. In 1870 a fungus began attacking the coffee plantations, and in ten years this fungus killed practically all the coffee bushes, and reduced the planters to ruin. Instead of whining helplessly over their misfortunes, the planters had the energy and enterprise to replace their ruined coffee bushes with tea shrubs, and Ceylon is now one of the most important sources of the world's tea-supply. Tea-making--by which I do not imply the throwing of three spoonfuls of dried leaves into a teapot, but the transformation of the green leaf of a camellia into the familiar black spirals of our breakfast-tables--is quite an art in itself. The "tea-maker" has to judge when the freshly gathered leaves are sufficiently withered for him to begin the process, into the complications of which I will not attempt to enter. I was much gratified, both in Ceylon and Assam, at noting how much of the tea-making machinery is manufactured in Belfast, for though Ulster enterprise is proverbial, I should never have anticipated it as taking this particular line. There is one peculiarly fascinating machine in which a mechanical pestle, moving in an eccentric orbit, twists the flat leaf into the familiar narrow crescents that we infuse daily. The tea-plant is a pretty little shrub, with its pale-primrose, cistus-like flowers, but in appearance it cannot compete with the coffee tree, with its beautiful dark glossy foliage, its waxy white flowers, and brilliant scarlet berries.

Peradeniya Botanical Gardens rank as the second finest in the world, being only surpassed by those at Buitenzorg in Java. I had the advantage of being shown their beauties by the curator himself, a most learned man, and what is by no means a synonymous term, a very interesting one, too. Holding the position he did, it is hardly necessary to insist on his nationality; his accent was still as marked as though he had only left his native Aberdeen a week before. He showed me a tall, graceful tree growing close to the entrance, with smooth, whitish bark, and a family resemblance to a beech. This was the ill-famed upas tree of Java, the subject of so many ridiculous legends. The curator told me that the upas (*Antiaris toxicaria*) was unquestionably intensely poisonous, juice and bark alike. A scratch made on the finger by the bark might have very serious results, and the emanations from a newly lopped-off branch would be strong enough to bring out a rash; equally, any one foolish enough to drink the sap would most certainly die. The stories of the tree giving out deadly fumes had no foundation, for the curator had himself sat for three hours under the tree without experiencing any bad effects whatever. All the legends of the upas tree are based on an account of it by a Dr. Foersch in 1783. This mendacious medico declared that no living thing could exist within fifteen miles of the tree. The Peradeniya curator pointed out that Java was a volcanic island, and

one valley where the upas flourishes is certainly fatal to all animal life owing to the emanations of carbonic acid gas escaping from fissures in the soil. It was impossible to look at this handsome tree without some respect for its powers of evil, though I doubt if it be more poisonous than the West Indian manchineel. This latter insignificant tree is so virulently toxic that rain-drops from its leaves will raise a blister on the skin.

Amongst the wonders of Peradeniya is a magnificent avenue of talipot palms, surely the most majestic of their family, though they require intense heat to develop their splendid crowns of leaves.

Colombo has been called the Clapham Junction of the East, for there steamship lines from Australia, China, Burmah, and the Dutch East Indies all meet, and the most unexpected friends turn up.

I recall one arrival at Colombo in a Messageries Maritimes boat. On board was a most agreeable French lady going out with her children to join her husband, a French officer in Cochin China. I was leaving the ship at Colombo, but induced the French lady to accompany me on shore, the children being bribed with the promise of a ride in a "hackery" or trotting-bull carriage. None of the party had ever left France before. As we approached the landing-stage, which was, as usual, black with baggage-coolies waiting for a job, the French children began howling at the top of their voices. "The savages! the savages! We're frightened at the savages," they sobbed in French; "we want to go back to France." Their mother asked me quite gravely whether "the savages" here were well-disposed, as she had heard that they sometimes met strangers with a shower of arrows. And this in up-to-date, electric-lighted Colombo! We might have been Captain Cook landing in Tahiti, instead of peaceful travellers making their quiet way to an hotel amidst a harmless crowd of tip-seeking coolies.

The unfamiliar is often unnecessarily alarming.

I remember a small ten-year-old white Bermudian boy who accompanied his father to England for King George's coronation. The boy had never before left his cedar-clad, sunlit native archipelago, and after the ship had passed the Needles, and was making her way up the Solent, he looked with immense interest at this strange land which had suddenly appeared after three thousand miles of water. All houses in Bermuda are whitewashed, and their owners are obliged by law to whitewash their coral roofs as well. Bermuda, too, is covered with low cedar-scrub of very sombre hue, and there are no tall trees. The boy, a very sharp little fellow, was astonished at the red-brick of the houses on the Isle of Wight, and at their red-tile or dark slate roofs, and was also much impressed by the big oaks and lofty elms. Finally he turned to his father as the ship was passing Cowes: "Do you mean to tell me, Daddy, that the people living in these queer houses in this odd country are really human beings like us, and that they actually have human feelings like you and me?"

CHAPTER III

Frenchmen pleasant travelling companions--The limitations--Vicomte de Vogue, the innkeeper and the Ikon--An early oil-burning steamer--A

modern Bluebeard--His "Blue Chamber"--Dupleix--His ambitious scheme--A disastrous period for France--A personal appreciation of the Emperor Nicholas II--A learned but versatile Orientalist--Pidgin English--Hong-Kong--An ancient Portuguese city in China--Duck junks--A comical Marathon race--Canton--Its fascination and its appalling smells--The malevolent Chinese devils--Precautions adopted against--"Foreign Devils"--The fortunate limitations of Chinese devils--The City of the Dead--A business interview.

M. Des Etangs, the French traveller to whom I have already alluded, agreed to accompany me to the Far East, an arrangement which I welcomed, for he was a very cultivated and interesting man. Unexpectedly he was detained in Ceylon by a business matter, so I went on alone.

I regretted this, for on two previous occasions I had found what a pleasant travelling companion an educated Frenchman can be. I do not think that the French, as a rule, are either acute or accurate observers. They are too apt to start with preconceived theories of their own; anything which clashes with the ideas that they have already formed is rejected as evidence, whilst the smallest scrap of corroborative testimony is enlarged and distorted so that they may be enabled to justify triumphantly their original proposition, added to which, Frenchmen are, as a rule, very poor linguists. This, of course, is speaking broadly, but I fancy that the French mind is very definite and clear-cut, yet rather lacking in receptivity. The French suffer from the excessive development of the logical faculty in them. This same definite quality in the French language, whilst delighting both my ear and my intelligence, rightly or wrongly prevents French poetry from making any appeal to me; it is too bright and sparkling, there is no mystery possible in so clear-cut a medium, added to which, every syllable in French having an equal value, no rhythm is possible, and French poetry has to rely on rhyme alone.

It is not on the cloudless summer day that familiar objects take on vague and fantastic shapes; to effect that, mists and a rain-veiled sky are wanted. Then distances are blotted out, and the values of nearer objects are transformed under the swirling drifts of vapour, and a new dream-world is created under one's very eyes. This is, perhaps, merely the point of view of a Northerner.

As far back as 1881, I had made a trip down the Volga to Southern Russia with that most delightful of men, the late Vicomte Eugene Melchior de Vogue, the French Academician and man-of-letters. I absolve Vogue from the accusation of being unable to observe like the majority of his compatriots, nor, like them, was he a poor linguist. He had married a Russian, the sister of General Anenkoff of Central Asian fame; spoke Russian fluently, and very few things escaped his notice. Though he was much older than me, no more charming companion could be imagined. A little incident at Kazan, on the Volga, amused me enormously. We were staying at a most indifferent hotel kept by a Frenchman. The French proprietor explained to us that July was the month during which the miraculous Ikon of the Kazan Madonna was carried from house to house by the priests. The fees for this varied from 25 roubles (then 2 pounds 10s.) for a short visit from the Ikon of five minutes, to 200 roubles (20 pounds) for the privilege of sheltering the miracle-working picture for an entire night. I must add that the original Ikon was supposed to have been dug up in Kazan in 1597. In

1612 it was removed to Moscow, and was transferred again in 1710 to Petrograd, where a large and pretentious cathedral was built for its reception. In 1812, when Napoleon captured Moscow, the Kazan Madonna was hastily summoned from Petrograd, and many Russians implicitly believe that the rout of the French was solely due to this wonder-working Ikon. In the meanwhile the inhabitants of Kazan realised that a considerable financial asset had left their midst, so with commendable enterprise they had a replica made of the Ikon, which every one accepted as a perfectly satisfactory substitute, much as the Cingalees regarded their "Ersatz" Buddha's tooth at Kandy as fully equal to the original. The French landlord told us that in view of the strong local feeling, he was obliged, in the interests of his business, to pay for a visit from the Ikon, "afin de faire marcher mon commerce," and he invited Vogue and myself to be present at the ceremony.

Next day we stood at the foot of a small back-staircase which had been prepared in Russian fashion for the reception of the Madonna. Both the steps and banisters of the stairs were entirely draped in clean white sheets, to which little sprigs of fir branches had been attached. On a landing, also draped with sheets, a little white-covered table with two lighted candles was to serve as a repositor for the Ikon. The whole of the hotel staff--all Russians--were present, as well as the frock-coated landlord. The Madonna arrived in a gilt coach-and-four, a good deal the worse for wear, with a coachman and two shaggy-headed footmen, all bareheaded. The priests carried the Madonna up to the temporary altar, and the landlord advanced to pay his devotions.

Now as a Roman Catholic he had little respect for an Ikon of the Eastern Church, nor as a Frenchman could he be expected to entertain lively feelings of gratitude to a miracle-working picture which was supposed by Russians to have brought about the terrible disasters to his countrymen in 1812. Confident in his knowledge that no one present, with the exception of Vogue and myself, understood one word of French, the landlord fairly let himself go.

Crossing himself many times after the Orthodox fashion, and making the low prostrations of the Eastern Church, he began: "Ah! vieille planche peinte, tu n'as pas d'idee comme je me fiche de toi." More low prostrations, and then, "Et c'est toi vieille croute qui imagines que tu as chasse les Francais de ce pays en 1812?" More strenuous crossings, "Ah! Zut alors! et re-zut, et re-re zut! sale planche!" which may be Englished very freely as "Ah! you old painted board, you can have no conception of what I think of you! Are you really swollen-headed enough to imagine that it was you who drove the French out of Russia in 1812? Yah! then, you ugly old daub, and yah! again!" The Russian staff, not understanding one word of this, were much impressed by their master's devotional behaviour, but Vogue and I had to go into the street and laugh for ten minutes.

The wife of a prominent official boarded the steamer at some stopping-place, with her two daughters. They were pretentious folk, talking French, and giving themselves tremendous airs. When they heard Vogue and me talking the same language, she looked at us, gave a sniff, and observed in a loud voice, "Evidently two French commercial travellers!" Next morning she ignored our salutations. During the great heat of the day she read French aloud to her daughters, and to my great joy the book was one of Vogue's. She enlarged on the beauty

of the style and language, so I could not help saying, "The author will much appreciate your compliment, madame, for he is sitting opposite you. This is M. de Vogue himself." I need hardly say that the under-bred woman overwhelmed us with civilities after that.

The Volga steamers were then built after the type of Mississippi boats, with immense superstructures; they were the first oil-burning steamers I had ever seen, so I got the Captain's permission to go down to the engine-room. Instead of a grimy stokehole full of perspiring firemen and piles of coal, I found a clean, white-painted place with one solitary but clean man regulating polished taps. The Chief Engineer, a burly, red-headed, red-bearded man, came up and began explaining things to me. I could then talk Russian quite fluently, but the technicalities of marine engineering were rather beyond me, and I had not the faintest idea of the Russian equivalents for, say, intermediate cylinder, or slide-valve. I stumbled lamely along somehow until a small red-haired boy came in and cried in the strongest of Glasgow accents, "Your tea is waiting on ye, feyther."

It appeared that the Glasgow man had been Head Engineer of the river steamboat company for ten years, but we had neither of us detected the other's nationality.

On another occasion, whilst proceeding to India in a Messageries Maritimes boat, I made the acquaintance of an M. Bayol, a native of Marseilles, who had been for twenty-five years in business at Pondicherry, the French colony some 150 miles south of Madras. M. Bayol was a typical "Marius," or Marseillais: short, bald, bearded and rotund of stomach. It is unnecessary to add that he talked twenty to the dozen, with an immense amount of gesticulation, and that he could work himself into a frantic state of excitement over anything in two minutes. I heard on board that he had the reputation of being the shrewdest business man in Southern India. He was most capital company, rolling out perpetual jokes and calembour, and bubbling over with exuberant joie de vivre. I think M. Bayol took a fancy to me on account of my understanding his Provencale patois, for, as a boy, I had learnt French in a Provencale-speaking district.

All Englishmen are supposed in France to suffer from a mysterious disease known as "le spleen." I have not the faintest idea of what this means. The spleen is, I believe, an internal organ whose functions are very imperfectly understood, still it is an accepted article of faith in France that every Briton is "devore de spleen," and that this lamentable state of things embitters his whole outlook on life, and casts a black shadow over his existence. When I got to know M. Bayol better during our evening tramps up and down the deck, he asked me confidentially what remedies I adopted when "ronge de spleen," and how I combated the attacks of this deplorable but peculiarly insular disease, and was clearly incredulous when I failed to understand him. This amazing man also told me that he had been married five times. Not one of his first four wives had been able to withstand the unhealthy climate of Pondicherry for more than eighteen months, so, after the demise of his fourth French wife, he had married a native, "ne pouvant vivre seul, j'ai tout bonnement epouse une indigene."

M. Bayol insisted on showing me the glories of Pondicherry himself, an offer which I, anxious to see a Franco-Indian town, readily accepted. There is no harbour there, and owing to the heavy surf, the landing

must be made in a surf-boat, a curious keel-less craft built of thin pliant planks _sewn_ together with copper wire, which bobs about on the surface of the water like a cork. At Pondicherry, as in all French Colonial possessions, an attempt has been made to reproduce a little piece of France. There was the dusty "Grande Place," surrounded with even dustier trees and numerous cafes; the "Cafe du Progres"; the "Cafe de l'Union," and other stereotyped names familiar from a hundred French towns, and pale-faced civilians, with a few officers in uniform, were seated at the usual little tables in front of them. Everything was as different as possible from an average Anglo-Indian cantonment: even the natives spoke French, or what was intended to be French, amongst themselves. The whole place had a rather dejected, out-at-elbows appearance, but it atoned for its diminishing trade by its amazing number of officials. That little town seemed to contain more bureaucrats than Calcutta, and almost eclipsed our own post-war gigantic official establishments. On arriving at my French friend's house, the fifth Madame Bayol, a lady of dark chocolate complexion, and numerous little pale coffee-coloured Bayols greeted their spouse and father with rapturous shouts of delight. Later in the day, M. Bayol, drawing me on one side, said, "We have become friends on the voyage; I will now show you the room which enshrines my most sacred memories," and drawing a key from his pocket, he unlocked a door, admitting me to a very large room perfectly bare and empty except for four stripped bedsteads standing in the centre. "These, mon ami, are the beds on which my four French wives breathed their last, and this room is very dear to me in consequence," and the fat little Marseillais burst into tears. I have no wish to be unfeeling, but I really felt as though I had stumbled undesignedly upon some of the more intimate details connected with Bluebeard's matrimonial difficulties, and when M. Bayol began, the tears streaming down his cheeks, to give me a brief account of his first wife's last moments, the influence of this Bluebeard chamber began asserting itself, and it was all I could do to refrain from singing (of course very sympathetically) the lines from Offenbach's _Barbe-Bleue_ beginning:

"Ma premiere femme est morte
Que le diable l'emporte!"

but on second thoughts I refrained.

M. Bayol's garden reminded me of that of the immortal Tartarin of Tarascon, for the only green things in it grew in pots, and nothing was over four inches high. The rest of the garden consisted of bare, sun-baked tracts of clay, intersected by gravel walks. I felt certain that amongst these seedlings there must have been a two-inch high specimen of the Baobab "l'arbre geant," the pride of Tartarin's heart, the tree which, as he explained, might under favourable conditions grow 200 feet high. After all, Marseilles and Tarascon are not far apart, and their inhabitants are very similar in temperament.

I was pleased to see a fine statue of Dupleix at Pondicherry, for he was a man to whom scant justice has been done by his compatriots. Few people seem to realise how very nearly Dupleix succeeded in his design of building up a great French empire in India. He arrived in India in 1715, at the age of eighteen, and amassed a large fortune in legitimate trade; he became Administrator of Chandernagore, in Bengal, in 1730, and displayed such remarkable ability in this post that in 1741 he was appointed Governor-General of the French Indies. In 1742 war broke out between France and Britain, and at the outset the French

arms were triumphant. Madras surrendered in 1746 to a powerful French fleet under La Bourdonnais, the Governor of the Island of Reunion, and a counterattack on Pondicherry by Admiral Boscawen's fleet in 1748 failed utterly, though the defence was conducted by Dupleix, a civilian. These easy French successes inspired Dupleix with the idea of establishing a vast French empire in India on the ruins of the Mogul monarchy, but here he was frustrated by the military genius of Clive, who, it must be remembered, started life as a civilian "writer" in the East India Company's service. Dupleix encountered his first check by Clive's dashing capture of Arcot in 1751. From that time the fortunes of war inclined with ever-increasing bias to the British side, and the decisive battle of Plassey in 1757 (three years after Dupleix's return to France) was a death-blow to the French aspirations to become the preponderant power in India.

Dupleix was shabbily treated by France. He received but little support from the mother country; the vast sums he had expended from his private resources in prosecuting the war were never refunded to him; he was consistently maligned by the jealous and treacherous La Bourdonnais, and after his recall to France in 1754 his services to his country were never recognised, and he died in poverty.

G. B. Malleson's *Dupleix* is a most impartial and interesting account of this remarkable man's life: it has been translated into French and is accepted by the French as an accurate text-book.

The whole reign of Louis XV. was a supremely disastrous period for French Colonial aspirations. Not only did the dream of a great French empire in the East crumble away just as it seemed on the very point of realisation, but after Wolfe's victory on the Heights of Abraham at Quebec, Canada was formally ceded by France to Britain in 1763, by the Treaty of Paris.

This ill fortune pursued France into the succeeding reign of Louis XVI., for in April, 1782, Rodney's great victory over Count de Grasse off Dominica transferred the Lesser Antilles from French to British suzerainty.

The same sort of blight seemed to hang over France during Louis XV.'s reign, as overshadowed the Russia of the ill-starred Nicholas II. Nothing could possibly go right with either of them, and it may be that the prime causes were the same: the assumption of absolute power by an irresolute monarch, lacking the intellectual equipment which alone would enable him to justify his claims to supreme power--though I hasten to disclaim any comparison between these two rulers.

Between Louis XV., vicious, selfish and incapable, always tied to the petticoat and caprices of some new mistress, and the unfortunate Nicholas II., well-intentioned, and almost fanatically religious, the affectionate father and the devoted husband, no comparison is possible, except as regards their limitations for the supreme positions they occupied.

I have recounted elsewhere how, when Nicholas II. visited India as Heir Apparent in 1890, I saw a great deal of him, for he stayed ten days with my brother-in-law, Lord Lansdowne, at Calcutta and Barrackpore, and I was brought into daily contact with him. The Czarevitch, as he then was, had a very high standard of duty, though his intellectual equipment was but moderate. He had a perfect craze

about railway development, and it must not be forgotten that that stupendous undertaking, the Trans-Siberian Railway, was entirely due to his initiative. At the time of his visit to India, Nicholas II. was obsessed with the idea that the relations between Great Britain and Russia would never really improve until the Russian railways were linked up with the British-Indian system, a proposition which responsible Indian Officials viewed with a marked lack of enthusiasm. The Czarevitch was courteous, gentle and sincere, but though full of good intentions, he was fatally inconstant of purpose, and his mental endowments were insufficient for the tremendous responsibilities to which he was to succeed, and in that one fact lies the pathos of the story of this most unfortunate of monarchs.

To return from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, and from the disastrous collapse of the French Colonial Empire to my own infinitely trivial personal experiences, I regretted the business which had detained M. Des Etangs in Ceylon, and deprived me of the company of so agreeable and cultivated a man-of-the-world.

There was a Dr. Munro on board the liner. Dr. Munro, at that time Principal of a Calcutta College is, I believe, one of the greatest Oriental scholars living. On going into the smoking-room of the steamer one morning, I found the genial rotund little Professor at work with an exquisitely illuminated Chinese manuscript before him. He explained to me that it was a very interesting Chinese document of the twelfth century, and that he was translating it into Arabic for the benefit of his pupils. The amazing erudition of a man who could translate off-hand an ancient Chinese manuscript into Arabic, without the aid of dictionaries or of any works of reference, amidst all the hubbub of the smoking-room of an ocean liner, left me fairly gasping. Dr. Munro had acquired his Oriental languages at the University of St. Petersburg, so, in addition to his other attainments, he spoke Russian as fluently as English.

There was another side to this merry little Professor. We had on board the vivacious and tuneful Miss Grace Palotta, who was making a concert-tour round the world. Miss Palotta, whose charming personality will be remembered by the frequenters of the old Gaiety Theatre, was a Viennese by birth, and she sang those tuneful, airy little Viennese songs, known as "Wiener Couplets," to perfection. She readily consented to give a concert on board, but said she must be sustained by a chorus. Dr. Munro himself selected, trained and led the chorus; whilst I had to replace Miss Palotta's accompanist who was prostrate with sea-sickness.

And so the big liner crept on slowly into steaming, oily, pale-green seas, gliding between vividly green islands in the orchid-house temperature of the Malay Peninsula, a part of the world worth visiting, if only to eat the supremely delicious mangosteen, though even an unlimited diet of this luscious fruit would hardly reconcile the average person to a perpetual steam bath, and to an intensely enervating atmosphere. Nature must have been in a sportive mood when she evolved the durian. This singular Malay fruit smells like all the concentrated drains of a town seasoned with onions. One single durian can poison out a ship with its hideous odour, yet those able to overcome its revolting smell declare the flavour of the fruit to be absolutely delicious.

It is a little humiliating for a middle-aged gentleman to find that on

arriving in China he is expected to revert to the language of the nursery, and that he must request his Chinese servant to "go catchee me one piecee cuppee tea." On board the Admiral's yacht, it required a little reflection before the intimation that "bleakfast belong leady top-side" could be translated into the information that breakfast was ready on deck. Why adding "ee" to every word should render it more intelligible to the Celestial understanding, beats me. There are people who think that by tacking "O" on to every English word they render themselves perfectly clear to Italians and Spaniards, though this theory seems hardly justified by results. "Pidgin English," of course, merely means "business English," and has been evolved as an easy means of communication for business purposes between Europeans and Chinamen. The Governor of Hong-Kong's Chinese secretary prided himself on his accurate and correct English. I heard the Governor ask this secretary one day where a certain report was. "I placed it in the second _business_-hole on your Excellency's desk," answered Mr. Wung Ho, who evidently considered it very vulgar to use the term "pigeon-hole."

Considering that eighty years ago, when it was first ceded to Britain, Hong-Kong was a barren, treeless, granite island, it really is an astonishing place. It is easily the handsomest modern city in Asia, has a population of 400,000, and is by a long way the busiest port in the world. It is an exceedingly pretty place, too, with its rows of fine European houses rising in terraces out of a sea of greenery, and it absolutely hums with prosperity. If Colombo is the Clapham Junction, Hong-Kong is certainly the Crewe of the East, for steamship lines to every part of the world are concentrated here. With the exception of racing ponies, there is not one horse on the island.

Macao, the old Portuguese colony, is only forty miles from Hong-Kong. The arrangements on the river steamers are rather peculiar, for only European passengers are allowed on the spar deck. All Chinese passengers, of whatever degree, have to descend to the lower decks, which are enclosed with strong steel bars. Before the ship starts the iron gates of communication are shut and padlocked, so that all Chinese passengers are literally enclosed in a steel cage, shut off alike from the upper deck and the engine-room. These precautions were absolutely necessary, for time and time again gangs of river-pirates have come on board these steamers in the guise of harmless passengers; at a pre-arranged signal they have overpowered and murdered the white officers, thrown the Chinese passengers overboard and then made off with the ship and her cargo. An arms-rack of rifles on the European deck told its own story.

Macao has belonged to Portugal since 1555. Its harbour has silted up, and its once flourishing trade has dwindled to nothing. Gambling houses are the only industry of the place. There are row and rows of these opposite the steamer landing, all kept by Chinamen, garish with coloured electric lights, each one clamorously proclaiming that it is the "only first-class gambling house in Macao." A crowded special steamer leaves Hong-Kong every Sunday morning for Macao, for the special purpose of affording the European community an opportunity to leave most of their excess profits in the pockets of the Chinese proprietors of these places. The Captain and Chief Engineer of the boat, who, it is almost superfluous to add, were of course both Clyde men, like good Scots deplored this Sabbath-breaking; but like equally good Scots they admitted how very lucrative the Sunday traffic was to the steamboat company, and I gathered that they both got a commission

on this.

The old town of Macao is a piece of sixteenth and seventeenth century Portugal transplanted into China. It is wonderful to find a southern European town complete with cathedral, "pracas," fountains, and statues, dumped down in the Far East. The place, too, is as picturesque as a scene from an opera, and China is the last spot where one would expect to find lingering traces of Gothic influence in carved doorways and other architectural details. As far as externals went Camoens, the great Portuguese poet, can scarcely have realised his exile during the two years, 1556-1558, of his banishment to Macao. He most creditably utilised this period of enforced rest by writing *The Lusiads*, a poem which his countrymen are inclined to over rate. All the familiar characteristics of an old Portuguese town are met with here, the blue and pink colour-washed houses, an ample sufficiency of ornate churches, public fountains everywhere, and every shop-sign and notice is written in Portuguese, including the interminable Portuguese street names. The only thing lacking seemed the inhabitants. I presume the town must have some inhabitants, but I did not see a single one. Possibly they were taking their siestas, or were shut up in their houses, meditating on the bygone glories of Portugal, tempered with regrets that they had neglected to dredge their harbour.

Admiral Sir Hedworth Meux, the Naval Commander-in-Chief in the Pacific, who happens to be my sister's son, told me that he was sending a destroyer for three or four days up the Canton River, on special service, and asked if I would care to go, and I naturally accepted the offer. The Admiral did not go up himself, but sent his Flag-Captain and Flag-Lieutenant. The marshy banks of the Canton River are lined with interminable paddy-fields, for, as every one knows, rice is a crop that must be grown under water. After the rice harvest, these swampy fields are naturally full of fallen grain, and thrifty John Chinaman feeds immense flocks of ducks on the stubbles of the paddy-fields. The ducks are brought down by thousands in junks, and quack and gobble to their hearts' content in the fields all day, waddling back over a plank to their junks at night. At sunset, one of the most comical sights in the world can be witnessed. A Chinese boy comes ashore from each junk with a horn, which he blows as a signal to the ducks that bedtime has arrived. In his other hand the boy has a rattan cane, with which he administers a tremendous thrashing to the last ten ducks to arrive on board. The ducks know this, and in that singular country their progenitors have probably been thrashed in the same way for a thousand years, so they all have an inherited sense of the dangers of the corporal punishment threatening them. As soon as the horn sounds, thousands of ducks start the maddest of Marathon races back to their respective junks, which they never mistake, with such a quacking and gobbling and pushing of each other aside, as the ungainly fowls waddle along at the top of their speed, as must be witnessed to be credited. The duck has many advantages: in his wild state, his extreme wariness and his powerful flight make him a splendid sporting bird, and when dead he has most estimable qualities after a brief sojourn in the kitchen. Domesticated, though he can scarcely be classed as a dainty feeder, he makes a strong appeal to some people, especially after he has contracted an intimate alliance with sage and onions, but he was never intended by Nature for a sprinter, nor are his webbed feet adapted for rapid locomotion. Sufferers from chronic melancholia would, I am sure, benefit by witnessing the nightly football scrums and speed-contests of these Chinese ducks, for I defy any one to see them without becoming

helpless with laughter.

The river in the neighbourhood of Canton is so covered with junks, sampans, and other craft, that, in comparison to it, the Thames at Henley during regatta week would look like a deserted waste of water. One misses at Canton the decorative war-junks of the Shanghai River. These war-junks, though perfectly useless either for defence or attack, are gorgeous objects to the eye, with their carving, their scarlet lacquer and profuse gilding. A Chinese stern-wheeler is a quaint craft, for her wheel is nothing but a treadmill, manned by some thirty half-naked coolies, who go through a regular treadmill drill, urging the boat along at perhaps three miles an hour. In addition to their deck passengers, these boats have rows of little covered niches for superior personages, and in every niche sits a grave, motionless Chinaman, looking for all the world like those carved Chinese cabinets we sometimes see, with a little porcelain figure squatting in each carved compartment.

We had a naval interpreter on board, a jovial, hearty, immensely fat old Chinaman. Our destroyer had four funnels, but as we were going up the river under easy steam, only the forward boilers were going, so that whilst our two forward funnels, "Matthew" and "Mark," were smoking bravely, the two after ones, "Luke" and "John," were unsullied by the faintest wisp of a smoke pennant trailing from their black orifices. Our old interpreter was much distressed at this, for, as far as I could judge, his countrymen gauged a vessel's fighting power solely by the amount of smoke that she emitted, and he feared that we should be regarded with but scanty respect.

The British and French Consulate-Generals at Canton are situated on a large artificial island, known as Sha-mien. Here, too, the European business men live in the most comfortable Europe-like houses, surrounded with gardens and lawn-tennis courts. Here is the cricket-ground and the club. Being in the Far East, the latter is, of course, equipped with one of the most gigantic bar-rooms ever seen. The British Consul-General had ordered chairs for us in which to be carried through the city, as it would be derogatory to the dignity of a European to be seen walking on foot in a Chinese town. Our business with the Consul-General finished, we started on our tour of inspection, the party consisting of the Flag-Captain, the Flag-Lieutenant, the interpreter and myself, together with a small midshipman, who, being anxious to see Canton, had somehow managed to get three days' leave and to smuggle himself on board the destroyer. The Consul-General warned us that the smells in the native city would be unspeakably appalling, and advised us to smoke continuously, very kindly presenting each of us with a handful of mild Borneo cheroots.

The canal separating Sha-mien from the city is 100 feet broad, but I doubt if anywhere else in the world 100 feet separates the centuries as that canal does. On the one side, green lawns, gardens, trees, and a very fair imitation of Europe. A few steps over a fortified bridge, guarded by Indian soldiers and Indian policemen, and you are in the China of a thousand years ago, absolutely unchanged, except for the introduction of electric light and telephones. The English manager of the Canton Electric Co. told me that the natives were wonderfully adroit at stealing current. One would not imagine John Chinaman an expert electrician, yet these people managed somehow to tap the electric mains, and the manager estimated the weekly loss on stolen power as about 500 pounds.

No street in Canton is wider than eight feet, and many of them are only five feet broad. They are densely packed with yellow humanity, though there is no wheeled traffic whatever. There are countless miles of these narrow, stifling alleys, paved with rough granite slabs, under which festers the sewage of centuries. The smells are unbelievably hideous. Except for an occasional canal, a reeking open sewer, there are no open spaces whatever. And yet these narrow alleys of two-storied houses are marvellously picturesque, with coloured streamers and coloured lanterns drooping from every house and shop, and the shops themselves are a joy to the eye. They are entirely open to the street in front, but in the far dim recesses of every one there is a species of carved reredos, over which dragons, lacquered black, or lacquered red, gilded or silvered, sprawl artistically. In front of this screen there is always a red-covered joss table, where red lights burn, and incense-sticks smoulder, all of which, as shall be explained later, are precautions to thwart the machinations of the peculiarly malevolent local devils. In food shops, hideous and obscene entrails of unknown animals gape repellently on the stranger, together with strings and strings of dried rats, and other horrible comestibles; in every street the yellow population seems denser and denser, the colour more brilliant and the smells more sickening. We could not have stood it but for the thoughtful Consul-General's Borneo cigars, though the small midshipman, being still of tender years, was brought to public and ignominious disaster by his second cheroot. After two hours of slow progress in carrying-chairs, through this congeries of narrow, unsavoury alleys, now jostled by coolies carrying bales of merchandise suspended from long bamboos resting on their shoulders (exactly as they did in the pictures of a book, called *_Far Off_*, which I had as a child), now pushed on one side by the palanquin of a mandarin, we hungered for fresh air and open spaces, less crowded by yellow oblique-eyed Mongolians; still, though we all felt as though we were in a nightmare, we had none of us ever seen anything like it, and in spite of our declarations that we never wished to see this evil-smelling warren of humanity again, somehow its uncanny fascination laid hold of us, and we started again over the same route next morning. The small midshipman had to be restrained from indulging in his yearning to dine off puppy-dog in a Chinese restaurant, in spite of the gastric disturbances occasioned by his precocious experiments with cheroots.

I imagine that every Chinaman liable to zymotic diseases died thousands of years ago, and that by the law of the survival of the fittest all Chinamen born now are immune from filth diseases; that they can drink sewage-water with impunity, and thrive under conditions which would kill any Europeans in a week.

The inhabitants of Canton are, I believe, mostly Taoists by religion, but their lives are embittered by their constant struggles with the local devils. Most fortunately Chinese devils have their marked limitations; for instance, they cannot go round a corner, and most mercifully they suffer from constitutional timidity, and can be easily frightened away by fire-crackers. Human beings inhabiting countries subject to pests, have usually managed to cope with them by adopting counter-measures. In mosquito-ridden countries people sleep under mosquito-nets, thus baffling those nocturnal blood-suckers; in parts of Ceylon infested with snakes, sharpened zig-zag snake-boards are fastened to the window-sills, which prove extremely painful to intruding reptiles. The Chinese, as a safeguard against their devils,

have adopted the peculiar "cocked hat" corner to their roofs, which we see reproduced in so much of Chippendale's work. It is obvious that, with an ordinary roof, any ill-disposed devil would summon some of his fellows, and they would fly up, get their shoulders under the corner of the eaves, and prise the roof off in no time. With the peculiar Chinese upward curve of the corners, the devils are unable to get sufficient leverage, and so retire discomfited. Most luckily, too, they detest the smell of incense-sticks, and cannot abide the colour red, which is as distasteful to them as it is to a bull, but though it moves the latter to fury, it only inspires the devils with an abject terror. Accordingly, any prudent man can, by an abundant display of red silk streamers, and a plentiful burning of joss-sticks, keep his house practically free from these pests. A rich Chinaman who has built himself a new house, will at once erect a high wall immediately in front of it. It obstructs the light and keeps out the air, but owing to the inability of Chinese devils to go round corners it renders the house as good as devil-proof.

We returned after dark from our second visit to the city. However much the narrow streets may have offended the nose, they unquestionably gratified the eye with the endless vista of paper lanterns, all softly aglow with crimson, green, and blue, as the place reverberated with the incessant banging of firecrackers. The families of the shopkeepers were all seated at their supper-tables (for the Chinese are the only Orientals who use chairs and tables as we do) in the front portions of the shop. As women are segregated in China, only the fathers and sons were present at this simple evening meal of sewage-fed fish, stewed rat and broiled dog, but never for one instant did they relax their vigilance against possible attacks by their invisible foes. It is clear that an intelligent devil would select this very moment, when every one was absorbed in the pleasures of the table, to penetrate into the shop, where he could play havoc with the stock before being discovered and ejected. Accordingly, little Ping Pong, the youngest son, had to wait for his supper, and was sent into the street with a large packet of fire-crackers to scare devils from the vicinity, and if little Ping Pong was like other small boys, he must have hugely enjoyed making such an appalling din. Every single shop had a stone pedestal before it, on which a lamp was burning, for experience has shown how useful a deterrent this is to any but the most abandoned devils; they will at once pass on to a shop unprotected by a guardian light.

We had been on the outskirts of the city that day, and I was much struck with an example of Chinese ingenuity. The suburban inhabitants all seem to keep poultry, and all these fowls were of the same breed--small white bantams. So, to identify his own property, Ching Wan dyed all his chickens' tails orange, whilst Hung To's fowls scratched about with mauve tails, and Kyang Foo's hens gave themselves great airs on the strength of their crimson tail feathers.

It is curious that, in spite of its wealth and huge population, Canton should contain no fine temples. The much-talked-of Five-Storied Pagoda is really hardly worth visiting, except for the splendid panorama over the city obtained from its top floor. Canton here appears like one endless sea of brown roofs extending almost to the horizon. The brown sea of roof appears to be quite unbroken, for, from that height, the narrow alleys of street disappear entirely. We were taken to a large temple on the outskirts of the city. It was certainly very big, also very dirty and ill-kept. Compared with the splendid temples of Nikko

in Japan, glowing with scarlet and black lacquer, and gleaming with gold, temples on which cunning craftsmanship of wood-carving, enamels and bronze-work has been lavished in almost superfluous profusion, or even with the severer but dignified temples of unpainted cryptomeria wood at Kyoto, this Chinese pagoda was scarcely worth looking at. It had the usual three courts, an outer, middle, and inner one, and in the middle court a number of students were seated on benches. I am afraid that I rather puzzled our fat Chinese interpreter by inquiring of him whether these were the local Benchers of the Middle Temple.

The Chinese dislike to foreigners is well known, so is the term "foreign devils," which is applied to them. Our small party met with a most hostile reception that day in one part of the city, and the crowd were very menacing until addressed by our fat old interpreter. The reason of this is very simple. Chinamen have invariably chocolate-coloured eyes, so the great distorted wooden figures of devils so commonly seen outside temple gates are always painted with light eyes, in order to give them an inhuman and unearthly appearance to Chinese minds. It so happened that the Flag-Captain, the Flag-Lieutenant, the midshipman and myself, had all four of us light-coloured eyes, either grey or blue, the colour associated with devils, in the Chinese intelligence. We were unquestionably foreigners, so the *_prima facie_* evidence of satanic origin against us was certainly strong. We ourselves would be prejudiced against an individual with bright magenta eyes, and we might be tempted to associate every kind of evil tendency with his abnormal colouring; to the Chinese, grey eyes must appear just as unnatural as magenta eyes would to us. We were inclined to attribute the hostile demonstration to the small snottie, who, in spite of warnings, had again experimented with cheroots. His unbecoming pallor would have naturally predisposed a Chinese crowd against us.

The feeling of utter helplessness in a country where one is unable to speak one word of the language is most exasperating. My youngest brother, who is chairman of a steamship company, had occasion to go to the Near East nine years ago on business connected with his company. The steamer called at the Piraeus for eight hours, and my brother, who had never been in Athens, took a taxi and saw as much of "the city of the violet crown" as was possible in the time. He could speak no modern Greek, but when the taxi-man, on their return to the Piraeus, demanded by signs 7 pounds as his fare, my brother, hot with indignation at such an imposition, summoned up all his memories of the Greek Testament, and addressed the chauffeur as follows: "*_o taxianthrope, mae geyito!_*" Stupefied at hearing the classic language of his country, the taxi-man at once became more reasonable in his demands. After this, who will dare to assert that there are no advantages in a classical education?

All the hillsides round Chinese cities are dotted with curious stone erections in the shape of horseshoes. These are the tombs of wealthy Chinamen; the points of the compass they face, and the period which must elapse before the deceased can be permanently buried, are all determined by the family astrologers, for Chinese devils can be as malignant to the dead as to the living, though they seem to reserve their animosities for the more opulent of the population.

It is to meet the delay of years which sometimes elapses between the death of a person and his permanent burial, that the "City of the Dead" exists in Canton. This is not a cemetery, but a collection of

nearly a thousand mortuary chapels. The "City of the Dead" is the pleasantest spot in that nightmare city. A place of great open sunlit spaces, and streets of clean white-washed mortuaries, sweet with masses of growing flowers. After the fetid stench of the narrow, airless streets, the fresh air and sunlight of this "City of the Dead" were most refreshing, and its absolute silence was welcome after the deafening turmoil of the town. We were there in spring-time, and hundreds of blue-and-white porcelain vases, of the sort we use as garden ornaments, were gorgeous with flowering azaleas of all hues, or fragrant with freesias. All the mortuaries, though of different sizes, were built on the same plan, in two compartments, separated by pillars with a carved wooden screen between them. Behind this screen the cylindrical lacquered coffin is placed, a most necessary precaution, for Chinese devils being fortunately unable to go round a corner, the occupant of the coffin is thus safe from molestation. Other elementary safeguards are also adopted; a red-covered altar invariably stands in front of the screen, adorned with candles and artificial flowers, and incense-sticks are perpetually burning on it. What with the incense-sticks and abundant red silk streamers, an atmosphere is created which must be thoroughly uncongenial, even to the most irreclaimable devil. The outer chapel always contains two or four large chairs for the family to meditate in.

It must be remembered that the favourite recreation of the Chinese is to sit and meditate on the tombs of their ancestors, and though in these mortuaries this pastime cannot be carried out in its entirety, this modified form is universally regarded as a very satisfactory substitute. In one chapel containing the remains of the wife of the Chinese Ambassador in Rome, there was a curious blend of East and West. Amongst the red streamers and joss-sticks there were metal wreaths and dried palm wreaths inscribed, "A notre chere collegue Madame Tsin-Kyow"; an unexpected echo of European diplomatic life to find in Canton.

The rent paid for these places is very high, and as the length of time which the body must rest there depends entirely upon the advice of the astrologers, it is not uncharitable to suppose that there must be some understanding between them and the proprietor of the "City of the Dead."

We can even suppose some such conversation as the following between the managing-partner of a firm of long-established family astrologers and that same proprietor:

"Good-morning, Mr. Chow Chung; I have come to you with the melancholy news of the death of our esteemed fellow-citizen, Hang Wang Kai. A fine man, and a great loss! What I liked about him was that he was such a thorough Chinaman of the good old stamp. A wealthy man, sir, a very wealthy man. The family are clients of mine, and they have just rung me up, asking me to cast a horoscope to ascertain the wishes of the stars with regard to the date of burial of our poor friend. How inscrutable are the decrees of the heavenly bodies! They may recommend the immediate interment of our friend: on the other hand, they may wish it deferred for two, five, ten, or even twenty years, in which case our friend would be one of the fortunate tenants of your delightful Garden of Repose. Quite so. Casting a horoscope is very laborious work, and I can but obey blindly the stars' behests. Exactly. Should the stars recommend our poor friend's temporary occupation of one of your attractive little Maisonettes, I should

expect, to compensate me for my labours, a royalty of 20 per cent. on the gross (I emphasize the gross) rental paid by the family for the first two years. They, of course, would inform me of any little sum you did them the honour to accept from them. From two to five years, I should expect a royalty of 30 per cent.; from five to ten years, 40 per cent.; on any period over ten years 50 per cent. Yes, I said fifty. Surely I do not understand you to dissent? The stars may save us all trouble by advising Hang Wang Kai's immediate interment. Thank you. I thought that you would agree. These terms, of course, are only for the Chinese and Colonial rights; I must expressly reserve the American rights, for, as I need hardly remind you, the Philippine Islands are now United States territory, and the constellations _may_ recommend the temporary transfer of our poor friend to American soil. Thank you; I thought that we should agree. It only remains for me to instruct my agents, Messrs. Ap Wang & Son, to draw up an agreement in the ordinary form on the royalty basis I have indicated, for our joint signature. The returns will, I presume, be made up as usual, to March 31 and September 30. As I am far too upset by the loss of our friend to be able to talk business, I will now, with your permission, withdraw."

Had I been born a citizen of Canton, I should unquestionably have articulated my son to an astrologer, convinced that I was securing for him an assured and lucrative future.

CHAPTER IV

The glamour of the West Indies--Captain Marryat and Michael Scott--Deadly climate of the islands in the eighteenth century--The West Indian planters--Difference between East and West Indies--"Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die"--Training-school for British Navy--A fruitless voyage--Quarantine--Distant view of Barbados--Father Labat--The last of the Emperors of Byzantium--Delightful little Lady Nugent and her diary of 1802--Her impressions of Jamaica--Wealthy planters--Their hideous gormandising--A simple morning meal--An aldermanic dinner--How the little Nugents were gorged--Haiti--Attempts of General Le Clerc to secure British intervention in Haiti--Presents to Lady Nugent--Her Paris dresses described--Our arrival in Jamaica--Its marvellous beauty--The bewildered Guardsman--Little trace of Spain left in Jamaica--The Spaniards as builders--British and Spanish Colonial methods contrasted.

Since the earliest days of my boyhood, the West Indies have exercised a quite irresistible fascination over me. This was probably due to my having read and re-read _Peter Simple_ and _Tom Cringle's Log_ over and over again, until I knew them almost by heart; indeed I will confess that even at the present day the glamour of these books is almost as strong as it used to be, and that hardly a year passes without my thumbing once again their familiar pages. Both Captain Marryat and Michael Scott knew their West Indies well, for Marryat had served on the station in either 1813 or 1814, and Michael Scott lived for sixteen years in Jamaica, from 1806 to 1822, at first as manager of a sugar estate, and then as a merchant in Kingston. Marryat and Scott were practically contemporaries, though the former was the younger by three years, being born in 1792. I am told that now-a-days boys care for

neither of these books; if so, the loss is theirs. What attracted me in these authors' West Indian pictures was the fact that here was a community of British-born people living a reckless, rollicking, Charles Lever-like sort of life in a most deadly climate, thousands of miles from home, apparently equally indifferent to earthquakes, hurricanes, or yellow fever, for at the beginning of the twentieth century no one who has not read the Colonial records, or visited West Indian churches, can form the faintest idea of the awful ravages of yellow fever, nor of the vast amount of victims this appalling scourge claimed. Now, improved sanitation and the knowledge that the yellow death is carried by the *Stegomyia* mosquito, with the precautionary methods suggested by that knowledge, have almost entirely eliminated yellow fever from the West India islands; but in Marryat and Scott's time to be ordered to the West Indies was looked upon as equivalent to a death sentence. Yet every writer enlarges upon the exquisite beauty of these green, sun-kissed islands, and regrets bitterly that so enchanting an earthly paradise should be the very ante-room of death.

In spite of the unhealthy climate, in the days when King Sugar reigned undisputed, the owners of sugar estates, attracted by the enormous fortunes then to be made, and fully alive to the fact that in the case of absentee proprietors profits tended to go everywhere except into the owners' pockets, deliberately braved the climate, settled down for life (usually a brief one) in either Jamaica or Barbados, built themselves sumptuous houses, stocked with silver plate and rare wines, and held high and continual revel until such time as Yellow Jack should claim them. In the East Indies the soldiers and Civil Servants of "John Company," and the merchant community, "shook the pagoda tree" until they had accumulated sufficient fortunes on which to retire, when they returned to England with yellow faces and torpid livers, grumbling like Jos Sedley to the ends of their lives about the cold, and the carelessness of English cooks in preparing curries, and harbouring unending regrets for the flesh-pots and comforts of life in Boggley Wollah, which in retrospect no doubt appeared more attractive than they had done in reality. The West Indian, on the other hand, settled down permanently with his wife and family in the island of his choice. Barbados and Jamaica are the only two tropical countries under the British flag where there was a resident white gentry born and bred in the country, with country places handed down from father to son. In these two islands not one word of any language but English was ever to be heard from either black or white. The English parochial system had been transplanted bodily, and successfully, with guardians and overseers complete; in a word, they were colonies in the strictest sense of the word; transplanted portions of the motherland, with most of its institutions, dumped down into the Caribbean Sea, but blighted until 1834 by the curse of negro slavery. It was this overseas England, set amidst the most enchanting tropical scenery and vegetation, that I was so anxious to see. Michael Scott, both in *Tom Cringle* and *The Cruise of the Midge*, gave the most alluring pictures of Creole society (a Creole does *not* mean a coloured person; any one born in the West Indies of pure white parents is a Creole); they certainly seemed to get drunk more than was necessary, yet the impression left on one's mind was not unlike that produced by the purely fictitious Ireland of Charles Lever's novels: one continual round of junketing, feasting, and practical jokes; and what gave the pictures additional piquancy was the knowledge that death was all the while peeping round the corner, and that Yellow Jack might at any moment touch one of these light-hearted revellers with his burning finger-tips.

Lady Nugent, wife of Sir George Nugent, Governor of Jamaica from 1801 to 1806, kept a voluminous diary during her stay in the island, and most excellent reading it makes. She was thus rather anterior in date to Michael Scott, but their descriptions tally very closely. I shall have a good deal to say about Lady Nugent.

The West Indies make an appeal of a different nature to all Britons. They were the training-ground and school of all the great British Admirals from Drake to Nelson. Benbow died of his wounds at Port Royal in Jamaica, and was buried in Kingston Parish Church in 1702, whilst Rodney's memory is still so cherished by West Indians, white and coloured alike, that serious riots broke out when his statue was removed from Spanish Town to Kingston, and his effigy had eventually to be placed in the memorial temple which grateful Spanish Town erected to commemorate his great victory over de Grasse off Dominica on April 12, 1782, as the result of which the Lesser Antilles remained British instead of French. For all these reasons I had experienced, since the age of thirteen, an intense longing to see these lovely islands with all their historic associations.

In 1884 I travelled from Buenos Ayres to Canada in a tramp steamer simply and solely because she was advertised to call at Barbados and Jamaica. Never shall I forget my first night in that tramp. I soon became conscious of uninvited guests in my bunk, so, striking a light (strictly against rules in the ships of those days), I discovered regiments and army corps of noisome, crawling vermin marching in serried ranks into my bunk under the impression that it was their parade ground. For the remainder of the voyage I slept on the saloon table, a hard but cleanly couch. We lay for a week at Rio de Janeiro loading coffee, and we touched at Bahia and at Pernambuco. At this latter place as at Rio an epidemic of yellow fever was raging, so we had not got a clean bill-of-health. As the blunt-nosed tramp pushed her leisurely way northward through the oily ultra-marine expanse of tropical seas, I thought longingly of the green island for which we were heading. We reached Carlisle Bay, Barbados, at daybreak on a glorious June morning, and waited impatiently in the roadstead (there is no harbour in Barbados) for the liberating visit of the medical officer from the shore. He arrived, gave one glance at our bill-of-health, and sternly refused *_pratique_*, so the hateful yellow flag remained fluttering at the fore in the Trade wind, announcing to all and sundry that we were cut off from all communication with the shore. Never was there a more aggravating situation! Barbados, all emerald green after the rainy season, looked deliciously enticing from the ship. The "flamboyant" trees, *_Ponciana Regia_*, were in full bloom, making great patches of vivid scarlet round the Savannah. The houses and villas peeping out of luxuriant tangles of tropical vegetation had a delightfully home-like look to eyes accustomed for two years to South American surroundings. Seen through a glass from the ship's deck, the Public Buildings in Trafalgar Square, solid and substantial, had all the unimaginative neatness of any prosaic provincial townhall at home. We were clearly no longer in a Latin-American country. It was really a piece of England translated to the Caribbean Sea, and we few passengers, some of whom had not seen England for many weary years, were forbidden to set foot on this outpost of home. It was most exasperating; for never did any island look more inviting, and surely such dazzling white houses, such glowing red roofs, such vivid greenery, and so absurdly blue a sea, had never been seen in conjunction before. Barbados is

almost exactly the size of the Isle of Wight, but in spite of its restricted area, all the Barbadians, both white and coloured, have the most exalted opinion of their island, which in those days they lovingly termed "Bimshire," white Barbadians being then known as "Bims." Students of Marryat will remember how Mr. Apollo Johnson, at Miss Betty Austin's coloured "Dignity ball," declared that "All de world fight against England, but England nebber fear; King George nebber fear while Barbados 'tand 'tiff," and something of that sentiment persists still to-day. As a youngster I used to laugh till I cried at the rebuff administered to Peter Simple by Miss Minerva at the same "Dignity ball." Peter was carving a turkey, and asked his swarthy partner whether he might send her a slice of the breast. Shocked at such coarseness, the dusky but delicate damsel simpered demurely, "Sar, I take a lily piece turkey bosom, if you please." Dignity balls are still held in Barbados; they are rather trying to one of the senses. In the "eighties" it was a point of honour amongst "Bims" to wear on all and every occasion a high black silk hat. During our enforced quarantine we saw a number of white Bims sailing little yachts about the roadstead, every single man of them crowned with a high silk hat, about the most uncomfortable head-gear imaginable for sailing in. Another agreeable home-touch was to hear the negro boatmen all talking to each other in English. Their speech may not have been melodious, but it fell pleasantly enough on ears accustomed for so long to hear nothing but Spanish. From my intimate acquaintance with Marryat, even the jargon of the negro boatmen struck me with a delightful sense of familiarity, as did the very place-names, Needham Point and Carlisle Bay. I was fated not to see Barbados again for twenty-two years.

In the early part of the eighteenth century a French missionary, one Father Labat, visited Barbados and gave the most glowing account of it to his countrymen. According to him the island was brimful of wealth, and the jewellers' and silversmiths' shops in Bridgetown rivalled those of Paris. I should be inclined to question Father Labat's strict veracity. This worthy priest declared that the planters lived in sumptuous houses, superbly furnished, that their dinners lasted four hours, and their tables were crowded with gold and silver plate. The statement as to the length of the planters' dinners is probably an accurate one, for I myself have been the recipient of Barbadian hospitality, and had never before even imagined such an endless procession of fish, flesh, and fowl, not to mention turtle, land-crabs, and pepper-pot. West Indian negresses seem to have a natural gift for cooking, though their cuisine is a very highly spiced and full-flavoured one.

Father Labat's motive in drawing so glorified a picture of Barbados peeps out at the end of his account, for he drily remarks that the fortifications of the island were most inadequate, and that it could easily be captured by the French; he was clearly making an appeal to his countrymen's cupidity.

Upon making the acquaintance of Bridgetown some twenty years after my first quarantine visit, I can hardly endorse Father Labat's opinion that the streets are strikingly handsome, for Bridgetown, like most British West Indian towns, looks as though all the houses were built of cards or paper. It is, however, a bright, cheery little spot, seems prosperous enough, and has its own Trafalgar Square, decorated with its own very fine statue of Nelson. Every house both in Jamaica and Barbados is fitted with sash-windows in the English style. This

fidelity to the customs of the motherland is very touching but hardly practical, for in the burning climate of the West Indies every available breath of fresh air is welcome. With French windows, the entire window-space can be opened; with sashes, one-half of the window remains necessarily blocked.

Let strangers beware of "Barbados Green Bitters." It is a most comforting local cocktail, apparently quite innocuous. It is not; under its silkiness it is abominably potent. One "green bitter" is food, two are dangerous.

In St. John's churchyard, some fourteen miles from Bridgetown, is to be seen one of the most striking examples of the vanity of human greatness. A stone reproduction of the porch of a Greek temple bears this inscription,

HERE LYETH YE BODY OF
FERDINANDO PALEOLOGOS
DESCENDED FROM YE IMPERIAL LYNE
OF YE LAST CHRISTIAN
EMPERORS OF GREECE
CHURCHWARDEN OF THIS PARISH
1655-1656
VESTRYMAN TWENTY YEARS
DIED OCTOBER 3, 1678.

Just think of it! The last descendant of Constantine, the last scion of the proud Emperors of Byzantium, commemorated as vestryman and churchwarden of a country parish in a little, unknown island in the Caribbean, only then settled for seventy-three years! Could any preacher quote a more striking instance of "_sic transit gloria mundi_"?

Codrington College, not far from St. John's church, is rather a surprise. Few people would expect to come across a little piece of Oxford in a tropical island, or to find a college building over two hundred years old in Barbados, complete with hall and chapel. The facade of Codrington is modelled on either Queen's or the New Buildings at Magdalen, Oxford, and the college is affiliated to Durham University. Originally intended as a place of education for the sons of white planters it is now wholly given over to coloured students. It can certainly claim the note of the unexpected, and the quiet eighteenth-century dignity of its architecture is enhanced by the broad lake which fronts it, and by the exceedingly pretty tropical park in which it stands. Codrington boasts some splendid specimens of the "Royal" palm, the _Palmiste_ of the French, which is one of the glories of West Indian scenery.

Though Father Labat may have drawn the longbow intentionally, some of the country houses erected by the sugar planters in the heyday of the colony's riotous prosperity are really very fine indeed, although at present they have mostly changed hands, or been left derelict. Long Bay Castle, now unoccupied, is a most ambitious building, with marble stairs, beautiful plaster ceilings, and some of its original Chippendale furniture still remaining. A curious feature of all these Barbadian houses is the hurricane-wing, built of extra strength and fitted with iron shutters, into which all the family locked themselves when the fall of the barometer announced the approach of a hurricane. I was shown one hurricane-wing which had successfully withstood two

centuries of these visitations.

Barbados is the only ugly island of the West Indian group, for every available foot is planted with sugar-cane, and the unbroken, undulating sea of green is monotonous. In the hilly portions, however, there are some very attractive bits of scenery.

On my first visit, as I have already said, I saw nothing of all this, except through glasses from the deck of a tramp. I was also to be denied a sight of Jamaica, for the Captain knew that he would be refused *pratique* there, and settled to steam direct to the Danish island of St. Thomas, where quarantine regulations were less strict, so all my voyage was for nothing.

Not for over twenty years after was I to make the acquaintance of Kingston and Port Royal and the Palisadoes, all very familiar names to me from my constant reading of Marryat and Michael Scott.

I suppose that every one draws mental pictures of places that they have constantly heard about, and that most people have noticed how invariably the real place is not only totally different from the fancy picture, but almost aggressively so.

I have already mentioned Lady Nugent's journal or "Jamaica in 1801." I am persuaded that she must have been a most delightful little creature. She was very tiny, as she tells us herself, and had brown curly hair. She was a little coy about her age, which she confided to no one; by her own directions, it was omitted even from her tombstone, but from internal evidence we know that when her husband, Sir George Nugent, was appointed Governor of Jamaica on April 1, 1801 (how sceptical he must have been at first as to the genuineness of this appointment! One can almost hear him ejaculating "Quite so. You don't make an April fool of me!"), she was either thirty or thirty-one years old. Lady Nugent was as great an adept as Mrs. Fairchild, of revered memory, at composing long prayers, every one of which she enters *in extenso* in her diary, but not only was there a delightful note of feminine coquetry about her, but she also possessed a keen sense of humour, two engaging attributes in which, I fear, that poor Mrs. Fairchild was lamentably lacking.

Lady Nugent and her husband sailed out to Jamaica in a man-of-war, H.M.S. *Ambuscade*, in June, 1801. As Sir George Nugent had been from 1799 to 1801 Adjutant-General in Ireland, this name must have had quite a home-like sound to him. We read in Lady Nugent's diary of June 25, 1801, after a lengthy supplication for protection against the perils of the deep, the following charmingly feminine note: "My nightcaps are so smart that I wear them all day, for to tell the truth I really think I look better in my nightcap than in my bonnet, and as I am surrounded by men who do not know a nightcap from a daycap, it is no matter what I do." Dear little thing! I am sure she looked too sweet in them. They sailed from Cork on June 5, and reached Barbados on July 17, which seems a quick voyage. They stayed one night at an inn in Bridgetown, and gave a dinner-party for which the bill was over sixty pounds. This strikes quite a modern note, and might really have been in post-war days instead of in 1801.

Lady Nugent found the society in Jamaica, both that of officials and of planters and their wives, intensely uncongenial to her. "Nothing is ever talked of in this horrid island but the price of sugar. The only

other topics of conversation are debt, disease and death." She was much shocked at the low standard of morality prevailing amongst the white men in the colony, and disgusted at the perpetual gormandising and drunkenness. The frequent deaths from yellow fever amongst her acquaintance, and the terrible rapidity with which Yellow Jack slew, depressed her dreadfully, and she was startled at the callous fashion in which people, hardened by many years' experience of the scourge, received the news of the death of their most intimate friends. She was perpetually complaining of the unbearable heat, to which she never got acclimatised; she suffered "sadly" from the mosquitoes, and never could get used to earthquakes, hurricanes, or scorpions.

With these exceptions, she seems to have liked Jamaica very well. It must have been an extraordinary community, and to understand it we must remember the conditions prevailing. Bryan Edwards, in his History of the British West Indies, published in 1793, called them "the principal source of the national opulence and maritime power of England"; and without the stream of wealth pouring into Great Britain from Barbados and Jamaica, the long struggle with France would have been impossible.

The term "as rich as a West Indian" was proverbial, and in 1803 the West Indies were accountable for one-third of the imports and exports of Great Britain.

The price of sugar in 1803 was fifty-two shillings a hundredweight. Wealth was pouring into the island and into the pockets of the planters. Lady Nugent constantly alludes to sugar estates worth 20,000 or 30,000 pounds a year. These planters were six weeks distant from England, and, except during the two years' respite which followed the Treaty of Amiens, Great Britain had been intermittently at war with either France or Spain during the whole of the eighteenth century. The preliminary articles of peace between France and Britain were signed on October 1, 1801, the Peace of Amiens itself on March 27, 1802, but in July, 1803, hostilities between the two countries were again renewed. All this meant that communications between the colony and the motherland were very precarious. Nominally a mail-packet sailed from Jamaica once a month, but the seas were swarming with swift-sailing French and Spanish privateers, hanging about the trade-routes on the chance of capturing West Indiamen with their rich cargoes, so the mail-packets had to wait till a convoy assembled, and were then escorted home by men-of-war. This entailed the increasing isolation of the white community in Jamaica, who, in their outlook on life, retained the eighteenth-century standpoint. Now the eighteenth century was a thoroughly gross and material epoch. People had a pretty taste in clothes, and a nice feeling for good architecture, graceful furniture, and artistic house decoration, but this was a veneer only, and under the veneer lay an ingrained grossness of mind, just as the gorgeous satins and dainty brocades covered dirty, unwashed bodies. Even the complexions of the women were artificial to mask the defects of a sparing use of soap and water, and they drenched themselves with perfumes to hide the unpleasant effects of this lack of bodily cleanliness. On the surface hyper-refinement, glitter and show; beneath it a crude materialism and an ingrained grossness of temperament. What else could be expected when all the men got drunk as a matter of course almost every night of their lives? Over the coarsest description of wood lay a very highly polished veneer of satin-wood, which might possibly deceive the eye, but once scratch the paper-thin veneer and the ugly under-surface was at once

apparent. Money rolled into the pockets of these Jamaican planters; there is but little sport possible in the island, and they had no intellectual pursuits, so they just built fine houses, filled them with rare china, Chippendale furniture, and silver plate, and found their amusements in eating, drinking and gambling.

Even to-day the climate of Jamaica is very enervating. Wise people know now that to keep in health in hot countries alcohol, and wine especially, must be avoided. Meat must be eaten very sparingly, and an abstemious regime will bring its own reward. In the eighteenth century, however, people apparently thought that vast quantities of food and drink would combat the debilitating effects of the climate, and that, too, at a time when yellow fever was endemic. There are still old-fashioned people who are obsessed with the idea that the more you eat the stronger you grow. The Creoles in Jamaica certainly put this theory into effect. Michael Scott, in *Tom Cringle*, describes many Gargantuan repasts amongst the Kingston merchants, and as he himself was one of them, we can presume he knew what he was writing about. The men, too, habitually drank, of all beverages in the world to select in the scorching heat of Jamaica, hot brandy and water, and then they wondered that they died of yellow fever! Every white man and woman in the island seems to have been gorged with food. It was really a case of "let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die"; but if they hadn't eaten and drunk so enormously, presumably they would not have died so rapidly.

Lady Nugent was much disgusted with this gormandising. On page 78 of her journal she says, "I don't wonder now at the fever the people suffer from here--such eating and drinking I never saw! Such loads of rich and highly-seasoned things, and really the gallons of wine and mixed liquors that they drink! I observed some of our party to-day eat at breakfast as if they had never eaten before. A dish of tea, another of coffee, a bumper of claret, another large one of hock-negus; then Madeira, sangaree, hot and cold meats, stews and pies, hot and cold fish pickled and plain, peppers, ginger-sweetmeats, acid fruit, sweet jellies--in short, it was all as astonishing as it was disgusting."

It really does seem a fair allowance for a simple morning meal.

The life of a Governor of Jamaica is now principally taken up with quiet administrative work, but in 1802 he was supposed to hold a succession of reviews, to give personal audiences, endless balls and dinners, to make tours of inspection round the island; and, in addition, as *ex officio* Chancellor of Jamaica, it was his duty to preside at all the sittings of the Court of Chancery. During their many tours of inspection poor little Lady Nugent complains that, with the best wishes in the world, she really could not eat five large meals a day. She continues (page 95), "At the Moro to-day, our dinner at 6 was really so profuse that it is worth describing. The first course was of fish, with an entire jerked hog in the centre, and a black crab pepper-pot. The second course was of turtle, mutton, beef, turkey, goose, ducks, chicken, capons, ham, tongue, and crab patties. The third course was of sweets and fruits of all kinds. I felt quite sick, what with the heat and such a profusion of eatables."

One wonders what those planters' weekly bills would have amounted to at the present-day scale of prices, and can no longer feel surprised at their all running into debt, in spite of their huge incomes. The drinking, too, was on the same scale. Lady Nugent remarks (page 108),

"I am not astonished at the general ill-health of the men in this country, for they really eat like cormorants and drink like porpoises. All the men of our party got drunk to-night, even to a boy of fifteen, who was obliged to be carried home." Tom Cringle, in his account of a dinner-party in Cuba, remarks airily, "We, the males of the party, had drunk little or nothing, a bottle of claret or so apiece, a dram of brandy, and a good deal of vin-de-grave (_sic_)," and he really thinks that nothing: moderation itself in that sweltering climate!

In spite of her disgust at the immense amount of food devoured round her, Lady Nugent seems to have adopted a Jamaican scale of diet for her children, for when she returned to England with them in the Augustus Caesar in 1805, she gives the following account of the day's routine on board the ship. It must be observed that George, the elder child, was not yet three, and that Louisa was under two. "When I awake, the old steward brings me a dish of ginger tea. I then dress, and breakfast with the children. At eleven the children have biscuits, and some port wine and water. George eats some chicken or mutton at twelve, and at two they each have a bowl of strong soup. At four we all dine; I go to my cabin at half-past seven, and soon after eight I am always in bed and the babies fast asleep. The old steward then comes to my bedside with a large tumbler of porter with a toast in it. I eat the toast, drink the porter, and usually rest well."

Those two unfortunate children must have landed in England two miniature Daniel Lamberts. It is pleasant to learn that little George lived to the age of ninety. Had he not been so stuffed with food in his youth, he would probably have been a centenarian.

During Nugent's term of office events in Haiti, or San Domingo, as it was still called then, occasioned him great anxiety. Before the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789, Haiti had been the most prosperous and the most highly civilised of the West Indian islands. But after the French National Assembly had, in 1791, decreed equal rights between whites and mulattoes, troubles began. The blacks rebelled; the French rescinded the decree of 1791 and, changing their minds again, re-affirmed it. The blacks began murdering and plundering the whites, and many planters emigrated to Jamaica and the United States. That most extraordinary man, Toussaint l'Ouverture, a pure negro, who had been born a slave, re-established some form of order in Haiti until Napoleon, when the preliminary articles of the Peace of Amiens had been signed between Britain and France, hit upon the idea of employing his soldiers in Haiti, and sent out his brother-in-law, General Le Clerc, with 25,000 French soldiers to re-conquer the island. It was a most ill-fated expedition; the soldiers could not withstand the climate, and died like flies; France losing, from first to last, no less than 40,000 men from yellow fever. In 1802, Le Clerc, who seems to have been a great scoundrel, died, and in 1804 Haiti declared her independence.

After the Peace of Amiens the French Government were exceedingly anxious to secure the cooperation of British troops from Jamaica, seasoned to the climate, in restoring order in Haiti, and even offered to cede them such portions of Haiti as were willing to come under the British flag. During the ten months of General Le Clerc's administration of Haiti he was perpetually sending envoys to General Nugent in Jamaica, and continually offering him presents. It is not uncharitable to suppose that these presents were proffered with a view of winning Nugent's support to the idea of a British expedition to

Haiti. Nugent, however, sternly refused all these gifts. Madame Le Clerc, Napoleon's sister, who is better known as the beautiful Princess Pauline Borghese, a lady with an infinity of admirers, was far more subtle in her methods. Her presents to Lady Nugent took the irresistible form of dresses of the latest Parisian fashion, and were eagerly accepted by that volatile little lady. Indeed, for ten months she seems to have been entirely dressed by Madame Le Clerc, who even provided little George Nugent's christening robe of white muslin, heavily embroidered in gold. Ladies may be interested in Lady Nugent's account of her various dresses. "Last night at the ball I wore a new dress of purple crape, embroidered and heavily spangled in gold, given me by Madame Le Clerc. The skirt rather short; the waist very high. On my head I wore a wreath of gilded bay-leaves, and must have looked like a Roman Empress. I think that purple suits me, for every one declared that they never saw me looking better." Dear little lady! I am sure that she never did, and that the piquant little face on the frontispiece, with its roguish eyes, looked charming under her gold wreath. Again, "I wore a lovely dress of pink crape spangled in silver, sent me by Madame Le Clerc." She gives a fuller account of her dress at the great ball given her to celebrate her recovery after the birth of her son (Dec. 30, 1802).

"For the benefit of posterity I will describe my dress on this grand occasion. A crape dress, embroidered in silver spangles, also sent me by Madame Le Clerc, but much richer than that which I wore at the last ball. Scarcely any sleeves to my dress, but a broad silver spangled border to the shoulder-straps. The body made very like a child's frock, tying behind, and the skirt round, with not much train. On my head a turban of spangled crape like the dress, looped-up with pearls. This dress, the admiration of all the world over, will, perhaps, fifty years hence, be laughed at, and considered as ridiculous as our grandmothers' hoops and brocades appear to us now."

In fairness it must be stated that General Nugent punctiliously returned all Madame Le Clerc's presents to his wife with gifts of English cut-glass, then apparently much appreciated by the French. He seems to have sent absolute cart-loads of cut-glass to Haiti, but in days when men habitually drank two bottles of wine apiece after dinner, there was presumably a fair amount of breakage of decanters and tumblers.

I notice that although Lady Nugent complains on almost every page of "the appalling heat," the "unbearable heat," the "terrific heat, which gives me these sad headaches," she seems always ready to dance for hours at any time. Some idea of the ceremonious manners of the day is obtained from the perpetual entry "went to bed with my knees aching from the hundreds of curtsies I have had to make to the company."

In 1811 Sir George Nugent was appointed Commander-in-Chief in Bengal, and their voyage from Portsmouth to Calcutta occupied exactly six months, yet there are people who grumble at the mails now taking eighteen days to traverse the distance between London and Calcutta.

Lady Nugent was much shocked at the universal habit of smoking amongst Europeans in the East Indies. She sternly refused to allow their two aides-de-camp to smoke, "for as they are both only twenty-five, they are too young to begin so odious a custom," an idea which will amuse the fifteen-year-olds of today.

Not till 1906 did I find myself sailing into Kingston Harbour and actually set eyes on Port Royal, the Palisadoes, and Fort Augusta, all very familiar by name to me since my boyhood.

I had taken the trip to shake off a prolonged bronchial attack; a young Guardsman, a friend of mine, though my junior by many years, was convalescent after an illness, and was also recommended a sunbath, so we travelled together. The hotels being all full, we took up our quarters in a small boarding-house, standing in dense groves of orange trees, where each shiver of the night breeze sent the branches of the orange trees swish-swishing, and wafted great breaths of the delicious fragrance of orange blossom into our rooms. I was in bed, when the Guardsman, who had never been in the tropics before, rushed terror-stricken into my room. "I have drunk nothing whatever," he faltered, "but I must be either very drunk or else mad, for I keep fancying that my room is full of moving electric lights." I went into his room, where I found some half-dozen of the peculiarly brilliant Jamaican fireflies cruising about. The Guardsman refused at first to believe that any insect could produce so bright a light, and bemoaned the loss of his mental faculties, until I caught a firefly and showed him its two lamps gleaming like miniature motor head-lights.

Some pictures stand out startlingly clear-cut in the memory. Such a one is the recollection of our first morning in Jamaica. The Guardsman, full of curiosity to see something of the mysterious tropical island into which we had been deposited after nightfall, awoke me at daybreak. After landing from the mail-steamer in the dark, we had had merely impressions of oven-like heat, and of a long, dim-lit drive in endless suburbs of flimsily built, wooden houses, through the spice-scented, hot, black-velvet night, enlivened with almost indecently intimate glimpses into humble interiors, where swarthy dark forms jabbered and gesticulated, clustered round smoky oil-lamps; and as the suburbs gave place to the open country, the vast leaves of unfamiliar growths stood out, momentarily silhouetted against the blackness by the gleam of our carriage lamps.

It being so early, the Guardsman and I went out as we were, in pyjamas and slippers, with, of course, sufficient head protection against the fierce sun. Just a fortnight before we had left England under snow, in the grip of a black frost; London had been veiled in incessant thick fogs for ten days, and we had fallen straight into the most exquisitely beautiful island on the face of the globe, bathed in perpetual summer.

When we had traversed the grove of orange trees, we came upon a lovely little sunk-garden, where beds of cannas, orange, sulphur, and scarlet, blazed round a marble fountain, with a silvery jet splashing and leaping into the sunshine. The sunk-garden was surrounded on three sides by a pergola, heavily draped with yellow alamandas, drifts of wine-coloured bougainvillaa, and pale-blue solanums, the size of saucers. In the clear morning light it really looked entrancingly lovely. On the fourth side the garden ended in a terrace dominating the entire Liguanea plain, with the city of Kingston, Kingston Harbour, Port Royal, and the hills on the far side spread out below us like a map. Those hills are now marked on the Ordnance Survey as the "Healthshire Hills." This is a modern euphemism, for the name originally given to those hills and the district round them by the soldiers stationed in the "Apostles' Battery," was "Hellshire," and any one who has had personal experience of the heat there, can hardly

say that the title is inappropriate. From our heights, even Kingston itself looked inviting, an impression not confirmed by subsequent visits to that unlovely town. The long, sickle-shape sandspit of the Palisadoes separated Kingston Harbour on one side from the blue waters of the Caribbean Sea; on the other side the mangrove swamps of the Rio Cobre made unnaturally vivid patches of emerald green against the background of hills. On railways a green flag denotes that caution must be observed; the vivid green of the mangroves is Nature's caution-flag to the white man, for where the mangrove flourishes, there fever lurks.

The whole scene was so wonderfully beautiful under the blazing sunlight, and in the crystal-clear atmosphere, that the Guardsman refused to accept it as genuine. "It can't be real!" he cried, "this is January. We have got somehow into a pantomime transformation scene. In a minute it will go, and I shall wake up in Wellington Barracks to find it freezing like mad, with my owl of a servant telling me that I have to be on parade in five minutes." This lengthy warrior showed, too, a childish incredulity when I pointed out to him cocoa-nuts hanging on the palms; a field of growing pineapples below us, or great clusters of fruit on the banana trees. Pineapples, cocoanuts, and bananas were bought in shops; they did not grow on trees. He would insist that the great orange flowers, the size of cabbages, on the Brownea trees were artificial, as were the big blue trumpets of the Morning Glories. He was in reality quite intoxicated with the novelty and the glamour of his first peep into the tropics. By came fluttering a great, gorgeous butterfly, the size of a saucer, and after it rushed the Guardsman, shedding slippers around him as his long legs bent to their task. He might just as well have attempted to catch the Scotch Express; but, as he returned to me dripping, he began to realise what the heat of Jamaica can do. All the remainder of that day the Guardsman remained under the spell of the entrancing beauty of his new surroundings, and I was dragged on foot for miles and miles; along country lanes, through the Hope Botanical Gardens, down into the deep ravine of the Hope River, then back again, both of us dripping wet in the fierce heat, in spite of our white drill suits, larding the ground as we walked, oozing from every pore, but always urged on and on by my enthusiastic young friend, who, suffering from a paucity of epithets, kept up monotonous ejaculations of "How absolutely d----d lovely it all is!" every two minutes.

I had to remain a full hour in the swimming-bath after my exertions; and the Guardsman had quite determined by night-time to "send in his papers," and settle down as a coffee-planter in this enchanting island.

It is curious that although the Spaniards held Jamaica for one hundred and sixty-one years, no trace of the Spaniard in language, customs, or architecture is left in the island, for Spain has generally left her permanent impress on all countries occupied by her, and has planted her language and her customs definitely in them. The one exception as regards Jamaica is found in certain place-names such as Ocho Rios, Rio Grande, and Rio Cobre, but as these are all pronounced in the English fashion, the music of the Spanish names is lost. Not one word of any language but English (of a sort) is now heard in the colony. When Columbus discovered the island in 1494, he called it Santiago, St. James being the patron saint of Spain, but the native name of Xaymaca (which being interpreted means "the land of springs") persisted somehow, and really there are enough Santiagos already

dotted about in Spanish-speaking countries, without further additions to them. When Admiral Penn and General Venables were sent out by Cromwell to break the Spanish power in the West Indies, they succeeded in capturing Jamaica in 1655, and British the island has remained ever since. To this day the arms of Jamaica are Cromwell's arms slightly modified, and George V is not King, but "Supreme Lord of Jamaica," the original title assumed by Cromwell. The fine statue of Queen Victoria in Kingston is inscribed "Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, and Supreme Lady of Jamaica."

Venables found that the Spaniards, craving for yet another Santiago, had called the capital of the island Santiago de la Vega, "St. James of the Plain," and to this day the official name of Spanish Town, the old capital, is St. Jago de Vega, and as such is inscribed on all the milestones, only as it is pronounced in the English fashion, it is now one of the ugliest names imaginable. The wonderfully beautiful gorge of the Rio Cobre, above Spanish Town, was called by the conquistadores "Spouting Waters," or Bocas de Agua. This has been Anglicised into the hideous name of Bog Walk, just as the "High Waters," Agua Alta, on the north side of the island, has become the Wagwater River. The Spanish forms seem preferable to me.

Some one has truly said that the old Spaniards shared all the coral insect's mania for building. As soon as they had conquered a place, they set to work to build a great cathedral, and simultaneously, the church then being distinctly militant, a large and solid fort. They then proceeded to erect massive walls and ramparts round their new settlement, and most of these ramparts are surviving to-day. We, in true British haphazard style, did not build for posterity, but allowed ramshackle towns to spring up anyhow without any attempt at design or plan. There are many things we could learn from the Spanish. Their solid, dignified cities of massive stone houses with deep, heavy arcades into which the sun never penetrates; their broad plazas where cool fountains spout under great shade-trees; their imposing over-ornate churches, their general look of solid permanence, put to shame our flimsy, ephemeral, planless British West Indian towns of match-boarding and white paint. We seldom look ahead: they always did. Added to which it would be, of course, too much trouble to lay out towns after definite designs; it is much easier to let them grow up anyhow. On the other hand, the British colonial towns have all good water supplies, and efficient systems of sewerage, which atones in some degree for their architectural shortcomings; whilst the Spaniard would never dream of bothering his head about sanitation, and would be content with a very inadequate water supply. Provided that he had sufficient water for the public fountains, the Spaniard would not trouble about a domestic supply. The Briton contrives an ugly town in which you can live in reasonable health and comfort; the Spaniard fashions a most picturesque city in which you are extremely like to die. Racial ideals differ.

CHAPTER V

An election meeting in Jamaica--Two family experiences at contested elections--Novel South African methods--Unattractive Kingston--A driving tour through the island--The Guardsman as orchid hunter--Derelict country houses--An attempt to reconstruct the

past--The Fourth-Form Room at Harrow--Elizabethan Harrovians--I meet many friends of my youth--The "Sunday" books of the 'sixties--"Black and White"--Arrival of the French Fleet--Its inner meaning--International courtesies--A delicate attention--Absent alligators--The mangrove swamp--A preposterous suggestion--The swamps do their work--Fever--A very gallant apprentice--What he did.

The Guardsman's enthusiasm about Jamaica remaining unabated, I determined to hire a buggy and pair and to make a fortnight's leisurely tour of the North Coast and centre of the island. Though not peculiarly expeditious, this is a very satisfactory mode of travel; no engine troubles, no burst tyres, and no worries about petrol supplies. A new country can be seen and absorbed far more easily from a horse-drawn vehicle than from a hurrying motor-car, and the little country inns in Jamaica, though very plainly equipped, are, as a rule, excellent, with surprisingly good if somewhat novel food.

As the member for St. Andrews in the local Legislative Council had just died, an election was being held in Kingston. Curious as to what an election-meeting in Jamaica might be like, we attended one. The hall was very small, and densely packed with people, and the suffocating heat drove us away after a quarter of an hour; but never have I, in so short a space of time, heard such violent personalities hurled from a public platform, although I have had a certain amount of experience of contested elections. In 1868, when I was eleven years old, I was in Londonderry City when my brother Claud, the sitting member, was opposed by Mr. Serjeant Dowse, afterwards Baron Dowse, the last of the Irish "Barons of the Exchequer." Party feeling ran very high indeed; whenever a body of Dowse's supporters met my brother in the street, they commenced singing in chorus, to a popular tune of the day:

"Dowse for iver! Claud in the river!
With a skiver through his liver."

Whilst my brother's adherents greeted Dowse in public with a sort of monotonous chant to these elegant words:

"Dowse! Dowse! you're a dirty louse,
And ye'll niver sit in the Commons' House."

It will be noticed that this is in the same rhythm that Mark Twain made so popular some twenty years later in his conductor's song.

"Punch, brothers, punch with care,
Punch in the presence of the passen-jare."

In spite of the confident predictions of my brother's followers, Dowse won the seat by a small majority, nor did my brother succeed in unseating him afterwards on Petition.

Another occasion on which feeling ran very high was in Middlesex during the 1874 election. Here my brother George was the Conservative candidate, and owing to his having played cricket for Harrow at Lord's, he was supported enthusiastically by the whole school, the Harrow masters being at that time Liberals almost to a man. My tutor, a prominent local Liberal, must have been enormously gratified at finding the exterior of his house literally plastered from top to

bottom with crimson placards (crimson is the Conservative colour in Middlesex) all urging the electors to "vote for Hamilton the proved Friend of the People." Possibly fraternal affection may have had something to do with this crimson outburst. My youngest brother took, as far as his limited opportunities allowed him, an energetic part in this election. He got indeed into some little trouble, for being only fifteen years old and not yet versed in the niceties of political controversy, he endeavoured to give weight and point to one of his arguments with the aid of the sharp end of a football goal-post. My brother George was returned by an enormous majority.

The most original electioneering poster I ever saw was in Capetown in March, 1914. It was an admirably got-up enlargement of a funeral card, with a deep black border, adorned with a realistic picture of a hearse, and was worded "Unionist Opposition dead. Government dying. Electors of the Liesbeck Division drive your big nails into the coffin by voting for Tom Maginess on Saturday." Whether it was due to this novel form of electioneering or not, I cannot say, but Maginess won the seat by two thousand votes. I still have a copy of that poster.

Neither Londonderry nor Capetown are in Jamaica, but oddly enough, Middlesex is, for the island is divided into three counties, Cornwall, Middlesex, and Surrey. The local geography is a little confusing, for it is a surprise to find (in Jamaica at all events) that Westmoreland is in Cornwall, and Manchester in Middlesex.

Kingston owes its position as capital to the misfortunes of its two neighbours, Port Royal and Spanish Town. When Port Royal was totally destroyed by an earthquake in 1692, the few survivors crossed the bay and founded a new town on the sandy Liguanea plain. Owing to its splendid harbour, Kingston soon became a place of great importance, though the seat of Government remained in sleepy Spanish Town, but the latter lying inland, and close to the swamps of the Rio Cobre, was so persistently unhealthy that in 1870 the Government was transferred to Kingston. Though very prosperous, its most fervent admirer could not call it beautiful, and, owing to its sandy soil, it is an intensely hot place, but in compensation it receives the full sea breeze. Every morning about nine, the sea breeze (locally known as "the Doctor") sets in. Gentle at first, by noon it is rushing and roaring through the town in a perfect gale, to drop and die away entirely by 4 p.m. By a most convenient arrangement, the land breeze, disagreeably known as "the Undertaker," drops down from the Liguanea Mountains on to the sweltering town about 11 p.m., and continues all through the night. It is this double breeze, from sea by day, from land by night, that renders life in Kingston tolerable. Owing to the sea breeze invariably blowing from the same direction, Jamaicans have the puzzling habit of using "Windward" and "Leeward" as synonyms for East and West. To be told that such-and-such a place is "two miles to Windward of you" seems lacking in definiteness to a new arrival.

As we rolled slowly along in our buggy, the Guardsman was in a state of perpetual bewilderment at having growing sugar, coffee, cocoa, and rice pointed out to him by the driver. "I thought that it was an island," he murmured; "it turns out to be nothing but a blessed growing grocer's shop." Half-way between Kingston and Spanish Town is the Old Ferry Inn, the oldest inn in the New World. It stands in a mass of luxuriant greenery on the very edge of the Rio Cobre swamps, and is a place to be avoided at nightfall on that account. This fever trap of an inn, being just half-way between Kingston and Spanish Town,

was, of all places in the island to select, the chosen meeting-place of the young bloods of both towns in the eighteenth century. Here they drove out to dine and carouse, and as they probably all got drunk, many of them must have slept here, on the very edge of the swamp, to die of yellow fever shortly afterwards.

Sleepy Spanish Town, the old capital, has a decayed dignity of its own. The public square, with its stately eighteenth-century buildings, is the only architectural feature I ever saw in the British West Indies. Our national lack of imagination is typically exemplified in the King's House, now deserted, which occupies one side of the square. When it was finished in 1760, it was considered a sumptuous building. The architect, Craskell, in that scorching climate, designed exactly the sort of red-brick and white stone Georgian house that he would have erected at, say, Richmond. With limitless space at his disposal, he surrounded his house with streets on all four sides of it, without one yard of garden, or one scrap of shade. No wonder that poor little Lady Nugent detested this oven of an official residence. The interior, though, contains some spacious, stately Georgian rooms; the temperature being that of a Turkish bath.

Rodney's monument is a graceful, admirably designed little temple, and the cathedral of a vague Gothic, is spacious and dignified. Spanish Town cathedral claims to have been built in 1541, in spite of an inscription over the door recording that "this church was thrown downe by ye dreadfull hurricane of August ye 28, 1712, and was rebuilt in 1714." It contains a great collection of elaborate and splendid monuments, all sent out from England, and erected to various island worthies. The amazing arrogance of an inscription on a tombstone of 1690, in the south transept, struck me as original. It commemorates some Lieutenant-Governor of Jamaica, and after the usual eulogistic category of his unparalleled good qualities, ends "so in the fifty-fifth year of his age he appeared with great applause before his God."

There is a peculiarly beautiful tree, the *Petraea*, which seems to flourish particularly well in Spanish Town. When in flower in February, neither trunk, leaves, nor branches can be seen for its dense clusters of bright blue blossoms, which are unfortunately very short-lived.

Four miles above Spanish Town the hideously named Bog Walk, the famous gorge of the Rio Cobre, commences. I do not believe that there is a more exquisitely beautiful glen in the whole world. The clear stream rushes down the centre, whilst the rocky walls tower up almost perpendicularly for five or six hundred feet on either side, and these rocks, precipitous as they are, are clothed with a dense growth of tropical forest. The bread-fruit tree with its broad, scalloped leaves, the showy star-apple, glossy green above deep gold below, mahoganies, oranges, and bananas, all seem to grow wild. The bread-fruit was introduced into Jamaica from the South Sea Islands, and the first attempt to transplant it was made by the ill-fated *Bounty*, and led to the historical mutiny on board, as a result of which the mutineers established themselves on Pitcairn Island, where their descendants remain to this day. Whatever adventures marked its original advent, the bread-fruit has made itself thoroughly at home in the West Indies, and forms the staple food of the negroes. When carefully prepared it really might pass for under-done bread, prepared from very indifferent flour by an inexperienced and unskilled

baker. It is the immense variety of the foliage and the constantly changing panorama that gives Bog Walk its charm, together with the red, pink, and fawn-coloured trumpets of the hibiscus, dotting the precipitous ramparts of rock over the rushing blue river. Bog Walk is distinctly one of those places which no one with opportunities for seeing it should miss. It opens out into an equally beautiful basin, St. Thomas-in-the-Vale, of which Michael Scott gives an admirable description in *Tom Cringle*. I should hardly select that steamy cup in the hills as a place of residence, but as a natural forcing-house and a sample of riotous vegetation, it is worth seeing.

The native orchids of Jamaica are mostly oncidiums, with insignificant little brown and yellow flowers, and have no commercial value whatever. The Guardsman, however, was obsessed with the idea that he would discover some peerless bloom for which he would be paid hundreds of pounds by a London dealer. Every silk-cotton tree is covered with what Jamaicans term "wild pines," air-plants, orchids, and other epiphytes, and every silk-cotton was to him a potential Golconda, so whenever we came across one he wanted the buggy stopped, and up the tree he went like a lamp lighter. I am bound to admit that he was an admirable tree climber, but I objected on the score of delicacy to the large rents that these aerial rambles occasioned in his white ducks. On regaining the ground he loaded the buggy with his spoils, despite the driver's assertion that "dat all trash." Unfortunately with his epiphytes he brought down whole colonies of ants, and the Jamaican ant is a most pugnacious insect with abnormal biting powers. After I had been forced to disrobe behind some convenient greenery in order to rid myself of these aggressive little creatures, I was compelled to put a stern veto on further tree exploration.

The ascent from Ewarton, over the Monte Diavolo, is so splendid that I have made it five times for sheer delight in the view. Below lies St. Thomas-in-the-Vale, a splendid riot of palms, orange, and forest trees, and above it towers hill after hill, dominated by the lofty peaks of the Blue Mountains. It is a gorgeously vi

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