

PICTURES OF INDIAN LIFE



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# PICTURES OF INDIAN LIFE

SKETCHED WITH THE PEN

FROM 1852 TO 1881.

BY

ROBERT NEEDHAM CUST,

LATE OF HER MAJESTY'S INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE,  
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"Che tanto amo in lei?  
L'aria, il cielo, la terra, la gente, i sassi."

With Maps.

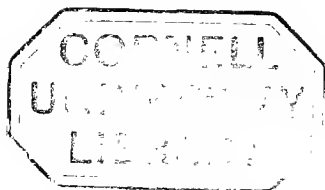
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1881.

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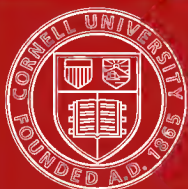
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MS

TO  
THE MEMORY OF MY GREAT MASTER,  
JOHN LAWRENCE,  
AND TO  
ALL, WHO LOVE THE GOOD AND GENTLE PEOPLE  
OF  
*BRITISH INDIA,*  
ESPECIALLY TO THOSE, WHO HAVE NOT YET FINISHED,  
OR ARE ABOUT TO COMMENCE THEIR  
*INDIAN CAREER,*  
**This Volume**  
IS DEDICATED.



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## P R E F A C E.

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MY object in publishing in a collective form these Pictures is the same, which induced me to write them at different periods during the last quarter of a century, viz., a sincere love for the people of India, and a desire to interest others in them.

And what other country has such a multiplicity of interests, extending over such long periods; such magnificent rivers and mountains; such a variety of objects to attract the Antiquarian, the Linguist, the Ethnologist, and the Philanthropist?

When those, who have spent years in the country have left it for ever, how much they desire to go back for a few days, to clear up some doubt, to ask some question, to talk to some friend in a language never more to be used!

All seems like a dream: the life in the city: the life in the camp; the vigorous order: the instant obedience; the constant contemplation of the rising sun in the morning ride; the villages: the mountain-passes; the ferry across the noble river.

And above all, the people, those for whom we laboured, and with whom we laboured. The features of many rise to the recollection, but where are they?

Dead, or grown old: the same fate has happened to those, whom we rewarded, and those whom we punished.

As these lines flow from my pen, the vision rises before me of well-remembered faces, and unforgotten scenery; and the image of my great master, John Lawrence, stands before me, as I knew him in his prime. I seem again to be in my youth.

“Days of my stirring youth! I'd freely give,

“Ere this life close,

“All the dull days I'm destined yet to live

“For one of those.

“Where shall I now find rapture, that was felt,

“Hours that were spent

“In gay and gladsome labour, when I dwelt

“In Indian tent?”

F. P.

If they but love the good and gentle people of India, and learn to wiu their love, such happiness may still be the lot of many, whom Destiny beckons to the East, and all will then be well for British Rule in that country. But if the wall of separation between race and race becomes broader, and the representatives of the State to the people do not care to acquaint themselves with the languages, customs, weaknesses, and excellences of the subject nation, it must needs be that our Empire, which is based on opinion, will, like the Empires of other conquering but unsympathetic nations, pass away.

ROBERT CUST.

LONDON, *April* 1881.

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### E R R A T A.

Page 22, line 7, for	“Ferozshahr”	read	“Firozshahr.”
„ 94, „ 10, „	“Brahmins”	„	“Brahmans.”
„ 132, „ 12, „	“Chillianwála”	„	“Firozshahr.”
„ 154, „ 4, „	“Prajag”	„	“Prayág.”
„ 161, „ 28, „	“Prajag”	„	“Prayág.”
„ 161, „ 24, „	“Nishádi”	„	“Nisháda.”
„ 162, „ 16, „	“Prajag”	„	“Prayág.”
„ 197, „ 23, „	“Saiud”	„	“Sayyid.”
„ 198, „ 12, „	“Kanakuchwa”	„	“Kanakachwa.”
„ 233, „ 21, „	“Jypúr”	„	“Jaipúr.”
„ 236, „ 11, „	“Jahalpúr”	„	“Jabalpúr.”
„ 241, „ 12, „	“Provisions”	„	“Provision.”
„ 244, „ 20, „	“Hushiarpúr”	„	“Hoshiarpúr.”
„ 245, „ 19, „	“Hushiarpúr”	„	“Hoshiarpúr.”
„ 278, „ 7, „	“Maráthi”	„	“Marátha.”
„ 301, „ 32, „	“states”	„	“grades.”

# PICTURES OF INDIAN LIFE.

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## CHAPTER I.

### *THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN INDIA.*

CHANCE led my steps one Sunday evening to the door of a Native Christian Church belonging to one of the Missions at one of the largest towns in India. The bells were chiming from the tower, that sweetest of sounds: the hands of the clock pointed to the hour of five, and the congregation were flocking in at the door, men, women, and children. There was something soothing in the sight: a dream of the past came over me, of the absent and of home, associated with feelings of religion and purity. My better spirit triumphed; my engagements were forgotten, and joining the simple crowd, with uncovered head and reverential feelings, I entered.

It had been my lot to sit in the churches, and join in the worship of many branches of the great family of Christians; in far and distant countries; in divers and sundry languages: in the cold and formal worship of northern, in the ardent and demonstrative adoration

of southern Europe ; in the evangelical devotions of the Reformed Church of England ; in the dark and unsightly oratories of poor degraded Syria ; but, though many years a resident in India, this was the first time that I had joined in the prayers of the chosen few of those millions, whose destinies we govern.

The building was handsome and appropriate. Art and zeal had lent their assistance to the decoration of the house of God, but with simplicity : there was that, which was sufficiently distinctive from the ornaments of ordinary houses, to recall wandering thoughts to a recollection of the place : but there was nothing calculated to transform the house into a temple, or to lead weak minds to suppose, that the *dead walls* constituted Christ's Church and not the living persons of the congregation. Here, at least, no pride or pomp of circumstance disfigured the equality of the worshippers ; no shining emblems of ephemeral station dishonoured the assembly of the faithful ; the floor sounded to no clank of martial tread ; the sun, as it streamed through the windows, lighted on no dazzling insignia or scarlet trappings : in this assemblage, he, that was the least, was even as the greatest.

I looked down the nave with interest and heartfelt pleasure. According to the custom of Oriental churches the sexes were divided. On the one side were the men and boys of the congregation, on the other the matrons, young women and children. Nearly all were clothed in white ; the men were bareheaded as well as barefooted, the reason for which I did not understand, such not being the practice of Oriental churches elsewhere, and manifestly inconvenient, and as such to

be avoided. The women had their heads decently covered in the folds of their scarfs. I saw many sweet expressive Madonna-like faces of women, not fearing, in the simple confidence of female virtue, to look in the faces of their husbands, their parents, and their acquaintances, proud of the conceded privilege of equality with their helpmates, with hopes for the future dependent on their own exertions, without the recollection of a past marked by neglect and degradation. If Christianity has done this alone, restoring the modest blush of innocence to conscious and fearless virtue, it is the Benefactor of our Race!

But the service has commenced; a kind hand supplies me with the Book of Life and the Book of Prayer; and that language, which had hitherto been familiar to me only as an expression of the worst passions of the governed, and the Regulations of the Ruler, was now for the first time the vehicle to my ears of praise and prayer. Dissociated from their familiar words, which are merely the outward covering of the inward spirit, the moving admonition of the minister, the humble confession of the people, and the absolution, came back to my senses as an old strain of familiar music, long heard, and often from loved and revered lips; now first fully felt, when ringing from the chords of a new instrument. Many are the languages of men: one the language of God. How is it, that the voices of the children, responding in their deep and ringing chorus (though the words are in a strange tongue), bring back so truly, so vividly, forgotten Sabbaths and distant churches? Is it that there is but one sound for prayer and praise, that human penitence can be expressed but in one tone? Is

it thus that the loud hosannahs of the denizens of the earth will be collected in one joyful chorus at the day of the Second Coming? I was struck and delighted by the devout and attentive behaviour of the congregation: when two or three are thus joined together, He will surely be in the midst of them.

The Psalms and First Lesson were omitted, that the service might not be too long, and at the close of the Second Lesson followed the Sacrament of Infant Baptism; and now I became aware of another feature of order in this well-arranged congregation, which from the position of my seat had hitherto escaped my observation. In front of the font, but with their backs turned towards, and concealed from, the rest of the church, sat with solemn, thoughtful and reverent faces, those in whom the Spirit of God was working for their salvation: they were *in* but not *of* our body; they were candidates, awaiting baptism, when they had passed their ordeal, and by their consistent conduct in the *past* had given earnestness for the *future*: seated they were in front of the font, the waters of which were to them for a season denied, while they beheld the newborn babe, unconscious of the taint of hereditary sin, admitted before their eyes into the covenant, which they were commencing to appreciate. Never till then had I fully recognised, or been sufficiently thankful for, the blessing of being born of a Christian stock, with no fiery ordeal to go through; no parents, friends, and all to desert for His sake; no sad, mournful, but beloved and regretted associations of the past to look lingeringly back upon; no doubtful, scorned and opprobrious future to anticipate. I felt that they

had something to wish for, which I had already in possession; something, for which they paid a great price, but which to me was a birthright; not the right of being a Briton, but the privilege of being born a Christian. But great will be their reward. Christian children of Christian parents! feel for them, and do not in your pride despise the weak and failing brother!

Two infants were presented to be baptized, their swarthy little faces peeping out of their white garments, and contrasting strangely with the fair hand and face of the minister. Here the white man appeared in his true and proper dignity; not the exterminator, the stranger, the ruler by a strong arm, the enforcer of arbitrary laws; the one, that is bowed down to, and yet shunned in the streets; that is openly courted, yet secretly scoffed at and despised as unclean: here I saw the race of the Saxon bestowing on their subject people a greater skill than the science of arms, a greater miracle than the triumph of manufactures. We are a mighty, strong, and wise people: we have conquered countries unknown to the Romans; we have measured the paths of the heavens with a far-distending radius denied to the Greeks; the achievements of our present surpass the wonders of their past; but here we spontaneously convey to our subjects that treasure, of which they knew not, but which in the midst of our wealth we value the most: that strength, to which they never arrived, but which in the midst of our pride is our greatest glory, the Shame of the Cross, and the Way of Salvation. Who is the lowest in the eyes of the world amidst the congregation? Upon whom have the doubtful gifts of fortune

fallen thicker? The priest takes the child of either in his arms, washes away the sins, in which his mother conceived him, and signs him with that sign, of which he ought never to be ashamed.

The sponsors knelt reverently round, and made their answers with feeling. I looked into the hard features of the men, to see if any hidden sign would betray a difference between them and their heathen brethren, any flash of intelligence sparkle from the eye of the mind which had comprehended such truths. There was none. He that readeth the heart will judge what it is forbidden for man to know.

Then followed the three Collects, the prayer for the Queen, the Royal Family, the Clergy, Parliament, and all conditions of men; and I wondered, as I saw the lips of the women and girls articulating the words Victoria and Albert, what idea they connected with the names, what strange pictures they had drawn in their simple minds of the royal couple, and the little sháhzada: I could almost have wished that the prayer of native congregations were reserved simply for those in authority over them.

After the prayers followed a hymn, sang by the congregation to the accompaniment of a harmonium, played by one of the members of the Mission: the chant was from the Hindustáni hymn-book, possessing apparently but slight poetical merit, but well suited to the place, and well sung, showing that the natives of the country have a full appreciation of the system of European music: but while the hosannah was swelling up to the roof-beams from these untutored lips, I beheld through the windows, which open down



to the ground, the cortège of a wealthy rája sweeping by under the walls of the sacred edifice. I heard the rattle of his equipage, as every screw and bolt gave a music of its own: I could see from the spot, where I stood, this ignorant wretch, this bloated abomination of a man, contemptuously smiling, as the voices of the congregation reached him: I saw the low truckling flatterer leaning over from the back-seat, and with finger pointing to the building, and chuckling laugh, telling, what I knew to be some false scandal, *his* version of what was going on in the interior. I saw the whole at a glance, and comprehended it; but busy Memory, roused by the incident, bore me back many a century to the upper chamber of Troas, to the school of Tyrannus. I thought of the early Christians at Athens, at Corinth, at Ephesus, and at Rome: thus and thus, as this debased rája now, did then the noble Roman, the philosophic Greek, great in the power of science and arms, once ride by, lolling in the biga, talking flippantly, or discussing seriously the manners and customs of this new sect, these worshippers in the Catacombs. With them was the flatterer and busy mocker, the sarcastic stoic, the lively atheist, the sycophantic eunuch, to tell ridiculous stories for these good easy men to believe. I thought of these things, and God forgive me, if I triumphed, when I dwelt on the triumphs of Revealed Truth, and anticipated new victories. I have seen standing erect the sign of the Cross in the place, where the early Christians fought, after the manner of men, in the Roman amphitheatre: I have stood on the Areopagus to contemplate the ruins of the Parthenon, wondering how it looked,

when St. Paul spoke of Christ and the Resurrection: my voice has rung along the silent shores of Ionia, "Demetrius, surely thy craft is in danger: where is thy Great Diana of the Ephesians?"—no sound is heard in reply but the splashing of the waves of the Ocean. Returning from the past, in the full confidence of faith, I pondered on what would be the fate of the great and wicked city around me. Will not a day arrive, when that gilded pinnacle shining in the sun will be torn down, and those tapering minarets will be laid low? Will it not be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the Day of Judgment, than for this city, in which the Word of God is daily preached in the streets, in whose ears the bells of this church are ringing weekly warnings for repentance? Will not the men of Nineveh rise up in judgment against them?

But the psalm has been finished, and the sermon commenced; no new-fangled theories, no polemical discussions, no metaphysical distinctions, fell from the lips of the Reverend Preacher. I heard a father addressing his own children, expounding simple Scripture-narrative with simpler applications. I turned back, and noticed the mouth opened in interest, the neck outstretched to catch each word: I saw children hanging on the familiar notes of the father. "We are told, how Noah in obedience to Divine authority built the ark, how he and his family entered into it and closed the door; how the wicked scoffed and jeered at him: how at length the rain *did* descend; the fountains of the deep *were* opened, the wicked utterly destroyed, but those few in the ark saved. This

Church, my brethren, is the Ark; over this wicked city is impending the Deluge: hasten ye in." The page of Scripture further on supplies new morals, and fresh consolation. We hear how Abraham, trusting in God, nothing doubting, left his country and kindred, things the nearest and dearest, to go he knew not whither: yet his faith was rewarded. "And ye, my brethren, who have sacrificed the ties of home for His sake, if ye endure to the end, will ye not have your reward also?" No wide gulf separates the preacher from his hearers: if he propounds a subject interrogatively, the answer appears to burst from the lips of an eager listener, and receives no check. We feel, that one and all have derived instruction from such expositions, and comfort from such counsels. Sincerely we pray, that the words may rest grafted in our hearts, the peace of God on the congregation, as they meekly and reverently disperse to their homes.

And who are the good, the great men, who have wrought this wondrous work? Whose hands have offered this incense of sweet savour to the Most High? Who are those, who have taken this new Jerusalem from the Jebusites, and planted this new Canaan in the land of the heathen? Who have kept together these ten righteous, if peradventure for their sake the wicked city may be spared? There sit they,<sup>1</sup> the shepherds among their flock, the Christian warriors reposing with their armour off after the combat. On their breasts are no proud insignia of battles that they have fought, of victories that they have won: but with a good fight they have carried the entrenchments of

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. W. Smith and C. B. Leupolt.

sin and Satan, and have the Cross engraven on their hearts. They have not sat on earthly judgment-seats, they have not collected the tribute of nations, but they will hereafter gather in the full harvest of redeemed souls. They have no precedence given them in mortal assemblies, but their mission is that of angels to men. They have not attempted to control the selfish contentions arising from man's bad heart, but they have led the redeemed soul to its Saviour.

I never see a Missionary, but I seem to wish that I were one of them. Are they not to be envied, whose duties in this world lead them to the next, whose zeal in their earthly vocations promotes the work of their own salvation? They stand among the heathen, as an ensign of what each of us values most: the General represents our victorious arms, the Governor our triumphs of administration, but the Missionary displays our virtues, our patience, our Christian charity: and shall we not be proud of him? I asked myself, how is it that so few of England's learned and pious sons select this profession. The vision of one man from Macedonia took St. Paul across the Hellespont; and will no one cross the Indian Ocean for the millions, not in vision, but in reality? Will no young Augustine spring up to repay the debt of the Occident to the Orient, to bring back the sun to the East? Had I life to begin again, this would be my choice: the glories and profits of other professions are but as vanity. We have fought battles, which are scarcely known beyond the narrow limit of the echo of the cannon. We have ruled over Provinces, but our fame is forgotten as soon as we are gone. But should we have saved souls, a

long line of Christians will carry back the legends of their family to our era, and entwine our names with the golden thread of grateful thanksgiving. Who remembers the Generals, the Proconsuls of the time of the Cæsars? Who remembers not the Apostles?

Thence glanced my thoughts to the early converts, those who had borne the heat of the day, on whose foreheads I had traced the lines of sorrow and early affliction (for the chain of the world is still dear to us) softened, yet not effaced, by the sweet smile of faith and resignation. Perhaps in the records of this Church will be handed down, as household words, the names of these early saints, who, when Christianity was young, forsook all things for His sake. When far and wide over this beautiful, and to me beloved, land, in village and in town floats the ensign of the Cross amidst a Christian people, then on many a Sabbath evening, when young and old are gathered together for reading and meditation, will their tale be told: old men will point to ruined temples, and tell to wondering ears, how once idolatry existed in this land: soft, tender, womanly cheeks will be stained with tears at the sufferings of these St. Stephens; young, manly hearts will glow in sympathy with the intrepid bravery of the Indian St. Pauls.

We are standing on the threshold of mighty events: perhaps there may be some amongst us who will tarry till He comes. In the early Christian Church we can trace three stages: the first, when a few obscure men professed an unknown and unappreciated faith, persecuted by fanaticism, and crushed by ignorance. Miracles had long since ceased; the gift of the Holy

Ghost no longer visibly descended, but the second stage was soon arrived at; thriving congregations began to appear in each city, and to maintain their rights, with the tacit allowance, if not the sanction, of the Government. Within three hundred years the Heathen Temple was deserted, and the Cross erected in the market-place.

A few months ago it was my fortunate lot to join in the Protestant worship of a few sincere and sturdy Christians in an upper room at Nazareth: no preaching was allowed in the streets, no edifices dedicated to worship. There was fear, trembling, and the possibility of oppression and outrage, but for the protection of England; in this we have the first stage before our eyes. In the church, in which I lately stood, I recognised the features of the second stage, the well-ordered congregation, the voice of the preacher in the highways calling loudly to repentance, the modest tower rising up in the outskirts of the town, the bell calling cheerily to prayers; and this under the sceptre of England in India. Thrice happy England! the extent of your conquests will be forgotten, for those of Jenghis and Timúr have perished; but your Missions will never be forgotten, for they will have given religion to thousands, and the time will come, when the great Idol will be thrown down.

Who would not then be a Missionary, the Great King's messenger, whose treasure is laid up in heaven? Those, who cannot attain this high office, must give of their abundance or of their pittance, must pray for them, as I did, as I followed the last of the congregation out of the door, thinking how sad would be the

day, when, like Alexander, we had no more countries to conquer and convert; how happy it was for us to see so rich a harvest gladdening the heart of the labourer in the vineyard!

The evening was closing, and a drizzling rain falling, as I returned into the outer world, but the picture of what I had seen clung to me, and, had I to choose again, I would be a Missionary.

BANÁRAS, *July* 1852.



## CHAPTER II.

*DEATH IN INDIA.*

IN the course of the present year death deprived me of a very dear and valued friend: though dead, his memory still liveth:

I had known him only a few months. Chance had thrown us together, but friendships, such as link heart to heart, are of short growth. With some we may live, we may know them for years, yet the treasure-house of the affections has never been unlocked, there has been no sympathetic bond: such was not the case with us: from the first day that we clasped each other's hand, we were friends.

He had faults: who has not? I am not describing the achievements of a hero, but of one, who a few weeks ago moved among us. He had numbered but twenty-one summers; he was still in all the glory of youth; but some portion of maturer wisdom had found its way to his heart. In the days of his youth he remembered his Creator, and honour be to those who had trained up the child in the right way. Honour to those kind and judicious friends, who had guided his steps, and taught him where to place his affections. Verily in his not untimely end they have reaped their reward.

It seems to me still like a dream; I have scarcely realised his loss. His voice still sounds in my ears; I see his cheerful face at the board; I hear pleasurefully, though doubtingly, his enthusiastic plans for the future, his schemes of benevolence, sketched out to embrace a long life. How many a subject did we run over of classic lore or local interest! How often did we cheat the night of its rest in discussions not unprofitable, inasmuch as they tended back always to one subject, which to him was the paramount thought! A prophetic intelligence appears to have possessed him, for at one time he was speculating on the future occupation of the blessed, at another repeating thoughtfully the address of Hadrian to his soul. Any instance of sudden death would draw from him serious remark. I knew that he was devout in the reading of the Scriptures, and have seen him kneeling in secret prayer.

All these things now come back upon me. Many, wise after the event, pretend to have expected his early death, and to have detected signs of decay. I saw them not. I beheld only the youth in his opening prime, the young and strong, who cherished noble longings for the battle of life: no wrinkle of care, no line of sorrow, had marked that smooth cheek; no languor of Oriental summers, no long nights of feverish watching, had dimmed that sparkling eye. I saw in him generosity, perhaps exceeding the bounds of prudence, the gay hope fed by flattering fancy, the ambition for distinction, the bright anticipations for the future; burning zeal, high principles, and strong determination; the heart that could plan the good enterprise, the hand that could execute the benevolent action. Years had

chilled these feelings in my breast: zeal, ambition, and bright anticipations were all gone, but mindful of an ancient flame, I acknowledged in another the traces of what once had been.

And all this is gone: all struck low in a few brief days. Alas! how often in the first years of Indian life are the brightest hopes dashed! How many a noble boy falls an untimely victim!

It was in the sickly months that he began to ail; at first there were slight complaints, and unsuccessful remedies. Then the shadows began to close round him; his nervous temperament aided the approach of the disease; his cheerful laugh ceased, and he no longer went abroad, but was confined to his couch. I will not say, that he feared death, but, unused to illness, he anticipated it from the first. He read the Bible as usual, which was always beside him, not seizing it then, as drowning landmen seize a rope or a spar with unpractised hand, but clasping, as his consolation in sickness, the Book which had been the charm of the days of his health. His friends talked to him, and strove to cheer him, and tried to shake off the melancholy which had preoccupied him. We spoke of the topics, which once used to please him; the sermons of the Sabbath, which he had been unable to hear, were detailed to him, and discussed as in happier days. The body was weaker, still the intellect was bright. At length his ears grew dull from the effect of medicine; all interchange of mental thoughts then ceased, and the friend became even as a stranger.

Did I think he was dying? Did it pass through my mind that his days were numbered? Oh! had I

done so, how would I have redoubled my attention to win one smile of thanks! But my eyes were darkened; the lamp of hope burnt brightly, and I knew not what was impending. The fever rose and sank, but the patient sank always; like the glimmer of the expiring taper, the divine principle of life flashed upwards. All that devoted attention, all that medical skill can do to arrest death was done. He spoke little, he heard nothing. Interest for things of this world seemed to die in him. The Bible was no longer opened, though always at hand; even those messengers of hope, those winged ambassadors of love, that month by month cheer the exile's heart, remained unopened and uncared for by his side.

What thoughts passed through his busy brain during those long and, to him, noiseless days? On what did he ponder in anxious thought during those lonely nights? As the lengthening shadows of the evening fell, as the light of the setting sun, pouring in in a golden shower, played upon the walls of his sick chamber, as the cooing of the doves, the busy murmur of the insect tribe, told of the coming of the evening, did he rejoice that the day was gone? Or after the tedious watches of a sleepless night, did he welcome back the dim twilight of the Indian morn? Did he then in thought wander back to the hills of Cheviot and the valley of the Esk, never again to be revisited? Did in his dreaming wakenings bright eyes beam kindly, and loved forms appear, to soothe that throbbing heart? Did soft hands in fancy smooth his pillow and touch that aching brow? Or did his piety triumph over his earthly affections, and did he long to

be at rest? Did he know that he was going? Had he aught that he strove in vain to say? any tender message of love to leave to those behind? any thoughtful warning to convey to those in whose welfare he felt interested? any banished friendship to implore, any evil action to crave pardon for, any hasty word to atone?

I knew not. O Saviour! be with us in these hours; inspire us with good resolutions; strengthen our convictions in health, and give us grace to cling to them in the dying hour; and, when that last sleep seals our eyes, be Thou nigh! Thus thought I, as doubt was followed by anxiety, as anxiety was scarcely combated by faint hope, as at length that yielded to despair.

Is he then to die, to go we know not whither, and lie in corruption? Are such good hopes to be prematurely cut off? Is there no rotten tree, that may take the place of this green branch? He died, and in peace. We had watched him softly and slowly breathing through the night, while hope and fear contended with each other; for, when sleeping, we had almost fancied him dead, and when he died, to us he seemed still in slumber. Yes! it came at last, the troubled dream was awakened from; brighter worlds began to open round him. As the morning came upon us dull, wet, and dreary, his quiet eyes closed; it was but the struggle of a moment. Like the last puff of a taper, the spark of heavenly flame escaped from its clay tenement; another morn than ours had dawned upon him.

To him the wondrous secret had now been unravelled, which none on earth have ever known. But what were the last ideal reflections on his brain ere it

relapsed to clay? Did he sigh for some fond breast, on which his parting soul would have relied? As the world receded, did he cast long-lingering looks behind? Did his trembling spirit turn with timid love to old familiar things, bidding the earth farewell in fear and in mourning? And, as his eyes closed, did his deafened ears recover their power, to hear sweet voices welcoming him to rest?

I stood alone by his cold stiffening clay. Decay's finger had not yet swept the familiar lines; alone, yet not alone, for the memory of the friend was still embodied with me, though fast fading into the ideal. I had not yet disconnected myself from the dream of his existence. How I blamed my hasty temper, as many harsh words rose up in judgment against me! How I recalled his gentle and subdued line of argument, his chastened train of thoughts! How many subjects would I have referred to his judgment, for in the last moments he had been invested with a new dignity, and I felt that I was in the presence of a superior, for he now knew all, concerning which we had so much doubted. Alone, yet not alone; for those dark, passionless forms, which we in our insular pride so much despise, those beings with whom we have so little save mortality in common, who worship not the gods which we worship, who know not the consolation to which we look at the last, they stood abashed and weeping, as the master, to whom they had so lately bowed down, lay lifeless before them. Think not that their tears were insincere, but rather that they flowed from the common fount of humanity, distinction of race and creed in this hour having vanished.

Alone, yet not alone; as the bright light of the sun played in at the now open windows, as I heard the birds cawing in the trees, the patter of the goats on the gravel, the lowing of the kine in the enclosure, the voices and busy hum of men in the highway; as I looked on the boats floating down the river, the white houses shining among the dewy trees on the opposite bank, the many-coloured groups of bathers standing in the stream; as the voice of the ploughman, calling to his oxen and his fellows, while he turned up the new autumnal furrow, came floating cheerily over to me, softened musically by the distance, everything so full of gladness and vitality; I thought of life, its duties and its pains, all those absorbing interests which enchain and subdue us. But I turned back, and my eye fell on the white stiffened form: there was no more restless rolling on the couch, no parched lips craving for water, no waving fan to cool the heated atmosphere, no more noiseless treadings or subdued voices in the chamber, no friends with anxiety-stricken countenances, no spirit struggling with eternity. I felt then that I was in the presence of a greater monarch than the World, that I stood face to face with the last enemy to be triumphed over, Death.

But there is no time for mourning in India. Necessity of climate will not brook delay. Short interval of sorrow and seclusion to accustom us to the face of the dead ere we see it no longer! At the earliest dawn of the morrow he is laid in his last abode. The same goodly company, in the same garb, with the same feelings of fellowship that would have welcomed him at his glad espousals, follow him to the grave.



*There* are those who have seen death in many a form, that have looked it steadily in the face in the day of battle, that have assisted in many such a ceremony both in peace and in war. They look on with cold solemn face, if not hardened heart. What do they care for death? *There* are the flaxen-haired, light-hearted lads just hurried from their native hills over the waves of the ocean, to fill perhaps after a few short days an early grave. Thoughtless and careless, with good dispositions, and memory of parental warning still waging unequal fight against temptation and example, what do they know of death? *There* are the few pensive and sincere friends, who in simple affection mourn their lost companion, and, talking lowly to each other, shed tears for the bright youth that has been snatched away.

No bells sound in mournful dirge, and the shadow of no Gothic tower falls on the consecrated ground. We enter no church. We kneel in no house set apart to pray, but the corpse is met by the minister of God at the gate of the cemetery, choked with tasteless and unwieldy memorials of the forgotten dead. As the solemn exordium sounds, the heads of all are uncovered; perhaps by God's grace some heart may be touched, and the motley crowd follow in, and gather under the canopy of heaven round the narrow bed of their companion.

The last time that I heard these words was many years ago, many hundred leagues hence, where the flower of British India stood panting and exhausted on the banks of the Satlaj. It was in the dead of night, while the guns, which the enemy were sullenly firing,

still rung in our ears, amidst the rattling of musketry, that the body of one of the bravest of his accomplished service,<sup>1</sup> George Broadfoot, was laid in the dust. Nor in his glory was he left alone ; for in the fight in which he fell many had fallen, some to share the narrow chamber of his grave, some to sleep beside him. Below us were those that fell at Múdkí and Ferozshahr, and standing among us were some who a few days after fell bravely at Sobraon ; and months afterwards, when those poor bones had been turned to dust, when their spirit had appeared trembling before the judgment-seat to receive their last and great award, when their places in the council and the field were filled by others, England rang with their praises. History still boasts of their achievements.

How different was the scene now acting ! No laurels were entwined round this youthful brow ; he had added no new lustre to the great and honoured name of Malcolm ; no wisdom in council, and no great excellence among men will remain to be told of him. He had not met death in the field, when, the blood warmed by excitement, the spirit roused by patriotism, the brave man scorns danger, and with rash, oh too fearless daring, rushes an unrepenting sinner into the presence of the Almighty. He had met death in the silent chamber, where there is nothing grand to mortal eye, for in a fever there is no romance ; yet let us trust that in the Book of Life will his name be recorded.

As I stood on the grave of one who had preceded

<sup>1</sup> Edward Lake and I recovered his body from the trenches of Ferozshahr, and he was buried at Ferozpúr, in the presence of Lord Hardinge, that night.

my friend but a few months, perhaps a little week, I looked round upon the crowd: all were there, the friends of his youth and the companions of his joy, to render the last tribute to his memory; there also were his dark heathen attendants, led by some feeling of sympathy, but unconscious of a country beyond the grave; there were the thoughtless faces of the passers-by arrested to see the show, some too in their heart rejoicing that there was a Power which could lay low and avenge their invincible oppressors. The solemn silence of the scene was ever and anon interrupted by the rattle of the wheels of some tardy arriver; but the mockery of woe blackening all the way, the sable mutes, the feathered hearse, the pomp and circumstance of grief, are unknown in a clime, where death is always busy, and grief but short-lived. Yes, all were there. They would have accounted it as a shame to be absent, and, as the earth dropped from many a hand on the coffin, as the measured words of the minister fell upon their hearing, as, the rites completed, they departed, some to their business, some to their pleasures, I wondered who would be the next borne through the portal; for it is but a few weeks since he, whom we have now left here, wandered with me among these tombs, talking thoughtfully and wonderingly about the dead. With cheerfulness of heart let us leave him to sleep there, as one not without hope, whose warfare is accomplished; but for myself and those who stood around me, forgetting already the cause of their being there, there was room for doubtfulness and gloom? Will you miss your friend, who was so lately among you, the sharer of your joy and your

pleasures? Will the memory of his blameless life live with you? Will the thoughts of his sudden death be a warning to you? Will you think of him in your homes and in your gatherings? Will you regret his absence at the festive board? Will you sorrowfully mark his vacant place at the church? Surely he has left some footsteps on the sands of time for your heeding; and do ye return to your vices and follies without one better impression, without one deeply-set warning? Hereafter, when fever lays you low, when your turn arrives, you will regret the opportunity lost and example thrown away. What more do you expect? Do you not hear? As the distant sound of the last wheel, bearing away its light-thoughted master to his occupations and his pleasures, fell on my ears, I felt that none would hear, even if one should rise from the dead! But a few days ago he was the friend of many; it will soon be forgotten that he even existed.

But my task was not yet done; not mine to give vent to secret grief in my chamber, or to drown it in the cares of the world. He that had died was a stranger without kin in the land, and the law stepped in to guard the interests of the inheritance. Before twenty hours had elapsed, I found myself mechanically assisting in what to me seemed sacrilege, though still a duty, in searching his desk and most secret depositories for some memorial of his wishes. There were books and tokens of love and affection from absent friends to be set aside; there were his papers and letters to be sealed up. Round us lay strewed the tokens of his innocent pleasures, his more laborious hours and his thoughtful devotions. Poor boy! his bats

and his note-books ; his journal recording his simple life ; his Bible marked with references, to which his eye will never again turn ; his watch, which had run down, and was still, even as the lifetime of its master, one had to him marked the flight of time, the other had shown him, not in vain, how those hours were to be spent ; of both now was the use gone from him, for to him the great Book of Life was closed, and time had ceased to exist. There also was the letter written, but not despatched, to some dear friend, full of hope and glee ; how can we now send this lying messenger ? There were his clothes and his favourite books ; on the table lay papers with unfinished sentences, the ink dry in his pen. Round us flitted the shadow of the departed ; his home seemed a temple robbed of its divinity.

I turned sickened away, but the last act was to be played ere the curtain fell on the scene. All came to have a share in the spoil. I heard the half-suppressed joke, the giddy laugh, as his favourite horse was sold at the outcry ; the dogs, which had been fondly caressed by him and fed from his hands, passed away to strangers. I dare not call to them, poor hounds ! for they knew my voice too well.

The whole item of little humanity, represented by that one name, has now resolved itself into an idea, sooner even than the form has returned to its original dust ! It will soon be forgotten what year, what month he died ; soon, very soon, before even the sad news reaches a sequestered village, a distant nook of Caledonia, where an aged bosom will swell with that agony which parents only know, and kind womanly

hearts will mourn the cherished boy, whom they so lately sent forth with pride and hopefulness to his destiny; of whom, though they had no hopes of again meeting, they rejoiced to hear, that in a distant land he thought and cared for them, and prospered.

Is there yet no nearer and no dearer tie, one twined with the bright garland of youthful fancy, that has been broken? Have no visions of future homes, of kindly welcomes hereafter, of cheerful hearths, of children climbing on the knee, been rudely dashed to the ground? Is there no broken heart mourning in unacknowledged affliction?

Ask it not; probe not the secret of the heart, nor try to unravel the mystery of the tomb. Go, kneel by the grave; his is the happiest lot. No pain, no passionate grief, no hot burning anger, no disappointed ambition, no unrequited love, will vex him more. He is gone to that silent shore, where grief *is not*, where the good are rewarded, and the weary are at rest. And in humble imitation of the poet, who poured forth many a tuneful sonnet to the memory of his youthful friend, let this be my weak imperfect offering; let me scatter over the turf these few purple flowers, these unavailing tears, telling mournfully *how he lived and how he died.*

BANÁRAS, August 1852.

## CHAPTER III.

*THE INDIAN FESTIVAL.*

It was in the evening in the month of October, that season of the year when Nature puts on her most beauteous dress, tricked out in brightest verdure, the gift of the departed rains. The slanting rays of the sun illumed the landscape, shedding a wondrous brightness over each tower and pinnacle, when I found myself standing, a solitary European, amidst a crowd of our subjects, celebrating in pomp and joyousness the national festival of India, the Rám-Líla.

The whole of the great city had poured itself out, in numbers numberless; the streets were thronged with gaily-clad thousands; the houses and walls were lined with expectants of the coming procession. Bright drapery hung in festoons from the roof tops, or was stretched across from balcony to balcony; streamers floated in the breeze; and the cheerful hum of busy voices, blended with strains of Oriental music, sounded gratefully in my ears.

Seated under an ancient tree, whose branches had witnessed many such a festival, on a rural throne sat the heroes of the pageant, the representatives of those whom the crowds had assembled to honour. In the

centre was the royal youth, who gladly sacrificed a throne to meet the wishes of a parent, and on each side of him the brother and the wife, the faithful companions of his exile. Dressed was he in that fanciful costume, to which antiquity has given its sanction. In his hand was the bow, and on his shoulders was bound a plaything quiver of now-useless arrows. Flowers, the gay offerings of nature, were heaped on the steps of the throne; garlands hung round the necks of him and his companions. Each subject, as he approached to do homage to the mimic monarch, brought tribute of flowers and fruit. Each felt pleased and rewarded by a garland from the royal hand; even that young sick child smiles, as its anxious parent holds it up aloft to receive, as a charm, some token of the hero.

I sauntered down the crowd, which opened of itself to let me pass and closed behind on my steps. What heart does not gladden at beholding the signs of cheerfulness and rejoicing around; the smiling face, the glistening eye, the open salutation, the shout of victory coupled with the name of the hero, which was the watchword of the day? All classes and all ranks were there. Sober merchants and money-changers had this day closed the thumbed ledger, and relaxed the griping hand, had wound on their heads a bright new turban, and stepped forth for once free from care. The wealthy nobleman passes by, borne by his servants or mounted on high on the turreted elephant. Struts by with firm and martial tread the erect sepoy, with beads round his neck and staff in his hand. After him followed a band of young men in the pride of their opening years, with girdles wound proudly, and all the coxcombry of their



age. There too are the draped figures and half-veiled faces of women, the smiles and laughter of unimprisoned women, for this one day released from their tall jealous walls, and from the thralldom of their still more jealous customs; wondering, gentle creatures, on this their day of liberty, how beauteous the outward world could appear; perhaps murmuring at the hard fate, which had shut them up in houses.

Ranged on one side in places of honour and repose are the old men, chanting aloud the melodious rhythms of the great ballad, their broken notes accompanied by the stringed instruments and the pipe; loud sound their voices and cheeringly the passers-by join in the chorus. Thus once sounded the Psalms of David, when sung with tabret and pipe on the hill of Sion; and, as the interest of the story varies, their excited feelings overpower them, and the sound of weeping is blended with that of laughter: the laugh of triumph at the great heroic glory, of which the drama is enacting before them, the weeping at the recollection of the good old days of their youth. So imaginary are the evils for which poor mortals weep, so uncertain the joys for which they triumph! Some toothless grey-beards sit looking on, silent or mumbling to each other tales of ancient shows which bring back to them the features of long-forgotten friends, or boasting of feats of agility and splendour of spectacles, to which this degenerate age cannot approach.

But the procession is now advancing amidst the shouting and clapping crowds; uncouth and gigantic figures of fiends and demons, such as we have heard of in fairy tales but never seen in broad daylight till

now, waving swords in mimic defiance, and threatening the royal youth, who from his rural throne sits gazing on unmoved. After them follow groups disguised as monkeys and savages, the denizens of untrodden forests; and then a long and gorgeous procession of fantastic figures borne upon thrones and overshadowed by canopies, equalling in strange and barbaric splendour the pomp of an Asiatic proconsul, as he swept down the sacred way in his triumphal car to the Capitol, bringing home plunder and victory from the Far East to Imperial Rome. Among them were many of the chief citizens, some reclining in state, smoking their pipes in Asiatic repose, with calm and dignified want of thought depicted on their countenances, which is unknown in the busy cities of Europe. Others with strange masks and antique dresses, girt with sword and shield, seated upon thrones and bowing to the applauding bystanders; behind them, on a moving platform embowered with the broad leaves of the plantain, a group of ash-coloured Fakirs, half-clad according to the old traditionary manner, and yellow ascetics, playing on shapeless harps and chanting unintelligible songs. They are part and parcel of the drama which is enacting, and without them all would be incomplete; but they give but a faint idea of those wondrous residents of the wilderness in bygone days, whose profound sayings, chronicled in their god-like language, still astound us; whose thoughts, disentangled from their bodies, darted upwards to the stars, and brought back a wild tissue of fable resembling truth, and profound dicta of unprofitable philosophy, showing how near the greatest wisdom, unassisted by revelation, is to folly!

But the combatants having arrived, the hero descends from his throne to wage war against these demons, and to re-enact before eager eyes the oft-repeated triumph. In the regular profile of his face, in his long flowing tresses, bound by the chaplet, in the stiff motion of his limbs, as he discharges his arrows and pressés on the discomfited foe, we recognise a dignity indescribable, a classic grace, such as speaks to us from the deserted tombs of Egypt, such as Assyrian kings carved on the rocks of Mesopotamia. But the deepest and most absorbing interest is reserved for the last scene, when, his exile over, the labour intrusted to him having been performed, the self-devoted hero returns to his home and his kingdom, and, surrounded by his brothers, seats himself on the throne, which is raised from the ground and borne along the streets amidst the shouts of the applauding citizens, who, in the phrensy of the moment, believe that it is Ráma *indeed* whom they are welcoming, and that *they* are the people of Ayodhyá.

Who is this Ráma? In what bygone ages did he live? What great achievements did he perform, that the whole of this vast peninsula of India, from Kashmír to Cape Komorin, should with one mind thus render to him annual homage, and at the same season of the year carry out to his glory this national pageant? A man he was of royal blood and blameless character, who, at a period enveloped in the mist of tradition, sat upon the throne of the Rajpút dynasty of Ayodhyá, and thence led a force across the Vindhya range, over mountain, river, and arm of the sea, against the capital of Ceylon, which he conquered, and returned in triumph

to continue a line, which still boasts of its antiquity. Thus speaks history; and the path of the conqueror can be traced by many a stately fane, many a sacred shrine, with unerring fidelity for hundreds of miles, religiously preserved in the oral legends of many tribes and a far-divided people. But tradition has woven a brighter garland round her favourite's head, and, aided by the inspiration of the poet and the daring invention of the priest, has in this blameless mortal brought into existence the first dim shadowy idea of a Redeemer, an incarnation of the Creator, sent down from on high to be born of woman, to redeem mankind from the evils that surrounded them. But the gross ideas of unassisted mortals could but clothe their incarnate god in the transitory dignity of human sovereignty, could make him to triumph only over earthly enemies, the giants and the demons of the forest.

Other ages saw what they dreamt not of; other nations have learnt to worship what is still beyond *their* comprehension: a Sovereign greater than one clothed in the purple, a Saviour, who has redeemed from greater evils than earthly, a Conqueror who has triumphed over more potent adversaries. Still the name of Ráma has woven itself into the inmost recesses of every heart. His name is entwined with what Indians value most, the early history of their country, the legends of their hills and valleys; for in this country no mountain raises its head unsung, every river flows in verse; religion and fiction have lent their aid; and so charm-working is the spell, so vividly do the annual festivals bring back every event of the life of the hero before the gaping crowd, that naught is

taught earlier in infancy, naught is remembered so faithfully in age as the story of Ráma. Mark that old withered crone, who has so little of enjoyable in this life, who in her hard struggle of widowed existence has little time for romance or for poetry, yet so strong is the spirit of nationality and religion within her, so wondrous the power of oral tradition, that she too has softened her grim features this day, and, as she points her lank arm towards the hero, is giving that little black-eyed boy beside her the first ideas of the wondrous tale of the Rámáyana.

Read, those who care for the fresh annals of a great people, read the grandest epic in the loftiest and most godlike strains, that the world ever knew. Happy hero, who has escaped the Lethé of Forgetfulness by the influence of the sacred bard! Happy poet, who has selected for his strain so pure and blameless a character! We dare not believe that he was a Redeemer incarnate. We can see through the dim mist of early history the origin of the legends connected with the wild armies, which he commanded, and the wilder foes which he conquered. All nations have fallen into the same errors, have peopled the forests with giants, and placed hill and valley under the protection of fairies. The annals of all nations commence in the same mythic strains, until civilisation clears away the forest, which encumbered the soil, and the strange, crude notions, which perplexed the brains of the early inhabitants; and we wonder then whither are departed the giants of our nation's childhood.

Still the poet, while he tells of wild tales and perpetuates charming fictions, is true to himself and his

country. Though twenty centuries have elapsed since he pricked on his reed-tablets the stately lines and measured couplets, still the people are before us now, as the poet described them ; and well deserved he, that his tale should live in the memory of posterity, for purer morality was never described. No men were more self-controlled, no women were more virtuous, than those painted by him ; vice of all kinds never appeared more revolting ; and the virtues, the gentler virtues of forgiveness, of humility, chastity, and filial obedience, never appeared so charming, as when standing forth from the magic canvas of Valmiki.

And what history so enduring as that graven on the living tablets of a nation's fancy ? What homage to virtue and greatness so exalted, as that conceded by the applause of untutored millions ? Ask those weary footsore pilgrims what took them on their long and painful journey to Lanka and the Southern Ocean ? What leads the countless hundreds to the solitary hermitage at Chitrakót ? There is naught to admire in the hill but its wild verdure, but to them it teems with strange interest. With us in our lofty cathedrals we have storied urns and marble tombs to recall the memory of the good and wise, whose bones are laid in the cemetery ; but here the ashes of each, as he shakes off his mortal coil, are scattered to the four winds, or committed to the sacred waters, but the mountain and the stream preserve the name of the mighty dead. Nature has carved out the lofty mausoleum of the departed ; the ballads of the country, transmitted from mouth to mouth, have worked more effectively than the sculptured epitaph.

In what place now can we rank, when compared with those ancient and widely spread legends, still living in the feelings, still openly acted in the streets before the eyes of millions, the tale of beleaguered and plundered Troy? The rape of Helen aroused a few rude chieftains, the lords of petty though romantic provinces, and carried across the narrow seas, that intervened betwixt them and the heights of Ida, a fleet of light vessels to besiege an insignificant town; and the story of the Ten Years' siege, the quarrels of the bandit warriors, would have perished, as has been the fate of many such a foray, had not the genius of the blind Ionian possessed itself of the tale, and, just as the intellect of the Greek people was dawning, sent it forth, clothed in such marvellous diction, and depicted in all the majesty of sonorous hexameters, that future ages can never cease to admire, or hope to imitate without falling short of the divine original. Thus, from the charm of the verse and the genius of the poet, came it, that the story became vested with such strange interest for the Athenian people. Thus centuries afterwards listening thousands hung on the honied words of Euripides, refashioning the old Homeric ballads; and as, seated in the theatre of Bacchus, beneath their own Parthenic Temple, they looked out on the island of Salamis, the scene of dearer victories, as the breezes of the Ægean fanned their flushed cheeks, and swept back their long hair, if in the excitement of the moment they shouted, it was but that the sympathy with the triumphs of their kindred in former days was blended with exultation arising from the contemplation of their own.

But this is the great triumph of a whole nation, the

inhabitants of a vast peninsula, not the denizens of one petty province, the few thousands uttering the same dialect, and clinging round one Acropolis, but of millions, separated by every obstacle of nature, by vast mountain ranges, by conquering rivers; cut off from each other by distinct languages and dissociating habits; ruled over by hostile sovereigns, partitioned into separate principalities; but all look back to a dim era of traditional history, since which many, many hundreds of years have flown by, when certain events took place, which they gladly unite, forgetful of the present, to commemorate and perpetuate; and, knowing how much nearer the eye speaks to the senses than the ear, in every town, in every hamlet, lead forth and play out a festive drama. Who talks of the short-lived triumphs of the victor in the Olympic arena? Of what esteem is the parsley wreath of the panting hero when compared with this undying laurel? All has passed away. The Greek nation exists, but they have no longer a thought for the Palæstrum; the ballad of Troy is to them but an old woman's tale. But the Indian, generation after generation, sees enacted before him the same historic pageant, which his forefathers saw ere Alexander penetrated to the banks of the Hydaspes, while Achilles in his spleen was still pacing up and down on the shores of the sounding Hellespont. More wondrous is it, when we consider, that it is a people, who have naught of real nationality, who know not even the name of patriotism, who have bowed for centuries abjectly to any conqueror whom chance might place over them; who are incapable of unity for their own advantage; yet on this one



occasion they raise the cry of Victory, though defeated ; display unity of action, though hopelessly dissevered ; and might pass for patriots, did we not know that they were not so. We search history in vain for a parallel ; and we find it not, save on that one day, when the many nations and tribes of disunited Christendom kneel in humble recollection of the sufferings of a crucified Saviour.

But the procession and crowds have now departed ; the place, where I stand, is empty ; but the noise of the shouting is still resounding, when a new sight displays itself, and, accompanied by strains of plaintive music and lamentations, a long train of men and women pass by, urged by similar feelings of religion, supported by similar instinct of duty ; yet between them and those, who stood here a few moments before, sojourners of the same city, clothed in the same habiliments, is a vast chasm of ideas, a boundless dissociation of sympathies and traditions.<sup>1</sup> They celebrate this day the anniversary of the slaughter of the grandson of their prophet ; with drawn swords and tears they convey to the place of interment a fanciful burden, and fondly deem, that they, the residents of India, mourn in sincerity for the untimely end of these two youths of Arabia. But in their acting there is no deep pathos ; in their annual celebration there is no unity of action ; and it is not even all the followers of Mahomet, that join in the Muharram ; even those, who do so, scarcely know why, for the sons of Fatima fell not in their quarrel, their

<sup>1</sup> The Mahometan Fast varies with the Lunar Months, and on this occasion synchronised with the Hindu, which is fixed according to the Solar Year.

blood stained, not the sand of India; and so their grief is but an empty show, and their mourning but illusory.

Amidst all the din and all the clamour, din of the triumphant Hindu glorying in triumphs, the extent and nature of which are forgotten; clamour of the Mahometan, mourning, he knew not why, over two murdered strangers, the sound of bells (for it was the Sabbath-eve) fell on my ears from the church of the Mission, whose solemn tower looked mournfully down on these vagaries of the poor human intellect, these wild fantasies of erring mortals. From within came the voices of children, and men, born again even as a little child, who at this hour of evening were pouring forth prayers of sorrow and repentance for sins, which they had but lately discovered, and devout ministers chanting songs of triumph over the enemy, whom their arms had defeated, the cause of their mourning and the reason of their rejoicing being well known.

Play on, gentle people! Do not forget your National Festivals; transmit from mouth to mouth your ancient and time-honoured ballads, and year by year carry out beyond the city walls your gay pageant; and in due season may a brighter ray dawn on your now obscured intellects! May my eye never weary in contemplating your peaceful sports! May my pen never flag in defending your immemorial customs!

BANÁRAS, 1852.

## CHAPTER IV.

*THE BOX OF INDIAN LETTERS.*

MANY years ago I was deputed by the Government to take charge of the office of an Indian Judge, who had died suddenly. He was a man of the old school, who had vegetated in India uninterruptedly for more than the third of a century, who had broken through all English ties and set at defiance many of the better English habits. He had risen high in rank, and had obtained some estimation for official ability; but the heart, that could disregard the natural ties of relationship, was not likely to draw to itself new and sincere friendships. He had lived very much to himself and by himself, and, when he died, no one regretted him. There was rather a feeling of satisfaction among his juniors, that death had at length removed this permanent obstacle to their promotion.

I received charge of his private effects as well as his Office, and a strange *melée* of things they consisted of; for the deceased had left England during the last century, and had never returned to refreshen his ideas, and had never broken up his establishment. A great mass of rubbish therefore had accumulated, which for years past he had been too indolent either to look at or think of.

A few months after I received from a solicitor in London an application urging and imploring me to make search for a particular document, which was supposed to be among the letters of the deceased, and which was of the greatest importance to his relations, if produced at once. It appears that his next of kin were great-nephews, who had never seen, and only faintly heard of, their Indian uncle. They had become aware of his death from the papers, and had become entitled to some property, supposing a document could be produced; and they earnestly solicited me, though a stranger, to make a search for it; and, should it not be found, they authorised, nay, entreated, me to read every letter received in days bygone from his family, on the chance of some trace being found leading up to its discovery.

I complied unwillingly to what appeared to me to be an irksome duty, one very repugnant to my feelings, and for which I had little leisure or eyesight. However, one evening I opened the box, in which I had previously sealed up all his private papers, and began, with much *ennui* and ill-will, what seemed a very heavy task. But, strange to say, as I read, an unexpected interest seemed to seize me; I found in these letters a history of the deceased's domestic relations for the last fifty years, all the joys and sorrows of his home told artlessly, and, rising up unadvisedly, more fascinating than many a studied romance. The work occupied many nights, but I forgot the fatigue; and oftentimes I was so deeply interested, that I read on insensibly past the midnight hour.

The letters were tied up in packets, and the first,

that came under my eyes, contained the letters of his father, written in a round, old-fashioned hand, with all the indications of being the work of a gentleman of the old school, such as we hear of in the reign of the Third George. From the first to the last they commenced, "My dear Boy;" and so faithfully had they been treasured and arranged, that the first on the file were written to the deceased, when he was at a public school. Full were they of old saws and modern instances, of warnings, kindly admonitions, announcing some projected pleasure, or forwarding some parental present. By degrees the plans for the future life of the boy began to be discussed; the dreadful word, India, was first placed before his eyes; the expressions were brief, but affectionate; the old man clearly did not like to condemn his son to banishment, but could not conceal from him the offer. The series with English postmarks then ceased, and a year after a fresh series commenced with Indian directions. In some of the last the bold hand began to tremble, the letters were shaky. At length, at one period many years ago, the series abruptly closed, and labelled on the last, which stood on the top of the packet, were the significant words, "My poor dear Father."

Hard by was a large bundle, or rather succession of bundles, written in a female hand. It was not difficult to divine who had written them; for they commenced at a much earlier date than those of his father, and some of them were written in large printing characters to catch the eye of a child. How deeply and clearly did maternal love speak out in all this! How the notes of this early period brought before me the imaginary

writer in all the pride and fervency of the young mother; her kind and thoughtful watchings over her darling boy; her gentle admonitions; her steady supporting him in his difficulties; ever ready to befriend, to counsel, to caution for his health, to warn for his future! I traced the boy from the small school to the great public institution. The letters, though written by the same person, indicated by the change of tone and style the improvement and development of the mind of the receiver; constant, unbroken, often alluding gently to neglect of answers, but never reproaching; supplying to the absent schoolboy the little incidents of his home, telling him of the health of his pony and the care taken of his garden. All the boy in his many phases stood before me: I saw his joyful face, as he opened and read the short note, telling him on what day the carriage would meet him to bring him home for the holidays; and I pictured the tearful eye with which the first letter was received after his returning to school, telling him, and oh how truly! how much he was missed. I began to know his brothers and sisters by name. Soon the fact began to grow upon me, that his second sister was sickening and would not long live. I read that in the mother's cautious phrases; but the boy, amidst his lessons and his cricket, little heeded them, till one letter came to convey him his first sorrow, and tell him that his earliest playfellow was dead. All the details were given, such as a mother's pen only can give them; all the little symptoms, the struggle of hope and fear, the opinion of the doctor, the trust in God's mercy; then came the last moment, the last words of the dying girl, the thoughtful message of love to the

dear and absent brother, the "God's will be done" of the heart-broken parent.

All this I read, till I could read no more ; it was a page of domestic history, that must have been known to all of us. I had become so identified with the family, so interested in the poor sufferer ; I had so connected her with some lost loved one of my own circle, that I, a self-collected man, when I reached this crisis, rose up from my seat overpowered, and wept aloud at the account of the last moments of a young girl of sixteen summers, who had died years ago, before I was even born, of whom I had known and till that evening heard nothing. So strange and deep-seated is the chord of human sympathy !

For many years afterwards the letters of the mother were tinged with gloom and melancholy resignation ; the blow had gone home to the heart, and all the mother was poured out in every letter. Whatever was the subject, constant allusions to the lost child would force themselves in ; hopes, that the darling boy might never forget his sister ; prayers, that he may be like her, and in the days of his youth remember his Creator. Even the joyful tidings of the happy marriage of the elder daughter could not tear away *her* thoughts from the churchyard corner, where green turf and bright flowers bloomed over the grave of the early dead.

But the stream of Life could not be stayed. It flowed unceasingly on ; the boy became a man ; Love began to take the place of Authority ; the Teacher gave way to the Friend ; and the tone of the letters was again altered. Then came the first mention of abhorred India ; the mournful anticipations too truly

realised; the trusting in Providence; and then a great blank in the correspondence.

The boy had indeed become a man. The man had been doomed to exile, in his case eternal. There was no overland mail then. Ship-letters came few and far between. Yet, when they did come, what an outpouring of motherly love was contained in those closely written and crossed pages! Not a hasty scrawl written on the day previous to the departing vessel, with empty apologies for premeditated carelessness; but a minute chronicle of home, a record of events renewed day by day, and, as year followed year, and letter followed at long intervals letter, an expression of hopes and wishes, a participation of doubts and anxieties. I soon gathered that the old man's health was failing, that he yearned to see his son after a ten years' absence; for the dates told me that that time had now passed; that he grew weaker day by day. The letters told me how very near that return was to the mother's heart. How could the son coldly listen to such appeals! What newly-formed ties, what professional ambition, what foolish shortsighted love of lucre tempted him to delay his return? I knew that he never had revisited his home, and I fear that he never had intended; but for two long years the letters of his mother were written with new hope, dwelling on some promises expressed or implied, for in the autumn she was expecting him with the spring, and, when spring came, she was building palaces of delight for the future autumn. *But he never returned!* Oh! ask not the cause, blame him not, but let each remember, that the duties, that they owe to their parents, are paramount,



and must not be delayed. How heavy must have fallen the news on the son, when he saw the black seal, when he read, that the old man was dead! Did not tears, bitter, scalding tears, of anguish and reproach blister the paper, when his mother's trembling characters told him, that his father had sickened; how he had died peacefully, bequeathing his benediction to his absent boy; how he had gratefully, with expiring accents, thanked Heaven for many blessings, and would not allow himself to murmur, if one only, that of seeing his son again, had been denied? Of what value at that moment to that son were his professional honours? What bootied his hoarded treasure that had prevented his return? Did not that lock of grey hair, now all that remained to him of his first and dearest friend, reproach him, that he had allowed that honoured head to descend to the grave with one wish unfulfilled, which a son might have gratified?

The powers of the widowed mother now seemed shaken. Her letters never failed, but became shorter, and were as full of thoughtful love as they had been years before; new names were alluded to as taking place in the family circle; the old house had been vacated; the seat under the stately elms, where he had often sat at his mother's feet, listening to the cawing of the rooks, was vacant; the churchyard grave of the daughter, who had died twenty years before, was no longer visited; all past associations were gone. The twentieth year of exile had now elapsed, and the mother had left off sighing for or alluding to her son's return; she was content that he prospered. A new race of people had sprung up unknown to him, and his

sister's children had arrived at maturity. They were known to him only by report, and, though their hands filled up the vacancies of their grandmother's letters, they wrote as strangers. His own third sister, whom he had left in the cradle a baby, was now described as in blooming womanhood. Many a gentle allusion fell from the mother's pen to attract the brother's affection to this unknown sister, by describing her beauty, and her resemblance to that lost sister of his childhood, who had now been mouldering a quarter of a century in the deserted churchyard, and by all but the mother had long been forgotten.

I had begun to love and venerate this good old lady. My hand trembled, as I took up each letter, fearing not to see the same handwriting beneath. I saw too that I was approaching the last of the bundle, and I knew, that that must mean death, for such love ceases not this side of the grave. I seemed to have known her for years. I remembered her as the young mother writing her first letters to her schoolboy; I remembered her pale countenance over the grave of her child; I contrasted that blooming matron, as when she bade him farewell, with the stiff, upright figure in the old armchair, with the picture of her son hanging before her, her son, as he had left her, in sanguine youth, full of bright hopes, good resolutions, and warm affections, in the morning of his career.

And did he not return home even then to throw himself at the feet of his injured parent? for what greater injury than love unreturned! Did he not tear himself away from his Oriental ties to repay so many years of unchanging affection? Will a few shawls and Indian

nicknacks, the cold display of useless affluence, gratify a mother's yearning? Can the heart become so cold? Can the first duties of Nature be so easily forgotten? I had never loved this man, but, until I read these letters, I had somewhat respected him; but I felt now burning with indignation, as if personally wronged, nor would I, fearing an avenging Providence, have trusted myself in the same vessel with one so regardless of the ties of humanity.

I said that but a few letters remained. They were short, cheerful, and resigned, thanking him for some present, inquiring tenderly after his health, but never alluding to his return or his future. The mother had divined the secret: some kind friend had told to her the Indian scandal. That silence, when contrasted with the warm anticipations and eager hopes of the past, cut me deepest. Her last letter was dated forty years after the first. The handwriting had changed but little; the signature almost the same; and the same true tone of unchanging womanly love, the same unselfish outpouring of maternal care, showed itself throughout the whole correspondence. True to herself, true to her principles, in a long series of two hundred letters, there was nothing that on perusal she could have wished to have expunged. Had the whole been published, each reader would have recognised the type of a Christian English mother.

I had almost forgotten the object of my search, and the urgent reasons, which had privileged me to violate these sacred pages. Having finished these interesting packets, I had to wade through a miscellaneous mass of correspondence, letters from his sisters, letters from his

nieces and his nephews, from his lawyers in England, from his friends and acquaintances in India. There was the acknowledgment of the sporting Major, who had plundered him at the card-table or outwitted him on the racecourse; there was the note of apology from the youngster, who had broken the knees of the horse lent to him by his good-natured and careless host; there were the duns and the applications, the whining of misery and the fawnings of sycophantism. What a strange picture of the world is offered by a box of miscellaneous correspondence extending over many years! I found letters written in the freshness and confidence of boyhood, by men, whom I knew now in the surliness and misanthropism of decaying years. The extravagant of those days had become misers; the sinners of the last century had furnished the present with saints. Names of old fogies, who had long since been transferred from the staff of the Army to the list of the Pension-Paymaster and the Sexton, were here alluded to as smart officers anxious for the purchase of their Company. Old judges, who had years ago gone to that place, where all old judges go, in these pages appeared as men of sense and intelligence, for which I had never given them credit. I read on with varied interest, sometimes a smile and sometimes a sigh; and at the bottom of all my attention was once more arrested by a small packet in a delicate female hand, and the contents told the old tale of an early engagement ending as usual in moonshine. The correspondence had commenced at a very distant period, before even the departure to India, and for two or three years the series was regular, abounding with the usual trite, schoolgirl

remarks of undying affection, and anticipated happiness. There was no clue to the name, as initials only were used; and one day thirty years ago this correspondence had ceased; why, it was impossible to divine; for the last letter was as fervent as the first. This was not a case of love perishing by slow decay, but a sudden wrench of hearts; and I sat some time wondering how it had come to pass, whether death, or kind friends had interfered, whether she still lived, whether the sight of his name among the dead had secured one only tear for the grave of her old Indian lover.

But why were his days doomed to terminate in this way? Why did he not return to his home to reap the rewards of his youth and manhood spent in intellectual and honourable labour? Lax in morals, unsettled in religion, effeminate in habits, imperious in manner, antiquated in notions, and narrow in views, why did he tarry here at length to creep to an obscure grave, unlovable; unloving, and, since that one fond maternal heart had ceased to beat, unloved?

BANDA, 1853.

## CHAPTER V.

*MIRIAM, THE INDIAN GIRL.*

THE tale, which I have to tell, is a very strange one, and happened many years ago. The events, which are described, to the casual reader, may seem very trivial, but to me they were fraught with overpowering interest, and have had an influence over my character and life.

In the year 18—, I was in civil charge of a remote and obscure District, the solitary European. I was in the midway of the path of life. The romance of youth had not entirely been extinguished by the commonplaceness of manhood. Naturally of a serious and retired disposition, I rejoiced in my solitude, was never less alone than when alone, as I found in my studies and books a better companionship, a more engrossing society, than can be realised in the sickening bustle, and hollow gaiety, of the larger Districts, where no real friendships are formed, where so few sympathetic spirits can be met with.

My days glided peacefully away. My mornings and evenings were usually spent in my large and carefully kept garden; and there, when relieved from the duties of my Office, I sauntered up and down, chanting the majestic lines of Homer, or lost in the beauties of the

Italian poets. I have spent hours in one nook, where a lofty pítal afforded shade to a rude bench. There, during the season of summer, often I saw the sun rise or set without interruption and without intrusion of strangers.

The extremity of my garden bordered on the native town, and a large tank, and a few poor houses, were immediately adjoining. A low fence, with a little gateway, separated me from a path which, though not much frequented, was open to the public.

Here one day my eyes fell on a little urchin of a girl, of about five years old, but lightly and poorly clad, who used to dart about from the cottage, where she resided, along the high banks of the tank, who seemed everywhere like a ray of sunshine with her light laugh. Sometimes she stood watching my actions, as I paced up and down. Insensibly an acquaintance was formed between us. A present of a few copper coins removed all fear and bashfulness. One day with trembling steps she obeyed my summons, and, passing the little gate, came up to me to be interrogated as to her residence, and the occupation of her parents. I became then aware of her extreme beauty, such as I have never seen realised before or since: eyes of the deepest black, features of the most delicate chiselling, and long black hair. Her figure and limbs were of the slightest and frailest mould; she seemed more like a sprite than a living being. It appeared, that she lived with an old woman in one of the cottages, whom she called her grandmother; but on inquiry it appeared, that she had been found five years before, a new-born infant, on the banks of this tank, her parentage utterly unknown and

unsuspected ; and she had been reared out of compassion by a childless crone.

The gate once passed, the little fairy included my garden within the circle of her dominions. To me personally still shy and reserved, with the gardeners and my numerous servants she was soon on terms of the closest intimacy, and won their hearts by her gentleness and beauty, hearts easily won towards children or animals. Morning and evening, there she was, chasing the butterfly down the alleys, calling to the birds, picking flowers, busy about something, her voice heard everywhere, her slight figure glancing about. She appeared, and she vanished with the birds and the insect tribe, and seemed as one of them. Sometimes, but not often, she came to me to have her head patted, and receive some toy, some new dress, or some small sum of money to carry home ; and as surely as this happened, on the following morning the natural gratitude of the child prompted her to lay aside her shyness, and bring me a nosegay. As we met on the path there was always a glad smile, a light laugh, a musical "Salám" to greet me ; but a year or more elapsed, ere I thought of her more than the birds and the butterflies, which appeared always as her companions, or the pet dogs and the tame deer, which, like her, had the *entrée* of my enclosure.

One day in the whim of the moment, it occurred to me to order, that she should be taught to read and write, an unheard-of accomplishment for a girl in India. She, however, was in raptures, and in a few weeks developed a wonderful memory and capacity ; and it was then, that our acquaintance ripened into



intimacy. The treasures of knowledge, which she acquired daily from her teacher, could not be communicated to her former companions, for in them she found no sympathy, but to me she delighted in her newly acquired boldness to read over the lesson of the day, to repeat what she had committed to heart, to ask wild questions; and I soon became aware, that there was a soul in that tiny body, that nature had endowed that fairy form with a wonderful precociousness of intellect: in mind, as well as body, she differed from those, among whom she had, as it were, been dropped from the skies.

My attention once roused, a deep interest now surrounded her. Who has ever had the task of instructing a beautiful and intelligent child without feeling a deepness and purity of love insensibly spring up in the bosom? As she sat on the ground day by day at my feet, busily reading, or listening with those deep eyes fixed upon me, with a trust and belief, that knew no bounds, her gentle hand supporting her chin, as she sobered down her gay spirits to thought and contemplation, or separated the long locks which had fallen across her eyes, all the love, which of old I had borne to the little fairies of my home and my youth, which had lain stagnant in my bosom during ten years of solitary exile, burst out, and was concentrated in her. When alone, we soon learn to love, if a fit object can be found; but she seemed like one of the spirits, that I had dreamt of, or read of credulously in the wildest of poets. As I saw her sometimes sitting by the edge of the fountain, thoughtfully looking into the water, and remembered her unexpected appearance in this world, I began to think, that she was indeed one of the Naiads,

although no sandal imprisoned her tiny foot, and no fillet looped up her shining tresses.

As her ripening intellect enabled her to comprehend, I led her gentle spirit to the contemplation of Religion. I felt, that I had a sacred deposit intrusted to my charge. Here was no rude struggle with Sin, no attempt to drive out, trench by trench, the world from a hardened heart. Her guileless soul took in and comprehended the Divine truths, as I with unpractised tongue tried to convey them. I felt my own unworthiness, my own unfitness to be the instructor and guide of so pure a disposition.

I had named her Miriam, from her resemblance to the picture of that most blessed among women, which Murillo has left us to gaze on with wonder, though not adoration; and Miriam had now become to me the companion of my solitude, and a very necessary part of my happiness. To me she read her Bible; under my guidance she increased her worldly knowledge. She was still the same wild, all but unearthly thing, with light step and uncontrolled spirits, the darling not only of the white master, but of every one of the dark attendants, and of all, with whom she came in contact.

Thus seven quiet years from the day, that I had first known her glided away, and my little girl had budded into a beautiful woman, for at the age of twelve, under the precocious heat of an Oriental sun, development is more rapid than in the tardy West; and willingly would I have bade the dial return, and restore her to me as a child, on whom I could, without reproach, centre my affections; but I now daily felt the responsibility of my charge. The fate of my beautiful, and now Christian child was in my hands, and depended

on my judgment; and to permit one so beautiful to live unprotected under her humble roof, and to run unrestrained about my garden, and in my society, was not unattended by danger to her future happiness, and, in a censorious world, to her good name; and I was arranging to forward her to the charge of the wife of a Missionary some hundred miles off, there to be regularly introduced into the Christian Church, and to be brought up and settled in such comfort, as belonged to the adopted child of my affection. I was steeling my heart to the moment, when this communication was to be made to her, for I could not but believe, that she loved me as a father; and I knew, that her sinless and guiltless heart would not see the imperative necessity of our separation. Conscious of the integrity of my conduct, and the sternness of the duty, I had reconciled myself to the deprivation of my greatest earthly comfort: and my plans were all but matured, when it pleased Providence to ordain otherwise, and to bring to me, and my child, a more eternal separation.

It was in the middle of June, the season of the year the most intensely hot and oppressing, and my arrangements were made to despatch her to her new home, when one evening I missed her from her usual seat in the garden, but thought nothing of it, ascribing it to the weather. In the middle of the next day I was informed, that she had an attack of fever, and was dangerously ill. Illness to her was an entire stranger, and alarmed me the more; and without further delay I hurried down the path, which led to the humble roof, which she still continued to occupy. During our long acquaintance it had so happened, that I never had

crossed her threshold till this moment; and it was under one of the humble Indian roofs of mud, scarcely high enough for me to stand upright, dark though clean, that I found my sweet Miriam lying on one of the rude pallets of the country. It then flashed upon me, how little, while dwelling on her intellectual improvement, I had thought of her temporary comforts; but, such as it was, it had to her the charms of home. There she lay, exhausted by fever, her eyes closed, her long hair falling on her pillow, and one tiny hand hanging over the side. I knelt down, for under that humble roof there were no seats, and took the little hand in mine, and by the fierce heat and the rapid pulsation became aware of the seriousness of the attack. Perhaps there was something electric in my touch, for she opened her languid eyes, and a sweet smile passed across her features; and making signs to those around her to raise her up, she put forward her hot, parched lips to meet mine, as with tears in my eyes I leant over her. The exertion was too much, for she fell back, holding my hand, in which she buried her soft burning cheek, and closed her eyes again with a smile on her lips, as if she were then happy.

I felt from the first, that there was no hope; that her delicate frame could not resist the dread evil, which had seized her; and as I bowed my head, a scalding tear fell upon her hand. She opened her eyes, and began to speak faintly, asking me whether she was really dying. "My sweetest Miriam," said I, "it is in the hand of God: you have learnt to trust in Him, and He will not desert you." She raised herself gently up, and leaning in my arms, clinging to me, exclaimed,

“But why should I die? Please do not let me go: keep me with you: you are all powerful: all obey your orders: I am *still so little, so young*: I was so happy: the world seemed so bright to me: you were so kind to me: all were so kind to me: what harm have I done? Why should I die, and leave you? I cannot and will *not* leave you.” She was pleading with me as for her life; her voice was now choked by sobbings; and she threw herself into my arms, hiding her head in my bosom, and I felt her little heart beating rapidly against mine. I tried to soothe her, and reminded her of what I had taught her in the Bible; how Jesus Christ would take her to heaven, how much better it was for her to leave the earth as a child, for to them heaven was promised. “Is it?” she exclaimed. “Oh! do tell me about that: but I should wish so much to live to hear more about Christ. You told me that you had much more to teach me. I must not, I cannot go yet.” Laying her gently back on her bed, I opened her little Hindustáni Testament, and read to her slowly, “Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.” A sweet smile crossed her lips, and she again pillowed her head in my hand, as if she was now resigned to death, and I thought that the end was not far distant; and I prayed gently, but distinctly, the little prayers, which I had taught her, and sometimes her lips seemed to try to form themselves to pronounce the words, but the deadly dryness prevented the utterance.

Thus an hour went by, as she dozed gently, and I even began to hope, that my prayers had been heard,

and that the crisis might be passed. I looked round the poor chamber, in which this sweet girl had been brought up: bare mud walls with scarcely an article of furniture beyond the two pallets, on which she and her grandmother slept, but in one niche I saw her secret hoard of treasures, and with tearful eyes I recognised all the little presents, which in days gone by, before she was valued as I now valued her, I had thoughtlessly given her. Everything was there stored up. On the little dark arm, which languidly fell on the white sheet, I recognised a small piece of ribbon, a mark of a book, which in a moment of playfulness I had two years ago tied round her arm, and which she had never allowed to be removed. All spoke of a love exceeding that of a daughter. She had given away a heart, ere she was conscious of possessing one, to the white stranger, who was unworthy of the priceless gift. In thought I hastily glanced over the whole period of time, since I had first seen her in her gambols: nor could I accuse myself of having striven in idle pride to gain her simple heart; nor had such a possibility ever suggested itself to my mind, preoccupied by other ties and other notions: but to her I had been Teacher, Protector, and Benefactor, and in return for little kindnesses she had given the one great gift of all a heart can bestow.

As the evening drew on, the door of the dark chamber with a sudden gust blew open; a gleam of sunshine streamed in, and played in glorious waves on the wall; a joyful chorus of singing birds floated into the dead silence; all Nature seemed as reviving from the exhausting heat of the day; the dying girl raised

her head, for it was the hour, when she had been in the habit of sallying out for her evening lesson under the pípal tree, and her sports down the green alleys. She passed her hand faintly across her forehead, as if she hardly knew what had happened, but seeing me kneeling by her side, all came back to her. She knew that she was dying : that bitterness was past, but her last thought in this world was purely womanly : it was not for herself. She had forgotten the grief of leaving the sweet and dear things of the earth so soon : she seemed in modest pride to know her own worth at last : all her thoughts were centred on the object of her guileless love, and her feelings for his bereavement. " Oh ! what," she exclaimed, " will *you* do without your own Miriam ? Who will read to you the Bible, and learn her lessons for you under the pípal ? Who will, when I am dead, look after your flowers ? Who——who will——." She could not express the words, but love, unutterable love, was written in her eyes : and, raising herself up, she threw both arms round my neck, placed her lips to mine, and in the exertion she breathed forth her gentle spirit and expired.

I laid her lifeless body down, and turned my face to the wall : all was over now. There are moments of such agony in this life (by the mercy of God they come but seldom), when the world seems one wide blank, when the wave of affliction bears down, sweeping away all the ramparts of pride and resolution, and overthrowing all but the rock of God's Providence to those who trust in Him. This now swept over me, engulfing everything fair, everything that was lovely, everything that was desirable here below. One such wave

had passed over me before, on the day that I left my father's home and began life among strangers. My tears had now ceased: that is an early stage of grief. I had passed it. I felt like a martyr being led to the stake whose bitterness of death was already gone by. It was time for acting also. As I looked on the slender body of my darling before me, I trembled at the thought of the jackal in that unprotected spot during the night, and shuddered at the idea of the funeral pile, which the old Hindu woman might perhaps have suggested. I seemed to recover a strange calmness, and ordered my servants to dig a deep grave beneath the pípál tree; and placing a rosebud between her tiny fingers, I kissed the cold cheeks of my lost child, and directed that her body should be at once sewn up in the sheet which surrounded her. One long lock of hair I cut off from her luxuriant tresses, and, with her little Testament, placed it in my bosom. The news had now spread, and my servants were all assembled in deep grief at the loss of their favourite; and I looked on, in sullen calmness, till it was announced that the grave was ready; but no one would raise the poor remains. Of those ignorant, all but soulless clowns, notwithstanding their respect for me and love for her, none would raise her from her last couch. Indignation roused me, crushed as I was, from my lethargy, and lifting the light weight of her stiffened body from the bed, I carried her in at the garden gate, that gate which she had so often passed in gladness. One little black foot peeped out through the shroud; her little elbow knocked against my heart, as I bore her in my arms. No useless coffin enclosed her; no useless prayers were said over her. Prayers are for



the living ; the dead ask them not. I laid her gently down, and placed all her playthings by her ; the earth was filled in and levelled, and the last that I remember of the scene was, that I charged the gardener to take care, that naught disturbed the rest of the departed.

What happened afterwards I know not. I remember turning homewards ; but from that moment consciousness left me, and it was not till weeks had elapsed, that I became aware of what was going on round me. I found that I had been brought to death's door from a severe attack of fever in the evening of the events above narrated ; that another officer had been sent to discharge my duties, and had nursed me ; that to his care I was indebted for my life. I almost regretted, that it had been spared ; so blank did the future appear ; but a longer pilgrimage awaited me.

I scarcely clearly recollected what had happened, till my eye fell on the Testament and the black lock of hair ; then all the sad details came heavily back. As soon as I had strength I walked alone to my favourite seat. The grass had grown during the rains, and there was scarcely a sign of the grave, but I was assured, that a faithful watch had been kept. I sat down to try to compose myself to the loss, and I saw before me the very spot of open ground, where the little girl had at first attracted my attention seven years before.

There was the same humming of insects, the same busy sound in the trees, the same incense breathing in the air : the flowers were blooming with redoubled brightness, and earth had recovered her verdure from the rich blessings of rain, but there was *no* Miriam glancing down the shining pathway, or bounding to-

wards me with a grateful offering along the shady alley, like some Indian Flora, the genius of my retreat, with eyes sparkling as the fountain, which splashed her naked feet, as gay, as fantastic as the butterfly, whose flight she was chasing, as musical as the bird, who cheerily answered to her calling : no gentle pupil seated at my feet with upturned eyes, and talking thoughtfully of heaven, to which, rather than earth, she seemed to belong. Thither she has returned : they reckon not by years and months where she is gone. From much inevitable grief has she been saved ; nor was her mission to me in vain.

Soon after I returned to England. Many years have passed by since, and Providence has heaped unmerited blessings on my head. Among the friends of my youth I found a companion for my age, and loving hearts are gathering round me. Yet those scenes have never been forgotten. Often have my children, seated on my knees, listened with glistening eyes to the story of poor little Miriam ; and the memory of their father to his latest hour will turn to that solitary grave, where the remains of the Indian girl moulder under the shade of the wide-spreading pipal.

BANDA, 1854.

## CHAPTER VI.

*THE INDIAN VILLAGE.*

HAVE you ever spent a day in a native village, a long day among the people, not shut up in the curtains of your tent nor hemmed in by your menials, but under the hospitable roof of the landowner, or in the porch of the Dharamsála, while the simple crowd gather round you unfearing and unrestrained? I have spent many, having early learnt to sympathise with the people, whose destinies we govern, to make allowance for their shortcomings, to enter into their woes and listen to their wrongs, to feel an interest in their simple annals, and pity their degraded ignorance. Some power may thus have been acquired of arousing their sluggish faculties and touching the cord of sympathy: in some such moment (but then only) will the ice of reserve be broken through, and an electric chain of intelligence be established between the subject and the Ruler.

Walk through the dirty and ill-kept streets; look not for the traces of simple yet genuine comfort, which marks the cottages of England, nor for the garnered stores of the English yeoman. Banish from your thoughts the fond vision of Oriental life, which finds currency in Europe; contemplate the village and the

people, as they are ; yet amidst their squalidness and poverty deem not rashly, that happiness is not to be found beneath those mud walls, and that contentment is unknown in that simple homestead. Feel for them and with them ; fancy for a while, that you had been bred up from a child within these narrow limits, that your ideas of the world had been formed from the view here presented, that your notion of wealth had been circumscribed to some such simple habitation, and that by you *that* state only was considered poverty, where the daily loaf was denied ; and how many a care for superabundances or fancied want might you thus have escaped, thanking Providence for the small but sufficient store, that the last harvest had left you, careless and dependent on destiny for the future !

Look around you : flags flying from the trees to commemorate the sanctity of some spot, which none can properly describe, or mark the tomb of some saint, the era of whose existence is unknown ; shops filled with sweetmeats and swarming with flies, and little boys gaping as wistfully on, as if were there spread the most exquisite luxuries of the West ; the grains and fruits of the country ranged in tempting rows and doled out to the purchaser with a deceitful balance ; hard by bales of rough homespun cloth heaped up promiscuously with the many-tinted products of European looms ; high blank-walled houses, in which Fancy might picture the imprisoned beauties of the East, but if we look in at the entrance we see them, like their Western sisters, employed in the endless round of domestic duties : some seated in pairs and grinding at the mill ; some cleaning cotton ; some singing to the whirring wheel ;

some fondling their new-born infant with the universal tenderness of mothers ; some, but not all, for in that distant corner, refusing to be comforted, sits one, like Rachel, weeping for her bereavement, and we are told that the little sick child, which was held up to look at us, as we entered in this morning, has just breathed out its tiny atom of life, and the young mother is in the newness of her affliction : perhaps happier for it thus early to have shaken off the earthly coil, to have escaped from the thankless office of suckling another generation of serfs, to have gone prematurely to that bourn, where at least there are no daily pitchers to be filled at the well, no mill to be unceasingly grinding. As we pass on, communities of dogs, whose habitations and profession are the streets, bay at us, but we mind them not, for they are not more savage than the men amongst whom they inhabit, not more ignorant than the masters, whose crumbs they pick up.

But our steps are arrested where, under a vast spreading immemorial tree, stands unblushingly forth the place of idolatrous worship, and the priest from the threshold salutes us, as in scorn. What true Christian does not feel at such moments very jealous for his Lord ? Who does not then wish for the fire - compelling hand of Elijah ? We wonder when the term of this iniquity will cease ; when the cup of vengeance of the Most High will run over ; but still a thousand years in His sight are but as one day, and this is but the evening of the second morn of Christianity.

Come away from such soul-depressing, such degraded sights ; come beyond the village walls ; come away and sit with me on this rising ground, and look out on the

sweet charms of Nature undefiled. Our village friends range themselves silently round, while the eager eye wanders over the varied landscape, now tracing the course of the stream dotted with islands, as it meanders through the rich fields, fields partly browned with the exhausted harvest of the autumn, green, richly green with the promises of the spring, and now dwelling in fancy in some distant hamlet nestled in the declivity of yonder hills. The sun is sinking down in the fulness of Oriental majesty: what are the splendours of earthly courts compared to this daily Durbar? A glorious flood of gold is illuminating every object, and tinting every feature of inanimate Nature, gladdening every human heart, while the moon rises slowly from behind the verdure of the grove. What a bright contrast of colours! What an unrivalled harmony of tints from the brush of the Creator! What earthly painter would daringly blend on one canvas the blue of the heavens, the fleecy grey of the clouds, the yellow ambrosial tint of the atmosphere, the dark shades of the mountains, to which distance has leut a strange enchantment of beautiful outline, the silvery sheen of the moon, and the blood-red of the exhausted sun, as it sinks into the bed of the Ocean in that direction, towards which my heart unceasingly turns, the land of the West, whither are wafted my morning sigh and my evening prayer?

But see the cattle are wending homewards, some drawing with languid neck the inverted ploughshare, some bearing spontaneously home their full udders for the support and pleasure of ungrateful man. They reach the stream: the shadow of the leader tinges the glassy surface, as she stoops to drink, and now the whole

herd stands in mid-water in beautiful disorder. Oh for the rare pencil of a Cuyt to paint that bright scene, those trees standing out with every leaf so clear against the horizon, those figures of cattle and men standing in the stream, which winds itself on, till it is lost in the distance!

Turn the eye to yonder sequestered nook, where smoke is rising up, and a melancholy group are gathered round the flames, which consume the remains of some revered relative, some beloved companion. Ancient time-honoured custom, how much does thy prudence shame the vanity of those, who, foolishly wise, have stored up their dead in cements, to be unfolded many centuries afterwards, as a wonder and a show to a curious posterity! No vengeance can now be wreaked on that poor senseless frame, no indignity offered by beast or man! Sleep on quietly, for the meaner worm is deprived of its prey on thy carcass: the jackal cannot fish thy body out of its narrow tomb: the more cruel-hearted sexton cannot ruthlessly dig out and expose your poor bones in after ages, nor will a more cold-hearted savant edify an enlightened audience with his notions as to your physical structure or defects.

Scarce have the flames subsided, the mourners are still purifying themselves in the lustral waters, when the sound of wild music announces the arrival of a bride at the village of the bridegroom. So strangely blended are joy and grief; the tide of life will stop for none; and the anniversary of grief and bereavement to one is hailed by a neighbour as the era of the commencement of his domestic joy. Gaily moves on the bridal procession: the boy-bridegroom on horseback careering

on this his day of jubilee : behind, the covered car that encloses the concealed charms of the child-bride, whose black eyes peep out from under the drapery to stare at the European stranger. The singers and cymbal-beaters go before : behind them follow the relatives of the bride : and see from the village precincts issue forth a goodly band to welcome the arrivers. Money is scattered to the crowd, and in gladness and pomp the procession moves on, while behind totters an old greybeard, leaning on his staff, and calling up in his confused recollections former rejoicings and forgotten nuptials of those long since departed.

See the long string of camels toiling in, bearing rich burdens, but no longer from the looms of Kathay and Bokhára ; no more the muslins of Dakka, or the wools of Kashmír, for the stranger has shown the way to new wants, and has introduced new manufactures : guided by the ruthless policy of selfish commerce, he has crushed the productive power of the country, and in the nursery of manufactures and the garden of cotton, clothes the Indian girl with stuffs grown in New Orleans and woven at Manchester. Forgive the offence of thy blind Rulers, timely-wise Subject ! Thank Providence, that you have been spared the ills of over-productiveness, and the curse of a too facile manual dexterity ! Your cup of bitterness has not been steeped with the falsely sweet sugar : you are not hungry and naked, because your fields teem with ricé and with cotton : for you the lash is busy on the swamps of New Orleans, and slaves are groaning to keep you warm : for you children are condemned to premature and crippled old age, girls do the work of men, and lose



the gentleness of their sex in the villages of Lancashire : fast flies the shuttle for you ; for you iron is poured out like water, for you vessels puff o'er the Ocean. Wind your turban, Indian youth, gaily round a brow, which has not sweated for its burden : tighten your girdle proudly, for that back has not bled with the lash. Shroud your sable beauties, gentle damsels, in your mantle, for the lives of your country-women have not been embittered to weave that tissue, the morals of your daughters have not been contaminated to wind that warp : so you by a bountiful dispensation taste the honey, which others have fabricated, you wear the fleece which other flocks have borne.

Ever and anon the scene is changed ; and the road is now covered with an array of carts bringing in the abundant harvest : the large rich ears are concealed from the sight by the broad leaf of the Indian corn, in which they are bound : follows after the glad husbandman, rejoicing in the success of his labours and vaunting of his field, but forgetting that Hand, which watched over the grain, while it vegetated in the soil, which shed the evening dew, vouchsafed in due season the early and second rains, while the tender herb sprung up, and brought forth fruit an hundred-fold. The labour of the field is over, but by the morning he will be gathered with his fellows under those trees, where even now we can distinguish the busy husbandman, where he stands with the fan in his hand on the threshing-floor : upwards flies the chaff, but the grain is gathered into the garner, while the bullocks are unmuzzled working their eternal round, treading out with unconscious feet the abundant grain. Hard by, the sheep and goats are winding up

the declivity on their return from the pasture: mark how they answer to the watchful bark of the dog and the cry of the shepherd, as he divides them to his right and left, while he tenderly carries the new-born lamb in his arms. Hark to the musical cry of the gardener, accompanied at intervals by the splash of water, and bestow some sympathy on those poor oxen, who, like Sisyphus, have from morn to dewy eve been drawing up that weight, which after discharging its contents rolls back, causing them, poor beasts! endless labour, but blessing the soil with abundance and increase.

Watch the bright stream purling down the channel, then gushing forth, and overspreading the soil, which, exhausted by meridional heat, licks up greedily the refreshing saturation. How all these little details carry me back to my boyish days, to Arcadian Eclogues, to Virgilian strains, so well known and remembered in Eton's classic bowers! How I appreciate now what in England's moist climate I little understood, why the channels of the fields were to be closed, when the meadows had drank enough, what meant the warnings to the boys to escape from the venomous snake, and the injunction to lay aside the garments while the husbandman urges the sluggish oxen with the plough along the furrow, or scatters the seed broadcast over the fallow! Do not the soft cadences of Horatian Odes come back, while the busy thoughts fly hence to the undulating Sabine Hills and the blue Mediterranean?

But touched by the incident, do not those thoughts fleet back to even more distant days? Do I not insensibly glide from my classical lore, from the arena of boyish triumphs, to an earlier home, where at

the feet of my mother I formed my first rude idea on Oriental subjects, where from those loved lips I drank in the sweet incidents of Scripture-story? Does not the inmost chords of the heart vibrate, as if struck by a well-known hand? Does it not come back to me sweetly, even as the melody, which in former days I have heard? Do I not bless those lips, which now, alas! have no language, but are cold in death, whence I first heard the story of the oxen of Gideon, of the threshing-floor of Araunah? Who first told me of Him, who planted the vineyard and came to gather the fruits in due season? From whom did my opening intellect learn the parable of the bridegroom, of the sower, of the sheep and the goats, of the wheat, which will be gathered into the garner, of the chaff, which will be burnt by a just and terrible Judge in unquenchable fire?

But the shadows of the evening are now closing: the last travellers of the day are hurrying in: oxen with jingling sound coming in with loads of sugar from the South to give in exchange for salt from the North. So strangely, yet wisely, has Nature distributed her vegetable and mineral treasures! The herds of the village have long ere this found their way back unbidden to their stalls: passes in at this late hour a group of pilgrims returning from some shrine; some needy mendicant, or bold-faced Fakír, fattening on the superstition and ignorance of his countrymen; or some poor widow on her road to the Ganges, with all that remained of the ashes of her lord from the funeral pyre tied up in the corner of her mantle, but which she, urged by strong faith and duty, has wandered many a

mile to scatter in the sacred stream. Now the sun sinks, and has departed to the land of the West: now the fleecy clouds are barred with gold: every varied colour, every tint of green, every object, far and near, is distinguished. How the heart softens and yearns homeward at sunset! How wistfully I look at the clouds, free to go whither they will! With how many a message would I charge them! How I bless the hour and the clime, where to me in bygone years the sound of the Ave Maria bell has so sweetly tolled the dirge of the day! Let me look again ere the scene fades away, for shortlived are the Indian twilights: let me catch the last glimpse, as if my dearest friend, and not the day, were dying, as if the drops of dew now falling were tears for his loss: let me gaze my last on the now dimly shadowed-out mountains, on the fields, where now all is silent and still, on the stream, where the white stork now stands alone, on the lines of long-necked cranes passing on high. Where do they go? by what marshy pool, on what sedgy bank, do they seek their resting-place?

And now that the night has fallen, a cheerful flame has sprung up, against which the figures of the villagers stand out in bold relief, presenting such a contrast of light and shade, as would be worthy of the brush of Rembrandt: in the background the houses and draped figures of women occasionally glance out, and then, as the uncertain flame falls lower, they vanish. I join the circle: room is made willingly for me: I gaze round on the bright faces; and, as I stretch out my hands to the flames, and my eyes are instinctively directed up to the starry vault, and linger with Arcturus and

Pleiades, how my simple companions silently watch me: but little do they know how, as my eyes glanced up, your home-yearning thoughts were borne far away, as the recollection came back to me, how often in a distant country I had measured the hours of the night by the declination of the Wain.

Hard by, on the stone-raised seat at the gate under the spreading pípál tree, are gathered the old men of the village; the greybeards are croning about old days, or plodding through the intricacies of some petty quarrel; round them in noisy groups are congregated the young men and children, in like manner as years ago *they* stood at the feet of their long-departed forefathers. Here is told the strange tale of magic, or the local legends of the Rakshasa and Giants to listening and believing ears; here the merry laugh follows the last strange account of the manners and doings of the white stranger, whom they fear so much, but of whom they know so little; here the wildest story of the barber, or the childish fable of the priest, are received in as truth itself, with such conviction as no future reason can shake; here is fashioned the tone of the public mind, and the deep-rooted ideas of the people. Now the group is joined by some light-hearted traveller singing blithely; no fear has he of robbers or a strange country, for in his girdle is nothing. Many a league has he traversed, depending, and not in vain, on that hospitality which prevails all over India, the cup of water, the cake baked on the hearth, and the corner in the shed to lie down. Grateful for such favours, in return he charms the long-lived night with tales of distant climes, of facts blended with fiction, perils by land, perils by

water, of temples and shrines long heard of, now at last visited. Fanciful and varied is his tale; he gives perhaps rumours of wars and description of battle and armies, for the sword is never sheathed in India.

Fired by the sound, speaks up one of a party, which had hitherto sat silent and sequestered from the rest, whose military bearing and haughty carriage speak them to be the Sepoys of the Foreign Ruler. Returning are they from their leave of absence. After a seven years' service they have revisited their native village, their parents, and their little ones; but the quiet life ill suited them, and they now, not unwillingly, reseek the Fortress or the Cantonment. Who can talk of war in their presence and not rouse their martial ardour? Out they speak, and tell of sieges and fights in far Kábul, and on the plains of the Panjáb, how they have seen the banner of their Legion triumphant in many a hard day, of the guns which they had taken, of what their captains said and did on the day of action. <Credulously the gaping crowd listen to such tales supported by wounds, which are proudly shown, and medals, which are vauntingly handed round.> The speakers are those that have seen service, but with them are lads ready to enlist, sprung of a race of soldiers; nor is the present sufficient, for past history is also indented upon, and justly so, for one of the party has but a few days ago left an old greyhaired father, who is calmly reposing after his toils in his native village, under his mango-tree, upon the bounty of a paternal Government. He, in acknowledgment, has sent his whole race under the banners, which he himself had followed ever to victory over the waters of the Ocean, to Egypt, to Java, and the

Mauritius, and in many a wild Marátha battle under Lake, and Wellington, those selfsame banners, which his sons had seen waving at Ghazní, bearing which they had opposed numbers with discipline under Napier at Miáni, and supported gallant Gough in his mishaps at Chilliánwala and his crowning triumph at Gujerát. Vain after such boasting are the weak remarks of some worshipper of the past, some mourner of the fallen dynasties; vain is the account of the armies and the splendour of Aurungzéb and the Moghal, for they have passed away like a dream, and are *not*.

Thus pass the hours of the night, till one by one the company steal off to their couches, and the busy hive is at rest. The traveller sleeps by the side of his horse, or his tethered oxen. All is still, save where the barking of the dogs or the yelling of the jackal break upon the ear, rendering the silence which follows more profound. Soundly they sleep, careless and thoughtless for the future; sufficient for them that they have lived the day. No feelings of patriotism, no high notions of liberty, no thoughts that ennoble, no cares that waste away, find entrance to their bosoms. Thus let them sleep; and, as I slowly and pensively return to my tent, wondering thoughts suggest themselves why the Almighty has placed this vast kingdom in our hands, for what good purpose has He elevated our race in power and in reasoning above these our fellow-creatures, by what means will the dark cloud be raised up that now shrouds the intellect and conscience of the Indians.

## CHAPTER VII.

*THE INDIAN GALLOWS-TREE.*

THE fatal morning had dawned, and I had to hurry to the spot where the ceremony, so painfully familiar to all in India, was to be performed. It was the first occasion, on which the odious duty had been forced on me; and, though years have since passed, the scene comes back as yesterday: the sloping ground, the bright morning sun, the crowds of women and children, and presently a long line of officials advancing from the neighbouring gaol, while low murmurs amidst the assemblage proclaimed, that the unfortunate victim had walked with undaunted mien to the foot of the gallows.

He had scarcely numbered twenty summers, and was sprung of an ancient race, so ancient, that even in the nineteenth century the common voice of the people acknowledged the Sun, the glorious orb of heaven, to be his lineal ancestor! He had the misfortune of being linked, while yet a child, to a beautiful wife, and, rightly or wrongly, believing himself to be betrayed, in the madness of passion he had cut off her head, and, with the corpse before him, sat down in his house calmly to await his capture. All reasoning with him was vain: his savage notions of what was honourable, and decent,



and right, had triumphed: he had avenged his dishonour, and was ready to die. Alas! thought I, when I first saw him, that such high determination, such unshaken constancy, should be lost on a cause so unworthy! I had almost pitied him, till my eye fell on the ghastly body of his victim: there lay the headless trunk, and by it the head still beautiful, as painters would love to draw it, with the placid calmness, which ever follows death from the cold steel, the crisp black locks braided about the smooth forehead, and a gentle seductive smile on the rigid lips and half-opened mouth, speaking how true a daughter of Eve she had been, how well called Woman, as entailing woe on man.

And now I saw him once more, for on me had fallen the duty of carrying out the extreme sentence of the law, the justice of which not even the criminal could deny. There were no yells, no expression of feeling from the crowd, but eager eyes were watching his every movement. Some had climbed into trees, and carts with women had stopped on the road as for a show. There was no sympathy for or against him. The men might have been imagined to be on his side, as partaking his views of the necessity of the crime, which he had committed; but some feeling on the part of the women against him might have been expected; but there was none. So calm, and so contemptuously did he look round and proudly smile on us, even as the fatal word was being spoken, that I almost felt, that I, and not he, was to suffer. Oh! what is he thinking of? Can it be, that I am an instrument in the hand of fate, and am unwittingly punishing by an ignominious death one, who is innocent, and supported by some internal

comfort, of which I am ignorant? Will it be, that future ages will look back to the death of that poor youth, as the era of a new faith, and brand my name as his murderer; for little indeed did the Roman Prætor, whose name is now cursed by every Christian, know what he was doing, when he ordered the Man of Galilee to be crucified.

Every object seemed to my eyes wonderfully distinct: my ears seemed to have a supernatural power of hearing. The elevated spot, where I stood, commanded the busy city and the crowded highway. I watched the labourers sawing wood, the cattle moving out to the meadows to graze, each person performing the routine of his dull hard life, not thinking, or caring, that a soul, laden with the frightful burden of its own sins, was about to start on its last sad journey.

But what sees he, the ill-starred murderer? The last few minutes have cleared away the film of his vision: his senses have recovered from the shock of the late events, and at the last have acquired a wondrous acuteness. Memory brings before him a vision of his youth and his childhood. He sees his own cottage in the paternal village on the skirts of the primeval forest, girdled by the well-known features of river and mountain. He sees the fields, in which he and his father have played as merry boys; the old stone seats, on which he and his contemporaries have sat on the knees of men in days, that can never return. He recognises the marsh, where he has whooped the bittern; the copse, where he has felled the giants of the forest; the lair, where he has roused the partridge, or tracked the barking jackal. He hears the cries of the herdsman, and the

voices of the women in the field, and the chorus of the birds in the pípá trees; and ever and anon he marks his own figure in the familiar landscape, year by year expanding from the naked urchin to the stalwart lad: *but ever by his side*, as the child, the boy, and the man, is she, the little playfellow, the little sister, the little wife, the partner of his very existence, without whom life had had no reality, whom he had known from his earliest years,\* to whom he had been wedded in his childhood. Oft had Aurora looked into their faces and tanned their brown cheeks, as they climbed the mountains: oft had the setting sun found him with her under the spreading mango-tree, what time the herds returned lowing from the pasture: oft to meet her had he breasted the sacred stream on the neck of the buffalo, and oft had he helped her to fill her pitcher at the well, her champion, her adviser, and her helpmate! Who talks of the slender thread woven in manhood by the fickle passion of the moment, of two persons yoked together for life on the acquaintance of a few days, at the time, too, when discrimination is weakest, and the passions have the greatest sway? He had looked on *her*, as the wife ordained for him, as much as were his parents, and he would as soon have thought of changing one as the other. Thus gladly, thus innocently, began their life together. Little had they of worldly property, little of sentiment, nothing of love; yet they belonged to each other, and were content, until the demon of jealousy crept in. He had but little, but she was *that all*: it was the only possession which Nature had granted him. He believed

\* In the mountainous Districts, and Villages generally, the Women in their childhood have much greater liberty than is allowed in towns.

that she had betrayed him, and he—slew her; for well has the preacher said, “Jealousy is the rage of a man, therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.”

But his bright eye changes: the cloud drifts away: he sees around him the gaping crowd; he hears rude voices; he finds himself the object of a strange interest. All eyes were glaring upon him: vile hands touch him, but he scarcely notices it; for in the crowd he singles out one group, he recognises his aged white-haired father, and that trembling shrouded figure in the white mantle: oh! spare him! why came she there? it is his mother! After the manner of Indian women she has concealed her face: is it in mercy to him, or is it that like the Grecian parent she cannot bear to look on the sacrifice of her child in that deep agony, which sculptors cannot portray, and which no pen can delineate?

But the fatal word was spoken, and with a loud clap the platform falls. I heard it, but dared not look. My eyes were insensibly fixed on the ground, for what human heart can take pleasure in beholding the life struggle of a fellow-creature? Still every eye in the crowd appeared to be strained to drink in the spectacle. Gentle women gazed on the poor body as it struggled, on the wretched bosom as it heaved to and fro, while drops of perspiration poured down in the throes of extinction. I tried to close my eyes, but I seemed to see on all sides of me; I felt a cold shiver and a strange sickness. So different is the moral and physical conformation of the European and the Asiatic; for, coupled with great gentleness, and great pity, there is

a wonderful recklessness of death among the people of India.

At length recovering my composure, I stood face to face with my victim. The sinewy frame, cast in a mould of iron, so lately warmed by hot blood and sustained by dauntless pride, now hung rigid and cold. The labours of the hangman had been brief: a rope had been pulled, and *nothing more*: but in that moment where had that proud spirit departed? At what judgment seat does it now stand trembling? Does it still with dauntless air, and resolute courage, face a greater than an earthly Judge, and bandy words with its Creator, pleading human customs in justification of a breach of divine laws? Or lone, friendless, without sympathising relations, shunned and shuddered at by spotless Angels and redeemed mortals, does it stand awestricken, roused to a sense of guilt, watching the balance, as laden with his sins it descends, and wishing, oh! in vain wishing, that it might recall the rash deed, and return to the life of poverty and the dishonoured home?

Yes! it was but a moment: the proud Rajpút eye quailed; the whole composure changed; there was a feeling of throttling, a passing agony, a desire to purchase one breath at the price of worlds. One moment, and the fleshy integuments were cast off: naught remains but the awful sin, and the curse primeval of Cain. He dares not look up to the Mighty Presence, or the throne of Jasper. Everything speaks of murder: the voice of conscience, so long slumbering, is roused and cries out: murder is written in the air, murder sounds in his ears, and is engraved in blood on those

hands, which are vainly raised up to screen his eyes from the radiance of ineffable glory.

In his life he had learnt little : no mother had leant over him in childhood to teach him the right way to soften his temper. He had been brought up even as the beasts of the forest, yet still the crime of murder had ever been condemned in the annals of the village : he had heard from the lips of the old men of the reprisals and miseries, which followed such outrages ; but pride, passion, and jealousy had overpowered him, and he fell.

And needs be, that he should perish : but why should such scenes as his punishment be enacted in the midst of our cities ? \* Why should our populations be hardened by the spectacle of death, and, while every avenue of pity is closed by familiarity with suffering, punishment become a common show ?

\* I rejoice to say that owing to remonstrances made by me at the time, supported by those of others, executions are now carried out within the prison walls.

BANDA, 1855.

## CHAPTER VIII.

*THE PARTING FOR INDIA.*

AND so my sister is to go to India! She has chosen for her mate one of those stern spirits, which were fashioned for rule and power, and therefore wisely placed *there*, where that capacity can be developed.

She is to go, and that soon: ere ever her old home has vanished, while it is still in all circumstances and persons complete, while her parents still claim her affection and sustaining hand, while the old house is still as it was, when she was a child, while the friendships of her youth are still strong, and naught has happened to dissever the charmed circle of her girlhood.

She is to go: it was written in her destiny. I had known what such Goings meant: I knew the full meaning of the words, separation and exile, letter by letter, not from the set phrases of kind friends, but from the early experience in youth, from the recurrence in manhood. My own heart was steeled and proof against the weakness, yet the contemplation of it in another, and one that I loved, opened old wounds, and with the interest of one who has suffered, I watched the sufferings of others.

At first no mention of the hated name was to be made: no black thoughts were allowed to tarnish the white roses of the bride: the darkness of to-morrow was not allowed to dim the brilliancy of to-day. But weeks and months crept on. Time will not be trifled with; and a tinge of bitterness poisoned the charmed chalice, and all felt, what none like to speak of, that *the blow was to fall.*

There were the last preparations to distract, the last round of letters to write and receive. How little do the warmhearted, yet thoughtless, correspondents think of the wounds which they inflict? how lightly they talk of the wrench which is to take place? how they seem to rejoice in dressing out in some new phrase the pang, which has ever been present before the waking and sleeping thoughts of the victim?

Next came the parting with those, who were never valued so much as when about to be lost, the acquaintances of every-day life, for whom one cared not much, but whom one cared still less to lose. There were the partings of civility, the partings of well-meant kindness; there was the last word to be said to the old servant, the last shake of the hand of the neighbour, who has been known from childhood. With an aching heart, but tearless eye, has all this to be gone through: a cheerfulness has to be maintained to keep up the spirits of those dearer, and nearer, for the struggle of the morrow.

Ah! that morrow; how well we know it! It is a morrow, that commences over night, for the feeling of the last "good-night," is even worse than the last "good-bye." The last kneeling at family prayers, the



last meeting in the family circle, the last assembly of all in the same room : here is the true agony of parting. On the morrow there is bustle, excitement, necessity for action, but at night there is the embrace repeated so often, oh ! so often, the last loving words to be said, the last look to be looked, the mutual forgivings (for who has not offended ?) to be interchanged, the night robbed of its sleep, the heavy dream worse than awakening, the too early arrival of dawn.

And now the fatal moment has arrived : she falls on her old father's neck, and sobs : her lips refuse to utter the word " Farewell," for in that fatal word, however we promise, and hope, and believe, we know *that there breathes despair*. Silent she receives her father's blessing : silent she embraces her mother. She believes, she hopes, that it is only a dreadful dream : she acts unconsciously, and she scarcely awakes from her trance, till the door has turned upon her. Her last look has been taken : she is gone. Oh ! what would she give for one other look of the old scene, one more embrace : but it is over : she is gone. Her home knows her no longer.

But her place will long be vacant. Before the eyes of her parents her figure will ever arise, sanctified by distance, and sweetened by Time. Faithful Memory will bring back to them the little trials, which had endeared her to them, the little habits, perhaps the little faults, of their lost darling. They will remember the beautiful infant, as it was first presented to their embrace in the nurse's arms : oh ! so long ago, that it had been forgotten ; but it now comes back with the distinctness of yesterday ; then the incidents of her

childhood. How many a long night has the Mother watched by the sick-bed of the sweet daughter, trembling at the idea of losing *for ever what she has now lost*, how the father has crept on tiptoe to catch one glimpse of the pale face, and share the cares and fears of his helpmate! Other scenes of joyousness and happiness, merry meetings at Christmas, merry welcomings of happy new years, come back to the recollection: but in all *she* was present. No picture of the nursery, the schoolroom, no family meeting has been void of her figure until now. Can that place ever be supplied? Can we go back over the years of the past, and unweave the thread, which bears her name, from the golden tissue of the history of a Family.

And she, poor girl! as she glides along the plains of France, or is tost on the waves of the Mediterranean, how often with bursting heart, and tearful eyes, will the fearful conviction of the truth of what seems a dream come over her in the novelty of her grief! How will the long hours at sea pass with her, with heart yearning for home and prayers, that she may live to return there, and *part no more—no more!* How often will the picture of the dear old home, the aged parents sighing for that form, which they may never see again, the vacant seat never to be filled up, come back to her, expanded by fancy, and hallowed by memory! How often, when she least expects, will the chord be struck and the heart reply! At the sound of some voice, the note of some song, when lonely, or in company, the light of other days will gleam in her eyes, her lips will move inarticulately, she will think fondly and lovingly of the old place at home, of the little window, where

the morning sun came peeping, of the alleys and garden paths, down which in childhood and girlhood she had flown, of the old sycamore, under the shadow of which she had so often sat, listening to the cawing of the rooks, and thinking of nothing so little as India. Ah! many the happy hours she has there spent, many the joke and the smile she has there given birth to, many the song she has sung *in days that can never return!* Often in her new home, amidst the luxuriant foliage of her Asiatic garden, will busy Memory bear her back to the less glorious but more familiar vegetation of her country, and amid the palm-trees of Bangál she will bless in recollection the good green wood of England, and, breathing a prayer (God grant that it may be not in vain) to see them again, own in tears of anguish that a thorn from home is more precious than the flowers of India.

And as months and years fly by, how strange a homesickness will come over her! How she will long for the sound of voices that are still! How in dreams she will revisit, free from shackles, the green fields of her home! If by chance she meet some one from the old country, how her heart will warm to him, though a stranger, and how much she will have to ask him! How pleasant *even to talk of home!* Oh! did you see my Parents? Oh! what would I give for the sight of those features once more, ere the grave close over me! How eagerly will she welcome the missives of love, brought thousands of miles, but still fragrant of Home, and speaking to her heart like voices from the departed! Yes, let her cherish them, blister them with her tears, gather them up as her most valued treasures; for while

many a fond kiss has left no trace on her cheek, and has been forgotten, many a loving word has entered her ears, and flown out again at the ivory gate to be remembered no longer, yet *these* will be always hers, to be pored over in secret, and pressed to the bosom, when the hand of the writer has long been cold, and the affectionate heart, which dictated the phrase, has long mouldered into dust. Let her cherish them, and in her loving replies cheer her aged parents, seated by the fireside dreaming, that *they once had a daughter*. Let her know, that a tenderness is thrown over all she said and did: terms of affection are coupled with her name: she had been forgiven if ever she erred: she has been blessed night and morning. Long, long as home exists, shall we miss her merry laugh: never more can our circle be complete, for *there will be one always absent*.

Wherever she may be, I do not think, that she can have forgotten all; for how we cling to England in a strange land! how in vain we seek to be comforted! how we prefer it in our mirth! how we weep over it in our sadness! how our heart's roots lie in the soil! We stretch out our hands to bless it from afar, and Memory adores it in distant lands away.

It is hers to crown other realms of love with blessing, to be the happy centre of another home, to be the worthy helpmate of one of Life's stern reapers, one who will haply leave some trace in the sands of Time, and better and nobler is this than to wear out a vegetable existence in some obscure retreat amid dull domestic cares.

Still ever and anon will come some token of her grief, though trodden down. Remembrance often will wake

her busy train, and the heart will beat in unison. Some thought will ever claim the tribute of a tear, for none are so desolate, to whom this blessing is denied. Perhaps new cares, new troubles, the solemn martyrdom of Maternity will arise: perhaps she will hear, that her old home has vanished like a dream, that her parents are no more; but baby lips will not laugh down the intense love of home, the water floods will not drown it, the tomb of loved ones will not bury it. She will try to communicate the same feelings to her little ones, talking to them of distant places, and interesting them in scenes, which dwell in her own memory unforgotten.

And even if she lived to return after years have flown by, and sharp necessity, and experience, have taught her, that the home of the wise is in themselves, that to the self-collected all countries furnish a resting-place, but if she return, how strange all things will then appear! how small will seem the dwelling-house, which was once the centre and limit of her world! what a change will she find in the little commonwealth of the village! The old men, whom she had known as a child, will have long been slumbering under the turf, and their graves will be shown her under the yew-tree: toddling children will have been transformed into stalwart yeomen and will scarcely confess to know her: some, perhaps those, whom her heart longed for most, will be *not*. Let her grieve, but let her confess that such is the order of mortality.

But perhaps she will not live to return. That one, so loved, and so regretted, may die in a strange country, amidst strangers, or perhaps alone in the roadside refuge,

no fond Mother to smooth her pillow, no fond heart on which her parting soul can rely, no sweet friend to soothe her anguish. Still in her last day, as she watches the rays of the setting sun, which will never rise again to her, her thoughts will turn to the land of the West. The heart knows its own bitterness.

Courage, Sister, be not cast down! Others have trod this path before you. Compose yourself in humble faith to meet your Saviour.

WINDSOR, 1856.

## CHAPTER IX.

*THE INDIAN RÁJA.*

HE was sitting at the window of his Palace surrounded by his rabble followers, as alone and unattended I rode under the archway and entered the enclosure. The sight was picturesque from the irregularities of the building, the bright colours of the dresses of the people, and the draperies suspended on the walls. A royal salute from two old guns, fired by some ragged Artillerymen, announced my arrival. A company of ill-dressed and undrilled sepoy presented arms, as I dismounted, and, ascending the stairs, came face to face with the Rája.

Every filthy habit, every abominable crime, had been his practice from his youth, not in secret, but openly and unblushingly. His attendants would scorn to act as he does, but do not question his right to do so, as one above law, and with a right to do so as a Rája, being incapable of crime. All, that disgraces and stigmatises others, renders him illustrious and distinguished among his countrymen.

Monstrous and bloated in bulk, hideous and disgusting in appearance, decked with earrings and necklaces like a dancing girl, and tricked out in silks and satins

like a popinjay, rising heavily from an old chair covered with silver, he bid me a rude welcome, and, as he spoke, a disgusting effluvia issued from his black teeth and red tongue, and a murmur of applause arose among his sycophantic followers, as if they had heard the voice of a god. As a simple Anglo-Saxon of the nineteenth century, I felt ashamed of being obliged by public duties to have such a host, and be in such company.

What is his lineage? Surely he is sprung of noble ancestors, and his family is of those, who have ruled India since the days of Alexander, who have entwined their names with the Bay and the Cypress of History, the memory of whose virtues or misfortunes has been enthroned in the hearts of the people: these thoughts might make me forgive his shortcomings, and mourn over a noble dynasty in its decadence. But No! none of these things: he is the offspring of a petty freebooter of a neighbouring district, a rapacious landlord, a dishonest farmer, of a most obscure family, and degraded social caste. Just when the great Empire of the Moghal was falling to pieces, his grandfather was thrown up like scum on the fermenting pool of Indian politics, then boiling over in the change of dynasties; and, as that mass was subsiding by the influence of a foreign agency, this scum congealed on the surface, and became a Rája to the disgust of the pure waters below, and to the contempt of all that was above.

What are his habits? The gifts of Fortune have neither taught him pity nor forbearance. He is still the freebooter in thought, still the assassin in heart; jealous of an impalpable substance called his own honour, regardless of that of others; grossly ignorant,



grovellingly superstitious, his mind is the only one thing grosser than his gross and disgusting body; without manners or power of conversation, without ideas or facility of speech, selfish, cruel, fickle, and cowardly; grasping at anything belonging to another, tenacious of even a dry stick belonging to himself; unconscious of good works, incapable of good or wise thoughts; a mass of uncompromising claims, and of arrogant and antiquated ideas; always in heart hostile to the great Power, at whose feet he is fawning, through whose undeserved bounty he protracts his unworthy existence; always listening with outstretched head to ill news from Kábul, drinking in with delight and chuckling the garbled tale of some discomfiture in Barma. No bitterer hater than your ghee-fed Rája, who talks of his white Masters in secret with contempt and opprobrium: no keener speculator on the possibility of change of dominion, forgetting in the folly of his heart, that a storm once raised would sweep away such poor rubbish as himself with the first puff, to make room for sterner spirits with some pretension to Manhood, if not Virtue.

Analyse that monstrous conglomerate: cut through the spangled robe and costly girdle: reduce the mass to its real elements, the pure silex of ignorance, the alumen of depravity, the stinking fæces of some antediluvian monster: not one grain of pure gold, of valour, or of worth.

Ask him about countries and kingdoms beyond his narrow limits, and he knows them not. To him in the nineteenth century the world is still a flat plain, supported by elephants, who again stand upon a tortoise:

the noble river, that flows under his terrace, to him is a Divinity. Follow his eyes to the heavens, and in the starry orb he sees nothing but a machine, by which his lying priests calculate his worthless horoscope. For him the pages of History have been written in vain. Ask him about justice, and he will tell you of the rights of his family; of religion, and he will point to the hideous Idol, at the feet of which he daily rubs his ill-favourèd head, and deposits lamps of oil; of wisdom, and he indicates the coarse and cunning Brahmins, who pander to his vices, and mutter incantations to his terror. The poor fool has said in his heart, that the people were made for his pleasure, to administer to his passions. The great social maxims, which in Europe are as elementary truth, are unknown: he knows not, that Power was not given to gratify lusts, but as a solemn trust, of which a stern account will one day be required; that the oxen do not wander in the hills, the fruit does not blush on the trees, the seed is not scattered in the furrow for him, and him alone: for in his solitary state he knows naught of books beyond the sounding lines, which are chanted to him in an unknown language: of society he knows naught but the flattery of his menials.

If fond of hunting, he will seat himself on a raised platform, where with a coward blow, free from all possibility of personal danger, he may slay a beast not more cruel, but at least more noble and intelligent than himself. Ready he is to take advantage of every subterfuge: utterly devoid of honour and truth, he will not hesitate to plunder the last grain of the peasant's harvest, while at the same time he is shirking the pay-

ment of the merchant's debt. Thus wears out the day with him, until some morning a rumour of a Mutiny or an Invasion reaches him: he believes it, he rises with his hundred men: the villagers are distracted and shaken in their loyalty by hearing that he is arming. For two days he is sole master, plays the Sovereign most royally, and wonders why he ever submitted: the third day arrives a company of infantry; his rabble is dispersed; he flies: he has nowhere to turn: he is taken prisoner: he is brushed away like a cobweb from the map of India, and ends his miserable and useless career, as a prisoner at large, at Calcutta, and sighing for those Hills, which he will never revisit.

Sickened I turned away, and looked outwards on the scene before me. Nestled in an amphitheatre of lofty hills, tipped with distant snow, the town with its steeples and its gateways shone like a diamond: the sun was shedding upon it its last rays, as if sorrowful to depart: far above, and around, were scattered villages, and amidst the feathering bambu the smoke curled wavingly upwards, while the whole mountain-side gleamed in the glorious golden sunset of India. Plenty appeared everywhere: annual rich gifts of Nature were scattered in rich profusion: it was a place for the residence of Angels: the valley might have been the Paradise of Man; but over it, to the shame of Men and Angels, ruled the hereditary scoundrel, who, since the day that he was born, had never lifted an eye of thankfulness to the God, who gave such rich things, who sat before me, like a scorpion at the base of a beautiful lily, who looked upon men only as materials for slavery, and on women only, as possible concubines, on the earth as

producing its kindly fruits in due season to be eaten, to be drunk, to be smoked by such as him, or as a substance to receive the expectorations of his vile appetites, and to be stamped by the foot of his folly.

And this is the class of Chieftains, whom we uphold with our bayonets, worse than the most degraded Nobility of the Middle Ages in Italy, more exacting in their indefeasible rights, more selfish, and more cruel, than the petty Dukelings of mediatised Germany. These are the protégés of independent Members in the British Commons, whom philanthropists in England would wish to uphold; treating the governing of men as an hereditary right, and a kingdom as private property, and not as a high Office and an onerous duty. And they are all the same. Search India from the Himálaya to Cape Komorin, and there will be found on the pageant thrones the real or the adopted sons of needy adventurers, lucky farmers, successful freebooters, ignorant, antiquated, selfish, overbearing opponents of every reform or even practice of civilised life. The only varieties in the picture are that of a senseless man, or a shameless woman: the only alternative of Government is the Tyranny proper, or the Strumpetocracy. Every such petty kingdom becomes of necessity a nucleus of bad feeling to the great Government, a refuge of notorious criminals, a place, where ideas stagnate: and the retrograde tendency of all things moral, and material, offers the mockery of a contrast with the show of elaborate laws, of enlightened judges, the complication of tape, form, and returns, which we have introduced into our Provinces; while at the same time we allow villages interlaced with our own, and

large tracts inhabited by a kindred people, to be handed over to men, who have no broad views distinguishing Right and Wrong, whose notions of Revenue are to squeeze as much as possible, and spend it on personal gratifications, whose views of Justice are so oblique, that they would take away the life of a man, who slaughtered a cow, and yet tolerate, and venerate, the hereditary perpetrators of Female Infanticide.

And will our fair countrywomen touch the hand of such a reprobate? Will the pure have ought to do with the impure? Pause and consider his views of, and his relations to, the sex. Pierce the walls of his Zanána: there is the wife, or the wives of his youth, the mothers of his children, neglected: there are the concubines, who had the misfortune of being born and bearing children of uncertain parentage in his house: there are the Mahometan dancing girls, who have become the joy of the obese period of his life, from whom have sprung a promiscuous family of all castes and all religions. Who are the officers of this State? The fiddler, the dancer, the easy husband, the venal father. Will you appear in such company, and for an annual display of fireworks and cheap luxuries, bow to Rimmon, and eat food offered to Idols?

Who can say, that the new race is improving, or is more worthy than those, whose unprofitable ashes have been flung into the Ganges, and whose widows have been burnt with them on the funeral pile? Let them therefore be treated with cold civility: let them be taught their moral inferiority, and learn, that we bear with, but do not countenance, their filthy and disgusting practices, their Pán-chewing, and their Natches, but

that we put down with a high hand their abominable practices, and crush their foolish quarrels: let them understand, that the time and men have changed, that it is their misfortune to be anachronisms, that their antediluvian ideas and wishes cannot be tolerated, that, if less wise than the Megatherium, and other obscure and hideous animals, they have chosen to outlive the peculiar era, which gave them birth, they must submit to the indignities, which have fallen upon them.

Finally, these and such as these are the main supporters of Idolatry. All Religions, which consist of externals, depend on State-support, and no severer blow has been given to false religion than by cutting off their resources. We must remember the turn of mind, and the state of civilisation of the people, with whom we have to deal. Outward signs are everything to those, who have no great public opinion to guide them. It is when wealth is lavishly bestowed upon idolatry, when the proud temple rises, when the stone steps climb for many a league the hill-side to some shrine, when the hundred fat Priests of Baal speak, vauntingly of their god, it is *then*, that the vulgar mind is astounded, that the simple and untutored residents of the village and the hamlet believe, what they see, and see, what they are able to believe. But let the long steps of Banáras be once swept away by Mother Ganges, with no wealthy devotee ready to repair them: let the golden roof of the temple fall in, and the idol itself, robbed of its jewels, lie headless on the ground: let the mountain shrine be torn up by the torrent, or be buried and forgotten in the jungle; let the colleges of sleek Priests be broken up, with no treasure pouring in, no fat bulls of

Bashan lowing in the streets, no temple-ceremonial gathering in the crowd; then will come a great change over the minds of the people, and they will arrive at the conviction, that the *old gods have had their day*. Thus fell in the Western world the Idolatry, that still enchants us by the beauty of its fictions, and enslaves us by the Majesty of its Poetry and its Philosophy! Let us picture to ourselves the feelings of the worshippers of Delphi, when the roof fell struck by lightning, and the Pythia was prevented by stress of weather over the tripod from giving her oracular responses; for Constantine had transferred the patronage of the state to Christianity, leaving the priests of Diana at Ephesus, and the cymbal-beaters of Daphné, to grow thin for want of bread, owing to the resumption of the lands set apart for their hallowed Religion! Apart from religious persecution let poverty make Idolatry ridiculous, as it certainly will. We are bound morally and openly to oppose detestable heathen practices, to cease to call religious grants sums of money, which have been set apart to melt butter over volcanic fires, and light tapers before obscure images. We should call things by their right names, and cease to talk with the Hindu of his customs, and his worship, except in the same manner as we should, gently and reprovngly, in pity and disgust, talk of drunkenness, folly, and libertinism.

BANDA, 1855.

LAHORE, 1858.

## CHAPTER X.

*THE FAREWELL TO MY INDIAN DISTRICT.*

I HAD been three years in civil charge of a newly conquered territory, the pioneer of civilisation in an obscure nook of India. I had abandoned the ways of my countrymen, and in the energy of youth had thrown myself into my charge, thinking in my fond egotism, that there was no part of the world like it, no scenery so glorious, no inhabitants so manly and noble. I had begun to look upon it as a second home, when one morning I received laconic notice, that I was to quit it, that my services were to be transferred elsewhere. Whether I owed this to the jealousy of a rival, or to freak of power in the Rulers, I know not, nor did I care to inquire.

Oftentimes, though I have since risen to far higher power and dignity, have I pondered on the circumstances attending me at that period of my career, of the fairy-like life, which I then lived; and, though I have long since acknowledged, that what happened was well, a thought of that parting pierces me with a dart still capable of wounding. Still a feeling of fascination attends those regions, which I never have seen, nor ever may see again.



In the earliest dawn of manhood, caught away from the dull routine of my contemporaries by a gust of invasion and war, I found myself in the presence of heroes and statesmen, in the hour of danger and in the moment of victory. I was present at the concussion of rival armies, and the breaking up of the great Sikh Monarchy; and, when the storm cleared away, I was dropped alone, as from the clouds, among a new people, of whom the name and habitations had been unknown to me three months before.

War had again intervened, intestine war. There was to be a second struggle for Empire. I had seen smoke rising from the firing of my own villages, attacked under my eyes by my own troops. I had been congratulated upon the defeat and destruction of my own misguided children.

Much had there been in the natural features of the country, the blending of hill and plain, the union of mountain and river, but it was the development of my own faculties, the first sweet taste of unbounded power for good over others, the joy of working out one's own design, the contagious pleasure of influencing hundreds, the new dignity of independence, the novelty of Rule and swift obedience, this and the worship of Nature in the solemnity of its grandeur and the simplicity of its children, were the fascinations, which had enchanted me.

In the course of the first year I traversed in every direction the regions under my control, dwelling among the people, studying their feelings and their habits. The tent had become my home, and the horse my only means of transport. Simple was the repast, light were the slumbers, unbroken the health in those days, when

the earliest morn found me in the saddle. How familiar I became with the Sun in his downsettings and uprisings! At starting Cynthia was my guide, and in treading the plain I looked with familiar pleasure at Orion, or counted the stars of the sinking Pleiades; till at length the East reddens, the chorus of birds announce, that a great event is about to happen, and glorious Phœbus looks me steadily in the face. On the journey he is lost again, for I dare not look upwards, until older, wiser, broader grown, he sinks into the river, with the golden shadow of his last smile playing through the green foliage with beauty inexpressible.

An hour before daylight all is dead silence: the sound of dogs barking is heard at a mile's distance. As we wade the river with lighted torches, we hear each melodious splash. All is dark, but the darkness becomes thinner, the black softens down to grey, the wind begins to blow, the stars begin to wane, to the silence succeeds a murmur; each bird wakes on its branch, and addresses soft notes to his companion: the great family of the wood is rousing itself for its business, for the search of food, to sustain life by labour and by crime: glorious tints now overspread the Eastern skies, visions of paradise, distant, distant clouds, shaping into happy islands: Aurora is scattering her gifts on the earth; and now the Sun sails up in majesty.

And how does the thoughtful mind in such rides expand, and elevate itself to the contemplation of the great Creator! Who tied up the cotton in those small capsules? Who bade the Indian corn spring up to so lofty a height? Who gave the broad leaf to the tobacco? Who filled the sugarcane with sweetness, and

suspended bags of honey from the branches of the mango? Who spangled the orange-tree with the golden fruit of the Hesperides? Who bade the juicy water-melon spring up on the arid sand? Even He, that gave the green herb for the use of man! Bountiful Providence! who does not recognise the almighty wisdom both in what Thou givest, and what Thou deniest? Who laid the foundations of those immemorial hills? Who plumbed the depths of that crystal fountain, which leaps down in a bright cataract, sparkling in the sun? The Palm shoots up on high, and from tree to tree hang gay festoons with vast petals of divers colours: the Parrot, and the Humming-bird, and numberless children of song dash to and fro. All Nature joins in praising Him: the breeze, as it sighs melodiously through the Bambu, the stream, as it dashes down in its wild course, the melodious symphony of birds, the echo of solemn valleys; these are the voices of the created praising the Creator.

Man only is silent: Man only, where all things are grand, where vast mountains expand, and conquering rivers flow, where natural gifts are on a scale of magnificence, is degraded, and in ignorance.

But see we have turned a fresh glade, and opened out a fresh succession of vale upon vale. See a herd of deer have sprung forth, dashing away the dew from their flanks. Bound on unhurt; ye timid Foresters: no weapon of mine shall pierce your leathern coats! Taught by that Power, which pities me day by day in my rambles, I have pity for you also.

Long trains of birds coming from Tartary announce the approach of evening, governing by some sure law

their periodical migrations, describing strange lines and figures in the skies. By how many names do men know them? in how many climes do they dwell? how puny to them are the local divisions of men! what to them is the boundary of Rivers, of Empires, or of Mountains? what to them the different races of mankind?

Now the road lies by streams, which have auriferous sands; and some poor wretches are laboriously extracting grains of gold. To the calm, thinking mind is their situation really more debased than their more exalted brethren of the counting-house, for their object is the same, and in neither case does the gold seem worth the labour? Who knows, whether beneath those quartz rocks, if Nature be only true to herself, there may not lie fields of gold far exceeding those of Australia and California? Dame Nature smiles: she knows what secrets she has to unfold, and when she will unfold them, secrets that have escaped the glass of Herschel, systems, that have not been unravelled by Humboldt, speculated upon by Laplace, or condensed by Comte. Ships steam across the Ocean, and idly strive to tie continent to continent. Poor weak mortals think, that they have made some great discovery, some new combination of the Elements: but she laid the nuggets of gold there, when the Creation of this orb was but a new thing, and the morning stars danced for joy: she watched over them, while the Flood was out, long ere Solomon erected his Temple: she hid them, as she hides many a bed of orient pearls, until the fulness of time; and we make empty boasts, that we have discovered these fields of gold, as we boast, that we have discovered the last planet, which has, regardless of us, been revolving

its magnificent orbit long, long before our own was rendered habitable for Man.

Now I gain the highest ridge, and see down the valley and into the plains, those plains, which have been traversed by conquerors after conquerors, who have left no trace behind. My companion shows me the white tent glistening in the far distance. The scene is enchanting: for I know each village, and each clump of trees is familiar. I sit down and drink in the landscape.

And my approach is like a triumphal procession, for old friends flock out with kindly greetings. Much talk is there of the harvest, many wise remarks about the weather, many kindly proffers of service; and the heart genially expands in sympathy with the joys and sorrows of the people. Wars and tumults, so long as they reach not their acres, affect them not. They care not for the change of dynasties, so long as the little tyrant of their valley does not enhance his exactions. No thought have they of the steamship, or the railway, that shake mankind; but keen are they and full-spoken on the subject of blight to their crops and the marriage of their children. They reckon years by harvests, and count back to the era, when their mango groves gave a bumper crop, and when the grain was eaten by locusts. Still their memories, if touched by a skilful hand, will give back strange fragments of ancient story: Each ruined castle, each mountain shrine, many a field, many a tree, have their tales of local traditions of conflicts, of the politics of the valley.

A ruined temple swept down by some torrent arrests the sight: the great Deity could not protect his own shrine. But it is in vain to attempt to draw the

thoughts of my companions to the great Creator, for their weak intellects cannot reach Heaven's throne, while their depraved imaginations grovel amidst the high places of earth, its footstool. They are not even impressed by the signs of progress in their own valley, for ruined castle and ruined temples speak out with a language of their own. They tell that the power of kings is transitory, that religions pass away, and that man-made gods are forgotten. The towers of other days, if torn down by batteries, tell of war and bad passions, but when dilapidated by time, they tell more instinctively of the stealthy march of civilisation and improvement, and the arts of peace, when such muniments of war are no longer required.

The stream is now won, and our horses enter the ferryboat. Who can see a river without delight, or cross one without a pulsation of innate joy, spurring on to reach it, drinking in the prospect, longing to rush into the waters, and dwell for ever on its banks, as the Greeks cried *Thalatta! Thalatta!* when after long wanderings they regained sight of the Ocean! No wonder that men worshipped the Ganges and the Nile, the most noble of worships, not based on Revelation.

But all around what busy scenes are going on? Boys are shouting to each other, as their ancestors did when they were boys; herds of buffaloes are crossing the stream from the pasture; solemn crows are perched on their heads, while on the neck of the leader strides the youthful herdsman; voices coming down stream, oh! so cheerily! old Brahmins looking on from the bank, or with upraised hands saluting the setting sun, and

repeating their immemorial prayer. In the same boat are cattle laden with goods from Manchester and apples from Kábul, and one poor widow who is conveying the remnant of her dead and burnt husband, a tooth and ashes of scarred bone, many a weary league to the Ganges; for the one only moral feature, which pervades the whole world, is the unthanked devotion of women.

Mark the smoke curling up above the trees; to that homestead I have promised this day to carry honour. Hard by my tents are pitched, but I am to lodge in the house of the exulting yeoman. There, as the night draws on, a cheerful party are gathered round the wood fire, and the hours are wiled away with tales of the local Fairy, the legends of the place, history woven with fiction. What do they know of or care for the last new invention, or for the latest news from China or Pesháwar? Public events pass over them unheeded. Civilisation in its railroad-pace has left them untouched: but every word which drops from my lips is greedily swallowed in. Strange questions circulate at that fireside concerning England and Queen Victoria. They descant on their troubles under their former rulers, and end exultingly, that all their woes are now over. Does not my heart misgive me? May it not come to pass, that the neglect of European rulers, the venality of native officials, and the Procrustes-like rigidity of Regulations will break up this family, and pull down this roof tree! Who would wish to disturb these quiet circles of domestic peace, where Patriarchal life has been caught alive? The children gather timidly round, lifting up their lustrous black eyes, and, if the

stranger be gifted with the magic power of winning children's love, they nestle down. Sad is the absence of the women, but they are nearer than they appear to me; for, as the last surprise, the latest baby is brought in; and see the modest father of scarcely sixteen years stands in his new paternity, blushing to hear the chuckling of the grandfather, who exults, as if the child were some wondrous feat of his own performing: meanwhile the fire is glistening on bracelets and black eyes behind the adjacent lattice work, and the room is indeed the centre of an Indian family. In the morn I am once more in the saddle: my host holds the stirrup, and offers a cup of fresh milk, drinking which I lift up my eyes to the everlasting mountains. Snow has fallen since the evening. Snow! what visions of distant countries are conjured up by the thought! what remembrance of home and forgotten days! what visions of friends long since slumbering in their calm repose!

Vast forests wave in the morning breeze. The falcon springs from the wrist of my companion, hovers, and pounces upon the hare. Hark! the bugle thin and clear! Pass by the solitary hermitage: were the grand ideas of the Hindu sages worked out by such as these? Now from our lofty path the men in the fields below are reduced to their proper level, and look like beetles, villages like ant hills, with the busy ants moving about; women filling at the well the eternal pitcher, resembling in this the daughters of Danaus, for their labours are unceasing, and so will it go on, till the pitcher of their life is broken at the well; not that the golden cord can be snapped, for small portion of gold is there in the ligament, which binds them to life. Forth comes to



meet me some Rája, boasting of his lineage from the Sun, and believing his boast: then some greybeards with their offerings of sugar or almonds, or the Rupee kept to be presented, and touched by the Ruler. There is scarce a village without its tower, or its temple, with all the freshness of scenery, the union of works of God and Man, and far greater beauty than can be found at Teviot or Loch Katrine; but for these regions no sacred poet has been forthcoming to wave his magic wand, and cast the charming robe of fiction round the statue of reality, converting bloodstained robbers into Heroes of Romance.

Oh! the deep shade of the mango and mowha at mid-day, where my tents are now pitched, and where justice is now to be administered, where decision has to struggle against habitual procrastination, the strong will, trained in English schools, against subterfuge, nonchalance, and corruption. The Saxon stranger, who has come from many a hundred league, the youth of a few summers, is listened to attentively by old men, brought up in these very valleys, occupied all their lives in these subjects.

The crowd is ranged round in picturesque groups: the busy hum of men resounds, while the rooks caw loudly, being roused from their siesta. The Court is open: no javelin men deny entry, no ermine intimidates suitors, no barristers bar men from their right, no attorneys turn light into darkness: the natural sovereign takes his place among his people.

The witness is called upon to speak to what happened under his own eyes. The man, who in a distant Court-house, abashed by the strange scene, hustled by Court-

officers, browbeaten by Agents, would lie grossly and foolishly, here amidst his relations and friends, standing amidst two generations, his children clustering round their old grandfather, makes a true and gallant delivery. He is standing in the presence of his *dii majores* and *dii minores*, for from the spot where he stands, he can catch sight of his house, glistening on the hill-side. He sees also the shrine on the mountain-top, to which, he has gladly ascended on many an annual festival: he sees the fields, in which he and his father have sported as boys: he sees many an eye fixed on him: he feels, that there is many a tongue ready in full chorus to convict him, should he swerve from the truth; he speaks out, and fully, like a man, and will not conceal the truth, though it be to his own detriment. A long murmur of applause from the crowd, as he seats himself, confirms his veracity.

But all is over now. No longer by the stream or the mountain, no longer in the cottage or the castle, will my footsteps be known. Tears, idle tears! the world may wonder, why I shed them, what sympathy I can have with those, whose skins are not of the same colour with my own. They know not that a touch of Nature makes kindred of us all.

My subjects flock in to see me, to have the last word of parting. They touch my feet sorrowfully: they tell me, that they have scarcely felt my rule, so gently have their fetters fallen on them. They crave some small note as a memorial, and as an introduction to my successor, and they promise, that they will not forget me. Tears are shed, as I lay my hands on their heads, and wish to say much, strive to be remembered

to some absent friend, but the spirit gives way, and I am silent.

It was my first charge. I had won it by energetic service. I had fought for it, and held it, against all comers during a rebellion. Untraumelled by Regulations, unencumbered by domestic cares, I had fashioned it after my own model, had founded its institutions, had been led on by high burning, yet unflagging zeal, and ambitious hopes not yet crushed and blighted. These were the brightest hours of my Indian career.

I would not cultivate the friendship of a man, who honoured not his parents, and loved not his brothers: so would I, mindful of a just Providence, not risk my life in a frail bark with one, who could coldly neglect the interests of a vast people confided to his charge, one who rejoiced not in their joys, and sympathised not in their sorrows. His name will never sound stirring on hill-side and in valley. Old men will never hereafter talk lovingly of him, or quote his jocund words and describe his actions. He may achieve by force of intellect a cold reputation, but he will never have won the hearts of a simple people, nor be chronicled in the annals of the poor.

But all is over. The heart sickens at the thought. How often in the din of the metropolis, amidst the domestic conventionalities of England, will busy Memory go back gladly to the white tent pitched by the stream in the mango-grove, where, far from the tumult of cities, and rattling of wheels, have passed laborious hours, devoted in sincerity and simple-mindedness to the benefit of the people! Memory will recall the slanting rays of the sun, the cry of the peacock, the

cooing of the doves, the white figures glancing through the shade, the row of elephants, and horses, and camels. Thus dwelt Abraham, when he migrated to Hebron: thus judged the early Judges in Israel. A man may forget his first love; but his first District, the primeval Forest, into which he was sent as first settler, will not be forgotten.

HOSHIARPÚR, 1849.

BANDA, 1854.

AMRITSAR, 1859.

## CHAPTER XI.

*THE TWO INDIAN SHIPS.*

WHILE residing at Southampton, in the year 1857, I heard that, on the next day the steamer to Alexandria would sail, and that probably about the same time the return vessel with the homeward-bound passengers would arrive. I knew somewhat of India, and I availed myself of the opportunity afforded of studying the contrast offered by the appearance and deportment of the passengers of the two vessels, who, though belonging to the same nation and rank of life, would appear under such singularly opposite circumstances.

It was the season of the fall of the leaf. On both sides of the beautiful Bay the trees had put on their autumnal tints, and departing summer had assumed the tenderest of aspects. Sweet Southampton Water, how goodly art thou to gaze on, and how pleasant to the memory to recall in distant lands! I hurried down to the docks to rehearse a scene of parting, in which only two months later I was to be myself a principal, and to witness a returning, the like of which may not be written in my destiny.

The outward-bound vessel was ready, and scrupulously clean: the cows were still lowing for the calves,

which they had left last night behind them: the sheep were clean and well-looking, unconscious of the sway and the brine of the ocean: the barn-door fowls were plump and defiant, redolent of the Hampshire farm-yard: the stewards stood at their ease, fresh, smiling, and intelligent, like ministering Angels. What body of men so polite, and so pleasant spoken, as the Ship's Officers in harbour? So charming are the arrangements of the saloon, so convenient, snug, and surprising the eccentric contrivances of the cabin, and the berth, that stayers at home reflect with wonder on the waste of room and air in beds and bedrooms in England. Ah me! if experience makes wise, wise indeed must be those, who have gone down to sea in the ships of the great Company, and have known, what it is to be for six weeks degraded from the position of a man to that of a passenger!

As the hour of noon approached, crowds began to assemble. As yet there was no outward discrimination between those who were to part, and those who were to stay. Stewardesses were heard wondering, whether No. 64 in the Ladies' Saloon was to be the young Miss in the hat, or the old party in barnacles. Some were thoughtless spectators, who were more tolerable than the odious Agents, who flocked here on business only: others, like myself, appreciated the position, entered into each sorrow, and filled up in fancy the detail of each history, for, as the hour of eleven struck, the motive of this gathering began to show itself unmistakably. Some, who up to this moment had held up bravely, burst into sudden and uncontrolled weeping. Partings, which had already taken place in anguish and

unknown bitterness of heart in secret cabins, in hotel rooms, in the privacy of domestic circles, were here acted over again before the cold world; for in the agony of the moment Nature spoke out, and demanded her own tribute. I stood up on a bench, and looked around. Every variety of unmistakable affliction was around me: husbands leaving wives, parents blessing and sobbing over children, sister parting with sister, brother with brother, and friend with friend. Bitter was it to behold, when both reciprocated, bitterer still to see the thoughtless boy shaking off the caresses of his widowed mother, who had pinched herself for his weal, and will long, long as her fond heart beats, pray for him, and think of him, while he in a few hours after the ship has left the port will be calling to his fellows on the fore-castle, and will have forgotten his mother, and her advice, as if they had never been.

It is not often that we can weigh grief against grief, and contrast sorrow with sorrow; witness at the same moment the overwhelming, abandoned, loving grief of youth, the heavy tear-storm of manhood, the strong frame quivering with emotion, the chastened enduring sorrow of middle life, where there is no hope to brighten, no future to look forward to. There ought indeed to be some recompense to those, who have to commence, carry on, and conclude the battle of life with such a struggle.

Some will never see England again: this is a solemn thought: never again see those fertile and gay valleys, those undulating downs, broken with steeple and tower, to which the heart clings so fondly, which will rise before them in many a fevered dream, which they will

bless with dying breath, when they have ceased to care for aught besides. Stayers at home know not the bitter thirst of those, who long to, but cannot, return. Some are parting with aged Parents, and will see their faces no more. On your knees, on your knees, crave blessings, ask pardon, and breathe a word of gratitude into those ears, before it is too late! it may be a pleasure to them, for they have done their duty, but to you it may be the one thing, which, if done, will soothe your dying moments, and which, if left undone, will bring its own remorse. Some may live to return, but so changed, that they will know, and be known no more. They may climb to honour, and achieve enviable greatness, but those, who loved them best, and most unselfishly, will never know it: they may have hoped it, have prophesied it, have in their heart of hearts believed it, but they will not live to see it.

The time is approaching; the steam is getting up; shrill is the Boatswain at the capstan; and Ship Officers, who clearly have no such things as a relation in the world, give hints to strangers, that they must depart. The last copy of the "Times" is bought from the newsvendor: Oh! how often will those pages be conned over, for days and weeks must elapse before the next day's issue is seen, and so long will it have remained in sight, that even at the end of the journey it will escape destruction, and perhaps years after turn up, as a memorial of the day of departure from home. To one, as a parting present, a nosegay of flowers is offered, and received in tears, for redolent is it of the giver, of home, and of garden alleys, down which the feet of that youthful traveller will never again saunter.



The bitter waters of separation are crossed in silence and sobbing. Grief is universally understood, and respected, for on that spot it has ceased to be a novelty. The anchor has been raised, the plank of communication removed, and the noble vessel moves in the docks. Hurry round, friends and loving ones, to the point, whence once more you can see the form of those, whom you love, can recognise their last salutation, distinguish the last wave of the handkerchief. But now all is gone, the individual merges into the vessel, which still excites interest, as the holder of such treasures. Now that is gone also, and parents, and children, and wives, are left alone on the strand lamenting.

Down the Southampton River glides proudly the noble vessel, sighting many a happy home, many a sweet villa, past Hythe, past Netley Abbey, under the shady slopes of Cadlands, past the mouth of the Humble: before her lies the Isle of Wight, and Osborne House, throned on its green eminence, and many a smaller vessel, bent on pleasure and traffic, is passed by in contempt by the great sea-going *Leviathan*. But, as she rounds Calshot Castle, steam is shortened to exchange one word of salutation with her consort, which at that moment comes within hail on its return from Alexandria. Short is the greeting, and sadder the gloom of those, who are departing, when thus brought into contact with and sight of those, who are returning. "Farewell to the outward-bound," I exclaim, as, availing myself of the boat, which passed from ship to ship, I transported myself to the deck of the homeward-bound vessel.

Dirt, and sunny, sunburnt countenances, light hearts

and indifferent costumes, were around me. The hen-coops were empty, the decks decidedly grimy, the passengers provokingly selfish, and bad company, trying to wring me as a sponge to extract public news, vexing my spirit with inquiries, whether unknown individuals had arrived at any one of the hotels, and at what hour trains started to London. Round me echoed the din of foolish lotteries. On the deck was heaped the strangest kind of baggage, and the male passengers wore the most eccentric kind of head-pieces. Some, who had evidently taken pains with themselves, wore shirt-collars of an antique mould, and coats with the buttons between the shoulders, while they writhed in the tightness of their straps. No smart new portmanteau from Regent Street, no smart dandified youngsters were there, but a vast aggregate of shapeless trunks, tin petárahs, bird-cages, and cane-baskets, a crowd of unshorn, ill-tended men, men all of whom had suffered much, if they had not done much. Wounds, disfigurements, and disease, had swept away the pride of beauty and manliness, and many a countenance told its own tale of bad lives, bad livers, hopeless fever, and broken-down constitutions. What struck me most was the general atmosphere of children, into which I had dropped. Babies in the arms of black nurses, or black servants leading about children, met me at every turn. In the least-expected corner I stumbled over an infant refreshing itself with a draught at a dusky fountain, or lost my balance by an inroad of boys passing between my legs. The word "Baba" seemed to float in the air, for the doings of fifty children in a confined space set at least a hundred tongues in motion. I descended to the saloon, and even my

respect for the fair sex could not disguise the fact, that a voyage has a most distressing effect. The pretence of finery in some by a Kashmīr shawl flung over the worn-out travelling dress, and the soiled collar, made the contrast more lamentable. Still all was bustle, and the desire of the heart of all was to be clear of the good ship, which bore in gallantly forward.

As we touched the shore, and the plank was laid down, on rushed a crowd of anxious inquirers, and looked askingly around; then came recognitions and embracings, tears of gratitude and joyful voices. Old mothers fell on the necks of middle-aged, faded daughters, and men, who had been presumptuously called by their fellows old themselves, found older fathers, of whom mankind in India had never dreamt, ready to welcome them. There was a general buzz of inquiry, and comparative analysis of appearances, in which the world at large could partake. "I should not have known you!" "Is it you, indeed?" "What! little Fanny?" "Are these the children?" "How are you all at home?" "Let me introduce you?" These happy parties soon clear off. How foul the steamer feels to them! How valueless all the little comforts, for which they have struggled and paid, as Englishmen only pay! Off they go to the hotel to be shaved, to buy new hats, to dress themselves so as to quiet the susceptibility of their friends. England welcomes their return with strict custom-houses, heavy duties, oppressive porters, and exorbitant hotel-keepers. Many a romantic hero, who had designed to kiss the consecrated earth of his country, as he stepped on shore, finds his feelings choked within him by the hard flags of the pavement,

and the singular want of sympathy of the Dockyard Establishment.

But there are those, who find no friend to meet them. One has found news, that his mother is dead, and that he has returned too late; some have found letters announcing some sad calamity, or offering cold welcome to relations bankrupt in credit, health, and fortune, who have failed in the battle of life, or outlived those who cared for them. Widowed fathers sit apart with little children in deep black on their knees, until the crowd has cleared away, and they can steal away to some solitude, and try to find comfort. Others are there, who expect neither friend nor letter, for whom owing to long exile England has ceased to be a country, and who land, as if landing on a foreign shore. Hopeless are they indeed, who have outlived the love of their country, or forfeited the love of their relations!

And there are those, who have gone through much tribulation: mothers, who have seen their children perish, and whose hands are empty, and whose hearts are blank; men, whose wives and families have been slaughtered before their eyes, who have called on man in vain for assistance in their agony, who look on the meetings of others with staring and hollow eyes, for they are alone in the world. May God in His mercy help and console them!

AMRITSAR, 1859.

## CHAPTER XII.

*THE FAMILY IN INDIA.*

AGAIN the day has come round : how well all the events of that day last year come back to me ! It was at day-break, that the messenger stood at my door : " Your child is dying, hasten," was all that the telegraphic wire conveyed : within ten minutes I was flying along, spite of heat and dust, from Lahore to the distant hills. The sun rose in its splendour, the splendour of July ; still in my ear rang the sound, " Your child is dying ; " the sun set, and night came on ; still the same echo. At midnight I was stopped by a messenger, and then read, for the first time, what was the ailment, and that the little one still lived. Press on, press on ! I may still kiss the little face again : I may still touch the waxen fingers, though perhaps I may never hear the voice again.

At daybreak I was at the foot of the hills, and mounted my horse. Later news reached me : " She still lives " was the guarded message. Ride on, ride on, through the sweet undulating valley ! the hours glide by : horses are changed : and see, from afar, the white house, which contains the dear ones, is glistening on the opposite hill. I stop and slake my thirst at the

stream; but I mind not the blistered hands, or the feeling of exhaustion of an overstrained frame : another note is met : " She is not dead ; " I shall not be met by a sad procession winding down the hill-side ; I shall still see her again. Up the hill-side of sweet Dharamsála ; nothing is known by casual passers-by. I dare not put the direct question ; I pause to ask faintly, and with drooping head, " What news ? " at a friend's house, and pressing on, I thank God from my heart, that I am in time ; that my little one, my first-born, still hangs between life and death, but still lives. I hasten into the room, and look at the poor, moaning, senseless, sightless form : is this my gay little one ? God's will be done !

Often have I pondered over what happened at that time. In the agony of the moment I had prayed not for the child's life, but for guidance and resignation. " If the child's life is spared, she shall leave this sad country, and return to her native land ; " thus thought I ; and some few days after my wife entered my room sadly, and announced in despair the opinion of the doctor. " What will become of us ? " My child's life had indeed been spared, but I had lost my wife and children ; the roof-tree of my home had been pulled down.

Ah ! the Indian home, with the children pattering about the house, followed by their sable attendants ! The room has been darkened all the long summer day ; the little ones have slept, played, slept again ; wakened up, ate, and played again ; the long, wearisome, languid day, so dark, that only one ray of light comes in from an upper window ; so silent, that only the splash of water at the window, or the moaning of the punkah, reaches

the ear. But hark! the sounds of evening are coming on; the birds begin to be busy; there is a sound of a going in the trees; the sinking sun scatters a glory over the landscape; the servants begin to move, and windows and doors to open; round come the ponies and little carriage; the children are dying to be out of their prison, their voices are heard everywhere, and at length away they go, surrounded by their attendants. As night falls, they return, and the silent house is again alive with sounds, but for a season only, for soon the little ones are hushed in their slumbers, and lie like snowdrops folded in their beds. How much is going on all day, when they are there! What occasion for thought, for anxiety, for joy! What a deep death-like silence falls on all, when they are gone!

Gather together the playthings, now no longer wanted; the little bed, the saddle of the pony, the high chair, are grouped together as useless lumber, yet priceless in the eyes of the father. Hang up on the wall the little straw hat and the little shoes, that his eyes may fall on them, as he wakes in the morning. *Those days and those children can never return*; they may live, and grow up, and be the comfort, or sorrow, of his old age, but, as the children of his Indian home, they are gone.

Others have known greater sorrows; they have seen the little ones struck down by disease, never to rise up again; the blow has been repeated, and the little cot put tearfully out of sight, as recalling blessings too great to endure; or haply the sorrow has come suddenly, when the father is absent; the dying child prattles of him, and calls for him; but he comes too late. The

mother meets him with tearful eye, and empty arms, and can only point to the grave, where moulders his heart's darling. There is an oppressive silence in the house, for the parents have launched all their happiness in one frail bark, and the wreck is total: the thread of their hearts was tied up in that tiny form. No more will little feet rush down the passage to meet the father returning from his Office; no more will he see at his window the Madonna-like forms of his wife and child; fingers pointing to him as he approaches; no more will waxen arms, and gleeful smiles, be ready to welcome him. Still, his lesson, has been learnt, the heavenly ministers have not been sent to him in vain. With all its trouble, with all its sorrow, he would not change his lot, nor unlive that life, for the effects are humbling and humanising; he ceases to be defiant, and haughtily walk in the air; he becomes less selfish, and more considerate for others, for the hand of the strong man has trembled to open the letters, which bring him news of his child. In the midst of the cares of the rule of a Province, of how much importance to him is that one little life!

Other scenes of sorrow have been known to him or others. During the march, far from the haunts of Christian men, pain and anguish come like a thief in the night on the mother, and in the deep jungle a child is born to gladden the hearts of the parents. Beneath the broad pipal tree the little one sees the light; round it echoes the deep murmur of the forest. But with the butterflies at eve its little breath passes away, and the young parents are again childless, perplexed in the eddies of the newness of their grief, and newness of



their joy, a tumult of strange feelings, for they scarcely know, what they have gained, or what they have lost. The father digs a grave for the unbaptized infant; verily the angels of heaven are such as this child; no name marks the tomb; in the parents' mouth it is known by no living combination of letters and syllables; but the wild ranger of the forest has spared the grave of the child, and future travellers may wonder at the meaning of that little mound. But where is that mother now? Far away in distant lands across the Ocean; her rich auburn hair has long since turned to grey; her sweet soft countenance bears the mark of time and care. Many another babe of her own has since then gladdened her heart, and been pressed to her bosom, and her children's children cluster round her, but she can never forget that day, *that child*, and that spot; and as sometimes she sits musing, and tears start from her eyes, which look vacantly out of this world, her husband knows, that her memory is wandering back to the unforgotten grave of her nameless first-born.

On some death comes more slowly. In the morn the child is on its pony, amidst its attendants: fresh and bright as the flowers, happy and thoughtless, as the insects on the wing. At noon it sickens, will not touch its food; its little prattle fails; its little limbs grow hot and languid; its little head hangs down, like a daisy drooping on its stem; sleep comes not to its relief; day and night seem the same; the gentle moaning, the refusing to be comforted, the languid eye, the praying to be left alone to waste away and die; this is all, that meets the eye and ear of the anxious

parents. One only solace is found in the gentle motion of being carried about. Thus the night hours pass sadly and slowly to the father, as he carries his little one in his arms, and paces up and down the room by the side of the pale and worn-out mother; or watches the hour, or feels the skin of the child, on the chance of its being safe to administer those remedies, on which life depends. How the thoughts turn upwards to the Heavenly Father, and inward to the secret recesses of the heart, in these sad solitary hours! Such trials come not unadvisedly; God grant that they come not in vain! What deep lessons of utter helplessness, of self-denial, of repentance, are to be learnt by the sick-bed of a suffering child! At length the tiny flame burns out. With the first beam of the morning the little taper, which had fluttered all night, is extinguished. There are no partings, no farewell looks, no regrets on the part of the dying one; the little one knew not, what was in life, and knows not what is in death. As in the arms of its earthly parents it moaned itself to sleep, so now it yields itself trustingly to death; it breathes its last little sigh, and is gone. Then breaks on the mother the sad conviction, that her darling, never before out of her sight, must be taken away; that it must leave her and never come back; that it must be laid in the cold earth, and worms must consume those little chubby cheeks. Ah me! it is hard to bear! and so suddenly: in a few hours the little box is at the door (for it is no more); it is placed in the same carriage, in which the child has so often scrambled, and played on the knee of its mother; the carriage comes back empty. The little burden is

carried by four friends, and dropt gently into its last resting-place; the earth is closed over it. Poor little darling, its place is now among the angels! Cares and trouble has it escaped; God loved it, and took it away, ere sin and sorrow could blight the opening blossom. So small a portion even in human interests did it occupy, that its departure is not noticed, its name among men is not known, its existence is soon forgotten. Forgotten, yes! save in one home and two hearts. How strange the house seems on their return! windows all thrown open, traces of the last week's disturbance swept away. Is only that one little frame gone forth, and is so much changed? How large a portion of time, of thought, of hope, of fear, of sorrow, has gone forth also, leaving a dull void behind! Roll up those scattered memorials: the little pillow, which that head will never press again; the little sheets, the tiny garments, on which such loving care has been so fruitlessly expended. Put away out of sight all, that recalls the mortal: think of the new immortality. Parents, your poor protection is not wanted; your child is amidst the angels! Your child might have grown up to be good, and pure, and lovable, under the care of earthly parents; but it is better, and purer, and more lovable in the Courts of your Heavenly Father. Or haply you yourself have been saved from bitterer sorrow.

To some death does not come, but separation. The child is not sick unto death, and, restored to the country of its fathers, to the cooler air of some sweet valley, will bloom again, will grow up to strength and health, will pass through childhood and youth, may perhaps be the blessing and light of your old age, and close

your eyes; or may perhaps never see you again, and know nothing of you, your love and your trials, or perhaps by misconduct bring your grey hairs in sorrow to the grave. Oh, let but the child live, even if the parents be forgotten! The love of parents is the great heirloom, handed down from generation to generation: in loving their offspring they do but discharge the great debt of nature. Let but the child grow up, and in due time the great fount of parental love will be unsealed, and forth upon the heads of children yet to be born will outpour the treasures of unknown, unrequited, unremembered love, handed down from parents, sleeping their quiet sleep with their vial of affections only by death exhausted, and their unselfish duty brought to a close in the grave!

What mournful dream comes back to me! I seem to see over again the sad preparations being made; the sad procession going forth; the last walk with the children; the unconscious prattle of the little ones; the parting with the native servants; the fierce conflict of feelings; the pressure of innumerable cares; the heavy dead weight of despair. Farewell, home of my children! Then follow anxious days and nights of rolling wheels, of early arrivals, hastened departures, strange faces, dust, and fatigue; all gladly borne, and more also, if but the suffering child can but reach the port of embarkation, and be launched on the salt waves, whence new health is fondly anticipated.

At length the port is reached and in safety. Back to my memory comes the tall ship riding so proudly; the narrow cabin, into which all my world was to be compressed, where I was to leave them. Nothing

seemed too good, every want must be supplied, the last unavailing sacrifice of love must be made. Ah! the last day, the last night, that the darlings were seen slumbering in their cots, the last morning that they rose from them, no more to slumber on Indian couches. What passed seems a dream, from which I only awoke days after. I remember the mechanical discharge of my duties; the arrival by night at the ship's side; the children slumbering in their berths; the deep silence in the vessel; the solemn thought, that this tyrant would be set in motion in the morning, and carry all that I love, all my life, away. Then the morning stir, the arrival of passengers; the children wake up, but know not what misery is impending upon their parents. Then comes the solemn hour of parting, "God bless you, O my children; Farewell! my beloved." Part, and once more return; look in and then part again; rush down the side of the vessel, and hang on the sides of the vessel like an angel excluded from Paradise. There in a small square window is framed the picture of my wife and children; "God bless you, darlings:" "Papa must not go," were the last words. Then the noble vessel puts itself into motion, and walks exultingly away, as if unconscious of care, affection, and sorrow. From the sides I see a pocket-handkerchief waving: now it grows scarcely visible: it is gone; I am alone with my God, who will have mercy on me. I have done my little all, and I have made the great sacrifice of all that my heart prized most.

LAHORE, 1861-1862.

I read again the lines penned by me twenty years ago. It seems as if another hand had written, another mind had dictated them. In reading the Holy Scriptures the eye passes from tales of joy to tales of sorrow; and the next page tells of joy again, or death. Such is the type of human life. Within the space of one year that sweet wife returned to her old home at Lahore only to fill a grave in the Cemetery, from which her child had been spared. Within a few more years that healthy boy was called away amidst his lessons and his cricket to fill another early grave far from that of his mother; and I have had to live on many long years, and still to find sunshine and shade in the world without them. Their figures, as I last saw them together from the window of that vessel, seem to have retreated into an immeasurable distance, and to be still looking at me—the child-wife and the baby-boy—filling the memory of my past life with ineffable sadness. But sadder still! I have lived to feel, that it would have been well, if the life of the sick child of this story had *not* been spared; that it was well for my wife to be sleeping in the Cemetery of Lahore; that it would have been better, if on that day in June 1860 that little life, in the midst of its childish glee and innocency, had been extinguished; that I had met the sad procession winding down the Dharamsála Hill to convey the little coffin to the Cemetery where Lord Elgin, the Viceroy, sleeps his last sleep; for then my tears would long ago have been dried, and I should have been spared the heavy sorrow, which in my old age that child has caused, and which must accompany me to the grave.

LONDON, *Feb.* 24, 1881.

“Daily there surges upwards to the throne  
The burning wave of passionate appeal.  
Ye bring your bleeding hearts, your brains, that reel,  
And gasp your prayers in eager feverish tone.  
The kind Controller looks with pitying eyes  
On the wild upturned faces, and *denies.*”

## CHAPTER XIII.

*THE INDIAN DISTRICT.*

SOME papers come before me, on which the latest stroke of my pen fell in October 1859; domestic troubles and illness had caused the pen to fall from my hands, and the ink has faded. The pages of my journal carry me back still further to enable me to complete the picture, which I was then sketching, and the days are brought vividly before me, when, having defeated the Sikh army in February 1846, we annexed the country betwixt the rivers Satlaj and Beas, and sold the valley of Kashmír to the Maharája Golab Singh of Jamu.

I had buried my Master and Chief, George Broadfoot, having recovered his body from the trenches of Chilianwála: I had been present by the side of Henry Hardinge and Henry Lawrence in the tremendous battle of Sobraon: I had been sent into Lahore on a solitary Elephant to persuade Maharája Dhulip Singh, and Goláb Singh, the Wazir and the Sikh chiefs, to come out to the camp of the beleaguering army at Mián Mír: I did not know then in the insouciance of youth, how very near to death I came that day. I was present and took part in all the proceedings of that period, and, when the tide of war rolled away, I was left, as my reward,



in charge of the beautiful district of Hoshiarpúr, at the age of twenty-six, *quite alone*, amidst a people who had never seen a European ; but I was in constant correspondence with my chief, and that chief was John Lawrence.

I used to march for many months about the District, consorting with my people, having given up my own language and adopted theirs. It was situated at the foot of the Himálaya, and the lower ranges were included in it. I knew every one of the thousand villages, and loved the people and the country. At eventide, when work was over, we used to saunter out, and sit on one of the jutting headlands, and watch the sun setting. Such a combination of mountain, river, and plain, can never be forgotten. Who were my companions ? They were young and old, Hindu, Sikh, and Mahometan ; some were owners of the soil, or mere cultivators ; some were the hereditary servants of the Village or the Hundred, the Accountant and Kanúngo, and the trained officials from Delhí and Agra. Where are they all now ? How many questions rise up in my mind, which with my riper experience I should like to ask them ! Sometimes the Priest from the neighbouring temple would come down and sit near us, the travelling mendicant, who had visited all the shrines of India, or the young celibate of the neighbouring convent. Some of their names float, like strange sounds, in my brain ; but of those cheerful parties all the older members have long since been burned on the funeral pyre, and the young have grown old, and a whole generation of greybeards have long since passed away.

What did we talk of? The history of these tracts, their own experiences, the tales of the country side. Beneath us lay the great battlefields, where the fate of India had more than once been decided, and there was a ceaseless flow of anecdotes. I had long known and liked old Dil Súkh Rai, Kanúngo. He was an independent old gentleman, past the age of sixty, but still hearty enough to accompany me in my rides on his pony; and many the tale he told me, drawing on his own experiences and the legends of his ancestors. He was prejudiced in some things, but kind and benevolent; and, as he had taken service for many years in one of our old Districts in Northern India, he was much in advance of his Panjábí neighbours, but he still spoke the sweet Panjábí dialect, and on his return to his country had fallen back into his old habits and dress.

One evening we found ourselves on a rising ground which commanded not only a large portion of my present District, but a large portion also of the adjoining one of Ambála, which had been three times in my charge, and in which the old man had served the State for many years. We gave our horses to some one to hold. I was drinking in the landscape, and thinking that the time must come, when I must leave my District, and wondering how former native rulers had looked on the same beautiful prospect, as the many-armed Satlaj was flowing under our feet, and mountain rising above mountain behind us. Immediately beneath us lay the old man's own Pargána or Hundred of about twenty villages; his face showed no signs of thought: it was possible, that he was thinking of nothing, as he smoked his pipe and looked calmly downwards.

At length I said, "You must have known many District Officers in Ambála during your long service, and seen many changes in your own District of Hoshiarpúr since you were a boy?" "Yes," he replied thoughtfully, "it is now forty years, since the English rule commenced East of the Satlaj. I was quite a young man, but I remember the day, when the red-coated regiments arrived at Ludiána. We had heard strange stories in our villages, how the General ate a young child each morning, and the Doctors seized men, and, after boring a hole in their skull, hung them up by the legs to let their brains ooze out, as a compound for their medicines. We were told, that we should all lose our caste, and have to eat with sweepers. In consequence many buried their jewels, and removed their women and children to hill-villages for safety. Well! nothing of the kind happened; that old fort by the river side in ruins held out for a few days, but the gate was blown open, the garrison captured, and each man instead of being killed, as he expected, was ferried across the river, and set free with a rupee in his hand. Quiet was soon restored, and we were surprised to find everything going on as usual. Gradually people came back; a cantonment was marked out for the white soldiers; bungalows were built, and we were astonished to find everything paid for. You can see the mounds to the left of the old fort, where stood the Colonel's bungalow. Ten years later the cantonment was abandoned, but the burial-ground still remains, and that white speck marks the grave of a Sahib, who was killed by a Dakait."

"Did you ever talk to the Sahibs?" I asked. "Yes,

I did ; I used to be a good deal about the place, and some of them were very sociable ; but they spoke so strangely, that at first we could not understand them ; but one of them, who had black hair and black eyes, spoke like a native, and with him I made great friendship : he was just my own age, and was killed in one of the battles with the Marátha. I used to see in his bungalow the goings on of the Sahibs. They always had twisted leaves of tobacco in their mouths, or white bits of clay ; and they drank brandy and played games. The Colonel was a just man, for one of the grasscutters was flogged for cutting young green wheat in a field ; and he was always ready to listen to complaints, and, though he was easily angry and called people bad names, he was easily appeased. He died of the cholera, and was buried in that graveyard. Some of us stood by, while they read a book over his body, and threw earth in upon the grave."

"But how did you get employed in the Office at Ambála?" "Why," he replied, "I could read and write, and knew accounts, as all my ancestors did ; and one day I was summoned as a witness in a case, and the Collector was pleased with my answers, and laughed at my having earrings in my ears, and asked, if I would like to learn my work in his Office, and he gave me ten rupees a month as a writer. I was twenty-five years in the employ of the British Government, until my uncle died, and I succeeded him in the hereditary office of our family with the pension of my term of service."

"You must have seen a great many Collectors in that time?" said I. "Indeed, I have, and I know and

remember them all. One or two lived to go back to their country, but most of them died in India. My first master was a rough-and-ready soldier, always on horseback. He told me, that honesty was the best policy, and that if I would be content with my lawful wages, I should remain longer in office, and be richer in the end. I believed him, and found it to be true. He used to be too hasty and do acts of injustice, when he meant to do right." "Something like myself," I interrupted him. "Pardon me," said the old man respectfully; "I may have thought so, but I did not mean to insinuate it. The Sahibs often err from not knowing the feelings of the people, and wound us in ignorance. After my first master, who died, came a quite different kind of Officer from the Districts east of Delhi. He brought his wife with him, and never rode on horseback, but used, when not in Office, to be always with her. I think I see him now walking in the garden with her arm under his. They used to smile at each other and talk. They saw nobody. He did his work in a certain way, rarely went into camp, rarely spoke to natives, until one day we heard that the lady had died. I with others attended to see her buried, and I shall never forget the face of the Sahib. In the evening we saw him walking alone in the same walk, and sitting on the same bench, and we heard him sob and cry, as if he had lost his mother or daughter, but we could not understand, how a man could mourn in such a way for his wife; but you Sahibs are different from us: and next day a new Collector came, and he went off to Calcutta, and I never heard his name again. For some years we used to put flowers on the lady's grave, but soon that was forgotten.

Other Collectors went and came: some bad, some good; some swore and drank, and beat the natives; some were led entirely by their Headman; some were very careless and passionate, but still they liked the people, and the people liked them; some were always saying prayers; some seemed to have no religion at all, and had a Zanána, like natives. But there was one feature in all. I never knew an instance of any one taking, or being suspected of taking, a rupee, as a bribe or a present; and all lived simple lives without show or expenditure. You are a strange people, Sahib. Any other race when in power would have plundered the people, and given lands and houses to their relatives; but none of these Sahibs took more than their pay, and, as far as we can judge, they had no relations. The people used to say, that the English had no hearts, and were mere machines for fighting and writing; but I, who had seen the poor lady buried, and seen some of the Collectors playing with their little children, knew better. And there was one Sahib who, when the time came for him to go home and see his old parents, cried like a child at leaving his people and his District; and when he left,<sup>1</sup> all the town, and many of the villagers, who had come in from a long distance, stood by the roadside for the length of a mile to see him go, and bless him. But they are not all like that. And they change also; for when this Sahib came back after some years in a higher post with wife and children, he did not seem to care for his old friends as before. I heard people

<sup>1</sup> This happened to me twice: once at Hoshiarpúr, 1849, and once at Banda, 1855; and I look back on it as something better than titles, better than honours.

say that, it was not the same Sahib, though it looked like him. In one thing all the Sahibs, whom I have met, resemble each other: they seem to have no fear; they go about quite alone, without guards, and sleep tranquilly in the midst of dangers. I remember, that there was a rebellion in the District once, and one Sahib went out and slept in a little tent not far from the rebel chief.<sup>1</sup> It was suggested to the rebel, that they should attack and kill him by night; but when they found him and his two servants asleep, they returned and said, that they could not do it, for they were sure that, there was some Jin or Afrit ready to fall upon them." "The eye of God seemed always to be upon them," I answered; "and they knew it, and feared no one else."

We were silent for some time after the last remark. It is the remarkable phenomenon of the English Rulers in India that they have no fear; either from ignorance, or the high spirit of youth, or the innate nobility of the conquering race, they go about alone among the people. And this is at once the secret of their power, and a cause of awe to the people. It is true, that both my superior officer, Frederick Mackeson, and my assistant, Robert Adams, fell by the hand of the assassin; and for years I had a loaded revolver under my pillow by night, and in a drawer of my table by day, but I never had once occasion to use it, and yet I had lived for years alone among the people in distant parts of India, and never had a bad night from anxiety, or felt the necessity of beating a hasty retreat. If once we lose this prestige, if the Officers of Government keep

<sup>1</sup> This happened to me in the rebellion of the Jalandhar Doab, 1848.

to the towns, and appear only with guards around them, our Empire, which is based on Opinion, is gone. The District Officer, on his horse among his people, is their Ruler and Master. Shut up in the towns he is a mere name and a puppet.

“Tell me,” I said at length, “something about your own family.”

“Well,” he replied, “my father died forty years ago; but my mother is still alive and lives with me. Her eye is not dimmed, her teeth are sound, and she moves about, eats her cake, and rules my home. She is more than eighty years old, and remembers the invasion of India by Ahmed Shah, and the battle of Panipat, and the sacking of Sarhind by the Sikhs. She has often talked of those times. She had just been fetched home by my father from her father’s house far away beyond Ludiana, when the Sikhs broke out into rebellion and sent their horsemen far and wide. One evening two arrived and threw their shoes into our village, as a proof that they had taken possession. The Mahometan power had broken down, and we were too timid to do anything but submit. When I grew up to take notice, Jy Singh was established, as Chief over this Pargana. My father died young. I married, when I was twelve years old, and had several sons, but they are all dead. But I have grandsons, and great grandsons in my home; they have learned to read and write, and help me in my office, to which they will succeed, unless”—and he paused and looked at me—“the English sweep away this office also.”

“Have you no school,” I said, “for the children of the other villagers?”



“No,” said he gravely. “You might as well ask the squirrels, why they do not educate their young, or ask the birds, why they do not alter the forms of their nests and adopt new customs; tell the goats to leave off gamboling. The children of the tiller of the soil are like them : they enjoy the sun ; they hunger and thirst ; they sleep and play ; by the time that they are able to work they are condemned to labour, and thus the whole of their life passes away. So did that of their fathers for countless generations, and so will that of their children ; and if you are wise, Sahib, you will let them alone. Each year they have their marriage-feasts, and their festivals, and they go up to that high hill to rub their head against the Idol. They never miss their daily meal and nightly sleep. Each man has his wife and his children. If their lot is hard, at least it is certain ; let them alone.

“Ján Lárens, and you, have already done many things, which will give trouble hereafter. I was present at Hoshiarpúr, when you called out to the Landholders, that there were three things, which they must never do in future, and, if they did, that you would punish them : that they must not burn their widows ; that they must not kill their infant daughters ; that they must not bury alive their lepers. I remember an old Sikh remarking to me : ‘ Why do the Sahibs fret about such matters ? If we pay them their revenue, and abstain from rebellion and plundering, why do they meddle with our women and sick people ? ’ Then, next year came the order to allow cows to be killed, and compelling children to be vaccinated. The hearts even of well-wishers of the English Government fell within them, when they heard such bad things, especially when

in the Proclamation of Conquest it was stated, that all our religious customs were to be maintained. This year we hear, that the people are to be counted and their names taken down, and schools are to be opened, for which the people are to pay an extra cess. Then you are cutting roads all over the District, which never had one before, and did very well without them. Some day the Sahibs will repent of this. What is to become of our homes, full of childless widows, virgin widows, useless widows, none of whom can by our laws marry again? Where are the high families in some castes to find husbands for their daughters, without loss of credit or ruin from the expense? What will become of the country, if the lepers, instead of being buried alive, as they are quite accustomed to be, are allowed to roam about, and live at the public expense on the threat of touching our children? And then think of the cows and the bulls, why should you kill them? Poor creatures! they are the objects of our veneration, and it is a sin to shed their blood." He then quoted a Sanskrit text to prove, "that the greatest virtue was not to injure any one," which he seemed to limit to cows, to the exclusion of women and lepers.

The old man warmed up under the sense of the terrible grievance, and was then silent. I sat and looked into the future, and wondered, how this problem would work itself out; never for a moment could I doubt, that the famous trilogue to spare the lives of widows, female children, and lepers, was a just one; yet customs become so deep-rooted, that they caused moral blindness, or the obliquity of vision evidenced by my good friend.

At this moment the rooks began to caw over up in a

lofty cotton-tree ; there was glory from the setting sun in the atmosphere, and a humming sound from the insects in the trees ; long lines of wild geese were passing over our heads ; from the Hindu temple below us came up the sound of the gong and the bell, as the hour of evening prayer had come ; there was an indescribable beauty in the prospect, as each village, each separate homestead, stood out in distinctness, and we each of us knew them by name. The old man watched the scene ; something passed through his mind, and he said, " Why do the Sahibs allow all our ancient trees to be cut down or disfigured by the camel-drivers ? Why are our sacred pipal trees, that stand round our temples, so lopped and hacked about ? Why are the materials of our old tombs and shrines carted away for new buildings in the Cantonment ? The Mahometan Rulers and the Sikh Chieftains had spared them ; under that great tree below my ancestors have sat for twenty generations, and the stump gives no shade now, and the monkeys have been driven off, who used to play round the great tank. Some of them were also shot by the camp-followers." I felt for the old man, and sympathised in this grievance, but we were on the highway of armies, and the Civil Authorities were helpless. A military camp arrived one morning ; the mischief was done in the day, and the camp was gone that night ; identification of the plunderer, or the thing plundered, was impossible : the camp-followers came, like the cholera or some fell disease ; they selected their victim and departed.

I was anxious to test from the mouth of a man, experienced as he was, the correctness of the nature of the tenures of land, as accepted in official books in

Northern India; in fact, I was testing in a practical view the accuracy of my own knowledge, such as it was, by the hard logic of actual facts; so I said to him, "Tell me, Dil Sùkh Rai, the history of the twenty villages, which are situated in your hereditary Pargana. No doubt they will supply different and perhaps every variety of tenures, and you will be able to explain how this came about." He replied, "Gladly I will try to do so, they have been my life's study, and what I tell you, I received from the lips of my father, and he from his."

"The whole twenty villages have been for more than sixty years in the Revenue-Assignment, or Jaghír, of Jy Singh Sirdar and his descendants. He does not live here now, and under your new arrangements he cannot interfere with the Landholders; but he receives from them annually in four instalments, at fixed dates, the revenue assessed on each village by Ján Lárens. Of the revenue thus collected he pays one quarter as tribute to you; when he dies, his eldest son will succeed, and pay one half as tribute for his life; and on his death the interests of the family cease, and the whole will be paid to the British Government. He possesses a garden and a few acres under his own cultivation in one village; and of the twenty villages he has granted the revenue of two to persons, who hold under him and subject to his grant. One village is assigned to his family priest in return for prayers offered up at a Hindu shrine; the other is assigned to a Mahometan prostitute, who is the mother of one of his children."

He interrupted his narrative for a moment. "Ah, Sahib, that resumption of Revenue-Assignments has been the ruin of many a family, and the cause of bitter dis-

content all over India. What with the bribery of the native employees, and the tedious length of the investigation, many have lost their all, and their land has been resumed after all; it seemed so hard to take away fields occupied for two or three generations."

"Do not say so," I replied; "Dil Súkh Rai, be reasonable; I wonder that you, who see things so clearly, can call this injustice. You know well enough, that a Government must maintain armies, police, courts of justice, or else no order could be maintained, and they must be paid in cash. You know, that nearly the only means of paying them is supplied by the land-tax according to the immemorial custom of India. Why then should a few people, sons of servants of the former Government, or courtiers, or priests, perhaps people of bad character, hold lands free from assessment, and contribute nothing to the public burden, thereby compelling others to pay double, or else the Government would fail to meet its demands? You know well, that when these grants were made, they were in lieu of actual service of some kind, neither rendered now nor required; and that the grantees knew, that they only held at pleasure, and that the ruler had the power to resume, and had resumed scores. Moreover, the Mahometan Ruler resumed every grant held by a Hindu, and, when the Hindus last generation ousted the Mahometans, they resumed every grant. Why do you therefore blame the Government for exercising an undoubted right, in restoring the Revenue of land improperly alienated to the wants of the community?"

The old man was not convinced, and alluded to his own holding of a garden, limited under the Rules to his

life only. I regretted it, but I knew, that the question was hopeless to argue then; but thirty years later, when his grandson, whom I had taught and introduced to public employ, after long years of faithful service, retired to his home in bad health, I petitioned the Lieutenant-Governor, my old deputy and friend, that this garden might be continued in perpetuity, Revenue free, to the family; and last year I received the reply in the affirmative, and forwarded it from London to my old and faithful friend, Amín Chand, whom my eyes may never see again; a man, who never took a bribe.

He then continued his narrative. "That village on the mound in the centre is the oldest and chief site in the Pargana; it was located time out of mind by a caste of Rajpúts, who nominally possessed the whole, but the greater part was waste covered with jungle. There were two brothers among the original ancestors, and a division took place of the interests of the two branches, first as a matter of account, and at last by dividing the area into two equal portions, and allotting the portion towards the rising sun to the one, and towards the setting sun to the other; those shares and those names still exist, and, as a vast area of waste still remained uncultivated, the tenure is that known in your books as 'Incomplete Shareholding.'

"One hundred years ago one of their family went out to service, and became a successful soldier, commanding armies, and amassing wealth. In his old age he returned to his native village with a large following, and demanded his share from his weaker brethren. A compromise was made at the advice of my great-grandfather, and a large area of the waste land was

assigned to him, and he founded a new village with his own name, which is held by his descendants, still collectively as an 'Undivided Property,' totally independent of the elder village.

"As years went on, and the fertility of the soil became known, and the strength of the Rajpúts guaranteed protection from rapine, immigrations took place at different periods of lower castes, who were excellent cultivators, both Hindu and Mahometan; they petitioned the Rajpút lords of the soil to be allowed to found hamlets: permission was granted on condition of paying an annual quit-rent. Some of these hamlets grew, by natural increase of population, or by further immigration of relations and connections, in strength and size far beyond the Rajpút villages, the owners of which were less industrious, and averse from taking a share in personal agriculture. They reclaimed the waste, sank wells, and fortified their villages; many of their brethren took service in the Sikh army, and came back with independent ideas, refusing to pay any quit-rents to their former masters. Some of these tenures are of the famous "Brotherhood" type, where each man's right is measured by his actual possession, all hereditary claims, if they ever existed, being forgotten. Some smaller ones are still held as "an undivided property," but there is a tendency to divide shares; others are already divided; and it often happens, that in each of the main divisions there exist different forms of the three varieties of tenures above described, according to the custom of the tribe, or the convenience of the people, or the circumstances of the proprietors. Over all presses the

necessity of paying the Revenue, the amount of which is fixed by the Collector, and distributed to each shareholder by the Village-Accountants; beneath all is the unlimited number of tenants, some with rights of occupancy, and some merely at will."

I recognised in this description of a comparatively virgin district all the salient features of our system, and bowed to the wisdom of the founders of the great Settlements of North India, whose object was, not to create new rights, but record and uphold existing ones, and thus maintain self-government. Not as yet in this happy land had the curse of the Sale-Law commenced its ravages. Money payments had been introduced in supersession of the old rough-and-ready division of the corn upon the threshing-floor, or the annual valuation of the standing crop, which opened such a door to abuse and dishonesty. Vast tracts of uncultivated waste were being brought under the plough; but there is a Nemesis in all things, and the price of grain fell, and the landholder was ruined in the midst of his abundance.

The sun had set, and it was time to walk down to my white tent, which had been set up in the village near the well. I found my table spread after the manner of the English with fish from the stream, game from the coverts, cakes baked on the hearth, and sparkling beer from England. I dined, like a monarch, alone; and English letters from my Office, and sometimes overland letters from home, were before me. Though I spoke the language of the country, I still wrote the language of my nation. Early to my cot at night, early in my saddle in the morning to welcome



the rising sun, and move on to new scenes of delight, new regions of interest.

Thirty years have passed over my head since then, and twenty-one years since I commenced this picture. Is it a dream of my youth, or did I once in the flesh live this life, and dwell thus among my subjects? All seems to have passed away, except my love for the people. I have since then been backwards and forwards to England, and have left all, that I loved most, in the Cemetery at Lahore; cut off from honour, while upon the very threshold, doomed by domestic sorrow to leave India, with my work unaccomplished, my term of service incompletd, and the goal of my ambition not arrived at. Still in all my sorrow, and in all my disappointment, the thought of those happy days comes back, and I seem to hear the old voices and familiar sounds, to conjure up scenes long forgotten, and friendly faces long since passed away.

AMRITSAR, 1859.

LONDON, 1880.

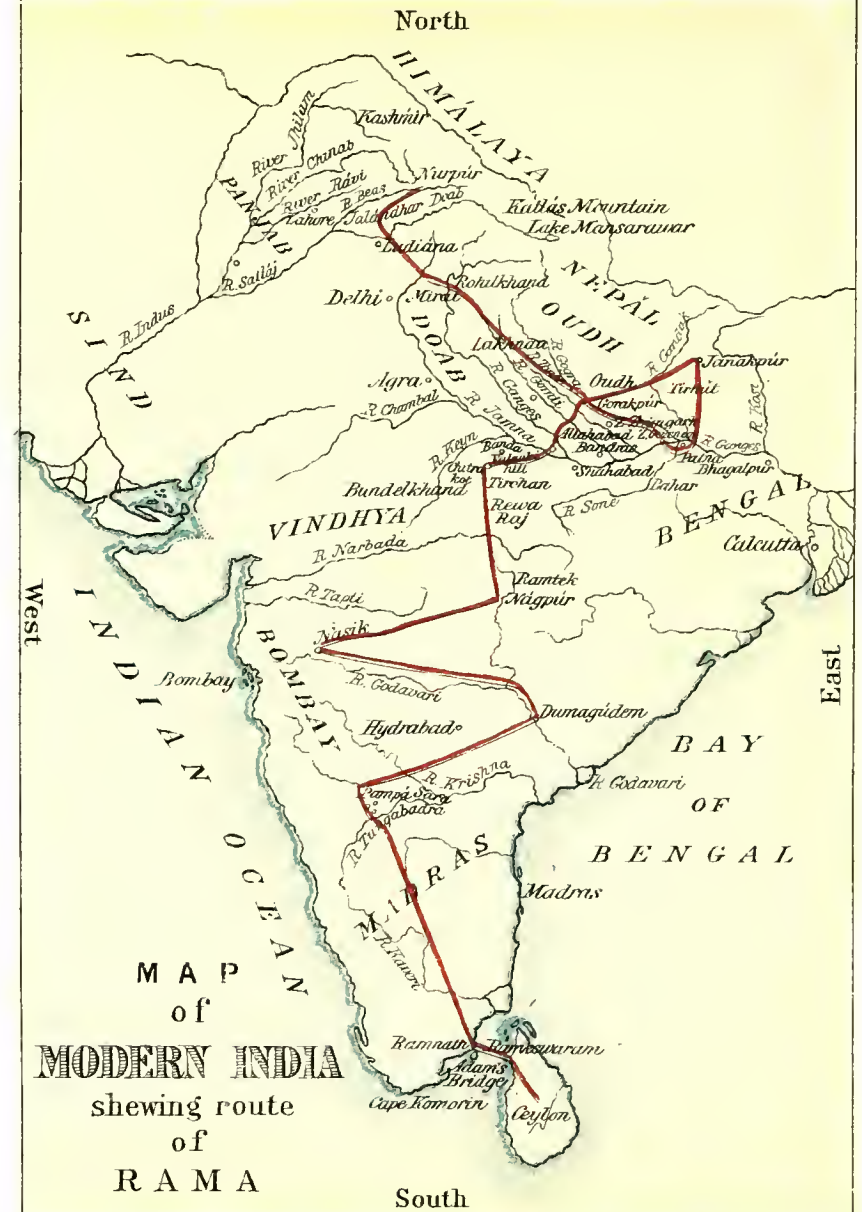
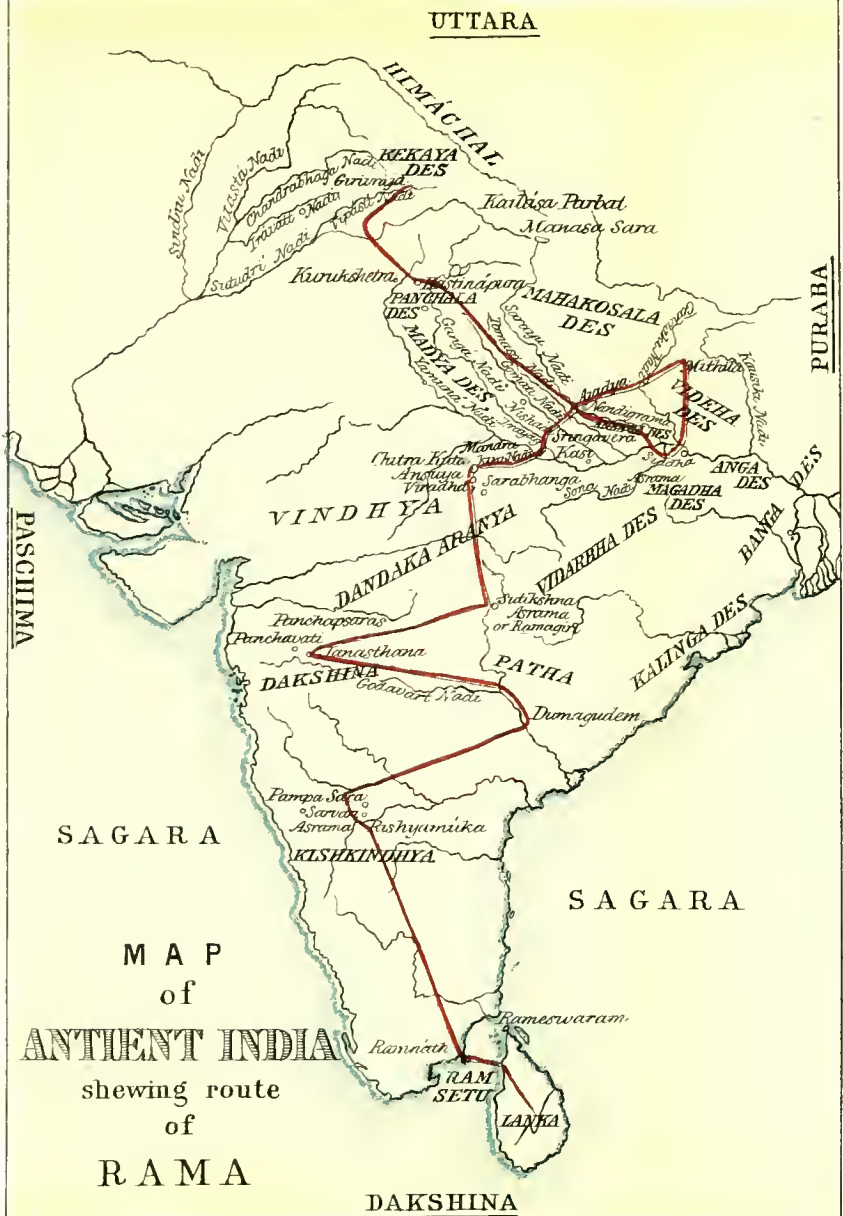
## CHAPTER XIV.

*THE INDIAN HERO.*

*Written for the people of India, and translated into several of the Vernacular Languages of India.*

WHO was Ráma? There is scarcely a native of India, who does not know the name. Every Hindu connects it with the religion and history of his country, and places implicit confidence in wild legends, without accurate information. The Mahometan scarcely believes, that such a man existed, and treats the tales of the Hindu as apocryphal; thus betwixt the undue exaltation conferred by one class, and the unmerited contempt of the other, Ráma has not occupied his proper place in history.

To the Hindu, who wishes to exalt this hero to the heavens and worship him as a god, I reply, that such matters rest so entirely on individual opinion, that I cannot admit that view of the subject. I cannot depart from the broad road of possibility and probability, and enter into the kingdom of miracles and prodigies, though it is no object of mine to prevent others from doing so. To those, who doubt the very existence of Ráma, and consider him entirely a myth, I reply by positive facts, universal tradition throughout the continent of India, and the consistency and reasonableness





of the narrative. *That such a person existed at a remote period of Indian history, there is no doubt.*

My information is drawn entirely from the great Epic Poem, the Ramáyana, the author of which was Valmíki, a contemporary of the hero, whose actions he describes. A great many other works exist in the Sanskrit language on this subject, but they are all posterior to, and derived from, the Ramáyana, which is admitted to be one of the most famous works in the Sanskrit language. There are two great editions of this poem, one of which is known by the name of the Gúr edition, and is highly esteemed in Bangál; the other is preferred by the Pandits of Banáras. They differ considerably in words, phrases, and details, but the story is the same in both. The poem consists of twenty-four thousand double lines, or sloka, which is twice the size of the great Greek Epic Poem. The whole of the Gúr edition has been published in the original Sanskrit in Europe, and a portion of the other edition; there are translations of portions in Latin, English, and French, and of the whole in Italian. In the time of Akbar, king of Delhi, Tulsi Dás, a Bairági, published a history of Ráma in Hindi, which is very popular; it is not a translation of the poem of Valmíki, but a separate composition; with the common people it is preferred to the poem of Valmíki, but the language is very obscure and difficult. It must be admitted, that a well-educated Hindu and Mahometan cannot find an intelligible and brief history of Ráma as an historical character; and it is to supply this want, that, after a careful study of the original, this book is written.

Many Pandits ascribe to the life of Ráma a period of

antiquity, which we can only pass by with a smile. It is very easy to talk about lakhs of years ; but, when no details are given of what happened in that time, and men are said to have lived several thousand years, it is as well to suppose, that there has been some mistake in the copying of the book, from which this information is drawn ; and when in the same book we find India talked of as the whole world, and descriptions of oceans of milk and sugarcane juice, which we *know* to be false, we are led to believe, that the writer was mistaken ; at least, until positive proof is given of these facts, everybody of sense and learning has a right to suspend his belief. When the usual tests are applied, with a view of discovering the age of this book, which have been successful in other instances, we find that the date will be some hundred years before the Christian era, or more than two thousand years ago ; and, as the Poet tells us, that Ráma took Lanka only twenty years before the poem was written, we infer that he lived at an era very well known in the history of Europe as that of the Trojan war. European scholars, who have studied the subject, have arrived at this conclusion, and the date, which they assign is probable, and therefore we place more trust in it than the stories of the Pandits ; however, we leave it to others to believe or not as they like ; but if they trust in the story of the Pandits, they must inform us, where are the oceans of milk and sugarcane juice, and why every other country, except India, has been omitted by the wise men, who wrote the Purána.

We now proceed to describe the family, kingdom, and acts of Ráma ; for every word which we write, we can refer to a sloka in the Ramáyana of Valmíki. We

have searched for, and found, all the places alluded to, and in the two maps, which have been published, are traced the journeys of Ráma in red ink. In one map the rivers, towns, and districts are shown in their modern names, and in the other, in their ancient Sanskrit names, that anybody who knows Sanskrit may refer to the passage.

Ráma was of the Warrior caste, generally called now Rajpút. His father was named Dasaratha, and he was king of Maha Kosala, a country partly included now in the province of Oudh, and partly in the district of Górákhpúr. The boundaries of this kingdom were the Himálaya mountains, the rivers Gandaki and Ganges, but towards the east the boundary was undefined. The capital was Ayodhyá, now called Oudh, on the southern bank of the river Sárju, now called the Gogra. This river rises in the Snowy Mountains in the district of Kumaon, where it is still called the Sárju, not far from the Mánasasarovára lake; and therefore when the Poet says, that the river actually took its source from that lake, he is not so far wrong. The river flows southwest, and passing through the district of Ghazipúr, it falls into the Ganges, just at the confines of the Chapra district, in the province of Bangál. This river is very sacred with the Hindu on account of Ráma, and is one of the largest tributaries of the Ganges. In the Ramáyana, Dasaratha is constantly described as king of the whole world, and his ancestors are described as having dug out the sea, and brought down the Ganges from Heaven. These two last facts are difficult to believe, but the first we find at once to be a mistake, as mention is made of the king of Mithila or Tírhút, the

king of Kási or Banáras ; the king of Anga or Bha-galpúr ; in fact, of many other kings, whose territories immediately adjoined Maha Kosala. We find also, that Prajag, or Allahabad, was beyond his limits, and therefore the phrase, of ruling the world, was only an expression ; just as some little Rája in India, whom the English have out of pity allowed to remain, is no doubt told every day by their Pandits, that he rules the world also.

There is no doubt that Dasaratha came of a very ancient family : we have the name of all his ancestors given, and a long account of them in the Rághuvansa, a Sanskrit Poem on the family of Raghu ; and even now a tribe of Rajpúts is called the Rághuvansi. They believe, that they are descended from the Sun and the Moon. Now a little consideration will at once show, that this is merely an idle tale, for the Sun and Moon are known to be large round bodies, many thousand miles distant from the earth ; and even if they had children, which is not very likely, how came they to be of the same form and size as other men ? In fact this is one of the fables, which are invented to hide ignorance, and which it is very foolish of any one to believe. Ikshvaku founded the kingdom of Kosala, and probably his ancestors were obscure persons. Dasaratha is the thirty-fifth in succession from him, and probably 700 years intervened. One of Dasaratha's ancestors was called Ságara, and his sons are said to have dug up the Ocean, which is thence called Ságara. A great grandson, Bhágiratha, is said to have induced the river Ganges to leave the heavens, and fall down upon Siva's head, where she was detained a long time by his hair, and at length she got loose, and poured down to the sea,



whence she is called Bhágirathi. Nobody but very little children can believe the story now, as we know that the Ganges springs from the Gungótri mountain, in the Himálaya range, and that, wherever there are mountains of hard stone, there must be streams; and that a great many streams meeting together, form rivers to drain off the water to the sea, which is again sucked up from the sea to the clouds, and again falls back from the clouds to the mountains, whence it is again drained off to the sea. By the locks of Siva are meant the ranges covered with woods, which obstruct the passage of rivers in the hills. Of course anybody may believe, that Rama's ancestors were descended from the Sun and Moon, and that the river Ganges fell on Siva's head from heaven; but they should go to Gungótri, and see the little Ganges springing out of the snow, and look at the Sun and Moon through a telescope, and then give their opinion.

Dasaratha had three wives, Kousalyá, whose parents are not known, but who must have been a native of Kosala; and Kaikeyi, the daughter of the king of Kekéya Des, a country in the Panjáb, in the hills, between the rivers Chináb and Beas, perhaps Nurpúr, or somewhere in that neighbourhood; the third wife was Sumitrá, the daughter of the king of Magadha, now called Bahár, or Patna. Besides these three wives, or queens, he had many other women in his palace; and it is worthy of note, that all his misfortunes arose from the fact of his having more than one wife; and it is contrary to reason and justice, that one man should have more than one wife, in the same way, that one woman should have more than one husband. When-

ever people are ignorant, wicked and bad customs become introduced, and the rich and powerful always fall into evil courses, and the poor forget, how wrong it is, because the rich do it. Although he had so many wives, Dasaratha had no sons, and he was very anxious to have one, to be the heir to his kingdom, and proposed to make a great sacrifice of a horse to the gods, by which he hoped to obtain this favour. A celebrated hermit of the name of Risyinga, the son of Kapila, was sent for from the kingdom of Anga, the present Bhágalpúr, on the Ganges, and we find that he had married Santa, the daughter of King Dasaratha, from which it appears that the marriage of a Brahman with a Kshatriya in those days was allowed. The sacrifice was performed, and soon after four sons were born to the king from his three wives: Kousalyá was the mother of Ráma, Kaikeyi of Bharata, and Sumitrá of Lakshmana and Satrúgna.

Ráma was always considered the eldest, and he was distinguished by every virtue. His character should be well considered, followed, and admired. How many talk of Ráma, and praise him, who do not act in the way in which he did! I quote the second book of the Poem, for there are seven books, that we may know what was considered "virtue" in those days. We all know what an idle and useless life a Rájá and Nawáb live at the present day, doing good to no one, and caring only for the gratification of their sensual passions. Now see what Ráma was, and refer, if you please, to the passage in the Sanskrit:—"He was the delight of his father, his mother, friends, brothers, and the people at large; he was one, who addressed everybody softly

and gently ; when addressed harshly himself, he made soft answers. He ever delighted in the society of those, who were advanced in learning, virtue, and age ; he was wise, generous, and of sweet address. Valorous was he, but never boasting of his own valour ; open-hearted, prudent, a respecter of the aged : one who was beloved by all his dependants, respected by the citizens, full of compassion, with his angry passions in subjection : not in the least covetous of the kingdom, though he knew, that it was his lawful heritage ; for he considered the acquisition of wisdom as more desirable than that of earthly power. A keeper of his promises ; one who could appreciate the merits of others ; who had his own passions in control ; who was firm of his own purpose ; who preferred truth to life and happiness."

Thus grew up this gracious and noble youth, and we know no further, until he reached his sixteenth year. As the son of a king, he had been taught the science of arms, and was skilled in the use of the bow, which, previous to the invention of gunpowder, was the only weapon of discharge. About this time a great and wise sage, named Visvamitra, arrived at Ayodhyá, and solicited the services of Ráma, to protect him and other good men, who had retired from the world to dwell in hermitages, in the performance of their sacrifices, for they were much interrupted by savage attacks of enemies. These enemies are called Rakhasa ; but it is quite enough to suppose, that they were wild people living in the forest on plunder. Dasaratha with difficulty consented, for he was afraid that Ráma was still too young for battle. However at length he yielded, and Ráma started, with his brother Lakshmana, in the

company of the sage, on his first journey. They proceeded along the south bank of the river Sárju, passing through the Azimgarh and Ghazipur districts, until they reached the point, where this river unites with the Ganges, not far from Chapra. Here they crossed the Ganges, and as they crossed Ráma was struck by the great noise caused by the concussion of the waters, and Visvamitra narrated to him all he knew of the sources of these great rivers, and he told him many other legends connected with these countries in ancient time. They entered the district of Shahabad, and somewhere there was the hermitage, and Ráma not only protected the hermits, but he slew their enemies, and wounded their chief, named Marichi, severely, who fled away to the southern countries.

While here, the news reached them that there was to be a great sacrifice at Mithila, and that the daughter of the king Janaka was to be granted as the prize in a trial of strength; whoever drew a large bow, of enormous size, was to be the conqueror. Thither Ráma and his brother proceeded. They crossed the river Sona, into the country of Magadha, or Behár, and the Ganges below Patna, and entered the district of Tirhút, which then bore the name of Vidéha. The name of Tirhút is derived from "Tirabhakti," or "bounded by rivers," as the rivers Gandaki, Ganges, and Kosi form its limits on three sides. The city of Mithila is supposed to be represented by Janakpúr, which is in the kingdom of Nepál. There they were received by the king; and Ráma not only drew the bow, but he snapped it asunder, so very great was his strength. This is not an unusual mode of trying the strength of men, and

in many countries we read of it as having been the practice.

Síta, the daughter of Janaka, called from her father's name, and that of her country, Janaki, Maithili, and Vaidehi, was of very extraordinary beauty. She was only an adopted child, as the king had found her in a ploughed field, where she had no doubt been exposed by her inhuman parents. Such we know was the case with Núr Jahán, the celebrated wife of Jahangír; and indeed such exposures are, and always have been, very common. As it would have been improper for Ráma to marry without the permission of his father, messengers were despatched to King Dasaratha, inviting him to come to the wedding. The messengers are described as having gone in four days, and the king got over the journey in the same time; but, when we consider the great distance, we think that there must be some mistake. However Dasaratha at once started to see his friend, and took his two younger sons with him, and all four brothers were married the same day, Ráma and Lakhsmana to two daughters of Janaka, and Satrugna and Bharata to two nieces. This shows, that the silly custom of marrying children, before they are old enough, has been invented since the time of Ráma.

The bridal party returned in great state to Ayodhyá, by the direct road passing through Tirhút, Chapra, and Gorakhpúr. But on their road they were met by a celebrated Brahman, of the name of Parasu Ráma, who had been distinguished for his great strength, and his hatred to the Kshatriya race, a large number of whom he had slain in battle. He had heard of the fame of Ráma, and of his having snapped the famous bow at

Mithilā, and he now challenged him to single combat, or to draw the string of a second famous bow, which he held in his hands. To Rāma this was no great effort, and he directed an arrow against his antagonist, which compelled him to retire from all further contest. When they arrived at home, they found the streets all adorned, to welcome them on their return, and a few days after Bharata started with his maternal uncle, Yudhājít, on a visit to his maternal grandfather, at the city of Giriv-  
raja, in the Kekéya Des, in the Panjáb.

Dasaratha felt he was growing old, and was unequal to the fatiguing duties of his station; and as he remarked how fitted Rāma was, by his valour and excellence, to rule a kingdom, he was anxious to anoint him as his heir and colleague on the throne. This is not an unusual custom, as it prevents disturbances and troubles on the death of the ruler. Preparations were being made for the ceremony, which was a cause of rejoicing to all the people, when it was prevented by the intrigues of Kaikeyi, the mother of Bharata, who was determined, that no one but her son should succeed to the throne. Her husband had formerly promised to grant her two favours, whenever she demanded them, and she now suddenly demanded the banishment of Rāma for fourteen years to the Forest, and the consecration of Bharata in his place; and Dasaratha was compelled by the force of his oath to comply. Here we see the bad effects of polygamy, as each mother struggles for the advancement of her own children, and from this cause many of the royal houses of India have fallen.

Very few men would have submitted quietly to so great an act of oppression, and, had Rāma chosen, he

might have at once seized the kingdom, and all would have supported him, and even his father would have rejoiced to see him do so. But Ráma was entirely free from ambition, anger, or revenge; he felt, that it was his duty to see, that his father's promise was kept, and he at once resigned the kingdom, and prepared to go. The only favour, which he asked of his father, was to také care of his poor mother. When the news of his departure became known, his brother Lakhsmana and his wife Síta determined both to go with him. They gave away all their rich clothing and jewels, and dressed like a fakir, with bows and arrows, amidst the grief of the people and the despair of the old king, they all left Ayodhyá. No history furnishes a more noble instance of devotion than that shown by Ráma, his wife, and his brother, and those, who so often pronounce their names, would do well to follow their example.

They journeyed to the south, and passed one night on the river Tamasa, or Tonse, the stream on the banks of which Azimgarh stands; thence they crossed the river Gumti, on which Lakhnau stands, and arrived at Sringavera, now called Sangrúr, in the Allahabad district on the north bank of the Ganges. Here Guha, the chief of the Nishádi, a tribe of fishermen, lived. He was very kind to them, and on the next day ferried them across the Ganges into the Doab, and they journeyed on to the point, where the waters of the rivers Jamna and Ganges meet at Prajag, or Allahabad. All this country which is now so rich and fertile, was in those remote days a dense forest, and uninhabited. This shows how small was the kingdom of Dasaratha, that in two days they had passed the limits. At

Prajag, which has always been held in high estimation by the Hindu, Bharadwája lived, who was a hermit of great reputation. He received Ráma very kindly, and proposed that they should live with him; but this was declined, as it was too near to Ayodhyá, and probably people would come over from that place and disturb them. The famous city and fortress of Allahabad are now well known, but in those days the hermitage of Bharadwája was the only house, and it is still shown and known by that name. Many persons imagine, that there is a third river, the Saraswati, which also joins the Ganges at this point; but it is a mistake, as anybody can see, who visits the spot.

Bharadwája recommended Ráma to fix his residence at Chitrakót, on the other side of the river Jamna, but not far from Prajag; so the next day Ráma, with his brother and wife, crossed the Jamna at the Burwar Ferry in a raft, because there were no boats then. They had now entered the district of Banda, in Bandélkhand, and they lodged one night at a place now called Ramnagar, where there are the ruins of a fine old temple. The following day they crossed the river Ohun, under the hill of Valmíki, near the village of Bagréhi, and paid their respects to the hermit, who was the same person that some years afterwards wrote their history in the Ramáyana; they then crossed the little river Paisuni, which joins with the river Mandrákini, just under Chitrakót, a large town adjoining Tirohan, in the Banda district. They took up their residence close by, on the solitary hill of Kampta, which is in Independent Bandélkhand. There are now a great many temples, and a paved road, round the



hill, for the use of the pilgrims, who come here in great numbers, especially at the great annual festivals. Here Ráma, with his wife and brother, lived happily in a hut made of branches of trees, and their bows supplied them with food, which is a proof that, in those days at least, animal food was not forbidden. Happy were they in poverty, because they had committed no crime, and were attached to each other.

In the meantime Dasaratha had died from grief at the loss of his dearly-beloved son, and the chief men of the kingdom did not know how to act, as two of the princes had gone into banishment, and two were absent; for Bharata, when he went to his grandfather's, took his brother Satrugna with him. They could not perform the funeral rites, so they placed the dead body in a cask of oil, and sent messengers for Bharata. These men made all haste; they proceeded west, through the province of Oudh, the districts of Sháhjahánpúr, Budaon, and Moradabád in Rohilkhand, into the district of Mírat, for they crossed the Ganges near Hastinápúr; thence they hurried north-west, crossing the river Jamná at the Kurukshetra, which is near Thanésar, and the river Satlaj, or Satúdra, at Ludiána. This brought them into the Jalandhar Doab in the Panjáb. They crossed the river Beas, or Vipása, into the Bari Doab, and thence we cannot trace them, for immediately afterwards they arrived at Girivraja, the capital of the country of Kekeya, and, as the name implies a hill, we think this city must have been somewhere near Nurpúr, in the district of Kangra, in the lower Himálaya, but of this there is no certainty, and though we have consulted many Pandits, we have never obtained a satis-

factory answer. Had the messengers gone any farther, they must have crossed the Airávati, or river Ravi, and the Chandrabhága, or river Chináb, and as no mention is made of those rivers, we must suppose that they were not crossed.

Bharata returned immediately by nearly the same route, and, when he arrived, he first heard of the news of the death of his father, for the messengers had been directed not to tell him. He was overpowered with grief; but, when his mother told him of the banishment of Rama, and his having become heir of the kingdom, his grief was turned to anger; he bitterly reproached his mother for such wickedness; he refused to accept the kingdom, and declared his intention of at once going to his elder brother, and begging him to return and receive his heritage. This was a noble act of Bharata; how few would have resisted the temptation of seizing so rich an inheritance! As soon as the funeral ceremonies of the old king had been performed, Bharata, with the three widows of his father, and all his army and courtiers, started towards Chitrakót, to restore the throne to Ráma.

They crossed the Tonse and Gumti rivers; and Guha, when he heard of their intention, ferried them over the Ganges at Sungrúr. They visited the hermit Bharadwája, who praised Bharata, and bade him forgive his mother, as the banishment of Ráma would end in his glory. The next day they crossed the Jamná from the Allahabad into the Banda district, and advancing to Chitrakót, Bharata and Satrugna sought out the hut of their brother, and earnestly begged him to come back and rule over them. The brothers embraced;

all doubt was banished from their minds, and true it is, that brotherly affection is better than the possession of great riches ; and let those, who take the name of Ráma, follow his example in this matter also. The three widows of King Dasaratha also visited their son, and added their entreaties to him to return ; but all was in vain. Ráma's mind was made up to continue the full term of his exile, and entirely free his father from the engagement, into which he had entered. Perhaps this was a little unnecessary, as Kaikeyi herself, who had made the request, in shame and tears now begged him to forego it, releasing him and his father from the promise ; but it shows, how truly honourable was Ráma, and how worthy an example his is to be followed. Finding that all their prayers were in vain, Bharata returned homewards, assuring his brother, that he should hold the kingdom in deposit until his return, and as a token of his submission, he carried with him on his head, a pair of kusa-grass shoes belonging to Ráma, and declining to enter the city, he settled down at Nandigráma, now called Nandgaon, close by.

Feeling that his residence was now known, and that he would be interrupted by visitors, Ráma, with his wife and brother, determined to pierce farther into the great forest, on the edge of which they lived. It was known, then, as the Dandaka Aranya, and extended over the whole of Central India ; but it has long since vanished, and the country is now covered with towns and villages. Leaving Chitrakót, he proceeded southward, crossing the river Paisuni, and ascending the lower range of the Vindhya mountains. Two spots

where he rested, are still shown; the hermitage of Ansuya and of Surbhang. Many hermits lived in these wild regions, occupying their time in prayer and meditation, though they had much better have been employed in the duties of life, and in doing good to their fellow-creatures; and, as may be imagined, many persons, outlawed for their crimes, had taken refuge here, and lived a wild life by plunder. This has been found to be the case in every country, which is thinly inhabited, and owing to the ferocious character, and wild appearance of the people, they soon got the credit of being ogres, or, as they are called in India, Rakshasa. Now we know pretty well, that no such people as the Rakshasa ever did exist, and it is only the ignorant in any country who would place credit in such stories.

Proceeding southward, Ráma arrived at a place called Rámagiri, or Rámtek, close to Nágpúr. To get there he had crossed the river Narbada. At or near Rámagiri, wandering from one spot to another, Ráma spent ten years of his exile in great happiness, and on many occasions he defended the poor hermits from the attacks of these robbers, who lived in the woods, and once or twice he killed some of them with his arrows. At length he moved to the West, and passing through the Northern part of the territory of the Nizám of the Dakhán, he entered the province of Bombay, and settled down at a spot called Panchavati, on the river Godávári. This place is now called Násik, or the Place of the Nose, and the reason of this name arises from the events, which happened there. This is considered the extreme western limit of the great Dandaka forest. Ráma had thus entirely

left the north of India, and crossed the Vindhya into the Peninsula. His route lay onward through the province of Madras, and thus the story of Ráma spreads over the whole of India.

In the neighbouring forests lived large numbers of the wild people, to whom we have above alluded, and they appeared to have had recognised chiefs and sirdars, and to have been spread over the whole of the Peninsula, for their chief dwelt at Lanka, or the island of Ceylon. His name was Rávana, and his brothers acted as his lieutenants in the northern portion of the tracts overrun by him. There is nothing unusual in this; we have exact counterparts at the present day, in the way, in which tribes spread over countries, moving from place to place, and subordinate to one chief; and the state of India must have been something of this kind in those days. Rávana had a sister called Suparnakhá, who dwelt with her brothers on the Godávári. She was inflamed with love at sight of the beauty of Ráma, whom she chanced to meet in her wanderings, and, because he would not consent to return her passion, her love was turned to rage, and the two brothers were obliged to protect themselves from her attack, and in the struggle she was much injured, and suffered the loss of her nose, of which fact mention is only made, because it is the reason, whence the modern name of the place is derived. Covered with blood, Suparnakhá fled to her brothers, Khara and Dushana, and urged them to revenge her upon the two strangers. To please her, a small party was despatched, but they were routed and slain by the superior strength of Ráma, and the same fate awaited the two chiefs also,

and the remainder of their wild attendants. There is nothing unusual in this: Ráma and his brother were skilled as warriors, and especially in the science of archery, and they easily put to flight a number much larger, but less efficient. As to the numbers quoted in the Ramáyana, it is notorious, that in every battle that has ever taken place, the number of the combatants is multiplied beyond belief. Khara and Dushana were both killed, and Suparnakhá fled away to announce the news to Rávana in Lanka.

To effect her purpose, and urged by jealousy, she praised the beauty of Síta, and incited her brother to carry her off, and make her his own wife. Partly from rage at the death of his brothers, and partly from lust for the beautiful Síta, Rávana lent himself to his sister's proposition; but previous to starting, he consulted one of his friends, Marichi, who earnestly dissuaded him from the attempt, for he himself knew the strength of Ráma, having been wounded by him on a former occasion. Nothing, however, could deter Rávana, and he persuaded Marichi to accompany him. The story goes, that Marichi transformed himself into a beautiful deer, of the colour of gold, and that Síta, feeling desirous of possessing it, persuaded Ráma to go in quest of it. The deer wandered a long way from the hut, and Síta feeling anxious, sent Lakshmana to look after Ráma, and was left herself alone. Profiting by this opportunity, Rávana came suddenly upon her, and carried her off, in spite of her cries. All this is simple enough. Many women have been carried off this way, in the absence of their friends, and it is quite unnecessary to sup-

pose, that the deer was anything but a common deer; but of course those who think, that a man can change himself into the shape of a deer, may do so, if they like; people of sense reject all such improbabilities. Rávana succeeded in carrying away Síta to Ceylon.

Ráma was in despair, when he returned, and he long searched in vain. At length he found traces of Síta, as some of her ornaments had been dropped by her on the road. They made friends with a wild race of people living in the mountains of Southern India. From Nasik they went southwards through the province of Bombay, the kingdom of Satára, and a portion of the territories of the Nizám of the Dakhan. Crossing the river Krishná, they arrived at the banks of the river Tongabudra, close to the modern town of Anagundi. Here they found the Pampa lake, which is close by the Kiskindya mountains. The people, who lived there, were a wild and savage race, but very active of body, and differing very much in appearance and colour from the inhabitants of Upper India, much in the same way as the Kol, Gond, Bhill, and other mountain races, still differ very much from the civilised Hindu. These people had great strife and contention among themselves, headed by two brothers, Bali and Sugriva. Ráma lent his assistance to the latter, and enabled him to kill his brother, and gain possession of the kingdom, in return for which Sugriva promised to search for Síta, and assist Ráma in recovering her.

People in India still believe, that these wild tribes, who thus assisted Ráma, were apes, and some go further, and on this account worship apes. It is no part of this book to try and convince of their folly people, who can

believe such absurd stories, as it is manifest, that it could not have been so. The mistake has arisen in a very natural manner, owing to the darker colour, smaller stature, and wilder habits of these mountain tribes; and indeed at the present day the Gond and Kol in some respects resemble apes. However, Ráma collected a large army, and, after sending out spies, he ascertained beyond a doubt, that his enemy, Rávana, lived at Lanka. One of his messengers, more bold than the rest, penetrated to Lanka, and ascertained, that Síta was actually in prison at that place. Ráma's forces advanced through Bellary, through the kingdom of Mysór, the district of Salem, below which they crossed the river Kávári, and passing through the districts of Trichinopoly and Madura, found themselves on the shores of the Ocean at Rámnáth, which is nearly the most southern point. Rámnáth is still a considerable town, and of great reputation, as pilgrims from all parts of India resort thither.

Not more than one hundred miles off is Lanka, separated from India by a narrow strait, called the Gulf of Manár. It appears, that there were no boats in those days, and the army would have found difficulty after all in passing, but that there is a long reef of rocks running right across the arm of the sea, connecting two small islands with the mainland on both sides; and so complete is the reef, that no vessels could pass through this strait, until the English Government opened a passage for ships betwixt the island of Rámisserám and Rámnáth; but even now all large ships are obliged to sail round Ceylon, losing many days. On the island of Rámisserám is a celebrated temple to Ráma, and this



is the extreme limit, to which the pilgrims of India wander. The reef is called by European geographers Adam's Bridge, and by Hindu the Bridge of Ráma; and an idea is entertained, that it was constructed by Ráma, on the occasion of his invading Lanka. It is unnecessary to say, that stories of this kind prevail in all countries, and any rock or cave, or natural feature of an extraordinary kind, has some name assigned to it; for instance, the Straits of Gibraltar were called the Pillars of Hercules, who occupied in Greek mythology much the same position, that Ráma does in the Hindu Legend. In Ireland we have the Giants' Causeway, but nobody now supposes that either Hercules or the giants had anything to do with the matter; in fact, as regards this very reef, all the world, except the Hindu, call it Adam's Bridge, but merely as a name; nobody believes, that Adam had anything to do with it. In the same way in Europe it used to be believed, that giants were buried under volcanoes, and that they breathed out fire; indeed the names of the giants were given, and the reasons of their being there: but further inquiry showed, that all these were foolish stories, invented by ignorant people to explain what they could not understand. In every part of the world we have the same kind of tales connected with giants, but nobody believes them now, because they are contrary to probability. These remarks apply especially to the Rám Setu; it has no doubt existed as long as the continent of India, or the island of Ceylon. The rocks rise from the bottom of the sea, or the solid crust of the earth, which is below the sea, and any convulsion of nature, which would elevate the continent, or island, would affect them also.

No doubt it was there, when Ráma arrived at Rámnáth with his army, and they made use of it to cross into Ceylon; and as it had never been heard of before, strange tales were told about it, till at last the person, who first saw it, was said to have made it.

In some way or other the army crossed over to Lanka; they attacked the city; and, after a dreadful fight, which lasted eighteen days, they slew Rávana, destroyed all the inhabitants, and recovered Síta, who had received no injury, but had remained faithful to her husband. Ceylon, for the last fifty years, has been in the possession of the English Government; it is governed very much the same way as India. The colour, dress, and habits of the inhabitants differ considerably from the people of India, and their religion is that of Buddha, the *ninth* Avatára of Vishnu. All the stories about the country being inhabited by Rakshasa, and the streets being paved with gold, are *fabulous*, and there is no excuse for giving credit to them, as a few days will convey any one from Calcutta to Ceylon.

Ráma having recovered his wife, and the time of his exile being completed, returned to his kingdom. We may suppose, that he went back by the same route, that he came, as it would be the shortest, and the only one known to him. If a person wished to go in the present day, he might accomplish his journey in a fortnight, or three weeks, with no difficulty, proceeding to Calcutta, and taking the steamer. The post conveys letters with regularity from Lanka to any part of India, and anybody, who spoke the English language, and who had served the English Government, would find very little difference to remark.

Both the kingdom of Ráma, and his enemy Rávana, are now under the rule of the same nation.

Ráma lived many years after his return to his home. His brother Bharata received him kindly, and they all dwelt together very happily. Bharata is said to have founded a city on the river Indus, and though this may seem improbable, still it is mentioned in the Raghuvansa; and in the district of Dera Ismail Khan, in the Panjáb, we find the tradition, and the names of Kukki and Bharatpúr. Lakshmana had also children, who are said to have founded Mathurá, on the Jamna. Ráma had two sons, Kusa and Lava, and from them are descended many families of Rajpúts, now in existence, though they have long ago lost the kingdom of Ajodhyá, and the name of Kosala has also been forgotten; but the actions of Ráma are well remembered, owing to the great poem of Valmíki, and the annual festival of the Dasahrá, which is kept up in his honour. No one would wish a people to forget the great actions of their former heroes and rulers; they ought to remember, and treasure them with pride; but no persons, that are enlightened, and capable of distinguishing truth from falsehood, will give credence to idle and improbable tales. We know pretty well, that very little change in the strength, or size of mankind, has taken place during the last four thousand years, and no doubt the people of India, in the time of Ráma, were very much the same as they are now; whatever is probable or possible now, was probable or possible then, and no wise man will believe more. And it does injury to the great name of Ráma, to mix up his good character and great

deeds, with such stories, as no people of another religion can credit: and the consequence is, that up to this time Ráma has never been considered a real, or an admirable character; and his virtues have never been appreciated. But those who judge rightly, say, "that it is better to restrain the passions, than to conquer a kingdom;" and therefore Ráma's dutiful conduct to his father is more deserving of praise than the conquest of Lanka.

The maps show the state of India as it is now, and as it existed in the time of the author of the Ramáyana. It is a pity, that so little attention is paid to Geography, and that respectable people in India are not ashamed of being grossly ill-informed on this subject. Every part of the country is now well known, and the most distant places brought into regular communication, the facilities of which, by Railroads and Electric Telegraph, are increasing daily. When we look at the ancient map, we can only recognise the mountains and rivers: *they at least* have not changed, and fortunately, by their assistance, we are enabled to trace many things, which would otherwise have been forgotten. In all the Purána, attempts have been made to describe the Geography of India and the World, but the writers have shown so little knowledge, that it is as well to reflect, that, if so little truth is found in matters which are capable of proof, such as History and Geography, how shall we trust them in things, which cannot be proved? The great country, through which the Ganges and Jamná flow, along which the Rajpút and Brahman races spread, was known as the Madya Dés, to the north of which was the Himavan,

and to the south the Vindhya Parbat: they knew the names of all the great rivers, which are still preserved. Some few of the great cities can still be traced, but they are fallen into decay, with the exception of Kasi, or Banáras. Kanya-Kubja, or Kanouj, Hastinapúra, Indraprastha, Ujáyini, Mithila, Sthaneswara, Mathurá, have all lost their glory. The boundaries of the kingdom of Magadha, Vidarbha, Videha, Kalinga, Maha Kosala, Anga, Banga, Panchála, Kurukshétra, and Kekéya, can with difficulty be traced out, and are unknown to the inhabitants of the very country: while on the other hand the Dakshina Patha, and Dandaka Aranya, now teem with people and cities. So fleeting and fragile are the works of man, notwithstanding his pride and boasting. But the works of God, the mountains and rivers, continue unchanged for ever. And to Virtue the same privilege is conceded. Thus the character of Ráma still challenges our admiration, though the rust of centuries has consumed his spear, and his mighty bow has long since been snapped asunder.

BANDA, 1854.

## CHAPTER XV.

*THE FIRST INVADER OF INDIA.*

*Written for the people of India, and translated into several of the Vernacular Languages of India.*

No one has obtained, and preserved, so world-wide a reputation as Alexander the Great, King of Macedon and Conqueror of Asia. Being a native of Greece, and so intimately connected with the most glorious period of the history of that country, it was not likely, that his name would be forgotten; and every well-educated person in Europe has heard of, and knows generally, the details of the life of this remarkable man. But in Asia he has obtained a still wider, though not so distinct, a reputation; and though very few can say exactly who he was, when he lived, and what he did, yet nearly every one has heard the name of Sikandar, and connects with it the idea of a great King and a great Conqueror. And indeed there is no such book in the languages of India, as gives a condensed and accurate account of his long expeditions, and short life, which are more interesting to the people of India, as he visited and conquered a part of that country. It is to supply that want that these pages are written; and with the aid of a map, the reader will be able to trace the course of Alexander,

from Macedon to the river Euphrates, and thence to the river Beas in the Panjáb.

Some Indians will remark, that they have read the Sikandarnáma, and are not in want of a history. It is replied, that the Sikandarnáma is a most silly and most incorrect book. It is quite evident, that the author had no correct means of information himself, and was ignorant of general history and geography; and it is also clear, that no one, from the perusal of that book, would be able to form any accurate notions of the country, or deeds of Alexander. And, if any teacher of a native school were asked by a pupil, where were the Nile or Euphrates, or the great cities conquered, or founded, we all know, that no satisfactory answer would be given. If the same teacher were asked, how many years ago Alexander lived, he would be unable to say, whether he was a contemporary of Abraham, or Mahomet; whether he was a fire-worshipper or an idolater. All, that would be told, would be, that he lived many years ago, and somewhere in the Western countries. The writer of these lines has read the book through, and had an abstract prepared, of the historical and geographical facts contained in it, and compared them with the Greek and Latin historians, who must now be noticed.

The subject of history had been much cultivated in Greece before the birth of Alexander, and people were quite aware of the importance of a correct account of remarkable events, written in plain language, and not in poetry, as has generally been the case in the East. The consequence was, that two of the companions of Alexander wrote accounts of all that was done, and which they had actually seen. Both these books have

been lost, but fortunately they were read, and made use of by two authors, whose works have come down to us, one of whom lived four hundred years, and the other four hundred and sixty years, after the death of the man whose life they were writing; but they lived in a country adjoining Macedon, among a people of most enlightened intellects, and they were aware, that many false reports and stories had been spread even there, and they were on their guard to avoid them. It is to be feared, that the author of the *Sikandarnáma*, who lived more than a thousand years after the death of his hero, and in a country very widely separated from the place of Alexander's birth, and among a people not capable of criticising and distinguishing truth from falsehood, was not so much on his guard, as Arrian and Quintus Curtius, and had not the same opportunities of testing the truth. He did not intend to write falsehood, but he was writing poetry to catch the ear, and he merely committed to paper the legends, which he had heard. Alexander was a Greek, and it is fair therefore to trust to histories drawn from Greek writers, rather than from a foreign country. Another proof of their general veracity has been afforded by modern geographical discoveries, as the country, traversed by Alexander, has only lately been opened to travellers, and therefore the account now given may confidently be relied upon.

Alexander was son of Philip, King of Macedon, a portion of the country then known as Greece, or Yunán, now included in the empire of the Sultán of Constantinople, and known as the kingdom of Rúm. He was born 354 years before the Christian era.



Greece is the most eastern portion of Europe, and separated by an arm of the sea from Asia. In those days nothing was known of the present nations, who are powerful in Europe. Their country was inhabited by savages, and the whole world, with the exception of the nation of the Jews, were idolaters. But they were not so much to blame then, as the Word of God had not been revealed to mankind at large, but only to one small people. Philip, by his wisdom and valour, maintained a great influence over the States, who possessed the southern part of Greece, and the Greeks were a very warlike and learned nation, though not numerous.

The whole of Asia, as far as it was then known, and the country of Egypt in Africa, were all included in one great kingdom, called the kingdom of Persia. This kingdom had been founded by Cyrus, so well known in the *Shahnáma* of Firdúsi as Kai Khosru, and had been ruled by Darius Hystaspes, known as Gustasp. At that time it included one hundred and twenty Provinces, stretching as far as India, and including the countries on the river Indus, though they had never been thoroughly conquered. They had however been explored, for ships had been floated down the Indus to the sea, and conveyed thence to the port of Suez, in Egypt. At the time of Alexander, Darius, known as Dara, was the king of this country; but, like the large kingdoms in India, it was badly governed: no care was taken of the people, who were plundered for the benefit of the servants of the king, and a corrupt nobility. The religion of the country was that of Zírdast, or Zoroaster. The followers of this religion were called fire-worshippers, or Gabr, and a remnant of them still exists

at Bombay, in India, whither they fled from the persecution of the Mahometans. For a century previous to the time of Alexander, the kings of Persia had been at war with the people of Greece. The Persians had twice invaded Greece, but they had been signally defeated both by land and sea, although their numbers were far greater than that of the Greeks. There had, after that, been constant war in Asia Minor, and it had become the practice of the Persian satraps, or governors of provinces, to engage Grecian mercenaries as their soldiers. On one occasion, when Artaxerxes was king, his brother Cyrus had rebelled against him, and, aided by a force of ten thousand Greeks, had penetrated across the Euphrates, almost to Babylon, and fought a great battle, in which Cyrus, though conqueror, was killed. These same Greeks cut their way back many thousand miles, through the strange and mountainous country of Armenia, to the shores of the Black Sea, in spite of the attacks of the Persian forces. All these things had taught the Greeks, how very weak, in reality, was the power of the Persian king, and how much a few properly disciplined troops could do against many.

We thus see, that there existed at that time the great, but weak, kingdom of Persia, and the small, but strong, country of Greece, divided into several states, which were generally quarrelling with each other. Philip had managed to unite them nearly all under his orders, and was himself preparing to invade Asia, when he was killed by an assassin. But his son Alexander, though only twenty years of age, at once undertook to carry out the scheme. Some foolish people choose to believe, that Alexander was elder

brother of, or related to, Darius. This was a story, invented to render the disgrace of the Persians less remarkable. He was son-in-law of Darius, as he married his daughter, but in no other way related, as the Greeks had not previously intermarried with the Persians, and Alexander was in every respect a pure Greek. Others have pretended, that he was the son of one of the heathen gods. Had he lived a few hundred years earlier, no doubt the story would have been believed; for in very old times everything was believed, and everybody, whose father was of no repute, was said to be son of some god. Luckily Alexander lived after the historic period had commenced, and we know exactly who he was.

In the year 334 before the Christian era, he commenced his memorable journey. His force consisted of 34,500 foot-soldiers, and 4500 cavalry, and he marched along the coast of Macedonia, till he came to the narrow arm of the sea called the Hellespont, which separates Europe from Asia. This he crossed in boats, and had at once to prepare to fight a much larger army assembled by the provincial governors, consisting of 110,000 men, more than twice the size of his force. Alexander entirely defeated this force on the banks of the river Granicus; an immense number were killed and taken prisoner, and all opposition ceased. He now swept through Asia Minor, conquering city after city, and appointing governors over the new provinces. He passed through the mountainous ranges on the south-east of Asia Minor, called the Syrian Gates, and entered the province of Syria, not far from the celebrated city of Antioch.

In the meantime Darius had prepared to receive him, and had himself led a large army from his capital across the river Euphrates into Syria, and advancing towards Antioch, met Alexander near the little river Issus. Both parties came unexpectedly in sight of each other; but, though the army of Darius was not less than 200,000 men, he was entirely defeated, obliged to fly, leaving his wife and family in the hands of the conqueror. This battle was a very severe one, and the number of Persians killed was enormous. Darius fled across the river Euphrates, and offered terms of peace, agreeing to surrender half his dominions; but Alexander refused to listen, being determined to have all or nothing.

The whole of Syria was now conquered, and the great city of Damascus taken, known as Shám. The famous city of Tyre, so renowned for its commerce, was besieged and taken in a wonderful way, for it was situated on an island, and Alexander threw out an immense causeway, by which the island was connected with the land, and is now a peninsula. Thence Alexander marched to Jerusalem, the city of the Jews, but that people surrendered at once, because the true and great God, whom they worshipped, and whom the Christians worship now, had told them by the mouth of His prophets, many years before, that a king of Greece would come, and destroy the empire of Persia. So they went out to meet him, and showed him, what was written in their books regarding him, and he worshipped the great God, of whom he had never heard before, and visited the celebrated Temple, and spared the city and people.

He next marched southward, towards Egypt, which for a hundred years had formed a portion of the Persian empire, having been conquered by Cambyses, the son of Cyrus. Egypt or Misr is one of the most ancient kingdoms of the world. Fifteen hundred years before the well-known Joseph, or Yusuf, had been governor of this country on the part of Pharaoh, who then ruled; the river Nile flowed through the land, and was the cause of its great fertility and wealth; but the people were always, and are still, a degraded nation. They were so debased, as to worship animals, such as the cat, the stork, and the cow, than which nothing can be more foolish. It is even more unworthy of a man of sense, than the worshipping of Idols, as they at least are believed to represent a deity; but the worship of animals is only that of brute beasts. Alexander conquered Egypt without difficulty, visited the temple of Jupiter Ammon in the desert, and founded, not far from the mouths of the Nile, on the coast of the Mediterranean, a great city, which is still famous, and called Alexandria.

Returning northward, he prepared to cross the Euphrates, and attempt the conquest of the Eastern provinces also. The country of Mesopotamia, to which he now approached, is a very remarkable one. It is a Doáb, between the Euphrates and the Tigris, which take their rise in the mountains of Armenia, and flow southward, till they join together, and form the Shatt-al-Arab, and thence into the great Persian Gulf, which is connected with the Indian Ocean. It was the seat of some of the earliest kingdoms, of which the memory has survived in history. Up

to the time of Alexander, the sovereign of Western Asia had always lived on the banks of one of these two rivers, and all the commerce of the ancient world, whether by land or sea, found its way there. Alexander marched to the Euphrates, and crossed by a bridge of boats at Thapsacus. To avoid the desert country he marched across the Doáb, and crossed the river Tigris also, near the ruins of the celebrated city of Nineveh, which in those days had been quite forgotten; but during the last few years its ruins have been discovered. Not very far off, at a place called Arbéla, the Grecian army met the army of Darius, and after a battle, in which the carnage was dreadful, Alexander was victorious, and the Persians entirely destroyed. Darius fled away, and was killed by one of his own officers. Babylon, on the river Euphrates, the capital of the Empire, was now occupied without a struggle, and the Greeks found themselves masters of the great Persian empire.

This was not, however, enough for the young king. The lust of ambition and conquest increases the more that it is gratified, and Alexander at once prepared for a campaign farther eastward, extending to Afghanistan and India. He took the cities of Susa and Persepolis. At the former he found immense treasures; and, in a moment of drunkenness, he set fire to, and destroyed, the palaces of the latter. He then marched to the north, passing through the modern kingdom of Persia, and near the present capital of Teherán, and crossing the mountains he entered Hyrcania, now called Mazenderán, on the shores of the Caspian Sea. He then marched through Khorasán, near the

sites of the modern cities of Meshed and Nishapur, thence invaded Bactria, and the kingdoms of Bokhára and Samarkand, crossing the river Oxus, and penetrating as far as the river Jaxartes. This country is known now as the country Mawar-al-Nahr, or regions beyond the Oxus. Báber, the founder of the Moghal dynasty, who ruled so many years at Delhi, came from that quarter, his native land being Ferghána. Wherever Alexander went, he conquered the people of the country, took strong fortresses, and founded new cities bearing his name, but the exact sites of which can now with difficulty be fixed.

Crossing the mountains to Kábul, he prepared to invade India. The names of places have so much changed since that time, that it is not easy to trace his exact route, but he must have come along the usual mountainous route by Jalálabád to Pesháwar. He had to attack and defeat many wild tribes inhabiting the mountains, for the inhabitants of these parts were then as wild and rude as they are to this day. One celebrated mountain fortress on the banks of the Indus was taken, which is supposed to be near the town of Amb, in the country of the Yusufzye. He crossed the Indus at Attak, and entered the district of Rawal Pindi, in the Panjáb. It is interesting to read of events, which happened in these countries two thousand years ago. Advancing through eastward, Alexander was met by the king of that country, Porus, who was prepared to dispute with him the passage of the Jhílam, a deep and rapid river. No opposition had been met between the Indus and Jhílam, for Taxiles, the king of that country, had made friends with the

invader. The capital of Taxiles was called Taxila, and the ruins have been discovered. The Jhilam was formerly called the Vetusta by the Indians, but the Greeks called it the Hydaspes. It takes its rise in the valley of Kashmír, through which it flows, and after passing through many ranges of mountains, it at length enters the plains of the Panjáb, and joins the Chináb.

The exact spot, where Alexander crossed this river, is not known, but by a skilful artifice he effected the passage, and entirely defeated the army of Porus, whom he took prisoner, but afterwards released, and restored to his kingdom. He himself advanced across the Panjáb through the district of Gujerát, and crossed the Chináb. The name of this river with the Indians was Chandra Bhága, and it is so mentioned in the Ramáyana, and by this name it is still known in the hill tracts. The Greeks called it the Acesines. Advancing farther, Alexander crossed the Rávi, on the banks of which Lahore, the capital of the Panjáb, stands. This river was called the Airavati by the Indians, whence the word Rávi is corrupted; but the Greeks called it the Hydraotes; it flows southward, and falls into the Chináb, below the junction of the river Jhilam. Thence Alexander marched across the district of Amritsar, and attacked and conquered a people called the Kathæi, who dwelt at a town called Sangala. The site of this town is not known, but it must have been somewhere in the Bári Doáb. The people were, no doubt the ancestors of the tribe, so numerous in the Panjáb to this day, called the Khatri, a branch of the Kshatrya, or Warrior Caste. Some scholars connect the Kathæi with the people of the country, mentioned



in the Ramáyana as the Kekeya Des. At any rate the two countries must have been very near together.

Alexander had now reached the Beas, known by and mentioned in the Ramáyana as the Vipása, but called by the Greeks the Hyphasis. He was preparing to pass this river, and enter the Jalandhar Doáb; he would then have crossed the river Satlaj, known to the Indians as the Satúdra, but to the Greeks as the Hysúdrus; and as he conquered more countries, he was seized with the desire of making more conquests, and was planning to cross the river Jamna, and descend the Ganges, through kingdoms, of which then nothing was known to the Western world; but from the Sanskrit books we know, that at that time powerful kingdoms existed in Madya Des, at Indraprasthá, Hastinapúrá, Mathurá, and farther down at Ayodhyá. With all these Alexander would have had to contend, and so many battles, and such long marches, had much reduced his army. He himself was most anxious to penetrate farther, to descend the Ganges, and sail back to Greece round Africa. This is a very easy voyage now, and may be done with great facility; but in those days, when ships were so small, it seemed like a dream, for nobody then knew the extent of the world, or even of the peninsula of India. Something, I am afraid, like the majority of the people of India now, who are much more to blame than Alexander; for his teacher Aristotle at least knew all, that had been discovered up to that time, and attempts had been made to draw a map.

When the Grecian army heard, that the king was preparing to cross the Beas, they mutinied. They loved

him dearly and truly, but they were exhausted, and they lost heart, when they heard, that he was determined to go still farther Eastward; they could not tell, how much farther he would have taken them. When Alexander found, that he could not persuade them to go with him, he was obliged to yield, and retraced his steps to the river Jhílam. Here a fleet of boats had been prepared, on which part of his army was embarked, while two other portions marched down the right and left banks of the river. The Jhílam flows into the Chináb, which receives, a little farther down, the river Ravi. Still farther down these three united streams flow into the Satlaj. The five rivers of the Panjáb thus united bear the name of the Panjnad. Some miles farther down they join the Indus, and flow on through the country of Sind into the Ocean. Alexander attacked many nations on the way down, especially the Malli, who are supposed to have been the inhabitants of the district of Multán, and here he very nearly lost his life, for he scaled the walls of a fortress almost alone, and was severely wounded. He was also opposed in Sind, but eventually arrived safe at Patála, at the head of the delta of the Indus, near the modern city of Tatta. Here the army was divided into three parts; one portion, comprising the elephants, was despatched by a central route betwixt the confines of Balúchistán and Afghanistán, to find its way back to Kirman, in Persia. A second, under the command of Alexander in person, marched along the southern coast of Balúchistán, through a desert and uninhabited country, never traversed before. The third division was embarked in vessels, which sailed down the Indus

into the Ocean, under the command of Nearchus, the most skilful sailor of the time. This was indeed a wonderful feat, and a service of great danger; for the vessels were small, the navigation unknown, the distance scarcely known either, and the chance of getting supplies of food very doubtful. However, they kept close to the coast, as in those days no ships dared to leave the coast. After suffering great privations, they arrived at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, which was well known to them, and all difficulty was then past. The land detachments suffered from want of water and food, and numbers perished. At length the whole army was again assembled on the Euphrates, and the great campaign was finished. The whole world, as it was then considered, had been conquered. Close calculations have lately been made to ascertain the exact distance traversed by Alexander from the day that he left Pella, the capital of Macedon, till his return to Babylon, and it is found to exceed nineteen thousand English miles. This was the greatest expedition, that had ever taken place, and was indeed a very wonderful one, though the distances traversed in modern days by the troops of the present Rulers of India, coming from, and returning to England, or proceeding to China, and every part of the world, are much larger.

Alexander was quite aware of the importance of Commerce, and now that he had returned to his capital, he was preparing still more extensive schemes, one of which was to conquer the Peninsula of India. He was building new cities in every part of the world, constructing a large fleet, and many of his schemes

were wise, and worthy of a great Sovereign ; and as he was still only thirty-one years of age, and had no single rival, all being dazzled by his great glory and success, all his schemes seemed possible and probable, and it is much to be regretted, that they were not carried into effect. But everything is ordained wisely, and so it happened, that this great king, who had survived so many battles, and such severe wounds and fatigues, died of a fever in his palace at Babylon, and with him all his mighty schemes perished, and India was cut off from the Western world for another fifteen hundred years, till it was conquered by the Mahometans.

His death is a memorable instance of the frailty of all human greatness. All his family, his wives, his child, and his mother, were in a few years killed ; his kingdom was divided among his generals, who each seized upon what they could lay hands on. Nothing remained of him, but his great name, which has received a greater lustre from the circumstance of no one ever having arisen in after-times to equal him ; and his reign was so short, only thirteen years, that it appeared like a dream, when he was gone. It is mentioned above, that at Jerusalem he was shown in the holy books of the Jews how he was to conquer Persia ; had he read a few lines further, and pondered upon it, he would have seen that his kingdom would be broken, and divided towards the four winds of heaven, and not be to his posterity.

Alexander was a great king, and a great general, and possessed many noble qualities, such as valour and generosity ; yet he was stained with many crimes. Nor can we wonder, when we consider the tempta-

tions to which he was exposed. In a fit of drunkenness he killed his friend Clitus with his own hand, and set fire to the palace of Persepolis, the ruins of which even to this day excite our admiration. He put to death also some of his most faithful companions upon unjust suspicions. He was insatiably ambitious, and pleased with the grossest flattery. Very few good traits of his private character are recorded, and it may be perhaps the better for his fame, that he died so young. We must not also forget the thousands of lives, which he sacrificed, both of his countrymen and of the people of Asia, solely for his own selfish objects. It has been too much the practice in Asia to consider the lives of the poor and the weak entirely at the disposal of the rich and powerful.

The countries, included in his Empire for the few years of his reign must now be noticed. Macedon, his hereditary kingdom, was to the extreme west. Proceeding eastward, we come to Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, or the Holy Land, to the south-west of which was Egypt. In Arabia Alexander made no conquests. To the east of the Euphrates his Empire included Mesopotamia, Persia, Afghanistan, the country between the Caspian Sea, the Oxus, and the Jaxartes, the Panjáb, Sind, and Balúchistán. It must not be supposed, that these countries were all governed directly by him, or that his power was equally exerted in all: in some he had entire control, and appointed his own Governors, who collected the revenue, and maintained soldiers to control the inhabitants; in others the local Rulers were allowed to remain, on condition of paying an annual tribute. Among these were the Rulers of the

Panjab and Sind, who, soon after the death of Alexander, threw off their allegiance. No idea can be formed of the population, or of the revenues of the whole kingdom, owing to the rapidity, with which it was created and fell away; but great as it was, we know that it fell far short of the Roman Empire in extent, and even in these days is far exceeded in size, wealth, and number of the population, by the Empire of the English Nation, of which the great country of India, from the Himálaya to the Ocean, is only one Province.

My readers may rest satisfied, that this account of Alexander is that, which has been received and believed in Europe for more than two thousand years, and which there is every reason to believe to be true. It will occur to any person of intelligence, that nothing is here related, that is contrary to possibility or probability. The countries and cities described are recognised, and can be traced on the map; but what shall we say of the story of Alexander visiting the country of Zulmat, or Darkness, at the end of the World, to fetch the water of life, which is mentioned in the Sakandarnáma? Where are the ends of the world in a globe, which has neither end nor beginning? The author of the Poem is a Mahometan, and of course he makes Alexander visit the Kába at Mecca, in Arabia, a place utterly unknown beyond Arabia at that time, as it was not, till many hundred years afterwards that Mahomet was born, and brought the black stone of the Kába into notice. No doubt, had a Hindu written the life of Alexander, he would have taken him to Mathurá or Banáras; for, when once the path of truth is departed from, each author

wishes to introduce the countries, which are most interesting to his readers. The object of this book is to interest, and also to instruct, and therefore truth is not departed from ; but all, that Antiquity has left us of the actions of the great Alexander, is faithfully examined, and no one is required to believe, what cannot be proved, and is not within the bounds of probability.

BANDA, 1854.

## CHAPTER XVI.

*THE INDIAN REFORMER.*

*Written for the people of India, and translated into several of the Vernacular Languages of India.*

THE life of a person, who by his actions and precepts has influenced the ideas, and consciences, of a large number of his fellow-creatures, both during his lifetime and for centuries after his death, can never be devoid of interest. When that influence has not been owing to his wealth, rank, or power, but simply to his own merits, that Man must be called truly Great; and, when we find that his motives were unselfish, that after a long life devoted to the instruction of others in the paths of Virtue, and Moral Purity, he died poor, and delegated his office, not to his children, but to one of his disciples, whom he considered most virtuous, *that* Man must be considered truly Good, as well as truly Great.

Such was Baba Nának, the first Teacher and founder of the Sikh tenets. However much we may differ with him in many of his doctrines, we cannot but admit, that he was one of those, to whom the Almighty has vouchsafed special blessings; for during a long life of seventy years, he laboured unceasingly at one object,



viz., to reform the lives and religion of his countrymen, to break through the tyranny of Priestcraft, Ritual, and Caste. He taught, that purity of thought, word, and deed, abstinence from Lust, Anger, and Avarice, were better than feeding Brahmans, or making offerings at Temples. He tried to amalgamate the Hindu and Mahometan Religions, and convince all, that they were really brothers, descended from one Father. He lived long enough to see the seed, which he had sown, bring forth fruit: that in after age the plant has been choked by the thorns of corruptions, is owing to the imperfection of all things human: that he made the noble attempt, that he set the example in his own life, and partially succeeded, is his greatest praise.

There are some, who have tried to impose upon the ignorant by asserting, that Nának was an incarnation of the Deity, and that he worked miracles; those may believe this, who like, but they must remember, that he lived only three hundred and fifty years ago, at a period, when the facts of History are well ascertained, and in a country, ruled over by people of another religion: had Nának had the power of flying through the air, walking over the sea, raising the dead to life, these facts would not have escaped mention, especially as he was not unknown to the great Emperor Báber. The same assertions are made in favour of every person, who in any country is renowned for sanctity, or virtue, and are believed by none, but the most credulous. In the same narrative we find stories most ridiculous, and untrue, with regard to the Earth, the Stars, and other facts of positive knowledge, which furnish a good test of the degree of credibility of

the writer. Those who like, may believe everything ; we have selected those facts, which are worthy of the belief of all.

In that Province of British India, which from the circumstance of its being traversed by five rivers, is called the Panjáb, in the District of Lahore, in the tract betwixt the Rávi and Chináb, called the Rechna Doab, near the banks of the Degh Nála, there was a village named Talwandi, the property, as it is still, of a tribe of Mahometan Rajpúts, who had emigrated from the sandy regions between the Jamna and Satlaj, known as Bhattiána. The time of our narrative is the year 1469 of the Christian era. This part of India was then governed by the dynasty of Ludi Pathans, whose name still lives in Ludiána on the Satlaj. Four hundred years had elapsed since the first Mahometan had invaded India, and their power was firmly seated in Northern India: the great Timúr the Lame had sacked Delhi, and his great grandson Báber, who was destined to be the founder of a line of Emperors, was still a child in the countries beyond the Oxus.

The country round Talwandi was wild, badly cultivated, and covered with brushwood. It is at the edge of the great jungle waste or Bár, which occupies the space betwixt the Rávi and Chináb, containing many million acres of uncultivated land. Two religions appeared to meet here also, for the industrious, and settled Jats, who were Hindu, here came into contact with the idle and migratory Bhatti, who had adopted the religion of Mahomet. In those days persecution on account of religion was very common, and many

changed their faith from base motives; bitter feelings existed between the Mahometan and Hindu there, as elsewhere. No roads traversed this savage region; it was then, as it is now, in *a corner*, and when many years after, this neighbourhood passed into the hands of independent Sikh Chiefs, they assumed the name of Nukya from this circumstance.

The Brahmans had for many centuries past re-established their Religion, and system of Castes throughout India; had expelled the followers of Buddha from the country, and tried to convince the ignorant people, that there was no other nation in the world but the Hindu, and no other religion than that of Vishnu and Siva; but unluckily for them, the arrival of Mahometans in vast numbers and great strength, from the countries west of the Indus, destroyed this idea; and moreover the Mahometans were always desirous of making converts, and succeeded in so doing by force, persuasion, and the offer of worldly advantages. But the new converts rarely abandoned their Hindu customs, or comprehended fully the simple tenets of Mahomet. Among them the system of Caste was partially introduced; the Saiud was considered as powerful as a Brahman; a Pir and Sháhíd were as much venerated as a Jógi and Fakír; pilgrimages to tombs and shrines were held to be meritorious. The true meaning of the Korán and Veda was unknown to the multitude; wild stories of miracles, and supernatural beings were believed, and if any one asked, where truth was, to be found, or what was God, no answer could be given either by Hindu or Mahometan. Many abandoned the duties of life in the

hopes of obtaining purity by escaping from what they could not but admit to be deception; and in different parts of India different sects had been formed under Rámanand, Gorakhnáth, Kabír, and the ascetic orders of Bairági, Gosain, and Jógi had come into existence.

It was at this period, and at the place above mentioned, that a son was born to one Kalu, a Khatri, of the Bedi tribe, a poor but respectable man, who occupied the post of Village-Accountant. The father and mother of Kalu were named Siva Rám, and Bunási; and he had one brother named Lálu, and his wife came from near the village of Kanakuchwa, half-way betwixt Lahore and Firozpúr; her sister was the mother of Ram Taman, a person of great celebrity at Kasúr. Kalu had one daughter, who was named Nánaki, and who was married to Jai Rám, a corn-dealer at Sultánpúr, in the Doab. Kalu named his son Nának; and when he afterwards became famous, he was called by Mahometans Nának Shah, and by the Hindu, Guru Nának, Bába Nának, and Nának Nirankár.

Many wonderful stories are told about his birth, infancy, and childhood; we do not believe all, but, as his followers believe them, we give some. The Nurse, who assisted at the birth, stated, that she heard at the moment of his entering the world, sounds as of a crowd welcoming with joy the arrival of a great man; the spot is shown and a temple built over it, called Nánakána; close by, is another place, where he used to play with other boys, called Balkarira, on the banks of a tank. Nának acquired a knowledge of Persian, and accounts in a very short time; but

he was disinclined to any worldly pursuit, and one day, while in charge of cattle, he fell asleep, and by his carelessness the crops were destroyed, but, when complaint was made, the injury was miraculously restored. He was one day found sleeping exposed to the rays of the Sun, but a snake had spread its hood over his head to shade him. The place is called Kiara Sahib, and a handsome building has lately been erected there. Kalu then tried to employ him in mercantile pursuits, and sent him on a journey with Bála, a Jat of the Sindhu tribe, and gave him forty Rupees to trade with. On his road he met a party of Fakirs, and entered into conversation with them, being surprised to find, that they had neither home, clothes, nor food. He learned from their mouths the vanity and uselessness of these things, and the danger of living in cities, and being engaged in worldly matters. As they refused his offer of money, and asked for food only, he went to the neighbouring village, and invested all his money in flour, and fed the whole party. He returned home, and was found by his father concealed under a tree. He told him what had happened, and justified himself by stating, that his father had directed him to do a good business, and he had done so by laying up treasures in Heaven, the fruit of works of charity. His father was very angry, and was proceeding to beat and ill use him, but Rai Bholár Bhatti, the Mahometan landowner, interfered. He had been struck by the wonderful stories current in the village with regard to Nának; and by the purity of his character, and the nobility of this last action, he paid Kalu the money, and forbade him ever to ill use

or constrain his son. The place where Nának fed the Fakirs is called Khara Souda or Real Profit, and the tree, where he lay concealed, is still shown; its branches sweep down to the ground on every side, and is known as Mal Sahib.

As he would not settle down to any trade, to the great sorrow of his father, though his mother always took his part, Kalu sent him to visit his sister Nánaki at Sultanpur, on the Bein Nadi, in the Jalandhar Doab. This was a city of some note, situated on the great Imperial road from Lahore to Delhi, as can still be traced by the Kos Minar, and the Serai. At that time the Governor of the Province, Daulat Khán Lodi, a relation of the Emperor of Delhi, resided there. Jai Rám, the brother-in-law of Nának, had sufficient interest with this Nawáb to get him appointed to the charge of the supplies of the household. Nának received a large advance, but he gave away so much to Fakirs, that he was accused to the Nawáb of having behaved dishonestly. When, however, accounts were taken, a large balance was miraculously found in his favour.

At this time Nának was married to the daughter of Moula, whose name was Solakhni. By her he had two sons, Sri Chánd and Lakshmi Dás. From the latter descend the Bedi tribe, which pretends to the sanctity, though they do not adopt the virtues, of their great ancestors. The former founded the sect of the Udási, who dwell in numerous convents all over the Panjáb. He gave no authority to his descendants to practise the wicked custom of killing their daughters. Indeed, it is contrary to the mild and benevolent principles which he taught. He appears

to have anticipated, that his descendants would make a bad use of the circumstance of his being their ancestor, for he was unwilling to marry, and had no wish to have children. In none of his travels did he take them with him, and he expressly excluded them from the succession to the position of spiritual teacher, which he had attained, and chose one of his disciples, as more worthy of that important office.

Soon after the birth of his children he ceased to care for worldly affairs: his mind was more and more occupied with a sense of the Vanity of Wealth, Rank, and Power, and even of Life. He went once to bathe in the Bein Nadi, and stayed three whole days in the water. The tree is still shown where he used to sit, and is known as Baba-ki Bír, and the place where he bathed is called Sant Ghát. Even the shop, where he used to trade, is called Háth Sahib, and weights are shown stated to be those which he had used in trade. He now abandoned his home, and took up his abode in the jungles. His friends tried in vain to dissuade him; many went out to talk him over, and among others, his father-in-law Moola, who was naturally very much annoyed at seeing his daughter and her children deserted without any provision. Nawáb Daulat Khán was persuaded to send his commands to him to return, but in vain. Nának replied, that he was the servant of God alone, and knew no earthly master. It may be remarked, that all his replies are given by the narrator in the form of short pithy verses.

The tendency of all his remarks had been, that there was one God, one true faith, and that the divisions of

Religion and Castes were but the work of man. This led the Nawáb to persuade him one day to accompany him to the Mosque at the hour of prayer. When all the Mahometans knelt down to pray, Nának alone stood up. When the Nawáb remonstrated, he said, "O Nawáb, you were not praying; your thoughts were occupied in the purchase of a horse at Kandahár." The Nawáb, who was an honest, truth-loving man, confessed, that his thoughts had wandered. The Kázi was much enraged, and asked Nának, why he did not pray with him? He replied, "You, O Kázi, were not praying; you were thinking of your daughter's illness, and wondering, whether your colt had fallen into a well." The Kazi's countenance fell, and he was obliged to confess, that the Guru had truly read his thoughts. There is deep wisdom in these remarks; for a formal repetition of words in a language not understood, cannot be considered to be praying, and the thoughts are too apt to wander, when they ought to be fixed upon God.

Nának now finally abandoned the world, and adopted the life of a Fakir. His wife and children were sent to his father-in-law. He took leave of his sister Nánaki, who remained always warmly attached to him, and started on his travels from village to village and from country to country. His companions were Bála, who had accompanied him from the earliest days, and is thence called Bhai Bála, and Mardhána, a Mahometan musician, who voluntarily joined him, and who used to play to his master on his harp while he was abstracted in thought and prayer. Bhai Mardhána is described as a strange companion, who



was always hungry, and getting into scrapes, from which Nának had to extricate him. When he played on the harp it was always in the praise of the Creator.

Tu hi Naráyan karkirtar : Nának banda tera.

Nának used to be whole days wrapped in meditation, with closed eyes, and thoughts fixed on God, and unconscious of what was going on, while Mardhána suffered much from exposure, hunger, thirst, and a desire to return to his family.

One day he went to Aminabád, then as now an important city in the Rechna Doab, in the district of Gujeránwala. He put up in the house of Lalu Thakán, whom he knew to be virtuous and honest; and refused to eat the food of Wazir Malik Bhagu, because he was an oppressor of the poor, and had collected his wealth, as an unjust Ruler of the people. Here is a wise lesson for all readers of this story, for indeed there is no blessing in wealth wrung from the poor by oppression; the name of Nurshirván still lives on account of his Justice after the lapse of many centuries. The place, where Nának slept at Aminabád, is still venerated under the name of Rori Sahib, from the circumstance of the Guru having spread gravel on the spot. While he was residing here, the great invasion of India took place under Báber, the founder of the Dynasty of the Emperors of Delhi, which has only lately passed away. Aminabád was taken by storm and plundered, and the Guru and his companions were compelled to carry burdens; he submitted, and was carried to the Emperor's tents, accompanied by Mardhána playing on the Rabáb. The Emperor

was struck by his appearance and still more by his words, and held a long conversation with him, and ordered his release. The Guru is said to have told the Emperor, that his descendants to the seventh generation would sit on the throne of Delhi, which prophecy came true. It is also narrated, that, while the Guru was talking with the Emperor, the servants brought bhang, an intoxicating drug, in which the latter too freely indulged. Báber offered some to the Guru, who declined, stating that he had a supply, which never failed him, and of which the effects were never exhausted. Upon being asked to explain, he replied, that he alluded to the name of God, the consideration of which occupied all his faculties. At other times he made similar remarks, that he had no thought for food, that the name of God was his only food; and when urged by his relations to return home to Talwandi, he replied that he had no parents, brethren, or family, that God was all in all to him.

Among other places in the Panjáb that he visited was Hasan Abdal, where they show the impression of a hand in marble, which the inhabitants are good enough to call Panja Sahib, as the hand of Nának. How it came there, what good it does there, is not explained. The Guru also visited Sialkót, and the tree, under which he sat, is still shown as Bábaki Pír. He also visited Pak Patan and Chuhar Khana in the district of Gujeránwala, at the last of which places is a building in his honour. Once or twice he returned to his native place to visit his parents, who soon after died, and his kind friend and protector, Rai Bholar. Although he lived to the age of seventy years, his uncle Lalu outlived him.

After his return from his travels he settled down on the banks of the Rávi in the District of Gurdáspúr. He built, a Dharamsala there, and called the place Kirtarpúr. There he gathered his family and his disciples around him, and there eventually he died.

With regard to his travels it is difficult to speak with precision ; that he visited all the chief cities and places of pilgrimage of Hindustan, is probable : mention of them all is made in the traditions, and wonderful stories connected with some. He appears generally to have entered into discussions of a hostile nature with every Brahman and Pujári, pointing out the uselessness of works and rituals, if there was no purity of mind or faith. At Hardwár, on the Ganges, he told the people to beware of the Pandits, who would infallibly lead them to perdition, and that, until the mind of man became pure, all púja pát, or sacrifice, was vain. One day as the Brahmans stood looking to the East, and pouring out water as a funeral offering to their ancestors, Nának stood up, and did the same, looking to the West. When asked the reason of his so doing, he said that he was watering his fields at Kirtarpúr, which lie to the West. They scornfully remarked, that his water could never reach so many hundred miles. "How, then," he replied, "do you expect, that your water can reach your ancestors in the other world?" He accused another Brahmán of thinking of a woman, while he was apparently muttering his devotions.

With regard to his travels beyond the limits of Hindustan, nothing certain is known, as he left no account. Bhai Mardhána died before him, and all,

that is known was collected from the mouth of Bhai Bála, an ignorant Jat, who undertook to record many years after all what he had seen. The people, who drew up the narrative, were ignorant of geography, and of the distances of one city from the other. All that they could do was to enter at random the names of all the places, of which they had ever heard from travellers, or books. We thus meet with the names of Lanka, the Dwipa of the Purána, Sind, Kábul, Kharam; and we find, that the Guru availed himself of the easy mode of transport of flying through the air, or wishing himself at any place, or directing the place to come to him. This entirely prevents us from following him, and describing what happened to him at each place on his travels. We can only conclude that he travelled, as Fakírs do now, putting up at night in roadside hermitages, and at times in the large convents, and preaching and conversing, with all ranks of men. He came back, as poor as he went; for he had no thought or care for wealth and luxury. The period of his travels, being less than three hundred and fifty years ago, and the state of the countries adjacent to India, chiefly inhabited by Mahometans and Buddhists, being well known, we may at once reject, as erroneous, all the wild stories about Magicians, Monsters, and dangers of a supernatural kind, which are said to have met him.

Two places of great note were no doubt visited by him, namely Mecca, and Medína in Arabia. In those days, as now, there was a constant flow of pilgrims from India to Arabia, and the communication was easy. Nának was described as having assumed the

garb of a Mahometan Fakir, and with him was Mardhána, an undoubted believer in Mahomet. At Mecca he entered into discussions with the Mahometans in charge of the Kaba; and when he was reprov'd for sleeping with his feet turned towards that building, which seemed disrespectful, he inquired, in which direction he could turn his feet, where the same disrespect would not be offered, for God was everywhere. Many strangers, convinced by his words, asked what they should do to be saved. His answer was, "Worship God."

He died in the year of the Christian era 1539, at the advanced age of seventy years. He selected Lehna, a Khatri of the Tihau Goth, to be his spiritual successor, and named him Angad, which is fancifully derived from the word Ang Khud, as if the Guru considered him to be his own body. He considered his own sons unworthy of the succession because they were undutiful; and when expostulated with on the subject by their mother, he tried their obedience in the following way. A cat had flung a half-dead mouse at his feet: the Guru ordered his sons to remove it; they drew back and refused. Lehna without a moment's hesitation obeyed the order. Nának blessed him and said, that he was the real son, who obeyed his father. Another miraculous story is told to the same effect. One day they had found a dead body in the adjoining jungle. Nának said to his followers, "Whoever is my disciple, let him eat of that dead body." They all drew back in horror, but Lehna at once stooped down to obey the order, and behold! the body was gone, and a plate of excellent food was in its place.

The real truth is, that Nának in his wisdom foresaw the tendency of all hereditary appointments to become abuses; his object was, not to found a family, who under a false pretence to sanctity, might lord it over their country, while they practised abominable crimes. He wished to provide for a succession of wise and good teachers of the doctrines, which he had himself taught. His intentions have not been carried out, and his sect of the Hindu Religion will soon cease to exist. He had never abandoned the Hindu, nor adopted the Mahometan religion; but his disciples were of both faiths, and, when he died, a discussion arose as to the mode, in which his body was to be disposed of: the Hindus desired to burn, and the Mahometans to bury it. They were commencing to fight, when happening to look under the sheet, they found, that the body was gone, having no doubt been removed by some of his disciples. The sheet was cut in half, and one portion was burned with the usual ceremony, and the other buried with the usual prayers. Both the tomb and the cenotaph have since been swept away by the waters of the Ravi; but the memory of the good man lives in the hearts of many thousands of his countrymen; and it is much to be regretted, that they have forgotten his precepts, and do not attend to his words.

Angad succeeded him, and lived and died at Khudúr near Táran Táran, of the Amritsar District. He elected as his successor his pupil Amar Dás of the Khatri Caste, who lived at Goindwal on the Beas, at the point where the Imperial road from Delhi to Lahore crosses that stream. This is marked by a Kos Minár on the high bank. To Amar Dás succeeded his

son-in-law Ram Dás, of the Sodhi tribe of the Khatri caste, in whose family the office of Guru became hereditary, till it finally ended in the person of Guru Govind Singh, who converted the peaceful Sikhs into warlike Singhs, and established a state of things, deadly hostile, instead of being conciliating towards the Mahometans. The descendants of Nának are known as the Bedi, and when the Sikhs became powerful, this family became rich and arrogant: living in luxury on lands bestowed by the Government, and the collections made from the Sikhs. This last item used to be very considerable, and members of the family travel long distances to collect their fees. They reside chiefly at Dera Baba Nának, on the Rávi, near the spot, where their great ancestor died, and have in later years taken very much to trade.

Lives of Baba Nának, called Janam Sákhí, are very common, but they are so full of fable, and invention, displaying such intense ignorance, that they are more calculated to deceive than instruct. The whole life of the Guru has been depicted in a series of pictures, which are often found on the walls of shrines. Every act of his life, true or fabulous, is there narrated. He himself is generally represented as a white-haired, venerable old man, with Bhai Bála fanning him, and Bhai Mardhána playing on the Rabáb. From these pictures, and oral tradition, all the details of his life are well known to the people, but this is the first attempt to compose a narrative, from which all the marvellous has been excluded, and which Hindu, Mahometan, and Christian can credit.

His sayings, and his precepts, were collected by his

successors, and written in the volume, called by the Sikhs the "Ádi Granth," or first volume, to distinguish it from the Second Granth, composed one hundred years later by Guru Gōvind Singh. This book is written in an archaic dialect and difficult to understand now, and in that variation of the Indian Character, which is common in the Panjáb, but which having been used for these sacred books is called the Gurmúkhi, the words having been uttered by the Guru: these sacred books have been translated into English, that the followers of Nának may see, how much they have deviated from the example and precepts of their great Teacher.

AMRITSAR, 1859.



## CHAPTER XVII.

*THE GREAT MISSIONARY.*

*Written for the people of India, and translated into several of the Vernacular Languages of India.*

It has been granted to few to make so deep an impression on the character, and sentiments of hundreds during his lifetime, and of millions during the eighteen centuries, which have elapsed since his death, as the remarkable Man, whose history I now propose to narrate. Setting aside the events of his life, which produced most important results, he has left behind him writings, which, had they perished with him, would have caused a greater gap in the sum total of human knowledge, than the loss of the productions of any other Writer.

Paul, the Hebrew, a native of Tarsus in Cilicia, belonged to that class of philanthropists, who, having become possessed of an idea, or a principle, which in his opinion would benefit his fellow-creatures, thought it right to abandon the advantages of his worldly station, and in spite of persecution, poverty, and suffering, to devote the remainder of his life to the propagation of that idea, and the wide-spreading of that principle. In fact he was a Missionary, and his object was to

collect men of all Nations, religions, languages, and stations in life, into assemblies, or associations, on terms of equality, for the purpose of serving the great God of all in one peculiar way.

Up to the time, when his labours commenced, the world was, as now, divided into countries, and nations, but, having had little intercourse with each other, the customs of each People, their dress, and their religious views, were distinct, and, though all the known world had become subject to one great Empire, that of the Romans, yet still it never entered into the heads of persons to reflect on the nature of their Religion, with a view of changing it, any more than of changing their language, or their ancestors. The present state of the Hindu people is very much, as described here, up to the present moment, and such once was necessarily the state of the whole world; not only would strangers not be sought for, but they would not be admitted to share religious privileges. Paul was anxious to break down these barriers, and his instrument was preaching, and explaining to the People the new idea, and principle, of which he had obtained the knowledge. And in so doing he effected another great change, for, as up to that time all Religions consisted of ceremonies, and were connected with local, and therefore limited, associations, his was an appeal to Man's intellect and Conscience, and was applicable to every part of the World.

Six hundred years previously, a remarkable man of the name of Buddha had done a similar work in India. He devoted his life to preaching, he appealed to the understanding of men, broke through the ceremonies of the Hindus, and eventually established a Religion, which

exists to the present day, and comprises many hundred millions of followers, but it is founded in error, and has sunk into depravity. The example of Paul was followed by many in all ages, and up to the present time: it will be interesting therefore to consider the life of so remarkable a man. He was by race a Hebrew, a descendant of the Patriarch Abraham by his younger son Isaac, and of that particular family, which trace back to Benjamin, the favourite child of the Patriarch Jacob, whom his wife Rachel had died in giving birth to. For some reason his parents had settled at the city of Tarsus, a very important place on the southern sea-coast of Asia Minor. Paul had been brought up in the strictest rules of the law of Moses, he was very learned in the laws and customs of his ancient Nation, and very much devoted to that portion, which places weight on the outward observation of festivals, sacrifices, and ceremonies, and the maintenance of Caste, and social purity by the washing of pots and vessels, and the refusing to eat unclean things, or to eat with anybody, but those of their own race. The Hindus often think, that they are the only people, who have the institution of Caste, and are therefore specially blessed: the fact is, that they are the only people, who have been foolish enough to keep up a practice, which was common to the infancy of all Nations, and which more enlarged knowledge has caused to be abandoned: their conduct therefore is very much like the conduct of a man, who, though grown up, is still frightened, or deceived, by the tricks used to control a child.

Of the infancy, or youth, or the parents, or the relations of Paul, we know nothing: he either never

married, or at least left no descendants; which is a very fortunate circumstance, as so foolish are mankind, that they pay a servile and undeserved respect to the descendants, often unworthy, of good and wise men, forgetting that children are the issue of the animal, and not the spiritual, or intellectual, essence of the Ancestor. Of this debased character is the feeling of respect felt by the Sikhs to the descendants of their great Nának, and by the Mahometans to the supposed descendants of the daughter of the Founder of their Faith.

Paul was not the founder of any new way of thinking, nor had he any personal communication with the Founder of that Faith, which he devoted his life to publish. It so happened, that about the year 34 of the Christian era, he visited the great city of the Hebrews, in which King David and King Solomon had ruled. That city still exists, and is venerated by every Christian, and Mahometan, and is in the Kingdom of the Súltán of Istambóul, and called Beit al Mukaddas, and by Europeans Jerusalem.

The year before his arrival in this city had happened the most important event, which the world had ever seen, or ever can see, and which can never be forgotten. The Hebrew Priests and Chief Men had, from motives of envy and hatred, persuaded the Roman Governor, who was stationed with his troops in the city, to kill by a disgraceful death, the most innocent, the most virtuous, and the most beneficent of persons, who ever bore the appearance of Man. His name was that Blessed Name, which the greatest, the proudest, the most powerful of Nations and Kings

now think it an honour and privilege to bear, and the shape of the wooden instrument, on which that Holy One died, is now the badge of what is more precious than life to millions of Men. So little did the foolish Hebrew Priests know what they were doing, when they crucified the Lord of Life and Glory, the Saviour of the World.

They thought by persecution to crush the influence, which He had gained over the Hebrew people by His words and works. They did not care to, or could not, argue against the truth of what had been said, so they killed Him, and soon after they stoned to death in a popular tumult one of His followers, who died as a witness, or martyr, to the truth of His Death and Resurrection. Nothing is so wicked, and so foolish, as this kind of persecution; for it is wrong to take away the life of any one, only because he cannot bring his opinions into the same mould as the majority of the community, and it is very unwise to rouse a spirit of opposition, which such acts are sure to beget; yet in all ages good and wise men have been deceived, and allowed themselves to err in this respect, and on the occasion of the second murder the subject of this narrative, Paul, was consenting and taking a prominent part. His eyes were darkened, and he thought, that he was serving God. Being of an enthusiastic and ardent character, he was deputed to persecute the rest of this way of thinking, and started northward towards Shám, then, as now, a great and important city.

On his journey, which did not occupy many days, a great change came over him; for he appears to have repented of what he had done, and determined to join

those, whom he meant to persecute, to abandon his family, and position, and devote the remainder of his life to publishing the idea, and principle, of which he had gained information, all over the known world, and bring all people into one brotherhood. No act, however trifling, takes place without the special direction of the Almighty God, and Men, however much they may vaunt of their power, and their might, are but the blind instruments in an unseen Hand, which is directing events to some particular end. Yet on some occasions direct intervention is almost manifest, and this is one of them. A man learned, devoted, and fearless, had been induced by other than earthly motives and warnings to join a band, which consisted chiefly of ignorant Peasants, and Fishermen.

Under a just Government, such as exists now in India, license is given to every man to serve God in the way, which seems right to him, and protection is afforded to his person, and his property, although he should change the religion of his Fathers; at the same time every man has license to be the bearer, and spreader, of good tidings to his fellow-creatures, and to try to convince them by argument and teaching, and every good man, who possesses a priceless treasure, not of this world, is anxious to share this treasure with others. No liberty can be truly so called, where the liberty of delivering such a message is not allowed, and the countries, in which this freedom is denied, are in the worst of slaveries. Such was the case at the time, that Paul declared his altered convictions: a gang lay wait to murder him at the city-gate of Shám, but he was let down the city wall in a basket,

and escaped. On his arrival at Jerusalem attempts were made by his former friends to slay him, and it was thought prudent to conduct him to Cæsarea, the great Roman seaport on the Mediterranean, and send him by ship to his native city Tarsus, to which he returned a humbled and altered man: He had left it a few years before, proud of his learning, zealous for his Caste, his ceremonies, the traditions and customs of his family and race: In his narrow pride he had fancied, that nothing was so good as a Hebrew, nothing so important as to cut his hair in a peculiar way, to wash his cups and plates in a peculiar fashion, and to abstain from touching, or eating with, the rest of mankind, whom he was good enough to consider unclean. He was regular in paying his tithes to the Priests, in observing Moons, and fast-days, in praying loudly and in public places: he was righteous in his own eyes, and sure to be saved, come what may with the rest of the world: he returned humbled, abashed, but prepared to sacrifice his all in the self-imposed duty, to dash down the wall of separation of his people from the rest of the world, to put a stop to the abuse of Caste, and supposed purity of eating and drinking, and to inculcate the Idea, which had been imparted to him, that Man could not be saved by his own works, and the Principle, on which he based his system, viz., Faith in One, who could Save, Hope for Rewards in a World beyond the Grave, which this world cannot give, and Charity to his fellow-men. This happened eighteen hundred years ago, when Paul first snapped the tyrannical bonds of Custom in the Western World. Does it not occur to any of my

Indian readers, that in some countries this bondage is still in existence, such Hope beyond the Grave is wanting, and the Idea of One Powerful to Save has not been grasped?

Of what happened during this his last visit to his home we know nothing. The greatest trial to him, who dares to exert the privilege of independent judgment, is to be found within the threshold of his Home. Every influence, in other matters respectable, was no doubt brought to bear on him, as it has since been, and ever will be, the case: no doubt his relations refused to eat with him; he had to purchase for himself new cooking-vessels, and had to dispense with the services of the family-barber: he may have been wounded in a tenderer part, and been debarred from the society of his wife: how he was assailed, can well be imagined from contemplation of what an Indian convert has to undergo even in these days from his kind friends, and well-wishers; as a proof, that he suffered, we have his own admission that to the day of his death he bore a thorn in the flesh, or some secret domestic sorrow. A necessity was laid on him to preach: it was woe to him to delay: and so he departed to the neighbouring city of Antioch, the greatest of the Province; there he dwelt a whole year, formed an assembly, taught many, and there under his teaching the great and venerable name of Christian, the highest title of honour in the world, was first assumed.

From this city he commenced the first of his journeys, in the course of which he traversed the whole length of the Roman Empire, and visited some of the greatest



cities, Ephesus, Athens, and Rome, all then flourishing in wealth, and splendour. He was accompanied in his first journey by Barnabas, a man like himself devoted to the newly-discovered duty of evangelising, or carrying good news to, his fellow-creatures. Many had been induced by desire of amassing wealth, or winning earthly glory, to tempt the perils of the deep, or to undergo the dangers, and hardships, of land journeys, but who had ever before abandoned their home, and comforts, merely for the purpose of doing good to strangers, of whom they had never heard before, and by whom they would probably be very ill received! We know of none in the page of history, except Buddha, and his followers, who acted in the same way towards the countries in the East of Asia, but whose message was not true.

He crossed the Mediterranean from Seleucia, and sailed to Cyprus, a fertile island, famous for the temple, and worship of Aphrodite, who was supposed to preside over those sensual passions of the human frame, from which the bulk of our misfortunes and crimes spring. Men used then in their folly to worship there, but her temples have long since fallen to ruins, and her worship is forgotten. Here Paul preached before the Roman Ruler, and was favourably heard. He then crossed the sea to the neighbouring continent of Asia, and travelled from city to city, publishing his doctrines, and being most favourably received by the people, who had never heard the like before; but some of his own countrymen, filled with jealousy, and envy, because he preached to all, and not to the Hebrews only, excited a tumult, and turned him out of the town; but he submitted to the indignity, shook off the dust of his feet as a witness

against them, and proceeded on to other towns and cities, and in one of them the foolish multitude, struck by his words and deeds, began to worship him as a God. They called him Hermes, the God of cunning, and his companion Zeus, the greatest of the Gods, and they prepared to offer sacrifices to him of oxen: this is a subject for reflection, for these people thought, that they were doing a good action, and one likely to please their God, in killing the animal, which the Hindus consider it a great crime to deprive of life under any circumstances. Paul, when he saw these idolatrous preparations, was sadly grieved, and called out to them, that he was a man like unto them, and was come specially to exhort them to abandon these idle ceremonies, and turn to the one living God, who had in past times allowed all Nations to walk in their own ways, yet still reminded ungrateful Mankind of His existence by sending Rain from heaven, and granting fruitful seasons. A few days after this a great crowd stoned him with stones, and drew him out of the city, as if he were dead. So fickle, and unstable, are crowds of ignorant men, who really do not know what they do.

In this way Paul visited many cities, and districts, and spent two years, hazarding his life for the truth of what he stated, after which he returned to Antioch, and thence went up to Jerusalem, to meet his fellow-labourers in the same cause. Up to this time he had visited only his own nation, the Hebrews, and the countries adjacent to his own home, people who had the same habits and customs as himself: he now prepared to visit the chief city of a great and mighty

people, the most learned that the world had ever seen, who were so famous for their Schools of philosophy, that the young men of all the great cities flocked there to study, and who were not likely to receive instruction from a people, whom they despised. I allude to the kingdom of Yunán, or Greece, and the Yávani, who under Sikandar, had conquered all Asia as far as the River Beas in the Panjáb. Paul took with him one companion only, and traversed again the same region, which he had so lately visited, and proceeding Northwards he crossed over from Troy in Asia to Macedonia in Europe, at very nearly the same spot, where Sikandar three hundred years before had crossed over from Europe to conquer Asia. How different were the objects of these two men! One sought to destroy, the other to save, his fellow-creatures. He proceeded along the coast of Macedonia, being imprisoned in one city, well treated in another, preaching, and founding assemblies, and at length he came to the great, and justly celebrated city of Athens, the most important in Yunán, where the most learned, and wisest of men dwelt, and taught their disciples.

There was a great, and magnificent, Temple in this city, built to the honour of, and containing the gigantic statue of, the Deity Pallas Athéné, who represented Wisdom, and was supposed to have come forth from the brain of Zeus. This temple stood on a hill, and opposite to it was the hill of Ares, the God of War. The city was full of temples and statues to other Deities, for Athens was much devoted to Religion, and the Philosophers, the greatest of whom was Socrates, the wisest of uninspired men, who lived there, were always

searching and feeling for some trace of the real God, if haply by speculation, and reason, they might find that great Truth, which had been searched for ardently by all nations from the beginning of the world. Thus it followed that each Guru, or Teacher, taught his pupils different doctrines, some denying the existence of God at all, and some asserting, that He existed in everything; the state of things was very much like that of the Hindu Pandits at the present moment. Some belong to the School of Nyaya; some to that of the Nastika, a third to that of the Mimansa: so finely spun was the web, that none of the unlearned could possibly understand, and it is much to be doubted, whether the Gurus understood it all themselves. So afraid were they of offending some God, of whom they had not heard, that after putting up altars to every known Deity and Avatára, whom they could think of, they erected one "To the Unknown God." When they heard that Paul was teaching in the Bazaar, they were curious to know, what new doctrines he had brought, and imagining that he was the founder of a new school, they conducted him to the hill of Ares, where he explained to them the nature of his message.

It was too simple for them to comprehend: they were too noble-minded, too free, to persecute, but they ridiculed him: they mocked, and laughed at the mean-looking, oddly-dressed foreigner, who in unidiomatic, and unlearned, phrases dared to address them in their own language, in the presence of their own Gods, and their own Gurus, attacking their ancient customs, and books, and talking of people, and of things, of which they knew and cared nothing. So have we seen the

Pandits, and other Hindus at Banáras, scoff and jeer at the plainly-dressed Missionary, who is telling them just what Paul told eighteen hundred years ago to the Yávani, who were a much wiser, and more celebrated people than the Hindy, but of whose Gods, Goddesses, and Religion, not one fragment remains, except so far as it is enshrined in their beautiful Legends, and wonderful Poetry.

Thence Paul went to the city of Corinth, famous for its wealth and luxury, and he remained there more than a year, but he did not adopt the life of a Fakir or Bairági, living disgracefully at the cost of others. Paul worked for his own bread, and teaching others without charge, he earned his own livelihood by making tents. He met with opposition there, and on one occasion he was summoned to the office of the Roman Ruler, who, when he found that the charge brought against the prisoner was only connected with matters of religion, drove the Plaintiffs away from the Judgment-seat, and would have nothing to say to their quarrels. This order was a very proper one, for so long, as no offence is committed against the law, it is not proper for a Judge to interfere: and this is the English law in India.

Paul returned to Jerusalem, but he soon started on his third journey, and came to Ephesus, the capital of that part of Asia, and resided there some months, and such effects did his preaching have, that many hundreds believed in him, and he came into collision with a new class of enemies. He had in other cities been opposed by his own countrymen, who were jealous of his teaching other nations, he had been laughed at

by the wise, and stoned by the ignorant, but now by increasing the number of his disciples, he offended those, who made a trade of, and derived a profit from, the old Religion. Such is the case in India. Look at the men known as Pujári, Pandit, Ghátia, Achárij, and Fakír, who live on the folly and credulity of their countrymen, making them believe, that their services and prayers are necessary. Now there was at Ephesus a famous temple to Artemis, who represented the Moon: this temple had been burned to the ground on the night, on which Sikandar was born, by a foolish youth, who wished to have his name remembered, but it had been rebuilt; and people, who came on a pilgrimage to it, used to purchase silver models, and of course the artisans made a great profit thereby. These men, from fear of losing their trade, excited the furious mob by telling them, that their Religion was in danger, and they cried out all over the city, "Great is Artemis," just such a scene may happen any day at Mathura, Ayodhyá, or Banáras. Many a Hindu instead of listening to reason, urged on by his Pujári, and the sellers of models, would bawl out, "Great is Krishna of Mathurá, Great is Ráma of Ayodhyá, Great is Siva of Banáras." When the Roman Hákim heard of this disturbance, he warned the people of their folly, and told those, who had any real grievance, to bring an action in the Civil Court; very sensible advice and exactly what is the English law in India. Paul visited Yünán once more, and passed along the coasts of Asia, visiting the assemblies, which he had constituted in his previous journey in each city. During his absence from them, he wrote them letters, some of which have

come down to us. He did not revisit Ephesus, but he sent for his disciples to meet him at a neighbouring town, and he then took an affecting parting of them; he had reason to know, that he had roused numerous enemies, and that his life was endangered, and that he would never see his friends again, but he was not afraid to stand fast in what he knew to be just, and true, and his duty: he warned them of the trials, which were coming on them, and urged them to obey his precepts, and he commended them to God. Thence he sailed on, touching at some of the islands, and journeyed on to Jerusalem.

On his arrival he worshipped in the Temple according to the custom of his Ancestors, and preached to all the new doctrines, exhorting them to embrace the new Faith. Unable to cope with him in argument, the Priests, and learned men, proceeded to violence, and tried to crush and destroy him in a popular tumult. In this foolish way the Brahmans, and Mulla, have tried to crush in Indian towns any person, who from conviction attempted to change his Religion. But, as the British Officers now interfere in all such cases, so on the occasion of this disturbance the Roman Ruler interfered, and, descending from the Citadel with an armed force, he rescued Paul, and allowed him to address the people in their own language, and explain to them what he had to say. Common Justice suggests, that each man should have a fair hearing, if he can get people to listen to him, but it is too much the practice of the ignorant, and prejudiced, to try and stop the utterance of what they do not wish to hear. Foiled in their attempt to kill him in a popular tumult,

his enemies now laid a plot to assassinate Paul, and bound themselves by an oath not to eat or drink, till they had done so. This came to the Ruler's ears, and he despatched Paul at night under charge of a party of horsemen with a letter to the Governor-General of the Province, who resided at Cæsarea. At that place Paul remained prisoner for two years in chains, although nothing was proved against him. At length he demanded, as a Roman citizen, that his case should be transferred to the court of Cæsar, the Emperor of Rome, and as this request could not be refused, he was despatched thither under charge of a Company of Soldiers. We have a most interesting account of his long and painful voyage. He passed by the islands of Cyprus and Crete, was caught in a dreadful storm and shipwrecked, narrowly escaping with his life to the island of Malta: thence he embarked again, and sailed to Italy, landing near Naples, and proceeding by the usual marches to Rome.

What happened there, and how he spent the remainder of his life, we know not for certain: it is said by some, that he left it, and returned again, and on his second visit was beheaded during a persecution of his religion. He wrote letters from that place, some of which have come down to us, from which we gather, that he had gone through much affliction, and was prepared to lay down his life, and would do so with joy, for he had fought a good fight, had finished his cause, and looked to his reward in another world.

The writer of these lines has followed the steps of this, the first Missionary of the Christians, from Jerusalem to Shám, to Miletus, to Athens, to Malta,



and Rome : he has stood in the narrow prison, where the good man was bound in chains, and near which he perished by the sword, for no other fault, but that he loved mankind too well, that he was not content to be a philosopher and philanthropist in words only, but must needs be so in deeds also. But what a change has come over Mankind since then ! Kings, and their Armies, and their Palaces have perished : Great cities with their temples, and their people, and their Gods, have passed away like shadows : Ephesus, with the great shrine of Artemis, has passed from the annals of Man, like Hastinápúra, Gaur, and Kanoj, and, if its name is ever pronounced now, it is because Paul wrote to his disciples at that city a letter, which has come down to us, as a treasure of wisdom and benevolence.

Let those, who read, pause and reflect ; seed may be sowing in India, which will bring forth a similar harvest : there may be among us those, whom the people of India despise, and would, if they could, persecute, who many centuries hence may be revered, and loved, by their descendants. Paul was thus a great conqueror, a greater conqueror than Sikandar ; his life was, as blameless, as the faultless Ráma, and like him he resigned all, and went forth on a pilgrimage. But how different were the last moments of Paul to those of Sikandar ! [He rejoiced to depart, for he felt, that his Empire was for all ages, while Sikandar sighed to think, that he was cut off in the midst of his great schemes, and had no more worlds to conquer. Paul felt, that his task was accomplished, that he had not undergone perils by land, perils by water, persecutions, imprison-

ments, scourgings, and at length death, in vain. For his words still blow about the world, are read in hundreds of languages, are spoken by millions: every ship laden with merchandise, or with troops, that reaches the shores of India, has those on board, to whom his words have been familiar from infancy. Convincing, rebuking, encouraging, and warning, he spoke to all ages, and for all time. He could change from forcible and powerful admonition, when he denounced wicked inhabitants of wicked Cities, to humble and earnest advice, when he tried to win the hearts of friends, or intercede with a Master for his slave. Of all human writers, he is the one, who has made the deepest impression, and whose works the world would be least willing to lose.

Should it be asked, why for this series the life of Paul has been selected, it is replied, that the life of Ráma was written to illustrate the position of a good Man and Sovereign, in the time of Hindu religious and political quietude and isolation: no dread existed then of secular, or spiritual propagandism. The life of Alexander the Great illustrates the first touch of fire, given to the inanimate corpse by the Greek, who was the Missionary of Arts, Arms, and Cosmopolitism. But there were to be greater conquerors than those, who enslaved nations, and in the person of Buddha (600 B.C.) the period of propagandist Religion was dawning. Men were being born, whose lifelong object it was to conquer minds. Systems were being elaborated, capable of unlimited intellectual expansion, and intended to absorb nations in a spiritual thralldom.

Of these Heroes, Paul is the best known: anterior in date to him no doubt was Buddha, and centuries after came Mahomet and Nának. These three have left deathless traces on the history, and customs of India: Their lives ought to be known and studied.

LAHORE, 1858. .

## CHAPTER XVIII:

*THE INDIAN KING.*

It has been said, and with some show of justice, that Darius, son of Hystaspes, has left behind him on the rock of Behistún the proudest and grandest Monumental Inscription, that ever could be imagined, in three languages, the old Persian, old Median, and Assyrian, representatives of three distinct families of languages; he tells us, in bombastic phrase, of the nations whom he had conquered, the rivals whom he had overthrown, the glory with which he had surrounded the name of the Achæmenides. Worldly glory, intolerable arrogance, and pitiless slaughter, are revealed in every line of the thirteen hundred, of which this grand triumphal song is composed. By an irony of fate its existence was forgotten from the day of its completion until, as it were, yesterday. The Greeks never heard of it, not even Herodotus and Xenophon, or Ktesias; the Romans would not have condescended to notice it, even if they had known of it, or understood it; there it stood neglected and forgotten, on the high-road between Baghdád and Ekbatana, until Rawlinson brought it to the notice of the present generation, and compelled the rock to

give up its secrets, which date back to the sixth century before the Christian era.

British India has unconsciously treasured a cluster of Monumental Inscriptions more interesting than those of Darius. English industry and intelligence have compelled certain rocks, caves, and pillars to disclose a forgotten chapter of history, and revivify the name of a king, Asóka, alias Priyadási, who in the third century before the Christian era erected these Monumental Inscriptions in every part of his wide dominions, with a view of preaching peace, and mercy to the lives of man and beast, of inculcating maxims of morality and self-denial, of teaching his subjects, that there was a more excellent way than the path of earthly glory, and above all, insisting upon religious tolerance. Such a revelation of moral excellence existing before the Christian era, and wrought out by the unaided efforts of mankind (if indeed God's creatures can at any time be said to be unaided by their Heavenly Father), would of itself constitute one of the richest treasures, which haughty Time has been compelled to surrender to the energy of this generation; but the Monuments themselves are treasures of linguistic, palæographic, and historical lore, and they let in a new light upon the relation of the successors of Alexander the Great to the sovereigns of India.

During the last year General Alexander Cunningham, Archæological Surveyor of India, has published the first volume of his "*Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*," which is wholly devoted to the inscriptions of Asóka, and brings together the scattered data,

supplied by such great scholars as James Prinsep, Westergard, John Wilson, Horace Wilson, Norris, Eugene Burnouf and Christopher Lassen, and by a host of less-known contributors to this great work. As the work is rare, and exceedingly learned, it may be a convenience to epitomise the contents, and state briefly the nature of the Monuments, the place, the date of erection, the character, in which the Inscriptions are recorded, and the language, which these characters reveal; the purport of these Inscriptions, the history of the sovereign to whose genius, and piety, and power, we are indebted for these precious waifs of time; and lastly, the names of the Greek sovereigns alluded to.

The Monuments consist of Inscriptions carved on the native rock in caves, generally artificial, and on pillars of a uniform height and architectural design. They are the earliest Indian Inscriptions, that ever existed, or at any rate, that have survived the wreck of time, and, when we come to consider their date, they will appear comparatively modern in the eyes of the student of the Egyptian, Assyrian, Phenician, and Grecian Monuments. There are thirteen rock Inscriptions, though only five are of first-rate importance; there are seventeen cave Inscriptions, but chiefly mere fragments. Although ten pillars exist, six only have Inscriptions upon them, and five only are of importance. Setting aside therefore the Monuments with no Inscriptions, or with unreadable or fragmentary ones, we have ten Monuments of the greatest interest, five rock and five pillar Inscriptions; the fragments are of value, inasmuch as they are unquestionably written in the same peculiar character, and therefore assist the palæographer in his work of deciphering letters, which

have stood the blasts and the heat and the rains of twenty-one centuries, and survived the neglect and the wantonness, and the iconoclasm and vulgar taste for leaving one's own name on the records of antiquity, of sixty-three generations of men. Fortunate was the lot of those, which were protected by the incrustation of moss, or the sympathetic embrace of the impenetrable forest. Those suffered most, which fell under the eyes of men, and into the hands of arrogant kings, who added their own names, or bigoted priests, who tried to destroy, what they could not understand.

The field, in which these Monuments are strewed, is literally the whole of Northern India, from the Indian Ocean on the West to the Bay of Bangál on the East, from the southern slopes of the Vindhya range on the South to the Khaibar Pass, across the river Indus, to the North. Some are found in Ganjam in the Province of Madras, some in Kathiáwar in the Province of Bombay; the Central Provinces, the North-West Provinces, and the Provinces of Bangál and the Panjáb have their representatives; one is in the neighbourhood of Jypúr, in Rajputána, another at the spot, where the river Jamua leaves the Himálaya mountains. In fact, the field of the Asóka Monuments is conterminous with that of the Arian people, and none have as yet been found in the land of the Dravidians.

The ten famous Inscriptions are found in the following localities:—

I. The Rock of Kapúrdagarhi, is in the Yusufzai country, beyond the river Indus, or in other words in British Afghanistan, forty miles east-north-east of Pesháwar, in the Province of the Panjáb. It is a large

shapeless mass of trap, twenty-four feet long and ten feet in height, eighty feet up the slope of the hill. The Inscription is on both faces of the rock, and although so situated, that it cannot be photographed, impressions and eye-copies have been taken. It was discovered by Court and transcribed by Masson forty years ago.

II. The Rock of Khalsi is situated on the West bank of the river Jamna, just where it leaves the Himálaya mountains to pass betwixt the Dehra Dún and Kyarda Dún, fifteen miles West of the Sanatorium of Mussúri, in the North-West Provinces. It was discovered by Mr. Forrest in 1860, incrustated with the dark moss of ages, but, when this was removed, the surface came out as white as marble. The text is the most perfect of all. There stands two hundred feet above the river level a large quartz boulder, ten feet long and ten feet high; on the South-East face, which has been smoothed, is the bulk of the Inscription, the remainder being on the South face. A figure of an elephant, with the word Gajátama, is on the north face. It is not stated by what process copies were taken.

III. The Rock of Girnár is situated half a mile to the east of the city of Junagarh, in Kathiáwar, of the Province of Bombay, forty miles to the North of the famous Temple of Somnáth. The first transcript of the Inscription was taken by John Wilson, of Bombay, forty years ago, but Tod had the honour of reporting its first discovery in 1822. It covers above one hundred square feet of the uneven surface of a huge rounded and somewhat conical granite boulder, rising twelve feet above the surface of the ground; it occupies the greater portion of the North-East face, and is divided



in the centre by a vertical line. Its figure is well known from the photograph in the Archæological Survey of Western India. Although excellent eye-copies had been taken, Burgess took an estampage of the whole Inscription, which has been photographed and published. There are other Inscriptions on it of a later date than those of Asóka, but of well-known periods.

IV. The Rock of Dhauli is on the opposite coast of India, in the District of Kattak, of the Province of Bangál, twenty miles North of the Temple of Jagarnáth. It was discovered by Kitto forty years ago. It is quartzose, on an eminence, and has been hewn and polished for a space of twelve feet long by ten in height, and the Inscription is deeply cut in three tablets. Immediately above is the fore part of an elephant of superior workmanship, hewn out of the solid rock. It is not stated by what process copies were taken.

V. The Rock of Jangada is situated in a large old fort, eighteen miles West-North-West of the town of Ganjam, in the Province of Madras, and therefore very near to the last-mentioned rock, amidst a population speaking at the present time the same language, the Uriya. The Inscription is engraved on a high mass of rock, of which the dimensions are not given, facing the South-East. It was brought to the notice of the Madras Government in 1859 by Harrington, who sent photographs of it, but it has transpired that its existence, and the nature of its contents, were perfectly well known to Walter Elliot in 1850. Impressions have since been taken and additional photographs, and a very good text has been secured. The Inscription is written on three tablets. It shares

with its neighbour at Dhauli the merit of being the most carefully and neatly engraved, and of possessing two additional Edicts. It has been much injured by the peeling away of the rock.

Including these additional Edicts we have thus disposed of seven of the rock Inscriptions, the remaining six possess certain points of interest as furnishing chronological data. They are situated at Sahasarám, on the Kymúr range, seventy miles South-East of Banáras; at Rupnáth, at the foot of the same range, thirty-five miles North of Jahalpúr; two at Bairát, forty-one miles North of Jaipúr; at Khandágiri, near Dhauli, in Kattak; and at Deotek, fifty miles South-East of Nagpúr; they are very brief.

The cave Inscriptions are found at four different places. Three are found at Barabar, and three at Nagarjuni, both places fifteen miles North of Gayá, in the Province of Bangál; nine in the hill of Khandágiri in Kattak, and two at Ramgurh in Sirgúja.

The pillars are believed to have been much more numerous, but only a few are now known to exist, besides several fine capitals without their shafts. The Chinese pilgrims make mention of many more than the five, which are still known to us with Inscriptions, and we know from the Inscription on the Delhi Siwálik pillar, that the king had given order "for stone pillars and stone slabs, by which *his religious Edicts should endure unto remote ages.*" Good man! his wishes have been realised. Why did not David and Josiah and Hezekiah, of whose existence not one sculptured line exists as a memorial, do the same, if they cared for the eternal truths, of which they were

the custodians? Five pillars present in a slightly variant form the text of six of the Edicts. The sixth is a short mutilated record on the fragment of a pillar lying beside the great Sanchi Stúpa, at Bhilsa, on the river Nabadá. The reading is too doubtful to be of any value.

I. Pillar at Delhi, called Firoz Shah's Lat, which is so well known to all travellers. Contemporary Mahometan historians mention, that it was brought from a place on the banks of the Jamna below the Siwálik range, ninety miles North of Delhi, and therefore not very far from the rock Inscription of Khalsi. The pillar has gone through many vicissitudes, it is now forty-two feet in height, and has two principal Inscriptions, besides several minor records of pilgrims and travellers from the first centuries of the Christian era to the present time. The oldest Inscription is that of Asóka, clearly and beautifully cut, and only a few letters are lost by the peeling of the stone. There are four distinct Inscriptions on the four sides, and one long Inscription, which goes completely round the pillar.

II. Pillar at Delhi, which, according to contemporary historians, was brought from Mirat to Delhi by Firoz Shah. It was thrown down by an accident 1713 A.D., and remained there in a broken state. The Inscription, after the lapse of a century, was removed to Calcutta, but has now been restored, and the pillar re-erected in its old site. The Inscriptions are very imperfect, from the mutilation and wear of time. Impressions were made for comparison with the text of other pillars. Only about one-half of the original Inscription remains.

III. Pillar at Allahabad. This is a single shaft of polished sandstone, thirty-five feet in height; there is no trace of the capital, the circular abacus still remains, with a scroll of alternate lotus and honey-suckle resting on a beaded astralagus of Greek origin. The Inscription of Asóka is in continuous lines round the column, very neatly and deeply engraved, but a great proportion has been destroyed by the vain-glorious Inscription of the Emperor Jahángir and the peeling of the stone. On the same column are Inscriptions of a king of another dynasty, and three smaller Asóka Inscriptions. There is a mass of visitors' names cut in quite modern characters. It appears to have been thrown down more than once, and these casual cuttings of names help to fix the dates of these accidents. It stands now secure in the centre of the fortress at Allahabad, but it is thought, that it was moved to Allahabad from Kosambhi by the Emperor Firoz Shah.

IV. Pillar at Lauriya, near Bettiah, in the Province of Bangál, is a single block of polished sandstone, thirty-eight feet in height; it has no capital, and being in an out-of-the-way place, has escaped the disfigurement of travellers' names; the engraving is very neat and clear, and divided into two distinct portions. Impressions and eye-copies have been made.

V. Pillar at Lauriya, near Bettiah, near the ruined fort of Navandgarh, has still retained its original capital, a lion seated on its haunches with its mouth open, but injured by a cannon-shot. The height is thirty-two feet, and the capital has a circular abacus, ornamented with a row of wild geese picking their food;

together with the capital the height of the Monument is thirty-nine feet. The Inscription is in two columns, clear and deeply cut. There are some unimportant name-cuttings upon it.

We must now consider the date, at which these Monumental Inscriptions were erected, and the argument lies within a very small compass. They bear the name of Priyadási, who is identified with Asóka of the Mauryan dynasty of Magadha or Bahár by a chain of argument, which is quite convincing. Asóka was the third of the dynasty, which ruled at Palibothra or Patna, and the grandson of Chandragúpta, who is identified with that Sandracottus, to whom Seleucus, one of the successors of Alexander the Great, sent Megasthenes, as ambassador, at a date which is fixed in Greek chronology. Here we touch ground. In the Inscriptions Asóka makes mention of Antiochus II. of Syria, Ptolemy II. of Egypt, Antigonus of Macedonia, Magas of Cyrene, Alexander II. of Epirus. This justifies the dates of B.C. 253 to 251 being assigned to the promulgation of these Edicts. Late as this may seem in the chronology of Europe, it is the oldest in India, and has the advantage of resting upon unquestionable data.

These Inscriptions, in a linguistic point of view, are invaluable, as they present us with an undoubted specimen of the Court or official language of the period, and show clearly, that it was not Sanskrit, but Pali, that intermediate stage, through which the modern Arian Vernaculars of Northern India have passed. To assert that it can be safely assumed, that this was the spoken language of the people over this vast area,

is unreasonable and most improbable, for it would then have to be shown, that the modern languages of Kathiáwar, Kattak, Bahár, Central India, Northern India, and Pesháwar, which are well known, are respectively derived within the 2000 years, which have elapsed since then, from the language used for the Inscriptions, and we know that such is not the case. Three dialectal variations are noted in the language of these Inscriptions: a Northern, a Middle, and a Southern; but these variations appear to extend only to the phonetics, and only one instance of peculiarity of vocabulary is mentioned, and none of grammatical construction.

The form of written character used is still more precious and interesting; here we find two distinct varieties, the one, known as the Northern Asóka, or Ariano-Pali, is confined to the rock Inscription of Kapúrdagarhi (No. I. of this paper); and the other, known as the Southern Asóka, or Indo-Pali, is used for all the other rock, cave, and pillar Inscriptions. The first is read from right to left, and the second from left to right, and this difference, which seems portentous to the student, vanishes into nothing, when it is recollected, that the Greek character passed through both stages, and even the intermediate boustrophédon, turning backwards and forwards like a plough in a field. There is not space to enter into the discussion, which the study of these two characters has produced. Cunningham has started, or rather developed, a theory, that the Southern Asóka alphabetical character has been derived from an independent and indigenous seedplot in India. He admits, that the Northern Asóka can be traced back to a Phenician parentage; but contrary to

the opinion of those, who maintain that the Southern Asóka is of the same stock, he has worked out his idea of the development of these alphabétical characters from the pictures of various objects, whence by the same process, known as the acrostychie, the object was adopted as the symbol of the sound of the first letter of the word, which expressed it. Of his theory there is not one shred of proof.

The purport of these Edicts is as follows :—

I. Prohibition of slaughter of animals for food or sacrifice.

II. Provisions of a system of medical aid for men and animals, and of plantations and wells on the roadside.

III. Order for a quinquennial humiliation, or republication of the great moral precepts of the Buddhistic creed.

IV. Comparison of the former state of things, and the happy existing state under the King.

V Appointment of Missionaries to go into countries, which are enumerated, to convert the people and foreigners.

VI. Appointment of informers, and guardians of morality.

VII. Expression of desire, that there may be uniformity of religion and equality of rank.

VIII. Contrast of carnal enjoyments of previous rulers with the pious enjoyments of the present King.

IX. Inculcation of the true happiness to be found in virtue, through which alone the blessing of Heaven can be propitiated.

X. Contrast of the vain and transitory glory of this

world with the reward, for which the King strives and looks beyond.

XI. Inculcation of the doctrine, that the imparting of dharma or virtue is the greatest of charitable donations.

XII. Address to all unbelievers.

XIII. (Imperfect.) Meaning only conjectural.

XIV. Summing up of the whole.

It is a bitter satire to think, that for the last two thousand years there should have been sermons on stones, and moral precepts carved upon enduring rocks with iron, and no one to read, mark, or understand. There would be no room for the abomination of Saivism or Vaishnavism, where such a code prevailed. Moreover, Asóka prays with every variety of prayer "for those who differ from him in creed, that they following his example may with him attain eternal salvation." (Pillar Edict VI.) This has the ring of true Christianity. He ordains tolerance in the following words (Rock Edict VII.) :—"He desires that all unbelievers may everywhere dwell (unmolested), as they also wish for moral restraint and purity of disposition. For men are of various purposes and various desires."

The soul wakes up in glad surprise to think, that men of old could out of their own hearts have conceived such good things, and the same sensation overpowers us, which we feel, when we read the discourses of Socrates. If Monumental Inscriptions had done no more than record the Edicts of King Asóka, they would have benefited mankind with an imperishable gift. The blast of the royal trumpets of King Darius; the wail of



Ezmunazar King of Tyre over the vanity of life; the ostentatious devotion of long lines of Egyptian and Assyrian Kings to Amen Ra and Asshur, their great gods and lords; the proud patriotism of the Athenians in the famous Greek lines over those who fell at Potidæa; the stately Record of the Emperor Augustus of all, that he had done for Rome, in the Ancyrean tablets; all these varied and affecting strains, which have been spared to us, when temple and tower have gone to the ground, sound faintly through the corridors of time, compared with the still small voice from the broken pillar, the moss-grown rocks, the forgotten cave, preaching Mercy, Toleration, and the highest Idea of human excellence, to mankind. How knightly seems that princely figure, whose only recorded title was "Beloved of the Gods," whose only boast was, that he had conquered himself; contrasted to those haughty monarchs, who only wished to be remembered by posterity, as the slaughterers of their enemies, the destroyers of cities, the depopulators of provinces, the enemies of the human race

LONDON, 1879.

## CHAPTER XIX.

*THE GREAT PROCONSUL.*

AT the close of the year 1845, John Lawrence was the active and highly-esteemed Magistrate and Collector of Delhi. In the neighbouring districts, Donald M'Leod, Robert Montgomery, and Edward Thornton, held similar posts. The Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces at that time, James Thomason, used to send the most promising young men, as they arrived, to be trained in their duties by Lawrence and M'Leod.

During the last weeks of that year the Sikhs invaded Northern India, and were met and defeated by Lord Hardinge and Lord Gough in the famous battles of Múdkí, Firozshahr, Aliwál, and Sobráon. Peace was granted at the price of the forfeiture of the Jalandhar Doab, and the whole of the mountainous region from the Satlaj to the Indus. That portion of the cession, which lies betwixt the Ravi and the Indus, was sold to the Maharája of Jamú, who became thenceforward Sovereign of Kashmír. The remainder of the cession was formed into a new civil division, called then the Trans-Satlaj districts, consisting of Jalandhar, Hushiar-púr, and Kangra.

John Lawrence, then about thirty-five years of age, was summoned from Delhi to be Commissioner and

Superintendent of the new tract, and arrived at his ground in March 1846. Lord Hardinge appointed, as his Deputies, three very young men, who had served through the campaign, and were present in the great battles: one at the side of the Commander-in-Chief, and the other two at the side of the Governor-General; their names were Herbert Edwardes, of the Company's European Regiment; Edward Lake, of the Bangál Engineers; and Robert Cust, of the Civil Service. George and Henry Lawrence and Robert Napier were already at Lahore. Robert Montgomery, Donald M'Leod, and Edward Thornton, arrived three years later, when the Panjáb was annexed in 1849; but Reynell Taylor and John Nicholson had been through the campaign with their regiments, and Destiny was drawing them to the Afghan Frontier, where their names will never be forgotten.

It seems but yesterday, that I first stood before John Lawrence, in March 1846, at the town of Hushiarpúr, the capital of the district in the Jalandhar Doáb, which was my first charge. I found him discussing with Henry Riddell, the Postmaster-General, the new lines of postal delivery, and settling with the Officer Commanding the troops the limits of his cantonments. Harry Lumsden, then a young subaltern, was copying letters. Seated round the small knot of Europeans were scores of Sikh and Mahometan landholders, arranging with their new Lord the terms of their Cash-assessment. He was full of energy, and was impressing upon his subjects his principles of a just State-demand, and their first elementary ideas of natural equity, for, as each man touched the pen, the unlettered token of agree-

ment to their lease, he made them repeat aloud the new Trilogue of the English Government, "Thou shalt not burn thy widows; Thou shalt not kill thy daughters; Thou shalt not bury alive thy lepers;" and old greybeards, in the family of some of whom there was not a single female blood relative, went away chanting the dogmas of this new Moses, which next year were sternly enforced. Here I learnt my first idea of the energetic order, and the rapid execution, which make up the sum total of good administration. Here I first knew the man, who was my model, my friend, and my master, till, twenty years later, I sat at his Council-Board in Calcutta, and, thirty years later, consulted him on details of the affairs of the Church Missionary Society, and finally joined his Committee in opposition to the mistaken policy of the Second Afghan War, the year before he died.

From 1846 to 1849 he discharged the duties of Commissioner, with occasional visits to Lahore, to assist his brother, Henry, who was Resident. In the last year the second Sikh war broke out, which culminated in the annexation of the whole of the Panjáb to British India, and his transfer to the post of member of the Central Board of Administration. In 1853 the Board collapsed, owing to the irreconcilable differences betwixt himself and his brother, and he became Chief Commissioner. In 1859 that title was changed for Lieutenant-Governor, which he held only for a few weeks, as, in March 1859, he resigned the Service, and left India, as it was then imagined, for ever.

That, which he had done for the Jalandhar Doáb in the first three years, he carried out in the wider field of the

Panjáb during the remaining ten years between 1849 and 1859. Order and firm rule were established, where there had been none for centuries: a firm rule, but not that of the Oriental Pasha, or the Russian Military Dictator. There were no soldiers employed, in an administration, which was purely civil; there was no secret police, no passports, no spies, no gagged press, no prisons full of political *détenus*, no Siberia for countless exiles; but an abolition of monopolies, except that of liquor and drugs, an equitable and fixed assessment of the land-tax, a reduction of pensions, and of Assignments of Land-revenue, which wasted the resources of the State, a disbandment of all feudal troops, and the substitution of a strong and disciplined police; a simple, cheap, and rapid system of Justice between man and man; a stern protection of life and property from violence and fraud; a levelling of all petty fortresses, a disarmament of the warlike classes; freedom of religion, freedom of trade, freedom of speech and writing, freedom of locomotion; the foundation of a system of national education; the lining out of roads, the construction of bridges, the demarcation of village-boundaries, the establishment of Posts and Telegraphs; the encouragement of commerce and manufactures by removal of every possible restriction. When I think of all, that was done, when I recall the state of the country before the annexation, and the marvellous change, that came over it in the course of so few years, I cannot but regret, that such men are not found for the other dark places of this globe. Peace had her victories no less renowned than war: Plenty poured forth her abundant horn: the

Sikh yeoman stood waist-deep in the exuberant harvest, where there had been a desert; canals were opened or extended. As the shining Reports of the eloquent Secretary<sup>1</sup> went forth year by year, as the Panjáb trumpet, blown lustily, sounded all over India, the official world in other Provinces were credulous or jealous. Even the difficulties of the frontier of the Indus seemed to be in a fair way to be settled, and Dost Mahomed, the Amír of Kábul, came down to Pasháwar to ratify terms of perpetual friendship. With failing health the great Proconsul was preparing to leave for England, when the grave events of the 10th of May 1857 altered the course of his life, and the history of India.

The time of trial had come: the last expiring click of the Delhi-telegraph told him of the Mutiny at Mírat and the Rebellion at Delhi; but Lawrence, Montgomery, and Herbert Edwardes, Nicholson, Corbett, and Cotton, were equal to the occasion. The Panjáb was, as it were, rent from India by a wide gulf of mutiny and disorder. Lawrence stamped with his feet, and raised a new army to replace the disbanded mutineers; the very soldiers, whom we could remember fighting against us at Múdki, Sobráon, and Gujerát in 1846 and 1849, were called from their villages, and helped to avenge themselves against the Sepoys. Other Governors might have selfishly thought of their own Province, and sacrificed the Empire to it; but Lawrence had been Magistrate of Delhi, and recognised the paramount importance of the Imperial city. He summoned his great feudatories of Kashmír and Patiála; he enlisted

<sup>1</sup> Richard Temple.

his old enemies on the frontier, and launched them all against Delhi, preferring rather to throw all upon the die than to be consumed piecemeal. Then came the time of restoration, but not of revenge. Some, who had done nothing during the days of peril, became active then; but the brave are ever merciful; and, when Delhi was made over to Lawrence, he peremptorily stopped the indiscriminate slaughter, and recorded the famous minute, that he was the first to strike, and, the first to leave off striking. Victory was thus crowned by Mercy.

Perhaps his figure stands out in more knightly proportions; perhaps he was more entirely himself the man, who had found the Panjáb a den of wild beasts, and left it an orderly garden, as I remember him then, and I quote the description which in 1859 I wrote in a local periodical, which speaks more particularly of his outward appearance, and the feelings, with which he was regarded: "One man, one only, has in these last days (1859) retired from the Service amidst the plaudits of England and India; and as, on the eve of his departure, the great Proconsul was about to resign his dictatorial wreath, he received from his fellow-labourers an ovation far transcending the vulgar strut up the Sacred Way, or the bloodstained triumph of the Capitol. He had no more favours to bestow, no more patronage to dispense; but he was the pilot, who had weathered the storm, and he deserved the acknowledgments, which he received. There he stood, firm on his legs, square in his shoulders, dauntless in his aspect, built in the mould of a Cromwell, ready to look friend or foe in the face, incapable of guile, real or implied, and yet so strong in

his simplicity and straightforwardness, that he was not to be deceived. Age had silvered his hair and dimmed his eyesight, since thirteen years ago I met him, as he crossed the River Satlaj, but naught had been diminished of his energy, or of his firmness of purpose. Good fortune, and a wonderful coincidence of events, had seconded his exertions, and, rising from the ranks of his profession, he had in his own rough way carved out a European reputation, received every honour, which a citizen could wish for, the great Civil Order of the Bath, and the thanks of the Commons; but, amidst the applause of all parties, he had not contracted one spark of conceit. His nature was too pure and unalloyed to be contaminated by the servile flattery, which accompanies success, and intoxicates weaker spirits. Elevation had not spoiled him. He was equal in all things, a good man and true, who did the work, that was set before him, strongly and thoroughly; who, when experience failed, drew on his own judgment, trusted in his own firmness, and was never found wanting. Indomitable in adversity, and restrained in prosperity, he has left to the State a train of followers, who are proud to be called the School of John Lawrence. In the United States of North America such a man would have been President of the people; in England, had the aristocratic element been less exclusive, he might have been a great Minister, like the elder and younger Pitt. In the Middle Ages he would have carved out for himself a Principality. He knew and remembered after a lapse of years the minutest details of our administrative system; still he grasped, and at once adopted, the general view of a



subject, which so many narrow official minds miss. Unrivalled in despatch of business, he never tolerated delay in others, but he knew when to relax and when to tighten the rein. He was the master, and not the slave, of his work, and of the machinery for the despatch of that work, and he never sacrificed ends to means. So great was the prestige of the success of his ten years' administration, that all, military as well as civil, older in years or younger, tendered to him the willing homage of obedience. He rose to ennoble the last years of the great East India Company, as if to prove that the system of nomination by patronage could sometimes, by a happy chance, produce a *man*, as a set-off to the succession of hereditary dullards, by whom India has been oppressed. He all but effaced the stain on the shield of the great Company, that during a century of rule it had never given one servant to take his place for purely Indian Service among the hereditary Senators of his country."

He returned to England in 1859, and might have spent the remainder of his days in the strenuous idleness of the Indian Council, the inglorious ease of the London club, or the obscurity of the Highland valley. When Lord Canning in 1862 resigned the Viceroyalty, his name was mentioned as a possible successor, but the choice fell upon Lord Elgin, who succumbed to disease in the autumn of 1863, while a serious war was raging on the frontier. The occasion had arisen, and the man, though past fifty, was ready. As he was seated in his room at the India Office, the Secretary of State, Sir C. Wood, looked in, and said briefly, "You are to go to India. Wait till I come back from Windsor."

And so Lawrence returned once more, and held the post of Viceroy during five years of peace and progress. He revisited England in 1869, where ten years of honour and repose were vouchsafed to him, before he was summoned to his last home in 1879.

What of the man? In reviewing the greatest of his contemporaries, what was his place? He was not one of those giants, armed with a genius, before whom all men insensibly bow down. Even compared with his own school, he had not the fiery eloquence of Herbert Edwardes, the calm wisdom of M'Leod, the sweet gentleness of Edward Lake, the dauntless pluck of Montgomery, the sparkling genius of poor George Christian, the brilliant talents of Richard Temple, or the comprehensive faculty of George Campbell. Others of his followers surpassed him in natural gifts or acquired attainments; but he was the good man and true, strong in his clear perception, strong in the firmness of his purpose, his disdain for all meanness, and the entire absence of petty feelings.

Like all men endowed with greatness of character, he drew around him a school of followers. Men admitted to his presence felt, that they were face to face with a master-workman, who went to the bottom of everything, and that that bottom was the best interests of the people. There were no platitudes to disguise ignorance; there was no veneer of official phraseology to hide the absence of fixed principles; tolerant of contradiction, he was fertile in argument, and convincing in his own simple eloquence, but ready in council to admit the cogency of the views of his antagonists; but when it came to orders, there must be obedience. I

myself have accepted cheerfully from him blows, which I would have tolerated from no one else, and, as I rose to power, handed them on with good will to my subordinates, for there was no *arrière pensée*, no secret intrigue: it was simply, "Do this or that, or go," and the thing was done! There was a time, when the rough-and-ready free-lances of the Panjáb were laughed at; the time came, when they were feared and imitated, when the model Province stood out, as the object of imitation, when the personal friends and followers of John Lawrence, long before he became Viceroy, had been translated into the highest posts in Mysór, Haiderabád, Bangál, Nagpúr, Allahabád, Lakhnau, and Barma. After the Mutiny, it became the fashion to look to the Panjáb for a soldier-civilian, or a civilian-soldier, for every duty; and Lord Canning, who came very slowly and gradually into a full appreciation of the merits of a lieutenant, who had obscured his own grandeur, as Governor-General, replied to a remonstrance against the promotion of so many men into other Provinces, that he must take more; and so, indeed, it went on, until the whole of India had passed under the more or less direct influence of the new principles of administration, which were shadowed forth by Lord Dalhousie, and worked out by John Lawrence. And his power of selection, his divining-rod of a man's capacity, was wonderful. He must have, he used to say, brains or sinews: one or the other, or both. His frontier men must have sinews to guard the marches and head the foray; his counsellors and his administrators must have brains. Some, like Richard Temple, had both: the seat in the saddle, the bright intelligence at the

council-table. He rejected the feeble fool, or the lazy giant. Moreover, he stood by his subordinates; if they made a mistake, he knocked them down himself; but, having done so, he placed his broad shield over them, and no one else should touch them. He accepted the credit of their joint success; he submitted to the blame of their co-operative failures. So men knew whom they were serving, and gave true yeoman service.

Constant intercourse with the people in their villages, seated on a log under the shady grove, on horseback, in the evening walk, climbing the mountain side, floating down the river, was the secret of his personal rule; an intimate knowledge of the language of the people, their customs, their prejudices, their weaknesses, and their abundant excellences; a ready ear to their complaints, and a prompt decision; a never-failing flow of good humour and *bonhomie*, of good fellowship, and cheerful jokes, under the influence of which a man, who had lost his case, went away smiling; of distinct and simple orders, and hard blows, when occasion required: and all this accompanied by business-like method, accuracy of autograph record, simplicity of routine, promptness and clearness of account of money collected and disbursed, and immediate reply to letters received: this was the machinery, by which an Oriental people, who had been untamed for three centuries, became as lambs within a decade. When the second Panjáb war broke out in 1849, and, deceived by rumours, some few chieftains of the Jalandhar Doáb rose up in a parody of a rebellion, by the orders of John Lawrence I issued a summons to the headmen of the villages to meet us at different points of our hasty march to grapple with the insur-

gents. At each halting-place they were assembled in scores, and, when a sword and a pen were placed before them to select the instrument, by which they wished to be ruled, the pen was grasped with enthusiasm. With the genius of a general, Lawrence planned and carried into execution this bloodless campaign, where delay would have been fatal.<sup>1</sup>

His great strength was his love for the people: he resisted the Government of India, if it were attempted to over-tax, or pass an unpopular law; he resisted his own subordinates, if they were harsh or neglectful; he resisted the nobles of the Panjáb, and, later in life, the Talúkdars of Oudh, and the indigo-planters of Bangál, if they attempted to oppress the tillers of the soil. He resisted his own brother Henry, who erred from noble mistaken sentiment, and not from sordid motives; he would have resisted the Missionaries, if they had attempted to depart from the great principles of toleration (which in India they never have done), if they had erected their places of worship in offensive proximity to some shrine of local sanctity, or if they had waged war against the time-honoured and innocent family Customs of the people. His ideal, which I have often heard from his lips, of a country thickly cultivated by a fat, contented yeomanry, each man riding his own horse, sitting under his own fig-tree, and enjoying his rude family comforts, may not have been the ideal of a State in the nineteenth century politically free; but for a people, whose destiny it has been for centuries to be conquered, domestic comforts, and the enjoyment of their own customs, their own religion, and their own language, soften the

<sup>1</sup> See note at close.

sting of foreign domination. "An iron hand in the velvet glove; plenty of the rein, sparing use of the whip and spur; be accessible to all:" these were his maxims and his practice. If in his morning ride an old Sikh would seize the bridle of his horse, or in his evening walk an irrepressible old woman would clasp his legs, he would, indeed, shake them off with a full flow of vituperative vernacular, for such approaches are often the cover of the assassin; but he would carefully note the name and residence of his assailants, and, to their surprise, they would find themselves called for, and their cases attended to at the earliest opportunity. "You have been too hard upon the poor Rájá" were the first words of a letter written to me more than thirty years ago, when I was pressing my heel too heavily on one of the lineal descendants of the Sun and the Moon in the lower Himálaya ranges; and the words have often recurred to me in after-life, and, with all those, who love the docile and gentle people of India, I perused with gratitude and thankfulness the parting admonition of the great Proconsul, when he left Calcutta for the last time, "Be kind to the Natives."

A mighty horseman, he thought nothing of a score of miles before breakfast; a mightier disposer of business, he would be found seated in the midst of his Native subordinates, or, in later years, in his study, and getting through more work in an hour than many men of untrained experience, and uncertain purpose, would in a week. He had the art of making others work also. Like Cæsar, he seemed to be able to read, write, and dictate at the same time. Seated pen in hand, with naked arms in the intensely hot weather,

he seemed to be striking the iron while it was hot ; then was the time of the famous orders, scored roughly in pencil, "to bring each sinner's nose to the grindstone," and to tell the writer of a letter, that "he was a fool, but let me see the draft before it is copied." For with this stern rule there was ever the ready joke, the deep, good-natured sense of fun, the twinkling of the kind gray eye. And more than that: in the midst of all the business of Empire, he found time to write the brief, yet sympathetic, letter to the bereaved husband, to the sorrow-struck widow, to condole on the death of a little child. Though no domestic sorrow ever came near his door, he had the heart to sympathise with the sorrows of others ; and a short time before his death, while he was sick and blind, he followed to the grave the wife of one of his old assistants, who was absent in India.

Simple in his habits, the Ambassadors of Kábul or Kashmír would find him playing on the ground with his children, or, with his shirt-sleeves tucked up, up to his eyes in correspondence. If not received with much dignity, they had the inestimable advantage of direct intercourse with him without interpreter or go-between. If they heard rough truths, they were soothed with cheerful laughs and pleasant jokes ; if they found a man, whom no astute practice of theirs could deceive, they left with the firm conviction, that by that man, in deed or word, they would never be deceived ; for he had a heart incapable of guile, a tongue, which could not be shaped to deceive, rough yet kindly. His "yea" was "yea," and his "nay" was "nay" to all men, and the people of the Panjáb

learnt to prefer his hard speech and soft heart to the soft speech and hard heart of some of his fellow-labourers. If one characteristic was more conspicuous than others, it was his truthfulness. As the writer of this memoir followed him to his grave in Westminster Abbey, he had the unexpected honour of walking by the side of the greatest English statesman and orator, who had arrived too late to take his proper place in the procession. On mentioning to him, that truthfulness was the great feature of the character of the great man, whom they were following, Mr. Gladstone replied, that truthfulness was indeed the great characteristic, and the sharpest weapon (if we only knew it rightly) of a dominant race, and it was this, that distinguished the policy of the English from that of the Turks, whose every counsel, act, and scheme was more or less tinged with falsehood.

If by marvellous good fortune he rose to a position, of which it would have been folly to have dreamt in his early days, he bore these honours meekly, and was the same true man in the palace of the Viceroy, as in the tent of the Commissioner. If not so great as Warren Hastings, he left India with an unsullied shield. He was superior to Metcalfe, and Mount Stuart Elphinstone; and the reputation of no other member of the Indian Civil Service, from the first to the present day, can be brought into comparison with his. He alone, of all Viceröys past, and possibly to come, could in the solemn durbars address the assembled chiefs in their own language, and alone knew every detail of official routine. Such a ruler of men would soon have settled the difficulty in



Turkey, steering carefully betwixt the insolvency of the State and the oppression of the cultivators, which are the two rocks of Oriental administration. Such a ruler of men would soon bring to reason the conflicting nationalities of Slavs, Greeks, and Turks in Roumelia.

But he might have been great in council, successful in administration, loving as a father, husband, and a friend, and yet the chronicle of his services would have found no place in the records of Missionary Societies, nor would his name have been a tower of strength, a staff of support, to all, who place before their eyes the spreading of the Gospel among the heathen, as one of the first duties of man. But amidst his great successes, and his unparalleled good fortune, he had the grace given him to remember the Hand, that gave, and, while mindful of things temporal, not to forget things eternal. He set the example of a bold, independent, and yet Christian ruler, an uncrowned King of men by grace and election. He clothed with words the sentiment, which lies deep in the hearts of all, who are thoughtful, that Christian men should do all things in a Christian way: that, while cleaving to toleration, as the brightest jewel of Empire, and allowing not one inch to be yielded to the persecuting or patronising arm of the flesh in religion, still each man, each public officer, should not be ashamed, that the world should know, that he was a Christian, in word, in deed, and in principles: that he should vindicate to himself, in his private capacity, the same liberty, which he asserted for and guaranteed to others, to the Mahometan, the Hindu,

and the Sikh. They delight in their several ways to extend and advance the interests of their creed: the Christian, within the legal limits, should do the same, openly, and before all men.

Thus among the original founders of Missions in the Panjáb in 1851, we find the names of the two Lawrences; in 1853, his friends Lieutenants Herbert Edwardes and Reynell Taylor, founded the Missions on the Indus frontier. Thus, when the first sod was cut of the railway at Lahore, he assembled the nobles and citizens, and, in their presence, prayers, copies of which were handed to each person, were offered up to Almighty God, through the mediation of our Lord and Saviour. And; again, when he finally took leave of his subordinates in the Panjáb in 1859, he acknowledged his deep debt to the Author of all good: "What," said he, "without His guiding, protecting hand, would indeed have become of us all?" The instances could be multiplied, but what has been said will be sufficient.

Following the steps of James Thomason, he made morality, religion, and an interest in Christian Missions to be respected. There was no narrow pale, no Shibboleth, no exclusion of outsiders, no patronage reserved to a sect. One of his most distinguished followers was a Roman Catholic; others were men who, Gallio like, cared not for these things; but all knew, that the Chief Commissioner had his religious views, and made no secret of them. He was seen on his knees in his own tent, when on the march. Family prayer brought blessings down on his roof-tree. A few years later, Lord Canning heard with surprise, but received

the rebuke with courtesy, that in the Panjáb no Official moved his camp on the Sunday; and when his lordship was received on arrival by a company of men, distinguished in peace and war, who had marched on the Saturday night, so as not to disturb the Viceregal arrangements, he was struck by the silent reproof, and no tent was ever again struck on a Sunday. In British India, for more than a quarter of a century, no official order has been issued, no regiment allowed to march, no labour sanctioned on the public works on a Sunday; and this not from the operation of any law, or the influence of clergy, but from the quiet and unostentatious example and orders of God-fearing men in authority.

The same principles guided him during the five years of his Viceroyalty; and on his final return to England, it is gratefully recorded, in the annals of the Church Missionary Society, how, as their Vice-President, he was their ever-ready friend and wise councillor. He presided over the Sub-Committee of the Victoria Nyanza Mission, showing how large and universal were his sympathies with suffering populations. In his address to Bishop Copleston of Ceylon, on the occasion of the latter's interview with the Committee before his departure for England, he dwelt with prophetic wisdom, and loving large-heartedness, on the importance of co-operation between the missionaries of different Protestant Societies, all warring under the same banner of the Lamb. He attended with another Viceroy, Lord Northbrook, to take part in the discussion on the Resolutions agreed upon two years ago by the Indian Bishops. He was prepared

to come down in person to urge on the Committee the importance of exercising a wise and kindly policy in dealing with the question of Caste, but was prevented on the very morning by illness. During the last months of his life he considered the difficult question of the relation of the State to education in India, and forwarded his views to the Committee. On all points within the range of his experience, he was ready with clear, well-considered, and unprejudiced expression of opinion; and those who, like the writer of this Memoir, had the privilege of consulting him, feel, that by his death they have lost, what never to them can be supplied.

“Them that honour Me I will honour.” God gave him of His best gifts, and the heart to know, whence those gifts came, and for what purpose they were given. The Viceroy, who preceded him (Lord Elgin), was cut off by disease: the great and noble statesman (Lord Mayo), who succeeded him, fell by the hand of the assassin: but the Almighty had hedged this man round with His special favour; He gave him physical and intellectual strength, and such opportunities, as only occur once in a century. He was saved from the paw of the lion and the bear, from the assassin and the pestilence. When hundreds fell around him, his life was spared. He lived to be the last of the great company of soldiers, and councillors, whose names are famous, as those who added the Panjáb to British India, Hardinge, Gough, Dalhousie, Broadfoot, Sale, Havelock, Harry Smith, Henry Lawrence, Frederick Currie, Mackeson, and a long array of Sikh, Afghan, and Rajpút Chieftains and Nobles, whom I

remember, and among whom I lived in my youth, and all of whom have passed away.

To the sympathising readers, and friends, the veil of his private life may be respectfully lifted up. He might have achieved a cold reputation, and never won the priceless treasure of a loving heart; but he was, indeed, one of the tenderest and most loving of men; and he was blest, thrice blest, for the same sweet companion, who was with him five and thirty years ago in his Indian home and tent, charming all with her youthful beauty, copying his letters, and cheering him in his labours, was by his side, when premature old age and visual darkness fell upon him, writing letters at his dictation, his stay and his comfort, and following him to the grave. He was permitted to see his numerous children grow up like olive-branches round his table. He was blest with troops of friends, counting the period of their attachments by decades, and not by years: some few from the days of his school-time in Londonderry; some from his college-days at Haileybury; some from the days of the Delhi magistracy; and scores from the long years of the Panjáb. He died full of years (for Anglo-Indians seem old at fifty), full of honours, for a grateful country had nothing more to bestow that a simple citizen could accept, except a grave in the Abbey: with a reputation unblemished in any particular, for in Indian circles there were no secrets, that could be whispered, which could tell against John Lawrence: nothing hidden, that could be revealed, except unrecorded acts of generosity and kindness, done long ago, and known only to a few, and private and earnest

words of advice or caution, remembered gratefully after the lapse of years. It is a touching circumstance, and worthy of record, that the angel of death came to him at a time, when invitations were actually in circulation to friends to meet at his house to discuss the affairs of the Christian Vernacular Education Society for India; and some, who would have listened to his voice, and shared his counsels on that occasion, followed him to the grave a few days after the day fixed for the meeting, sorrowing, indeed, that they would see his face no more, but rejoicing, that grace had been given him to accomplish his warfare, as a true Christian soldier.

If, then, this life is but a vestibule to the mansions of our Father, a better life beyond the grave; if the first duty of a Christian man is so to pass through things temporal as finally not to lose things eternal; to discharge faithfully, and truthfully, the high office of Life, and to lay it down with resignation and dignity; if the Divine Revelation has been made for the purpose of aiding us in this solemn duty, and giving peace at the last; then of this man it may be said, without doubt, that we leave him with a sure and certain hope of a blessed Resurrection. Of the many hundreds of England's noblest sons, who during the last six centuries, and the eighteen generations of men, have been garnered into the vaults of the great Abbey, over the graves of how many must their friends have thought that "he that was least in the kingdom of heaven was greater than they"!

Statues in the Metropolis of England and British India record the public appreciation of the services of the only man, who has as yet risen from the post of an

Assistant to that of Viceroy of British India. Guns were fired in every Cantonment of that great Empire to record, that a great man had passed away. Tributes of respect and regret were expressed by speech in the numerous languages, and engrossed in the varying written characters, of her Majesty's Oriental subjects. Old greybeards in the Panjáb, when they hear, that "*Ján Lárens púra hoá,*" will think of him sorrowfully, and tell their sons and grandsons of the strong, kind man, who, years ago, at the commencement of the British Ráj, stood up for the rights of the Jat Zamindar, as if he had been one of their caste, and to whose forethought they owe their title-deeds, and the equitable assessment of the land-tax. Old friends in Indian circles will, when they meet, mingle words of sorrow with unqualified tribute of admiration, and professional pride, for the grave has closed over all the petty jealousies and envies, which surround unexpected and self-achieved greatness. An acquaintance, extending beyond one-third of a century, an appreciation of his sterling character, before the great world knew him, and of many excellences which the world never knew, (far removed from blind worship, or servile adulation, which he himself would have despised), justify the writer in placing on record, how much he admired the Statesman, how entirely he accepted and adopted his principles of Indian administration, and how profoundly he honoured the native nobility of the man.

If to some few, who followed him to the grave in Westminster Abbey, the thought went back to the solitary tombstone in the old Residency at Lakhnau, where Henry Lawrence sleeps, cut off in his prime, under the touching self-indited scroll, that "*Here lies*

one who tried to do his duty," still all must feel, that on the stone of the younger and more fortunate brother might be inscribed, that "*Here lies one who did his duty to the last.*"

LONDON, August 1879.

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NOTE.<sup>1</sup>—This passage has now received an honour as durable as brass, and whatever may be the fate of these pages, the idea conveyed in these words, will live as long as the city of London, for the sculptor, who was entrusted with the task of designing a statue of Lord Lawrence, announces that he derived his conception of a suitable attitude from the perusal of these lines, and has represented the Great Proconsul with a sword and pen in either hand, and the words underneath, "Peace and War." I was asked to give my authority for the anecdote, and on referring to my journal, faithfully kept day by day since January 1842, I find inscribed the Proclamation issued by John Lawrence as Commissioner, and the Circular Letter, which I, as his Deputy in charge of the Hoshiarpur District, forwarded to each of my lieges, and I print them as they stand, for they illustrate the manner of dealing, then at least in fashion, with a lately conquered people. It is not pretended that the very words of my letter were suggested by the Commissioner, for such was not the case, but at that period I was so imbued with the spirit of his example and his teaching, his principle of firmness of purpose, and decision of acting, accompanied by a never-failing love and tenderness to the people, while still in rebellion, that, if it was I who penned the words, the conception and the sentiment were his. My works were his.

PROCLAMATION OF JOHN LAWRENCE, Commissioner and Superintendent of the Trans-Satlaj States.

"November 28, 1848.

"Since I have heard that some evil-disposed persons, residents of Jeswán, have leagued with the Raja of Jeswán, and his son, and have attacked the Police-Station and Revenue-Treasuries of Amb,

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<sup>1</sup> See page 255.



“ I proclaim to all that, if a shot is fired from any village on any Government servant, or any person seized in arms, they will be heavily punished. Whoever wishes to save his life, and property, had better come to my camp at Amb: if no bloodshed has taken place, all other errors will be overlooked, but these, who do not appear, will be punished.”

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CIRCULAR LETTER OF ROBERT CUST, Deputy-Commissioner and Superintendent of the District of Hoshiarpur, to all the principal Landholders in the District, sent by special messenger to each separately.

“ CAMP HAJIPUR, November 28, 1848.

“ I expect, and am fully confident, that you are in your own villages, and have kept clear of any rebellion. If any of your relations have joined the rebels, write to them to come back, before blood is shed: if they do so, their fault will be forgiven. Consider, that I have in person visited every one of your villages, and I know the position of every one of you. What is your injury I consider mine, and what is gain to you I consider gain to myself. The rule of the British is in favour of the agriculturist. If your lands are heavily assessed, tell me so, and I will relieve you: if you have any grievance, let me know it, and I will try to remove it: if you have any plans, let me know them, and I will give you my advice: *if you will excite rebellion, as I live, I will severely punish you.* I have ruled this district three years by the sole agency of the pen, and, if necessary, I *will rule it by the sword.* God forbid, that matters should come to that. This trouble affects your families, and your prosperity. The Rajas of the country get up the disturbances, but it is the Landholders, whose lands are plundered. Consider what I have said, and talk over it with your relations, and bring all back from rebellion, and, when my camp arrives in your neighbourhood, attend at once in person, and tell those, who have joined the rebellion, to return to me, as children, who have committed a fault, return to their fathers, and their faults will be forgiven them. Let this be known in the whole valley of Jeswan, and be of good cheer. In two days I shall be in the midst of you with a force, which you will be unable to resist.”

As the Landholders came in, I received them seated in front of my tent with a pen and a sword in my hand, and asked them to

make their selection. They flew to the pen with enthusiasm. Some of the rebel Rajas surrendered, as our force approached. On December 2, 1848, before daylight, the troops made a double assault upon the village of Amb, and the Palace of the Raja of Jeswán, and we on the other side of the valley heard the rattling of the musketry, and suddenly two tall columns of fire sprung up from the two places of attack, at the distance of five miles from each other, and the same from us, and the lines of Virgil came to my recollection :

“ Tum vero omne mihi visum considerare in ignes  
Ilium, et ex imo verti Neptunia Troja.”

The captive Rajas, who at that moment were being led out in the midst of loaded muskets to commence their journey to Hoshiarpúr, turned round to take their last look at the valley, where their ancestors had ruled for so many centuries, and which they would never revisit again. The thought of Boabdil, the Moor, taking his last look of Granáda, the Alhambra, and the Vega, passed through my mind, as he stood on that beautiful spot, now so well known as “*il ultimo sospiro di Moro.*” The events of history seem to be repeated in every century and every clime. The five Rajas, captured on this occasion, were kept by me in the old castle of Bijwára, fed upon bread and water, until the war was over, and Lord Dalhousie had time to give orders as to their final disposal, when they were deported to the distant Hill Province of Kumaon, where they died, and all but the faint memory of them has passed away from the valley, where they were persuaded by a designing Sikh priest to raise the standard of revolt. This priest, Bedi Bikraman Singh, was called jocularly by Lord Hardinge the Archbishop of Canterbury, as he was among the greatest and most influential of his tribe; so much so that Maharája Ranjit Singh used to prostrate himself at his feet. He felt, no doubt, the change of his circumstances; and as he resided at Unah, in my District, he gave me great trouble, and organised this rebellion. The sight of the two columns of flame took all his spirit out of him; he fled with a few horsemen through a pass, which was left unguarded, to Amritsar; and years after, when Commissioner of that place, I found him living the life of a Fakir on the edge of the sacred tank, and there he remained till he

died. His castle was razed to the ground, all his chattels sold by auction, and his name utterly extinguished. Such are the sad accompaniments of foreign domination. Upon mature reflection, I do not know, how we could have acted otherwise, if our authority was to be maintained; still I feel sorry now for the poor Rajas, with whom I had lived several years in friendship, and have even a sigh of regret for my old antagonist the Bedi, for, as I have mentioned at page 139, he spared my life once; but when, in after years, he took credit for it in conversation with me at Amritsar, I told him, that he had spared his own also, for as sure as his servants had killed me that night in my tent, so surely would *he* have been hanged by John Lawrence, instead of being allowed to count his beads, and bathe in the holy tank in peace and quietness, and in all the odour of sanctity, till the end of his days; although to his last hour he could not be convinced, that he had done wrong in killing all his daughters, according to the custom of his pious and honourable family for many generations!

LONDON, *March* 1881.

## CHAPTER XX.

*THE INDIAN CUSTOM.*

THE subject of Caste is one of considerable importance. There exists unquestionably a social institution in British India, which is found nowhere else in such compact rigidity: it lays claim to considerable antiquity, and is a social phenomenon, which cannot be overlooked: it is proposed to examine the features of this institution.

It is of no practical advantage to discuss the origin of Caste. Of one thing there is no doubt, that it is not alluded to in the Rig Veda, as a social feature of the early Arian population. The Post Vedic Laws of Manu lay great stress upon Caste, but it is not clear, when these laws were written, by whose authority, and in what part of India. The idea has been hazarded, that they were compiled at a comparatively late date, with a view of upholding Caste against the levelling tenets of the Buddhists. At any rate, they have no more binding force upon the people of India generally than the Book of Leviticus has upon Europe. We shall see further on, that eighty-six per cent. of the population of British India does not belong to either of the priest, warrior, or merchant Castes of the Books

of Manu, but are members of the Sudra Caste, or of mixed Castes, or absolutely without any Caste properly so called. The subdivision of a nation into priest, warrior, and merchant classes, with a fourth for the common herd, is not unusual in Oriental nations. It is notorious, that the difficulty, where it exists at all, is found among the lower Castes, the great majority of whom cannot be included under any pretence in the lowest of the Castes of Manu, and this ought to be convincing, that the question is not one practically of Religion, but of deep-rooted Social Custom and tribal etiquette, among a people, who really have no religious belief, in the sense in which that word is known by Christians and Mahometans. The Sanskrit term for Caste is "varna," or "colour," clearly alluding to ethnical features. The ordinary term is "jati," or "birth," an elastic expression, like the "good family" of England. The people themselves call it "bhai-bundi," or "brotherhood," as the essence of the matter lies in the fact, that it is a close link, uniting sections of the community by unwritten laws of their own devising.

Caste has certainly a good side, and its sudden destruction or collapse would entail considerable evils by the complete disorganisation of society, which would ensue. I would ask the question, whether those Provinces of Southern Asia, where Caste does not prevail, such as Afghanistan, Barma, Ceylon, the Settlement of the Straits of Malacca, and Hong-Kong, are more easily governed; whether the people are more moral, or advancing more steadily in the paths of civilisation and education, than the people of British

India, who are technically described, as enslaved by Caste? One of the most time-honoured maxims in the science of government is that famous phrase, "Divide et impera," and in Caste we have ready-made fissures in the community, which render the institution of secret societies, so common and so dangerous among the Chinese and Malays, almost impossible in India.

The striking features of Caste may be described as (1), matrimonial; (2), religious; or rather quasi-religious; (3), social. We must consider each separately.

The rules of Caste are of course technically bad in preventing the free intermarriage of tribe with tribe, just as it was bad in Rebecca not wishing her son Jacob to marry one of the daughters of Heth; as it was bad in Nehemiah compelling the Jews, after the return from the captivity, to put away their wives of the country; as it would be bad in a quiet English family shuddering at the idea of one of their younger members forming an alliance with a Negress, a Gipsy, a Chinese, or a Malay. Many speak of the vast country of India, as if it were occupied by people of one race, one religion, one rank in life, instead of being the habitat of infinite varieties of the human race, in distinct states of social depression or elevation. Moreover, ever since the world began, and as long as it lasts, there will be a restriction, based upon unwritten and most capricious law, upon promiscuous alliances in marriage, and the fault of the native of India is, that it has been made so rigid. The better class of Mahometans are however in this respect quite as strict, and among native

converts to Christianity of undoubted excellence we find, that this difficulty cannot be got over, and that a man of good family will seek for a wife among people of his own Caste, and no equitable person could find fault with him for doing so.

Caste is thoroughly bad, and worthy of all condemnation, if it encourages the notion, that all mankind are not equal in the face of God and of their fellow-creatures, just as it was bad in the Greeks looking upon all the world as barbarians; as it was bad in the Jew asserting a superiority over the rest of mankind; as it is bad in the Anglo-Saxon asserting a superiority over the uncivilised weaker races and the aboriginal tribes, with whom he comes into contact. But the question may fairly be asked: Does Caste do so? Individual Brahmans may in their temple, or their seclusion, say so or think so; but we are dealing with the millions, and we lay down broadly, that members of the thousand inferior Castes, which make up the population of India, do not assert, that their particular Caste is something *better than, or superior to*, the Caste of another, but that it is *different from* that of another, and they would object to eat or intermarry with the members of a Caste notoriously *superior* just as much as with a Caste notoriously *inferior*, or even with particular subdivisions of their own Caste, separated from them by some imperceptible shade of difference, known only to themselves.

Caste may lastly be called bad in placing restriction upon promiscuous commensality, and thus limiting the form of hospitality and good fellowship, which is common in Europe, just as it was bad in the Egyptians

considering it an abomination to eat with the Hebrews, and in the Hebrews a thousand years later objecting to eat with the Gentiles. We might quote numerous other cases of tribes and classes refusing to eat together from notions of ceremonial purity both in ancient and modern times. The habits of Oriental life must be considered: insensibly certain kinds of food are objected to by one class, and indulged in by others. Some classes are exceedingly nice and clean; others are very much the contrary. The hand is the only instrument used in feeding; the state, in which that hand is kept, is therefore a consideration. Besides, we know as a fact in Europe, that one of the main tests of the division of the social strata is that of taking food together or separately. It would be repulsive in the extreme to be compelled to eat and drink with those, whose vocations are nauseous, and habits uncleanly, or whose tastes in the choice and mode of preparation of food differed materially. . Even as the social ladder is mounted, and there is an assimilation in culture and personal niceties, yet still by an unwritten law the table of persons is kept separate, who are intimate in other relations of life. We find, therefore, the groundwork of a common law of humanity even in the exaggerated law of Caste with regard to the modes of eating. It is an error, however, to suppose, that any restriction is thereby placed upon hospitality. I have myself accepted the hospitality of the highest Castes of Hindus, and dined by the side of the host, who excused himself courteously of partaking of the food, for reasons which I quite understood; and I have, on the other hand, entertained scores, both Hindu and



Mahometan, by entrusting to selected persons the details of the banquet, and this is the practice of good-fellowship all over India. The Mahometan in Turkey shares the food of the Christian, but it does not follow, that he is on that account more intimate with Europeans than his fellow-religionist in India is with the Hindu and Christian, whose food he would not touch : as far as I can judge, the contrary is the case.

I have dwelt upon these features of Caste to show, that it is one of the Old World customs, which has unluckily survived in India in a hard and crystallised form to the present day, while other nations under the influence of progress have toned it down, or abandoned it altogether. Among such customs may be reckoned domestic slavery of the gentle and patriarchal type, child-marriage, polygamy, restriction on re-marriage of widows, belief in magic and divination, cremation of the dead, painting or seaming of the features and limbs, swathing of the feet, circumcision, and even blood-feuds and duelling. It is difficult for Europeans in the nineteenth century to understand, how any one of such customs can be defended in theory, far less practised by intelligent and educated men ; and yet no wise ruler of an Oriental people would venture, except in an indirect and cautious way, to interfere with such customs, which must rather be left to the slow but certain discipline of intellectual, moral, and religious progress. As regards abominable customs, offending against laws Human and Divine, such as human sacrifices, burning of widows, burying alive of lepers, female infanticide, traffic in slaves, mutilation of the human body, and threats of immolation, the Govern-

ment of India has not been wanting in measures of stern repression. This distinction should be carefully considered.

When I said above that Caste is not noticed as existing in Vedic periods, I did not forget the famous stanza in the Rig Veda, of which such liberal use is made by the antagonists of the Custom. It runs thus :—

“The Brahman is his mouth : the Kshatriya was made his arms ;  
What the Vaisya was that was his hips : from his feet sprung the  
Sudra.”

Now it is worthy of remark, that this stanza is not written in Vedic or Archaic Sanskrit, but in the modern form of that language. What should we think of lines of Ciceronian Latin found in the Laws of the Ten Tables? Again, the word “sudra” is of unknown origin, and not grammatically connected with any Vedic word. But even, if the lines be genuine, they imply nothing beyond what is expressed in other countries in poetic diction; in other words, that the Priest is the mouthpiece, the Warrior the arm of defence, the Merchant the sinew, and the Working-man the groundwork of the body politic.

In this argument, however, I set aside the Hindu Scriptures, as having no direct relation to the issue, and turn to the reports of the last Official Census of British India, as we have to deal with Caste, not as it was three thousand years ago, but as it is now, after seven hundred years of Mahometan and one hundred of Christian domination.

The striking results are that there are: Brahman,

ten millions; Kshatriya, five millions; other Castes, one hundred and five millions; without recorded Caste, ten millions; Mahometan, forty millions; Non-Arian, eighteen millions; making a total of one hundred and eighty-eight millions.

Now, taking the Province under the Lieutenant-Governor of Bangál as a fair subject for analysis, we find out of a total of sixty-four millions sixty-nine specified Castes, although the number of separate tribes and Castes is calculated at little less than one thousand; and if the minor subdivisions, such as gotras, septs and clans, are taken into consideration, the number will swell to many thousands. There are four superior and three intermediate Castes, and then come the following: Trading, pastoral, preparers of cooked food, agricultural, general servants, artisans, weavers, labourers, sellers of fish and vegetables, boatmen and fishermen, dancers, musicians and beggars. In the North-West Provinces there are two hundred and ninety-one specified Castes; in Oudh, seventy-seven; in the Panjáb, nineteen; in the Central Provinces, forty-eight; in Bombay, one hundred and forty; in Madras, seventeen. Clearly the takers of the Census have not followed out the same principle of enumeration, and upon the data thus supplied it is not possible to arrive at an accurate detail of the Castes of British India, but it is evident, that their number far exceeds what was contemplated by the ancient men, who codified the Laws of Manu.

It must not be supposed for a moment, that the members of any Caste are restricted to any one particular trade, profession, or calling. This is one of the

greatest of the inaccuracies, into which writers on this subject have fallen, and the assertion, that the institution of Caste confines a man and his family for ever to the grade, in which he is born, prevents his rising to a higher class of society, whatever may be his character and merits, will not stand the test of inquiry. The history of the Maráthi and Sikh nations tells the unmistakable story of the upheaving of the lower Castes; and what is there in the present social state of British India to prevent a duly qualified man rising to the highest walks of life without reference to his origin or Caste? Successful adventurers are known to improve their Castes, as they get richer. Fictitious Castes are a device as common as fictitious pedigrees. The ten millions of Brahmans have no doubt been recruited from several inferior Castes, and from the issue of mixed marriages, for their ranks contain specimens of the most opposite physical types. If any one supposes, that Brahmans, as a general rule, are engaged in priestly duties, or that any proportion of them lay claim to any arrogant superiority over their fellows, he is greatly mistaken. A gentleman is always a gentleman, and the long hereditary culture of the Brahmans has told upon their appearance and manners. Their ranks supply many of the ablest public servants of the State, though by no means a majority of the official ranks, and they are themselves subdivided into so many numerous tribes, that a kingdom composed solely of the ten million Brahmans would still be indelibly streaked by Caste, for there are as many subdivisions of Brahmans, as there are great Castes of Hindu, and as completely separated in the matters of matrimony,

commensality, and social intercourse. The Gour Brahmans would shudder at the possibility of any communion, beyond that of general acquaintance, with the Kashmíri Brahmans, who compose the ablest class in Upper India, but are eaters of flesh (excepting beef) and drinkers of spirits, which are abomination to the Gour Brahmans. The Sáraswat Brahmans, who abound in the Panjáb, eat and drink with the Khatri Caste, and are employed in servile duties. Nor have the Brahmans even the monopoly of priestly duties or of sanctity; at many shrines other Castes officiate. With the great Sikh nation the Khatri Caste has quite superseded the Brahman. In the Anglo-Indian army there is an abundance of Brahman soldiers under the orders of low Caste men and of Mahometans. Brahmans are always sought after by the Hindu as cooks, a useful but not honourable or sacred position.

The Kshatriya Caste, if existing at all, is represented by the Rajpút and Khatri. In considering the Rajpút, the new anomaly presents itself, that thousands of these have become Mahometan, but still claim to be Rajpút, keep up their own family customs and law of inheritance, attend the weddings of their own Hindu tribal brethren, and have their particular bard and family priest. No intermarriage and actual commensality is possible, but still it is a wonderful instance of the elasticity of the Caste system, when the breakers of Caste have power and numbers on their side. The Rájá of one of the Mountain Rajpút States in the Himálaya is a Mahometan Rajpút, ruling happily over his Hindu brethren. A Rajpút takes every kind of service requiring fidelity or strength; but the arm has

to wield the pen as well as the sword, and at a period probably subsequent to the Laws of Manu the art of writing was imported from the West into India, and a powerful group of Castes, un contemplated in the original division of mankind, came into existence, viz., the men of the pen, or the Writer-Caste, who are not likely to be overlooked or crushed in any part of the world. They are known by different names in many parts of India, such as the Khatri, the Káyat, the Parbhhu, &c., &c., but it must not be supposed, that these classes monopolise the right of using the pen.

It would be impossible to follow in detail the other hundreds of Castes, but imperfect, as confessedly our knowledge is, as to the ramification of Castes, we can see clearly, that Religion is the smallest factor in the system, if it exists at all in the true sense of the word. For the sake of exhausting the subject, it may be stated that Caste has arisen from the operation of three causes : (1) religious or quasi-religious, (2) professional, (3) ethnical. We can hardly suppose, that any person would argue, that the origin of any of the Castes, bearing obvious trade and professional names, was religious, as such are clearly hereditary guilds. Still less could it be urged, that the Caste of dancing girls, jugglers, musicians, beggars, thieves, and other baser occupations, had the sanction of religion ; and yet the great mass of the population is divided into such kinds of Caste, and so entirely do the people mix up the questions of Caste and profession, that a watchman is generally spoken of by the Caste, to which he belongs, as the men of that Caste are all watchmen, and the great backbone of the population of the Panjáb is described

indiscriminately as Jat, which is their Caste, or Zamin-dár, which is their calling.

Those, who have not studied the mode, in which the motley population of India has been built up, hardly appreciate at its full value the effect of the ethnical fissures in the lower strata. The Chamár tribe of the North-West Provinces amount to three millions and a half, scattered in every part of the Province, employed in hereditary servile duties, or in trades of an offensive character, allowing themselves the liberty of eating carrion or the flesh of unclean animals, worshipping other gods than those of the Hindu, who avoid even their touch. In every village, moreover, there is a Helot class, engaged in servile duties as watchmen, sweepers, scavengers, removers of the dead, contact with whom is shunned, as that of the Cagot in the South of France, where the Caste feeling has survived the European culture of many centuries. It is clear, that the Shanár of South India are ethnically distinct from the rest of the population. There is no question, that all such races or tribes are of non-Arian origin, which have not accepted the thin veneer of Hindu culture, and are therefore hated and shunned, as out of the pale of Hindu society, and at the same time not strong enough, like the Mahometans and Christians, to establish a rival and independent social organisation of their own. It is an absurdity to quote the famous Vedic Foot and Mouth stanza, or the Laws of Manu, with regard to such classes, as those Laws bear no relation to any, who are not Arian in origin, or who have not introduced themselves into the Arian system. The Shanár worship devils, have peculiar customs, and

it is no matter of surprise, that the real Hindu of Arian origin, and those of the non-Arian, who have advanced to a certain extent up the ladder of Arian culture, look upon them with abhorrence, and that the antipathetic feeling of a superior race operates here, as strongly as it does on the part of the Anglo-Saxon in America against the Negro. Men must be more than men, if in one generation such antipathies could be softened down. The lower the Caste, to which the semi-Hindu has climbed, the greater the jealousy felt towards those outside the line. Among the very low classes in India this feeling must show itself by such outward signs as shunning contact, intermarriage and commensality, as their life is spent in the streets and marketplace, without the sanctity and privacy of a home, by which the richer classes keep out the unclean and the common herd.

Under a native Hindu rule it is more than probable, that the yoke of Caste pressed very heavily on the lower classes, but the sting is very much taken out under Mahometan and Christian rule. Moreover, I call attention to the following remarkable facts, as indicating, that a Caste feeling is, as it were, part of the common law of the Indian people. All the Hindu sectarians, who have disturbed the peace of the Brahmanical system in a long succession for several centuries, have, like the Protestant Missionaries, selected the Brahmans as the object of their hatred, and attempted the destruction of Caste under the alleged vaunt of the equality of mankind. Slowly and surely Caste has forced itself back again. Buddhism, which was based upon the abolition of Caste, was



fairly driven out of India. The more plastic Jain accepted Caste and a transitional position. In Ceylon the Buddhists even exhibit traces of Caste. The Sikhs of the Panjáb, after a long tilt against Caste, have relaxed their rules, and relapsed into Caste. A band of celibate ascetics, or vagrant beggars, may shake off Caste, but no body of religionists has ever settled down in India to decent family life without throwing round a fence of Caste more or less rigid. The non-Arian races of the Hills, as they settle down to be agriculturists and adopt a semi-Hinduism, of their own free-will assert their claim to a Caste; and, wonder of wonders! the Mahometan, who in Turkey, Arabia, Egypt and Afghanistán, marries any one, on whom his fancy falls, and eats and drinks with the European, in India is particular as to commensality, and, if he is a member of a respectable tribe, is very restricted in the choice of a wife. The Census report shows, that Caste is almost as prevalent among them as among Hindus, for the descendants of the conquering races who immigrated from Western Asia, the Arab, the Persian, the Moghal, the Turk, and the Pathán, generally marry each among his own kith and kin. The Mahometan Rajpút and other of the good Hindu Castes, who became Mahometans in the time of the Empire, keep close to their tribal rules, which differ from Caste only in name. The lower Mahometans, converts from the non-Arian races, are in practice less rigid; but even among them increase of wealth is sometimes accompanied by a fictitious improvement of Caste-designation. The successful corn-factor has been known in a time of dearth to have sprung from the

ranks of the Shaikh, or New Mahometan, to that of Sayyid, or descendant of the Prophet, and the self-asserting pride of a Sayyid is only equalled by that of a Brahman.

I proceed now to show, how the strong and impartial Government of British India has acted with a view of disarming and controlling the bad and exaggerated features of Caste. In the State-schools and hospitals, the difference of Caste is totally ignored. All, who enter there, are only known as scholars and patients. In the railway-trains the community is reduced to the common denomination of passengers. We have heard of Anglo-Saxon colonies, where black and white will not mix on such occasions: such is not the case in British India. In the Courts of Justice, civil and criminal, all subjects of the Queen are absolutely equal in theory and practice. A Brahman murderer would be hanged at Banáras without benefit of clergy, and the rights of the lowest Chamár would be vindicated. In the State-prisons all are associated together; but a prisoner of good Caste is selected as cook, as it would be obviously unjust to enhance the penalty fixed by Law for a particular offence by adding a feature, which would affect some prejudicially, but not all. It is insisted, that the wells of a village are available to all, and an attempt to exclude native Christian converts was distinctly put a stop to. Any attempt to exclude men of lower Caste from the use of the streets, or to prevent males and females from wearing such dress as they chose, would not be tolerated for an instant. The service of the State, civil and military, is open to all, and men of the highest Caste are constantly subordi-

nated to men of lower, according to their position in the service. On the other hand, any positive injury caused by one person to another, entailing injury to Caste, is the ground of an action for Tort: thus a valuable property in the form of Social Position is recognised as existing. Moreover, the native Laws of Marriage and Inheritance are accepted by the Civil Courts, and consequently the issue of a marriage, contracted contrary to the rules of Caste, is declared illegitimate.

How has society dealt with Caste? I can only give an opinion based upon experience acquired in a solitary life among the people of Upper India for weeks and months together without any European companion. I never found Caste an obstacle to social intercourse, nor did the subject ever press itself forward, and yet the population of the villages and towns visited each day differed considerably. Few villages were absolutely without Mahometans, none without men of the lowest Caste, and in the thronging of an Indian crowd there must be indiscriminate contact. In my establishment there was the Brahman, with whom I transacted ordinary business, the Rajpút, who carried my messages, the Khatri and Káyat, who engrossed my orders. Mahometan and Hindu sat upon the floor working side by side, in constant contact, and handed papers from one to the other; and, if the half-Caste Christian sat at a table to write English letters, it was only because the method of English correspondence required this distinction. My own tent was daily thronged by men of all Caste and position in life, and my visits to the male apartments of the notables was considered an honour, and yet of all Outcastes the European is the worst, as

he asserts his right to eat both beef and pork. Thus professors of different Castes mingle in social life without any unpleasant friction: each man respects his neighbour; he has no wish, indeed, to intermarry with the family of his neighbour, or share the cup and platter of his neighbour, but he does not consider himself in the least superior or inferior.

In one sense, and one sense only, Caste may be said to be religious. All, that remains to the non-Mahometan population of the religious idea and instinct, has centuries ago shrunk into the notion of Caste, just as in Europe in the Middle Ages all, that to many men remained of Religion, was a keen sense of personal Honour. Now both Caste and Honour restrain a man's actions from what is contrary to the rules of the brotherhood, is dishonourable, and often from crime, in a way, in which nothing else will restrain them, and in that sense Caste and Honour may be said to be religious sanctions, but in no other. No wise legislator would venture to do aught to weaken such sanctions, the existence of which mark a certain progress in civilisation, until other higher sanctions have been substituted.

With all my recollections of valued friends left behind me in India, whose features live in my memory, and whose portraits in some cases decorate my walls, it is amazing to me to hear on my return to England, that this good, easy-going people, amiable and ignorant, tolerant and docile, accommodating and affectionate, is, in the opinion of wise and good men, "enslaved by a Custom, which annihilates fellow-feeling, and eats out human sympathy, and makes one portion of the com-

“munity slaves to the other.” I could multiply quotations of this kind, but it is not my object to aggravate this difficulty, but rather to compose it. I cannot see, that Caste is an evil of the kind and degree, which it is imagined by many good men to be. In an exaggerated and self-asserting form it would certainly be an evil under a Hindu system of Government of the stiff and intolerant form of modern religious creeds; but tolerance has ever been of the essence of the Hindu system, and in British India the claws of Caste have been cut by a strong and impartial Government, and the social pressure of a population, made up of various elements, which would not submit to oppression. I remark that in Europe classes lie in strata *horizontally*, and that in India the separation is by *vertical* fissures. I have known men of good Caste and social position as gentlemen, who were not ashamed to have in their families near relations in the grade of menial or cook. Now such a state of affairs would be impossible in Europe, and marks the enormous divergence of social customs.

Viewing the matter, therefore, from the point of view of a statesman, a moralist, an advocate for civil and religious liberty, education and progress, I can see nothing in the social Custom of Caste, that requires any interference from the Legislature. I recognise the existence in different nations of an infinite variety of family customs, habits and tendencies, and, where they are prejudicial to the better interests of the human race, the work of amelioration may be left to time, education, intercourse with other nations, and

general intellectual progress. It is not the duty of the State to interfere with innocuous Customs, and the preacher and moralist had better reserve their censures for breaches of the Moral Law, the Criminal Law, and Idolatry.

LONDON, 1878.

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NOTE.—I ask those, who doubt the correctness of my views to consult any, or all, of the enlightened Statesmen, whose names are connected with India, for such I believe to be the opinion of all, who take an interest in, and love, as I do, the people of India.

LONDON, 1881.

## CHAPTER XXI.

*THE GREAT INDIAN NATION.*

It will be remarked, that my subject is limited to British India, that is to say, the Great Peninsula and the basin of the Irawadi, to the exclusion of the rest of the Indo-Chinese Peninsula, and the Indian Archipelago. At one end of my subject are positive facts, revealed by the reports of the Census, and amply testified to by the evidence of Language and Ethnology, viz., the existence of millions of non-Arians in British India: at the other end of the subject are the dim pre-historic reflections, or impressions, of certain great facts, which we can only see darkly, and which we must approach by the cautious use of reasonable induction. In India, History is non-existent, until times comparatively recent: Monumental Inscriptions, carved upon stone, are of a date later than the invasion of Alexander the Great. The problem of the date of the earliest written record of the Indian people, hangs upon the still more difficult problem of the date of the earliest use of an Alphabet in India, and the period, during which legend in a poetic form may reasonably be supposed to have been handed down orally from generation to generation.

It may be reasonably concluded, that at some remote period before the Christian era, the common ancestors of the great Arian, or Indo-European, Family were settled in the neighbourhood of the watershed of the basins of the rivers Indus and Oxus. At some period still more remote, they must have separated from the Semitic, Hamitic, Uralian, Malayan, and Mongolian Families, who were also established in Asia. Attempts have been made to reconstitute the primeval language of the Arian Family, by collecting the roots, which can be traced in two or more of the branches. Pressed by want of sustenance, or pushed forward by the action of more powerful tribes behind, the progression Westward of the Arian Family began. The Kelts led the van, and reached the shores of the Atlantic, where their remnants still exist; behind these North of the Caspian Sea, came the Teutons; behind the Teutons came the Slavs; the Helleno-Latin branch proceeded Westward also, but South of the Caspian. Two branches, the Iranian, and Indian, remained for some considerable period longer together, and are sometimes called specially Arian, as their language and mythology are more closely united: at length they were also set into motion, and the great Iranian branch descended to occupy the wide tracts South of the Caucasus and the Caspian, and the great Indian branch crossed the Indus into the famous Peninsula, which is shut off from the rest of Asia by the wall of the Himálaya, and the mountains of Afghanistán. Even to this day, some poor, uncivilised, hardy tribes exist on the confines of the old cradle of the race, the Káfir and the Dard, whose language never advanced to the



grandeur of the Sanskritic languages, though it is essentially Arian, of the Indian type.

When the Indian branch of the Arian Family crossed the Indus, and occupied the Panjáb, the country of the five rivers, whom did they find in possession of the land? We gather from the Veda, that they found a black and uncivilised people, inferior to them in civilisation, strangers to them in language and mythology, and, as was to be expected, very hostile to the invaders. It was the old story, of which we have many instances in the history of the Anglo-Saxon people in their colonisation of so-called waste lands. *Væ victis!* the natives are always described in the darkest colours, and have to be improved off the face of the earth at the earliest opportunity. And yet some of these pre-Arian races have left in India the ruins of remarkable buildings, and attached undying names to rivers and mountains.

The Arian race pressed down the basin of the two rivers, the Indus, and the Ganges, pushing their predecessors in the occupation of the country to the right and the left, and they reached the Ocean on each side of the Peninsula. Beyond the Vindhya range their settlements were limited, but their civilisation was extended to the Dravidian races, whom they could neither exterminate, nor absorb. But this was not the limit of the power of the great Arian-Indian race, for they colonised Ceylon at a later period, which may be fixed approximately, and gave a Religion and Language to that island. At some unknown period they carried their civilisation and Religion to the Indo-Chinese Peninsula, and the Island of Java. They

have given birth to the most marvellous Literature, that the world ever saw, to twelve different modern Vernaculars, to more than a score of different written characters, and to two of the greatest and most ancient Religions of the World, Brahmanism and Buddhism. There let us leave then, and turn to those, who can only be described as non-Arians of India, for want of a more accurate designation.

The statistics of modern times introduce us to the existence of four distinct groups, who are not Arian, within the confines of British India :

I. The lower strata of that great congeries of Castes, and races, which is known as the Hindu Nation. In the careless, and unsympathetic Official Enumeration of former years all, who were not Christian or Mahometan, were, with a kind of grim irony, entered as Hindu.

II. Dravidian, whose language witnesses to their entirely distinct origin, though their literature is deeply imbued with the genius of their superior neighbour: whose Religion is partly borrowed from the Arian, and is partly as degraded as that of the African savage.

III. Kolarian, whose language witnesses to an entirely distinct origin from Arian or Dravidian: who have never risen from a low state of culture, and cling to the Hills of Central India, to which they had been driven, with an exceedingly debased Religion.

IV. Tibeto-Barman, under which name are classed a large number of races, totally distinct from each other, and resembling only in this particular, that they

are not Arian, and that their habitat is in the slopes and valleys of the Himálaya, and in the basins of the two great rivers, the Brahmaputra and the Irawadi.

No one can have lived in the interior of British India, frequenting the great towns, and passing through the villages of the rural Districts, without having the remarkable difference of colour, stature, and physical features of the people, whom he meets, or sees, forced upon his notice. The people are aware of it themselves: hence the vertical splitting up of the population into Castes, and tribes, which hold no communication, either by eating or marriage, with each other. This custom is incorrectly attributed to Religion, while, in fact, it may be classed more fairly with the feeling of repulsion, which separates a European from an Esquimaux or a Negro. There is no greater error than to suppose, that the Brahmanical Religion is non-propagandist. In the long series of centuries, which have elapsed, since they commenced their progress down the Gangetic valley, they have absorbed non-Arian tribe after tribe into their comprehensive system, by the simple process of adding another Caste, with more or less of Hinduism venerated over the old Customs of the new comers. Abstaining from certain animal food, and cremation of the dead, appear to be the only indispensable requirements of the Hindu, but outside the fold are millions, who ostentatiously eat carrion, and prosecute loathsome trades and manufactures. The Chamár tribe of Northern India is recorded in the last official Census, as containing three and a half millions, not one of

whom in any way can be considered to profess the Brahmanical Religion. There are many other tribes of the same kind. Indeed in every village there is a helot class, the very touch of whom is considered by a Hindu a thing to be avoided. It is clear, therefore, that these infamous Castes, or perhaps the whole Sudra Caste, represent the races, whom the Arians found in possession of the land, and whom they converted into hewers of wood and drawers of water. In some cases the process of assimilation, and civilisation, have gone on, and the conquered tribes are deemed to be Hindu, though ethnologically non-Arian: in others, as described above, they are distinctly non-Hindu and non-Arian. It is probable, that wave after wave of Arian immigrants poured into the country, and this will account for the sharp and distinct separation of the great Castes of the Brahman, or Priest Caste, the Rajpút or Warrior Caste, the Writer Castes, and the great Agricultural Castes, the Ját or Getæ, the Gújar, and others. Whatever came from beyond the Indus was "noble" or Arian: whatever was found in the country was Nisháda, ignoble or non-Arian. In this we have but another instance of the conduct of a dominant invading tribe, when they take possession of the country of weaker races. At any rate, here we have the first group of non-Arians of India. It is worthy of remark, that in the legends of the Dravidian people there is no record of collision with their great Arian neighbours, and we may conclude, that none took place: it follows that the tribes, with whom the Arians did most certainly come into collision, were the ancestors of those, who now occupy

the lowest steps in the Hindu Polity, and possibly the Kolarians. The number of these Low-Caste men amounts to millions, and they dwell within the towns and villages of the Hindu people, but are as distinct from them, as the Mahometan, or rather more so. If they have places of worship, they are distinct from the Brahmanical ritual; if they have a semblance of Caste, it is but a reflection of the custom of their powerful neighbours, and it would be ridiculous to attach to it any religious sanction. Under British rule these classes have gained much: they can no longer be denied the use of the streets, the roads, the wells, the ferry-boats, the railway-carriages, the State-schools. Many hereditary Village-Offices fall to their share. Except in one instance they have not yet been admitted into the ranks of the Army; the time has passed for any forcible repression of these classes; even before the British rule notable upheavings occurred of the lower classes, as in the case of the Sikh and Marátha nations. These subjugated non-Arians have lost their language, and many of their customs; they have no traditions, and it would be mere idle speculation to inquire, from what quarter they came. All that we know for certainty is, *that they are there*; and the earliest tradition of the invading Arian tells us, that they were found there by the invaders on their first arrival. When hostile and unsubdued, they were termed Dasyu or Mlecha, but, when they settled down in nominal submission, they were called Sudra, and preserve that generic name to this day. Unquestionably the presence of these non-Arians in their midst reacted upon the Arian conquerors, and left an under-

current of usages, and local worships, foreign to the Religion of the Veda. The word *Sudra* itself is not a word of certain Arian origin.

We pass on to the Dravidians, who occupy the South of India from Chikakole on the Eastern coast and the province of Goa on the Western, and the Northern portion of the Island of Ceylon; and in addition to this large tracts in the Vindhya range, and beyond as far as the banks of the Ganges at Rajmahál. The number of these Dravidian races is estimated by Bishop Caldwell, the most competent judge, at forty-five millions, which in any other country, but India and China, would by themselves constitute a mighty kingdom, but they speak twelve separate languages; differ exceedingly from each other, as regards their forms of Religion, their Customs, and their state of Civilisation. But we must assume from the affinity of language, that they are derived from the same common stock, and there seems little reason to doubt, that they entered India from the West, probably in the lower basin of the River Indus, as traces of their language are found in the Brahúi, spoken by a tribe in Baluchistán, and there are affinities betwixt this family and that form of speech, which has survived to our times in the second, or Proto-Median, tablet of Behistún.

The four great Dravidian races are the Tamil, the Telugu; the Kanarese, and the Malayálim; the fifth is the Tulu, considerably less in size. But these five have, to outward appearance, adopted the Brahmanical Religion, and Culture, but not entirely; for amid the population of the so-called Hindu South Indian country are numbers, who worship local deities, foreign

to the Hindu Cosmogony; who also worship Devils, with all the wild ritual familiar to us in other countries; who worship Ghosts, or unite themselves into separate brotherhoods, essentially hostile to Brahmanism, such as the Lingaites. The Castes of the South Indians are essentially lower than in the North; the Sudra, who in North India is counted as nothing, in the South has a higher estimation, as below him are Out-Castes, or semi-Hindus, or unclean Castes and tribes, who look to the Sudra with the same respect, with which in the North the Sudra looks to the Brahman.

In addition to these five great semi-Hinduised Dravidian races are three insignificant Hill tribes, with well-developed distinction of features, the Kudagu, Tóda, and Kotá, in the Nilghari Hills, who are unquestionably Nature-worshippers, and in a low state of absence of Culture. In the Vindhya range are two notable Dravidian races, the Khond, infamously known for their former practice of human sacrifices, and totally without Culture; and the Gond, who occupy the Central Plateau, and are partly energetic agriculturists, and partly shy savages. Farther to the North are the tribe of the Oraon and the Rajmuháli. It is impossible to account for the intrusion of these Dravidian fragments into the midst of the Kolarian territory, but we must accept facts, as they are. These last four tribes are totally without any Arian Culture, and nearly without any Culture at all; they have been systematically oppressed by stronger and more advanced Arian races, pressing upon them from the North, East, and West, robbing them of their most fertile lands, or domineering over them in the persons of petty chiefs.

Unquestionably under British rule the position of these tribes is greatly improved: they are protected in their actual possessions: Education and Civilisation is going on, and we may expect a great change in their position, and no doubt their numbers will greatly increase with enlarged opportunities for cultivation.

Next in order are the Kolarian races; they are wild and uncivilised tribes, occupying the lower mountains north of the Vindhya, or portions of that range. It is impossible to speak with certainty as to their origin; to call them the aboriginal tribes is only shirking the difficulty, as obviously they must have migrated into their present habitat from some quarter or other. It is reasonable to suppose, that the Gangetic valley was occupied in pre-Arian days by immigrations from Central Asia across the passes of the Himálaya, or down the valley of the Brahmaputra. When the strong columns of Arian invaders from the North-West forced their way down the valley of the Ganges to the Ocean, they effectually interposed themselves betwixt the portion of the non-Arian tribes, who fled at their approach to the Vindhya, and the portion, which fled to the Himálaya. Centuries have passed since then; while the non-Arian tribes of the Himálaya have, as we shall see further down, received constant supplies of fresh blood from the Plateau of Tibet, and High Asia, that great Mother of Nations, the non-Arian tribes of the Vindhya could receive no new additions. Just as the frightened game of all kinds, when the lowlands are scoured by hunters, take refuge in inaccessible mountains, and there prolong a hazardous and timorous existence; so in many well-known cases



the advance of great and warlike races has driven their weak and helpless predecessors into a mountainous asylum, where it was difficult, and profitless to follow them. The remnant of many tribes, quite different of each other, are thus driven to herd together, and the Philologist and Ethuologist are at fault, when they attempt to classify and arrange these strange and incongruous elements. We have a wonderful instance of this feature in the tribes of the Caucasus, who were swept into those inaccessible fastnesses by the great procession of the conquering Semite, Arian, and Uralian races, which passed over the plains of North and South Asia. Thus is it also notably in Central India. The word Kolarian is, after all, only a convenient term to comprehend tribes, which are certainly not Arian, and are rejected by Dravidian scholars. We do not know enough of their languages yet to attempt affiliation. Some moreover of the races, who might ethnically be termed Kolarian, have lost their ancestral language, and adopted a debased dialect of the language of one or other of their great neighbours; of this class of cases are the notorious Bhill tribe, once notorious for savage plunder, now decent agriculturists, the Bhar, and a portion of the Savara. Many others, no doubt, have done the same. Of the still surviving Kolarians the Sonthal are the most conspicuous by their numbers, their rapid increase, their great agricultural industry, and their beautiful and vigorous language, which in its refined symmetrical structure rivals that of the Osmanli Turki, with richness of grammatical combination, comprising such as five voices, five moods, twenty-three tenses, three numbers,

and four cases; and yet it had never had a written character, indigenous or borrowed, and a total absence of all but legendary literature; so entirely is grammatical development independent of literary culture. This tribe numbers about one million. The Mundári-Kole are a tribe, which in its subdivisions, comprises more than three-quarters of a million, who all speak Dialects of the same language; their Field is in the critical position of the point of junction of three powerful Arian languages, the Hindi, Bangáli, and Uriya; and in the struggle for life it may go hard with their language, but the ethnical features will long outlive the language. Both the Sonthál and the Mundári-Kól are Nature-worshippers, with peculiar customs distinct from, and abominable to, the Hindu.

No Ruler; or Maker of a Census, could overlook these last two great, once troublesome, and still powerful, tribes; the remaining Kolarians are unimportant, though interesting; the Kharia are in a wild state, living in backwoods, and on the tops of hills; the Juang are the remnant of a great Forest-Race, and are a truly wonderful survival. The women wear no clothing, except a bunch of leaves hanging to a girdle of beads, before and behind. Though decent clothing has been supplied to them by the Officers of Government, and engagements taken from the men to clothe their women, they still entertain a superstition, that they will be devoured by tigers, if they do so. The Korwa, now reduced to fourteen thousand, live intermixed with other races, a savage and nomadic life, but are said to have been once the masters of the country. The Kur dwell in the Hills above the Rivers Tapti and Godávári.

The Savara is another tribe, said to have been mentioned by Pliny and Ptolemy. Part of the tribe has lost its language, and adopted that of its Arian neighbour, and become semi-Hinduised; part dress in leaves, and have maintained their customs, savagery, and language.

By the march of events, the pressure of civilisation, and the education, that proceeds, from contact with higher races, it may be expected, that the languages and customs of these tribes will soon disappear, like the language of the Cornishman and the Manx; but the ethnological features will remain, and that freedom to adopt new religious ideas and ritual, which appears so difficult to the Arian-Hindu, whose mind has been fixed in a particular groove.

We pass on to the Tibeto-Barman branch of the non-Arian Races. When it is stated, that in the five groups, out of a much larger number, which are unquestionably situated within the limits of British India, there are no less than sixty-three tribes, still separated by the fact of their speaking separate, and mutually unintelligible languages, and that many other tribes have accepted semi-Hinduism, and a debased form of the Arian languages, Bángali and Asamese, the magnitude of the subject may be imagined, though any idea of the number of the people is beyond the power of computation. In all time by the passes of the Himalaya the surplus population of the Plateau of Tibet, has poured over into India, in an extremely low state of culture. Some have pressed down into the basins of the Brahmaputra and Irawadi, and, becoming civilised, have lost their independent existence in the lower states of the Hindu Polity; some

have become decent agriculturists, or shepherds, preserving their identity, and yet subject to law and civilisation. Some have become strong and powerful, and made themselves a name, founding large or petty States; some have remained to this day in outrageous, lawless savagery; some have suffered reverses in their contact with more powerful neighbours, and are miserable, broken remnants: but all are non-Arian. Some bury their dead, some burn them; some have a particular written character, some are wholly illiterate; some are hunters, some nomad shepherds, some freebooters, and some decent householders. If a century is allowed to pass over British India in peace, a great change must insensibly come over these races. All turbulent inroads are instantly repressed; lands at the foot of the hills are offered for cultivation; markets are established for forest-produce. New kinds of culture offer opportunities for employment of unskilled labour; roads are cut through hitherto impassable jungle; a police armed with muskets laugh at the bow and arrow; and, where possible, the schoolmaster is abroad.

Six hundred years before the Christian era lived Buddha, who set on foot the first propagandist Religion, that history records up to that time. Religion had been previously as much a feature of nationality as language. Buddhism spread over India, but from causes, of which we know little, it died out of the Peninsula, and was superseded by the neo-Brahmanism of modern times, which is essentially different from the pre-Buddhistic religion. Buddhism, though expelled from India, took root among the non-Arian races of the Tibeto-Barman Family, spread over Tibet, Barma,

and the rest of the Peninsula of Indo-China into China. Religious toleration has always been the law of India, and within the Hindu fold exists the greatest laxity and diversity. The appearance of Mahometanism in India, and the long domination of Mahometan Rulers, enlarged this toleration, and abrogated the Hindu law, which punished change of religion by forfeiture of property. But as a fact Mahometanism made little way among the Arian-Hindu people. Of the forty millions of Mahometans a large portion are the descendants of *bonâ fide* immigrants from Khorasan, Persia, Turkistán, or Arabia, settled in Northern India, and a still larger portion are from the non-Arian races on the skirts of the province of Bangál, who accepted Mahometanism with their new civilisation, as giving them a better position than that, which they would have in the lower strata of the Hindu Polity. Hinduism, as stated above, in its own quiet way, is extremely propagandist; and in the same way as the Dravidians of Southern India, insensibly, and by their own choice, accepted Hinduism, so also numbers of the Kolarians and Tibeto-Barman races on the confines of the Hindu districts, have gradually by the power of attraction, and the force of example, and the idea of civilisation, passed into Hinduism, or, at least, semi-Hinduism; and the process year by year is going on.

It has often occurred to the thoughtful Missionary, that these non-Arian races present a more promising field to the Evangelist than the pure Arian-Hindu. Possessed of an ancient civilisation, a magnificent literature, certain religious dogmas hardened by age, a ritual sanctified by long usage, a priesthood, whose

power and subsistence are bound up with their religion, shackled by the Indian peculiar Custom, known as Caste, the Arian-Hindu is not open to argument, and has no heart to be touched by pleading. If educated on the Indian type, he is content with the present state of things; if educated on the European type, he is apt to throw aside all belief in the Supernatural, all thought of the Future, and believe in Nothing. It is a severe shock to an opening intellect to have it forced upon him, that all the Religious and Moral sanctions of his elders are false. It makes a young man believe in Nothing.

Of the two hundred and fifty thousand Protestant Christians in British India, nine out of every ten belong to the non-Arian races. The great Christian colonies in South India are among a Dravidian people. The promising Missions in Central India among the Sonthál, and Mundari-Kól. are among the Kolarian. In Northern India, wherever we hear of any particular success of a particular Missionary, it is sure to come out, that some particular low-caste section of the community has come under his influence; and I have attempted above to show, that these lower strata of the Hindu Polity are non-Arian. Missions have been started with some success in the district of Spiti, Kumaon, Sikhim, Assam, Gáru, and among the Khasia, a tribe totally isolated in language and customs, and separated from the Tibeto-Barman, but situated in the midst of them. Crossing the Patkói range into the basin of the Irawadi, we find Missions to the Shán, the Barmese, the Mon, and notably to the Karén. It appears, therefore, that the non-Arian races have not been overlooked by the Christian Missionary.

It is the fashion to attribute all the want of success in producing actual results in the Indian mission field to Caste: this is not a just estimate of the great Indian National Custom, and of the facts. We do not find such very marked success of Missions among populations like the Barmese, Sinhalese, and Chinese, where unquestionably there is no Caste. The real obstacle to conversions is the depravity of man's nature, the difficulty of touching the heart, and inducing a person to make a change in his daily walk of life. It is of course impossible to tolerate an exaggerated observance of Caste in a Christian community; and there must be a *bonâ fide* acknowledgment of the equality of all mankind before God, an entire absence of Caste-feeling in the Church, and at the communion table, as indeed there is already in the school, and the railway-train. But the Missionary does an injustice both to his cause and to the people in attempting to enforce intermarriage and commensality among people of totally different circumstances in life, race, feelings, and antecedents, for instance, an Arian-Hindu Brahman, and a non-Arian, or a convert from Mahometanism and a convert from Hinduism. Both indeed have accepted Christianity, but one may be an educated refined gentleman, and the other an illiterate sweeper of dirty habits. An attempt to amalgamate ranks and conditions of life under the guise of acceptance of Christian truth, would not be tolerated in Europe; why attempt it in India, and put a stumbling-block in the way of the catechumen?

When civilisation comes to a tribe along with Christianity, as it did upon our Anglo-Saxon forefathers, the path of the convert is greatly smoothed. The whole

family, and village, or even tribe, in such a case move in the same blessed direction: parents and children: mothers, brothers, and sisters: friends and neighbours. Of this process we have notable instances in South India, and in the Sonthal Missions of Central India, and at Metla-Kahtla in N. W. America. There are there no painful heartburnings, no deplorable scenes between parents and children, no rupture of conjugal relations, no desertion of the schools by children: in fact none of the heartrending scenes, which accompany each conversion of an Arian-Hindu of good family and education. It is a positive fact, that by some process, and a peaceful one, whole villages of Rajputs, the Warrior class of the Sanskrit Books, passed into Mahometanism, and still associate with their Hindu brethren without any reproach, or sense of inferiority, maintaining their tribal customs together with the precepts of the Korán. Such phenomena took place under the Mahometan rule, which was never a persecuting one in India. Some of the greatest statesmen and warriors of the Moghal Empire were Hindu of the noblest Castes. There is no reason, why similar phenomena should not gradually take place under the English Christian rule. It is an error to suppose, that the people are immobile. The long history of Indian literature tells the tale of constant sectarian uprisings, philosophic discussion, divergence of practice, the birth of new religious conceptions, and the extinction of old rituals. The Veda have been supplanted in the estimation of the people by the Purána: the idea of Sacrifice has well-nigh passed away: Education, Locomotion, and the Public Press are doing their silent



work : the absence of religious persecution, or disqualification, the stern repression of all acts contrary to the laws of God, such as widow-burning and daughter-killing, and the complete indulgence given to all customs, not in themselves crimes, give a breathing-time to the thoughtful and enlightened classes of this great people to consider their position. They have, moreover, a deep conscience of the Immortality of the soul, a just idea of right and wrong, and a conception of the necessity of an Incarnation of God, and an expectation of an Incarnation still to come.

The non-Arians are devoid of these feelings : theirs is simply Nature-worship : they have neither Temple, Priest, nor Book of the Law : they have no traditions of the past to look back to, but they are conscious of a new freedom and independent status given to them by the English Government, and an equality in the eye of the law with the superior races, who previously either despised them or oppressed them. They welcome the Christian Missionary : their very ignorance, their difficulty in entertaining abstract ideas, the clouded state of their mind, occupied with vulgar pressing cares, their readiness to appease the forces of Nature, the Small-Pox, the Pestilence, as living Powers, present the obstacle to their conversion. If they come over to the new faith in crowds, and after a certain amount of catechetical instruction are deemed qualified for baptism, we must be thankful, but the men will be weak Christians, unable to free themselves from their superstitions, ready to fall into immoralities, specially drunkenness, from which the Arian-Hindu is generally free, and not likely to supply an abundance of qualified

Teachers and Ministers, though some have been forthcoming. But the inestimable advantage will have been gained of their women and children being brought under Christian influences, and tuition. The Government of British India is not withheld from assisting philanthropic efforts in favour of the non-Arian races by the same stern unflinching rules, which forbid any assistance being given directly or indirectly of any effort to convert the Hindu and Mahometan. Where Missionary efforts are directed against non-Arian tribes, a separate Native Church would be founded in each Nationality, and the necessity of the language, if not any other graver consideration, forbids the attempt to include in a fictitious Church-unity elements, such as European and Asiatic, Arian and non-Arian, which are wholly in this generation at least incongruous. Where conversions are made from the lower strata of the Hindu polity (the first group of the non-Arians) in large numbers, great difficulties will arise in getting the better classes to join such rising Churches: no doubt the early Christians felt the same difficulty in the congregations at Rome, consisting of slaves, Jews, and Syrians, to which the lordly Roman of the conquering race was invited in the name of Christ to join: the difficulty is a tremendous one, especially for females of good family, and refined nurture, to have to assemble with sweepers, and eaters of carrion, men of filthy habits, and disgusting, though necessary, avocations. Faith and grace will triumph over every obstacle, but the Missionary should try to present the Gospel to the better class Hindu with surroundings as little open to such objections as possible. Some Missionaries show

no mercy to the hesitating inquirer, in whose heart God's grace is working: how few of us would stand the ordeal of having, as the price of our souls, to take our women and children, and squeeze into a chapel with scavengers, dustmen, and honest fellows, whose trades were more indispensable than savoury?

If the University of Cambridge felt themselves able, to make an addition to the noble work, which they are now maintaining at Dehli, and the share in the work, which they are carrying on in East Africa, the way is open to them. The upper basin of the Brahmaputra, known as the valley of Assam, is separated by the Patkoi range from the upper valley of the Irawadi, known as Independent Barma. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel has already a small Mission in those regions, which would be the basis of operations. The climate is not insalubrious, and many Europeans are settled in the Tea-Plantations. Some Nonconformist Missions are at work there, but there is work for many more. Selecting some particular spot, and making one tribe, South of the Brahmaputra, their chief object, they could in course of time extend over the Patkoi, and tap new regions hitherto unvisited.

It would be well, that the University should have a field open to each of the two developments of Missionary zeal. To some is given scholastic training, power of argument, intellectual discipline, and the genius of order and organisation: such gifts would find their place in the Schools, and Mission-Chapels, the itinerations, and manifold machinery of the Dehli District, among a people, who live in the loving recollection of the writer of this Essay, though never to be seen

again. To others is given the far greater gift of power by preaching to touch the heart of illiterate and savage hearers, the exceeding great love for souls, that will lead them to undergo toilsome journeys, sacrifice their daily comforts, risk their lives for the sake of conveying their message face to face, mouth to ear, of races, who have never heard it before. How can they hear, if the message is not conveyed to them! The South-East frontier of India, where the confines of British India, Tibet, China, and Independent Barma meet, is still one of the wildest, and least explored regions of Asia. We hear of expeditions fitted out to penetrate into Central Africa: that is well: but India is our particular heritage, and light should be let into this dark corner. A scheme for such a Mission was submitted by me some years ago to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, but for want of funds no action was taken.

LONDON, *January* 1881.

This paper was written as a Lecture to be delivered to the Undergraduates of Cambridge in the Lent-term, 1881, at the request of the Regius Professor of Divinity; it was written, but never delivered, as a severe domestic sorrow will prevent my ever revisiting that University.

R. N. C.

LONDON, *April* 2, 1881.

## CHAPTER XXII.

*THE RELIGIONS OF INDIA.*

THE subject is a complex one. There is no greater mistake than to suppose that the Brahmanical Religion of Modern India is the same as that of the old Arian immigrants from beyond the mountains of Afghanistan into the Panjáb, except that other common error, that the Brahmanical Religion did not, and does not to the present hour, extend itself by the quiet and unperceived method of social propagandism. Let us also do the Mahometans justice, that, whatever their practice in past ages and other countries may have been, their silent absorption of millions in the Province of Bengál has been unaccompanied by any act of violence or external inducement. Let us look back into history, and try to build upon such foundations as are available, the story of the present Religions of India.

More than fifteen hundred years before the Christian era the Arian immigration must have taken place, and at a certain period subsequent to that date the Veda were composed, though not necessarily contemporaneously reduced to writing. The first settlement was in the Panjáb, and the Arian immigrants came at once into hostile contact with indigenous tribes, who had other customs and religious conceptions.

The Veda are made up of hymns, upwards of one thousand. They are what we ought to have expected, yet which no one of later generations could have designedly composed. There is an antique simplicity of thought; the sentiments are childlike, the first sobbing and plaintive cry of a human family to their Great Father, who made them, and to Nature and the Elements, the great Mother, who nourished them; and with the childhood of our race and religion every true heart must sympathise. There is no attempt at cosmogonies and universal knowledge; there is no self-consciousness, and nothing is found, which will in any way support the gigantic abominations of Vaishnavism and Saivism. There is no mention of Ráma or Krishna. Vishnu is indeed mentioned by name, as the one, who takes three steps, symbolical of the rising, midday, and setting suns, or by another interpretation, light on earth as fire, light in the atmosphere as lightning, light in heaven as the sun; and Siva is supposed to be identical with Rúdra, mentioned in some of the hymns. There is no allusion to the great Hindu Triad, or to transmigration of souls, or to Castes, or to the pantheistic philosophy of the wise, or the gross polytheism of the ignorant. There is no mention of temples, or of a monopolising Brahmanical priesthood, and no allusion to the lingam. The sun is worshipped, but there is no mention of the planets; the moon is noticed, but the constellations never. The blessings asked for are temporal; the worship was domestic, addressed to unreal presences, not represented by visible types, and therefore not Idolatry. The physical forces of Nature were worshipped,

which appeared as possibly rival, certainly irresistible, deities. Those, that struck the mind most, were fire, rain, and wind, the sun ; and thus Agni, Indra or Váyu, and Súra, constituted the earlier Vedic Triad. With them were associated the dawn, the storm-gods, the earth, the waters, the rivers, the sky, the seasons, the moon, and the manes of ancestors. Sacrifices were offered both by warriors and priests, as food to the deities, hymns were sung, and handed down orally, and a ritual was established.

The growth of Religion is necessarily as continuous as the growth of Language. The soul of man appears to possess as its congenital attributes an intuition of a great, just, and wise God ; a sense of human dependence, as evidenced by want, sickness, and death ; a rough but true distinction of good and evil ; a hope of a better life, though a very carnal and material one. Two causes were at work to assist the debasement of the simple Vedic faith and cult : first was the artifice of the Brahmanical priesthood, who sought to secure and increase their power ; and second, the involuntary local streak of non-Arian Religion. Thus gradually anthropomorphism came into existence, and demonolatry. It is possible, that the priests believed in the unity of the Godhead, and that these separate fanciful creations merely represented different phases of the divine nature, the different attributes and spheres of operation of the Creator ; but the vulgar mind could not comprehend this, and thus Pantheism sprang into existence, from a too gross conception and a too material practice.

At whatever period the conception of an "Avatára" or "God in the flesh" was first arrived at, it marks

a wonderful progress in religious development. There must be some deep truth underlying the strange intellectual phenomenon, that God should descend from heaven and assume the form of a creature for the purpose of saving the world. The Brahmanical system records nine such manifestations, the earlier ones being animals, or partly so; the later heroes, thus again marking progress. The tortoise was succeeded by the fish, the bear by the man-lion; then followed the dwarf, who made the three great steps; Parásu Ráma and Ráma Chandra, Krishna and Buddha; all were manifestations of Vishnu, and are therefore the creations of a period, when the worship of that deity had become paramount. With regard to the earlier Avatára, we can do nothing but speculate; but in the story of Parásu Ráma, we recognise the struggle and the victory of the Priest over the Warrior class; and in Ráma Chandra, we recognise a real person, who has undergone a double transformation, first into a legendary hero, and centuries afterwards into a powerful god. Our feet seem here to touch ground; we have arrived at something, which resembles history; legend interwoven with religion, but with a large substratum of possible fact. The grand epic poem, the Ramáyana, gives the narrative of the life of this great hero. Unquestionably it has a reality with the people of India, both national and religious. In it we find the germs of the religious conception of bhakti or Faith, the reliance of the worshipper on the tutelary divinity for protection, the origin of the ordinary social salutation of the people, a component part of a large portion of their names, and finally the motive of



their greatest National Festival. In the aurora of all religions, the theatre, which at a later period is so far separated from all connection with the worship of the divinity, is intimately associated with, and is part and parcel of, the idea of devotion. Thus annually in every city, and in every cluster of villages, this popular legend is enacted by living actors in the eyes of a sympathetic, devout, and exulting people. Temples and shrines are scattered over the land. The art and zeal of the statuary, the poet, the painter, and the priest, have vied with each other, to extend the worship of Ráma and Sítá, and through them of the great member of the second Triad, Vishnu.

Measuring by the gauge of religious development, there must have been a considerable interval betwixt the promulgation and acceptance of the dogma of the Avatára of Vishnu as Ráma and the Avatára of the same deity, as Krishna. Both were of the Warrior class; both were earthly potentates; to both were ascribed miraculous powers and martial prowess; but one was the type of virtue and modesty, the other of licentiousness and shameless immoralities. The hand of the Priest appears more clearly in the latter legend; and the conception of Faith, or bhakti, is largely expanded, and with it comes love, love spiritual as well as earthly. If penance be the leading feature of Saivism, and duty of Ráma, love, an ocean of love, is the element, in which Krishna reigns. He is the god present in many places at once, the object of the love of thousands, the satisfier of that love, while each thinks that that love is special and peculiar. No one can read the Gítá Govinda, the Indian song

of songs, and the Bhagavad Gítá, the grandest effort of unassisted human intellect, without feeling, that he is entering into a new order of ideas, and has advanced in the diapason of the human intellect far beyond the Vedic, and the Heroic periods.

The documents, from which we are informed of this personage, are the great heroic poem, the Mahábhárata, the Bhágavata Purána, the Gítá Govinda of Jayadeva, and many other works going over the same ground. The portions of the great poem, which relate to Krishna, are manifest interpolations of a much later date.

We have been compelled to describe at the same time the conceptions of Ráma and Krishna, as heroes and as gods, but we must remark, that there was a lapse of ten centuries at least betwixt the two conceptions, and in that interval appeared on the stage a man, greater than them, the greatest of mortals, that ever trod the earth. He was known to his contemporaries and successors by the names of Sakya, Siddhártha, Gautama, Tathágata; and Buddha. He was of the Warrior class, and the son of a king in Transgangetic India. His date is fixed by general consent at about B.C. 622. No man has left a deeper footprint on the sands of time. His followers and the believers in his doctrines count by millions, far beyond the number of Christians or Mahometans, and are spread over the whole of Farther Asia, including Ceylon, Barma, Tibet, Siam, Cambodia, Cochin China, China, Mongolia, Manchuria, and Japan, though totally expelled from the country, which gave him birth, after a domination of several centuries. Buddha invented, or at least first openly practised, universal propagandism by argument,

destroying Caste, setting aside the priesthood, ignoring the Veda and all the sacred books, abolishing sacrifice, dethroning the gods from heaven, appealing to the highest ideal of morality, holding out as an incentive the absorption into the deity. He was in fact the apostle of nihilism and atheism; for behind the preceptor there is nothing, and beyond death there is nothing but extinction. A literature so voluminous has been handed down in Sanskrit, Pali, Tibetan, Burmese, Peguan, Siamese, Cambodian, Annamese, Shan, Javanese, Chinese, and Mongolian, that another generation must pass away, ere an adequate conception can be formed of its contents. Akin to Buddhism is Jainism, with a literature of proportions equally colossal and as imperfectly known; and the brain reels under the burden of unravelling all, that has become entangled, and comprehending all the cobwebs, that the subtle intellects of generations of men have spun! The Jaina appear to have had their career of supremacy in Southern India, but they have dwindled away to an inconsiderable sect; they admit Caste, and, if they abandon their heresy, can be admitted back into full privileges, from which they are only partially excluded.

How it came to pass, that this passionless, hopeless form of atheistic morality should have touched the heartstrings of one-fifth of the human race, is a great mystery; it is as if the Bible consisted of the single book of Ecclesiastes. "Vanity, vanity," said the Preacher; "all is vanity." And yet the world is a beautiful world, and the faculties of man are capable of goodness and greatness and virtue, and the Immortality of the soul seems to be an inherent idea of

mankind. Religion, as a great author has written, cannot be without hope. To worship a being, who did not speak to us, love us, recognise us, is not Religion: it might be a duty, might be a merit, but man's instinctive notion of Religion is the soul's response to a God, who has taken notice of the soul; it is a loving intercourse or a mere name. At any rate, whatever opinion we may form of this strange system, which has taken such very deep root in the affections of men, there can be no doubt, that Buddha stands out as the greatest hero of humanity, and that the more mankind are made acquainted with this exalted type of what the human race can unaided attain to, the better it will be.

We now come to the wonderful fact, that Buddhism was totally expelled from the land, which gave it birth, to the genius of which it apparently was not adapted. The questions may fairly be raised: Was Buddhism expelled? when was it expelled? It is more probable, that strict Buddhism relaxed in India, and that Brahmanism modified itself by the wonderful assimilation of contact. Buddha was himself promoted to the position of an Avatára of Vishnu. In the seventh century the Chinese traveller found the two cults side by side, as they are now, in the island of Bali. Traces of assimilation of cult and adaptation of temples and idol-forms are found in many places. At length it ceased to be the State religion; then the popular feeling set against it; Sankarácharya rose to preach the worship of Siva, and the new conceptions. The irreconcilables fled to Nepál; the worship died out. We have no distinct record of what happened, but the deserted monasteries

and temples of Ajanta show no signs of wanton destruction. The cult or rather persuasion totally disappeared in the seventh century of the Christian era; and there is hardly one indigenous Buddhist in India.

One strange doctrine, which does not date back to the Vedic period, but which was the intellectual outcome of a later age, lived through the Buddhist into the neo-Brahmanical system. We allude to that of the transmigration of souls. It is more hopeful than the doctrine of Fate, which ruled the earlier world. Under the influence of this doctrine, a man who is poor, afflicted, and unfortunate, is not so, because cruel hard Fate has so decided, and because he has no remedy, past, present, or future. On the contrary, he feels, that his present state is the result of his moral delinquencies in a past life, for which he is atoning, and though he cannot change the present, he is master of the future, and by a good life he can secure being born again in a better state. All the philosophic schools agree in this; no one was hardy enough even to question the doctrine. The Buddhist, who denied every other of the proto-Brahmanical doctrines, admitted this; and yet it is not a self-evident problem of the human mind, and no European intellect, however debased or uninstructed, could be induced to accept it. It is, however, the faith of one-fifth of mankind. Accepting this doctrine, the schools of Indian philosophy proceed to inquire in their own way, how this painful wandering of the soul from body to body can be terminated, and mokhsa or liberation be attained. Not to exist is, then, the highest reward. It was in fact an attempt to solve the hard puzzle: Why in this world the wicked are so exceed-

ingly prosperous, and the righteous so mysteriously oppressed ; how came it to pass, unless it had reference to causes, which arose in a previous existence, and led to consequences, which will develop themselves in a future ? This is the riddle, which the Book of Job tried to solve ; and after all, the author evades the question : he fails to see, that nobleness and goodness have nothing whatever to do with what men have, not even with happiness, which thousands of good men have never possessed. The immenseness of the intellectual contrast between the followers of the Mahometan and Brahmanical systems can only be grasped, when the Semitic conception of the Immortality of the soul is placed side by side with that of transmigration, with eventual absorption or nihilism.

We come now to the development of the second Triad : Brahmá the creator, Vishnu the supporter, and Siva the destroyer. There is an artificial look about this arrangement, and it is clearly a theoretic compromise. Brahmá goes for nothing ; he has but one or two temples, and scarcely a worshipper. The Brahmanical religion in its post-Buddhist stage is a congeries of parts derived from several very discordant systems. Fashion and taste have their play. Some prefer Siva ; some Vishnu ; a third part import a female element.

In this manner was developed a wife for each of the second Triad : Saraswati, or the goddess of eloquence, for Brahmá ; Lakshmi or Sri, the goddess of fortune, for Vishnu ; and for Siva, the multiform and awful consort, known as Deví, Kálí, Gaurí, Umá, Durgá, Párvatí, Bhawání, entailing a depth of degradation, at the brink of which we pause.

Siva-worship is alluded to by Megasthenes, and must, therefore, date back to a period anterior to Buddhism, though unknown to the Veda. The Brahmans may have opposed it, but the popular current was too strong. We know as a fact, that at the time of Mahmúd of Gházni, there existed twelve celebrated lingam-shrines, one of which was Somnáth, which was destroyed by that iconoclast. The lingam or phallus, with its usual accompaniment, is now the universal and sole emblem of Siva-worship. But there is an uncertainty, whether the connection of the two always existed. Some have asserted, that the cult was of non-Arian origin; but to this it is replied, that no trace of it is found in any existing non-Arian people, and that there is no proof of such a derivation. There is nothing indecent, meant or understood, in this symbol; no rites of a lascivious or degrading character are necessarily connected with the stone idol. In fact, it was part of Nature-worship. The worshippers of Siva, though found all over India, predominate in the South, where the cult was re-established by Sankarácharya on the expulsion of the Buddhists about the eighth or ninth century A.D. The worship was, as above stated, ancient; but just as the hero-worship of Ráma and Krishna developed into Vaishnavism, even so the revival of the worship of the lingam developed into Saivism. The worship of the Tulsi plant and Sála-gráma stone occupied a prominent position with the Vaishnavites. The two worships of rival, independent, supreme, and omnipotent deities were not necessarily mutually antagonistic, though they became so in the heat of ignorant partisanship.

The female principle, or Saktí, was a still further and grosser development, especially with regard to Durgá, the reputed wife of Siva, and set forth in the Tantra, of which we have no perfect knowledge, except that there is much that is degraded and obscene. The progress of degradation had become rapid. The study of the Veda had become quite neglected; a repetition of meaningless words was the extent of their study; all-sufficient faith in the popular divinity took the place of knowledge, ritual, and morality. If we wonder at the constant change of dogma and practice, we must reflect, that it would have been more wonderful, if, contrary to the order of human affairs, it had stood still. The pantheism of the proto-Brahmanical period was degraded into a polytheism in the neo-Brahmanical period.

The Christian and the Fire-worshipper and the Jew either never attempted, or were never able to introduce, a foreign religious element into India either by domination or persuasion, but a bright light suddenly sprung up from Arabia, and illumined the whole of Western Asia and North Africa as far as the Pillars of Hercules. The doctrine promulgated was so simple, that it could be understood at once, never forgotten, and never gainsaid, so consonant to the unassisted reason of man, that it seemed an axiom, and so comprehensive, that it took in all races and ranks of mankind. "There is no God but one God." Simple as was the conception, no Indian and no Iranian had arrived at it. There were no longer to be temples, or altars, or sacrifices, or anthropomorphic conceptions, but a God, incapable of sin and defilement, merciful, pitying, King of



the day of judgment, one that hears prayers and will forgive so long as the sun rises from the East; a God not peculiar to any nation or language, but God of all, alone, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent. Much of this was borrowed from the Jews and Christians, but had never been so enforced, had never been so extensively and enduringly promulgated in such gleaming phraseology.

There had passed twelve hundred years since the birth of Buddha. Mahomet was born in historical times, and laid no claims to powers of working miracles or to divinity. The promulgation of his doctrines, 622 A.D., is one of the greatest landmarks in history. Human sacrifices, Idolatry, abominable Customs, Savage rites, Cannibalism, sank before the approach of Islam. About 1000 A.D. Mahometanism reached India, accompanied by the sword, and its history is well known. The sword has long been sheathed, but the religion has extended peacefully over the non-Arian races on the skirts of India.

We come now to the time of the Purána. They are unmistakably modern works, compiled for a sectarian object, full of ignorance and conceit; but we find in them extracts and references to older documents, as they existed as far back as the Christian era, and this gives them a value, independent of the fact of their having supplanted the Veda in the affections of the people. The sects are either Vaishnavite or Saivite. The followers of Ramanúja and Mádhava, who lived in the twelfth or thirteenth century, constitute the great Vaishnavite sect. They have two subdivisions, which are worthy of notice, as illustrating the marvellous co-

incidences of the efforts of the human intellect. These two branches of the same sect reproduce the controversy betwixt the Calvinists and Arminians. The one insists on the concomitancy of the human will for securing salvation; the latter maintains the irresistibility of divine grace. Characteristically of India, the one adopts what is called the Monkey-argument; for the young monkey holds on to, and grasps its mother to be conveyed to safety, and represents the hold of the soul to God. The other uses the Cat-argument, which is expressive of the hold of God on the soul; for the kitten is helpless, until the mother-cat seizes it and secures it from danger.

After Rámanúja, who lived in South India, came Rámanand, who settled at Banáras. Both these were devoted to Vishnu in the person of Ráma. Chaitanya founded a sect in Bangál devoted to Vishnu in the person of Krishna; but the Vallabhacharya or Maháraj sect, devoted to Krishna in his boyish form, is worthy of a special notice. The spiritual preceptors of this sect have had the audacity to assert, that they were themselves incarnations of the youthful Krishna, and burned with like passions and desires towards their votaries. Under the blind control of Faith this has led to the grossest immorality, which has been fully exposed in a trial at Bombay, and the sound principle brought home to the people, that what is morally wrong never can be theologically right. Faith with works was the early cry, but Faith without works, or in spite of works, was the later cry, and degenerated into rank lawlessness.

Among the Saivite sects the most remarkable is

that of the Lingaites, as illustrating the wonderful elasticity of the Indian religious community. This sect was founded in the twelfth century by Basava, a native of the Dakhan. They reject Caste and Brahmanical authority, and all Idolatry, except the worship of the lingam, a model of which they carry about on the arm and tied to the neck. No Brahman officiates in such temples; they deny the transmigration of the soul, do not burn their dead, and allow the remarriage of women. They call themselves Jangam, and are abhorred by both Saivite and Vaishnavite. They dwell either in convents or wander about as beggars.

A still more remarkable sect in the north of India is that of the Sikhs of the Panjáb. Indian reformers have ever been springing up, using the vernacular language of the people, and conveying prophetic messages in opposition to the Brahmanical priesthood. Their messages have generally been vague and unsubstantial, speculative rather than practical, making a deep but temporary impression upon the people. Some of them have, however, touched the sensitive chord of their countrymen, and led to the foundation of a new civil Polity. Of these Kabír and Nának stand forth as examples. Kabír was one of the twelve disciples of Rámanand, the Vaishnavite reformer, who in the fifteenth century A.D., with unprecedented boldness, assailed the whole system of idolatrous worship, ridiculed Brahmans and the Veda, and, addressing himself to Mahometans also, with equal severity attacked the Korán. He left a sect behind him called the Kabír-Panthi, who never obtained any great import-

ance, though they have entirely withdrawn in the essential point of worship from the Brahmanical communion; and a voluminous literature in different dialects of the modern Arian vernaculars, which made a great impression on the popular mind. He lived and died near Banáras, the centre of Brahmanism, and his liberal doctrines never had fair play. Far other was the fate of his successor, Nának, who drank deep of his doctrine, and quoted freely his sayings. He may have attempted a fusion of the two great religions, but he certainly did in no way succeed. He may have wished to abolish Caste, but he has failed. He appealed to the people in the vernacular, and his doctrines have come down to us in the *Adi Granth*, which has lately been translated into English, and which by no means must be placed on a level with the Vedic or Buddhist books, and is far more modern than the *Korán* or the *Purána*. He and his sect would probably have disappeared, had not the unwise persecution of the Mahometans lashed his followers into madness, who, under his spiritual successor in the tenth degree, Govind Singh, founded a new religious and civil Polity, the temporal glory of which has now passed away, and the angles of the sect are rubbing off under the peaceful influence of an accommodating and absorbing Brahmanism.

No one, who has lived among the people, can have failed to remark the conventual establishments scattered about the country. We find the small grant of land from the State, the shrine, the home of the abbot and his spiritual disciples, the hall for the reception of strangers, and some scanty educational

and medical appliances. Of these the Bairági are the most respectable. Their way of life is simple. Early in the morning they repeat by the river-side at sunrise the famous Gayatri, "Let us meditate on the sacred light of that diviue sun, that it may illuminate our minds." This one liuk reaches over four thousand years, and connects them with their Vedic forefathers. Then comes the worship of the shrine, and the daily prayers, as degraded as dogma and ritual can make them.

In the south of India the Brahmanical religion did not extend to the lower classes more than in name; the pilgrimages to the local shrines of the Deví tell an unmistakable tale; and in South India the worship of Kalí, the wife or female energy of Siva, is but an assimilation of a local Deví; and in the great temple of Madura, side by side with Siva, is seated a local goddess, adopted from the non-Arians by the astute Brahmans. In every village there is a Deví, the remnant of their old cult. Beside this is the devil-worship, which is essentially the same as the ghost-worship of the Western coast. The devil-dancer whirls round in frenzy, and, when under full control of the demon, is worshipped as a present deity by the bystanders, and consulted with regard to their wants. The Brahmanical religion is spread like a thin veneer over all, but the old affections of the lower classes survive. Notoriously in Northern India the lowest classes, who have no place assigned to them in the Brahmanical system, have their own deities, and indeed are incorrectly called Hindu in the Census. The great bulk of the residents of the Himálaya valleys are

Brahmanical only in name; they are still Nature-worshippers. Every remarkable peak, or lake, or forest has its deity, to which sacrifices of goats are made; temples abound, the keepers of which are not always Brahmans.

And outside the Brahmanical fold are the millions of non-Arian Pagans in Central India and on the slopes of the Himálaya. For three thousand years they have fought a lifelong battle against the Arian immigrants, who have driven them from their ancient possessions, and have incorporated so many in the lower strata of their religious system. Temples, priests, or literature they have none; but from them we may imagine what the inhabitants of India were before the Arian immigration. No doubt their days are numbered.

As the Jaina religion is an admixture of Buddhist and Brahmanical doctrines, and as the Sikh religion has the credit of being an attempt to blend Mahometanism and Brahmanism, so in these last days we have a new development, and an admixture of Christianity and Brahmanism, which presents itself under the name of Brahmoism. Ram Mohan Rai tried to make a revival in the nineteenth century of the ethics and ritual of the Veda. But the modern Brahmoists pillage freely the divine truths of the New Testament, and deny the divinity of its Author. They have cast off their old Hindu mythology, and without becoming Christians, have accepted whatever is best in Christian morality, and Theistic doctrine. This is the latest of the religious movements in India.

It may be asserted with confidence that through the long annals of Vedic, proto-Brahmanical, Buddhist, and neo-Brahmanical periods of the religion of India, independence of inquiry, extreme latitudinarianism, philosophic atheism, and unbounded tolerance, have been the rule and practice. We cannot but remark the constant attempt to get rid of the trammels of Caste; whether the reformers are Buddhist, or Lingaite, or Sikh, the first social reform is to get rid of this artificial inequality, and to eat and drink together. In the shrine of Jagarnáth, one of the great seats of the worship of Vishnu, no Caste exists; for the time and place it is suspended. These facts are important subjects of reflection. Moreover, the lower and more degraded the Caste, the stricter appear to be the Caste rules, and all breaches can be atoned by money payments. The sectarian and the Gurn have always played the part of prophet in antagonism to the hereditary priesthood; and the modern conception of bhakti, or Faith in the spiritual adviser and in the special divinity, has accentuated this formidable liberality of sentiments, and this has been the case under most unfavourable circumstances. And now that education and entire freedom of thought and religion have become the inheritance of the people, and the veiled shrine of the Veda has been exposed to view, we cannot but anticipate further expansion. We await in wonder the effect of Education, the Press, and Locomotion. Neither Brahmanism, nor Buddhism, nor Mahometanism, nor the non-Arian cults, have ever before been exposed to the scorching

glare of a dominant, hostile, and critical Civilisation until now. There can be but one issue of such a struggle for life. Brahmoism is but the advanced guard, the first column of dust, which heralds the coming storm.

LONDON, 1878.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

*THE INDIAN WOMEN.*

IN my public addresses on Missionary platforms on the subject of India, I often made the remark that during my residence of a quarter of a century in that country I had only twice the opportunity of conversing with an Indian lady, so jealously screened from notice are the wives and daughters of the noble and rich, and, in fact, all, who are in comfortable circumstances. Of the poorer classes there are plenty of women in the fields and streets working like cattle; but as soon as a man gets a decent income, he shuts his wife within four walls, as a token of his respectability, and calls it "Pardah." The exceptions are worthy of notice. The old Sikh chieftainess of Jigádri, in the Ambála district, was very quarrelsome, and insisted upon seeing me. She was of any age above sixty, and I was conducted into her apartments, and found a native Indian bed turned up on its end, with a chair for me in front of it, while she was squatting behind it with her eye against the twisted cordage, which formed the bottom of the bed, so that she could see me, but I could not see her. She was quite able to explain her wishes to me, which were to destroy utterly her adversary, who

was probably her own grandson, or grandnephew, I forget which.

The other interview was more striking. In 1852 the old Rání of Vizianagram, and her son's wife, a really beautiful young woman, resided at Banáras. They were from the Madras Province, and I never understood why or how, but, as a fact, they received male visitors with unveiled faces, seated upon chairs, and very pleasing and sensible they were to converse with, and they went so far as to give entertainments in the English fashion. I never heard what became of them, but I always regretted, that the practice was not more general.

But no public Officer can pass through his official career without having a great deal to do with women. The suits in a Civil Court are in native parlance divided into three categories: Chattels, Women, and Land; and really the second is the most burdensome, as our subjects have to be taught what are women's rights and women's duties. The written Codes of Positive Law, both of Hindu and Mahometan, are singularly capricious, for they give a woman large rights of inheritance and dowry, and yet she has no personal liberty, unaccompanied by license. In the Panjáb, among the Sikhs, a man has a right to the property and the widow of his deceased brother, and this often leads to ludicrous contentions. Again, where it has happened, that father, son, and grandson have died, leaving three widows, I have had experience of the widow of the son contending for the family property against her mother-in-law, that the death of her husband shut *her* out of the property; and against her daughter-in-law, that the widow of the son could not oust the widowed

mother. Her pleas were wholly inconsistent to each other; but so obtuse is the vision of self-interest, that she could not possibly see, that of the three her right under no possible circumstance could prevail.

It has been asserted, that there is no case brought forward in the Criminal Courts, which cannot be traced directly or indirectly to that after-thought of the Creative Power, whose special vocation it has been to bring woe to man. There is no doubt, however, that a very large proportion of Civil actions arises in every country from this cause, simply because there has been from the beginning of human affairs an attempt to keep them down, and debar them from the equality to which they are entitled. It is self-evident, that the Old Testament was written by a man; the tenth commandment was clearly reduced to that vehicle for ideas, which we call "words," by one of the male sex. Had Miriam been commissioned to legislate to the Israelites, she would probably have expressed herself otherwise. However unjustly trodden down, Nature will raise its head, and is generally triumphant; any unjust law of repression against the equity of things is sure to strike in the rebound. Thus it has happened as regards the law of women both in England and India. The wife has often been the ruin of the house in both countries. In England, though denied a legal existence while under coverture, though her property has been at the mercy of her tyrant, though unjust laws have prevented her being heard in the case, which affects her honour, her fortune, and her status, she has generally won in the end, or made her victor rue his success.

So also in India. From her earliest hour the woman is oppressed; no congratulations mark her birth; her poor mother's heart fails her, and her groanings recommence, when she hears, that a female child has been born; no care watches over her childhood to mark the budding beauty, and to develop the dawning intellect. If by the mercy of the British Government, or the humbleness of her Caste, she escapes the opium-pill, or the sly pinch of the jugular vein, designed for her to preserve the honour of the family, she grows up unattended, unwashed, uneducated, and very often unclothed. In infancy she is disposed of by betrothal, and so much cash, so much grain, so many trays of sweetmeats find their way to the family dwelling, as the price of her charms and the barter of her affections. In her nonage she is married, but no honour awaits her even on this occasion; the bridegroom is the great object of the ceremony, but where is the bride? Hired courtezans are dancing for the gratification of the men, while the women of the family are huddled away in closets, or allowed to peep through screens. Poor hapless daughter of Eve! Love has no existence for her; she never listened to honeyed words; she knows nothing of the wild throb of being wooed, or of the glory of being won; not for her the indistinguishable throng of hopes, and fears, and gentle wishes till the hour arrived, when in granting favours she was herself thrice blessed. Nobody asked her opinion on the subject. Her father arranged the transaction with the boy's father; her family-barber looked at him; his family-barber examined her, noting her defects and her merits; the male relations ate, and the Brahmans prayed, muttered,

and ate also, and she had a ring thrust through her nostril, and was a bride. A few years afterwards, when she had arrived at a nubile age, amidst the conventional howling of all the females of the house, she was deported with a proportion, fixed by custom, of cooking-pots, clothes, and jewels, to the house of the bridegroom, a beardless lad, whom then for the first time she saw; and she was thrust into another labyrinth of dark passages, murky yards, and musty closets, resembling so far the paternal mansion, amidst a crowd of mothers-in-law, stern aunts, child-mothers, and widowed girls, who represent and make up the hidden treasures of an Indian home.

Nor in married life was her situation much improved. Owing to the universal habit of whole families herding together, and the comfortless arrangement of dwelling-houses, for years she never saw her husband, except by the light of the chaste moon on the flat roof of the mansion, or by an oil lamp in a closet. He was often absent for months and years; to the end of her days she never appeared unveiled in his presence before a third person, not even her children; she was never addressed by her proper name; if she proved a mother, she had at least the blessing of her children, and taught them to fear their father; but if her husband's lust of the eye fell elsewhere, she had a hateful colleague thrust in, with whom life became one continued jostle of persons, choking of cholera, and conflict of children, and, if she were childless, she mourned her hard fate, and submitted. Her sin was not forgiven in childbearing, and she even cherished the child of her rival for the want of something to love. We pass over in silence

the angry words, the neglect, the cuffs and even blows, that must be the case in some households in a country, where no shame attends the act of striking a woman. We pass over such outrages in silence; for in England not many years ago a mother, in bringing a charge against her son, stated in evidence, that he beat her as much as if she had been his wife. In England there are savages still!

But the Indian wife has her revenge: the time comes, and the woman. In the declining and obese period of life, when passion is lulled, and the only object of the male animal, who has become seedy and weedy, is to be respectable, when the wife has become haggard, wrinkled, toothless, and hideous, she can wring his heartstrings, she can expose him to the gossip of his neighbours and to the tittle-tattle of the Court. She sues him for alimony, or maintenance, or (that fertile source of vexation) dower, or for jewels, which she declares to be her separate property. She carries her wrinkled face into Court, and even lays bare her chaste bosom, rivalling a sun-dried mud-bank more than the conventional snowdrift, denounces her husband, discloses his weaknesses, and derides his defects. She thus revenges herself and her sex for many a slight, many a cuff; and this must go on, and he must bear it, much as he looks forward to the day, when it will be his special privilege to expend a few copper coins in faggots to consume the carcass of the woman, who had been his torment, unless she outlive him, when she will not be behindhand in each detail of conventional woe. Still, in spite of all these disagreeable circumstances, the Courts are pestered with

ridiculous claims of brothers-in-law, or cousins, to possess themselves of the persons of widows, in whom they imagine, that their family has invested capital, of which they wish to enjoy the interest. Many long fights have arisen, with regard to the hand of very undesirable ladies, betwixt the party who considers, that he has a legal remainder, and the party who is in actual possession, the one pleading a species of tenure of tail female, and the other a tenure "in corde."

The wicked novelist, Balzac, has somewhere written, that a man should not venture to marry, until he had at least dissected one woman. We would warn the Hindu to witness one such Civil action, ere he add to his family. As far as the writer of these pages personally knows such ladies (from acquaintance in the Court-house), they are apt to be unamiable, unguarded of speech, rather spiteful, and very unreasonable, certainly not the ministering spirit, with whom he could wish to share the Arab tent. None so earnest in appeal, none so unruly and obstreperous, and the Judge is fortunate to have a table and rail between himself and the litigants, and not to have a long beard to tempt insult, for the Sikh lady is apt to run to bone in formation, and would be a powerful enemy in conflict. Nor do they persecute their husbands or their male relations only; none so pertinacious against the world and its institutions at large, as the wretched widow, who has been tempted by some devil to waste so many weary days and weary nights for the possession of some miserable hovel, the value of which would never equal such an expenditure of temper, credit, words, or hard cash. A personal experience of some terrible widows,

clasping the knees at every unguarded opportunity, shrieking at every corner, vexing the spirit at uncertain hours, has tempted many a Public officer to sympathise somewhat with the unjust Judge, who has been held up as an example to avoid.

And all this has arisen under English rule, all this trouble is authorised, and exists in the necessity of things. It is dangerous to insult the feelings of a people, yet here we must run athwart their most deep-rooted prejudices, and the Judge, though satisfied, that with a conscience and principles of rectitude he could not decide otherwise, returns daily to his home, deeply conscious that he has wounded their feelings on the tenderest point. Their whole practice with regard to betrothals is iniquitous. Women are transferred like cattle; circular contracts are made, by which a whole series of marriages is arranged; grown-up women are tied to boys of tender years; little girls made over to old men; brothers sue for forcible possession of the widow of their deceased brother; the woman is treated as a chattel or a domestic animal, of which the joint property is vested in the whole family. The conscience of our jurisprudence is opposed to all such transactions, and they cannot be upheld. Great is the wrath and loudly muttered the dissatisfaction of many a middle-aged country gentleman, who from his age and turn of mind cannot see the drift of the policy. Moreover, the evil was aggravated by the novelty of our rule, for no sooner had the British army crossed the river Satlaj, than it got about, that we were governed by a Queen, and the East India Company was believed to be an aged female of some description. This gave birth to a feeling of independence



among the womankind of the country; hence a quarrel and a miniature rebellion in every house. The astonished Sikh, worsted at the battle of Sobraon, at least honourably, had in his own home to carry on a disgraceful contest with a loud tongue, cased in a body, which he no longer dared to chastise, craving for more jewels, more clothes, and threatening to avail itself of its newly-acquired liberty.

This dislocation of the domestic relations is brought about by polygamy and child-murder, which, by destroying the numerical equality of the sexes, has given women a money value in the market, as a thing to be sold, and when bought to be kept possession of. Polygamy may be dismissed in a few words. None of the respectable middle classes tolerate it. In extreme cases of childless husbands the privilege may be under a protest made use of, for to a Hindu it is a dishonour and sorrow to be childless. The poor cannot afford it. It is only among the wild beasts of the pseudo-aristocracy, that the custom prevails to any extent, and they as a class are being extinguished. A law to place polygamy under civil disabilities might be passed without exciting a remark, for it is as unsanctioned by the feeling of the people as excesses of the same character, though developing themselves in the European form of profligacy, are against the feelings of the people of England. Indeed, now that the power of the whip and the fetter has been removed, the custom is not likely to be much practised. It is all very well for a chieftain, residing in a fort with four bastions, to indulge in the luxury of a separate wife in each tower, or a banker with two or three dwelling-houses might find it feasible,

but for a man with limited means the experiment would be dangerous. In ordinary marriage-contracts tricks are often played. The barber of the bridegroom is bribed, and at a time, when it is too late to recede, the bride is found to be one-eyed, with only one leg or arm, marked hideously with the small-pox, or imperfectly developed in mind or body. A contract, based on misrepresentation and fraud, is but a sorry start in life for the young couple.

Female infanticide lies deeper, as it is based not on individual passion, but family pride. It must have taken some years, or perhaps generations, to stamp the iniquity in its present complete form, to drown all feeling of humanity, shame, and manliness, and it will take some time to restore them. The subject has been misunderstood. It is not only the undue expenditure at weddings, that led to the crime, as this would not have induced the wealthy in some particular tribes to adopt a practice which their neighbours equally wealthy revolted at. The facts are these: Indian society is divided into Castes, and each Caste into tribes infinite. A man must marry one of his own Caste, but never one of his own tribe. As long as these tribes are relatively equal, no trouble would arise; but as in process of time one tribe became conventionally more honourable than the other, and as it is a point of honour never to give a daughter to one of a lower tribe, there must be certain tribes, who may have equals, but can have no superior; and if there should be no equal, as in the case of the Bédi tribe of the Khatri caste, there is no alternative but dishonour, or female infanticide, and of course they choose the latter. Let us illustrate this position further.

Suppose that the great Caste of Smiths had from times beyond the memory of man been divided into tribes, the William Smiths, the John Smiths, Andrew Smiths, and so on; now by the necessity of the case a Smith must marry a Smith, but not one of his own cognates, and all would go on well, until the disturbing cause of relative rank happened to interfere. Unluckily one of the ancestors of the Andrew Smiths was said to have been a bishop, a lord mayor of London, a popular Low-church preacher, or a personage of some such distinction, as would lead his descendants, who were apparently equal, to consider themselves relatively better than the William Smiths. The sad consequences of this absurd distinction would be, that the Andrew Smiths as a tribe, sooner than give their daughters to the William Smiths, or the other inferior tribes, would habitually practise female infanticide. “*Hinc illæ lacrymæ.*”

But ever and anon, amidst this wilderness of the affections, flashes out with a bright light on the part of that sex, which can forgive its tyrants every fault, even infidelity, some instance of the tenderest, because unrequited, love. The voice of the country, and tradition of the golden age, are against such treatment of the weaker vessel, and generation after generation has sympathised with the pictures of truth and fidelity, which have been portrayed so vividly and with such sweetness by Valmiki and Vyasa, the great heroes of epic poetry, and gathered round many a fireside have young and old alternately wept and smiled at the tale of the sorrows and triumphs of Sitá and Damayanti. Still in spite of her social degradation lives the proverb, that, though a hundred men form only an

encampment, one woman constitutes a home; still inconsistently the dearest affections and nicest honour of the great people of India are interwoven in the veil, which shrouds their females. They plunder provinces to load them with jewels, and then complain, when restitution is demanded; they worship their mothers and elder relations, treat their wives as so much dirt, and ignore their daughters, yet will those wives travel long distances to visit them in prison, and sacrifice all to get them released, and scenes often occur, which reconcile us to the Oriental development of humanity. The neglect on the part of the selfish lord often displays itself in as ludicrous a manner as the devotion of the wife. It is the custom for a Hindu on the loss of a relation to shave his beard by way of mourning, and I once asked a Rajpút, who had lately lost his better half, why he had neglected this attention. The reply was, that a man would as soon think of shaving his beard for the loss of a pair of old shoes. On the other hand, I once overtook a lone female on my road towards the river Ganges, and she informed me, that she was journeying many a league to commit the remains of her lord to the sacred stream. I looked back, expecting to see some modest conveyance, on which these melancholy relics were deposited, but there was nothing; on inquiry she undid a knot in the corner of the sheet, in which she was clothed, and showed a tooth and a bit of calcined bone, which she had picked up from the cinders of the funeral pile, and which she considered to be a sufficient representative of her husband.

Education, moral and religious, is the only cure. A quarter of a century ago, not a woman in India could

read or write ; and there was some justice in the assertion, that there was no book fit for a woman to read, and no legitimate occasion for a woman to write. That excuse can no longer be made. The efforts of good and pious English women have brought into existence an abundant, and daily increasing, serious and light literature, suitable for women at their present state of education, in many of the Indian Vernaculars ; and the Zanána Societies have been started with the sole and laudable object of educating the women, elevating their ideas, making them fit companions of educated husbands, and fit mothers of educated sons. On the furtherance of such designs the well-being of India depends.

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