

TRUE TALES
FOR
MY GRANDSON



SIR SAMUEL W. BAKER



mint

5.70

TRUE TALES FOR MY GRANDSONS





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation



WELL, I GUESS YOU AIR AN ELEGANT PERFORMER IN THE WAY
OF DISAPPEARANCES.'—p. II.

Frontispiece.

TRUE TALES
FOR MY GRANDSONS

BY
SIR SAMUEL WHITE BAKER
M.A., F.R.S., F.R.G.S.

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS

BY W. J. HENNESSY

London
MACMILLAN AND CO.

1883

c-8499-210 Mammals

Printed by R. & R. CLARK, Edinburgh.

955
B1685
true

P R E F A C E.

THE love of truth is a charm in human nature.

The first question of the young when listening to a tale of adventure, "Is it true?" expresses the natural desire of the sympathetic mind. Should a story be fiction, at least one-half the interest would disappear, as the characters become unreal; but if true, we share the joys and sorrows of the persons whose actions create the tale, and we appreciate the reality of the scene.

In the arrangement of these anecdotes I have carefully avoided fiction, each story being absolutely true in the main facts. Names of persons may have been either changed or withheld, and occasionally some extra may have been introduced to the *dramatis personæ*; but the chief incidents will appear precisely as they occurred, or as they were related to me by reliable authorities.

M346647

I shall endeavour, without special classification, to vary the character of these stories, to be selected according to the taste of the reader; some old grandfathers may perchance discover an interest in a work that was arranged for the benefit of my grandsons. The various portions of the world connected with these tales will be faithfully described, the physical geography of the localities being in all cases accurate, to form a combination of scenes with incidents as instructive pictures of reality.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
I. BUMMER AND HIS POOR ACQUAINTANCE	I
II. THE CRUISE OF THE WHALER "SOPHIA"	33
III. EVERARD HARCOURT; OR, THE YOUNG CADET	153
IV. HASSAN ALI AND THE GOLDEN BASIN	292
V. SOMETHING ABOUT DOGS, AND MY GRANDFATHER'S STORY	336
VI. ELEPHANT TALES, AND REMINISCENCES OF NATURAL HISTORY	352
CONCLUSION	434

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
“WELL, I GUESS YOU AIR AN ELEGANT PERFORMER IN THE WAY OF DISAPPEARANCES”	<i>Frontispiece</i>
“WHAT’S THE MATTER, OLD BOY?”	31
SHE FLUNG HER ARMS AROUND HIS NECK AND SOBBED BITTERLY	56
NEXT INSTANT THE BOAT WITH ITS ENTIRE CREW WAS DASHED COMPLETELY OUT OF THE WATER	78
THE BURNING SHIP CAST A LURID GLOW OF RED FAR AND WIDE	113
“POOR SOUL, I DO PITY YOU, INDEED!”	148
“HOW QUICKLY THE HOURS FLY!”	155
THE WIDOW THREW HERSELF AT THE FEET OF MAJOR SELWYN	201
“IS IT POSSIBLE THAT TWENTY YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE WE LAST MET?”	279
HASSAN ALI’S VILLAGE ON THE NILE	294
HE FORCED THE HEAD OF THE ATTACKING ELEPHANT HIGH INTO THE AIR	377
DASHED STRAIGHT AT THE NEAREST BUCK	397



TRUE TALES FOR MY GRANDSONS OF LAND AND SEA.

BUMMER
AND HIS POOR ACQUAINTANCE.

CHAPTER I.

AMONG the rapid developments of geographical centres during the last half century there is no more striking example than the rise and progress of California.

About thirty years ago the first rude settlement was established upon the site of the now famous city of San Francisco. At that time the gold mania was at its height; and rough horny-fisted men, tempted by the glittering tales of the El Dorado in the Far West, had started upon their perilous enterprise, and slowly but perseveringly crept onwards across the barren prairies of America.

Savage tribes of Indians attempted to obstruct their progress, and many of the hardy pioneers fell before the tomahawk and arrow; their fair-haired scalps adorned the wigwams of the barbarous victors, and remained as trophies,—blood-stained emblems of the first rough footsteps of advancing civilisation.

We are fond of that word "civilisation;" every syllable is euphonious, and the total is a comforting assurance that the great and hitherto unknown world is progressing; but how few are aware of the horrors which in every portion of the globe have preceded the result!

It is only necessary to refer to Biblical history, where, instead of the word "civilisation," the name of God was used by the Israelites as the authority and shield to cover and condone the terrible atrocities of an advance into the Promised Land. Could we trace the actual footsteps of progression in the world's history we should find them printed in red letters and in blood.

It is useless to argue upon the great principles of right and wrong; the fact remains, that civilisation, misconstrued by philanthropists, means "*force*," and savagedom means weakness—the force must advance, the weakness must recede, and eventually disappear.

Thus from the earliest history the world has revolved in clouds and sunshine; the dark days of barbarism, after a glow of fearful red, bursting into the bright light of what we term "civilisation."

And so the pioneers advanced across America, rifle in hand, representing the germ of the East that must extend its sway.—God only knows why or by what reason, but the Anglo-Saxon dominates, and will prevail.

The waggons travelled wearily over trackless plains, salt efflorescence, and alkali, which drifted before the wind like dusty snow, and nearly choked the

weary animals and men—miles after miles, weeks after weeks, in constant toil, the pioneers laboured onwards towards the unknown land. The oxen sickened upon the wretched sage-scrub and water charged with soda; the waggons sank in the deep gullies; but the spirit of the pioneers never faltered. The Indians hovered around their path. Many of their comrades had fallen from fatigue or arrow, and had found rest in the rough-hewn graves that marked the track in this march of desolation; but there was no murmur for retreat, the iron nerve and will of the Anglo-Saxon was driving like a wedge slowly but surely forward.

The salt plains were passed, and the pine-clad mountains of Nevada, trackless and snow-drifted, six thousand feet above the level of the sea, chilled and bewildered the almost hopeless emigrants. Enormous trees, fallen in countless tempests, strewed the forests and blocked the advance of wheels. The axe for the first time sounded in those solitudes, and with painful labour the way was cleared. The waggons crept forward, down into deep valleys where lakes sparkled with clear water from the melted snow, and reflected the dark foliage of the overhanging pines; then upward over heights where icy pinnacles froze into glassy rocks above their route. The night was never silent. When the pine logs crackled and sparkled into bright fireworks high in air the cry of the wolves was heard around the camp, and the grizzly bear was distinguished by its guttural roar. In those days this giant of the forest was instinctively dreaded, as the rifles were of exceedingly small

calibre, owing to the difficulty of transporting heavy ammunition.

At length the slope determined towards the west ; the waggons travelled quicker ; the temperature increased, and all hearts became lighter as the route was inclining downwards. The forests no longer intercepted the distant view, and far beyond the plain which stretched to the horizon was a faint gray line, apparently high above the earth. The sea ! the sea !

Who can appreciate the feeling of delight which braced the hearts of those early pioneers when there was no longer a doubt, but the broad Pacific lay before them ! Following the slopes of the Sacramento River, they at length emerged upon the plain now known as the Sacramento Valley ; and, skirting the broad lake or inlet of the sea which stretches for about fifty miles land-locked from the ocean, they halted opposite the sandy point where the hills rose boldly from the sea, and formed an abrupt entrance to this vast harbour.

That gap or inroad of the Pacific, with steep hills upon either side, forms the neck, or what is now termed the Golden Gate of San Francisco. Ships enter the Golden Gate in the present day between frowning batteries upon either side, which completely command the entrance of the Strait. This narrow throat is hardly a mile in width, and the hills being several hundred feet above the water level, give an imposing appearance to the approach.

There is a barren aspect owing to the absence of trees, and the great surge of the Pacific bursting upon

the perpendicular rocks outside the Golden Gate throws a cloud of spray high into the air, and gives an appearance of wild desolation to this dangerous coast. Rocky islands fringe the shore. These are the resort of seals, and are almost covered with huge sea-lions, which bask in the warm sunshine, and curiously manage to raise themselves from rock to rock by their flappers and tails, until they reach an elevation of thirty or forty feet above the sea. Many of these creatures exceed the bulk of a large cart-horse; as they are never disturbed, no change has taken place in their habits or numbers, while the neighbouring country has been thoroughly transformed.

The barren sandy waste upon which the city of San Francisco has been erected was the first spot where the early settlers landed when their vessels entered the Golden Gate. A few huts were rapidly constructed; and as by degrees fresh adventurers arrived, a nucleus was formed which has grown into an important city, upon a deplorable site, ill chosen, and exposed to prevailing winds and fogs which chill the climate and try the constitutions of men and animals. On the opposite side of the harbour, a fruitful soil and more sheltered locality would have offered a perfect situation for an extensive city. This is now springing into importance, and the country is dotted with pretty villas and well-kept gardens, while Oakland is rapidly becoming an important town.

Magnificent steam ferryboats of about 1600 or 2000 tons traverse the harbour between San Fran-

cisco and Oaklands every quarter of an hour throughout the day, and in a transit of about twenty minutes cross the widest portion.

The entire country is in cultivation. Fields of many acres are planted with tomatoes, which grow in similar quantities to the swedes and mangolds of Great Britain. These are produced upon this extensive scale for preservation in cans, in like manner with the peaches, pears, and other fruits, for which California is now famous in supplying the distant world.

For many miles in the neighbourhood of Oaklands the country is divided into fruit farms and gardens, where cherries of immense size, currants, and all the well-known European fruits, are cultivated for export. It is a strange result of only a few years' enterprise that the interminable waste of salt deserts, and apparently boundless forests and prairies, which were so laboriously toiled across by the weary pioneers, should now be traversed by express trains laden with the rich grapes and other fruits of California for the supply of New York city.

This is the effect of the white man's advent. The Red Indian has disappeared; the elk, that were numerous when the gold-seekers first turned the soil, have almost ceased to exist; and herds of splendid cattle of the best English breeds have usurped the pasturage of the wild deer. A soil of extreme richness glows with yellow crops of wheat, which the farmer thrashes upon the field in a climate where rain during harvest is unknown. The corn is packed in sacks, and the agricultural wealth of the country

is displayed by the enormous rows of these neat packages built into parallel bulwarks along the quays of San Francisco, for shipment to the great consumer England.

At first sight it appears impossible that wheat can bear the cost of transport from such an immense distance as California by the Cape Horn route ; but the farmer of the Far West has many advantages. A dependable climate renders him independent of barns and rick-making, and saves the great expense of labour in harvesting his crops. The land is free from many onerous charges which burden the soil of England ; and the earth without manure yields remunerative crops, recuperated only by the system of rotation.

Of late years the cultivation of the grape has attracted much attention ; and the Californian wines will at some future time command a European market, when the growers shall have gained experience in their manufacture. It is considered that no agricultural industry offers such tempting prospects as the grape, both for the production of wine and for transport as fruit, to Eastern America.

There are many soils throughout the world that are well adapted for fruit cultivation, but few climates that are suitable to its preservation. Dryness at the period of ripening is essential, and this is assured in California ; thus not only are fruits of great variety preserved in cans, but apples, peaches, blackberries, etc. etc., are dried simply in the sun, and are packed in this inexpensive form for export, in addition to the large quantities reserved for home consumption.

The agricultural development which now constitutes the permanent wealth of California, is the result of a vast influx of settlers who followed the original gold-seekers, and who turned their attention to farming when the mines became either exhausted or overcrowded. Colossal fortunes have been realised by the early adventurers in mines, and by those who purchased large tracts of land at a time when few were sufficiently far-sighted to foresee the immense rise in value that would be ensured by a few years' patience.

The society of the present day is a great improvement upon that of ten years ago. It may be readily imagined that the rough and untutored miners who were first attracted to California, exhibited the daring and persistent courage of their class, but were mingled with others whose brutal natures, when beyond the pale of laws, could only be restrained by the rough and ready justice of Lynch law inflicted by those who represented public opinion.

The knife and revolver were the ready arguments that quickly appeared, as they were never absent from the person. Card-playing, gambling, and low drinking shops were the certain accompaniments to a first settlement, where the absence of women in the earliest days of mining enterprise deprived the men of all home attractions.

A touching story is told of a miner who arrived with his young wife in a remote locality where no white woman had hitherto been seen. This modest and beautiful, but solitary specimen of her sex, exercised a peculiar influence upon the rough community

around her. Men, hardened by unpunished crimes, were softened by the presence of one who to them appeared angelic ; the brutal oaths, which had formed the greater portion of their vocabulary, were suppressed when she was near. The news spread far and wide, and many rough but warm-hearted men left their mining operations to visit the attractive spot, and would sit down and gaze at this young woman till their eyes filled with strange and unaccustomed tears, as the sight of her good face recalled the memory of those of their own, so far distant, from whom they had been separated for many years.

Unfortunately the benefit of woman's civilising companionship was quickly destroyed by the arrival of a different class, as the gold poured forth from the mountain sides into the hands of the lowest specimens of our race. The keepers of gambling and drinking booths were paid in nuggets and gold dust ; and men who were fitted only for the gallows rapidly became rich.

By degrees the necessity of the situation induced the needed reforms. "Vigilance Committees" were formed, and the notorious characters were proscribed and quickly banished from the locality ; or executed forthwith, if caught red-handed.

The rapid increase of wealth and population evolved a city from the original small nucleus, and San Francisco was laid out in broad and imposing streets. Few would have believed had it been foretold in those early but still recent days, that the shops and streets would rival those of Paris and its boulevards in 1882 !

The city grew forthwith. There was a strange energy throughout the ever-increasing population. This in our slow and steady-going country would have been called a temporary insanity, and the desponding minds of England would have prophesied a lamentable reaction. But the city grew.

With the increase of wealth came the demand for luxuries and refinement. With the demand came the ever certain supply.

Here within a few years was built up a modern landmark of the world's progress, and in a quarter of a century an example was effected of commercial development and the results of gold,—that omnipotent ruler, Gold; dominator or tyrant, or idol of this world, without which no such word as "civilisation" could be constructed, and we should have remained in the barbarity of an iron age.

One of the first necessities in a community is food. The butcher and the baker are two early and important citizens.

When San Francisco was in progress of development there was necessarily a butcher's shop.

The shop that is connected with this story was kept by a respectable citizen, and the supply of meat would have rivalled many such establishments in England.

It was a cold day in mid-winter, and although no snow is known in San Francisco, the wind was cutting through the broad street like the edge of a knife. People were wrapped in greatcoats, and were hurrying to their business with umbrellas up, and well bent towards the blast, that drove a misty

rain straight into their faces, and made the pavement slippery. Everybody was in rapid movement, as the day was not favourable to loiterers; even the butcher in his open shop was walking to and fro, and occasionally stopped to sharpen his knives briskly, as though an excuse for exercise.

The only object in the street that was not in movement was a thin and hungry dog; this sat wistfully upon the wet pavement, and gazed imploringly at the butcher's display of meat.

It was, or rather should have been, a dog of considerable size; but it was in such a reduced condition that its skin hung loosely upon a framework of bones; and its drawn face, tightened upon the jaws, exhibited a melancholy picture of suffering and neglect. Occasionally the under jaw chattered with cold, misery, and anxiety, as it attempted to gain the butcher's attention by a complaining whine. This friendless dog had probably been owned by some stranger to the country, who might have died; but no one knew the animal, neither had it been seen at that butcher's shop before.

The butcher had just sharpened his knife, and to try its edge he trimmed off a ragged end of a joint, and threw the morsel to the expectant dog.

That titbit never reached the ground, but was dexterously caught, and as instantly swallowed by the hungry beggar. "Well, I guess you air an elegant performer in the way of disappearances!" exclaimed the butcher, who followed his exclamation by jerking a larger piece high into the air. In an instant the dog was upon its hind legs, and the

falling steak was as cleverly intercepted and vanished out of sight.

“Well, I’m darned if you ain’t a real conjurer, and you’d keep me at this trick till you’d have swallered a whole bullock, you would. You think me fool enough to play this losing game, do yer, pitch and toss the whole of my shop down your hungry throat? Not if I know it.” In spite of this declaration, the indulgent butcher threw successive pieces to the hungry dog, all of which were as quickly swallowed, without an attempt at mastication.

“Well, I’ve seen a good many dogs in my life, but I never met such a regular ‘bummer’¹ as you be; if you haven’t packed away within that ugly hide of yours as exquisite a lot of beef as would have stuffed a crowd of famished Irishmen, and you’re not half played out yet!” With reckless generosity the butcher cut a large steak from a coarse joint, and threw it expectantly to the dog, with the exclamation, “Now, Bummer, old boy, I guess that’s kill or cure, ain’t it? that’s choking or consolation, suffocation or satisfaction, to the hungriest cuss as I ever see’d upon four legs, or I’m no judge.”

The butcher was right; it appeared that the dog was satisfied, as, instead of eating the flesh, it hesitated for a few moments, and then, taking the large morsel in its mouth, it left the shop, and, turning a corner of the street, disappeared from view.

The butcher seemed half disappointed at this retreat. “Ha!” he ejaculated to himself, “you’re

¹ A bummer is a beggar, or vagrant, or an idle vagabond.

like the rest of 'em : eat as much as you can swallow ; fill out your skin at other people's expense ; when your belly's full, then fill your pockets, and go off without saying Thank yer ! I wonder you didn't ask for a glass of whiskey ; that's regular human natur. I bet a dollar to a cent that you'll come back again to-morrow, for you're a regular bummer, out and out."

On the following morning a change had taken place : the sun was bright, the streets were dry, and people were hurrying along at the usual business pace through the broad thoroughfares of San Francisco. Knots of mining speculators were to be seen at intervals, scrutinising the published lists of stocks and shares with that haggard anxiety of features that marks the inward misery of the gambler.

The shops were open, and although many were of rude appearance, a marked improvement was perceptible, as plate-glass fronts had been erected, and many others were in progress, exhibiting the general prosperity of the country in the quality of merchandise exposed to view.

The butcher's shop was in process of washing up, and the butcher himself was busily engaged in suspending choice carcasses and joints to the various hooks, sufficient to entice the hungry housekeeper who was patrolling in search of the daily wants.

A dog sat before the butcher's shop, looking intently at the tempting display.

"Ha, ha!" exclaimed the butcher ; "here you are again, Bummer, my boy ! I thought we should have the honour of a second call ; why, you are the coolest old cuss I ever came across,—can't wait, but

must go visiting at sunrise. Early birds get the worms, eh, Bummer? Come along, old boy; you're a knowing one, like most empty bellies; come in here, old lad. Lord, if ever I felt such a bag of bones! poor old chap," said the now sympathising butcher, as he patted the miserable dog, who, having ventured upon the invitation, had crept hesitatingly within the shop.

That day the friendship between Bummer and the butcher was consolidated. "I always wanted another dog since old Tiger was run over and killed," said the butcher to himself, "and now I've got one cheap. He's a thin specimen now, that's sartin; but I think I can stuff him out within a fortnight, and make him quite an exquisite figure of a dog. And he's curly, and got a well-shaped head, and a regular benevolent kind of an eye; and a good set of teeth to take care of himself with; and blessed if I don't think he'll turn out a respectable character some day; won't you, Bummer, eh?" In this strain the now patronising butcher assumed the protectorate of the houseless Bummer; and the dog, who apparently appreciated his position, licked the hand of his new master, and by those endearments which exhibit the affection of the canine race he quickly secured the sympathy of the rough but good-natured citizen.

That day was the commencement of Bummer's reign. Stray dogs peeped into the butcher's shop with the intention of purloining and sirloining, but the ever-watchful guardian would rush upon the largest-sized intruder without a moment's hesitation, and no policeman could have surpassed Bummer in

the rapidity of his attack or in his detective abilities; his sole object appeared to be the watch and guard of the shop door throughout the day.

The evening came. Shortly after sunset the butcher called his new acquaintance, and, after patting him upon the back, he threw him a large piece of meat. To his astonishment the dog seized it eagerly, but, instead of devouring it upon the spot, our friend Bummer leisurely quitted the shop and trotted off along the street with the flesh secured within his jaws.

The night arrived, but the dog had apparently deserted his new master.

On the following morning, before the shop was open, Bummer was to be seen waiting expectantly in the street; and as the butcher opened the door, the dog rushed in, and, leaping upon his master, evinced the greatest pleasure at the meeting.

Day after day Bummer arrived in the early morning, kept watch within the shop throughout the hours of business, but retreated in the evening, carrying his supper with him to some mysterious haunt in San Francisco.

Bummer was no longer the lean and hungry foundling—he had grown plump and handsome—the butcher's prophecy had been rapidly fulfilled, and he was "an exquisite figure of a dog," but his eccentricity was perplexing to his master. Why did Bummer refuse to remain at home after sunset? and where did he go every evening carrying a piece of flesh in his mouth instead of eating it upon the spot? "That beats me holler," exclaimed the

butcher to several of his friends, to whom he was narrating the peculiarities of his dog; "and I'm blessed if I don't follow him to-night, and just find out the sort of nest that master Bummer sleeps in." Several friends, whose curiosity was excited, determined to accompany the butcher.

The evening came. The usual supper was thrown to Bummer, who leisurely walked off with the large piece of meat, and retreated down the street.

The dog evinced no anxiety at being followed, and the butcher and a friend walked or ran alternately, thus keeping their object in view, as the streets at that hour were no longer crowded.

It was a long walk; and as the streets were laid out in right angles, the newly-built city being arranged in blocks, it appeared that Bummer was taking a rather extraordinary course, which at length emerged upon a sandy waste, where the prevailing wind had raised hillocks of drift upon the outskirts of the city. This was a wild and desolate spot. Nothing could resist the ever-moving sand, which altered its form with every changing breeze, and steadily determined to limit the attempt of man in advancing up wind in that direction. A few small houses had been attempted, but doorways had become choked, and even window-frames of the ground-floor were embedded in several feet of sand, which bore ripple marks, created by the wind, as though by the waves of the sea-shore.

Over this barren surface Bummer had trotted for some distance, followed by the butcher and his friend, who perseveringly trudged through the heavy

ground in curious pursuit, when at length he turned a corner of what had perhaps been planned as an attempted street, where some small and abandoned dwellings, only just commenced, had proved the impossibility of struggling against the natural difficulties of the locality. Into one of these miserable tenements the dog entered, as though quite accustomed to the spot.

There were many empty packing-cases and casks that had contained dry goods lying in heaped confusion, half choked with sand, which had invaded the little yard of an intended dwelling. Some scaffold poles arose like withered skeletons of trees from the deep accumulation; and these, which had been intended as supports, had been driven by the force of the wind from the perpendicular and inclined against the unfinished wall.

The dog had disappeared round a corner of this wretched building, and the next instant the butcher and his friend found themselves in a tolerably protected angle, where Bummer was already seated before a large broken cask without either head or bottom. There was a heap of shavings and some sand and rubbish collected in this cask, upon which a curious mass was lying, which resembled a worn-out and shrivelled door rug. Bummer had deposited his piece of meat before this apparently lifeless object, and, after vainly endeavouring to attract attention by whining, he impatiently scratched it with his forepaw to awaken it if sleeping.

A lean and miserable figure slowly uncurled itself from the dust and shavings in reply to Bummer's

summons. After a preliminary stretch, it staggered forward and lay down, or rather fell, opposite the piece of flesh, which it licked, but apparently had neither the appetite nor the strength to chew.

✓ Bummer watched these futile efforts with evident anxiety; and, as though to increase desire on the part of the sick dog, he seized the flesh himself and bit and swallowed a morsel, and then withdrew it to a few feet distance, and, crouching with the tempting bait between his fore-paws, fixed his gaze upon the invalid, and whined in plain dog language—"It's very good, and I shall eat it myself if you won't come."

By various little enticing ways Bummer endeavoured to excite an appetite in his sick friend, but with little success; the unfortunate dog munched a very small portion of his offering, and then crept back to its heap of shavings, and once more coiled itself to sleep. Seeing that his patient was obtuse to all attempts upon his part, Bummer entered the cask and, after turning round, and several times scratching and arranging the dusty shavings to his satisfaction, he also prepared himself for the night's rest by the side of his poor acquaintance.

It was getting dusk. "I guess we had better be getting home," said the butcher to his silent companion, who had watched the conduct of the dogs in mute admiration, "or we shall be benighted. Don't talk to me of Christians after this—Bummer beats them out of that line altogether. Don't talk to me about charity—Bummer wipes all the shine off them in that particular. Don't tell me about Good

Samaritans—Bummer whacks all that sort, because he sticks to his friend instead of leaving him at an inn with only a penny, and a small credit. Don't preach to me about human beings, for Bummer's gone hungry to bed to save a bit for his friend to-morrow morning, and I never saw a human go so far as that. Don't talk to me about philanthropists, and foundling hospitals, and sisters of charity, and infirmaries, and all that lot; for Bummer's got all them heaped together and packed away under his curly hide—he has, and no mistake! Poor old Bummer, he's a regular Christian through and through, and beats all the parsons, and bishops, and archbishops, and popes, and——”

How long the good-natured butcher would have continued to pour forth his admiration for Bummer it would be difficult to say, had it not been for a sudden interruption from his hitherto silent friend, who now broke into the conversation with the following remark—“I quite agree with all you say, and your dog is a real wonder; but I don't think his head is equal to his heart, as it strikes me that he has given his share of the meat to his sick friend, but has forgotten to bring water. The poor brute is thirsty, and is too weak to seek far for drink.”

“Well,” exclaimed the butcher, “you've hit the nail on the head this time, and no mistake! but Bummer hasn't got a utensil, I guess, that will hold water; so suppose we give him a helping hand? Here's a house where somebody's at home, for there's a light in the window. Here, missus! or anybody who may answer!” and the butcher loudly knocked

at the closed door. It was quickly opened by a woman, and, the butcher having explained his want, was supplied with an empty can, which had contained about two quarts of tinned provisions. This was clean, and was soon filled with water.

It did not take many minutes to retrace their steps, and the butcher and his companion once more stood before the dogs' retreat. At the sight of water the sick dog seemed to gather strength, and it eagerly lapped the half of the contents, while Bummer himself partook of a small share, and the withered-looking dog looked quite refreshed after its long and welcome draught. "You are a miserable specimen, to be sure," exclaimed the butcher, as he stroked the wiry and ill-conditioned coat of the sick dog. "A regular Lazarus you are, indeed: starved and sick, and with no friend in the world except old Bummer. Well, good-night, old dogs; I shall come and have a look at you to-morrow. I shall call that dog Lazarus," said the butcher to his companion, as they now strolled homewards through the darkening city. "It will be a capital name for him—in fact, I think it will be quite an elegant name; and I shall take up that dog's case, and I calculate in about two months, with good feeding, I shall fix him up so that his maternal parent wouldn't recognise him."



CHAPTER II.

ON the following morning, as the butcher opened his shop at the usual hour, Bummer, who had been waiting outside, walked in. There was the customary wag of recognition in his tail, but nothing more. The day passed away, during which many customers had been informed by the dog's proud master "that he was the best Christian in San Francisco," and that "no bishops, or archbishops, or popes, or divines *in posse* could hold a candle to Bummer in the way of charity."

When the evening came, the daily portion of flesh allotted to Bummer was increased by the butcher, and the dog, as usual, trotted off; this time accompanied by the master, with a utensil for water, together with several friends, who wished to be eye-witnesses of facts.

Many weeks had passed away. The accounts of Bummer's performances had found their way into the city newspapers, and the dog had become a public character. The butcher's trade flourished, as Bummer had acted as an advertisement that attracted customers to his shop.

It was early upon a summer morning, that upon

the butcher's first appearance in his shop, *two* dogs were sitting without. There was a certain confidence in the air of one, but a shyness and timidity in the appearance of the other, who was a bony and delicate-looking dog. These were Bummer and his poor acquaintance Lazarus, who, having sufficiently recovered his strength, was now introduced by his guardian to the dogs' paradise of San Francisco—the butcher's shop.

The butcher was delighted at the appearance of his *protégé*, who was at once welcomed to the threshold and regaled with a few choice bits, which were instantly swallowed, Bummer meanwhile wagging his tail with lively satisfaction at the successful introduction of his friend.

It would be tedious to relate the daily life of the two dogs, even if I knew the exact details; there was a regularity in their proceedings which became well known in San Francisco. Bummer and Lazarus were recognised as citizens of eccentric habits, but harmless in character, and inseparable friends. They never slept at the butcher's shop, and rarely entered the door; but they were always to be seen, from sunrise to sunset, either upon the pavement in front, or somewhere in the immediate neighbourhood. They were never known to quarrel, and when the day closed they betook themselves to their old abode in the outskirts of the city, where Lazarus had been first discovered. The stray dogs that frequented the streets appeared to recognise the rights of territory that had been acquired by the occupation of the butcher's front by Bummer and Lazarus, and they

seldom presumed to trespass upon that portion of the thoroughfare. If by chance some strange cur intruded, whose ignorance of the circumstances induced him to set foot upon the forbidden ground, and gaze at the contents of the butcher's shop, he was immediately attacked by the two friends; and, having been tumbled over in the gutter, he was driven ignominiously from the street.

No citizens of San Francisco were better known, or more generally recognised as inhabitants of the town, than Bummer and Lazarus.

Meanwhile the city grew apace. The discoveries of gold had been followed by a vast development of the mining interest, which brought thousands of adventurers to swell the population. Wealth was rapidly accumulated, and those capitalists who had bought large tracts of land were busily engaged in agricultural enterprise. An extraordinary change was produced in the growth of the city, and for many miles around. Vessels from all portions of the globe sailed and steamed through the Golden Gate, bringing fresh settlers for beautiful California, while San Francisco extended in due proportion, and became the splendid capital of the Far West.

Municipal improvements had been much needed, as the influx of strangers from distant portions of the world had necessarily assembled many adventurers of doubtful character. The revolver and bowie knife had become the chief arbiters in disputes, and human life throughout California was regarded as of less value than the horse. That noble

animal was tacitly admitted as the superior, by the laws which rigidly protected it as property ; to steal a horse entailed the penalty of death, while murder was seldom punished.

The Vigilance Committee gave place to a new reform, and a body of police was organised in San Francisco. A code of municipal laws was established, sanitary arrangements were instituted, and among other necessary changes, all ownerless dogs were prohibited from wandering about the streets.

Newly-appointed officials, like new brooms, make a clean sweep, and display a vast amount of energy. The police were instructed to take all dogs into custody that should be found in the thoroughfares of San Francisco without being accompanied by their proprietors. A van had been constructed specially for this purpose. This vehicle was furnished with iron bars to admit ventilation, and to enable street passengers to see the dogs which might have become prisoners being driven to the appointed place of destruction. If any person should recognise his dog as one of the unlucky captives, he could, by paying a fine at the proper office, rescue his animal from death.

In a few days after the appearance of this fatal van a strong feeling of repugnance to the new dog-law was manifested by the public. Many people had missed their favourites, whose fate was involved in mystery, although no doubt could be entertained respecting their tragic end. The law was on the side of the police, who, in due proportion to the feeling exhibited against them, increased their exertions

with true metropolitan zeal in the capture and massacre of the unhappy victims of the civic authorities. Feelings warmed against the innovation; the press was excited upon the subject, and the public mind became violently agitated, as the pitiless law threatened the interest of every one who possessed a dog.

At this time, when the minds of the inhabitants were in a ferment upon the dog difficulty, it happened that our friend the butcher had been engaged in the purchase of cattle some few miles distant from the city, and was returning on horseback through San Francisco upon a fine afternoon, when the rumbling of wheels upon the ill-paved street announced the approach of a vehicle from an adjoining thoroughfare. The horse that drew the van was a broken-kneed creature, who slowly trotted along with a dispirited air, as though oppressed with a guilty conscience; the driver was a policeman, while upon the afterpart of the cage-like van another policeman acted as conductor. Both these officials were keeping a vigilant look-out upon either side, and along the street, for any stray dog that might be wandering about in happy independence and ignorance of municipal regulations—perhaps inwardly congratulating itself upon its extreme good fortune in belonging to a country where all were equals, and where liberty of speech and action would permit it to bark, or to bite both dogs and humans, with that true freedom which is the great blessing of American institutions.

At this moment a peculiar hesitation in the movement of the horse, accompanied by a corresponding

but cautious excitement in the driver, attracted the butcher's attention; and as the van halted about fifty yards in front, the conductor was seen to alight, and to disappear in a neighbouring street, armed with a peculiar arrangement of a wire noose at the extremity of a pole. The butcher reined up his horse and waited for the result. In less than a minute the conductor reappeared, dragging with him a struggling dog that he had dexterously captured. Resistance was useless; the iron caged door being opened, the victim was disengaged from the noose, and thrust into the barred van among about twenty equally unfortunate captives that were on the road to execution.

"Well, that's a cruel law!" ejaculated the butcher, who, having watched the proceeding with extreme interest, had set his horse in motion with an instinctive wish to examine the van more closely. "That's what I call a cruelty to the dog and a robbery upon his owner; and that's what these new-fangled reforms call justice! Why, they'll be trying their hand at Bummer next; but they won't catch him so easily, I know. He's not such a fool as to trust a policeman within reach of his neck. They may get hold of Lazarus, though; for he's a confiding sort of a creature, and is a real simpleton if Bummer isn't close alongside of him. But—confound it!" exclaimed the butcher suddenly, as a new idea seized him—"suppose they do catch Lazarus first? why, Bummer wouldn't leave him; that he wouldn't. He'd fight for him, I'd bet my last dollar. And then—why, they'd be sure to catch Bummer!"

As this horrible thought suggested itself to the butcher, the approaching van drew near, and in a slow jog-trot passed by. He had ample time to survey the numerous occupants, who, unconscious of their fate, were anxiously peering through the open bars of the travelling cage; while others were lying upon the floor among the crowd of their fellows, all strangers to each other, and as devoid of sympathy as would be an average crowd of human beings, or passengers upon their first arrival on board a ship.

A peculiar sharp and loud bark from this unhappy load of dogs startled the butcher. There was a quick succession of barks as two noses were thrust between the bars in joyful recognition. The butcher turned deadly pale. "Bummer, by God!—Lazarus! Stop!—pull up! D'ye hear? Pull up that darned broken-kneed old corpse. Let my dogs out! You've got hold of Bummer and Lazarus; let 'em out, I tell you!" roared the butcher in intense excitement.

With true official calmness the driver cast a contemptuous glance at the butcher, and, giving a smart lash to his insulted horse, he endeavoured to increase his pace. This was too much to be endured; and the butcher, springing from his saddle, at once ran to the horse's head and seized the bridle, checking the animal by a violent thrust, and at the same time calling upon the driver to stop. The only reply was a sharp cut with the whip across the butcher's face, which was rapidly repeated in successive lashes, each adding to the rage of the exasperated assailant.

The butcher was a powerful man, and, heedless of the onslaught of the driver, he threw his whole

weight and strength against the bit, thus forcing the horse backward, and at the same time twisting it round, he drove the van bodily upon the footway and smashed the conductor through a shop window, amidst a loud crash of glass. There the van remained fixed and helpless, the broken-kneed horse having slipped upon the pavement and fallen upon its side. The butcher had used his opportunity, and, quickly relinquishing his hold, had stormed the van by mounting upon the driving seat, where he had collared the driver with both hands, and, forcing him backwards, he roared out lustily to the rapidly-assembling crowd—"They've got Bummer and Lazarus!—Bummer and Lazarus! Smash the darned van! Let the dogs out!"

The crowd instantly comprehended the situation. Everybody knew Bummer and Lazarus. The names of the dogs were quickly repeated, and a general attack was made upon the van. In the meanwhile the two objects of the disturbance had kept up an uninterrupted barking, which had excited the numerous captives to a similar chorus. The van having been backed against the shop window it became impossible to open the door; therefore, in spite of the tumult and the efforts of the mob to liberate the dogs, no means of exit existed so long as the bars resisted. The conductor had escaped into the shop through the broken window; and the proprietor, who sympathised with the crowd, presently emerged from his door with the much-needed assistance in the form of a large axe and an iron bar. Cheers were at once raised by the excited populace, and the implements

were seized upon, and the van attacked with such determination that in a few minutes the side was completely torn out. The astonished dogs, which shared the enthusiasm of the moment, leaped to the ground, and more than one, carried away by warlike zeal, fixed their teeth in the legs of the struggling liberators.

The mob was not easily satisfied, and, as the assault was heightened by the successful smashing and crashing of the vehicle under the heavy blows of the axe, wielded by successive men as their arms grew weary, they were determined to destroy it utterly, and thus at once to get rid of a municipal abomination.

The butcher had punched the head of the driver his assailant, to his entire satisfaction; and, as Bummer and Lazarus leaped about his person in their intense joy at deliverance, he wisely quitted the scene of riot; and, accompanied by his dogs, remounted his horse (which had, with true Californian docility, remained standing on the opposite pavement), and rode quietly homeward.

This stirring incident in the career of the two dogs created a considerable interest in the press of San Francisco, and Bummer and Lazarus from that moment became recognised objects of respect and sympathy among all classes of the population. The triumphant butcher proudly recounted the history of the dogs to such strangers who upon arrival at San Francisco, made personal inquiries, and many visitors declared that their history should be written by some

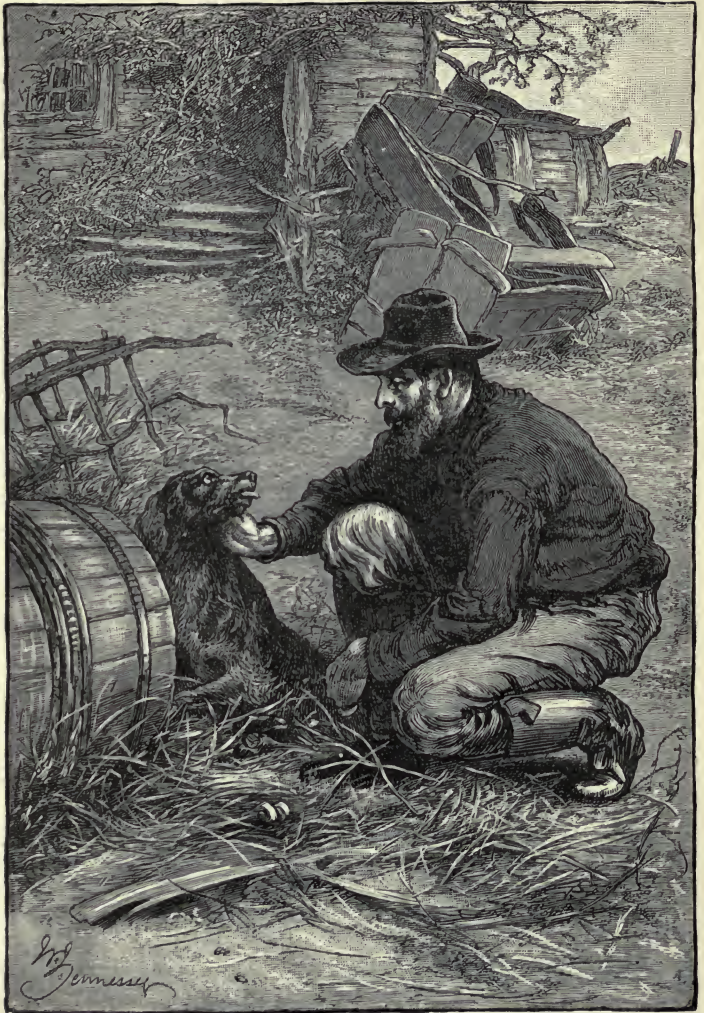
able hand, to combine the story with the early days of the rising city.
. . . Years passed away, and the inseparable friends continued their fraternal affection unbroken. Bummer was growing gray about the head, but he was otherwise active and strong. Lazarus, on the other hand, although the younger, had always exhibited a delicacy of constitution, and for some time past his appetite had failed, and his once sleek coat had stared, while his ribs could be plainly counted by the eye. He appeared together with Bummer every morning, but, instead of wandering and strolling as formerly about the street, he lay for hours asleep at the butcher's door ; his eyes grew dim and sunken. The dog was ill ; but nevertheless he continued to accompany his friend Bummer to and fro, returning at evening to some distant sleeping-place, well known to the butcher, although the changes in the town had driven the dogs from their old resting-place.

One morning when the shop was opened the dogs were missing. In vain the butcher called their names and whistled ; there was no answering bark, neither could a dog be seen.

Leaving his wife and a lad to attend the business of his shop, the butcher started off in great perplexity towards the distant spot which the dogs occupied at night, according to their strange natures of independence.

He reached the place where he had for some time past provided a large empty cask with a plentiful supply of straw for his two vagabonds. Bummer was sitting outside the cask, apparently watching the





WHAT'S THE MATTER, OLD BOY?'—p. 31.

sleeping dog within, when the butcher arrived, and patted him. "What's the matter, old boy?" asked his master, as he stroked his neck; "what's the matter with Lazarus? very bad, I'm afraid. Here, Lazarus, my boy; get up, old fellow!" said the butcher coaxingly, as he reached his hand into the cask, and would have assisted the dog to rise; but he drew his hand back quickly—the body was cold and hard—Lazarus was dead!

Some weeks had elapsed since the loss of Bummer's companion; the butcher had endeavoured to entice his dog away from his old sleeping-place, and had arranged a cask with clean straw in his own backyard; but, in spite of this attraction and every kindness which the good-hearted man exhibited to his favourite, Bummer refused his comfortable lodging, and retired to his accustomed spot. Upon several occasions he was seen to carry a piece of meat in his mouth when he left the shop at the approach of evening; the butcher, upon visiting the dog's resting-place, had found the meat untouched on the following morning; and it seemed as though it had been intended for the sick friend Lazarus, who had been thus fed in early days.

Bummer refused his food. The dog was restless; and, instead of remaining close by the butcher's shop, he wandered about the streets, searching for something lost, which his mind could scarcely understand. Sometimes he would start from his post near the shop door and run quickly across the street to

examine some strange passing dog that somewhat resembled Lazarus, and he would return despondingly upon discovering the hopeless reality.

The dog grew lean and gray; his ribs looked like a frame within his skin. Bummer was broken-hearted; he grew weak and ill, and the butcher saw that his much-loved dog was pining away for his lost friend.

. . . It was a bright morning in the autumn, and the sun had not long risen, when a man could be seen upon the sandy waste upon the outskirts of San Francisco, working hard as though digging up potatoes. There was no one near, but a package resembling a sack lay upon the ground. There was a small mound close to the spot, and within three feet of this raised landmark the labourer was at work.

In about a quarter of an hour he had dug a hole. He then carefully raised the package from the ground and placed it within. He arranged some straw gently upon the bundle, and after a moment of hesitation he proceeded to refill the hole with earth, and formed a mound similar to that which already marked the neighbouring spot. He then rested from his work; with a desperate plunge dashed his spade into the sandy ground, and, burying his face in his rough hands, he burst into tears. The butcher had buried his dog Bummer by the side of his poor acquaintance Lazarus.



THE CRUISE OF THE WHALER *SOPHIA*.

CHAPTER I.

A GREAT change has occurred during the last half century in the rapid strides of science, which have reformed and improved not only our means of locomotion but also the various methods of illumination in our domestic arrangements.

Our lamps are now trimmed with Alexandra oil, with duplex burners emitting the light of twenty or thirty candles, while gas is in general use throughout our passages. These will probably be eclipsed within the next few years by the improvement in the electric light, which will supersede our present burners precisely as we have improved and discarded the fashions of fifty years gone by.

In the early portion of the present century our lamps were trimmed with whale oil. Candles were composed of tallow for ordinary use, and snuffers were required to clip from time to time the club-headed wicks which became carbonised as they burned low, causing endless trouble. The best candles were termed wax, and an improvement was effected in plaiting the wicks, which obviated the necessity of snuffing.

Spermaceti was largely used in the manufacture of very beautiful semi-transparent candles, which were exceedingly expensive.

The whale oil was commonly called "train oil," and emitted a disgusting smell, if the lamp from faulty trimming flickered and smoked. Wealthy persons would not permit such inferior oil within their rooms, but made use of that from the sperm whale, which had a greater brilliancy, and was free from the offensive odour. Sperm oil was also extensively used for lubricating machinery, but in 1825 the price was nine shillings per gallon, more than double the cost of the best colza oil in 1882.

The great demand for whale oil and spermaceti was accompanied by the extensive use of whalebone at a time when the manufacture of steel was a tedious and expensive process. Women's stays, which are now partially supported by steel ribs, were formerly entirely dependent upon strips of whalebone. Umbrellas were invariably composed of whalebone ribs until steel was substituted. As every woman must wear stays, and every person must possess an umbrella, the quantity of whalebone required in these manufactures was enormous.

The unchanging demand for the products of the whale had necessitated a well-organised system of fishing, or rather marine hunting, as the whale cannot properly be termed a fish, and the sailors engaged in this pursuit were exceedingly hardy and dexterous in capturing such monsters by the simple method of harpooning.

It must not be supposed that the various pro-

ducts of the whale were to be found combined in one species. The whale is represented by numerous varieties inhabiting separate portions of the oceans, and exhibiting special characteristics.

The sperm whale possesses a sharp row of large teeth in the lower jaw only, the upper being unarmed, and is a distinct species from that which produces whalebone. This animal or marine mammal attains a length exceeding eighty feet, and its shape is entirely different from all other varieties. The head, terminating almost at a right angle from the snout, is immensely thick, and is about one-third the length of the whole body. The fat or blubber, from which the oil is procured by the process of boiling, is a layer of several inches thick just below the skin, and a full-sized whale will produce thirty or forty barrels; some of the bulls have been known to yield eighty barrels.

The spermaceti is a peculiar substance which is situated in a cavity within the head of the sperm whale; this is oily, but of a thick semi-fluid nature until the death of the whale, when it quickly granulates with exposure. A large whale will produce about one ton of spermaceti.

Whales of all varieties exhibit the same natural affinity by producing a single offspring at a birth. Twins are almost more uncommon than among human beings. The mother evinces strong affection for her young, which is suckled by two mammæ. These teats are situated in different positions in the very numerous varieties of cetacea; in the sperm whale they are near the tail.

The fluke or tail of the whale is horizontal instead of being vertical like those of fishes, and the action is directly up and down. A blow directed against a boat from below will throw it with the crew completely out of the water. This accident is to be guarded against when approaching a whale upon the surface.

It has been scientifically determined by Professor Tyndall that the sensor and motor nerves will convey a message to and from the brain at the speed of seventy feet per second. If a whale were eighty feet in length, and a harpoon was fixed somewhere near the tail, a second of time would elapse before the sensor nerves could transmit the message to the brain; another second would be occupied by the motor nerves in conveying the instinctive order from the brain to start the tail into spasmodic action; thus two seconds would be in favour of the boat's crew when backing their oars to escape at the instant of throwing the harpoon. As the average of whales would be about thirty-five or forty feet, we may admit that one second would be the usual advantage for the boat, equal to a distance of about eight or ten feet.

The blow-hole of the sperm whale is upon the upper extremity of the snout. This peculiar arrangement of nature allows the whale to fish by swimming open-mouthed, and when it closes the enormous jaws after a satisfactory haul, it compresses the water within its mouth, and drives it with great force through the nasal aperture.

As the whale is a mammal and not a fish, the

breathing arrangement is peculiar. The sperm whale requires air periodically to fill the lungs, and cannot remain below the surface for a longer interval than about one hour and ten minutes. It then arrives at the surface, and blows off the stale air which it had inhaled as a supply of oxygen for the lungs previous to descending into the depths. This process is peculiar, as it continues steadily for a space of about three minutes, during which a jet is thrown to many feet elevation, as though steam were blown off from a valve. This is the result of the compressed air expelled through the blow-hole mingled with aqueous particles.

From the mast-head of a vessel such a jet of spray can be discerned in calm and clear weather from a distance of five or six miles, and the position of the whale is easily discovered. When engaged in this operation the sperm whale can be approached without difficulty, as it appears unsuspecting of danger. The instant that it has expelled the air, it remains upon the surface for ten or twelve minutes, having refilled the lungs by an effort of inspiration, which does not occupy more than two or three seconds; it is then prepared for another plunge beneath the surface. The sperm whale is gregarious, and when in large shoals will frequently divert itself by plunging and then reappearing upon the surface with such rapidity as to leap its entire length from the water, falling back upon its side with a prodigious splash.

Although the gullet of most varieties of whales is so exceedingly small as to prevent the swallowing of any fish larger than mackerel, that of the sperm

whale is sufficiently large to admit the body of a man. The arrangement of teeth is such as to suggest a different food from the whalebone whale, which subsists chiefly upon jelly-fish, cuttle-fish, and other marine productions of a similar delicate structure. The usual speed of this species is from five or six miles an hour, to ten if wounded or excited.

The whalebone whales *par excellence* are the black-whale (*Balæna Mysticetus*) and razor-back (*B. Physalis*), which are found in various portions of the globe, and grow to an immense size, eighty and even eighty-five feet in extreme length being the proportions of the full-grown bulls.

The whalebone is a peculiar substance that combines the texture of horn with that of agglutinated hair or bristle. This flexible material is arranged in plates of about one foot in depth, and from seven to eleven feet in length, set edgeways transversely upon the roof of the mouth or palate to the number of about 600, *i.e.* 300 upon either side the longitudinal cavity which covers the tongue; the long bristly fringe upon the outer edge forms a strainer which captures the molluscs and cuttle-fish, etc., that are entangled in the mouth as in a trawl-net; they are retained by the whalebone arrangement, while the water that has entered together with the living creatures is expelled from the mouth by blowing.

The blow-hole of this species is situated on the top of the head instead of being placed upon the snout as in the sperm whale. The absence of teeth is a proof that this species trusts mainly to chance in fishing operations, as it advances open-mouthed

through shoals of small fry and medusæ, which are separated from the water by the whalebone strainer.

The roof of the mouth is divided into two longitudinal compartments by a passage which permits the expansion or contraction of the whalebone plates upon either side. These vary in number according to the species of whale, but are generally estimated at about two tons weight in a full-grown specimen. The value of whalebone was from £200 to £300 per ton in 1830, therefore the capture of a large whale was of some importance.

Whales are so immensely superior in size to any terrestrial animals, that stories have been circulated with gross exaggerations, as sailors have allowed their imaginations to magnify the real size of many which they have seen, but have not captured. Skeletons exist in various museums from seventy to seventy-five feet in length; these would have been perhaps ten feet longer from snout to tip of tail when alive, and there can be little doubt that larger creatures exist in the ocean than any specimens that have been brought to Europe. At the same time it must be accepted that the continual hunting for whales has diminished their numbers considerably, and those seas which fifty years ago abounded with these cetacea are now, if not absolutely barren, but seldom frequented by either whales or their hunters.

When we consider the vast magnitude and strength of whales, it appears almost impossible that so huge a monster can be killed by man with comparative ease by the simple harpoon and lance. It must, however, be remembered that the whale is a warm-

blooded animal, and that when struck by the harpoon it dives instantaneously to a profound depth, at which Professor Owen describes the action thus: "The non-valvular structure of the veins in the cetacea, and the pressure of the sea-water at the depths to which they retreat when harpooned, explain the profuse and deadly hemorrhage which follows a wound, which in other mammalia would be by no means fatal."

The celebrated physiologist John Hunter describes the heart and the aorta of the spermaceti whale to be prodigious, the aorta measuring a foot in diameter. He continues, "When we consider these as applied to the circulation, and figure to ourselves that probably ten or fifteen gallons of blood are thrown out at one stroke, and moved with immense velocity through a tube of a foot diameter, the whole idea fills the mind with wonder."

The eyes of whales are protected by movable lids; their sense of hearing is sufficiently acute although the orifice is exceedingly small, and there is little difference from that of quadrupeds in the internal structure.

This short outline of the salient points of the whale will be a sufficient introduction to the story in which we shall be now interested, as it will have explained the peculiarities of the creature which tempted the adventurous daring of the sailor to its capture. An average whale, either rorqual or razor-back, would produce about forty barrels of oil and one ton of whalebone, while a sperm whale would yield the same quantity of oil and about fifteen hundred pounds of spermaceti. The largest-sized

whales of either species would nearly double these quantities.

I have already stated that at the early portion of the present century the whale was invariably harpooned by hand, and when exhausted it was killed by the lance. Latterly the system of attack was improved, and the harpoon was fired from a gun specially arranged for the purpose. This method secured the boat's crew from the usual danger, as the shot was fired from a distance of about thirty or forty yards, which allowed both space and time for escape.

Of late years a further improvement has been effected, and the whale has been shot with an explosive shell charged with strychnine or with cyanide of potassium. This fatal poison was a destructive method of hunting which robbed the chase of all glory and excitement.

The Japanese are, I believe, the only people who use nets in the capture of whales. At a certain season the north coasts of Japan are much frequented by cetacea, and the inhabitants of the coast are well prepared for the arrival of shoals within sight of their shores. Boats are specially arranged for this purpose, and are provided with long and deep nets, the meshes of which are about three feet square. A complete organisation exists, and every boat is assigned a certain duty in the hunt. When the whales are first observed from the land, a number of boats push off and form a line according to circumstances, with the intention of driving the shoal into the shallows towards the shore. Should they succeed

in frightening the whales and thus driving them into a bay, or among islands or reefs, the nets are fastened together to the length required, and are dropped into the pass through which the whales are expected to escape. The boats then form line behind the whales, and drive them at their best speed through the pre-arranged narrows. When a whale strikes a net, it drives all before it, and quickly buries itself in hopeless entanglement; it then commences rolling in vain endeavours to escape, which only increase the difficulty, as the huge creature forms a wrapper around its carcase which renders it absolutely helpless. The active Japanese are expert hunters, and should a whale be once within their nets it is quickly attacked with harpoons and spears, and rapidly despatched.





CHAPTER II.

IN the year 1828 the winter was excessively severe. It was in the cold month of January upon a boisterous night that a huge fire of pine logs was blazing in a large hall within a comfortable mansion in Middlesex. This hall was the centre of an Elizabethan house which belonged to a rich London merchant, one of a class who represented in those days the commercial importance of Great Britain. At the commencement of this century London was not only the centre of commerce as it is at the present time, but the London merchant was well known throughout the world for his strict integrity of character. The manufactures of England were celebrated for their great strength and durability, and the fact declared in any foreign market that the goods were English was sufficient to ensure consideration and respect.

At the date of this story England was a slave-owner. The West Indies were in a prosperous condition, as the estates producing sugar, coffee, spice, etc., were cultivated by slave labour, which had originally been imported from the West Coast of Africa. It appears strange to us in 1882 that our grandfathers were proprietors of slaves that were

bought and sold like cattle, as we have completely reformed our views of humanity during the last half century ; but without any other blemish than slave-holding, the character of a West India proprietor was in all respects as humane as that of an average gentleman of modern times.

The owner of the residence, who now sat before the cheerful fire in the large hall, was the proprietor of vast estates in Jamaica ; he was at the same time a West India merchant, and large shipowner. His numerous vessels were chiefly employed in transporting to England the sugar, rum, coffee, pimento, etc., from the various estates belonging to himself, in addition to the produce of other properties which was consigned to his London firm. Harvey, Graham, and Company were among the leading merchants of the city of London, and Mr. Harvey was now warming himself before the fire sitting in a large arm-chair, his feet stretched out and resting upon the massive fender, while he apparently gazed into the bright blaze, watching the countless sparks which flew from the crackling logs as they shot upwards into the dark chimney.

Beyond the light of the large fire there was none, as the candles had not yet been lit ; but the glare of the pine roots illumined the hall sufficiently to afford a tolerable view of the scene. It was a lofty apartment : an old oak mantelpiece, richly carved and of very massive proportions, extended to the ceiling, the numerous shelves being covered with specimens of Oriental china ; the walls were ornamented with family portraits of the last century, tapestry panels,

and well-arranged groups of arms, both European and Indian. Old Venetian mirrors brightened the walls in several places, and relieved the heavy effect of curious lacquer cabinets furnished with rare specimens of Oriental workmanship, which would have awakened the cupidity of professional collectors.

Mr. Harvey poked the fire, and, with that peculiar love of arrangement that every one exhibits in his own home, he took each burning log by the tongs and piled the crackling mass together, producing flames and sparks that yielded an exhibition of miniature fireworks, which delighted a boy of seven years old, who, sprawling upon the thick hearthrug, had been endeavouring to read a book of large type illustrated with coloured engravings.

"You had better ring for candles, Arthur," said the father, "or you will spoil your eyes by the fire-light. What book are you reading so attentively?"

"All about whales," replied the boy, whose large blue eyes glistened with enthusiasm; "and we've just harpooned one. He has this moment dived, and he's running out the line at a tremendous rate! he'll come to the surface presently, and then we'll pull after him; but I can't see to read further, I wish they'd bring the lights! This is such a good book, father, and the story is told so that you can actually see everything as though you were there yourself."

"Well," replied his father, "you will be able to talk to Captain Hunter when he comes to-night; now that you have read something about the whale-fishing you will enjoy his stories, as you will understand them."

The lights appeared. A corpulent butler, who had been in the family many years, brought in a tall globe lamp and lighted a number of candles that were in their usual positions in the hall. The sudden illumination exhibited the rich but tasteful character of the furniture and the various details of the paintings upon the walls, more especially two large pictures of naval victories gained over the French by the father of Mr. Harvey, who had been an admiral in the Royal Navy. Mr. Harvey was the younger son of a large family, most of whom had distinguished themselves in various professions ; but, as fortune had smiled upon his industrious career, he at the comparatively early age of forty had amassed great wealth, and was one of the leading merchants of London.

There was nothing at Oakleigh that was ostentatious, although everything connected with the establishment represented wealth and luxury. The house was in excellent taste throughout—the library well furnished, while the grand old oaks in the park were known in the reign of Elizabeth as forest monarchs of no mean reputation.

The servant had scarcely quitted the hall when the sound of a carriage was heard in the approach, and was almost immediately followed by the loud ring of the front-door bell.

“ Captain Hunter is there, father ! ” exclaimed the excited boy, who hurriedly closed his book ; “ at least I hope he is come,” and without waiting he ran to the window, and endeavoured to satisfy his curiosity by peering into the darkness : this was doubly mysti-

fied by the steam of the horses which deadened the light of the carriage lamps.

The door was quickly opened, and a tall figure entered, muffled in a great fur cloak of foreign make.

Mr. Harvey had risen from his chair and advanced to meet him with much cordiality, but the more than ordinary respectful demeanour of the new arrival exhibited a deference which contrasted with the frank and genial manner of the host.

"Now, Arthur, take Captain Hunter's travelling-cap," said the father. A servant had already assisted in unfastening the heavy cloak, and in a few seconds Captain Hunter stood before the fire warming his chilled limbs after a long journey upon the outside of a stage-coach upon a snowy day. In those days railways did not exist, and people thought little of discomforts to which all classes were subjected alike.

The boy instinctively opened his book which he had been reading with so much interest, and, turning to the illustration of a whale, he applied to the new authority immediately. "Will you please tell me whether this picture is correct, and if you think the stories in this book are true?"

With an amused expression, Captain Hunter sat down by his side and glanced at the title of the work.

"Don't trouble our friend the moment he has arrived," said the father. "You must excuse him, Captain Hunter, as he has whale upon the brain at the present moment, and he will give you no rest. Arthur," continued Mr. Harvey, "go and tell your

mother that we should be glad to see her before we dress for dinner, if she is disengaged."

The boy started without a moment's delay.

"Mr. Harvey," exclaimed the guest as the door closed upon the enthusiastic lad, "you will have to make a sailor of him some day, and he will keep up the family reputation in the navy."

"He is a good boy," replied the gratified father, "but perhaps a little too impulsive. He has heard me speak of our projected whaling scheme, and he has at once entered into the project with the feelings of a man; his mother bought him that volume upon whale fishing, and you will have enough of him before his bed-time, as he will bore you terribly with all sorts of questions."

"It is a pity he is not ten years older," said the Captain, "you might have trusted him with me, sir, for a cruise in the *Sophia*; it would have done more than a couple of years book-study to make a sailor of him."

"Ha! that is out of the question," said Mr. Harvey; "but you will have my nephew with you, and I have strong hopes of his success in life; he is a fine character, and as strong as a young lion; he was seventeen last birthday, and his whole heart is devoted to the sea. . . . Tell me how the ship is progressing with the outfit? are the new topmasts up?"

"Topmasts are up, all standing rigging taut, and the ship can be ready for sea within a week, excepting the stores and whaling outfit," replied the Captain.

"Good," said his employer, "you have pushed the

work forward very rapidly, and we must now hurry on the completion of stores, etc. Where is Captain Bunce, and how is he behaving?"

"If he continues when at sea as steady as he now is on shore, we shall have no difficulty, sir. I hear that he has abandoned liquor entirely; if so, he is invaluable as a whaler, as no one knows the seasons or localities for the sperm whale fishing so well as Bunce. If he gives up drink, he will make a fortune for the ship this voyage, but I am always doubtful concerning the reformation of a drunkard; the change for the better is seldom permanent."

"I am afraid not," replied Mr. Harvey, "but at any rate we must hope for the best while we take precautions against the worst that can befall us. Bunce will be nominally the captain of the *Sophia*, as he is so experienced a whaler, but you will represent the firm, and you will be furnished with the necessary authority to interfere and to supersede him in the command of the vessel, should any misconduct be exhibited. Your position will be clearly defined beforehand, and shall be explained to Bunce in your presence. You will act as supercargo on board until some untoward circumstance may compel you to assume the command. I trust this may not be necessary."

At this moment the conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Harvey together with her son and a very lovely daughter, who appeared to be a few years older. She was a handsome and stately woman of about thirty-five, with a dignified but amiable expression.

Upon an introduction to Captain Hunter, she asked the usual questions concerning the inclement weather which must have added to the fatigue of his journey, and she quickly turned the conversation to the topic which would be most interesting to her guest. "My son has, I am afraid, been troubling you rather unceremoniously for information before you had time even to warm yourself after your cold drive. I am afraid we must make up our minds that he is to become a sailor, but as they are always welcomed throughout the world, their lot is scarcely to be pitied. You are to sail this month, Captain Hunter, I understand ; this will be a sad parting for Mrs. Hunter."

"Indeed, madam, it will be a trial for us both ; a sailor's home knows more sorrow than joy, and I believe we are wrong to marry. When absent we are worried by anxiety, and when we return it is only to part again. I must be contented with the *Sophia*."

"I am *Sophia*," replied Mrs. Harvey, laughing ; "the vessel was named after me ; I shall therefore hold you responsible for good management. Formerly she was a French corvette called the *Coquette*, we have changed her name to one more respectable."

"She is a fine craft, and I shall be proud to command her ; she had a great reputation for speed when in the French navy, and had she not grounded upon a sandbank when chased by an English frigate she would never have changed her name. She is as strong as oak and copper can make her, and if we

succeed in filling her with oil, she will bring home a fortune."

At this moment the half-hour bell warned the small party that the dinner-hour was approaching, and Mr. Harvey, leading the way, piloted his guest through the central hall, up the broad staircase and along the gallery, from which the rooms opened upon either side. "The blue room is prepared for you. I don't know your political views ; the election is just over, and, as we are Conservatives, we shall convert you if Liberal by associating you with our own colours."

"I am not much of a politician, Mr. Harvey, except when on board my ship ; I understand the ship's politics. A good man to command, a steady man at the helm, and a crew that know their duty and obey. It appears to me that, after all, you can't much improve that simple form of government."

"Very true, my friend ; but your good captain and helmsman are not a representative government ; yours is a mild form of despotism well suited for the sea and for half-civilised communities. I should almost enjoy a despotic government myself on the condition that I was the despot. We are tolerable disciplinarians even here under our own roof. The bell rings at seven for dinner punctually, and we meet in the hall when alone. You and I will talk about the future over a bottle of good old port when the ladies retire."

The dinner party was small ; Mrs. Harvey, a very agreeable lady who was governess to the little

girl, and the sea captain, were the only persons excepting the host.

That evening's conversation perfected all the necessary arrangements for the *Sophia's* approaching voyage.





CHAPTER III.

A MONTH had elapsed since the evening at Oakleigh, where Captain Hunter had received detailed instructions from his employer, and a vast amount of work had been accomplished. The *Sophia* was ready for sea.

This vessel was a beautiful model, and about seven hundred tons measurement. She had been recently purchased from the Government, as the navy had been reduced, and no expense had been spared by Messrs. Harvey, Graham, and Company in fitting her for the intended voyage to the South Seas. Her masts and yards had been shortened to enable a smaller crew than the full complement of the Royal Navy to handle her sails, and her rigging had generally been reduced in due proportion to a size that was well adapted for a long cruise, where repairs in case of accidents would be difficult.

The outfit of a whaler was very costly, as the vessel was supposed to be supplied for three years, or even longer. The *Sophia* was armed with six guns, long twelve-pounders, in addition to the small arms necessary for her numerous crew ; this was a precaution against attacks from the savage islanders

of the South Sea groups, by whom several vessels had been treacherously overpowered, and their crews not only massacred, but eaten by the cannibals. A very large supply of ammunition was on board, also water, which in those days was stowed in casks instead of the iron tanks of modern times. Rum was an important item, and was taken in large quantities, as it was a useful medium of barter, in addition to the requirements of the crew. Spare sets of sails, ample stores of the best rope, canvas, spars in case of accidents to topgallant-masts, studding-sail booms, royals, etc., planks, nails, pitch, paints, oils, turpentine, oakum, copper sheets, spun-yarn, anchors of all sizes, and the multitudinous articles that are necessary to the outfit of a ship. In addition to the usual list of ship's stores were the special fittings of a whaler. These were upon a large and costly scale, comprising copper boilers for reducing the blubber to oil, a number of whale-boats, a good supply of harpoons, lines, lances, and all the various appliances for the fishery; lastly, a perfect cargo of staves and iron hoops all ready in bundles, to be set up as barrels when required for oil. The cooper was an important person on a whaler.

Captain Bunce was a good specimen of a whaling captain. He was a first-rate seaman, and understood the fishery of the South Seas thoroughly; he was a short, thick-set man with red hair, and when sober he was a good-natured but exceedingly rough fellow; unfortunately he was addicted to drink, and when drunk he exhibited a savage disposition. Upon several occasions he had nearly killed those who

were under his command, and once he narrowly escaped a conviction for manslaughter. It appears strange that a man in Mr. Harvey's position should not have declined the services of such a person ; but Captain Bunce had reformed, and for some time had been a total abstainer. His reputation as a whaling captain was so well established that a vessel was considered to be certain of a full cargo of oil provided he was in command ; therefore it was natural that his employers should regard his past conduct with leniency. The *Sophia* was a much larger ship than those usually employed in the trade, and her expenses of outfit and prospect of returns were in due proportion to her tonnage ; an experienced whaling captain was therefore prized, and the owners could not be too particular concerning an unblemished character.

It had therefore been duly explained to Captain Bunce that his command would depend upon his behaviour, and that Captain Hunter would represent the owners of the vessel, but would not interfere with the management, unless he should consider the conduct of Bunce to be such as required his suspension from duty. In such a case, full powers had been vested in Hunter to supersede him, and to act as he might think proper.

This was an awkward position for both parties, but it could not be avoided. Bunce was too valuable to be lost, and Hunter was so respectable and excellent a captain, that under the new arrangement the ship would be perfectly safe : a voyage of three years included many risks, but, with good manage-

ment and moderate luck, the *Sophia* was expected to realise a considerable fortune.

The day before sailing was one of quiet after the bustle of the last few weeks. The ship in perfect order, with a picked crew of seventy men, had left the docks, and had dropped down to Gravesend with the tide, where she lay until her captain should come aboard with the necessary clearance from the Custom House and the ship's papers.

Captain Hunter had taken leave of Mr. Harvey and his partners, and had hastened to his little house on the outskirts of Greenwich to take a sad and long parting from his much-loved wife and the little infant of only a few months old. "We shall not know each other when I return," he sorrowfully said, as he kissed the child's forehead, while he held it gently in his strong arms. . . . Mrs. Hunter was a handsome woman of about twenty-five. Her large black eyes were filled with tears as she gazed at the white face of a loudly-ticking clock, whose pendulum swung to and fro with the calm unfeeling regularity which neither joy nor misery would disturb. The wife took the child from her husband's arms, and laid it sleeping in the cradle; the next instant she threw her arms around his neck and sobbed bitterly; he pressed her to his heart, kissed her convulsively as his tears fell upon her uplifted face, and tenderly disengaging himself from her grasp, he muttered, "God bless you, darling," and rushed from his loved home.

A boat was pulling swiftly with the strong ebb tide, and a muffled figure in the stern turned and



SHE FLUNG HER ARMS AROUND HIS NECK AND SOBBED BITTERLY.—p. 56.

looked back anxiously towards an ivy-covered cottage on the outskirts of the town ; suddenly he snatched a large red silk handkerchief from the pocket of his greatcoat and waved it wildly above his head. There was a speck of waving white which moved from the upper window of the green-faced cottage : it was the last signal of good-bye from his wife. The boat rowed on.

Parting is always a sad hour ; but the one left behind must bear the greater share of sorrow, as she feels the blank of solitude, while the man, although for the moment overpowered, can quickly find relief in the active change of scene around him. Thus Captain Hunter, after ten minutes' silence, gave the necessary orders to the rowers, and consigned his handkerchief to the depths of his coat pocket. His heart was nevertheless heavy, and he tried not to think of wife and home, but endeavoured to distract his thoughts by talking to his men, and asking questions upon many topics connected with the ship.

The weather was lovely and the wind fair. The *Sophia* was anchored off Gravesend, and as she came in view, our friend Hunter observed her with admiration. She was in perfect trim, her yards were exactly squared, and she looked every inch a man-of-war. The blue Peter was flying at the mast-head.

In a few minutes they were alongside. Captain Hunter ran up the rope ladder and was quickly on deck ; the boat in a short time was hoisted up and secured upon the davits. Captain Bunce was aboard ; the ship's clearance all in order ; and nothing re-

mained but to weigh anchor and make sail with a fair wind and favourable tide.

A handsome lad of about eighteen stepped forward, and was warmly greeted by Captain Hunter. "Your kit all safely stowed, Dick?" asked the captain.

"Yes, sir, thank you; I went on board while in the docks; there was much to do, and I thought I might as well be here as on shore."

"That's right, my lad, never leave anything till the last minute, and then most likely forget it. . . . We have lovely weather for a start. . . . Has the crew been mustered?—are all hands on board?"

"I believe your boat was the last, sir. I heard the Captain say that we were only waiting for Captain Hunter."

A slight blush tinged the bronzed features of Hunter, and his compressed lip implied that Captain Bunce might have spared such a remark; on the other hand, Bunce had imagined that Captain Hunter purposely delayed his arrival on board in order to exhibit the importance of his position.

"Well, on board at last, Hunter!" exclaimed Captain Bunce as they met upon the poop. "We have been ready to weigh anchor this half hour, the cable's shortened and we can heave away at once."

"Heave away, then; send down all strangers into their boats and make them cast off or we shall find half a dozen stowaways when we get to sea."

The boatswain's whistle piped the shrill command, the trampling of many feet sounded upon deck as the crew manned the windlass, and the

merry clicking of the pawls in rapid time soon showed that the anchor was tripped and coming home. The numerous provision boats, and such as contained friends of the officers and crew, dropped astern, and no one was left on board the *Sophia* except her complement, and the pilot who would take her to the Downs.

Sail was made without any hitch ; and as the new canvas spread to the smart breeze, the beautiful vessel rippled through the water, and with the strong ebb-tide the *Sophia* hurried down the Thames. The copper shone bright, as the vessel, answering to a puff of wind, heeled slightly upon her port-side ; a point was rounded, and the width of the river being increased more sail was added, and she scudded along with topgallant-sails set, the foam dashing from her bows in creamy waves. . . . "Hurrah !" shouted a crowd of holiday-makers upon the deck of a Margate steamer which was returning toward Gravesend, and passed by the beautiful ship within fifty yards to windward ; "Hurrah !" they repeated in chorus as the two vessels shot by each other, and the *Sophia* excited their admiration and delight. . . . They little knew the destiny of that noble ship ; that her keel would never cleave the water of the Thames again !
. . . Nothing of consequence occurred during the passage through the Downs. The pilot had been dropped ; and a strong breeze and moderate sea enabled the *Sophia* to make a quick run down channel until the Start light was passed, and last of all the Lizard. The course was now altered,

and the vessel's head bore direct for the island of Madeira.

A trading vessel is never in perfect order until she has been two or three days at sea. The *Sophia* was now at her best, the decks were as clean as sand and holy-stones could make them, and all brass-work from binnacle to belaying-pins was as bright as gold.

The run to Madeira was made with exceptional rapidity, and having anchored for a couple of days to take in fresh provisions and to fill up water-casks, the vessel once more weighed anchor and continued on her voyage to the Cape of Good Hope.

Having sighted the Cape de Verd Islands, she bore away to the south-west and quickly entered the trade-winds. Nothing can be more delightful than sailing in those unchanging currents, where there is no risk of storms, but throughout night and day the wind appears to exert the same pressure upon the canvas. Every sail was set, and the *Sophia* scudded over the blue sea like a white swan; the lower studding-sail booms now and then dipped the surface of the waves as the vessel heeled to the port-side and coquetted with their frothy crests, broken by the surge of her bows in ploughing through the water.

Good luck attended the voyage; kind hearts must have offered up prayers at home "for those who travel on the sea," for no ship could have had better fortune: not a single hour of bad weather since she left the Thames! On she flew, as though the ocean was her playground, and when the line

was crossed, she slipped along with a light breeze without encountering the delaying calms which so frequently distress the sailor. . . . At length the balmy air of the tropics gave place to stronger wind from the west, the sea increased, and as the vessel drew rapidly towards the south the climate became colder. The studding-sails had been taken in, and the royals had disappeared; the ship now sailed under topgallant-sails; but these were reefed.

Latitude 40° south was reached, and the ship's course had been changed to due east. She had now entered the strong westerly gales which blow continually in the southern hemisphere.

The *Sophia* had quitted the luxurious ocean where the trade-winds scarcely ruffled the waves, and a cloudless sky reflected a sapphire blue upon the surface. She was now running before a strong gale with double-reefed foretopsail, and rolling to an extent that made it almost impossible to stand on deck without holding on to a rope or pin. Nevertheless, the wind being dead astern, the good ship flew before it at the rate of thirteen knots, and rushed through the enormous waves which seemed to follow her as though determined upon destruction. Sometimes a perfect mountain of water would overtake the vessel, and its angry crest would curl like a threatening avalanche far above the taffrail as the ship's stern had sunk into the hollow of the last wave; it appeared certain that the overwhelming mass must burst upon the poop and sweep everything before it, but the good ship rose like a duck upon the surface, while the monstrous wave, balked

of its prey, roared forward, breaking into a surf like the river below Niagara.

The mighty albatross skimmed the billows with widespread wings, sometimes touching the foaming wake with its beak, as it picked up some morsel of refuse thrown from the ship. These wonderful birds appear to float upon the air, hardly flapping their wings, which by a sail-like movement of trimming to the wind carry them apparently without exertion. The large brown gull or "Cape hen" of sailor's nomenclature, and the speckled gull of the southern hemisphere, were the constant companions of the albatross, and accompanied the ship in her stormy course, sometimes hovering exactly overhead, almost touching the spanker boom, at other times skimming around the vessel as though she were at anchor, then dropping suddenly into the sea astern to snatch some of the steward's sweepings, or the butcher's offal, that had been thrown overboard.

In this wild latitude the *Sophia* made rapid easting, but in a most uncomfortable manner. The decks were never dry. The rolling was so incessant that the cook could not produce a decent dinner. At last the ship reached east longitude 15° , and the course was changed to north-east toward Cape Town or Table Bay. The wind was upon her quarter, and although she laboured heavily in the rough sea and occasionally shipped green water, she bowled along at a great speed.

At length the sea abated. There was a dense fog. The deep-sea lead was got ready, as the ship luffed up to the wind preparatory to taking soundings.

The night was dark, and the captain lay the ship to until morning. The dawn showed a gray mist which enveloped the ocean. The sea was smooth, and the wind light.

The sun rose and shone red through the white fog; but as the brilliant orb ascended, the mist became thinner, and like fine gauze it appeared to roll upward in thick folds. The surface of the sea was already clear, when the fog bank having lifted to the masthead, suddenly dispersed, and the vessel emerged as from a curtain into pure and unclouded atmosphere. A beautiful picture was disclosed. Table Mountain rose before them as clearly defined as though the sharp outlines had been cut by a knife; the table-top was covered with the thin coating of dense white mist that is locally known as "the table-cloth." The Lion's rump showed itself distinctly in the form which originally suggested the name, and the distant mountains in continuous ranges exhibited every shade of purple, blue, and gray. The order was at once given, sails trimmed, and the *Sophia*, with a light but favourable breeze, sailed along the waters of Table Bay. She shortly dropped her anchor opposite Cape Town; forty-eight days from the Downs.

As land had not been sighted for the last five weeks, all eyes were gladdened by the striking landscape. In those days Cape Town was of considerable importance, although very inferior to its present size. A long street, well paved and of ample width, was faced by a canal fringed by a row of trees. A good hotel—the George—opposite the canal, and a continuation of well-built houses and merchants'

offices, gave an appearance of solidity to this portion of the town. The lofty mountain rose to a height of 5000 feet exactly at the back of the settlement, and from the sea its face appeared to be quite perpendicular. The bay was alive with fishing-boats and vessels of all descriptions. An English man-of-war lay at anchor, and several large Indiamen belonging to the East India Company; one of which, deeply laden with a rich cargo of tea and silk from China, was about to weigh anchor on her return voyage.

The *Sophia*, having anchored within half a mile of the shore, was quickly surrounded with boats and their clamorous native crews, some of whom offered vegetables, others fish and the various productions of the place for sale. All these natives wore enormous hats of about twenty-six inches diameter, which gave them the appearance of gigantic mushrooms. One boat was full of large crayfish, which were to be found in great quantities within the bay, and could be purchased at a very low price compared to that of England. Ostrich feathers, cured skins of animals, weapons of native tribes, whips of hippopotamus hide, and a variety of curiosities, were brought on board by an energetic dealer, and the sailors quickly discovered an opportunity for wasting money.

Shortly after the anchor was dropped, the quarantine officer's boat was seen approaching, accompanied by the agent of Harvey, Graham, and Company, who had made out the signal of the *Sophia*. A clean bill of health having been declared, Captain Hunter, accompanied by Captain Bunce, went ashore together with the agent of the London firm.

Cape Town was well known to both these officers; it was the usual resort of whalers, and they now hoped to obtain information concerning the presence of whales about the Agulhas bank, from vessels which had been fishing in that direction.

The day was occupied in business. The *Sophia* had brought a small amount of cargo to be delivered at Cape Town; this would require two or three days to discharge, and the ship would probably remain a week before she sailed upon her fishing voyage.

The two captains divided the work, Hunter occupied himself with the business transactions, while Bunce devoted his inquiries to the whereabouts of whales, and collected the necessary information from vessels which, engaged in the fishery, were now anchored in the harbour.

The young lad who was accosted as "Dick" at the commencement of the voyage from Gravesend, was a nephew of Mrs. Harvey's, Richard Downe, who had been apprenticed to a vessel in the East India trade, and at the expiration of his term had now been appointed third mate of the *Sophia*, with the intention that he should gain experience in the whale fishery and ultimately take the command of one of Harvey and Graham's vessels. In those days every merchant ship was compelled by law to take a certain number of apprentices in proportion to her tonnage, who were to be instructed in seamanship by the captain. It is to be regretted that such a law no longer exists, as it resulted in the production of a fine body of seamen who had been thoroughly trained in their duties from an early age. Mr. Harvey was an emi-

nently practical man, and, although such an apprenticeship was unusual for the sons of gentlemen, he wished that his nephew should become a thorough sailor, and commence with the hardships that attend a service "before the mast." Richard Downe, or "Dick," had passed through this rough ordeal, and at the age of eighteen was equal to most sailors of five-and-twenty ; he was of medium height, powerful, and active. Notwithstanding the rude associations of the fore-castle, he was devoid of all coarseness of manner and had remained a gentleman, hard-handed certainly, but otherwise his exterior would not have denoted the rough life of the past three years.

As Dick was a genial character and full of daring, he was a general favourite both with officers and crew ; he was withal so steady and attentive to his duties that he was especially regarded by Captain Hunter, who had promised his employer to keep an eye upon him.

On the day before the departure of the *Sophia* from Cape Town, all the work of the ship having been concluded, leave was granted to a certain number of the officers and men to go ashore. Captain Bunce had been in high spirits during his short stay at the Cape, as he had met some old friends in the whaling trade, to whom he had confided the great change that had taken place in his own habits, as he had discovered that water, and such mild infusions as tea and coffee, were far more beneficial than stronger drinks. He had endeavoured to make converts of his old acquaintances, and had actually attended a teetotal meeting in the town. In public Bunce was

a total abstainer, but in private he never drank tea without a strong admixture of rum.

The morning previous to the day fixed for the departure, Captain Bunce, with some chosen friends, started for Constantia in a light waggon and four horses, and drove about fourteen miles to the vineyard of a well-known wine-grower. It was a sandy road through low scrub, at the base of an abrupt range of hills upon the right. The day was hot and the dust intolerable. The party arrived thirsty.

It was the custom in those days to entertain strangers with much hospitality should they make excursions from Cape Town, and Bunce and his friends having driven up to a large house in the centre of well-kept grounds, were immediately invited by the Dutch proprietor to stay for luncheon, and to visit the cellars where the celebrated Constantia wine was stored.

The change to a cool cellar from the burning sun and dust was most agreeable, and, as an exception to his rule, Captain Bunce was obliged to taste the various wines that were produced upon the estate of his host. There was Constantia fifty years old, but still sweet and heady. A white wine, known as "Cape sherry," was also tasted; but an immense butt of champagne was declared by the visitors to be superior to any wine they had hitherto seen, and they lingered a considerable time in the neighbourhood of the mighty cask, drinking repeated glasses of the sparkling tempter.

A fine quality of cognac was distilled from this wine, known as "champagne brandy," and it was

necessary to test the flavour before quitting the subterranean vault for the luncheon which had been prepared in a broad verandah above.

Bunce and his friends having washed their faces and got rid of the dust upon their clothes, were delighted to find that the ladies of the house intended to be present, and in a short time they were seated at the table with the host, his wife, and two grown-up daughters.

The lunch was excellent, the wine cool, and the party in high spirits ; in fact, it was the brightest day that they had enjoyed since leaving England. Bunce had already fallen in love with the eldest daughter, and after luncheon he resolved to express his affection, but unfortunately his speech was thick, and the young lady, whose knowledge of English was limited, could not understand his meaning, and thought that he wished his waggon to be brought round. The family were well accustomed to similar visits from ship captains and their passengers, whose eccentricities were pardoned as they frequently gave orders for casks of wine, which increased the profits of the estate.

The waggon was announced. It was four o'clock, and they would have a cool drive to Cape Town.

The party took an affectionate farewell of their host and his family, and were profuse in their expressions of gratitude, declaring their intention of coming again upon their next visit to South Africa. Captain Bunce had determined to kiss the young lady's hand, which he tenderly grasped as he said good-bye, but as she withdrew it quickly, he kissed

his own knuckles instead without having discovered his loss, and was assisted by his friends to mount the waggon, upon which he announced his intention of driving.

In plain English, the party were all excessively drunk, including the half-caste driver, who had been regaling himself with the servants.

Captain Bunce endeavoured to crack the long whip as preliminary to starting, but cut one of his friends across the face and entangled the lash in the wheel just as the horses galloped forward. The whip was quickly twisted out of his hand, his hat was lost, and the team with their heads towards home dashed off at full speed. . . .

Early on the following morning a party of discomfited excursionists walked into Cape Town to the George Hotel. Captain Bunce had a black eye and was much scratched, and every face bore traces of rough treatment. They had come into collision with an ox-waggon while at full speed on the previous evening, their vehicle was upset, and fortunately the sandy nature of the soil had saved them from broken bones. The horses had kicked themselves free from harness and had galloped off somewhere, but they could not be found. Bunce and his friends had been too drunk to follow them, but in a vain attempt had lost themselves in the jungle; they could not recollect any incident beyond the upset, as they had fallen asleep upon the ground, where they passed the night until near sunrise.

Hunter and all officers and crew were on board, and the *Sophia* ready to weigh anchor, when Captain

Bunce appeared in a most unsatisfactory condition. The ship made sail.

Information had been obtained from a South Sea whaler that she had filled up with oil by a successful fishery on the Agulhas bank, and the *Sophia* was accordingly bound for the reported fishing grounds.

Nothing of importance occurred during the first few days, but the experience of a week at Cape Town had evidently changed the demeanour of Captain Bunce, who had become by turns excitable and morose. There was no doubt that having once broken down the hypocritical pretence of abstention, he had returned to his original habit of spirit-drinking, which Captain Hunter had observed with considerable anxiety.

The *Sophia* had been favoured with fair wind and weather and was cruising about a hundred miles east of Cape Agulhas. For the first time during her voyage from England she was looking out for whales and was fully prepared for fishing. It was customary for whalers to be manned with an additional number compared with the usual complement of trading-vessels, and a ship of 350 or 400 tons would be furnished with a crew of fifty men. The *Sophia*, being much larger than the average, had seventy men ; these were divided into three watches, containing a complete proportion of harpooners, boat-steerers, etc., and the nine whale-boats were apportioned to separate crews, who were responsible for their good condition. Each boat was provided with six whale lines of 120 fathoms, which, when joined together, would equal 1452 yards, or more than

three-quarters of a mile in length. Also a number of harpoons, lances, spare oars, in addition to the usual equipment of flags for signalling, and axes to cut the line in case of entanglement. One of the dangers of the whale fishery is the risk of such an accident, by which many lives have been lost. When a whale is struck, it at once dives to an immense depth, and runs out the line of the harpoon at the rate of nine or ten miles an hour; this is arranged to run over the bow of the boat to avoid the chance of a capsize, and a man stands by with a sharp axe to cut the line instantly should it foul or catch any portion of the boat, which would in that case be dragged beneath the surface. Captain Scoresby relates a sad fatality that befell one of his crew during a hunt for whales. He writes: "As soon as the missing boats came within hail, my anxiety induced me to call out and inquire what had happened. 'A bad misfortune indeed,' replied the officer commanding the first boat. '*We have lost Carr!*' . . . This awful intelligence, for which we were altogether unprepared, shocked me exceedingly; and it was sometime before I was able to inquire into the particulars of the accident which had deprived us of one of our shipmates. As far as could be collected from the confused accounts of the crew of the boat of which he went out in charge, the circumstances were as follows:—The two boats that had been so long absent had on the outset separated from their companions; and allured by the chase of a whale and the fineness of the weather, they proceeded until they were far out of sight of the ship.

The whale they pursued led them into a vast shoal of the species: they were indeed so numerous that their 'blowing' was incessant; and they believed they could not have seen less than a hundred.

"Fearful of alarming them without striking any, they remained for some time motionless, waiting for a favourable opportunity to commence an attack.

"One of them at length arose so near the boat of which William Carr was harpooner that he ventured to pull towards it, though it was meeting him, and afforded but an indifferent chance of success. He, however, fatally for himself, succeeded in harpooning it. The boat and fish passing each other with great rapidity after the stroke, the line was jerked out of its place, and instead of 'running' over the stem, was thrown over the gunwale; its pressure in this unfavourable position so careened the boat that the side sank below the water and it began to fill. In this emergency the harpooner, who was a fine active fellow, seized the bight of the line and attempted to relieve the boat by restoring it to its place, but by some singular circumstance which could not be accounted for a turn of the line flew over his arm, in an instant dragging him overboard and plunged him under water, to rise no more.

"So sudden was the accident that only one man, who had his eye upon him at the time, was aware of what had happened; so that when the boat righted, which it immediately did, though half full of water, they all at once, on looking round at an exclamation from the man who had seen him launched overboard, inquired what had got Carr? It is scarcely possible

to imagine a death more awfully sudden and unexpected.

“The velocity of the whale on its first descent is usually (as I have proved by experiment) about eight or nine miles per hour or 13 to 15 feet per second. Now, as this unfortunate man was occupied in adjusting the line at the very water’s edge, when it must have been perfectly tight in consequence of the obstruction to its running out of the boat, the interval between the fastening of the line about him and his disappearance could not have exceeded the third part of a second of time; for in one second only he must have been dragged to the depth of ten or twelve feet! The accident, indeed, was so instantaneous that he had not time for the least exclamation; and the person who witnessed his extraordinary removal observed that it was so exceedingly quick that although his eye was upon him at the instant, he could scarcely distinguish the object as it disappeared.

“As soon as the boat’s crew recovered from their consternation they applied themselves to the needful attention which the lines required. From the accompanying boat, on the rising of the fish to the surface, a second harpoon was struck, and some lances applied; but the melancholy event that had occurred had cast such a damp upon all the men employed in this business that they became timid, cautious, and inactive in their subsequent duties. The whale, when nearly exhausted, was in consequence of this allowed to remain for some minutes unmolested on the water, until, having recovered some degree of

energy, it made a violent effort and disengaged itself from both of the harpoons.

“Our exertions thus proved altogether fruitless, and were attended with serious loss. . . . Some near approaches were made by our different harpooners and one of the fish was struck, but after withdrawing about 300 fathoms of line, the harpoon retracted, and the prey escaped. We still kept the boats upon the watch ; and towards evening another whale was harpooned in a manner that proved effectual. It took 960 fathoms of line from the ‘fast-boat,’ and was re-struck and killed after an interval of about three hours. It proved a valuable prize, being estimated to yield at least twenty tons of oil and a ton weight of whalebone. The longest lamina of whalebone measured eleven feet three inches.”

It was not long before the *Sophia* entered upon her promised hunting-grounds. During a calm night the sound of “blowing” had been heard in various directions, and at sunrise upon the following morning the ship found herself in water of a light-green colour which suggested shallows. The deep-sea lead was at once hove, and the soundings gave a depth of 670 fathoms.

The peculiar colour of the sea was occasioned by the presence of innumerable living organisms which form the favourite food for whales, and there could be no doubt of their presence as their repeated blowings had been heard during the night.

The boats’ crews were in readiness, and a bright look-out was kept from the mast-head. Suddenly

the joyful cry of "A fall! a fall!" directed the attention of all hands to a jet of steam about a mile distant upon the starboard bow; this was quickly followed by several other jets in various positions, and from the continuous issue of watery vapour without a break there was no doubt of the character of the species—it was a large shoal of sperm-whales.

Six boats were lowered without a moment's delay, and hardly had the last boat pushed off from the ship's side when an enormous head protruded from the water, almost touching the copper below the quarter, and blew a dense mass of watery spray high in air, which fell upon the poop-deck. The next instant the whale, which must have mistaken the bottom of the vessel for one of its own species, inverted itself suddenly and dived perpendicularly, its enormous tail flourishing in the air as it descended. This was a startling challenge to the boats that had only just been launched in pursuit, and for about a minute the crews rested upon their oars and anxiously watched the surface. They had not to wait long before one of those peculiar scenes was presented which, although perhaps of frequent occurrence in the gambols of the sperm-whale, are seldom witnessed by human beings. The sea was in good order for whale-fishing, as the surface, without being calm, was unbroken by the crests of waves, therefore any disturbance upon the water could be immediately detected. Without any previous warning, except the sudden appearance of the whale's head just described, an immense sperm-whale shot upwards from the sur-

face with an extraordinary velocity, which carried it high into the air, so that the tail appeared to be quite ten or twelve feet clear of the water. This was within 300 yards of the vessel, and from the great size of the monster, the distance was apparently less than this computation. So great was the exertion, and so unwieldy was the carcass when in mid-air, that the whale had no power to turn head foremost in its descent, but fell flat upon its side upon the smooth surface of the water, raising an extraordinary commotion, and creating a splash that might have been heard at the distance of a couple of miles.¹

The crews of the *Sophia's* boats were experienced whale-fishers ; otherwise they might have been somewhat daunted by the lively demonstrations that had just been exhibited. It was impossible to determine whether the whale that had just leaped like a salmon from the water was the same creature that had suddenly emerged from under the ship's bottom ; perhaps it was startled at the unexpected appearance of the vessel, and may have reappeared in a spasmodic gambol.

The boats did not wait long to consider, but pulled off at a steady stroke towards a continuous puff of steam about half a mile distant, while the ship backed her fore-topsail and waited for the event.

Young Richard Downe was inexperienced in whale-fishing although an excellent sailor ; he had therefore

¹ This I myself saw when on board the ship *Larking* off Cape Agulhas in 1844.

obtained permission to assist as an extra hand in one of the boats now leading the attack. As the sea was favourable and the wind light, the boats rose and fell to the long swell, and made rapid way toward the blowing whale.

They had not proceeded far, however, when another jet of spray shot up from the surface about a quarter of a mile upon their left, and three boats went off in that direction, thus equally dividing the flotilla. Whales were in great numbers, and it was impossible to know when or in what direction they might suddenly appear.

In a short time the leading boat was within a hundred yards of the whale, which, having ceased blowing, was floating with a small portion of its back above the surface, apparently unconscious of the approach of an enemy. The swell was sufficient to conceal both the approaching boat and the whale alternately, thus rendering the conditions of attack most favourable. The crew, at a signal from the steersman, rowed cautiously, and just dipped their oars noiselessly in the water.

The harpooner stood up in the bow and slowly raised his arm. He was a powerful man with broad muscular shoulders, and his uplifted hand grasped the harpoon firmly and prepared for a deadly cast.

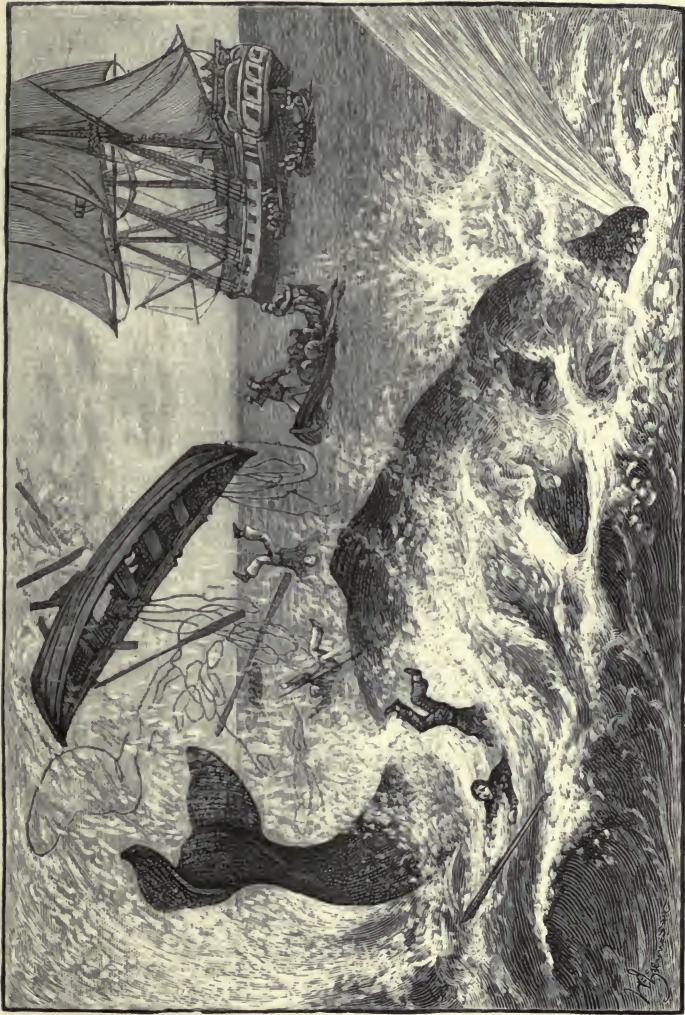
The boat was now within fifteen yards of the whale's back; it was evidently one of the largest size. One steady, long, but quiet stroke had given the boat sufficient momentum to complete the approach, and she glided noiselessly but swiftly through the water, while the crew rested on their oars ready

to back water immediately upon the order being given, when the harpooner should have delivered his harpoon.

Every breath was held ; the whale's back was not more than ten feet distant, when the weapon flew from the harpooner's hand just as the whale, having discerned the enemy, gave a convulsive plunge downwards.

"Back water, all!" shouted the steersman, but hardly had the oars obeyed the command, when a tremendous blow from the whale's tail struck it from beneath, and the next instant the boat with its entire crew was dashed completely out of the water and fell half inverted, split from end to end ; while oars, lines, harpoons, lances, and all the numerous appliances were scattered here and there, together with the men, some of whom were swimming, while others clung for safety to their oars. Young Richard Downe was a good swimmer, and he had caught a sinking sailor by the hair, to whom he gave an oar for support, until the nearest boat, which was almost immediately at the spot, came to the rescue.

The third boat had lost no time in pulling with all the might of her powerful and excited crew in the direction which it was supposed the whale had taken, while the boat which had picked up the disabled crew immediately hoisted the flag as a signal that a whale was "fast." The addition of eight men hampered the action of the boat, but some sat down in the bottom, while others assisted at the oars as they best could, and endeavoured to save all the floating *débris* of their damaged boat, which was bottom



NEXT INSTANT THE BOAT WITH ITS ENTIRE CREW WAS DASHED COMPLETELY OUT OF THE WATER.—p. 73.

H. B. Swain

uppermost. This was quickly effected, and they were considering whether they should right the inverted boat and take it in tow, or whether they should join in the pursuit with the advanced boats, and afterwards return to save their wreck, when it suddenly disappeared with a jerk, and was seen no more!

The whale had been travelling during the last few minutes at a furious rate, and the line, which had remained within the boat, had run out to a great length until it became entangled in the thwart; the boat was at once dragged beneath the surface. This was a satisfactory proof that the harpoon was holding fast, and accordingly the double crew of the boat exerted every effort to continue the chase.

The leading boat was now a quarter of a mile ahead, and it was expected that the whale would quickly reappear, as the resistance of the water to the sunken boat that was now dragging would cause great exhaustion.

Upon looking toward the advanced boat they perceived an alteration in its course, and almost immediately after they observed the spouting of a whale upon the right, toward which the boat was steering. The accident having been descried from the *Sophia*, another boat had been immediately lowered, which was hurrying to their assistance.

The chase was now at its height, and the excitement was intense. It was impossible for the boat with fifteen men to arrive in time to assist in striking the whale, toward which the advanced boat was hurrying, but they might still be of service. In the meantime the leading boat had arrived within har-

pooning distance ; presently her flag was hoisted, which announced a successful cast ; the whale had once more dived, having two harpoons fixed.

The direction of the whale was uncertain, as it had plumbed the instant that it had received the last harpoon. The "fast-boat" accordingly waited in the hope of descrying that peculiar oily streak upon the surface which denotes the track of a whale, resembling the wake of a vessel in calm weather.

In the meantime the crowded boat's crew were pulling hard to close with their more fortunate companions. Suddenly they observed the wreck of their own boat floating at a couple of hundred yards' distance ; steering towards it, they shortly arrived, and felt beneath it with a boat-hook to discover whether the line was still fast, or had become detached. . . . The line was there ; but it was supposed that either the harpoon had retracted, or that the whale had in some manner broken loose. The experienced harpooner at once made fast another line before he cut the entangled end adrift from the wrecked boat. Fortunately he had taken this precaution, for almost at the same moment the line became tight, and commenced running out at the rate of about six miles an hour. There was no longer any doubt that the whale was still fast, but its first impulsive rush had been expended, and it was now travelling at a slower rate. They signalled to the other boat, which immediately pulled towards them, and shortly arrived within speaking distance. The whale was plumbing steadily into a profound depth. A third line was made fast, and the enormous creature seemed to sink

like a leaden plummet, as though determined upon reaching the deepest bottom of the ocean.

By this time the extra boat had arrived from the *Sophia*, and the crew were ordered to pull far ahead in a direction where it was expected that the whale might emerge when it should once more be forced to seek the surface. The line ceased to run, and for a few minutes an inexperienced person would have imagined that nothing alive could be attached. Presently it again moved, but slowly, and at a distance of about half a mile a long greasy lane or track was plainly discernible. Upon this track the foremost boat was pulling at best speed, the harpooner standing in the bow in expectation of a rise. At once the "fast-boats" began to coil in slack line as they pulled towards the leading boat.

A jet of spray suddenly burst from the sea only a few yards ahead; almost at the same instant the harpoon was dexterously thrown, and once more the whale was struck and forced to dive before it had inhaled a sufficient volume of fresh air.

The boats now closed together and followed cautiously in the direction which the whale had taken. The line was run out to its extreme length, and another had been added; this also was insufficient, and a third had been made fast, when, after about twenty minutes' interval, the whale rose once more upon the surface and emitted a long jet of spray tinged with blood.

The boats now shot swiftly forward, the men straining every nerve in the exciting race, as the whale was evidently exhausted, and they hoped to

arrive sufficiently near to attack it with the lances. The boat that had been despatched from the *Sophia* was the first to reach the spot, but just as the harpooner prepared to deliver his cast, the whale once more headed downward, and the broad fluked tail dashed the water into the air and descended upon the surface with a smack that narrowly missed the boat, which had fortunately backed water and escaped by only a few feet. The sea around was tinged with blood, and the bleeding would be increased at the depth to which the whale had plumbed, owing to the greater pressure of the water.

The exhausted creature did not appear to be travelling forward, but had merely dived vertically to an enormous depth as though seeking for safety below from its enemies upon the surface. Upward of 400 fathoms of line were hanging almost perpendicularly as though the deep-sea lead was suspended at the bottom. . . . Half an hour had passed, and no movement had been perceptible in the lines, which were now hauled taut, as it was supposed that the whale had died in the profound depth to which it had retreated.

The crews of each boat hauled away upon the lines until the bows of their boats dipped low upon the water, but no movement responded to the strain, and it seemed as though they were fast to a mass of rock. Suddenly the lines slackened at the same moment, and in a few minutes an immense whale emerged from the sea about two hundred yards in advance ; after blowing the usual jet of spray, it commenced the most violent lashings with the tail, driving

the water into foam, and creating a series of loud reports that could be heard at a great distance. The boats now pushed ahead and quickly reached the whale, which still convulsively thrashed the water in a manner that rendered an approach exceedingly dangerous. Another harpoon was thrown, and embedded its barbed head more than a foot deep in the yielding blubber, but this time the exhausted monster remained upon the surface instead of taking the usual plunge. The boats now attacked upon either side, and, keeping just behind the head, and well forward of the dangerous tail, which was spasmodically thrashing the water into breaking waves, the crew drove their long lances deep into the vitals of the vanquished sperm, and repeated their thrusts until the action of the tail became fainter by degrees. At length all was still; the whale was dead.

The *Sophia* was observed to be bearing down toward the spot under easy sail. In the meantime the boats were engaged in making a rope fast just above the tail in order to secure their prize to the vessel upon her arrival.

It was a splendid specimen of a bull sperm-whale, measuring about seventy-two feet in length, and the hunt had lasted upward of four hours from the time when the first harpoon was fixed until the death.

The boats, having made fast, now formed a line, and towed the floating carcass toward the approaching vessel, which shortly bore up to the wind and hove-to. The operation of "flensing" or cutting off the blubber was immediately commenced when the

whale had been secured alongside ; at the same time an aperture was made in the head, and the spermaceti was scooped out and hoisted up the ship's side in buckets, to the amount of rather more than a ton. This was carefully stowed in barrels. A sperm-whale exhibits a peculiar appearance when dead, as the huge head seems disproportioned to the body, of which it forms a third part of the total length. This whale was in excellent condition, and was covered with blubber or fat beneath the skin to a depth of about nine inches. Although the operation of stripping the blubber or "flensing" would appear laborious, it was rapidly effected by peculiar sharp instruments specially constructed for the purpose. The fat, together with the skin, was cut into long strips like flitches of bacon, these were whipped up and deposited upon the deck. As this was the first whale of the voyage, and a good specimen, the jaw-bones were carefully extracted and hoisted on board to be presented upon the return home as an archway for a summer-house in Mr. Harvey's garden.

For several days the *Sophia's* decks were in a greasy state, as all hands were employed in cutting the blubber into small pieces to boil down for oil—of which nearly thirty tons were secured and safely stowed at the bottom of the hold.

A whale of this size would weigh about 110 tons. Captain Scoresby in 1822 computed the weight of whales with great accuracy by measurement of their cubic contents. The specific gravity of a whale is almost exactly that of water, as the carcass immediately after death floats upon a level with the surface ;

it is therefore a simple calculation of the measurement of water displaced, which is equal to the weight of the whale. The value of the day's capture would be about £800, and it was to be regretted that the same good fortune had not attended the other division of boats which had harpooned two fish and lost them both, together with several lines. One of these fish had plumbed to such an enormous depth that the length of line was expended, the other had escaped owing to the retraction of the harpoon.

It is by no means uncommon for a large whale to plunge headlong into a prodigious depth where the weight of the water would be too great for the strength of any other creature. As the specific gravity of the whale is the same as water, it can readily be understood that the powerful tail, being fixed horizontally, would enable a descent or ascent extremely rapid. Captain Scoresby calculated that whales of large size frequently descended to depths where the pressure of water would equal the weight of 200,000 tons. He adds, "It may assist our comprehension of the enormous load that the whale endures when it descends to a depth of 800 fathoms, which it is often known to do, to be informed that the pressure of water at this depth on the body of a whale must sometimes exceed the weight of sixty of the largest ships of the British navy. . . This pressure is sufficient to force the water through the pores of the hardest wood; yet it is effectually resisted by the skin of the whale though it is remarkably soft and flexible."

A few days after this capture, the *Sophia* was

cruising within seventy or eighty miles of the spot where the large shoal had been discovered, in the hope of again meeting the whales which had apparently been scared by those which had escaped wounded. The weather was exceedingly favourable, as the sea was sufficiently broken to render the approach of a boat possible without being observed until it should be close to the whale; at the same time it was not absolutely rough. . . . Toward midday the sun became exceedingly hot and a haze covered the surface of the ocean, which, although dense to the view of those on deck, was not a thicker stratum than about thirty feet, and could be looked down upon by the man at the mast-head, who at that height remained in a perfectly clear atmosphere. The ship was under easy canvas, and was making a little above six knots, when the sound of "blowing" was distinctly heard at no great distance, and was reported by the look-out to arise in several directions. This was most tantalising. As it was impossible to distinguish any object beyond a hundred yards from the vessel, she was accordingly brought head to wind, and topsails laid aback, in order to keep in a convenient position should the fog suddenly clear. In the meantime the boats were prepared so as to be ready for immediate action should the fog disperse.

The atmospherical changes are extremely interesting at sea when a cross current of air interferes to dispel a surface fog. The mist, which had settled upon the ocean like a snowy cloud, gradually resolved itself into curling masses, which rolled forward in heaps of vapour, and, ascending rapidly in wreaths,

vanished into thin air and disappeared entirely from the neighbourhood of the vessel, although fog-banks equally dense could be perceived a few miles distant. There is a strange feeling of relief when bright sunlight and blue sky have suddenly dispelled a heavy fog. The ship now lay upon a clear surface, and at the command of the captain, six boats were at once lowered with their crews complete to be in readiness for the appearance of a whale.

They had not long to wait before a cry from the mast-head directed their attention to two jets of spray rising steadily in the west about a mile distant ; all the boats immediately dashed forward.

Young Richard Downe steered the leading boat, closely followed by the remaining five, as it was arranged that they should keep together until they should be tolerably sure of the number and positions of the whales. This was a necessary precaution, as they had not rowed more than half a mile from the ship when they were startled by the sudden appearance of a monstrous head, which immediately emitted a long blast of spray within a few yards of the line of boats. With great dexterity a harpoon was thrown and the whale fixed just as it had commenced its downward movement at the unexpected sight of the boats' crews. The flag was at once hoisted from the fast-boat, and two others pulled forward at their best stroke in the direction which the whale was supposed to have taken.

In the meantime the remaining boats directed their course toward the whales which had been first observed. These were lying upon the surface with

a portion of their backs exposed. The weather was exceedingly favourable, and the boats approached so close that both whales were successfully harpooned ; thus three flags were flying from the six boats, and two whales were running line from a division of only three. The two flags being observed from those three boats which were pursuing the first whale, no time was lost in despatching one to their assistance, and the hunt was reinforced—thus dividing the chase into four boats with two whales fast, and two others that were following the whale first harpooned.

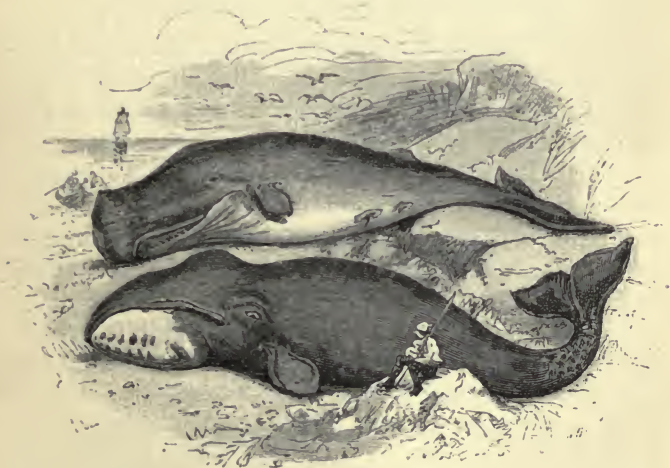
After a hunt of about three hours both whales were killed by the four boats, and the *Sophia* bore down to within easy distance. The two boats had followed the first whale, and had fixed a second harpoon, as both flags could be discerned ; but they were about three miles distant from the ship, and the whale was still running.

Two more boats had been lowered from the vessel, and all assisted to tow the captured whales alongside, where they were hardly secured when the fog, which had hung upon the surface about the horizon, once more rolled forward and completely enveloped the *Sophia*.

All hands were quickly at work, as the two dead whales were fifty or sixty feet in length and afforded occupation for the remainder of the day ; but the absence of the two boats with the third whale at a great distance from the ship caused considerable anxiety during so dense a fog. A gun was fired from the *Sophia* to give them the direction.

The fog had settled heavily upon the sea, and

although it did not interfere with the operations of flensing the whales and securing their spermaceti, there was an extreme danger of the missing boats mistaking the direction of the ship, especially if they determined to stick to their whale instead of returning toward the signals of the guns, which had been firing at regular intervals of fifteen minutes. The boatswain's whistle had been constantly sounded; the ship's bell had been tolled; and as hour after hour passed by without any sign of the boats, the anxiety became alarming. This increased at the approach of night. The fog still remained thick, and the wind fell to a dead calm.





CHAPTER IV.

THE morning broke thick and hazy after a night of dead calm and fog, during which the *Sophia* had fired guns and sent up rockets as signals, that might perhaps be distinguished should the missing boats be somewhere beyond the influence of the mist. The whole of that day passed away in vain hope. Another night arrived. The sails were wet with clammy vapour, and, in the absence of wind, they lay heavily against the masts. The greatest anxiety prevailed among the officers and crew, as it was known that the boats were without provisions, excepting a small keg of water and supplies for one meal.

Toward midnight the fog diminished in density, and a breeze springing up from the north quickly cheered the desponding crew by the sight of the moon, which rapidly grew brighter, until in a few hours the stars shone clearly, and the fog had entirely disappeared. Blue lights were burned at the mast-head the instant that the weather permitted, and the guns were continued at intervals.

The sun rose bright, and a gentle breeze, which hardly ruffled the blue ocean, swelled the sails. The *Sophia* was steered upon a course that would follow

the direction in which the missing boats had been last seen, but the uncertainty of the ship's position, owing to the influence of currents during the long interval of calm, would make that direction doubtful. An anxious look-out from the mast-head for some hours could discover no trace of the lost boats; the sea was spotless—not a broken crest distinguished any superior wave, but the surface was a boundless plain of tranquil blue, over which the vessel glided at the rate of about six knots an hour.

It was noon, when a sudden cry from the mast-head, "A boat ahead on the lee bow!" brought all hands on deck in eager expectation. Men ran up the rigging to confirm the glad report, and an object was descried upon the horizon that certainly resembled a small boat. For this hopeful sign the *Sophia* was steered, while the two captains earnestly examined the object with their telescopes. Captain Hunter had gone aloft, and after a few minutes he shouted to the officers on the poop deck, "It's not a boat, but I think it's a dead whale, as I can make out a flight of gulls above it." . . . The hearts of the crew that were so lately elated sank at the disappointing news. The breeze had slightly increased, and the *Sophia* hurried towards the uncertain spot, which grew larger every minute.

There was no longer any doubt. A number of birds could be seen hovering above the object, and as the ship approached it was decided, that a dead whale floating high above the surface was the tempting attraction.

In half an hour the vessel ran alongside, and

made fast to an immense sperm-whale. Boats were at once lowered, and it was quickly discovered that three harpoons were deeply fixed in the body, and a great but unknown length of line attached to each was hanging in the depths below.

This was a serious illustration of the event. The whale must have run for a great distance, and have been followed by the boats most determinedly, until they became lost in the fog. It had then become necessary to cut the lines in order to return to the *Sophia*, but the boats had failed to discover her position. The mystery was thus painfully explained.

The gas generated had inflated the whale's carcass to an extent that enabled it to float about four feet above the surface. It was still fresh, and would produce an amount of oil and spermaceti to the value of at least £800. It was considered that the only chance of finding the missing boats would depend upon the *Sophia* remaining with the whale, as it was probable that the crews would not have rowed far in any one direction, but would endeavour to keep as near as possible to the spot where they had been last seen by their vessel.

The whale was accordingly flensed, and the spermaceti collected in the usual manner; the deck was piled with blubber, a quantity of which was cut small and prepared for boiling. Signal guns were again fired, but to no purpose. . . .

The barometer was falling, and denoted a gale; this might have been expected as the sequence of the late condition of the atmosphere. Although the sky

was clear, a long narrow line of intense black was observed on the northern horizon, like the edge of mourning writing-paper. This line deepened within an hour, and vivid flashes of lightning could be seen which cut through vertically, and appeared to divide the black wall into fiery gashes. There could be no doubt that a storm was brewing, as a heavy swell set in from the same direction, although the wind was only light and fitful.

The barometer continued to fall. The topgallant sails were taken in, and topgallant yards sent down. All sail was reduced to close-reefed foretop-sail, jib, and spanker. Hatchways were secured, guns and boats well lashed, and every arrangement made for heavy weather. The cook was ordered to prepare an extra amount of food, as it was impossible to predict the duration of the coming storm. What would become of the missing boats if exposed to the fury of the gale?

The decks had been cleared of blubber, which had been packed below, and the *Sophia* was in perfect order. As the storm appeared to be heavy in the north, the ship's course had been altered to the east, in the hope of avoiding the maximum force of the gale. In the meantime the sea rose considerably, although the wind was still light, and the ship, under her reduced canvas, was hardly making four knots an hour.

Captain Bunce had been drunk daily since the departure from Cape Town, and at this moment of anxious preparation he was far from sober; it had therefore become necessary for Hunter to assume

the temporary command, while Bunce retired to his cabin and indulged in rum-shrub and forgetfulness. The black wall of cloud had now extended to both east and west, and had risen about thirty degrees upon the horizon, while the lightning illuminated the threatening background by flashes of forked flame, so continuous as to exhibit the hollow depth of shadow, like a yawning cavern.

Suddenly and without warning a wild scream was heard, as though all the furies of infernal regions had burst into a prolonged yell, while a bass roar, deeper than thunder, bellowed over the surface of the ocean. The shrieks were aloft, the deep roar below, and the ship for a moment yielding to the storm, lay over almost upon her beam ends. Fortunately all was snug, and she was ready for the blast. "Helm a-starboard!" shouted Captain Hunter through a speaking-trumpet, at the same time that he clung to the rigging, and made his way with extreme difficulty aft, to seize the wheel; the helmsman could not hear the word of command in the tumult of wind and rain, which poured upon the deck like a waterspout, driven into the faces of the crew with blinding force. There were three men at the wheel, and the helm having been brought "hard-over," the ship gradually righted, and was brought up head to wind. A terrific crash of thunder accompanied simultaneously a vivid flash of blue flame, and for an instant all on board imagined that the vessel had been struck; it was an awful shock, that shook the nerves of the strongest man, as the electric discharge descended into the water within a few yards of the struggling ship, now

beset by terrific waves, that had arisen into furious confusion, as though summoned from profound depths to the attack.

The foretop-sail had blown to shreds, but the ship was "laying-to," although occasionally a sea would make a clean breach over her bows.

It is difficult to describe the fury of such a storm ; it had burst like a whirlwind upon the ship, and the destruction of the foretop-sail had alone enabled her to recover. The sea was a mere confused mass of broken water ; immense waves were surging onward, but their curling crests were literally carried away by the wind the instant that they broke into surf ; the air was a dense mist of sea-water shattered into spray mingled with rain, while the surface of the ocean was reduced to a thick white cream, whipped and churned by the tempest into a consistence. It was impossible to see the largest waves approaching until they were within twenty yards of the ship's bow, so impervious was the water-laden atmosphere.

This was only the commencement of the storm, which gathered in intensity for the first three hours ; fortunately there was plenty of sea-room, and the *Sophia* was a strong ship with an experienced crew. There was little to do, as the ship was lying-to like a duck, although at irregular intervals a terrific sea would strike her with a force that made every timber tremble to the keel, and it felt as though she had bumped upon a rock. Several times a green sea had swept the decks fore and aft, and the good ship had for a few minutes staggered heavily with the weight of water, until relieved by the scuttles and gun ports,

which had purposely been left open on the upper deck.

. . . . For twenty-two hours the gale had lasted with varying force; the wind had chopped round suddenly upon several occasions, and the decks had been completely swept before the ship's head could meet the changing blast.

At last it blew steadily from the west, and as the barometer showed signs of an abatement, and the wind grew steadier, the captain wore the ship, and prepared to run before the gale in the hope of reaching better weather.

It was a fine sight to see the crew run aloft to loose the maintop-sail with double reefs, and still finer to watch the noble ship fly before the wind, bowling along a furrow of broken foam as she rode upon the crests of following waves, which chased her like greyhounds hunting a flying hare. The curling waters gathered over her taffrail, and often Captain Hunter, as he stood on deck and held on to the mizzen rigging, looked anxiously above at the threatening surf; but the good ship rose upon the angry billow, which rushed noisily forward, dispersing itself in creamy foam, leaving the *Sophia* victorious.

On the second day the weather abated, but the ship had run 250 miles to the eastward in twenty-four hours. The sun shone brightly, and the captain obtained satisfactory observations, thus proving his position. As the wind had decreased, additional sail was made, and the vessel continued upon her course due east. . . . But where were the missing boats? Unfortunately they never appeared again; it was

supposed that the storm must have overtaken them, and, with crews comprising fourteen men, they must have perished in the gale.

This was a terrible calamity, which cast a gloom over the whole ship's company. In addition to this anxiety, Captain Hunter had been severely tried by the conduct of Bunce, who had been drunk and unconscious throughout the late tempest, when the vessel demanded his greatest attention. He expostulated with him, feeling at the same time the inutility of argument with a confirmed drunkard. Bunce promised amendment, of course, and declared that his health was bad, and his nerves weakened, which alone induced him to exceed. He persuaded Hunter that a course should be steered south-east to attain a southerly latitude between 40° and 50° , where the sperm whale was more plentiful. Sail was made in that direction.

The South Sea is a vast expanse of ocean almost unbroken by land throughout the circuit of the globe, and in this desolate waste of waters the *Sophia* fished for nearly twelve months, sighting occasionally a barren rocky island, the resort of seals and penguins, but devoid of human habitation. A great number of whales had been captured, including several varieties, and Bunce had exhibited his experience as a whaling captain by piloting the vessel into most remunerative fishing grounds, but unfortunately his habit of drinking had increased to a degree that was most dangerous to the discipline of the ship.

Although the *Sophia* had been fitted out for three years, she had been so fortunate in her captures, that

before eighteen months were completed she had nearly a full cargo of oil. It was arranged that she should steer for Port Louis in Mauritius, where she could procure a new topmast to replace that which had been badly sprung in a gale, and at the same time she could have her copper cleaned from the weed and barnacles, which had grown in such thickness as to seriously impede her way.

There was no occurrence of importance during the voyage, and upon Christmas day 1830 the cry of "land ahead" from the "look-out," called all hands on deck a few minutes after sunrise. The sharp blue outline of volcanic mountains was pierced by the peculiar peak known as the Peter Bautre. This rises to a height of about 3000 feet, and is the highest point in the island; it is almost sugar-loaf in form, with a large head of rock superposed upon the summit, the sides of which overhang the precipice. This is an unmistakable landmark, toward which the *Sophia* now steered with a fair breeze, and at about three P.M. she passed the bell buoy and dropped her anchor within the entrance of the long narrow harbour, which penetrates for about two miles inland.

Mauritius was a lovely change of scene after several months' view of the barren sea, and the crew were delighted to obtain fresh beef and vegetables after their long diet upon salt provisions. The town of Port Louis was entirely French, and the language of the island was a species of *patois* that was difficult to understand upon first arrival. The houses were good, and all necessaries could be procured at the numerous shops and stores. As is usual in a French

town, there was an excellent market, where all the productions of the country were displayed, including bananas of great variety and of delicious quality, together with enormous jack-fruit, bread-fruit, mangoes of the finest kinds, some of which were brilliant vermilion, others golden, and many of dark green ; but all highly cultivated by the industrious French gardeners from grafts of the choicest growth.

The roads through the island were remarkably good ; and, as carriages could be hired, there was every facility for enjoying the beauty of the scenery, and admiring the wonderful foliage of choice tropical trees that had been planted by the early colonists, and tended with extreme care. The botanical gardens exhibited every rare plant, among others the graceful *Rafia* palm that had been introduced from Madagascar. The traveller's tree was interesting to many newly arrived, but the usual disappointment was expressed when the water, which exuded copiously upon tapping, was discovered to be undrinkable ; it consisted of a mucilaginous and rather astringent fluid that would have hardly quenched the thirst of the expectant traveller. Nutmegs, cloves, coffee, cocoa, and a great variety of trees that produce the necessaries of life were thriving in the well-kept gardens, while the graceful bamboo rose in plumes like gigantic ostrich feathers to a height of sixty feet, and afforded a cool shade in the heat of a mid-day sun.

The great agricultural production of Mauritius was the sugar-cane. The whole of the lower country was divided into estates beautifully cultivated and arranged in squares to facilitate the transport by carts during

crop-time. Excellent roads throughout each property enabled the canes to be carried off the fields to the crushing mill, where the sugar was manufactured for export. In those days extreme simplicity characterised the operations, as science had not introduced the systems which are now so thoroughly understood ; the juice was simply expressed by steel rollers, between which the canes were drawn, the machinery being worked by a steam-engine. An iron vat or caldron, containing about 400 gallons, formed a reservoir to receive the juice, as it poured in a continuous stream from a pipe connected with the mill. Quicklime was added, and well stirred in this large vat to prevent incipient acidity, and to fix the albuminous matter, before the juice should be thrown off by long ladles into the next boiler.

There were five boilers in a row, including the first reservoir ; beneath these a blazing fire was fed with the highly inflammable canes that had been crushed by the steel rollers. The heat graduated according to the position of the boilers, and, as the process of boiling continued, each vat was emptied by ladles in succession towards the boiler nearest to the fire. By this arrangement the watery portion was evaporated, and the juice arrived at the last and hottest boiler in the state of clear syrup. When this was boiled to such a consistence that it would cling like glue to the rod dipped for experiment, it was thrown off without a moment's delay, by men upon either side the battery armed with long ladles ; these were used with great dexterity. The syrup was ladled over an incline, and fell in a glistening sheet into an immense trough or

box about twenty feet long by ten in width. In this it cooled, and crystallised, until it became sugar. From the cooler it was dug out, and placed in deep vats with perforated bottoms, where it remained for some weeks to cleanse; the molasses percolated through the entire mass, and escaped into a leaden canal below. The sugar was then packed in bags made from the tough leaves of the *Vacoua* palm, and was ready for exportation. The molasses was subsequently fermented and distilled for rum.

The soil which produced the finest quality of sugar was merely the disintegrated portions of the volcanic rock which originally covered the surface. Upon some estates an immense mass of fragments had to be removed; these were built into walls about four feet high, running in parallel lines throughout the fields or squares. The true soil was discovered beneath the rocks, and the sugar-canes were planted in holes between the sheltering walls.

Mauritius in those days was celebrated for hospitality. There were no hotels, therefore perforce the traveller appealed for assistance to the first dwelling upon the road. Country-houses were provided with several small cottages containing a few plainly-furnished bed-rooms; these were termed "pavilions," and were always ready for the reception of a stranger. Excellent gardens formed a necessary adjunct to every residence, and fruit trees of choice varieties were planted in avenues to form an approach; in fact, the general arrangements of the colony left little to desire; luxury and hospitality were combined.

Although the island is only thirty-six miles in

length, it is a most important colony, as the harbour of Port Louis is perfectly secure at all seasons, and is the only dependable port in those seas. When Mauritius belonged to the French it was a "thorn in the flesh" to England, as the powerful cruisers of our enemy harboured in security, and from their well-fortified base they emerged at uncertain periods to intercept our Indiamen *en route* for England. It became absolutely necessary to annex this dangerous position, and an expedition was sent in 1810, which achieved the task with little difficulty. Since that time the colony has flourished, and the best feeling exists between the French settlers and ourselves.

The mountains are generally covered with forests, which include valuable woods, especially the "bois-puant" or "stinkwood," which is highly prized as durable, and proof against the ravages of worms. The sambur deer and wild pigs abound in the forests, but they must have been imported from either Ceylon or India, as the island was without animals when originally discovered by the Portuguese. It is a curious fact that snakes do not exist in Mauritius, although from the stony nature of the ground the conditions for such reptiles are most favourable. There can be little doubt that a volcanic upheaval must have given birth to this island from the depths of the sea, in like manner with the sister isle of Bourbon, which, although much smaller, exhibits a more grand appearance from the superior altitude of the mountains; some of which exceed 12,000 feet, and are capped with snow. Bourbon is better adapted for coffee cultivation than Mauritius, as the exceedingly

deep ravines afford a natural shelter from hurricanes, which occasionally desolate these latitudes. After the capture of Bourbon the English resigned it to the French, as it does not possess a harbour, and St. Denis is at the best a dangerous roadstead.

The chief character of Bourbon is the great depth of water around the shores, which in many places rise abruptly from the sea, like its well-known volcano, which is a sheer precipice of many thousand feet to the sea-level, beneath which there are no soundings. I have seen that volcano in full eruption, when a new crater was formed in the side of the mountain, seaward, from which the white-hot lava poured in a burning stream down the precipitous cliff, and plunged seething into the bottomless depths below. Bourbon does not produce one third the amount of sugar that is grown in Mauritius, but it is rich in coffee and spices. It is also celebrated for the "miel verte" or green honey of exquisite flavour, which is due to the aromatic blossoms of spice trees, and those of oranges and limes.

The *Sophia* remained during two months at Port Louis, during which she was thoroughly repaired and painted. Captain Hunter took the opportunity of writing to inform Messrs. Harvey and Graham concerning the success which had attended their voyage, and trusted that in another three months they would be a "full ship," and steer towards home. At the same time he described the difficulty occasioned by Bunce's habits of intoxication, and declared his intention of superseding him unless a 'change should take place for the better.

In those days the postal authorities of England had no regular communication with Mauritius, but letters were forwarded according to the most favourable opportunities, when trading vessels sailed from London or Liverpool. Captain Hunter accordingly confided his mail-bag to the agent at Port Louis, and the *Sophia* once more weighed anchor and made sail.

During the two months' sojourn in Mauritius, Bunce had become worse. Upon several occasions he had been arrested when on shore for drunken and disorderly conduct in the public streets, and, in aggravation of his complaint, he had purchased several puncheons of new rum above proof, which he had declared to be a necessary addition to the ship's stores. Upon his return to the ship he was totally unfit for the command, and, in order to obtain the good-will of his crew, he served out double the usual allowance of daily grog; at the same time he invited his officers to drinking bouts, which usually terminated in quarrelling and uproar.

The ship was steering towards her old fishing-ground to the east of Cape Agulhas. On several occasions whales had been seen, and the opportunities had been lost through the general demoralisation of the crew, resulting from the example of the drunken commander. Hardly a day passed without violence. Bunce was always more or less under the influence of liquor, and in certain paroxysms he was almost insane.

On one occasion, in an inarticulate voice thickened by continual drunkenness, he gave an order to a sailor, which being unheard, was unheeded. Bunce,

in a fit of frenzy, pulled a brass belaying-pin from its position and felled the man to the deck, where he lay unconscious in a pool of blood. Richard Downe, who was standing by, immediately raised the wounded man from the spot, but himself became the new object of Bunce's fury. Without the slightest provocation the drunkard rushed upon him, and aimed a tremendous blow at his head with the heavy weapon, which fortunately missed its mark and struck the capstan, behind which young Dick had dodged instinctively. The next moment he had seized the captain by the throat; at the same time he tripped him by a sharp action of the left foot, and threw him heavily upon the deck.

Dick was at once collared by the chief mate; several of the crew rushed aft, some lifted the captain upon his legs, while others shouted, "Give it him, Dick! serve the bully out!" and as the sailors congregated around the cause of quarrel, there could be little doubt that a division of opinion existed which threatened a resort to force. Fortunately at that moment Captain Hunter, who had heard the heavy fall, hastened upon deck, and at once ordered the wounded sailor to be cared for, and Bunce to be seated on a bench.

He then called all hands aft, and in the presence of their actual captain he addressed the crew in the following determined words:—

"Captain Bunce, officers, and men. . . . When this good ship sailed from Gravesend, I was proud of the position which I held as representing the owners of the *Sophia*. The vessel was worthy of her gallant

and well-disciplined crew ; and in my long experience I had never seen a more capable or better conducted body of seamen. We have worked well together through the sailors' fortunes of calms and storms, of cloud and sunshine ; there have been dangers common to us all, which we have met and shared together, and I feel confident that if it should please God to try our fortitude, you will exhibit the same spirit of discipline, and the courage which is the pride of British sailors. But the ship is no longer the *Sophia* that sailed from England ; drunkenness and disorder have disgraced us, and I almost envy those poor fellows who were lost with the boats and died, having done their duty, before the character of the crew was stained by insubordination. I will not be responsible for this position. You are yourselves not responsible ; the character of a crew depends upon that of her captain, and your present state is the result of a vicious example. The situation must change immediately ; either we will put back to Mauritius and I will leave the ship, or I will exercise my right and assume the command. My authority from the owners is undoubted, and I declare to you all that from henceforth I am your captain. I shall expect and insist upon a return to our original discipline, and I trust that we shall cast anchor in Old England with a full cargo for our employers, and united among ourselves, both officers and men." . . .

"Sail ahead on starboard bow !" shouted the "look-out" from the mast-head. . . . The chief mate at once raised his cap and cried out, "Three cheers, my lads, for Captain Hunter ! hip, hip, hip," etc.

Those hearty cheers installed Hunter as captain of the *Sophia*. Bunce had dropped off in a drunken sleep during this short address to the crew, and was now awakened, and assisted to his berth below.

In the meantime telescopes were directed upon the reported sail, which had changed its position in a singular manner, and was presently made out to be one of that beautiful species of gulls with snow-white plumage and long yellow feathers in the tail, which is only found in those seas.

The first step taken by Hunter was a radical reform in the issue of spirits to the crew, and the steward was instructed to keep everything under lock and key, while Bunce was restricted to a small daily allowance that would prevent intoxication.

For some days a marked change had taken place: the men were orderly and obedient, and the ship had resumed her original appearance; the decks were scrubbed at daybreak; every rope was in Flemish coil; the guns were polished with linseed oil, and shone like burnished bronze; the numerous boats were kept in first-rate readiness, and Captain Bunce had become a sober and peacefully-disposed supernumerary. The *Sophia* had reached the 30° south latitude, and everything betokened a satisfactory run to her old fishing-ground off Cape Agulhas.



CHAPTER V.

THE sudden report of a musket, and a heavy fall on deck caused Captain Hunter to leave his chart and to hurry up the companion. Bunce was raving drunk, and, having seized a loaded musket, he had deliberately fired at the man in the maintop; fortunately he had missed his aim, and he was felled to the deck and disarmed at the same instant by Dick Graham, who was holding him by the throat upon Hunter's arrival at the scene. Bunce, who was struggling like a maniac, was at once secured in irons; and an inquiry was instituted concerning the supply of liquor, which had of late been strictly guarded. It appeared that his craving for spirits had induced him to descend into the hold, where he had searched out the position of the casks of overproof rum that had been taken on board at Mauritius, into one of which he had bored a gimlet-hole, and had filled a jug; this was discovered in his berth with a portion of the contents.

For the first time during the voyage Captain Hunter now lost his temper. Bunce was incorrigible, and the only means of compelling sobriety was to destroy the liquor. In a foolish moment of anger Hunter seized an axe, and, descending into the hold,

he smashed in the heads of every cask of rum ; which at once disappeared in the bilge, to the amount of about 500 gallons. . . . It has already been stated that the rum was immensely strong, having been purchased new, about 30 per cent overproof.

The officers and crew were called aft, and Hunter explained the necessity which had induced him to destroy the spirits. Bunce was confined within a cabin, and the door fastened without.

The destruction of the rum caused general dissatisfaction ; although there was sufficient of the old stock for the daily allowance during some weeks, the sailors considered an attack upon the liquor as an interference with their rights, and for some days after the event they were somewhat sullen in demeanour.

In the meantime Bunce had been carefully guarded, and, being limited to his usual allowance of two gills a day, he had recovered his senses, although he appeared cast down with despondency.

A week had elapsed since the destruction of the rum casks ; Bunce was craving for the unnatural excitement which had become habitual. When the cabin-boy entered to arrange his cabin, he slipped a half-crown into his hand, and ordered him to visit the broken puncheons, and endeavour to collect any rum that might be remaining in the bottoms. The half-crown was a temptation, and the boy departed stealthily upon his errand. He took a jug and a small cup with which he might be able to bale out any liquor, should it have collected in the hollow of a tilted cask ; he also took a tinder-box and matches, together with a small piece of candle that was con-

tained among the tinder. . . . Having no shoes, he noiselessly descended the hatchway, and cautiously felt his way among the numerous tiers of oil-casks, until he arrived at that portion of the vessel where the rum puncheons had been stowed. It was very dark. There was a powerful fragrance of rum throughout the ship, which quite overpowered the faint odour of sperm oil, and the close atmosphere seemed overcharged with spirit, as the pungent fumes caused him to sneeze. He struck a light with the flint and steel, and, having ignited a match, he held the naked candle in one hand, while he placed the tinder-box upon a barrel. The rum puncheons were stowed in one tier side by side, and the heads, which faced him, had been broken in ; nevertheless he had no doubt that a considerable quantity of spirit remained in the belly of each cask. He accordingly peered into the darkness, and, to make certain of the contents, he stretched out his hand with the lighted candle into the centre of the empty puncheon.

No flash of lightning could have been more sudden or terrific in results ! A tremendous explosion took place, which shook the vessel from stem to stern, as the gas, generated by the powerful spirit, ignited, with the report of a cannon. In one instant the ship's hold was a mass of flame, which shot up high above the hatchway and roared like the blast of a furnace. The boy was killed upon the spot, and the consternation of all on board at the suddenness of this awful calamity was indescribable.

Captain Hunter was on the poop-deck when the explosion startled his strong nerves for the moment,

though in the next instant he realised the extent of the catastrophe, and shouted the necessary orders. "Lower away all boats, fill water-kegs, my lads; steady, all hands!" . . . Hunter was a brave man, but his face was pale as death. "Now's your time, Dick," he continued calmly; "get as much water stowed in the boats as you can, together with biscuits and salt pork. There's no chance for the *Sophia*, with a cargo of oil, and we've little time to spare before the fire reaches the powder magazine!"

The chief mate and the well-organised crew worked with extraordinary energy; each man seemed to be endowed with double strength, and the long-boat was safely lowered; fortunately the sea was smooth, and the wind slight. Provisions were hastily collected, firearms and ammunition handed into the various boats, which were supplied, as was usual in a whaler, with every necessary, such as oars, sails, harpoons, etc. The work was effected with marvellous rapidity, as the crew were well versed in lowering boats upon the sudden order when whales were sighted. In the short space of a few minutes, the flames, ascending with increasing force through the hatchway, caught the mainsail, and immediately leapt higher and ignited the main-topsail. Hunter had himself rushed to the wheel and had put the ship before the wind, which being almost calm, drifted the flaming vessel slowly forward, the boats with their crews keeping within a few yards astern.

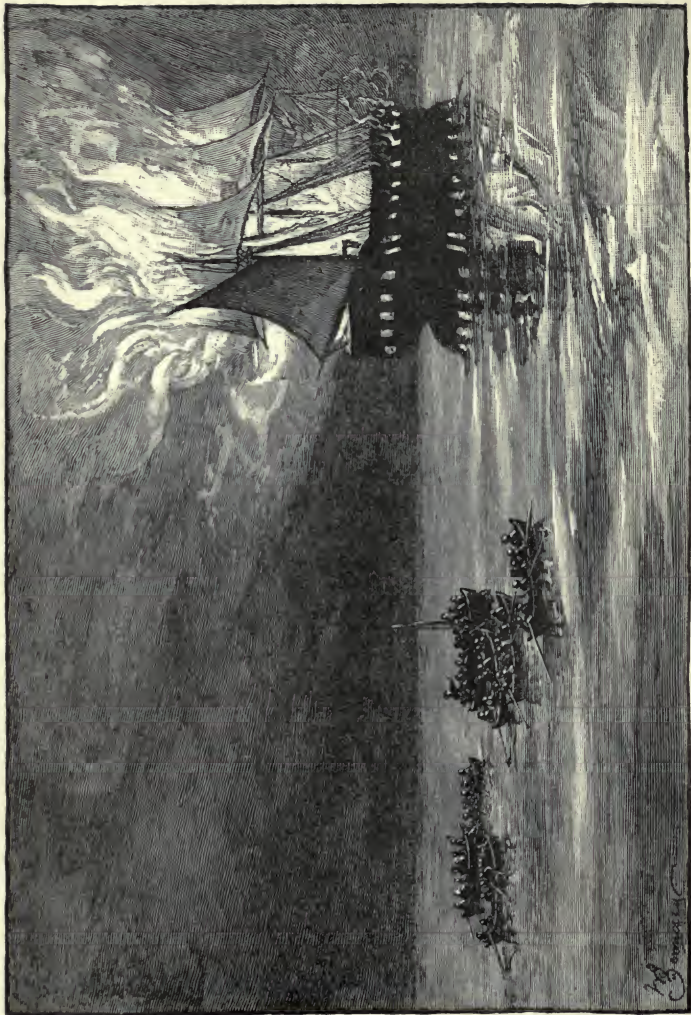
Dick had never left the deck, and while the boats with their usual crews were fully manned, he stood by the captain's side, determined to share his fate.

“Stand by the helm, Dick,” cried Hunter suddenly, as smoke shot upward from the cabin skylight. “The fire has reached the cabin through the lower deck !”

At the same moment Hunter rushed down through the ascending smoke, and with difficulty reached the cabin. A few instants later, he appeared half suffocated, his hair singed by flame, and so completely overpowered that he gasped for fresh air as he retreated to the wheel, clutching in his grasp the log-book, sextant, nautical almanac, chronometer, and charts. At the peril of his life he had saved these all-important articles ; the log-book would prove the amount of oil on board, by which the owners could recover the insurance ; the navigation of the boats depended mainly upon astronomical observations.

“Now, Dick,” exclaimed Hunter mournfully, “the good old ship is lost, and we have no time to risk, for I feel the deck planks hot. The men are in the boats, and we are the last on board. Long-boat, ahoy !” shouted Hunter, and in another moment both he and Dick swung themselves from the taffrail by a rope, and were received on board. “Shove off,” cried Hunter ; “pull a few strokes astern and clear the ship.” . . . The order was obeyed, and as the doomed vessel slowly forged ahead before the gentle breeze, the boats were quickly left astern.

This dreadful calamity had occurred with such startling suddenness that it was almost impossible to realise the extent of the position. The original discipline of a well-trained crew of able seamen had been exhibited in the coolness and dexterity with



THE BURNING SHIP CAST A LURID GLOW OF RED FAR AND WIDE.—p. 113.

which the shock had been sustained, and the orderly manner in which the boats had been lowered and manned, in the midst of the most fearful danger to which the sailor can be exposed. Tempest is the sailors' common enemy, but *fire* is a terrible word at sea, where the mere smell of burning will cause the heart to throb.

The wild anxiety of the last fifteen minutes, when all thoughts were concentrated upon lowering boats, and saving their own lives, had now vanished; the boats were called together, and the men mustered; all were present except the cabin-boy who had caused this dreadful ruin. Bunce had rushed on deck at the first alarm, and was now seated in the stern-sheets of a whale-boat. Evening was approaching, and the *Sophia* was a mass of flame, the sails flaring up to the royals, and the ship almost stationary. Instinctively the boat's crews dipped their oars, and followed their loved ship as though in a fearful dream; there was no object in thus keeping near to the blazing vessel, but the action was a natural impulse of a sailor. Suddenly the sun sank below the horizon, and darkness quickly shrouded the ocean. The *Sophia*, being laden with oil, blazed with terrific fury, and as the night grew dark, the burning ship cast a lurid glow of red far and wide, which was reflected upon the clouds above. The boats kept close together like a small flock of ducks, and still hovered within a few hundred yards of the ill-fated vessel.

An immense flame shot upward, with a bright mass of sparks thrown fan-shaped high in air! . . . A loud report followed this explosion; burning frag-

ments fell hissing into the calm sea ; then all was dark and still ! The moon had just risen, and was shining peacefully upon the unbroken ocean, and upon the little family of boats clinging together like children mourning for a dead mother.

It was a sad moment for the crew ; the excitement of the late struggle for life was over, and they now faced the cold reality of their situation. The moon was a little past the full, and she rose rapidly, throwing a clear mild light upon the scene. There were seven boats including the long-boat. Six whale-boats carried forty-two men, while the long-boat contained fourteen.

Captain Hunter having formed a centre to this forlorn flotilla, addressed a few words to the assembled crews. He assured them of their exact position by observations worked out at noon that day. The nearest land was more than 900 miles distant ; this would be the south point of Madagascar. It would be necessary to pull without ceasing if any hopes could be entertained of reaching land before their water and provisions should be consumed. All the boats were provided with sails, therefore they would have the chances of favourable winds to relieve the rowers, but it was absolutely necessary to enact a rule that each man should pull an oar for two hours, to be relieved alternately, and that failing this division of labour, the defaulter must be thrown overboard. If a man should be too weak to pull, he would lose his right to a share of water and provisions, and the others could not be expected to row his useless weight.

There were two compasses, therefore the boats must be divided into two parties,—one under the command of Bunce, assisted by the chief mate ; the other under Hunter, accompanied by Richard Downe. If the weather should continue fair there was reason to hope that land might be reached upon the ninth day. Hunter ended his terse discourse by beseeching all present to place their trust and hope in God. “ Let every man pray in his heart for assistance from the Almighty, and do his best ; if this spirit guides us, we need not be afraid.”

The course was given west-north-west, and the crews, cheered by the words of the trusty captain, pulled manfully at their oars, the boats forming two lines abreast.

The sea being calm and the moon bright, afforded favourable conditions for the departure ; and hope, which brightens the darkest day, inspired the hearts of the shipwrecked sailors, who little knew the terrible fate that the future had in store.

When morning broke they had travelled about fifty miles, as the men were fresh and had rowed with vigour. If they could make a hundred miles each day, they would be sure to reach the land. The question of provisions was most serious ; there was no possibility of lighting a fire, therefore the salt pork must be eaten raw ; this would aggravate the thirst which must result from working hard in a hot sun. The stock of water was considerable, and a calculation was made respecting the maximum allowance that could be afforded for each man ; but when divided by the boat's crew, it dwindled to an insigni-

ficant quantity, and could not possibly be sustained beyond eight days. It was a serious forecast of the coming trial that under the most favourable circumstances they must be devoid of water for one whole day ; should any misadventure arise through adverse weather, it would be impossible to predict the extent of the calamity. . . . The first day was propitious ; the men rowed well, and all boats kept their positions.

The second and third days were equally favourable, and a gentle breeze had enabled them to carry sail, which materially aided the rowers, who rested for several hours from their labour. The fourth day arrived, and with the usual elasticity of mind that distinguishes British seamen, the crews had no longer any anxiety, but had come to the conclusion that good luck would attend their voyage, and compensate in some measure the loss they had sustained.

On the fifth night the wind freshened and the boats sailed well, but toward morning the sky became overcast, and the wind, which had been favourable, suddenly chopped round and blew hard against them. The sun rose red, and there were ominous signs of an approaching gale. Sail had been taken in, and the men laboured at their oars against the strong head-wind, making but little progress. The wind increased to a gale, and the broken seas became so heavy that the greatest exertions were required to keep the boats' heads to wind, otherwise they must have been swamped. Fine weather and good fortune had forsaken them ; their thoughts must have wandered to the *Sophia* which had so often battled against a gale, and now, instead of the good ship, they had

to struggle against the sea in her open boats. With the approach of night the gale increased in violence : terrific seas burst almost upon them, and the boats could barely be kept against the roaring surf. The night became dark, and not a star broke through the clouds. The only light was the phosphorescent glow of the broken waves, in which the boats floated as though in a fiery sea. It was a hard task for the tired crew, as the force of the wind nearly tore the oars from their stiffened hands, and the boats could not move an inch, but barely kept their positions against the gale.

The hours of darkness seemed doubly long, and appeared as though two nights had been welded into one. At length a gray streak proclaimed the dawn, and Hunter, who had taken his turn at the oar in rotation with the rest, looked anxiously for the other boats through the dim twilight. In vain he strained his eyes, half-blinded with salt spray ; there was not a boat in view.

It was not a moment for reflections ; there was too much danger present ; the long-boat, being thirty feet in length and eight feet beam, had an advantage over the smaller whale-boats, not only in her size, but in the strength of her crew. Although in the usual course she had pulled six oars in rotation, she could now man eight to keep her head against the gale, and still reserve a relief.

Throughout the day the gale continued, and the fatigued crew of the long-boat were employed not only in stemming the furious wind, but in baling out, whenever a sea capped the gunwale and poured over

her side in broken surf. There was no rest that day, nor through the ensuing night, and the crew were well-nigh exhausted. Once more the morning broke. It still blew hard, although the wind had veered a little to the north ; this change increased the danger, as it was absolutely necessary that the boat's head should meet the sea ; she was therefore obliged to alter her course accordingly, and would lose progression, while time meant life or death, as the water and provisions were decreasing.

Toward noon the sun burst through the clouds, and the gale decreased. The waves no longer broke into creamy crests ; the angry sea subsided, like a wild beast that had spent its rage, and laid down to sleep. This was a merciful deliverance from the storm, and every man thanked God in his inward breast, for all had prayed in secret for aid in this great danger. During the night the sea fell calm ; the moon rose toward midnight, and once again hope rose within their hearts as the pressing danger had passed away. Another morning broke ; the sun rose grandly from his ocean bed, and shed a golden lustre over the bright sea ; fine weather had returned again, but the boat rowed heavily. The men were worn out with fatigue, and there was no strength in the oars to propel the heavy long-boat. It was a pitiable sight to watch the sunken cheeks and hollow eyes of the men who lately formed a portion of a stalwart crew. The oars refused to bend to the long stroke, but remained stiff in the hands of those who had lost their former power.

The raw salt pork, in addition to fatigue and sun-

heat, had created a raging thirst. It was impossible to resist an extra allowance of water, and Hunter saw with dismay that his men were becoming ungovernable in their demand. Water they would have to-day, even should they die of thirst to-morrow.

The calm sea and bright sky were favourable to an observation, and Hunter found the approximate position of the boat. They had lost all chance of reaching land before the provisions should be exhausted, and the water was almost gone; the men had stolen it during the night.

Several of the crew were delirious with fatigue and want of sleep. When their turn arrived to take the oars, they threw them into the sea, and the boat was continually delayed in their recovery. Two men insisted upon drinking salt water; another jumped overboard and sank. . . . On the following day those who had drunk salt water went raving mad; they snatched the oars from those who were faintly rowing. A wrestle took place, and they fell over the gunwale. The boat passed on, and their hands were seen for a few seconds above the water.

Richard Downe had supported his captain with zealous care during this trying ordeal. Hunter had upon a former occasion been subjected to similar privations, and he cautioned all to keep as silent as possible; the act of opening the mouth to converse in the dry burning heat of the sun would aggravate thirst.

The day at length arrived when death stared them in the face; the water was exhausted, and the last piece of raw salt pork had been consumed. Another

man died. The body was thrown overboard, but having been kept for several hours exposed to the sun it had become inflated, and would not sink. The crew had rested on their oars hopelessly, worn out with fatigue and misery; their swollen tongues protruded from their lips, and had become brown and furry with extreme dryness; the dead body of their comrade floated in a calm sea within a few feet of their boat: all wished that the pangs of death were over, and envied the unconscious corpse.

Suddenly a long dark brown fin like a scimitar protruded from the surface about ten yards distant, and was followed almost immediately by the appearance of a large shark, who swam leisurely up to the floating body, and then around, as though uncertain whether to seize the prey. Without a moment's hesitation Hunter seized a harpoon, and made it fast to a line, but the shark had disappeared.

"Keep quiet," he whispered to the expectant crew, who had been stimulated from their stupor by this unexpected visitation. "Keep silence; and ship your oars, he'll be here again presently." . . . The nervous system is a mysterious paradox; the men who were half dead a few minutes before now recovered their spirits at the chance so unexpectedly presented, and exhibited a keen interest in sport which was their special calling.

Hunter stood in the bow of the boat with the harpoon ready, watching intently the dead body of their late comrade, which floated a few yards distant. A few minutes elapsed, and hope began to sink; it was supposed that the shark was scared by the pre-

sence of the boat, and would not again return. The captain's arm slowly raised the harpoon, as he gazed almost perpendicularly into the blue water. The next instant there was a dash and quick commotion! the dead body whirled rapidly as though in a sharp eddy, and a flash of white in a long streak was seen beneath, at the same time that the harpoon sped from Hunter's hand, and the line whizzed over the gunwale. The shark was struck! It had evidently risen from a considerable depth to attack the body by a sudden rush from below.

Although the excitement of the moment had added new life to the weary and famished crew, their muscles were weak, and they with difficulty managed to play the large shark to which they were attached. Having allowed it to run out sixty fathoms of line, they hauled steadily upon it, and shortened their length to about twenty yards; they then made fast the line by a round turn upon the bow thwart, and the fish towed the boat at discretion until tired. The crew then hauled away until the shark was alongside the boat, when a shot from a musket in the spine, at the junction with the head, killed it immediately. It was about twelve feet long. All hands were employed in cutting the flesh into long thin strips that would dry in the hot sun, and afford a lasting supply of food. The men ate it raw as they busily prepared it for store, and the fresh fish moistened their feverish palates, and cooled their tongues.

In a few hours their work was finished, and the reaction set in. A raging thirst completely overpowered them, and several threw themselves panting

into the bottom of the boat. Even Hunter was prostrate, and Dick, who had manfully sustained the agony of thirst, was sucking a piece of raw shark in the hope of assuaging the cruel torment. The sun was burning, but there was no breeze. The sea was a dead calm.

A seaman, who had been apparently asleep, suddenly started up and with a wild and unearthly yell plunged overboard, and never rose again. No person moved to save him—all had grown callous in the common misery ; they looked vacantly at the sea, as though acknowledging a friend to whom they could make a final appeal in a last agony.

The evening came ; the sun, which had been their persecutor, now sank beneath the horizon, and the night covered them.

They were too weak to row ; the crew, originally fourteen, was reduced to nine. It was in vain that Hunter in a thick husky voice endeavoured to cheer them to their work, and he and Dick both attempted to take an oar ; the strength was gone.

Hunter and Dick were forced to relinquish their task, and they laid down together with the remaining crew thoroughly prostrated, and fell into a restless sleep, the precursor of that peculiar coma which heralds death.

No one was awake. It was past midnight. The long-boat floated upon the calm sea with her dying crew. All was still as death ; not a ripple murmured against her sides, and the boat was motionless ; a mere speck upon the vast expanse of ocean ; but that speck contained a mountain of anguish. As

each worn-out sailor sank into the stupor of thirst and weariness, his thoughts had travelled to his distant home, and as his eyes had closed upon the scene of wretchedness, they conjured up those images of love that would mourn his loss, but never know his fate. Hunter thought of his loved wife; he dreamt of home, and that he pressed her in his arms. His dream changed: they were walking together upon the sea-shore; he had just returned, and he was telling her of their terrible anxiety when the *Sophia* was in flames, and how they nearly starved and died of thirst; he told how in his supposed last moments he had thought of her, and would have died with her image in his heart. They came to a rippling stream that fell from a cliff, and she told him to drink. He drank! drank! drank! . . . he could not assuage his thirst; again he drank, and stood beneath the falling stream which fell upon his head and shoulders. He looked for his wife, but she was gone! vanished into thin air! a moment of agony thrilled through him, and he awoke from his dream with a start; he was wet through; . . . rain was pouring from a heaven-sent cloud!

Dick had awakened together with several of the men, while others were still asleep, or in a state of stupor. Two were dead at the bottom of the boat. For a few minutes Hunter could scarcely collect his thoughts, and he was hardly certain whether the present was not a portion of his dream. Recovering from his confused ideas, he immediately took steps to secure the supply of rain-water. Assisted by Dick and two men, he spread the boat's sail, and bending

down one end, he led the stream into the bung-holes of the empty kegs ; all of which were filled. There was no wind, but the rain fell with tropical violence for about two hours, and even the boat required baling. Hunter decided that the water in the boat's bottom should be retained for washing, and that nothing should be wasted.

The cloud having expended itself, passed on towards the south, forming a mere island of floating vapour in the otherwise clear sky. Hunter and his crew fixed their eyes upon that dark spot as it faded gradually from view, and fell upon their knees to thank God who had preserved them from a cruel death. Their nerves were weakened by prostration ; some wept like children, others embraced ; a few continued in prayer, overpowered by their emotion.

The morning broke ; again their enemy the sun arose from the deep sea, but a fine breeze from the south-east had sprung up, and the wet sail was hoisted. The long-boat glided through the water briskly, and was making six knots. This saved the tired crew from all exertion. The rain, which had saturated their clothes, had been partially absorbed by the body, and had produced an extraordinary effect in recovering the men from their late prostration. Their nerves were strengthened by the reaction ; they had both food and water sufficient for about ten days upon full allowance, as their party had been much reduced, only seven remaining from the original fourteen. . . . Hunter regained his former control ; he cheered their spirits, and assured them of his belief that the Almighty had specially interposed in their

behalf. Should the wind remain fair, there was every hope of sighting land in four or five days; in the meantime their strength would improve by good food and wholesome water.

Four days passed away, and it seemed as though some pitying angel had been commissioned to protect this remnant of a crew: the breeze had never slackened nor even changed, the sea was comparatively smooth, and the boat, which would have been too heavy for so few men to pull, had travelled rapidly through the water under sail, steering an unvarying course. Flying fish rose like silvery swallows as the boat disturbed their shoals, and skimmed above the waves, dipping their long fins upon the crests, and ricocheting for several hundred feet before they disappeared. These flights of fish gave life to the hitherto barren sea. Shoals of porpoises showed their dark backs above the surface as they dashed in hot pursuit after the flying fish: and a brown speck high in air gladdened all hearts upon its near approach, when it proved to be a gull. During that day several of the same species were seen, also cormorants, which gave hopes of land at no great distance.

On the following morning a small bird hovered above the boat, and presently settled for rest upon the mast; this was a land bird that had travelled seaward. It would be impossible to describe the delight of the crew in welcoming this confiding visitor, which had probably been chased by some hawk, and having in its fright fled from the shore, had found refuge upon their mast, bringing glad tidings that land was near.

During that day all eyes were strained toward the West ; seaweed was passed, floating in masses, as though torn by waves from coral rocks. A portion was examined, and small particles of coral were adhering to the roots. The fair breeze was faithful, and the boat rushed onward. The men had become accustomed to the dried shark's flesh, and, although they would have considered hard biscuits the choicest delicacy, they had regained a portion of their former strength. . . . The night arrived.

At about three A.M. a long white line could be descried about two miles ahead. There was no moon until near morning, but the stars were bright, and the horizon clear.

The boat stood on direct for the white streak, until in the calm night the sound of breakers was distinctly audible. Hunter determined to lie to until the daylight should discover their position ; the boat's head was brought up to the wind, and she lay off and on for some hours.

When the day broke, and the sun rose with the rapidity so well known in tropical regions, the line of surf appeared not far distant. It broke upon a group of coral islands which were apparently uninhabited, as there were no signs of dwellings, but merely a few dozen cocoa-nut trees towering above some stunted vegetation. The sight of land after the trying voyage was a great joy to the boat's crew, and Hunter quickly perceived a dark green gap in the line of surf that denoted a safe entrance. He immediately steered for the natural port, and in a few minutes the long-boat in full sail with a smart breeze passed the

broken waves upon the right and left as they dashed themselves into roaring foam, and safely glided into the still light-green water within the reef.

This was as smooth as a pond ; the girdle of reefs formed a zone upon which the waves expended their force. The true island was about a quarter of a mile distant, and the boat slipped quietly through the still water, steering toward a group of cocoa-nut trees until the order was given to take in sail, and then rowing with only four oars, landed upon a shelving bank of snow-white sand.

Captain Hunter was the first to leap on shore, and, as his feet reached the land, he for a few moments stood without moving, with his face buried in his sailor's cap. "Thank God," each man ejaculated as he once more felt the firm earth beneath him ; and the next minute all hands scattered to forage upon the uninhabited island. . . .

There was not much to discover, but happily a quantity of drift wood had been left upon the beach. There were vestiges of a fire here and there, proving that the island was sometimes visited, and pieces of half-burnt sticks that had assisted at these fires were carefully collected by the men, who for so many days had not tasted a cooked meal.

Some dried cocoa-nut husks were lying about ; these were a great prize for fuel, and presently among the low green bushes a small deserted hut was discovered that had been at some time inhabited by fishermen, as the bones and scales of many large fish were strewed around. . This hut was at once de-

molished, and the sticks were carefully bound into bundles with twisted cocoa-nut leaves.

The beach was composed of exceedingly fine white sand, and Hunter and young Downe strolled together along the water's edge to examine this fine surface, as it would exhibit the footprints of men should they have recently visited the island. They found no trace of human beings, but quickly discovered the tracks of turtle, which laid their eggs in the warm bank of sand. There was no difficulty in tracking them to the spot, as the sand showed clearly the recent disturbance, and by digging about a foot deep several nests were unearthed, yielding many hundred eggs. This was a glorious find, and it was suggested that as the water casks were well supplied, they should pass the night upon the island, where they might probably succeed in catching a few turtle. There was no fresh water on the reef, and from the remnants of broken pottery of a rude kind, it appeared that the fishermen must have brought their supply from the mainland.

They had no matches, but fire was easily procured by drawing the cartridge from a musket, and then firing off a roll of cotton rag with a small charge of powder. Some dry cocoa-nut leaves assisted to produce a flame, and when evening came and darkness once more shadowed the now joyful sailors, they were seated round a blazing fire cooking turtle eggs, and boiling oysters, a quantity of which they had found adhering to the rocks.

After a good supper the party divided in search of turtle, that would probably quit the water after

dark in order to lay their eggs upon the sand. Three large turtle were triumphantly laid upon their backs, and carried on the following morning to the boat, in which was packed a supply of firewood and a variety of shells, including oysters in great quantity.

There were many cocoa-nuts growing in heavy clusters upon the tall trees, and several vain attempts had been made to climb the branchless stems; the men had not recovered sufficient strength. Although it was almost sinful to destroy a tree that might be so useful to others in their own forlorn position, it was at length agreed that necessity knew no law, and that the axe must be applied to the roots of several that bore an abundant crop. . . . Three trees crashed down, scattering the great nuts in all directions by the shock; these were collected to the number of about two hundred, and were stowed within the boat. As each nut contained nearly a pint of sweet water, there would be both food, drink, and fuel; the shell of the nut is exceedingly oily and inflammable.

Once more all were on board the long-boat, and they pushed off from the shore, and rowed through the gap of the reef into the open sea. The clearness of the water was extraordinary, and every variety of coral and sea-weed of various colours could be distinguished at a great depth. The sail was hoisted, and the wind, which had freshened into a strong breeze, drove the boat along at about seven knots, steering due west.

A few minutes after noon, a bank of clouds that had obscured the horizon suddenly lifted, and disclosed the well-defined outline of a mountain range,

about fifty miles distant. At two P.M. trees were visible as though springing from the water, and forming a fringe upon the sky-line. These appeared to grow rapidly in height as the boat shot forward with the strong wind, and in another hour the coast was brought clearly into view. The shore was low and wooded, small hills ascended a few miles inland, which were backed by higher ranges terminating in the mountains which had been first descried.

Several reefs rose above the surface, upon which a heavy surf was breaking, and the approach to the coast would have been extremely difficult, had not good fortune directed them toward a long promontory that formed the extreme point of an estuary which penetrated for several miles inland. Upon nearing the entrance, it was discovered that a bar stretched across the narrow mouth, where the sea was exceedingly dangerous, and much caution was required in searching for a secure passage.

The wind was dead on shore, and the long-boat having kept parallel with the breakers a few hundred yards outside the surf, fortunately perceived a dark and quiet channel close to the point, which denoted deeper water. Steering for this favourable passage, the boat bounded over the heavy swell, and in a few minutes was scudding before the wind in perfectly smooth water. Beautiful trees overhung the placid surface, bamboos in feathery clusters rose gracefully from the inferior underwood, and shortly the elegant Rafia palm (*Sagus Rafia*) was exhibited in massive groups, which recalled to Hunter's memory the botanical gardens of Mauritius. The tree was here in

its own home. . . . "Here we are in Madagascar, my lads!" exclaimed Hunter, "and I hope the natives will give us a good reception. Do not attempt any resistance, as it would be utterly useless; we must take our chance, and endeavour to show them that we have perfect confidence, and arrive as friends."

The captain had scarcely spoken, when two large canoes were discovered paddling round the bend of a river which met the estuary; they were full of men, and were evidently directing their course toward the long-boat. . . . Three additional canoes quickly turned the corner, and hastened to overtake the leaders. The approach of the foreign boat had been observed, and the moment was not free from anxiety. Hunter at once gave orders that two of the crew should lift up one of the turtles when the canoes should be within easy distance, as the gesture would be understood by the natives to signify a peaceful motive.

As the English boat was sailing at good speed, and the canoes were paddling towards her with a strong force of rowers, they quickly neared, and in a few minutes were within a hundred yards. The long-boat lowered her sail, and Hunter stood up in the bows holding both arms extended above his head as a sign that he carried no weapons. At the same time Dick and another sailor managed to lift a turtle, and balance it on end upon the stem of the boat. . . . A yell of laughter arose from the naked crew of the canoe, and without any hesitation, they pulled close alongside the long-boat, and took the turtle into their own vessel, including the two others which lay at the bottom of the boat. They evidently intended

to secure all they could lay hold of before the arrival of the other canoes to divide the spoil.

Although the reception was rough, it was not positively hostile ; a number of natives had boarded the long-boat, accordingly Hunter hoisted the sail, and the breeze at once acting upon the boat, they quickly left the canoes behind, and ran up the estuary. As the sailors had joined in the general laughter, the natives thought the whole affair good fun, and intimated that they should row as well as sail, pointing to a dark grove of trees about a mile distant, as the place for which they should steer. A general race took place, but as the wind was fresh, the long-boat kept the lead, and was followed by the five canoes, whose crews were paddling with all their might, at the same time they were screaming a kind of chant in most discordant tones, which was intended to be an accompaniment to the paddle strokes. They were not long in reaching the shore, and discovered upon landing that a large village was concealed by the heavy foliage, where many hundreds of men, women, and children, were awaiting their arrival.

There could be little doubt in Hunter's mind that he and his party were prisoners, but he was anxious to save a box which contained the precious log-book, and his nautical instruments. He accordingly lifted it from the boat himself, and carried it beneath a tree near a hut, where he sat himself down upon it as though it were his ordinary seat. At the same time his men secured the muskets and ammunition, and, with the assistance of the natives, cleared the boat of harpoons, lines, and water casks, etc. ; these

were piled in front of a large hut, which belonged to some native of importance.

They had not long to wait before the hollow tones of native drums were heard, and the shrill sound of whistles or flutes ; these heralded the arrival of the chief, who marched into the village in considerable state, being followed by a number of men armed with spears. The chief was a fine man, above the usual height, with an expression of keen intelligence ; he was almost naked, but wore a scarf of native manufacture around his loins, and a variety of beautifully-coloured feathers arranged like a coronet upon his head. His armlets were solid gold, which had been hammered to an octagon, and bent into a massive ring above the biceps muscle. The rich yellow metal unmixed with alloy, looked doubly bright in contrast with his smooth coal-black skin. Similar rings were around each leg beneath the knee. Although, like others of his race, his lips were full, and his nose broader than the same feature among Europeans, the chief was a remarkably handsome man, even among his own people, who were far superior to the ordinary negro type.

The absence of an interpreter was an extreme difficulty. Hunter's first inquiry would have concerned the missing boats, as he trusted that by some good fortune they might have reached the coast. It was quite impossible to convey his meaning. He endeavoured by pantomime to describe the burning of their vessel, and the escape in boats. Pointing to the distant sea horizon, he took fire and applied it to a canoe, for a moment of time, he then threw the fire

in air to imitate a conflagration ; he broke pieces of cane into a number that would represent the boats which left the burning ship ; he then showed that one boat only had gained the shore, and exhibited his anxiety concerning the remainder. It was of no use ; the chief appeared to understand that some boat had been burned, but beyond that fact he was obtuse to all pantomimic attempts at description.

The chief could have taken all their small effects without considering their feelings, as the party was entirely in his power, but Hunter with ready tact selected the cleanest musket, and, after polishing it with some wood ashes taken from the fire, he presented it as an offering to the great man, with extreme civility of manner. He was requested to fire it off, as the chief had heard of firearms, but had never witnessed their effect. Hunter aimed at a cluster of cocoa-nuts, and at the discharge, three fell to the ground, which were immediately seized upon by the natives and presented to their chief. The women had stopped their ears at the report of the musket, but the men, although ignorant of the use of firearms, had not evinced the slightest fear. . . . Hunter now explained, as well as he was able, the manipulation of the lock and trigger ; he snapped the flint and steel, showing the pan for the priming, and the touchhole that communicated with the barrel. The chief was delighted, and expressed a wish to fire the musket himself. The instruction he had just received enabled him to load without assistance ; he bit off the end of a cartridge, and rammed it home. He placed the musket upon full cock, although point-

ing directly upon a crowd of women, who were admiring their chief's dexterity.

An order was given, and in a few minutes a fat goat was led forward; this was held by a native about five yards from the chief, who, after several attempts to aim, during which he had the instruction of Captain Hunter, fired; and to his intense delight, the goat fell dead! . . . He immediately examined the hole by which the ball had entered, and that upon the other side by which it had made its exit. The goat was skinned upon the spot, and opened; the passage of the ball and its effect were closely scrutinised, and at the conclusion the goat was presented to Hunter and his men. The chief made signs that Hunter was to occupy a hut close to his own residence, and that he and his men were to follow him. There were half a dozen muskets in a more or less rusty state, and a small keg of cartridges. Hunter ordered his men to shoulder arms, and to march in single file as a guard of honour behind the chief. About five minutes' walk led them to a huge india-rubber tree, near which grew one of those magnificent examples of vegetation, a stately tamarind of many centuries' growth, whose widespreading branches would have covered five hundred mounted men. The girth of this sound trunk was about thirty feet, and beneath its shade were several of the chief's family, reclining upon neatly-woven mats. All rose to receive him, and remained standing until the order was given for the whole party to sit down.

The mighty tamarind was covered with fruit that was nearly ripe, as the pods were well filled, and

brown. The boughs were full of monkeys, who gambolled with each other and munched the acid fruit with little fear of the human crowd beneath. Parrots of gaudy colours flitted among the branches, uttering discordant cries, and beautiful green pigeons in great numbers whistled and cooed in company with innumerable doves, and smaller birds of wonderful variety. That grand tree appeared like a little world of feathered life ; it was an emblem of silent strength, and the majesty of the everlasting ; and yet so sensitive to light, that, as the sun sank at even below the horizon, each of the million leaves closed upon the departed day, and slept till wakened on the morn. It is a curious example of the effect of sunlight upon certain vegetation, that the leaf of the tamarind always folds itself as though to sleep at the approach of night.

Huts were quickly prepared for Hunter and his men ; clean mats were laid upon the ground, and the chief, having taken his departure, the party were not long in preparing their goat's flesh by roasting it before the embers of the fire. This was a meal that was thoroughly enjoyed, as they had not tasted fresh meat since the day of sailing from Port Louis. A large calabash of toddy, which is the fermented sap obtained by tapping the embryo fruit-stems of the cocoa-nut tree, was sent as a present from the chief ; this was tolerably strong, and the welcome drink warmed the hearts and brightened the spirits of the late miserable crew, who for the first time during many days forgot their troubles, and laid down happily at night to sleep.



CHAPTER VI.

THREE years had passed away since we left Hunter and his men happily asleep. . . . Madagascar had passed through a political crisis. The enlightened King Radáma, who had endeavoured to introduce reforms, and by the encouragement of European enterprise to stimulate the desires of his subjects towards commerce and civilisation, had died in 1828, and had been succeeded by his Queen Ranavola, who determined to overthrow every institution which her good husband had created.

Radáma had encouraged missionaries, he had established schools, the army was organised by Europeans, treaties of commerce had been entered into with the English and French, the slave trade was discouraged, the industries of the country were developed, and European settlers had been invited to take up their residence at Tamatave, and at several stations upon the west coast on the Mozambique Channel. The Christian religion had been embraced by many converts, and the general intelligence of the people, under the guidance of their enlightened ruler, gave promise of rapid strides toward civilisation.

The Queen was idolatrous, and hated Europeans. She trampled upon all treaties, and gave all foreign-

ers fifteen days' notice to quit the country. The Christians were persecuted, and many were cruelly put to death. All schools were abolished, commerce was paralysed, and the country was at once thrown back into barbarism.

There are few countries in the world more capable of development than Madagascar. The island is about 950 miles in length, varying from 200 to 500 miles in width; the soil is rich, and although the coast-line is generally unhealthy, the interior is well adapted to the constitution of Europeans, as the country rises rapidly to a succession of plateaux upon mountain ranges, the peaks of which rise to a height of 10,000 or 12,000 feet.

As the island comprises latitudes from 12° to 25° 50' south, and is well watered by periodical rains, the productions are extremely abundant, including rice, indigenous sugar-cane, indigo, manioc or cassava, several species of tobacco, pepper, ginger, pimento, oranges, limes, bananas, and fruits of great variety, with cocoa-nuts and the bread-fruit; the latter tree is one of the most useful to the natives, as it supplies many of their wants. The fruit has no relation to bread in any form, and it is difficult to conceive the origin of the name. It is a large rough-rinded yellowish-green mass weighing from five to eight pounds; this is uneatable in a raw state, but when boiled it somewhat resembles a yam. If cut into thin slices and fried in butter it is a good substitute for potatoes. The milky sap of the bread-fruit tree when boiled produces an excellent pitch, which is used for smearing the seams of native ships,

and for other purposes. The bark yields an excellent fibre ; the timber is durable ; thus the same tree produces several articles of much service to the native shipbuilder—wood for his vessel, together with fibre to weave into sails and cordage, in addition to pitch for paying over the caulker's seams, and food for a few days' voyage.

The population of Madagascar was supposed to number between four and five millions. These were divided into chiefdoms, but mainly subject to the reigning monarch. The Hovahs, who inhabited the more elevated portions of the country, are a distinct race from the negro type of the original inhabitants, and are descended from Malays, who were successful invaders many centuries ago. These people have long hair instead of the woolly heads that characterise the African races. They are also more advanced in culture. Gold and silver work, together with that of iron and other metals, has always distinguished the Hovahs as superior to the ordinary Malagasses ; they are likewise well known for their industries in silk and cotton manufactures, and for the fabrication of strong stuffs from many native fibres, principally that yielded by the *Rafia* palm. Although these people exhibited a natural superiority to the inhabitants of the lower country, which was marked by the style of their buildings and their general mode of living, they were nevertheless idolators, and sunk in the depths of superstition. The French, who had formed a station on the southern portion of the island in A.D. 1740, had endeavoured, by missionary enterprise, to spread the seeds of Christianity, and had established

schools, which promised fairly, until the persecution of the Queen Ranavola extinguished all hopes of success.

The principal commerce of Madagascar had lain with Mauritius and Bourbon, both of which important colonies were entirely dependent for their supplies of bullocks and sheep upon this trade. The cattle of Madagascar were celebrated for their size and strength; thus not only were they of value for the supply of food, but they were the draught animals in general use for the transport of sugar from the numerous estates in the French and English possessions. The prohibition of export from Madagascar by the irascible Queen was a severe blow to the two colonies, and necessitated the purchase of supplies from the Cape of Good Hope. Mules were substituted for bullocks for draught purposes; these were obtained from Brazil, and even from the immense distance of Marseilles.

Slavery was an acknowledged institution of Madagascar, and the supply was generally obtained from Arabs who crossed the Mozambique Channel, which is about 240 miles in width from the mainland. It is a curious fact that from time immemorial the Arabs have been the most determined and energetic of all nations in this nefarious traffic. There can be little doubt that, long before the Portuguese commenced their adventurous expeditions, the interior of Africa was well known to the marauding Arabs who traded from Zanzibar in days that were prehistoric. The great difficulty in African research was caused through the absence of all means of transport, which com-

pletely paralysed the attempts of European explorations. The Arabs, who were slave-hunters, overcame this difficulty by kidnapping slaves and converting them into beasts of burden. By these means they not only reduced the expense of their trading adventures, but they procured the means of conveying ivory from the distant interior to the coast, after which they sold the tired slaves for export to all slave-dealing countries, including at that time France and England (before the abolition).

Such was the condition of Madagascar when Hunter and the remnant of his crew landed upon the island. As the Queen had spies throughout her territory, the arrival of these shipwrecked strangers was quickly reported, and an order was received by the hospitable chief to transmit his prisoners to headquarters. Hunter was absolutely penniless. Although coin had no value in Madagascar, an equivalent was as necessary as money would be in a civilised community. The exchange or barter by which purchases were effected in that country consisted of glass beads, mirrors, knives, scissors, muskets, powder and ball, and the usual variety of commodities that are in demand in primitive societies. The chief had sequestered the muskets and cartridges, which were forwarded to the Queen; but the astronomical instruments and the precious log-book were unmolested, as the native superstitions regarding witchcraft prevented them from touching articles of a mysterious nature, with which Hunter had been observed to communicate with the sun and moon.

The journey to the Queen's residence had been

fatiguing in the extreme, as it had to be performed for a distance of about 350 miles on foot. Upon arrival at the court of the bloodthirsty Queen a rigid inquiry was instituted, and the party narrowly escaped with their lives. Hunter and Dick were fortunately allowed to remain together, as they passed for father and son, but the remaining five sailors were sold as slaves to various chieftains.

Both Hunter and young Downe made considerable progress in the language during the first year of their residence ; but they were in the position of slaves to one of the principal advisers of the Queen, and worked upon his property in the manufacture of a species of flax produced from the fibres of the aloe. It was impossible for them to hold communication with the outer world, and escape appeared hopeless. The miseries of anxiety had to be endured ; the ivy-covered cottage at Greenwich, which contained all that made life dear to Hunter, rose before him in his dreams, but a cruel fate had separated him, apparently for ever, from wife and child. At the expiration of two years the Queen's adviser died, it was supposed by poison, and Hunter and his companion were sold to a chief in a northern province upon the sea border.

The French were persistent in their determination to sustain their commerce in spite of the Queen's prohibition, and a vessel of war arrived at St. Antongil Bay, within two days' march of the estate upon which Hunter and Downe were employed. The chief to whom they belonged happened to be at St. Antongil, and being desirous of communicating with

the French captain, he bethought himself of his white slaves, who might understand the language; he accordingly sent for Hunter, who hastened to obey the summons, accompanied by Richard Downe.

Upon their arrival at the sea-port, their joy may be imagined at discovering a French frigate lying in the beautiful land-locked bay of St. Antongil. Hunter knew a little French; but, fortunately, an officer on board understood English, and the story was soon told. The French captain at once offered a certain number of presents to procure the liberty of the two slaves, which was readily granted; in fact the chief their master, was by no means an admirer of Rana-vola, as he had been a faithful officer of the late King Radáma, and had suffered material loss from the prohibition of foreign commerce. He was therefore anxious to establish friendly relations with the French, and he agreed to discover the situations of the sailors who originally formed Hunter's party, and to bring them secretly to St. Antongil, where they should be cared for until the arrival of a future vessel. . . . Having been three years a prisoner upon the island, Hunter was once more free. He had been obliged to part with his astronomical instruments as they had been too weighty for conveyance through the long journeys on foot, but he had clung tenaciously to the precious log-book, and the chart which would prove the position of the *Sophia* upon the day of her destruction.

Nothing could exceed the kindness of the French captain and his officers. Clothes were supplied by them; and Hunter once more trod the deck of a fine

ship. The vessel was bound for Brest, having just returned from Bourbon and Pondicherry.

The voyage to the Cape was prosperous. Hunter had been buoyed by the hope that the *Sophia's* boats might either have been picked up by passing ships, or that by good fortune they might have reached the land. To his deep regret, no news could be obtained by the authorities at Cape Town, and there could no longer be any doubt that the long-boat, and the little remnant of seven souls were all that remained alive of the *Sophia's* crew.

The frigate remained at Cape Town for two days, and then proceeded upon her voyage. Hunter and Richard Downe had reported the circumstances of the *Sophia's* loss to the agent at Cape Town, from whom they had received an advance of money and an outfit for their return to England.

There were no incidents worth relating during the voyage, and the frigate arrived safely at Brest. As Hunter was yearning for his home, he lost no time in taking a grateful leave of the captain and officers of the frigate who had befriended him, and, accompanied by Richard Downe, he engaged a passage upon an English trading brig that was bound to London, and set sail.



CHAPTER VII.

AFTER a long absence from England, the return is generally disappointing. When far away from home our thoughts recall the past, and scenes are conjured up by our imagination which reproduce in vivid colouring the pictures that are allied with happy associations. England is represented in our memory brightened by sunshine, but our first view of the much-loved shores is through a depressing medium of fog and drizzling rain.

It was upon one of these gloomy days that the brig which contained Hunter and his companion dropped her anchor at Gravesend. They had travelled at best speed, and could not have despatched a notice of their approach that would have preceded their arrival. Hunter's mind was crowded by conflicting feelings, mingling hopes and anxieties as he neared his home from which he had been separated nearly five years. Was his loved wife alive? The infant would be now a child of five years old, with which he must make acquaintance, as it could not know its father.

With a heart throbbing with emotion he landed at Gravesend, and took a passage upon the steamer for London, which would deliver him at Greenwich.

The vessel's decks were crowded with passengers, their umbrellas dripping in showers from the light mizzling rain. The shores of the river were quite unchanged during the years of Hunter's absence; there were the same muddy banks, and gloomy-looking wharves and buildings, foundries, shipwrights' yards, and factories; there were countless vessels of all denominations, some heavily laden returned from distant lands, others on the point of sailing for foreign voyages with all the hazards of the seas before them. At last he could descry Greenwich Observatory through the murky atmosphere, and his heart beat quickly, as he knew that in a few more minutes the ivy-covered cottage would come into view, where all that he loved was unconscious of his near approach, and must be disconsolate at his long and mysterious absence. Another bend of the river was rounded by the steamer, and the little cottage could be plainly discerned. Hunter had a small travelling-bag which contained a change of clothes, and the important log-book, to which he had tenaciously clung from the moment of the *Sophia's* destruction. His first duty was to rush into the arms of his wife; and then to hurry with the log-book to his owners.

The steamer touched the wharf, and Hunter sprang on shore, and hurried through the well-known streets and lanes toward his old home. It was on the hill upon the outskirts of the town.

In a few minutes, breathless with his rapid strides up the steep incline, he stood at his own door. He had cast an anxious glance at the windows, but had seen no one. He rang the bell. . . . Somehow his

usually strong nerves had become weakened, he knew not why, but his hand trembled violently as he again rang the bell after vainly waiting for a reply. He listened at the door; he heard a sound of approaching feet, and of a child crying; the child cried "Mother!" It was no doubt his own boy, and the mother—his loved wife—was near. . . . The door opened. An elderly woman had attended the summons. Hunter quickly entered. "Is Mrs. Hunter at home?" he asked hurriedly. A little boy of about five years old had now run into the hall.

"Where is Mrs. Hunter?" anxiously inquired Hunter. "Tell her I am here; Captain Hunter," he exclaimed, having forgotten to announce himself.

"Captain Hunter!" almost screamed the woman, "why he's dead and drowned surely! Lord have mercy upon us! come into the parlour and sit down and tell us all about it if you knew Captain Hunter, poor soul! why that's his child, who's always crying for his mother since she's gone; and I can't pacify him."

"Gone!" exclaimed Hunter, who, now deadly pale, trembled as though with ague. "Gone!" . . . "Did you say the mother is *gone*? . . . Gone where? . . . Is she . . . is she . . . is she d-d-dead?" gasped poor Hunter, as some unknown but anticipated misery crushed him down with an anguish that was appalling. "I am her husband. I am Captain Hunter," he continued, in low broken tones. "For God's sake I beseech you, my good friend, take pity upon me, and tell me the worst. Where is she? where is my

dearly loved wife? without her my home is blank indeed."

"Oh dear, oh dear, this is a bad business, to be sure!" sobbed the old woman. "Why, sir, you were considered dead, and she took on for a time, and went into mourning; but a year passed by, and . . . and . . . and she's married again, only last month, and——"

"A lie! a lie!" shouted Hunter, "*married!* Did you dare to say that my wife has left me? . . . me! and that child! for another man? impossible, never will I believe such infamy. Where is she? tell me where, I beseech you, good woman, or I shall go mad; where is she gone to, if alive? but if dead, oh rather that it were death than this; tell me the truth, I do implore you."

"Poor soul, I do pity you, indeed!" said the sympathising woman; "and I do from my heart wish it was not true; but so it is, as I have told you perhaps too suddenly, for I could not believe you were really Captain Hunter. She is married and gone; and I was put here to take care of the little boy for a time by Mr. Harvey, who has been very kind, and has taken on about it uncommon, and has supplied me with all the money for expenses, and——" . . .

Hunter was turned to stone; he did not appear to listen to this heart-breaking disclosure, but stared vacantly at the child that was regarding him in quiet curiosity. He then gently took the child within his arms and kissed its cheek. "Thank God, you can never become a woman and a deceiver!" slowly and



POOR SOUL, I DO PITY YOU. INDEED! — p. 148.

severely murmured the heart-broken father, who fell back heavily and unconscious upon the floor.

It was some time before he could be restored ; and, when his consciousness returned, his features were haggard, and ten years seemed to have gathered upon his frame. He mechanically raised himself from the sofa, and taking his small travelling-bag in his hand, he dreamily left the house, and abstractedly took the road towards London.

In about an hour and a half he reached the door in Fenchurch Street, where Harvey, Graham, and Company in large letters upon the wall denoted the well-known office of his employers. Hunter opened the swing glass door, and entered the large room occupied by numerous clerks ; these he did not notice, but without regarding those whom he had known well in former years, he passed through the office to the door of the inner room belonging to the heads of the firm, and without knocking, he entered, closing the door behind him. Mr. Harvey alone was sitting before the table, and he started to his feet upon seeing the haggard and ghastly countenance of the unhappy being who had so unexpectedly appeared.

“ Hunter ! ” exclaimed Mr. Harvey, “ is this indeed yourself ? Thank God, you are returned to us at last ! ”

“ Would to God that I had gone down with the *Sophia* ! ” solemnly ejaculated Hunter. “ Here, ” continued Hunter (as he unlocked the bag and produced the log-book, the cover of which was scorched by fire), “ is the log-book, which I saved from the flames when she was burnt at sea ; this will secure

the amount of insurance by proving the quantity of oil on board. I saved it when there was no hope ; young Richard Downe is safe, and will be here to-night. Five of the crew are slaves in Madagascar ; beyond those, all are lost ; and I . . . am disgraced ; and my home . . . desolate," slowly exclaimed the unfortunate man as he sat down upon a chair and buried his face in his hands, with his elbows resting upon his knees. . . .

"Desolate!" continued Hunter as he rose from the chair, "but take care of my boy as I have taken care of your interests. I leave you the log-book, and my child."
. . . Hunter would have quitted the room, but Mr. Harvey had grasped his hand and forcibly detained him. "My dear friend, I know all your misery, and for God's sake let me console you if that is possible. My house shall be your home ; you may be desolate in heart—that is beyond my power—but if sympathy deeply sincere can comfort you in this sad affliction, believe and trust in me. You belong to me, and I shall not let you free ; you must accompany me home this very hour. Confide all in me as your truest friend, and this heavy cloud may yield to brighter days, but it is indeed a blow that might crush the stoutest heart."

The overpowering shock of misery had frozen the source of tears, but the brotherly sympathy of his kind employer completely thawed the ice-bound heart of the unfortunate Hunter, and he gave way to a burst of anguish, overwhelmed by the agony of his pent-up emotions.

It would be painful to dwell upon this scene. The reader of this tale will have followed the few years career of a fine true-hearted sailor with sufficient interest to have wished him the happiness so well merited upon his return, and if this story were not true, it would have been cruel to have invented so undeserved a punishment to a man who had earned at least the reward of his own home. Unfortunately it is too true. When I was a child I knew Captain S——n, whom I have named Hunter, and he himself told me the incidents of the voyage which I have described in these pages.

Mr. Harvey was a true friend to a man who had been devoted to his service. He kept Hunter at his house, and did all that was possible to cheer him and to relieve his mind from the terrible blow he had received. Hunter's little boy was also an inmate of Oakleigh, and the sympathetic heart of Mrs. Harvey strove by a thousand kindnesses to alleviate the distress of his position ; but, although Hunter received these marks of her good nature with undisguised gratitude, he was always reserved in women's society, and never recovered sufficiently from his disappointment to enable him to entertain his former respect for the sex. I knew him for many years, from my childhood to manhood, and I delighted in the man and in his stories of the sea, but I never heard him allude to his wife. The child grew, and was brought up to his father's profession. Mr. Harvey's sympathy was of a truly practical nature. When time had seared the first deep gash in Hunter's heart, and he began to recover from the shock, his employer pur-

chased a fine vessel called the *Vanguard*, of which he bestowed a half share, together with the command, upon his devoted captain. This ship traded to various portions of the world, and realised a considerable fortune for her commander, who eventually purchased his employer's share and became independent. The boy assisted his father, and when I last heard of them very many years ago, they were in considerable affluence.

If I were permitted to indulge in fiction I should not end this story here, but I should have continued the interest in Richard Downe, who, upon his return to his uncle's house at Oakleigh, would have found his lovely cousin grown into an age that might have reciprocated his affection, and the consequences might have resulted in their mutual happiness after the usual series of hopes and disappointment in all affairs of love. As I must adhere to facts, I confess that I know nothing more than I have related, and I have always looked back to the short history of Captain Hunter's cruise in the whaler *Sophia*, and his grievous affliction upon his return, as a story that affected me deeply when a boy.



III.—EVERARD HARCOURT; OR, THE YOUNG CADET.

CHAPTER I.

ABOUT the year 1825 the chief personage in this story was a young cadet fresh from Addiscombe. He was about to sail for India to enter the military service of the Honourable East India Company.

Everard Harcourt was an excellent specimen of an Englishman who combined every quality that should adorn a young man's character. Although only twenty, he was invariably respected by those of maturer age, who admired his natural charm of manner, which resulted from a frank and straightforward nature, at once modest and sympathetic. He was not only first in all games where strength and agility were required, but he was at the same time studious, and had passed all examinations with the highest credit. His handsome and frank countenance gained him friends without an introduction, as there was a sincerity of purpose and total absence of guile in his expressive features which formed a peculiar attraction.

Everard was the second son of Sir Anthony Harcourt, who had been educated for the church, and had succeeded to the title upon the death of his brother. The estate was poor; and although the stipend attached to the living was eight hundred a year, which formed a good addition to the vicar's moderate fortune, the family was large, and the expenses of education necessarily involved strict frugality. The mansion belonging to the baronetcy was let, and Sir Anthony Harcourt had never changed his method of living since he acquired the title, but remained in the pretty vicarage of Temple-Combe, where his children had been born and bred.

It was one of those lovely evenings early in July, when England appears in perfect beauty—could the climate of such a day be claimed as the rule instead of the exception, no portion of the globe could compete with our country's charms.—Everard Harcourt was standing upon an old stone bridge, looking down from the centre of its high moss-grown arch upon the rippling stream beneath. Although the river was not ten yards wide, and at the present moment it could not have been three feet deep, it was sometimes a roaring torrent when rains from the Dartmoor Hills swelled the numerous brooks which fed the stream. This sparkling water rushed over a rocky bottom in a deep dell, sheltered from winds by steep hills covered with hanging woods of oak and chestnut. About half a mile from the spot where Everard now stood, the gables of the ivy-covered vicarage could be seen, not far from the gray



HOW QUICKLY THE HOURS FLY! --p. 155.

church tower which rose above the trees, and formed a striking object among the massive foliage.

The church clock struck seven; the jackdaws flew out of the belfry at the startling sound. "Was that indeed seven?" exclaimed a gentle voice very close to Everard's ear. "How quickly the hours fly! I thought it was only five. Where will you be at this time to-morrow? . . . I shall be here, and I shall cry for you, dear Everard, till my tears swell the brook and rush with the stream into the sea, where your ship will carry you away from me. Think of me, then, for my heart will break when you are gone, and I shall lean upon this parapet and look into the water and see only my own sad face reflected; yours will be far away. Oh, Everard, you must not go!" continued the beautiful girl by his side. "I would rather die than be left alone when you are gone. . . . I feel that if we part we shall never meet again."

Eveleyn Malcolm was a girl of about Everard's age; her parents had always lived in the neighbourhood, but since the husband's death the mother had removed into a smaller residence, as her eldest son had for some years been of age, and had inherited his father's property.

As the families had been intimate for very many years, an affection between the beautiful Eveleyn and young Everard was a natural consequence. They had played together as children, and had unconsciously grown up as lovers. Often in their early childhood Everard had called her his "little wife," and the young girl would have been stony-hearted

had she not reciprocated the true love of so earnest a character as Everard. . . . The parents had advised in vain. If there had been wealth, even upon one side only, there might have been some hope, but both were poor ; and as love is said to be stronger in proportion to the difficulties with which it is beset, so also in the present case the two young hearts were indissolubly united, although there was no probable chance of a happy termination.

Eveleyn bent one fair elbow upon the hard stone parapet of the bridge, while tears fell from her large blue eyes ; her other arm was round the waist of her lover, and it is hardly necessary to say that his was in a similar position. In this attitude they suffered the intense agony of those who love hopelessly, but who are doomed to part upon the morrow. Every minute was precious, for it was but a second in apparent time, when hours that were fleeting too quickly were hurrying towards the dreaded moment of separation. Young Everard's face wore an expression of deep anguish. "Eveleyn," he said, "if I were rich I would give you all ; if I wore a crown I would throw it before your feet ; but I have nothing except my heart, which you have had since I was a child, therefore I have none to give. I never loved but once, and that was always ; and I always shall love you, and you alone. It is a cruel fate to part ; but still I am a man, and manhood gives me hope. With your love to support me I shall start upon my career in India, and with God's help I shall succeed. There have been many in worse plight than I who have risen to fortune, and I feel that what others have

done I can do. Believe me, dearest Eveleyn, when I swear that I will be true to you if you are faithful to me, that should years or a whole life separate us I will love no other, and that my hope, ambition, and prayer will be, that I may return to be worthy of you as my loved wife."

It is needless to give the words of Eveleyn's reply. There was an exquisite misery mingled with sad sweetness in the moment when these two young lovers exchanged their vows of mutual fidelity. She gave him a locket containing a beautiful miniature of herself, and he placed upon her finger a ring set with a single opal of brilliant colouring.

"There is a superstition connected with that stone," said Everard. "If any calamity is approaching the wearer, the opal loses its colours and becomes pale, like a clot of milk. I trust, dearest Eveleyn, it will remain like my love, unchangeable, and sparkle with joy upon my return, when you will become my own."

.
. . . That evening passed away too quickly, and upon the following day at the same hour the unhappy girl was alone upon the bridge, her face buried within her white hands as she leaned upon the parapet, and added her bitter tears to the stream beneath. Everard was gone; he had sailed to India upon one of the splendid vessels of the Honourable East India Company.

Every evening a sylph-like figure might be seen leaning upon the parapet of that moss-grown bridge. In the privacy of solitude she kissed the cold stone upon which he had leaned upon that day of bitter

parting, when for the last time he had pressed her to his heart, and they had mingled their youthful tears together.

Eveleyn was an only daughter, and her widowed mother observed with deep anxiety that she refused her food and was growing pale and thin. She no longer took an interest in her usual occupations, but the only object that received her care was a curly-coated black retriever. This dog belonged to Everard, and he had consigned it to her protection. "Sailor" was inseparable from his young mistress; he accompanied her in solitary rambles through the woods, he remained by her side during meals, of which he received the larger share, and slept on a rug before her door at night. It was a consolation to Eveleyn's sorrow that she had always before her some living thing which Everard had loved, upon which she could bestow affection.

Many months passed away without tidings. Whenever the wind howled at night she woke in terror, dreaming that his ship was in a storm; but at length the postman brought a ship-letter, with a large red seal flattened by the heat of a tropical sun to a degree that obliterated the impression. It was addressed to "Eveleyn Malcolm," and it came from Everard. She was seated at the breakfast-table; but she tore it open, and hurried to the privacy of her study, where she could devour the contents without interruption. She read as follows:—

CALCUTTA, 15th January 1826.

MY DEAREST EVELEYN—I have written so many letters during our long voyage, all addressed to you; as the occupation made me

imagine that you were near me, and that I was actually speaking to the one who makes me happy in my sleep when I see you in my dreams, and miserable when I awake and your dear form has vanished from me. Writing to you always seems to bring you nearer to me, although the talking is only upon my side, and I obtain no answer; still the fancy cheers me.

You will like to hear something about our voyage. There were some very good fellows on board—many young, like myself, going out to join regiments, or to take posts in the Civil Service. I have made a good many friends, and I hope no enemies, although there have been a few quarrels during the five months' sojourn at sea, where people have nothing to do but to eat, drink, argue, and squabble.

We had a tremendous gale in the Bay of Biscay, and carried away our fore-topsail-yard, and lost a portion of our bulwarks. When we arrived at the Cape we put in for repairs, and then came on here, touching at Ceylon, which is the most beautiful country you can conceive. Cocoa-nut trees fringe the shore for a hundred and fifty miles in an unbroken line, except where broad and clear rivers cut the green fringe in silvery streaks. The natives are exceedingly curious, as the men resemble women in appearance, having long black hair, which they fasten into a knot behind, and keep in position by a very large tortoise-shell comb. They are dressed in a sort of tight white petticoat, which reaches to their ankles; a neat white short jacket and carefully ironed shirt complete the man's costume.

The women dress in a similar manner, excepting the lace upon their jackets, which looks remarkably pretty. This they themselves manufacture. On the whole the natives are good-looking, but effeminate.

Their canoes are very extraordinary, as they consist of a long block of wood or tree, beautifully fashioned and scooped hollow. Planks are sewn upon either edge of the hollowed portion, so as to form a gunwale. The seams are secured by sewing a long strip of the areca palm over the surface, which is caulked and pitched with a resin called "dammer." This is procured from several species of trees, but the best is from the bread-fruit.

We remained for a couple of days at Colombo, the capital. There is a large fort that was constructed by the Dutch, and a fine sheet of fresh water outside the fort upon what is termed the Galle-Face. This is a turf promenade where the races are held. The stories you may have read of "cinnamon" or "spicy breezes" from Ceylon are nonsense. I went to the cinnamon gardens, and there is no perceptible scent unless you break a branch or crush a leaf; in fact, there is nothing whatever to admire in the cultivation of this spice, which somewhat resembles a bay-tree with a very broad leaf.

I was much interested with the tame elephants, which are taught to assist in various works, and are employed for moving huge stones into position, when building bridges, in road-making through the

interior. It is fortunate that I did not bring Sailor with me; the climate is much too hot for English long-coated dogs, and insects swarm here. Crocodiles are also in great numbers, and I hear that a dog is almost certain to be seized should he venture into fresh water. Under these circumstances I think Sailor is lucky to be in a cool climate with a warm friend like Eveleyn to take care of him.

We had excellent food while in Ceylon; the curries are delicious, and are very superior to those of Calcutta. The difference lies in the addition of cocoa-nut cream, which is pressed from the finely-scraped cocoa-nut. There is a highly aromatic leaf which also forms an adjunct to Cingalese curry. Prawns of immense size, and excellent oysters, are to be had for a few pence; while fruits of great variety, especially pine apples, are remarkably cheap. Altogether Ceylon is a charming place, and game, both large and small, abounds in the interior. I heard tempting accounts of elephant-hunting and other shooting, but our stay was too short for any attempts at such noble sport.

The approach to Calcutta by the Hooghly river is exceedingly dangerous owing to quicksands at the entrance, and I hardly think it would be possible for an enemy to ascend the river without a pilot. Large vessels have been known to ground upon these treacherous sands, and have been entirely lost. As the tide runs out, the stranded vessel heels over, and is literally sucked down by the quicksand, so that in a few hours the ship entirely disappears. This is a horrible idea, but these dangers are the safeguard of Calcutta.

You would be surprised to see this place; it is quite unlike the picture that I had anticipated. Broad streets, good shops, large and solidly-constructed houses, give a European appearance to an Oriental city. Balls and parties are very common; I have been to two of the former already, and danced considerably, but although all the beauty and fashion of Calcutta were present, there was not one that could have compared with a certain girl of my acquaintance at home. I wished with all my heart that you had been there, as you would have eclipsed them as the moon dims the stars.

I am to be sent up to Allahabad, which is a long way inland, and I shall travel by dawk—but you will not know what that means. Dawk is a postal arrangement, and you are carried in a palanquin by runners, who are engaged by the authorities. You can travel day and night, therefore you can accomplish a great distance in a comparatively short time, or about a hundred miles in twenty-four hours.

The climate is quite perfection at this season of the year, therefore I shall enjoy the trip. How different this life and scene is to the quiet but dear little combe at home. I thought of you so much, dearest Eveleyn, and wondered whether you went down to the old bridge the day after I went away. I shall never forget that spot, and trust, after some years, to meet again in the same old place, when there shall be no more parting. . . . Of one thing you may be certain, that I shall

do my best to succeed, with only one hope that shall be my reward hereafter.

I shall not be able to write again until I reach Allahabad ; but I shall expect a very long letter from you, upon several sheets of paper, that will take some time to read. With love to your mother and all friends ; pat old Sailor for me, and throw a handful of peas to the pigeons in my name, and a bit of sugar to your canary.—Ever yours,
etc. etc.

EVERARD HARCOURT.





CHAPTER II.

A JOURNEY by dawk of 460 miles from Calcutta brought Everard to the banks of the Ganges opposite to Benares. Nothing that he had hitherto seen could compare with this interesting city, which rose abruptly from the margin of the holy river.

At this spot the Ganges is about half a mile wide, and the cliffs or "ghauts" upon which the town is built are nearly a hundred feet above the water-level. Long flights of stone steps or stairs descend to below the water from numerous temples, to facilitate the bathing of crowds of pilgrims who congregate at this sacred city. The sun was shining brightly upon the walls, and the noble surface of the broad river reflected the bold and rugged outline of the incongruous shapes of innumerable houses and holy buildings, which in a quaint harmony of confusion produced a picture of Eastern architecture that was quite unrivalled. Everard was standing exactly before this scene, and, referring to his note-book, he discovered the latitude to be $25^{\circ} 20'$ north and longitude 83° east.

Stepping into a ferry-boat which was towed for about a quarter of a mile up stream to allow for the action of the powerful current, he was rowed across; the temples and other buildings increasing in pic-

turesque appearance upon his near approach. Landing upon the slippery steps, he ascended the long flight, and entered the streets of Benares. The illusion of beauty was at once dispelled; dirt and holiness, which are old companions, were here closely allied. Crowds of idle pilgrims and fanatics were lying about on mats, or squatting upon the ground; many of these were smeared with wood ashes, which gave a ghastly appearance to their features, while their wild and vacant eyes denoted the action of some narcotic; probably "bhang," which is a preparation of the Indian hemp, and is freely indulged in by those who devote their lives to holiness. The use of this drug produces a variety of effects, according to the form of the preparation. Some persons smoke the leaves instead of tobacco; others mix them in a certain proportion. The flower-blossoms when first expanded are dried, and treated in a similar manner with a more powerful effect, but the *ne plus ultra* is obtained by the use of a gum which exudes from every portion of the plant when in full bloom. This gummy excretion resembles honey dew, and is collected by people clad in raw hide; they move gently among the plantation until the gummy substance adheres in quantities to the hard surface of the dried skin; this is scraped off with a knife, and the gum thus obtained is highly prized. A piece no larger than a pin's head, if inserted among the tobacco of a lighted pipe, will cause rapid intoxication, with curious and sometimes dangerous results. It appears to exaggerate the prominent feature of the individual character; thus a person who is naturally lively will burst into im-

moderate laughter, and sit for hours smiling incoherently, and occasionally giggling at unknown jokes which are coined by his perverted imagination. . . . Others who are naturally irascible become pugnacious and frequently lose all control of their actions, and behave as maniacs. Those who have a religious turn become enthusiasts, under the unnatural excitement of the nervous system. . . . Although the reaction of Indian hemp is not distressing to the same extent as opium, it must be prejudicial to the general health, and generally terminates by producing a dreamy or lethargic state bordering upon stupor, which, among the Hindoo fanatics, is supposed to be a sign of inspiration.

Benares, being the centre of Hindooism, afforded a grand example of the religious superstitions of the people. The population was about 600,000, of which about one tenth were Mohammedans. In the midst of the city was the celebrated mosque of Aurungzebe. This was erected upon the site of a Hindoo temple of Vishveshwar, that was purposely destroyed by the ruler to exhibit the triumph of the Moslem creed.

The monkey temple was a well-known attraction at Benares. This is situated in a crowded thoroughfare of the town, and is an interesting sight to a stranger. The roofs of the houses in the immediate neighbourhood were crawling with sacred monkeys, while the courtyard of the temple resembled a menagerie, where several varieties either quarrelled, or chased each other over the eaves of the buildings, or quietly munched the offerings given by the passers-by. A small donation to the priest was thankfully

accepted for the upkeep of the establishment, and the monkeys' expenses.

Although the Hindoo religion abounds with incomprehensible superstitions, there are peculiar charms in some of the observances, especially that which relates to the sufferings of animals. In Bombay there is an establishment upon an extensive scale devoted entirely to such creatures which either from injury or natural deformity require an asylum. The entrance is direct from the street, and the visitor is introduced to a large courtyard surrounded by stalls under cover of a broad-roofed verandah. One portion is occupied by cattle, some of which upon my visit had been maimed by accident. According to our ideas it would have been more merciful to extinguish life at once, and put the unfortunate creatures out of a lasting misery, but the Hindoos thought otherwise. There was an immense bull, a zebu, that appeared fat and in sleek condition, I could not perceive any injury; it was perfectly quiet when patted by a stranger; the defect was explained by the attendant. "It had been born blind, and had been an inmate of the asylum since its birth." Other cattle had broken legs, which had been clumsily arranged by the native doctor, so that they were utterly useless and were shrivelled into deformities. One unfortunate beast had only three legs, and was evidently fatigued by standing. There was a department for dogs, nearly all of which were suffering from mange. Sick monkeys were being carefully attended, and vast numbers of pigeons were assembled in the courtyard, attracted by the grain thrown down by pious Hindoos as offer-

ings *ad libitum* to the birds. . . . Close by the entrance were several of the ash-smearing devotees who were tending butterflies with broken wings, that could not fly ; these had been picked up and carried to the general refuge, where they were carefully fed with sweets and flowers.

Although the impulse was healthy, the sentiment of Hindoo indiscriminate charity was exaggerated. Every chatty or earthen jar of water was covered with fine gauze to prevent the flies from falling in, and drowning.

While Everard was at Benares, he witnessed the process of cremation by which the bodies were consumed, and the ashes consigned to the sacred waters of the Ganges. The place set apart for this ceremony was outside the town close to the margin of the river. Numerous fires were in various stages of extinction ; some were reduced to heaps of ashes, others were still smoking, although a few embers were all that remained alight ; but one pile was only just prepared for ignition.

Four iron posts were fixed in the ground about six feet distant in length, by three in width, somewhat resembling the posts of an old-fashioned bedstead. Some dry palm leaves had been arranged upon the ground ; these had been rendered more combustible by the addition of ghee or buffalo butter in considerable quantity. Upon this inflammable groundwork, logs of wood had been carefully piled. Each log was about seven feet long by four or five inches thick, and perfectly straight. As these were laid between the upright iron posts they were con-

fined in a parallel position, until the funeral pile attained a height of about four feet, and formed a kind of bed or platform of neatly-arranged poles.

The body of a woman was carefully laid upon this pile. She must have been a person of some consideration, as she was enveloped in a beautiful sheet of red silk embroidered with gold. All being prepared, the relations and friends in considerable numbers advanced toward the pile. The face of the corpse was now uncovered, and each person took one last look as a sorrowful adieu. In this instance the woman's son was next of kin and chief mourner; he was a lad of about fifteen. He had been shaved by the priests, and washed before the ceremony. A torch was placed in either hand by a priest, and thus provided, the son was led three times around the bier, while a low chant was uttered by the priest and joined in chorus by all present. This being concluded, the son, with his back turned toward the pile, stretched his arm backward with the lighted torch, and ignited the inflammable material beneath the wood. He did this upon each side of the bier, at the head, foot, and sides. The lad then fell back to the party of relatives, who remained about ten paces distant. The fire began to burn; at first slowly and with considerable smoke, owing to the quantity of butter mixed with the leaves of cocoa-nut. In a few minutes the fire insidiously worked its way upward through the parallel logs, but without apparent flame, which in the bright sunlight was hardly visible. . . . Presently through the thin white smoke the lower portion of the red silk scarf could be seen to blacken and to

shrivel, showing that the fire had reached the nethermost parts of the body. . . . A few extra poles were now carefully arranged by the attendants upon either side of the corpse, until they projected above the level of the body, which had the appearance of being contained in a hollow.

The fire burned freely. The wind although light was steady, and the fuel being dry, the flames rose quickly, and soon the burning mass appeared at a white heat. The feet of the corpse fell off. One of the attendants with a long pair of tongs gently secured each foot, and placed it in the centre of the fire. . . . A peculiar explosion told that the head had burst, owing to the expansion of the steam within the skull; but nothing could be seen, neither was there any smell.

At the expiration of about two hours nothing remained but the four iron posts, and a few white ashes in the centre. Two attendants with long tongs diligently searched among the ashes, and discovered a few pieces of black cinder, remains of the corpse that would have been unrecognised by any person excepting an expert in the process. These few cinders were gathered together in a small heap in the middle of the hot ashes; an earthenware pipkin filled with ghee (butter) was tied to a long stick with cord; this was extended until the pot rested upon the cinders; the fire having burnt the cord, released the pipkin, which inverted its contents and promoted a fierce blaze. This additional heat concluded the operation, and reduced the charred remnants to white ashes. Absolutely nothing of the body was left that

could be distinguished from the light ashes of the wood, excepting a few delicate shreds extremely white, that must have been the remains of calcined bone.

This burning had taken place in bright sunshine and a tolerably brisk breeze, therefore the extremely dry wood had been entirely consumed together with the body ; the whole mass of ashes might have been contained in an ordinary hat-box. The corpse had been completely dissipated into steam, smoke, and the finest ashes, which had been carried away in infinitesimal atoms by the wind, leaving no trace of what two hours before had been the adult body of a human being.

The relatives now gathered the ashes together and carried them to the margin of the Ganges ; upon the surface of which sacred river they were religiously and sorrowfully consigned.

There was nothing repulsive in this act of cremation, which, though simple in character, was less appalling than the yawning grave which receives the coffin of the European to decay in loathsome rottenness.

The end of a human being must entail the necessity of removing the body in some form or other, and it is curious to observe the different customs of various nations to attain an object that at first sight appears simple. The main difficulty is caused by religious scruples, but there can be no question that cremation possesses many advantages in a sanitary point of view, and that sentiment which is merely the result of custom or fashion, need not be outraged if the

operation is delicately performed. The Hindoo custom of burning would be free from all criticism provided that the supply of fuel was in all cases sufficient; unfortunately this is the worst feature of the ceremony. The poor cannot always afford to purchase five or six hundred pounds weight of wood in districts where forests are scarce and fuel dear; the body is in such cases only partially consumed, and the half-burnt flesh is committed to the river instead of the purer ashes. Fortunately the numerous fish and crocodiles of the Ganges are purifiers of its sacred waters.

The Parsees, who are fire-worshippers, expose their dead to be eaten by vultures, and other carrion birds; this is a disgusting method, which must be condemned by every natural sentiment. If a body is to be eaten by vultures, it might as well be devoured by pigs or hyenas, but there is an idea that the earth should not be defiled by any portion of the human carcase after death. The birds, who are supposed to live in the air, and the vultures, whose aerial flight beyond the reach of human vision is symbolical of an ascension towards heaven, are permitted to feast upon the bodies of all ages and classes indiscriminately, as the Parsees admit that death levels all social distinctions; the rich and the poor are alike devoured.

The most important of all localities devoted to this extraordinary rite is that of Bombay, which is known by the poetical name, "The Seven Towers of Silence."

There is a road from the city of Bombay which skirts the coast towards Malabar Point; about four miles from the town an abrupt cliff rises above the

sea, covered with palms of various kinds and the foliage of other tropical vegetation. The rocks which protrude from the dark coloured soil are black basalt, so sombre in raven blackness that the blocks resemble coal. Upon the right hand when driving toward the point, a flight of broad stone stairs leads directly up the cliff through the tall palms which adorn the rugged sides.

After a long ascent the summit is gained. The temple of the sun stands upon the right exactly upon the margin of the cliff. You enter a gate and are introduced to beautiful grounds well kept, as though an English garden. Broad gravel walks, beds of lovely flowers all well tended, and surmounted by very tall palm trees in great numbers, ornament the Seven Towers of Silence. The gardens comprise many acres, and, shaded by groves of palms in various positions the white towers may be observed; these are circular; the walls are about thirty feet high, and at first sight appear as though specially constructed for defence against an enemy. The diameter of these circular buildings is about sixty feet; the interior is divided as follows. A small iron door is arranged as the solitary entrance. This being opened, exposes the interior. In the exact centre is a very large circular well or pit of profound depth. Around this central hole are circles increasing in size according to their remoteness from the middle point. These circles are divided into spaces for the reception of human bodies. The smaller for children, the next for women, and the outer circle for men.

There is a small aperture in the wall of each tower,

and although the seven towers are not equi-distant, but are erected at irregular intervals, their positions are so arranged that the light of the sacred fire, ever burning within the temple 200 yards distant, shines directly through the insignificant opening, and sheds its sacred ray within each theatre of death. The holy fire within the temple is fed by a supply of sandal-wood, and for more than ninety years this flame has never been extinguished.

About forty yards from the small door entrance to the tower is a huge slab resembling an enormous gravestone. When the funeral arrives, the body is laid down upon this flat surface, and at this point the relations and friends take their last leave of the corpse.

There is a class of attendants employed expressly for the purpose of conveying the now abandoned body from the slab, to deposit it in the proper place within the tower.

The tall palm trees which throw a dark shadow around the tower of silence are crowded by expectant vultures and hooded crows. As the body approaches, there is a sound of rushing wings, and a loud rustling of the disturbed palm leaves, as the noisome birds quitting their lofty posts hover around the tower, and then descend and perch upon the summit of the wall. The trees are foul with the rank excrement of these carrion birds surfeited with human flesh ; the ground stinks with their filthy refuse ; even weeds refuse to grow in such venomous earth.

The body, perhaps of some beautiful young girl, is carried through the iron door, and it disappears for

ever. The attendants lay it in the circle to which it should belong; they then remove the sheet or other covering, so that it shall be perfectly naked to attract the vultures. Hardly is time allowed for the retreat of the undertakers, when a roar of rushing wings is heard, as the flocks of many hundreds of ravenous birds pour down from every side, and tear the hapless corpse piecemeal from shred to shred.

In about an hour, a clean picked skeleton is all that remains within the horrible tower. The vultures gorged, with wings half expanded in distress of surplus feed, sit lazily among the boughs, or rest upon the wall, surveying the skeleton remains of their foul banquet. The feast is over.

The attendants re-enter the reeking circus, and, lifting the skeleton remains, convey it to the mouth of the deep pit that forms the centre. Down into the dark depth they hurl the bones of some once lovely girl, to mingle with those of poor and rich; the beggar and the prince brought down by death to nothingness, and levelled in corruption.

Powdered charcoal and quicklime are thrown in quantities down the pit, which contains the skeletons of multitudes. The wrappers which had covered the bodies, when brought into the gardens (some of which are exceedingly costly), are carried by the bearers to a small tower, where they are burned at regular intervals. No perquisites are permitted to the attendants, who are highly paid, and are never employed in other capacities.

The Parsees represent the highest commercial intelligence of India. Although worshippers of the sun

and fire, they profess to regard these objects simply as symbolical of the unseen and incomprehensible creator and ruler.

Benares is celebrated for very beautiful designs in brass, which, from the peculiar proportions of mixed metals, almost rivals the rich colour of gold. The shapes of vases, etc., are exceedingly artistic, and the engraving is rich and delicate. Small bowls of polished brass are commonly used as drinking-cups by all classes of Hindoos. These are easily cleaned and brightened by a handful of fine mud taken from the gutter, with which they are scoured, both inside and out.

Everard left this interesting city, and continued his journey to Allahabad, at the confluence of the Jumna, and the Sereswati with the Ganges, forming one of the principal cities of the vast plains of Central India, and considered by the Brahmins as most holy.

Allahabad is situated in $25^{\circ} 27'$ north latitude and $81^{\circ} 50'$ east longitude, and 550 miles north-west from Calcutta. It is visited annually by crowds of pilgrims to bathe in the sacred stream. A powerful fort is erected upon the junction of the Jumna and Ganges which commands the navigation, and a considerable military force occupies the cantonments.

The province of which Allahabad is the capital is one of the richest in India. The fertile soil produces cotton, indigo, opium in large quantities, in addition to a great variety of cereals, including wheat and barley. In this central position Everard joined his regiment, the 3d Bengal cavalry, and his military career commenced. We shall accordingly take leave

of him for two years, during which he will have been studying his profession, gaining the esteem of his superior officers, and the friendship of all his fellows.

His heart remained unchanged, and his letters home were rewarded at frequent intervals by replies which made his pulse throb quicker, as he broke the well-known seal, and sought for solitude to enjoy the message of her love.





CHAPTER III.

DURING the two years that had passed away since we left Everard with his regiment at Allahabad, a great development had taken place in his character ; from the lad of twenty he had become a man. Since he had been thrown upon his own resources and had associated with others much older than himself, the natural features of his disposition had expanded, and he appeared both in tastes and experience to be several years in advance of his actual age. Having a natural love for the military profession, he was not content with the usual regimental routine of the cantonments, but he had studied military history by reading the best works upon the subject, and he was thoroughly conversant with all the tactics and strategy of the old Napoleonic wars, and the various important campaigns of Europe.

Wild sports in hunting dangerous game are the best possible training for the soldier. To succeed in this noble pursuit, a man must possess those qualities which are essential to a general. He must be keen, but calm ; he must have a correct eye for country, and at the same time he must thoroughly comprehend the character of his adversary, to know the position of his haunts and the secrecy of his retreat.

He must understand the nature of the animal most thoroughly in order to contend successfully with a vast superiority of physical strength, that must be matched by a master-mind. Intelligence must overpower weight of bone and muscle. A thorough sportsman should be sound in wind and limb; sharp of hearing, and quick of sight. His nervous system should be under the most perfect control, to enable him to seize an immediate advantage without an instant of irresolution or delay. In the moment of danger he should become preternaturally cool, instead of yielding to excitement. The art of a stealthy approach should be reduced to a science.

If a general in command of troops should be opposed by an adversary who has a high reputation as a wild hunter, the best advice I could give him is "to sleep but little, and to keep both eyes open."

Everard Harcourt had already distinguished himself as a horseman in the exciting sport of pig-sticking, and had upon several occasions claimed first spear when in company with experienced sportsmen. His regiment had received orders to change quarters and to march for Jubbulpoor; this would be in the centre of all that was most attractive to an enthusiastic hunter.

The cantonments of Jubbulpoor are upon the plain, but are contiguous to a series of broken hills of dark coloured basalt, greenstone, and other plutonic rocks. The elevation above the sea-level is 1550 feet, but in the summer-time the climate is intensely hot. The town of Jubbulpoor is about three miles from cantonments, these are beautifully arranged in broad roads

kept in admirable repair, and shaded by mango and other evergreen trees, which protect them from the burning sun.

The large River Nerbudda is within a few miles of cantonments; this flows through the celebrated valley of that name, and debouches upon the West Coast near Baroda. The valley of the Nerbudda is a rich black loam, which for several hundred miles is one vast sheet of waving corn. Coal-mines are also to be found in this productive valley, which may at some future time be worked with profit.

Although the geological formation for many miles around Jubbulpoor is a series of interesting trap-rocks, there is a sudden and peculiar change within eleven miles of the settlement, where the Nerbudda River cuts through a range of hills composed of pure white marble. This locality has long been celebrated under the name of the "Marble Rocks," and it is the permanent attraction of all visitors to the Central Provinces of India.

The Nerbudda River is an average of 200 yards in width until it meets with the impediment of a hill range. Whether the abrupt cleft is the effect of an earthquake has never been decided, but I should lean to that opinion, as the entire neighbourhood is characterised by eruptive rocks exhibiting the effects of volcanic action; a sudden upheaval may have blocked the natural course of the river, which may have been diverted through a chasm, rent by volcanic forces through the limestone in the form of snow-white marble. The walls of this defile are not only perpendicular, but they actually overhang the water

120 feet below, where the hitherto broad river is confined between cliffs resembling in whiteness loaf-sugar, in a narrow channel which in some places scarcely affords space for the long oars of a boat to row clear of the threatening rocks. The water is exceedingly deep as it silently passes through this extraordinary gorge for a distance of about a mile, when it again expands into a broad stream, brawling over rushing cataracts, and again collecting in deep pools between rounded hills covered with forest trees and jungles. When rowing in a boat up stream between the overhanging marble cliffs, the effect is heightened by the brilliant plumage of numerous peacocks, which exhibit themselves to great advantage upon the sharp outline of the white rocks. Monkeys in numbers gambol among the trees and leap from crag to crag, sometimes meeting with fatal accidents when failing to clutch the slippery stone, and falling into the depths below. Blue-rock pigeons build their nests in the clefts and occupy the crevices in considerable numbers where the passage is the narrowest, but in such places shooting is most dangerous, as it might disturb the very numerous clusters of wild bees which construct their hives in lofty places among the precipices. Long yellow stains may be perceived descending the smooth face of the white marble cliffs where the honey has trickled down. These bees are very large, and constitute a real danger from their extreme ferocity. Fatal cases have occurred when, from some disturbance, the hive has attacked *en masse*, and both men and animals have succumbed to the poison of their stings. During the

extreme heat of April and May, when all trees have been denuded of their leaves excepting the mango, banyan, and a few others, it is highly necessary to take precautions when selecting a camping-ground within a shady tope or grove of mango trees, lest the bees nesting among the branches should be disturbed, and infuriated by the smoke of the fires upon sweeping and burning the dead leaves. In such cases they will make an indiscriminate attack upon men and animals, putting the whole camp to ignominious flight. . . . Although at the present day the large game of the Central Provinces has been much reduced by the shooting of Europeans, in addition to the usual destruction by native hunters, there was at the date of this story (1828) an abundance of wild animals in the immediate neighbourhood of the Marble Rocks, where Sambur deer, the spotted Axis, bears and tigers, were sufficiently numerous to satisfy the most ardent sportsman. Even at this moment there are tigers which visit the locality periodically, and the Sambur and Axis are not extinct, although so scarce that no experienced person would visit those jungles as a hunting-ground.

Everard had not been quartered long at Jubbulpore before he organised an excursion in the neighbourhood. Accompanied by one friend—a brother officer, Major Selwyn, who was an old shikari—he commenced his preparations. Camels were sent on with tents and supplies, and the “coolasses,” or tent-pitchers, were ordered to select a grove of lofty mango trees, while servants were instructed to have the camp in perfect readiness.

Indian servants are the best travellers, as they are thoroughly accustomed to tent life, and to the arrangements necessary for camping. Although, when confined to the daily routine of a household, they may be apathetic, they appear to wake up to their duties upon the commencement of a jungle shooting trip, and endeavour to excel. There is no particular benefit in being uncomfortable, and although a good sportsman should consider luxury as very secondary to the prime object of his expedition, he may remember that in a trying climate his health will be more likely to endure if he takes precautions to ensure it, and that, should his health break down, his sport is ended ; accordingly, if he can afford to travel comfortably, by all means let him do so.

The tents are the first consideration. These were double fly, with five cloths in the roof, single pole, fourteen feet square. Two were sent on as a double set ; one would always be forwarded in advance, to be set up and ready upon arrival when the last camp should be struck. Two good shooting elephants with howdahs were prepared, and a couple of travelling elephants which marched at the rate of five miles an hour.

Rifles were in those days very inferior weapons to the inventions of modern times. A double-barrelled No. 12, with a spherical ball, was considered to be a trusty companion for large-game shooting. This would be loaded with the small charge of two and a half, or at the most three, drams of powder ; the same bore of rifle would now be loaded with seven or eight drams, which, with a heavier elongated

bullet, would produce a weapon of treble power in velocity and striking energy. Our two hunters were armed in precisely the same fashion ; each possessed a No. 12 double rifle, and a smooth-bore (for shot) of the same number which would carry the rifle spherical bullet, if required, for close quarters. This arrangement possessed the great advantage of confining the ammunition to only one calibre.

All the servants and animals had started on the previous morning with the tents and baggage for a spot about twenty miles distant from Jubbulpoor. Upon the arrival of Everard and his companion, the gleam of white tents in the dark shade of a mango tope was a delightful sign in the distance that they were within sight of their shooting-ground. The camp had been swept clear of leaves, the tents were pitched, the headman of the district was present, according to instructions received from the authorities, and every necessary arrangement had been perfected.

It was a lovely spot for an encampment. A grove of about a hundred large mango trees the size of park-timber in England, produced a shade for the tents and people, while at the same time the elephants and camels enjoyed the comparatively cool retreat, and feasted upon a pile of fresh green boughs collected by their coolies. Close to the border of this grove, a small river, tributary to the Nerbudda, flowed between steep banks about thirty feet below the level of the country. The water was beautifully clear, although shallow ; and as it rippled over a stony bottom it fell rushing over larger rocks into a deep pool, where the fish were rising at the insects which

fell from the overhanging bushes. Rocky hills covered with forest, rose upon the opposite margin of the river, and beautiful glades stretched between these eminences, forming gentle inclinations draining towards the stream. It was the perfection of ground for game, as it combined covert, pasturage, and water, which at this dry period of the year was exceedingly scarce throughout the district; all the inferior brooks having long since been evaporated by the scorching wind.

The Tesseldar, or headman of the neighbourhood, gave encouraging accounts of tigers, "one of which had killed a native bullock only a few days before the arrival of the baggage; a well-known man-eater infested a small village some miles distant, and the jungles swarmed with sambur, axis (spotted deer), pigs, and nilghye." . . . "Allow at least one-half for exaggeration," exclaimed the experienced Major Selwyn; "these fellows always think it necessary to meet you with a pleasant story; but, in spite of some high colouring, we shall no doubt find employment for our rifles. The tigers must have our first attention before we disturb the country by firing at other game, and we must lose no time in making the necessary preparations." . . . Selwyn gave instructions to the Tesseldar that a buffalo about three parts grown should be tied up near the spot where the tiger had killed the native bullock; but the animal was to be brought without delay to be examined before purchase, as it would be necessary that it should be plump and in good condition. This is a very important consideration, as a tiger will frequently decline to attack a thin sickly buffalo, which the natives

would probably offer to the English sportsman at the high price of a healthy animal, unless it should be examined beforehand.

A fine young buffalo about twelve months old was brought to Major Selwyn on approval, and was purchased for twelve rupees. This animal was led by several shikaris and the native owner to a spot about a mile and a half distant from the camp, where a deep but narrow ravine cleft a small hill covered with thick jungle. In the sudden bend of the ravine, which was about thirty feet below the general level of the surface, a small pool of water still remained, although the bed of the insignificant stream was perfectly dry. There was a little plot of green turf upon a slope of sandy loam just above, and close to the pool. This was the only clear space, as the steep sides of the banks were covered with dense scrub, while the narrow bottom was overhung with creepers and tangled bushes.

Some dry shrivelled hide and a few large bones were strewed upon the turf near the water's edge. Upon the bank of damp sand below the turf, from which the pool had receded through evaporation, was an impression as though a soft but heavy weight had reclined within the last few hours ; this was the spot where the tiger had laid up after having killed and dragged the native bullock to its den among the thorns and jungle.

It was nearly sunset before the buffalo was secured by a strong rope to a stake driven in the ground, upon the higher level, a few yards distant from the edge of the ravine.

It was arranged by Selwyn that a hundred and twenty men should be held in readiness upon the following morning to act as beaters, if the tiger should carry off the buffalo during the night. This is the most certain method of discovering a tiger during the dry season when the streams and tanks are generally exhausted, as the animal, being naturally thirsty, is forced to the neighbourhood of water. If the tied buffalo is attacked during the night, the tiger is certain to drag the carcase into some spot difficult of access, and not far from water ; there it will consume as much flesh as it may desire for the first meal, it will then drink, after which the tiger will withdraw not far distant, and will generally sleep until appetite returns to tempt a renewal of the feast. As the tiger will most probably be hiding within a couple of hundred yards of the carcase, it may generally be started by a long line of beaters, and may be driven toward the guns, which would be posted in positions well known to the natives as the favourite runs of the animal when disturbed. Tigers will haunt certain localities for many years, sometimes disappearing, and returning at particular seasons with curious regularity ; they are accordingly recognised by the natives as habitual visitors, and the routes of their retreats are thoroughly understood by the villagers.

The night arrived. A certain number of shikaris had been instructed to proceed at daybreak to the spot where the buffalo had been secured, and to hasten to camp with the news should it have been carried off by the tiger ; in which case the beaters

would be prepared and the elephants ready for a drive.

. . . The morning broke. Hardly had the first rays of golden light streaked the horizon, when the shikaris returned in considerable excitement—the buffalo was gone! The rope of attachment was gnawed through, and the heavy carcass had been dragged along the dusty ground toward the deep ravine; the shikaris could see no more in the dim twilight, and they had hastened with the news.

“Saddle the elephants! call the beaters!” shouted Selwyn, who from his age and experience was acknowledged as the leader.

In a short time the beaters were assembled to the number of one hundred and twenty; a captain was appointed over every ten men, who was responsible for keeping them in line. The elephants were mounted, and the large party moved off in silence, led by the shikari guides, to the spot where the buffalo had been killed.

Upon reaching the place, a broad track was immediately discernible where the carcass of the buffalo had been dragged by the tiger along the ground. The shikaris now beckoned to the mahouts, and as the elephants approached, it was arranged that the guns should dismount and follow the guides silently, in the expectation of finding the tiger upon the body of his recent victim. It was explained that the tiger was exceedingly cunning, and that should he obtain the wind of the elephants, he would be warned by their strong scent, and nothing would induce him to expose himself. Accordingly the mahouts were in-

structed to take their animals about a quarter of a mile to the rear, and to be ready at a given signal—a loud whistle—should they be required.

The elephants retreated, and the two guns followed the leading shikari upon the fresh tracks of the drag. This terminated about fifty yards distant, at the abrupt edge of the ravine, where the carcass had evidently been tumbled over the precipitous bank, for upon looking carefully below, the route could be plainly seen where the weighty body had torn away the brambles in its descent; but no trace could be discerned, excepting the confused position of the thick bushes which appeared to have been disturbed.

The head shikari was, like many of his class, a fearless hunter, and, proud of his knowledge of such game, he suggested that they should descend by an easier path, and endeavour to discover the carcass of the buffalo, as by an examination he should be able to prognosticate the probable movements of the tiger.

It is a curious feeling of calm excitement when creeping through tangled jungle upon the fresh tracks of a tiger, and you feel certain that it must be somewhere in the immediate neighbourhood. Selwyn, as the older and experienced hunter, was leading the way at the heels of the advanced shikari, while Everard closely followed. Two trustworthy bearers carried their spare guns.

Upon arrival at the dry stream-bed below, they first examined the sandbank and turf mound close to the small pool; here were unmistakable tracks of two tigers, one of which, from its immense size, was the male. It was therefore admitted that a tiger and

tigress were in company. Following the stream-bed with extreme caution, they arrived at the place where the buffalo had fallen to the bottom. There could be no doubt that two tigers had assisted in dragging the carcass through the thick jungle, as their tracks were plainly distinguished wherever a sandy plot among the rocks permitted an impression. The leading shikari now stopped and listened; he was only armed with a short spear about six feet in length.

No sound being audible, he again advanced, parting each bough most carefully to avoid the slightest noise, and treading as gently as a falling leaf. Every time that the boots of the English followers made a sound upon the rocky bottom, he turned his head reproachfully to enjoin the greatest caution. Alternately stopping for a few moments to listen, and again proceeding, they had advanced about a hundred yards along the precipitous and narrow gorge, which now almost closed above them owing to the abruptness of the cliffs, and the density of the overhanging branches. There was a sudden turn in the ravine, and the party were still advancing in their stealthy manner through the yielding bushes when they were startled by a short but tremendous roar within a few feet of the leading shikari, accompanied by a rush through the impervious jungle. For an instant the shikari jumped upon one side, at the same time bringing his spear to the charge, while Selwyn's rifle was instinctively brought to his shoulder to meet the attack. All was again silent.

After a few moments of suspense the shikari

again advanced, this time with little caution, and within ten yards he came upon the remains of the dead buffalo, from which the two tigers had just retreated. The buffalo had evidently been killed early in the morning, as only a portion of the hind quarters was eaten, and the tigers had been disturbed at their meal before their appetites had been half satisfied. The shikari was of opinion that they would not abandon their prey, as no shot had been fired, and they had been only scared by the scent of the party, and the slight noise of their advance. A tiger will seldom wander to any great distance from its victim, as it is perfectly aware that vultures and jackals will leave nothing but the tough skin and bones, should the remains be left unguarded.

It was accordingly arranged that the guns should be posted in convenient positions, and that the jungle should be driven by the beaters. The party returned by the same route of their advance, and were not sorry to find themselves once more upon an open space in the bright day, instead of the dense confusion of tangled jungle.

The little army of beaters was now left to the charge of one of the village shikaris, while the headman guided the two Englishmen to their allotted positions about a mile distant.

Two convenient stations had been hastily arranged about a hundred and fifty yards apart, which would intercept the retreat of the tigers when the jungle should be driven.

The first position was a large tree which overhung a nullah, or deep dry watercourse, which de-

scended from a wooded range of exceedingly broken hills, as it was expected that the tigers would certainly make for that impenetrable fastness when forced to retreat before the advancing line of beaters. Major Selwyn climbed the tree, and was soon ensconced in a kind of gigantic bird's nest formed of poles and branches strongly interlaced, and bound together with the twisted bark of a species of mimosa.

Although to the ideas of some who are accustomed to meet the most dangerous game on foot, it might appear unmanly to be perched out of harm's way among the lofty branches, it should be remembered that the jungle is so dense that an object only a few paces distant can hardly be observed ; it is therefore an advantage to be in an elevated position, from which everything can be distinctly seen. Many tigers escape when fired at, owing to the deflection of the bullet when cutting through innumerable twigs that intervene across the line of flight. If a person remains on foot, a tiger will generally obtain his wind, and may sneak away without coming into view, or it might creep along the bottom of a nullah without being perceived, and thus pass scatheless. Some persons prefer to remain within the howdah upon the back of a well-trained elephant ; but when a tiger is being driven before the line of beaters it is exceedingly cautious, and advances slowly, occasionally halting to listen, or to look around in search of an expected enemy. In such cases the scent of an elephant is almost sure to be detected ; and the noise of the elephant's ears,

which are continually flapping, or the peculiar guttural sound emitted when it cools its flanks by blowing from the trunk, are warnings that would certainly scare a wary tiger. On the whole, therefore, the most certain method of killing a cunning tiger is to occupy a "mucharn," which is the name given to these special constructions for shooting.

Major Selwyn was already located in his mucharn, and Everard was conducted through the jungle to a similar arrangement in a large tree which commanded the junction of two deep nullahs. These formed a letter Y when united in the main channel. As the two dry watercourses descended from the hills, it was highly probable that the tiger might adopt the main nullah as his course of retreat towards the rocky and jungle-covered range.

Before Everard ascended to his hunting-nest, he trimmed off with his knife a few bushes which overhung the nullah. Having thus cleared the view, he climbed the tree with some little difficulty, and took his seat.

The shikaris departed, and returned to the distant beaters, who were waiting for orders to advance.

Everard was now alone, about sixteen feet above the ground. From this position he looked exactly into the two nullahs on the right and left below him, and straight before him into the main channel by which the tiger was expected to arrive. There could not have been a more favourable post. The rough branches hurt his knees, he therefore cut an armful of small green boughs; as this was a bo-tree and in full foliage; with these he arranged a more comfort-

able bedding, upon which he was soon settled at his ease. As all trees had shed their leaves owing to the extreme dry heat, excepting the banian, bo, and mango, the ground was completely covered, and the crispness of the withered leaves was such that nothing could move upon them without producing a loud noise. This peculiar condition of the season rendered shooting upon foot utterly impossible, as the crunching of the brittle leaves in such deep masses would have been heard at a great distance, and would effectually scare away all wild animals.

Everard now sat upon his perch, occasionally kneeling up cautiously to obtain a clearer view of the surroundings. He listened attentively. The cooing of countless doves was most perplexing, as it sounded like the distant shouts of beaters. He had looked at his watch when the shikari had departed, and he knew that twenty minutes must be allowed for his return to the beaters ; another ten must elapse before any animal could be expected to appear ; thus he might remain for half an hour in expectation.

Suddenly he heard a peculiar noise, sharp and regular upon the crisp leaves beneath ; this was a tiny black-striped squirrel leaping along the ground. If so small a creature produced so loud a rustling, the footstep of a tiger would be unmistakable.

In a few minutes his ear was attracted by another sound. A quick firm tread combined with a bustling among the dead leaves ; and he perceived a jungle hen with four half-grown chickens scratching the ground in search of food ; presently they passed on

and disappeared. Several times jungle-fowl passed beneath his tree; but now a heavier and more decided tread was heard proceeding from the rising ground on the opposite side of the ravine; the tread approached nearer. He knelt up and cocked his rifle in anxious preparation. . . . A fine peacock with gaudy tail appeared, and suddenly flew up into the boughs of a large tree within fifteen yards of his position. This was a compliment to his hiding-place, as that most wary of birds, the peacock, had not discovered him. From time to time several pea-fowl passed beneath, and he became accustomed to the peculiar sound of their tread. He looked at his watch; twenty-five minutes had passed away. He strained his ears to catch a sound, but the ceaseless cooing of the doves confused all others; he wished there were no such useless birds as doves: confound them!

Again he strained his ears. That was a shout, surely! hark again? Certainly those distant sounds were human voices? "Tum-tum-tum; tum-tum-tum." . . . That was a tom-tom decidedly! the beaters had started.

Everard now watched on all sides attentively. In a few more minutes the shouts of the long line of beaters had increased, while several tom-toms beating noisily added to the approaching din. . . . Again quick footsteps were heard upon the crackling leaves, and the shy peacocks hurried forward at the still distant shouts of beaters; these birds are the first to fly from the coming danger. Now a new and much louder rush was heard, and a small species of deer,

known as the jungle sheep, dashed madly past as though disturbed by some other animal.

No shot had been heard from Selwyn, therefore the tigers must be still between the beaters and the occupied positions. Thirty-five minutes had passed away, and yet no sign. Everard began to fear that the wary animals might have stolen away in some other direction by an unsuspected nullah.
. . . What was that noise? . . . Again the parched leaves crunched with a dull heavy tread! . . . He listened earnestly. Once more a peculiar sound was heard, as though a soft, but heavy foot was slowly and stealthily pressed upon the leaves. Nothing could be seen, although his eyes penetrated through all directions. . . . There it was again! That was no peacock, or deer; that was the wary footstep of a tiger; but where?

Everard's eyes had searched the ravines in vain; his ears tingled with extreme tension, as he could not determine the spot from which the sound proceeded. Another louder crunch among the withered leaves directed his attention, not to the deep nullahs where the tiger had been expected, but to the rising ground upon the opposite side.

He could hardly believe his eyes! There, as though conjured up suddenly by magic, stood the dim form of an enormous tiger, ghost-like in the absence of outline, as seen through the medium of countless bare branches of intervening jungle.

His hands grasped the rifle; but he carefully observed the movements of the animal. It halted, and turning its head towards the sound of the advanc-

ing beaters, it listened for some seconds. . . . Again it stealthily stepped forward, placing each foot slowly and gently upon the traitorous ground, which defied all secrecy. The tiger was thus stealing cautiously away from the approaching danger, and quite unconscious of the eager gaze and ready rifle now following its movements within forty yards' distance.

Everard's head was cool ; he knew that it would be a hazard to risk a shot through the numerous branches, which, though small, would intercept the bullet ; he observed with instinctive quickness that a small open space existed about twenty yards in front of the tiger, which some large tree must have formerly occupied, now long since fallen and decayed. According to the present movements of the animal, it would cross this vacant opening unless scared from its direct course. There was a large and peculiar evergreen bush of extreme density which grew at the exact edge of this open space ; the tiger would have to pass this dark mass of foliage, and would then emerge suddenly into the clear space, which was about four yards wide. Everard was determined to reserve his fire until he could obtain an uninterrupted aim.

Again the tiger stopped, and listened. The shouts were growing louder ; for a moment Everard was afraid that the tiger would swerve from the direct course, as it turned half round ; but to his joy it once more resumed its path, and disappeared from view behind the dark green clump. Everard was now kneeling, his rifle half raised, and his finger on the trigger in anxious anticipation. The tiger was evi-

dently listening once more, behind the dense screen, as it did not move.

Suddenly, but without sound, a magnificent black-striped head emerged from behind the thick bush into the bright sunlight, and slowly the form of an immense male tiger moved forward into the open space.

As the head appeared, Everard had quietly raised his rifle to his shoulder, and waited for a few seconds, until as the tiger stepped slowly on, he took the sight exactly in a line with the foreleg, and aimed at the centre of the shoulder. . . . He fired !

The tiger started upon its hind legs, rearing to its full height, and with tremendous roars which rang in terrible notes through the forest, it fell backwards and rolled in several convulsive struggles beneath the dark green bush, where after a series of loud growls which gradually relapsed into deep but low groans, it lay extended with its massive head beneath the shade of the evergreen ; its tail stretched in a long line down the inclining ground.

There was a thrill of satisfaction through Everard's frame ; the tiger was dead, and he was about to raise a loud whistle upon his fingers as a signal, when two shots in quick succession were heard from the position occupied by Major Selwyn. " That must be the tigress," thought Everard, " Selwyn is certain not to miss her." Thus considering in his mind, he clambered down the tree, with his rifle slung across his shoulders. He first crossed the ravine, and holding his rifle on the ready, he threw two or three clods of dried earth at the prostrate tiger to make certain that life was

extinct. No movement responded to the insult ; he approached without hesitation, and admired the massive frame and wonderful muscular development, so utterly unlike the long, lithe animals that represent the tigers of zoological collections.

Half a minute later, he was hurrying towards the station of his companion.

“Take care !” shouted Selwyn, as he observed his approach ; “she’s badly hit, and has rolled into those thick bushes. Don’t go too near, but come up here until the beaters arrive ; we must have the elephants to drive her out.”

Nine accidents out of ten occur when animals have been wounded. It is impossible to be too careful in approaching a wounded beast ; the tiger, lion, leopard, bear, or buffalo, that would have retreated when fresh, will assuredly attack if followed up when wounded.

Selwyn as an experienced sportsman was perfectly right in his advice, as the jungle into which the wounded tigress had retreated was so dense as to be practically impenetrable. Everard, on the other hand, who was flushed with his easy triumph, disdained the security of the mucharn, and remained below, awaiting the arrival of the beaters. An ominous silence had succeeded the rifle shots, the cries of the beaters had immediately ceased, as they knew that the game had gone ahead, and that the drive had been successful ; they were now hurrying towards the guns.

In a very short time anxious faces could be seen approaching, and it was quickly explained that one tiger was dead, while the other was severely wounded and concealed within the thick bush. A great num-

ber of men were quickly assembled, and orders were given that a messenger should be despatched to summon the two elephants.

In the meantime one of the shikaris ascended a tree within the thick jungle, and shouted to the others, "that he could see the tigress lying dead!" A village shikari, who wished to exhibit his superior courage, collected several large stones, and advancing to the edge of the dense bush, threw one into the direction suggested by the man within the tree, who actually saw, or thought he saw, the tigress. No response was made to the first stone. Another was thrown with the same passive result. The tigress was declared to be dead, and the man forced his way into the jungle.

Almost at the same moment a terrific roar was heard, and the tigress with one bound was upon him! Seizing the unfortunate man by the throat, she dragged him into the impervious thicket, where a succession of cruel roars and growls showed that she was tearing him to pieces. . . . This had happened so instantaneously and unexpectedly that it had been impossible to render the slightest assistance. It was an agonising moment, but hardly had the reality of the terrible event been impressed upon the bystanders, when Everard, without a moment's hesitation, rushed to the spot, and, throwing himself upon all fours, crept into the thorny jungle upon the track where the tigress had disappeared with her victim. With his rifle cocked and ready, he lay flat beneath the bushes, and crept forward with caution but cool determination. He was not aware that the courageous shikari,

armed only with his short spear, had followed close behind him, and was creeping upon his hands and knees literally at his heels. A smothered cry from the native, mingled with the growls of the tigress, hurried the advance of Everard, who in a few seconds had crept within view of the disastrous scene. Lying down upon his belly, he distinctly saw the tigress holding the man by the back of his neck as she crouched upon the ground by his side; she was about four or five yards distant, and appeared to have given her whole attention to the destruction of her victim. Everard was in a distressing position. If he knelt, he could not see the tigress through the dense thicket sufficiently well to ensure a fatal shot; if he remained prostrate, there would be a difficulty in taking aim, as the body of the man was dangerously exposed to his bullet.

There was little time for consideration, the tigress suddenly discovered the approach of her new enemies, and without relaxing her grip of the neck, she changed her position and faced the coming attack; at that instant with a cool and steady aim Everard fired, hoping to reach the heart by striking her a little to the left in a line with her chin, as she crouched upon the ground. His bullet must have passed within an inch of the native's head, as the tigress pinned his neck firmly to the ground.

At the report of the rifle, in the cloud of smoke (which being close to the earth in the thick jungle completely obscured the view), the tigress had bounded forward; Everard felt a heavy weight upon his legs, only for one moment, as he rolled quickly upon his

side beneath the bushes, and then immediately sprang upon his feet! For an instant he turned round, being ready with his remaining barrel to meet the unknown danger, when through the clearing smoke he saw the body of the tigress at his feet, with the spear of the shikari buried at least three feet deep in her breast. . . . The shikari was still holding the shaft of his weapon as he knelt upon the ground. The tigress was quite dead. Everard's bullet had passed through her heart, but her convulsive spring had carried her beyond his body as he laid close to the earth, and she had been fatally received upon the projected spear of the trusty shikari who had brought his weapon to the ready on the same instant that he had observed Everard prepared to fire. She had completely impaled herself, and the spear had passed through heart and lungs. The first impulse was to rescue the unfortunate native, whose body was now dragged from the thick bushes. Life was quite extinct; the bone of the neck had been dislocated by the wrench of the tigress's powerful jaws: deep gashes inflicted by the claws had cut the side of the head and face to the bone, and a pool of blood was discovered where the tigress had first dragged the body.

This disaster threw a gloom over an otherwise successful day. "Bravo, Everard, I never saw a more plucky thing in the whole of my experience!" exclaimed Major Selwyn, who had descended from his mucharn with the best intentions, but too late to render assistance, as the affair had been of only a few moments' duration.



THE WIDOW THREW HERSELF AT THE FEET OF MAJOR SELWYN. — p. 201.

W. G. ...

“It was the beater’s own fault, poor fellow ; I told you that we ought to wait for the elephants, and never attempt to disturb a wounded tiger in thick jungle. This will be a lesson you will never forget. You did splendidly, my dear Everard, and you were most pluckily backed up by that fine fellow the shikari ; but never run such a risk again, or you’ll tempt Providence once too often.”

A number of beaters now dragged the body of the tigress into an open space. The elephants arrived, and the tigress was hoisted upon the back with considerable difficulty, the howdah being removed from the kneeling animal to enable it to pack securely upon the pad. A party of men had been despatched to the nearest village to procure a charpoy or bedstead, upon which the corpse of the native could be conveyed to camp.

In the course of half an hour the triumphant but funereal procession started, two elephants transporting the dead tigers, and a number of natives carrying the body of the mangled beater.

The arrival at camp was sufficiently painful. The wife and children of the dead native had rushed down to meet the body, and were loud in their lamentations. The widow threw herself at the feet of Major Selwyn as the senior of the party, and covered herself with dust in token of despair. Fifty rupees were counted without delay, and pressed upon the widow for the expenses of the burial ceremony. This somewhat alleviated her misery ; another ten were added, which had a visible effect. Each of the children received a present in money, and the family retired with the

corpse to their village, envied by the multitude for their sudden access of riches.

The shikari who had so ably supported Everard was not forgotten, and a present of ten rupees in the presence of his brother shikaris and the whole village made him a proud and happy man.

The skins of the two tigers were neatly stretched under the shade of a mango tree, and were well cleaned of all adhering flesh and fat ; they were then smeared with arsenical soap, especially about the lips, and the pads of the paws, which are the first portions to exhibit decomposition. The mustachios were carefully extracted and preserved, otherwise they would have been immediately stolen by the natives, who consider them infallible as charms, and believe that if worn upon the person they will protect the wearer from the attacks of tigers.

A male tiger will average about five hundred pounds in weight, although some may exceed this. It may readily be imagined that the muscular power of any animal belonging to the genus *Felis* of this weight must be enormous, as the momentum of its spring combined with the blow from its forepaw, and the twist given by a wrench from the jaws when seizing at full bound, are sufficient to dislocate the neck of a buffalo. The power of the tiger is then displayed in dragging an animal heavier than itself over roots of trees, projecting rocks, and other serious impedimenta to a great distance with apparent ease.

The length of tigers is generally exaggerated in descriptions of this animal. Nine feet six inches

would be a very large specimen, although skins are frequently met with which measure ten feet, or even more. These give no true idea of the natural life-size, as they have been stretched entirely out of shape, being longer and narrower than the original. It would be easy to stretch a hide from a tiger just killed, to twelve feet, but this would be done at the expense of the breadth, and would give no idea of the true proportions of the animal. A tiger in its natural state is a very massive beast, with broad shoulders and hindquarters; this heavy frame prevents it from ascending trees like the leopard, thus a "mucharn" or hunting-box fifteen or sixteen feet from the ground affords perfect security.

There were no other tigers in this locality, therefore it was proposed that the camp should be moved to the village that was infested by a man-eater about fifteen miles distant.

The weather was intensely hot; the wind blew with a scorching heat as though it had passed over a brick-kiln, and had it not been for the well-watered tattas of sweet-scented kuscus root, the tent would have been unbearable. This fragrant root of the kuscus grass is exceedingly tough and long in fibre; it is therefore used for screens, which are fitted upon frames into the doorways of the tent, and are kept constantly watered throughout the day. The strong, but hot wind causes rapid evaporation, and produces a cool and pleasant draught.

Orders were given to the tent-pitchers to start that afternoon with a guide, and to have the tent ready for their arrival on the following morning at

the most convenient spot in the neighbourhood of the man-eater's haunts.

A bathe in the stream was a good preparation for dinner ; after which the camp beds were arranged in a clear open space away from all trees, and both Everard and his companion were quickly asleep. The precaution of sleeping in the open is highly necessary, as snakes and scorpions or other noxious creatures might fall during the night from the overhanging boughs upon the bed of the unconscious sleeper.

At five o'clock the next morning the elephants were ready for the journey of fifteen miles. A moderate-sized female named "Demoiselle," was arranged for Everard and Selwyn and two servants. The most comfortable saddle is that which forms a kind of oblong sofa with an iron rail at either end, and a foot-board upon either side. Four persons ride with ease upon this arrangement, sitting two together, and back to back, while at the ends they are protected by the rail. A good elephant will travel six miles an hour upon a road, or five miles across country. The morning's march was through a succession of open glades, passing between hills covered with forest. Numerous small villages were passed, in the neighbourhood of which there was considerable cultivation, wheat, barley, and maize having been reaped about a month before.

The fifteen miles were accomplished in a little more than three hours, and they arrived at a grove of trees near a small village of iron-smelters. The tent was in readiness, and the space throughout the tope or grove had been neatly swept by the

villagers, many of whom, together with their headman, were already assembled in expectation of the welcome hunters, who should rid them of the man-eater.

A cup of hot coffee is always refreshing after the morning's march; this had been prepared by the ready servants, and was followed by a pipe, while news of the tiger was eagerly discussed. This neighbourhood was rich in hematite iron ore, and for many generations the operation of smelting had been carried on by the small but industrious population. In witness of the antiquity of this business, huge mounds of scoriæ were overgrown with forest trees, while tumuli of all sizes and ages of the same refuse were to be seen heaped in confusion around the village, all of which were covered with low jungle. The iron ore was dug about a mile distant from the village, and was conveyed in panniers upon the backs of oxen to the smelting-furnaces. These were of the most primitive construction, formed of clay, and were arranged in long rows, while each separate fire was worked by hand-bellows, that entailed great labour and dexterity to raise the blast sufficient for the purpose. The ore was reduced to small lumps, and was mixed with pounded limestone to produce a flux; this was arranged in alternate layers of charcoal; the bellows, kept up by a succession of reliefs, were sufficiently powerful to keep the mass at a white heat, until the molten metal found its way to the bottom of the furnace. As each furnace was limited in its power of production to about thirty pounds of iron per day, the cost would have been excessive had the labour been calculated in wages; but as the

natives did not value their time, and simply worked as their ancestors had worked before them, they never troubled themselves with difficult calculations. The iron was of fine quality, and was sold throughout the district for the manufacture of hoes, reaping knives, bill-hooks, etc.

The women were generally employed in burning charcoal for the supply of the furnaces, and while engaged in cutting wood and conveying it from the jungles for this purpose, many had been intercepted, and had fallen victims to the man-eating tiger.

This animal had become so wary from continual practice in its depredations, that it never attacked twice consecutively in the same quarter ; it was therefore difficult to discover, and had always evaded the hunters who had attempted its destruction. It had killed and eaten a woman about a fortnight before within only a few yards' distance of her hut, to which she was returning with a faggot of wood from the neighbouring jungle.

It was useless to attempt the usual method of tying up a buffalo for bait, as the man-eater was too cunning to be thus tempted. When a tiger has become a recognised "man-eater," it generally prefers human flesh to any other, and it seldom attacks cattle or wild game, as the human being is so much easier to kill and carry off. This tiger, which was now the object of pursuit, inhabited a large tract of country, and was the scourge of the numerous villages throughout a considerable area. It was supposed that it had killed at least thirty people every year ; these were generally women and children, although many men

had been included among its victims.
. . . Two days had been passed by Everard and Selwyn in vain search throughout the neighbouring jungles; they had discovered the skull and a few of the larger bones of the woman who had been recently carried off, but there were no signs of the tiger, which had apparently quitted the vicinity. They were sitting one evening at dinner discussing the probable chances of failure, when a servant announced the arrival of the headman with pressing intelligence.

Permission being immediately granted, the messenger entered the tent, and after the usual salaam, he hurriedly informed his hearers that a native had arrived from a village about six miles distant, with the news that a woman had been carried off that same afternoon by the well-known tiger, which had sprung into the midst of a party who were returning from their work in the fields. This was startling intelligence, which admitted of no delay. Orders were at once given that the elephants were to be ready before daybreak on the next morning. The native was cross-examined, and his testimony being straightforward, there could be no doubt of the truth of his report; he was therefore retained as a guide, while the headman was requested to gather as many people as possible to serve as beaters, should the whereabouts of the tiger be discovered.

At a little before five on the following morning the party started. The two trained shikari elephants were carefully prepared, the thick cotton ropes which girthed the howdahs were hauled as tight as possible, to prevent accidents in the event of an extra strain

upon the fittings, should the elephant over-exert itself in an encounter with the tiger. A stock of fireworks including crackers and bombs, were placed in the box beneath the howdah seat. A jar of water and a pipkin of thick sour milk were securely stowed away in the same compartment, together with a few chupatties or flat cakes of flour, resembling the barley scones of Scotland. Thus provisioned, the two hunters were independent of all other supplies for the day, and they determined to devote themselves to the search for the man-eater from sunrise to sunset, should it be found necessary.

The route lay through difficult country, over hills covered with dense bush and forest trees. Frequently their course was impeded by large overhanging boughs, which threatened to sweep the howdahs off the elephants' backs; but the sagacious animals, obeying the command of their mahouts, although hardly audible to the riders, tore down with their trunks all such obstructions, and then placed the branches to the right or left in order to clear the path from the accumulated rubbish. The elephants clambered up steep places, sometimes skirting dangerous ravines, at others descending precipitous inclines where the earth crumbled beneath their immense weight as they slid carefully toward the bottom. Instead of traveling at the usual pace, two hours were occupied in traversing the six miles, and the watches showed a little after seven when the first elephant entered a low archway of curiously-woven branches which formed the entrance to the village. The natives were already astir, and they thronged around the elephants upon

their arrival with extreme impatience to join in the pursuit of their common enemy.

The first necessity was a responsible leader of the hunt ; and it was at once decided to entrust the entire management to the able shikari who had exhibited so much courage in the late encounter with the tigress. This experienced hunter proudly acknowledged the compliment, and accepted the command. It was arranged that before any operations should be commenced, it would be important to visit the exact spot where the woman had been seized on the previous evening, and to discover, if possible, her remains, as it was probable that the tiger would not be far distant. A number of villagers at once volunteered to act as guides, and the elephants proceeded towards the spot ; this was about a mile distant. They arrived at a narrow gorge between steep jungle-covered hills ; at the bottom a deep nullah formed a watercourse, which drained a range of high and broken ground. This rugged channel was now dry, although water could be obtained in the lowest bends of the stream-bed by digging in the sandy bottom ; it was supposed that in the recesses of the thorny entanglement which obscured the course of the brook, some place might exist where a small pool remained that sufficed for the tiger's thirst.

Passing along this gorge, they arrived at the entrance upon the opposite side of the hill range, where the country extended into a broad glade between two rows of hills ; the natural watercourses at the foot of each line converged into the deeper ravine, which passed through the gorge. It was just at this spot

where the woman had been seized on the previous day.

After a short examination of the ground, the shikari concluded that the tiger would not have remained in the large ravine that was close to the path which led through the gorge, but as the body of a woman was light and easy to carry, the man-eater would probably have dragged its victim to a considerable distance, and might be lying in one of the numerous tributary nullahs which furrowed the sides of the steep jungle-covered hills. The tracks or "pugs" of the tiger's foot were plainly discernible in the dust where it had disappeared into the ravine with the woman's body, and the shikari proposed to make an examination of the principal watercourse before they should disturb the other affluents.

The elephants knelt down, and both Everard and Selwyn dismounted to accompany the shikari upon his exciting exploration. Each was followed by the respective gun-bearers.

By holding on to the roots of trees and bushes they were enabled to slide and clamber down the precipitous bank into the bottom of the gorge, about twenty-five feet below. This was quite free from rocks, and the dry sandy bed exhibited the unmistakable marks of the tiger's paws, where it had descended with its prey, and retreated along the narrow course. The body of the woman had evidently been carried in the mouth, as the marks upon the sand showed that the feet had dragged along the ground. Should this quality of surface continue, there would be little difficulty in tracking up the tiger

to its lair. The shikari led the way rapidly, as though he considered the danger to be as yet remote.

In this manner the small party proceeded until they arrived at the junction of the two watercourses with the main channel, which had formed their route. Here they discovered an important witness in the tracks of the tiger, which had advanced by the right-hand nullah, and had then ascended the bank into the thick jungle, from which it had made its murderous attack. It had made its spring from this dense covert ; it then dragged the woman into the main gorge, along the bottom of which it had carried the body until it arrived at the junction of the three channels, by the right of which it had at first approached, and it had retreated with the body up the left-hand nullah. This exemplified the cunning strategy of a man-eater. It had probably laid in wait within the right-hand nullah until it heard the voices of the unsuspecting women ; it had then stealthily ascended the steep bank and had followed parallel with their advance until the right moment for attack ; one bound across the narrow path would have secured its prey, with which it had rushed forward into the deep ravine. The broad tracks upon the sand, and the drag of the woman's heels were unmistakable in the bed of the left nullah, along which the party now followed the leading shikari with due caution.

For about two hundred yards the tiger appeared to have proceeded with its victim without a halt ; at this point it had stopped, and had dropped the body, as the marks were distinct upon the soft and dusty

surface. After resting or listening, it had again seized its victim, and had resumed its retreat.

The shikari whispered that a gun-bearer should return to the elephants and bring the animals and the entire party into the open glade, in case they should be required. In the meantime, he took the spare gun from the man's hands and proceeded upon the tracks of the tiger.

They had not continued more than a hundred yards along the nullah which ran parallel with the glade, when they arrived at an exceedingly narrow but very deep and abrupt cleft in the steep hillside; this formed a roaring watercourse in the rainy season, draining into the nullah which had been the tiger's retreat. The body of the woman had been dragged up this precipitous cleft or ravine with considerable difficulty, as some of the bushes had been torn out by the roots, and loose stones had been detached from the banks, which had rolled to the bottom. The shikari still led the way, and the party clambered up the steep slope in anxious expectation. About a quarter of a mile had been traversed in this manner; the ravine had become almost superficial, as several level plateaux had checked the course of drainage. Upon one such level surface, the tiger had left the trench by which it had hitherto ascended, and, crossing to the right over a shoulder or "hog's back" of the range, had descended into a much more important ravine, which drained through a gorge among the hills in an opposite direction. Descending always upon the tracks, which were occasionally dragged with blood, the party were following a gentle

inclination which led to a dense jungle in a precipitous bottom, when the shikari suddenly halted. A long-billed toucan uttered its peculiar cry, and flew into the branches of a lofty tree which rose from the dark ravine beneath. "There is water near!" whispered the shikari. Almost immediately after, the rushing sound of wings was heard, and several vultures flew from the boughs, upon which they had remained unobserved. The shikari stood motionless, and listened attentively. . . . The vultures having flown around a few small circles, once more settled upon the boughs. "The tiger is there," whispered the shikari, at the same time pointing with his spear into the dark ravine about a hundred yards distant.

This was an exciting declaration, as the shikari was not likely to be deceived. No one would have expected that water was so near, as the country was completely dried up. There could be no doubt that one of those mysterious pools existed in some deep hole of the torrent bed, where a substratum of clay or rock prevented the absorption of the water. Although such drinking places of wild animals may be known to the native hunters, their existence would never be suspected by an English sportsman. Fresh tracks of large game are frequently seen in considerable numbers during the dry season, in places where there is apparently no drop of water for many miles around; but secret springs among the hills or mountains are well known to the wild animals, who have roamed through those quiet solitudes since their birth, and resort at night to the undisturbed drinking places, where they can slake their thirst in security

from the attacks of man, their only enemies being the leopard or the tiger.

The important question remained—"If the tiger was there, how were they to obtain a shot?"

It was quite impossible to proceed nearer, as the dead crisp leaves that covered the ground would give the alarm of an approach. . . . The shikari placed his gun and spear against a bush, and with monkey-like agility ascended a large tree, from the lofty boughs of which he peered into a particularly dark spot in the ravine below. After a few minutes' observation he descended. He had been able to see a pool of water immediately beneath a perpendicular rock or cliff about twenty feet in height; he had no doubt that the tiger had dragged the body to this secure retreat where it could obtain water, and was safe from disturbance.

The difficulty of the dead leaves was serious, but there was no possibility of overcoming it. From his experience of man-eating tigers, he believed it would not move from so secure a position unless driven; it might possibly have a cave in the cliff, especially as the rocks were limestone; at all events, he recommended that Everard and Selwyn should for the present occupy positions about a hundred yards apart from the spot where they now stood, while he would return to the glade, and bring the elephants and beaters by another direction, so as to advance from the opposite side of the ravine. Should the tiger retreat upon their approach, it must pass within shot of their rifles; but should it remain in its den, the future arrangements would have to be considered.

Everard remained where he stood, while Selwyn took up a position about a hundred paces distant upon the ridge, above the ravine where the tiger was supposed to harbour. The shikari left the spare gun which he had carried, and armed only with his spear, returned by the same route to the glade where the elephants and beaters would be assembled.

There was not a breath of air, and the heat was most oppressive. As Everard stood beneath a leafless tree, he placed his hand upon the smooth bark, which was hot to the touch, as though artificially heated. Three vultures sat upon the boughs of a high tree with their wings half extended to cool their sides. There was not a sound, but the forest seemed to be as still as death. Twenty minutes had passed in this extreme and depressing silence, and Everard's eyes had vainly endeavoured to pierce the mysteries of the dark gorge below; when suddenly a noise was heard, that broke the stillness in a most ominous manner. A loud lapping of water, as though dogs were drinking! . . . This was exactly beneath his stand, about a hundred paces distant, where the shikari had descried a pool of water beneath the rock. . . . There could no longer be any doubt that the man-eater was actually there, and was lapping the water after its cruel meal. The lapping ceased. Everard's ears were strained to catch some other sound.

A crack was heard in the extreme stillness of the air—then another—these were the bones of the unfortunate woman; the man-eater had returned to its repast. It may readily be imagined that the

delay in the appearance of the elephants and beaters severely tried the patience of a young hunter. Selwyn, who was a hundred paces from Everard, was about equi-distant from the tiger's lair, and he had heard the sounds with the satisfaction of an experienced tiger-shot, as he knew that the enemy was tracked to its den, and it was merely a question of time when it would be brought to bay in the position which it then occupied ; he felt perfectly certain that it would not budge an inch from the thick jungle into which it had retired beneath the cliff.

The cracking of bones continued at intervals, as the woman was being steadily devoured.

After waiting impatiently about half an hour, the deep guttural sigh of an elephant was heard upon the hillside upon the opposite face of the ravine ; presently the cracking of a tree betokened the approach. . . . Everard could not help thinking that a wary tiger would be certain to detect sounds that were so palpable to his own sense of hearing, and for the moment he cast his eyes around in the expectation that the tiger would retreat from its hiding-place. An occasional rushing noise in the jungle, and the flapping of elephants' ears, mingled with the blowing from their trunks, apprised him of the closer advance of the animals and beaters ; his heart beat with the joyful excitement that the time was approaching when he would be face to face with the man-eater.

Presently a tread in the dead leaves behind him attracted his attention, and he perceived the shikari advancing from the opposite direction. In a few

words he explained that the elephants and beaters were arranged in line within a few yards of the bottom or opposite side of the ravine ; the tiger would not attempt to charge through the line, therefore he proposed that Selwyn and Everard should accompany him down the hill and take up their positions upon the top of the perpendicular cliff which overhung the pool of water, by the side of which he expected to discover the tiger with the remains of its victim. . . . Selwyn immediately responded to the sign, and they commenced a cautious descent towards the rock ; stepping as lightly as possible through the betraying leaves.

Occasionally they halted to listen. No sound could be heard beyond the guttural tones of the elephants when blowing against their flanks, or the flapping of their ears. They continued to advance, and soon arrived at the extreme edge of the rocky cliff. They cautiously peered over. A mass of bare rock formed the base of the perpendicular face. Upon this lay the head of the woman, and the spine and hip-bones, to which portions of the thigh-bones were still attached. The legs and arms had been devoured, the thigh-bones had been crunched to pieces, and the ribs had been gnawed away until close to the spine. It was a horrible sight ; but the tiger was not there. "There must be a hole in the rock," whispered the shikari. "You remain upon the cliff, which commands all beneath, while I will bring the elephants to the base."

Selwyn and Everard, about fifty yards apart, with their respective gun-bearers, kept watch upon the cliff,

which commanded a clear view of the pool only twenty or thirty feet below. They felt no doubt that the tiger had, upon hearing the elephants, retired into some cave or den within the rocks, close to the spot where the woman was being devoured. Upon a more careful scrutiny of the narrow base between the foot of the cliff and the pool in the bend of the ravine, they discovered several other skulls and remains of bones, showing that this was one of the man-eater's habitual lairs, to which it retreated with its victims to be consumed at leisure.

In a short time the trumpet of an elephant was heard as the driver prodded it with the iron hook, and the line of beaters advanced to the edge of the ravine. They could now be clearly seen, and with a burst of shouts and tom-toms, a din was raised that would have scared the tiger had it been concealed within the jungle. There was no longer any necessity for silence. The shikari having mounted an elephant, crossed the dry torrent bed, and pressing through the jungle, arrived upon the rocky base exactly below the spot where Selwyn was stationed upon the cliff. He at once explained that two entrances to the rock-face formed caverns, which probably terminated in one cave; there could be no doubt that the tiger was within. It would be necessary for Selwyn and Everard to mount their respective elephants and occupy positions at either end of the base of the cliff. The tiger could not possibly scale the perpendicular face; thus, should it charge from its den, both rifles would obtain a shot, as there were no means of escape unless it should cross the ravine to

break through the line of beaters, who were now drawn up in serried ranks.

In a few minutes both English hunters were in their howdahs, each with a gun-bearer in the seat behind. The elephants were tuskers, and thoroughly trained; they had already smelt the tiger's presence, and at once comprehended the situation. Each elephant held its stand against the rock close to the pool of water; this was about twenty yards long in front of the precipitous face of limestone. Should the tiger break from the cave, it must either plunge into the pool before it could charge the beaters, or it must force a passage by either of the elephants. . . .

Several long crackers were tied together in a bunch, together with a stone secured in a piece of cotton cloth. These were ignited by the shikari, who courageously volunteered to throw them into the mouth of the suspected cavern. With extreme pluck, the man advanced and threw his fireworks into the cave entrance. . . . A series of reports and a cloud of smoke were the only results; nothing could be seen of the tiger. Had it stolen away before their arrival, without being perceived? This was a dreadful idea of disappointment. The shikari did not appear to entertain this apprehension. He crossed over to the beaters, and obtained from various individuals sufficient dried chilis (red peppers) which they had tied in their waistbands for an adjunct to their curry stuff. These were quickly pounded into dust upon a flat stone and mixed with gunpowder, a handful of which was tied into a bundle of cotton rags obtained from the tattered cloth of a villager's

costume. A considerable amount of gunpowder was damped slightly and rubbed into the cotton envelope. This bundle was ignited by a piece that projected at the knot, and it was thrown by the shikari into the murky cave, together with a bomb.

Every one waited in anxious expectation. Suddenly a loud report denoted the explosion of the bomb. Nothing appeared but the smoke which issued from the cave. At least two minutes elapsed, and nothing moved ; it could hardly be believed that any living thing occupied the bowels of the rock.

There was no warning, but an unexpected and tremendous roar was for an instant heard close to the cavern's mouth ! a yellow mass dashed through the smoke, and in another moment the tiger was fixed upon the face of the elephant which carried Everard, with teeth and claws adhering firmly to the upper portion of the trunk !

With a shrill scream of rage and sudden panic the elephant swung round, and plunging over the narrow ledge of rock, slipped, or fell into the deep pool, where for a few moments it disappeared, only the howdah and its occupants being above water.

The tiger had been obliged to loose its hold, and having arrived at the surface, was swimming across the pool, when a shot from Selwyn struck it through the neck ; this did not prevent it from landing upon the opposite bank, where it bounded up the rocks towards the line of beaters, who fled in all directions. It was just disappearing into thick jungle when a second shot from Selwyn struck it in the hindquarters, and rolled it over ; in the next instant it retreated

into a dense mass of thorns close to the water's edge.

This sudden attack and discomfiture of Everard's elephant had been the work of only a few seconds. The mahout, who had not been shaken from his seat, now landed his elephant from the pool, but not before Selwyn had forced his elephant to follow the wounded tiger straight into the thorns which had favoured its retreat. It was a grand sight to see the noble tusker raise its trunk high in air as it advanced to the attack; slowly but determinedly it crashed through the yielding jungle. Two or three short, but loud roars were the immediate result, as the tiger in furious bounds sprang toward the advancing tusks. With a swing of its huge head, the elephant bored down several tall saplings the thickness of a man's arm, upon the attacking beast.

"Steady the elephant!" shouted Selwyn to the mahout who had directed the movements of his animal. "Steady the elephant, I can't shoot!" At that moment the elephant stood as though turned to stone; the tiger had at the same instant bounded back from the tree-stems that had been pressed upon it, and at the crack from Selwyn's spare gun, the man-eater rolled over stone dead, shot through the spine just behind the neck at the junction with the shoulder. . . . This was a most satisfactory termination of the hunt.

The beaters, who had rushed away in all directions when the tiger had charged among them, now thronged around the prostrate body of their common enemy. It was a large animal, but the skin was in an un-

healthy condition ; this was attributed by the natives to its food of human flesh. With the usual difficulty it was placed upon an elephant, and the party returned in triumph toward the village.

In the meantime several of the beaters had run on before, to be the first with the good news. . . . When the elephants arrived, a great crowd of people had collected to meet them, and natives kept pouring in from the neighbouring villages to view with their own eyes the monster that had taken so many of their relatives during a series of eight or ten years. A general rejoicing took place ; during that night stories were recounted at the camp-fires of the many depredations committed by the dreaded man-eater, and they could scarcely believe that it had really disappeared for ever.

Everard and Selwyn returned to their own camp after the long but successful hunt, which had rid the country of an animal that had hitherto defied all attempts at its destruction.





CHAPTER IV.

A MONTH'S trip in the jungles of the Central Provinces was an enjoyable break in the usual routine of a life in cantonments. During this excursion the bag had consisted of tigers, bears, sambur deer, spotted deer, nilghye, black buck, besides smaller animals and feathered game. At that time India was a grand field for the hunter of large game, and the jungles, which are now almost barren in certain districts, were then well supplied. Since the mutiny our English army has been increased to 60,000 men; the large proportion of officers, many of whom are sportsmen, has tended to decrease the wild animals, added to which the wonderful improvement in rifles and the invention of breechloading firearms have been advantages on the side of the shooters, which have much reduced the game.

The Government of India pays a reward of 200 rupees for the death of a man-eating tiger, and fifty rupees for any other. Persons who are unacquainted with India can hardly appreciate the statistical returns of casualties through the attacks of wild animals and the bites of venomous reptiles. From a gazetted notice it appears that in 1881, 18,670 persons were killed by snakes, and 2757 by wild animals; 43,609

head of cattle were destroyed by snakes and wild animals during the same year ; 254,968 snakes, and 15,274 wild animals were destroyed, and rupees 102,810 disbursed by Government in rewards for their destruction.

There can be no doubt that many of those returned as killed by snakes may have been purposely poisoned, as such crimes are exceedingly common among the native population. On the other hand, the statistical returns of a particular district which exhibit great mortality through the attacks of tigers, would create an erroneous impression respecting the actual number of those animals. Two or three man-eating tigers will kill an extraordinary amount of human life, and in remote-lying villages such scourges are frequently beyond the haunts of English hunters.

Selwyn and his companion had done good service by the time of their return to Jubbulpoor, and several camels laden with the spreading antlers of sambur and spotted deer, together with skins of tigers, bears, and blue bulls (nilghyes), created a display which quickly raised young Everard to the coveted rank of a good shikari.

The post had arrived, and a long wished-for letter from Eveleyn was awaiting him. As usual, he had sought solitude to devour its contents ; but the tone disturbed him. It was written in despondency. Her mother had chid her sorrow, and had ridiculed the constancy of her affection. She had endeavoured to persuade her that Everard would prove untrue, and that a prolonged absence would be too much for the endurance of any man's engagement. Other beauties

would attract him, and Eveleyn would discover that her early and brightest days would have been wasted in a hopeless love, that would blight her future prospects. If she remained true to Everard for many years, and he should at length prove false, her youth would have been sacrificed to a vain shadow, which would have perhaps frustrated some more hopeful union.

Everard was unhappy. Why should he not be true? He reflected within his heart how often since he had been in India beauty had enticed him, and still he had resisted; had not the lovely image of his Eveleyn suddenly risen to his view whenever for a moment his youthful ardour had tempted him to admire some fair partner at the Viceroy's balls? had not that image immediately dispelled all other attractions from his eyes? had he not curbed his strong impulses, and set his heel upon temptations only because his love for Eveleyn guided him to constancy? and should she doubt him because her mother scolded?

Major Selwyn had become a bosom friend. There is a freemasonry among good sportsmen, and there is no place like the jungle and the tent for cementing friendships when two men are bound in companionship towards a common object, and mutually share each danger. In their evening chats Everard had often thrown out hints that some much-loved object had been left behind in England, but Selwyn had never encouraged confidence upon so delicate a subject, and had hardly interested himself in the conversation. Nevertheless Everard felt that it would

relieve his mind from much anxiety if he could obtain his friend's opinion ; he knew Selwyn to be a thorough gentleman, and a good officer and sportsman ; he felt that he was a sincere friend, who being many years his senior, had greater experience of life than he himself possessed ; . . . he determined to confide his position to him, and to ask advice.

They were riding together in the cooler hour of evening, and were about a couple of miles distant from Jubbulpoor when Everard broached the subject, and hinted his suspicions that the mother was endeavouring to dissuade her daughter from adhering to her vow of constancy.

" I should do exactly the same, my dear Everard," said Selwyn gently, " if I had a daughter in such a position."

" Impossible ! " exclaimed Everard with vehemence. " We swore most solemnly to be true till death. I consider myself absolutely married by that oath ; although not legally, morally I am hers and she is mine. If a princess with all the beauty and wealth of fairyland could rise before me, I could not even listen to such temptation. You should see her, Selwyn, and you would then understand the situation ; you *shall* see her some day, I trust, when we meet in Old England."

" Pray do not think that I doubt her charms and personal attractions, my dear Everard, or your devotion : I am merely regarding the case with the cool head of a man who is not in love. You are perfectly right to be constant, but you were wrong to form an attachment at your early age that must place the

young lady in a false position. Her mother will naturally argue that if you had possessed the means, you would have remained in England to marry her ; you enter the profession and come to India because you have no independence ; you cannot return for very many years ; ninety-nine lads out of a hundred at the age of twenty-one would forget their love after some term of hopeless absence ; why should you be an exception to the rule ? . . . The mother will say, 'Here is my daughter, beautiful, accomplished, young, with every prospect of making a happy marriage ; she places her affections upon a charming fellow without a rap ; they swear eternal fidelity ; he goes to India ; she remains at home to mope and pine away. She loses all other chances of marriage because she is foolish enough to consider herself irrevocably engaged ; years will pass away ; she will become older ; her beauty will fade ; by which time Everard will have forgotten her, or have changed his mind, or may have married another, or may have been eaten up by a tiger, or killed in action. In any case my daughter's prospects are being ruined by this delay, and the numerous chances are all against her ; her youth will have passed by in unhappiness, and her reward may be desertion or neglect.' Therefore the careful and cool mother will advise her daughter to be reasonable, and not to wreck her lovely vessel upon the rocks of folly. Everard will have grown colder, and will have seen the impossibility of such an engagement, he will make up his mind to the necessity ; the match must be broken off.

"There, my dear Everard," continued Selwyn,

“don't be angry with me for putting the affair in this worldly form ; I only wish you had money enough to run home and marry the young lady off-hand, but you may depend upon it women don't like delay, and the mother will advise the young lady accordingly.”

Every word of Selwyn's discourse had pierced through Everard like daggers ; he felt that the reflections were undeniable, and although a generous impulse smote his conscience suddenly, “that he might perhaps unreasonably have interfered with Eveleyn's liberty of action,” still he could not persuade himself that he had been in error. “I am in a similar position,” he replied aloud. “If she has engaged herself and thereby perhaps endangered her prospects upon my account, I have done the same. I have given up all thoughts of other women, and I may lose good worldly chances precisely in the same manner that she renounces the advances of other men. I will encounter any risks for her sake ; why should she hesitate to make an equal sacrifice for me ?”

A smile passed over Selwyn's face. “I wish I were your age, Everard,” he said ; . . . “you remind me of old times when I was very young, and believed in everything and everybody. I believed even in myself, and my ideas were very much like your own ; but I learned to know the world better with experience, and as I watched the change in my own opinions, I made due allowance for the change in others.

“You may depend upon it that what is known as an ‘old head upon young shoulders,’ would make a very disagreeable fellow ; our heads should be young

consistently with our years, and provided the heart's in the right place, we shall get on as well as others ; but avoid the women, my dear boy, until you're old enough and rich enough to marry without keeping them waiting ; for that's their weakness—they won't wait—and they are quite right, if they want to get married," continued Selwyn.

All this philosophy was very distressing to Everard, who could no longer resist a direct appeal. "Do you mean to say, my dear Selwyn, that you would advise a girl who has sworn to be true to a man she loves, to throw him over without rhyme or reason, except that she might improve her chances by being free?"

"I would not advise her to do anything of the kind in ordinary circumstances, but if I were her father in the situation which you have described, I should not advise her to 'throw you over,' but I should place the position before her in its true and hopeless light, and I should advise her to allow her absent lover full liberty of action, and claim the same freedom for herself. If you both were blessed with that magnetic power of mutual attraction which resisted all outward forces, you would remain destined for each other ; if, on the other hand, you should yield to the changes wrought by increased experience, you would be free to escape from the fetters of a youthful escapade."

"Why should she want to marry any other than myself? that is the real question. She has a comfortable home, an excellent mother : perhaps a little worldly," continued Everard ; "her friends are de-

voted, and she knows that I am true ; what more can she require ? ”

“ Simply that you should be her husband, instead of an absent and uncertain lover ; a present certainty, instead of an absent uncertainty. Ask the bird in its cage why it is not contented with food and kindness ; if you leave the cage door open, it flies away ; it requires a mate, and will seek one if not there. Remember what I tell you, my dear Everard, and do not become unhappy ; the force of circumstances will be too strong for you both. Her mother will prevail ; the tone of the letter you have now received bespeaks the situation ; the influence is at work, and the next communication will be still more forcible. You will then find that longer intervals will curtail the correspondence, until at length you will receive a letter from the mother instead of from your love, giving you the final *congé*, ‘ in the interests of her daughter, who will always regard you with affectionate esteem,’ etc. etc. etc.

“ Only don’t be unhappy, my dear Everard ; let things drift, and take your chance like other men. The day may come when you will look back, as we all have done, upon the sweets and sorrows of our first love, without breaking your heart at the recollection.”

This Platonic view of his position was hardly appreciated by Everard ; at the same time, there was so much probability in the forecast of the mother’s stratagem, that he was overwhelmed by doubts and suspicions. Who could tell what might happen during his long absence ? although he believed in Eveleyn’s

undying affection, he acknowledged that her beauty would attract many admirers. Some one might appear whose worldly possessions would perhaps exceed his own expectations ; the mother would naturally favour such a suit ; he would then have a rival ! If he were present, he would not fear a crowd of rivals ; but in his absence, a suitor that combined wealth, position, and good appearance would be dangerous to his interests ; and Eveleyn might be guided by her mother.





CHAPTER V.

TWELVE months had passed since the conversation with Selwyn during their evening ride. Everard had written long and interesting letters by every opportunity, but the replies had been at irregular intervals, and he could not conceal the fact that a less earnest tone pervaded Eveleyn's communications. Selwyn's prophetic voice rang in his impatient ears, and he dreaded the arrival of a post, lest it should bring a letter, not from Eveleyn, but from her mother.

This dreadful day arrived. With a heart full of bitterness he confided the cold epistle to his friend and sincere adviser. Not one word from Eveleyn! her mother excused her daughter's silence on the ground of her maternal command that she should cease to correspond. A small sealed parcel contained the opal ring which he had given her upon that evening of bitter sorrow when they swore eternal love in the hour of parting. . . . He broke open the seal. The opal shone bright with its various sparkling hues; whereas it should have been cold and gray under this momentous change of circumstances, unless the superstition was a fraud. He gazed upon the miniature that was ever near him, and could hardly believe that those sweet blue eyes should not be true; and that

her lips should caress another? This last idea was too dreadful for consideration ; he would at all events remain true to her, and nothing should wrest that loved portrait from his possession. She had given it to him together with her heart, and he would keep the features although her love was gone.
. Eveleyn's marriage was announced in the *Times* newspaper, which arrived in due course at Jubbulpoor. Her husband was a wealthy proprietor in her own county, and the match was in every way suitable to her position. It would be useless to attempt a description of the various phases of conscience-qualms through which she had passed before she had determined upon this step ; it would also be idle to declare that although she had married a man whom she could respect, she was absolutely and truly his in the entirety of her love. If the hidden recesses of her heart could have been scrutinised, the deep scar of her first love would have been discovered still unhealed. If it had been possible to make an exchange of persons, retaining the position which she occupied, there can be little doubt that Everard would have been preferred to the husband of her mother's choice ; but such reflections are useless and obscure—she was married, and lost to Everard. It was his first disappointment, and he made a resolution to adore her portrait, but never to love or trust another woman.

The General's daughter who commanded at Jubbulpoor was pretty and agreeable ; she was of course the centre of admiration, but although a coquette almost as a natural consequence of her position, she regarded Everard with a very different feeling. He

had dined at the General's table, and had never been omitted from evening invitations ; there could be no doubt that he was a favoured guest, and the various ladies of the station had not hesitated to couple his name with that of the young Isabella Grey. Although Everard was perfectly innocent and unconscious of his position in the affections of Miss Grey, and treated the chaff of his brother officers with ridicule, he was nevertheless regarded with increased admiration by the numerous female representatives of the cantonments, who were jealous of the General's daughter, and would gladly have attracted his attentions. The chilly reserve which Everard had adopted towards women since his disappointment, only increased their desire for intimacy with a young man who differed so materially from the usual throng of admirers, and he found himself sought after by those who in powers of fascination considered themselves the *crème de la crème* of Jubbulpoor.

Adonis was not more proof against the allurements of Venus than was Everard against the beauties of his surroundings. His natural courteous and polished manners were strictly confined to the amenities of social intercourse, but not a spark of warmer feeling could be ignited in his heart. . . .

Isabella was an only child of General Grey ; she had accordingly been sufficiently spoiled by both parents to have become their ruler—in fact, she might be almost said to have commanded the station. A fine figure, with a pretty gipsy-like type of brunette complexion in addition to large dark-brown eyes, completed the portrait of the young lady who re-

ceived the homage of many aspiring officers belonging to the various regiments in cantonments; but although Isabella was fond of admiration, she had never been in love. She had been so accustomed to command, and to have her own way without opposition, that she had scarcely listened to the numerous proposals of fond lovers with whose sentiments she had no sympathy. If she were to love she would herself select the object, and she could not conceive the possibility of any want of reciprocity upon the part of the individual who should be thus honoured by her affection. . . . General Grey was a good officer but a foolish father. He was proud of his daughter's personal attractions, and he had been sufficiently unwise to assure her that "she would have all the men at her feet." This was the natural position to which Isabella would have consigned them, until it might please her to relax her discipline. That Isabella Grey would ever be the victim of a hopeless passion none of her admirers could have conceived the possibility; but such was the case, and although her proud spirit would scarcely confess the weakness to her own heart, she was absorbed by a secret love for Everard Harcourt.

The General was fond of Everard; he was a thorough soldier, a daring sportsman, and had exhibited the qualities which the old officer most admired. He was withal modest and unassuming in the society of both men and women. No stranger would have guessed from his demeanour that he would be the first to lead in the moment of danger. The General knew his character, and he was quick to perceive his

daughter's predilection. Although he would have preferred a suitor of more mature age and of higher social rank, he was so thoroughly imbued with the necessity of yielding to his daughter's wishes that he abstained from all interference, and both he and his wife concluded that Isabella would manage the affair in her own manner, and that, if she loved Everard, he would of course love her, and the selection would take its natural course.

As Isabella managed the domestic arrangements, and materially assisted her mother in the details of invitations for the frequent entertainments given by the General, it can hardly be wondered at that Everard's name was seldom omitted from the list. The climax arrived when, by an unexpected opportunity, he was offered the post of aide-de-camp. Whether Isabella had anything to do with this appointment it is hard to say, but Everard in the General's establishment would be like Daniel in the lion's den.

"Don't accept it, Everard," exclaimed Selwyn. "Take care, my dear boy, or you'll put your foot in a snare that you hardly see. That pretty brown-eyed girl will make a slave of you; and, if I know anything of women, she means to marry you whether you are willing or not. Have nothing to do with her; she has youth and appearance now, but in ten years' time she'll become a veritable tyrant, as hard as iron, and as rusty, both in temper and complexion. I should think you have had a lesson in womankind that would make you hesitate before you encountered them again. The old General is good enough without the daughter; but, for heaven's sake, don't

carry her upon your back, or you'll never shake her off again."

It would have been a difficult position for Everard had not good fortune suddenly befriended him. An order was received from headquarters for his regiment to march to Delhi. This was an escape from a dilemma that might have become serious. Poor Isabella was crushed by the unexpected news. It was the last evening before the departure of the regiment, and Everard had received an invitation to dine with the General. . . . He was received with more than usual warmth by the parents, and Isabella was confided to his care during the dinner. The party was small, and the conversation was upon the customary local topics. Isabella hardly spoke; her large dark eyes exhibited symptoms of tears. Twice she dropped her handkerchief between Everard's chair and her own, and twice in the mutual struggle to regain it, their cheeks had collided as they stooped at exactly the same moment. Isabella blushed and looked confused, but lovely. A third time the vagrant handkerchief fell to the floor; but an active kitmagar (table servant) unfortunately interfered and picked it up before Isabella had time to stoop. How she hated the officious menial at that moment! The dinner being over, the party retired to the cool verandah. The moon was shining brightly. "Are you really going to leave us?" murmured Isabella with some embarrassment as she walked by Everard's side to and fro in the long verandah. "I thought you were to become my father's aide-de-camp, and that you would remain with us."

“It would have been a delightful position indeed,” replied Everard; “but Fate has destined otherwise. Our regiment is ordered to Delhi, and, as you already know, we march before daybreak to-morrow morning.”

“If you had wished to remain here you could easily have obtained leave; why do you not send in an application? My father will forward it to headquarters and support it—unless you really wish to get rid of us altogether in exchange for new friends at that hateful place Delhi, where you will soon forget us.”

“How can I forget those from whom I have received much kindness. The General has honoured me beyond my merits, and I shall always remember the encouragement and favours I have received from him wherever I may go.”

“Remember the General!” exclaimed Isabella, with undisguised astonishment—“remember the encouragement you received from the General! . . . How very extraordinary some men are! . . . Then you will forget *us*?”

“I cannot forget Mrs. Grey; I couple her name with that of your father, as I shall always remain indebted for her kindness.”

“Then you will remember the General, and my mother, . . . and forget poor me?” . . . This was difficult to answer without repudiation.

“Why do you suppose I should be forgetful of your kindness, Miss Grey? I have, and always shall have, an equal regard for you all, as a family that in this distant portion of the world has made me feel almost at home.”

“Then why do you want to leave us?” quickly

replied his questioner. "I tell you that the General can obtain leave should you wish to become his aide-de-camp. I will ask him myself, unless you have any positive objection. But let us talk the matter over in my mother's room, where the punkah will keep away these horrible mosquitoes; I am already eaten up by them."

The open door led directly from the verandah to the room in question, where Everard quickly discovered himself *tête-à-tête* with Isabella alone, sitting upon the same sofa beneath the gentle draught created by the punkah. This was a position which, under ordinary circumstances, would have been welcomed as most favourable, but in the present situation it was not only embarrassing but extremely dangerous. It was tolerably clear to Everard that he was expected either to declare his love then and there, or he was at the least to capitulate by agreeing to remain as aide-de-camp.

Isabella's fan fell from her hand, quite by accident, as she applied her handkerchief to her eyes. "How idiotic I am," she peevishly exclaimed; "that fan was a present from Colonel Temple. I am always dropping it . . . it is a sign that I do not care for him; in fact, I hate presents, and people who give them to me. You never gave me so much as a pair of gloves, and I suppose that is the reason that made me distinguish you from the crowd of fools that usually surround me. . . . Now, tell me honestly, do you really wish to remain with the General as aide-de-camp; or do you wish to leave us altogether, and go off to that distant station up in the North-West?"

“Miss Grey,” replied Everard, “as a soldier I must not allow my inclinations to attract me from my duty. Had the regiment remained here I should have considered the General’s invitation the greatest honour ; but I cannot conceal from myself that my duty lies with my regiment, especially as disturbances are threatening in the North-West, and troops are being concentrated at Delhi. . . . I shall look forward to some future time when I may have the pleasure of meeting your family again, if not in India, perhaps in England, when we may talk over old times, and I shall recall all your kind hospitality. But then,” continued Everard with some hesitation, “Miss Grey will no doubt have changed her name, and will no longer be the ornament of her father’s house.”

Isabella for an instant turned crimson, but quickly recovered her composure. “What name would you suggest in exchange for the monosyllable Grey?”

“There is not much in a name, and I should not be too particular if the man were worthy of you. If he loves you with all his heart, whether he be Jones or Johnson, or Howard or H——”

“Harcourt, you were going to say, I believe!” interrupted Isabella with affected simplicity. “Harcourt! a very pretty name indeed—Isabella Harcourt. I must ask my mother whether she would ever agree to such a change from the old name of Grey.”

“There are many Harcourts,” said Everard, “and should one be fortunate enough to convert Miss Grey it would be better for Grey to become Harcourt than for Harcourt to become Grey.”

“What idle talk this is,” responded the perplexed Isabella, who found it impossible to hook her wary fish; at the same time she was suffering from the disadvantage of an absolute passion for Everard, which blinded her to the ordinary sense of propriety. “It appears that what you term military duty is a stronger feeling than natural affection. Tell me candidly, if you loved a girl, would that same ‘duty’ drag you away from her arms? or would you be happier could you find some excuse to evade the call and to remain with the one you loved?”

“Miss Grey,” replied Everard sadly, “you have asked me a question which awakens the sorrow of my life; but as you honour me by an intimacy to which I have no claim, I feel that you take a more than usual interest in my career; thus I presume to answer you. My duty separated me from the only girl I ever loved. We vowed eternal constancy. This is she to whom my heart was given; and though she never can be mine, I can never love another.” As he spoke he drew from his breast the miniature of Eveleyn, and placed it in her hands.

Isabella turned deadly pale. She took the miniature and held it attentively before her. By degrees her large eyes filled with tears; she returned the portrait to his hand, which she grasped between both her own. “Go to Delhi, Everard! go, and let me forget you. Would to God that I had known this sooner. She is more worthy of you than I; I have been wrong, foolish, and often heartless—I can only say God forgive me! and may He bless you and . . .” She could not complete the sentence, but, over-

powered by her feelings, rushed from the apartment, leaving Everard alone.

Men are puzzles. Everard had never cared for Isabella Grey in the slightest degree, but he now really sympathised with her. He had always considered her to be a handsome but heartless coquette, who loved admiration, and was determined to enforce it from those who usually surrounded her. He had imagined that she was playing upon him the same game that she had indulged in with others; but when he saw that she was really and truly in earnest, and that her strong and self-supporting spirit had broken down at the avowal of his love for Eveleyn, he discovered a strong reaction in his own feelings, and he entered into a state of mind that might have been dangerous to his determination of avoiding women. This was disturbed by the sudden entrance of Selwyn, who in a voice of astonishment exclaimed —“Everard Harcourt alone in a lady’s boudoir! Why, Everard, old fellow, what does this mean? We ought to be in bed and asleep; we shall be roused up at four to-morrow morning. Come and say farewell to the General and Mrs. Grey and Isabella, and let’s be off.”

A warm and sincere “good-bye” to the kind host and hostess, and Selwyn and Everard took their leave, to march on the following morning by the Grand Trunk Road *en route* for the great city of Delhi. The General and Mrs. Grey discovered their daughter in tears; but the lesson of that night was not in vain. This first attack of real heartache produced a marked effect in the future of Isabella.



CHAPTER VI.

ISABELLA entirely changed her habits of levity and flirtation after her disappointment in Everard Harcourt ; she became a sensible and attractive girl, and eventually married that same Colonel Temple whom she had pretended to disregard.

Fifteen years passed away. Everard was a major, and Selwyn was colonel of the regiment. As time had flowed onwards many changes had occurred in persons and places. News from England had at certain intervals informed Everard that Eveleyn had, about a year after her marriage, become a mother, that she had two girls, and that her husband's death had left her a young widow. The latter event had been quite recent. Eveleyn was again free.

Events of great importance engrossed the attention of the Government of India, and there was little time for the minds of military men to dwell upon home topics.

For some years past there had been no rest. The disasters of the Afghan War had been repaired, and our defeat avenged by complete victory. The Mahratta War had terminated, and the annexation of Scinde had been effected by Sir Charles Napier after Meanee and Hyderabad ; but a severer struggle was

about to commence in the North-West, with an enemy superior to any with whom we had contended throughout the history of our Indian Empire. Lord Ellenborough had been succeeded by Sir Henry Hardinge as Viceroy of India. This able administrator and experienced general combined every quality that was essential for the high and responsible position.

The great Rajah Runjeet Singh, who had exhibited stupendous powers of command throughout his adventurous reign, had loyally adhered to his treaty with the English made on 25th April 1809. From that date he was assisted by European officers to reform his army, and to place it upon a footing that would ensure union and discipline throughout the ranks of that magnificent material which had hitherto been merely a collection of wild, but invincible irregulars. The Sikh army, thus reorganised, carried everything before it. In 1819 Cashmere had been conquered, and the military reforms resulted in the uninterrupted annexation of all adjacent provinces. In 1831 a new treaty had been entered into with Lord W. Bentinck when Governor-General of India. The only check to the victorious arms of Runjeet Singh was a defeat in 1836, inflicted by the Afghans. At the age of fifty, Runjeet Singh, the Lion of Lahore, was fading in physical constitution. A life of anxiety had unfortunately been coupled with debauchery, and premature old age crippled the form of the greatest warrior and administrator of that century in the East. On 27th June 1839 Runjeet Singh died. He left behind him vast possessions.

His four wives and seven favourite female slaves ascended the funeral pile, and, according to the barbarous custom of the country, were consumed by fire, together with the body of the Maharajah. He left a son, a child of four years old ; this was his highness Dhuleep Singh, who is now so deservedly esteemed as a naturalised Englishman, and resident in Norfolk.

The death of Runjeet Singh was the abstraction of a governing power. The masses of Sikh soldiery, which for many years had been kept in constant activity, could not be restrained in the absence of their late ruler, who had accustomed them to victory and plunder ; the country became the theatre of intrigues and rival factions.

It is not my province to write a history of the long chain of troubles which terminated in the annexation of the Punjaub. There can be no question that the responsibility of the war rested with the Sikhs, who, on 17th December 1845 advanced across the Sutlej into British territory, and thus commenced a struggle which tested the highest qualities of the British arms, and added lustre to the reputation earned upon many hard-fought fields upon the plains of India.

Everard's regiment, 3d Bengal Light Cavalry, formed a portion of the large force under Sir Hugh Gough, who, together with Sir Henry Hardinge, the Governor-General, had, after a long march on 18th December, reached Moodkee and encamped ; when suddenly the Sikh army, 30,000 strong, came hurrying forward and attacked.

A short but severe conflict ensued ; the Sikhs

retired, leaving 17 guns in the hands of the British. Amongst the killed were General Sir John M'Caskill and Sir Robert Sale, with a loss on the British side of 52 officers killed, and 39 wounded, making a total of 872 killed and wounded of all ranks.

The 19th and 20th were spent by both armies in burying their dead and in procuring reinforcements. Sir John Littler, at the head of 5000 men, joined the British on the 21st December about sixteen miles from the camp. The British army then formed itself into four divisions—the right under the command of Sir Hugh Gough, the centre commanded by Major-General W. R. Gilbert, the left by Sir J. Littler, and the rear by Sir Harry Smith. The Sikhs were commanded by Tej Singh, and had formed entrenchments in a jungle country, which rendered the march of infantry exceedingly difficult. The Sikhs have long been celebrated for their artillery; they were provided with heavy guns, which did great execution. Sir J. Littler failed in his attack upon their position; General Gilbert was successful. The first position of the enemy was taken. The darkness of the night prevented the continuance of the conflict; the British troops bivouacked on the ground.

This action could not be better described than in the identical words of the despatch forwarded by the Commander-in-Chief, dated at Ferozeshah, 22d December 1845:—

After the combat of the 18th at Moodkee, information was received the following day that the enemy, increased in numbers, were moving on to attack us.

A line of defence was taken up in advance of our encampment, and dispositions made to repel assault; but the day wore away without

their appearing, and at night we had the satisfaction of being reinforced by Her Majesty's 29th Foot and the East India Company's 1st European Light Infantry, with our small division of heavy guns.

On the morning of the 21st the offensive was resumed. Our columns of all arms debouched four miles on the road to Ferozeshah, where it was known that the enemy, posted in great force and with a most formidable artillery, had remained since the 18th incessantly employed in entrenching his position. Instead of advancing to the direct attack of their formidable works, our force manœuvred to their right: the second and fourth divisions of infantry in front, supported by the first division and cavalry in second line, continued to defile for some time out of cannon shot between the Sikhs and Ferozepore. The desired effect was not long delayed; a cloud of dust was seen on the left, and, according to the instructions sent him on the preceding evening, Major-General Sir John Littler with his division, availing himself of the offered opportunity, was discovered in full march to unite his force with mine. The junction was soon effected, and thus was accomplished one of the great objects of all our harassing marches and privations in relief of this division of our army from the blockade of the numerous forces by which it was surrounded.

Dispositions were now made for a united attack on the enemy's entrenched camp. We found it to be a parallelogram of about a mile in length and half a mile in breadth, including within its area the strong village of Ferozeshah, the shorter sides looking towards the Sutlej and Moodkee, and the longer towards Ferozepore and the open country. We moved against the last named face, the ground in front of which was like the Sikh position in Moodkee, covered with low jungle.

The divisions of Major-General Sir John Littler, who had succeeded Major-General Sir John M'Caskill, and Major-General Gilbert, deployed into line, having in the centre our whole force of artillery, one on either flank, and one in support to be moved as occasion required. Major-General Sir Harry Smith's division and our small cavalry force moved in second line, having a brigade in reserve to cover each wing.

I should here observe that I committed the charge of the left wing to Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Hardinge, while I personally conducted the right.

A very heavy cannonade was opened by the enemy, who had dispersed over their position upwards of one hundred guns, more than forty of which were of battering calibre. These kept up a heavy and well-directed fire, which the practice of our far less numerous artillery, of much lighter metal, checked in some degree but could not silence. Finally, in the face of a storm of shot and shell, our infantry advanced and carried these formidable entrenchments. They threw themselves upon their guns, and with matchless gallantry wrested them from the enemy; but when the batteries were partially within our grasp our soldiery had to face such a fire of musketry from the Sikh infantry,

arrayed behind their guns, that in spite of the most heroic efforts a portion only of the entrenchment could be carried. Night fell while the conflict was everywhere raging.

Although I now brought up Major-General Sir Harry Smith's division, and he captured and long retained another point of the position, and Her Majesty's 3d Light Dragoons charged and took some of the most formidable batteries, yet the enemy remained in possession of a considerable portion of the great quadrangle, whilst our troops, intermingled with theirs, kept possession of the remainder and finally bivouacked upon it, exhausted by their gallant efforts, greatly reduced in numbers, and suffering extremely from thirst, yet animated by an indomitable spirit. In this state of things the long night wore away.

Near the middle of it one of their heavy guns was advanced and played with deadly effect upon our troops. Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Hardinge immediately formed Her Majesty's 80th Foot and the 1st European Light Infantry; they were led to the attack by their commanding officers, and animated in their exertions by Lieutenant-Colonel Wood (aide-de-camp to the Lieutenant-General), who was wounded in the outset. The 80th captured the gun, and the enemy, dismayed by this counter-check, did not venture to press on farther. During the whole night, however, they continued to harass our troops by fire of artillery wherever moonlight discovered our position.

But with daylight of 22d came retribution. Our infantry formed line, supported on both flanks by horse-artillery, whilst a fire was opened from our centre by such of our heavy guns as remained effective, aided by a flight of rockets. A masked battery played with great effect upon this point, dismounting our pieces and blowing up our tumbrils. At this moment Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Hardinge placed himself at the head of the left, whilst I rode at the head of the right wing.

Our line advanced, and, unchecked by the enemy's fire, drove them rapidly out of the village of Ferozeshah and their encampment, then changing front to its left on its centre, our force continued to sweep the camp, bearing down all opposition, and dislodged the enemy from their whole position. The line then halted as if on a day of manoeuvre, receiving its two leaders as they rode along its front with gratifying cheers, and displaying the captured standards of the Khalsa army. We had taken upwards of seventy-three pieces of cannon, and were masters of the whole field.

The force assumed a position on the ground which it had won, but even here its labours were not to cease. In the course of two hours Sirdar Tej Singh, who had commanded in the great last battle, brought up from the vicinity of Ferozepore fresh battalions and a large field of artillery, supported by 30,000 Ghorepurras hitherto encamped near the river. He drove in our cavalry parties, and made strenuous efforts to regain the position at Ferozeshah. This attempt was defeated; but its failure had scarcely become manifest when the Sirdar renewed the

contest with more troops and a large artillery. He commenced by a combination against our left flank, and when this was frustrated, made such a demonstration against the captured village as compelled us to change our whole front to the right. His guns during this manœuvre maintained an incessant fire, whilst our artillery ammunition being completely expended in these protracted combats, we were unable to answer him with a single shot.

I now directed our almost exhausted cavalry to threaten both flanks, at once preparing the infantry to advance in support, which apparently caused him to suddenly cease his fire and to abandon the field.

For twenty-four hours not a Sikh has appeared in our front. The remains of the Khalsa army are said to be in full retreat across the Sutlej at Nuggurputhur and Tella, or marching up its left bank towards Hurreekpethur, in the greatest confusion and dismay. Of their chiefs, Bahadur Singh is killed; Lal Singh is said to be wounded; Mehtab Singh, Adjoodhia Pershad, and Tej Singh, the late Governor of Peshawar, have fled with precipitation. Their camp is the scene of the most awful carnage, and they have abandoned large stores of grain, camp equipage, and ammunition.

Thus has apparently terminated this unprovoked and criminal invasion of the peaceful provinces under British protection.
 . . . The loss of this army has been heavy—how could a hope be formed that it should be otherwise? Within thirty hours this force stormed an entrenched camp, fought a general action, and sustained two considerable combats with the enemy. Within four days it has dislodged from their positions on the left bank of the Sutlej 60,000 Sikh soldiers supported by upwards of 150 pieces of cannon, 108 of which the enemy acknowledged to have lost, and 91 of which are in our possession.

In addition to our losses in the battle, the captured camp was found to be everywhere protected by charged mines, by the successive springing of which many brave officers and men have been destroyed.

I must bear testimony to the valour displayed in these actions by the whole of the regiments of Her Majesty's service employed, and the East India Company's 1st Regiment of European Light Infantry. The native force seconded in a most spirited manner their gallant conduct.

(Signed) H. GOUGH, General,
 Commander-in-Chief East Indies.

The success of this decisive and sanguinary battle, although the British forces were ably commanded by General Hugh Gough, was due to the foresight of Sir Henry Hardinge, who had concentrated all available troops to prepare for the great struggle. This pre-

science is proved by an extract from the Governor-General to the Secret Committee, dated Camp Ferozepore, 31st December 1845 (No. 18):—

The Sikh army had in 1843 and 1844 moved down upon the river from Lahore, and after remaining there encamped a few weeks, had returned to the capital. These reasons, and above all my extreme anxiety to avoid hostilities, induced me not to make any hasty movement with our army, which, when the two armies came into each other's presence, might bring about a collision.

The army had, however, been ordered to be in readiness to move at the shortest notice; and on the 7th and 9th December, when I heard from Lahore that preparations were making on a large scale for artillery stores and all the munitions of war, I wrote to the Commander-in-Chief directing His Excellency on the 11th to move up the force from Umballa, from Meerut, and some other stations in the rear.

Up to this time no infantry or artillery had been reported to have left Lahore, nor had a single Sikh soldier crossed the Sutlej. Nevertheless I considered it prudent to no longer delay the forward movement of our troops, having given to the Lahore Government the most ample time for a reply to our remonstrance.

On the 9th at night Captain Nicolson, the assistant political agent at Ferozepore, reported that a portion of the Sikh army had approached to within three miles of the river. On the other hand, the information received by Major Broadfoot on that day from Lahore was not of a character to make it probable that any Sikh movement upon a large scale was meditated.

On the 10th no intelligence was received from Lahore confirmatory of Captain Nicolson's report, and the usual opinion continued to prevail that the Sikh army would not cross the Sutlej. The troops, however, moved on the 10th, 11th, and 12th, in pursuance of the orders given on the 7th and 8th, and the whole of the forces destined to move up to the Sutlej were in full march on the 12th.

I did not consider the force moving up from Umballa to be sufficient to force its way to relieve Ferozepore, if a large Sikh army with a numerous and well-served park of artillery should attempt to intercept it in its approach to Ferozepore, as in such case it could with difficulty receive any aid from that garrison. Being some days' march in advance of the Commander-in-Chief, I rode over to Loodiana; and having inspected the fort, the cantonments, and the troops, it appeared to me most advisable that the whole of this force should be moved up with the Umballa force, restricting the defence of Loodiana to the fort, which could be securely garrisoned by the more infirm soldiers of the regiments at that post, unless attacked by heavy artillery, which was a very improbable contingency.

The risk to be incurred of leaving the town and the cantonments to be plundered was maturely considered, and I had no hesitation in incurring that risk to insure the strength and sufficiency of the force which might separately be brought into action with the whole of the Sikh army. I therefore ordered Brigadier Wheeler to be prepared to march at the shortest notice.

The Umballa force in March was 7500 men, and 36 guns.

The Loodiana force amounted to 5000 men, and 12 guns.

The Commander-in-Chief concurred in these views; and this fine body of men by a rapid march on Busseean, an important point where the roads leading from Umballa and Kurnaul meet, formed the advanced column of the army, and secured the supplies which had been laid in at Busseean.

Up to the morning of the 12th the information from Lahore had not materially varied; but by the reports received on that day, the general aspect of affairs appeared more warlike. Still no Sikh aggression had been committed, and no artillery had moved down to the river.

On the 13th I received precise information that the Sikh army had crossed the Sutlej, and was concentrating in great force on the left bank of the river. The Umballah force at that time had been in movement three days. On this date I issued the proclamation, a copy of which is enclosed.

On the 14th the British forces moved up by double marches on alternate days, and on the 18th reached Moodkee, 20 miles from Ferozepore, after a march of 21 miles. On this day and at this place the whole British force was concentrated with the exception of two European and two native regiments, expected on the following day.

The troops were engaged in cooking their meals, when Major Broadfoot received information that the Sikh army was in full march with the intention to surprise the camp. The troops immediately stood to their arms and advanced. The result of that short but decisive action was the signal defeat of the enemy at every point, and the capture of 17 guns, the details of which are given in the report of the Commander-in-Chief herewith sent. The troops returned to their camp at midnight, and halted on the 19th and 20th to refresh the men, to collect the wounded, and to bring in the captured guns. There was no objection to this delay, as it was evident from the preparations and movements of the Sikh army, that its commander was intent upon intercepting the relieving force, and had no intention of risking an attack against Ferozepore.

On the 21st the Commander-in-Chief having left the baggage of the army, the wounded, and the captured guns, at Moodkee, protected by two regiments of native infantry, marched at four o'clock in the morning by his left, keeping about three or four miles from the enemy's entrenched position at Ferozeshah, in which the enemy had placed 108 pieces of cannon protected by breastworks.

A communication had been made the preceding night with Sir John Littler informing him of the intended line of march, and desiring him to move out with such a part of his force as would not compromise the safety of his troops, and the post. At half-past one o'clock the Umballah force, having marched across the country disencumbered of every description of baggage except the reserve ammunition, formed its junction with Sir John Littler's force, who had moved out of Ferozepore with 5000 men, two regiments of cavalry, and 21 field guns. This combined operation having been effected, the Commander-in-Chief, with my entire concurrence, made his arrangements for the attack of the enemy's position at Ferozeshah, about four miles distant from the point where our forces had united. The British force consisted of 16,700 men and 69 guns, chiefly horse artillery.

The Sikh forces varied from 48,000 to 60,000 men, with 108 pieces of cannon of heavy calibre in fixed batteries.

You will observe that every soldier who could be brought into our ranks had, by these combinations from Umballah and Loodiana to Ferozepore, been rendered available; that the force was most efficient, and, notwithstanding the difficulty of the ground intersected with jungle, the vast superiority of the enemy's well-served artillery, and the breastworks behind which their infantry fought, that our British force, particularly our infantry, surmounted every obstacle, capturing that evening and the following morning 70 pieces of artillery, and the whole of the enemy's camp equipage and military stores.

I refer to the report of the Commander-in-Chief for the details of this brilliant exploit. The three attempts of the Sikh army, reinforced by Tej Singh's army, to retake their position in the course of the day, were unavailing. The Sikh army then retreated on the fords of the Sutlej, disheartened by the capture of its artillery, and the severe loss it had sustained in killed and wounded, and has since crossed over to the other side of the river.

The force thus promptly brought forward from Umballah to the frontier has proved that it was sufficient for the protective object for which it was prepared, to repulse the treachery of the Maharajah's government and the arrogance of the Sikh army. It has further proved that the military precautions taken were most necessary. It has driven the invading force from our territory and punished the mutinous soldiery of a most unscrupulous government.

The total loss of all ranks in the actions of 21st and 22d December was 2415 killed and wounded. In these various actions the 3d Bengal Light Cavalry had lost many officers and men, but although in the thickest of the fight, Everard appeared to have borne

a charmed life, and remained unscathed. Selwyn's countenance was somewhat disguised by a long strip of plaister extending from his forehead to his upper lip, which traced the course of the sharp blade of a Sikh horseman, who had succumbed almost in the same instant to a straight thrust ; but such a wound was borne as a mark of honour, and was a trifle compared to the general suffering from terrible mutilations.

The presumption that the Sikhs were subdued by this signal defeat was premature. The upper Sutlej became the scene of very interesting operations, which are ably described in a despatch dated 1st February 1846 from Sir Hugh Gough (Commander-in-Chief).

It is a strange feature of this war that the enemy, pressed for supplies on his own bank, has been striving to draw them from his jagheer states on this side the river. In the town and fort of Dhurrumkote, which were filled with grain, he had in the second week of January a small garrison of mercenaries, Rohillas, Eusufzies, and Afghans. Major-General Sir Harry Smith was on the 18th sent against this place with a single brigade of his division and a light field battery. He easily effected its reduction, the troops within it surrendering at discretion after a few cannon shots. But whilst he was yet in march, I received information of a more serious character. There remained little cause to doubt that Sirdar Runjoor Singh Majeethea had crossed from Philour at the head of a numerous force of all arms, and established himself in position at Baran Hara between the old and the new courses of the Sutlej ; not only threatening the city of Loodiana with plunder and devastation, but indicating a determination to intersect the line of our communications at Busseean and Raekote. The safety of the rich and populous town of Loodiana had been in some measure provided for by the presence of three battalions of native infantry under Brigadier Godby, and the gradual advance of our reinforcements, amongst which was included Her Majesty's 53d Regiment ; and the position of the Shekawatee brigade, near Busseean, gave breathing time to us in that direction.

But on receipt of intelligence that could be relied on, of the movements of Runjoor Singh and his apparent views, Major-General Sir Harry Smith with the brigade of Dhurrumkote, and Brigadier Cureton's

cavalry, was directed to advance by Jugraon towards Loodiana, and his second brigade under Brigadier Wheeler moved on to support him.

Then commenced a series of very delicate combinations, the momentous character of which can only be comprehended by reflecting on the task which had devolved on this army of guarding the frontier from Rooper down to Mundote.

The Major-General breaking up from Jugraon, moved towards Loodiana, when the Sirdar, relying on his vast superiority of forces, assumed the initiative, and endeavoured to intercept his progress by marching in a line parallel to him, and opening upon his troops a furious cannonade. The Major-General continued coolly to manœuvre, and when the Sikh Sirdar, bending round one wing of his army, enveloped his flank, he extricated himself by retiring with the steadiness of a field-day by echelon of battalions, and effected his communication with Loodiana, but not without severe loss.

Reinforced by Brigadier Godby, he felt himself to be strong; but his manœuvres had thrown him out of communication with Brigadier Wheeler, and a portion of his baggage had fallen into the hands of the enemy. The Sikh Sirdar took up an entrenched position at Budhowal; supporting himself on its fort, but threatened on either flank by General Smith and Brigadier Wheeler, finally decamped, and moved down to the Sutlej.

The British troops made good their junction, and occupied the abandoned position of Budhowal; the Shekawattee Brigade and Her Majesty's 53d Regiment also added to the strength of the Major-General, and he prepared to attack the Sikh Sirdar on his new ground.

But on the 26th Runjoor Singh was reinforced from the right bank with 4000 regular troops, twelve pieces of artillery, and a large force of cavalry.

Emboldened by this accession of strength, he ventured on the measure of advancing towards Jugraon, apparently with the view of intercepting our communications by that route.

It is my gratifying duty to announce that this presumption has been rebuked by a splendid victory obtained over him. He has not only been repulsed by the Major-General, but his camp at Aliwal carried by storm, the whole of his cannon and munitions of war captured, and his army driven headlong across the Sutlej, even on the right bank of which he found no refuge from the fire of our artillery. . . .

The glorious victory of Aliwal was quickly followed by important operations, which led to the expulsion of the Sikh army. An extract from the *Bombay Times* of March 3, 1846, will afford a

graphic account of the operations subsequent to 1st February.

The siege train was now drawing near to its destination. From Busseean to Moodkee it was escorted by a detachment of 30th Native Infantry under Major Scott. It approached Hurrakee on 5th, when twelve howitzers were detached by the Commander-in-Chief, instead of pushing on, as was expected, to the Governor-General at Ferozepore. Colonel Wheeler's brigade took up a position near the village of Sunnait, six miles from Loodiana. He had under his command a powerful force consisting of the 1st light, and the 4th irregular cavalry, H.M. 50th, the 24th, 30th, 36th, and 48th N.I., the whole Shekawattee brigade with four horse-artillery guns—in all probably about 8000 men. On the 3d, four days after the battle of Aliwal, the force under General Sir Harry Smith marched from Boondric towards Dhurrumkote, and made arrangements to rejoin the headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief at Hurrakee Ghat. Here the enemy continued to maintain themselves in force. Their principal position was right in front of us on our side of the river; it was strongly fortified, armed with 70 pieces of artillery, and defended by about 30,000 well-disciplined troops.

A large body of men lay encamped on the opposite side; a well-constructed bridge of boats maintaining the communication between them. Sir Harry Smith joined the Commander-in-Chief on the 8th, and arrangements were immediately made for an attack on the enemy. So obstinately were the guns defended and so apt to be made use of if recovered for a moment, that two men of each company, exempted from all other duty, were detached from the European regiments, and provided with spikes to drive into the vents. The pontoon bridge at Khoonda Ghat, Ferozepore, was in readiness to be used at a moment's warning when our troops were prepared to cross.

Let us now turn to the state of matters at Lahore, where, amidst cruelty, perfidy, and falsehood, a stern and courageous determination not to yield to force of arms continued to manifest itself. The queen mother maintained a restless and uneasy position, unable to see her way or to control her vassal chiefs. She had learned that a conspiracy had been matured by Goolab Singh to depose her and the infant Dhuleep Singh, and throw them into prison. This was to be carried into execution on the return of the army from Ferozepore, where success against us was considered certain. The descendants of Shere Singh were to be placed upon the throne; the mountain chief exercising all substantial power, and entrusting with authority all such sirdars as might be subservient to his will. To counteract this scheme the queen invited Goolab Singh on his arrival to occupy the residence of the late Dhyyan Singh. She intended to have him and the sons of Shere Singh

murdered. The Rajah declined ; the other persons became aware of their danger, and escaped.

Goolab is understood at about this time to have sent messengers with a view to negotiation with the Governor-General, hoping to cover his designs, or, in case of reverse, to obtain separate terms for himself. He declined to have the customary salute fired on his arrival at the capital. On the 30th, the day of the battle of Aliwal, he appeared at court and stated that he was ready to undertake any duty Her Majesty might assign him. He was offered money and ammunition, and recommended to proceed to camp, but replied that he had brought abundance of both with him, which would be at the disposal of Government. He wished to fight the British with his own hillmen, and declined being mixed up with the Sikhs, in whose courage no reliance could be placed. His own troops and personal attendants numbered 12,000, with ten pieces of artillery. The conference ended in nothing. The same evening, tidings reached of the victory of Sir Harry Smith, and strong detachments were immediately ordered from Lahore to succour their defeated brethren and reinforce the camp at Hurrakee. The following day the Queen in her helplessness was induced, notwithstanding all that had occurred, to nominate Goolab Singh "vuzzeer" or prime minister. On the 2d February a report was circulated that the Sikhs had retrieved the disaster of the 30th, beaten the British, and recovered a portion of their guns, and as the man by whom the tidings were brought was handsomely rewarded for his pains, other bearers of intelligence equally flattering and fallacious made their appearance in abundance. In two days more an intimation from the defeated General Runjoor Singh revealed the full account of their disasters : 2000 men out of 24,000 who had been engaged were all he had been able to collect or keep together, and these were without money, arms, ammunition, or food—their whole artillery was in the hands of the victors. Information soon after arrived that so disheartened was the grand army under Tej Singh by the disaster experienced by their brethren, that it would be difficult to get them to fight unless Goolab Singh showed himself in camp. Evil tidings had arrived from the Indus. A rebellious chief at the head of 3000 men was ravaging the Dhejarat, and troops were ordered from the remote province of Cashmere to assist the forces of Government likely to be overcome.

It soon after appeared that the rebels had taken six guns from the Khalsa forces, for which they were far more than a match.

On the 4th February it was agreed that the British Government should be openly and formally applied to, that it should be intimated that the troops repented them of what they had done, and were most anxious for an amicable arrangement of differences. To induce the Governor-General to treat with them by a formidable display of strength still remaining, every effort was made to get more troops sent to camp, and to draw on the far North-West, on Attock and Peshawar, for rein-

forcements to guard Lahore. The Vuzzeer continued to wait with anxiety the return of his ambassadors. Urged to proceed to camp, he persisted in continuing at Lahore, pleading that his departure would be a signal for a rising in the capital.

The Governor-General is understood to have declined all separate engagements, and spurned the idea of cessation of hostilities. Tidings reached about this time of the assembling of a large force under Sir Charles Napier on the lower Sutlej, and the defection of the Mooltan chief, who offered at once to submit and to hold his dominions on the same terms under the British as he had done under the Sikh Government. This must have crowned the gloomy forebodings at the capital.

About 8th February every effort was being made for the fortification and defence of Lahore.

. . . Having given a short outline of the state of affairs in the Sikh capital up to the 8th February, we must once more revert to the operations of the British army, brought down to the junction of Sir Harry Smith on the day just indicated, and ready to give battle to the enemy.

The works had been repeatedly surveyed. They consisted of formidable entrenchments defended by not fewer than 30,000 men and 70 pieces of artillery. The fortifications had been most skilfully constructed under Colonel Don Hurban de Alcantara, a Spanish engineer. There was a double line of batteries arranged in semi-circular form; high ramparts and deep and wide ditches, with holes and banks; a triple line of defence with earth and plank such as a rifle ball could hardly enter, with gabions, redoubts, and epaulements, appeared to defy the efforts of our troops.

Immediately within they were, as in the camp of Ferozeshah, pierced with loaded mines, and everything arranged which skill could plan or perseverance carry out during the four weeks they had occupied the position. A considerable force remained on the other side, with guns so placed as to command and flank the position on this.

The arrangements in contemplation had been submitted to the Commander-in-Chief and met his hearty approval. Two picquets in front of Koodewallah, and the little Sabraon occupied by the enemy in force during the day only, were ordered to be taken possession of on the night of the 9th, and though some misconception and delay occurred, by daylight on the morning of the 10th they were in our hands. The battering and field artillery were placed in a semi-circle embracing within its fire the position of the Sikhs.

The cannonade, which was meant to have commenced at daybreak, was delayed till the rays of the sun had dispelled the heavy mist, which, hanging over the river and the plain, rendered distant objects obscure. Two brigades under Sir R. Dick meanwhile waited on the margin of the Sutlej to commence the attack on the enemy's right.

The 7th or Stacy's brigade, comprising Her Majesty's 50th and 53d, led on, supported at a distance of 200 yards by the 6th under

Colonel Wilkinson, the 5th under Colonel Ashburnham forming the reserve, was to advance from the entrenched village of Koodewallah, leaving one regiment, if necessary, for its defence.

General Gilbert's division, constituting the centre, was deployed for support or attack, its right resting on the village of the little Sabraon, which it partly occupied.

On the left, near the village of Guttah, with its right thrown out towards the river, was General Sir Harry Smith's division.

The cavalry under General Cureton feigned an attack on the ford at Hurrakee, threatening the Sikh horse on the other side. In the rear between General Gilbert's right and Sir Harry Smith's left Brigadier Campbell occupied a position capable of protecting both.

Sir Joseph Thackwell, with Brigadier Scott, held the remainder of the cavalry in reserve on the left, ready to act as circumstances might demand.

At 3 A.M. the troops advanced to their respective stations as just described. At daybreak the light field batteries and a brigade of howitzers opened. By half-past 6 the whole fire of our artillery was developed. Round shot, shells, and rockets followed each other with fearful celerity, and the frequent explosion of ammunition waggons in the enemy's camp showed with what precision they were aimed.

At first a few horsemen showed themselves, reconnoitring and directing the movement of the baggage stores across the river by the bridge. Our infantry lay facing the works within cannon range, but under cover. The enemy seemed at first scarcely aware of our position, the columns having taken up their ground under night, but were quickly seen lining the whole of their works as they saw themselves surrounded.

In an instant every gun was opened upon us from a common centre, and the fire became tremendous. Our guns were of formidable calibre, were admirably served, and were pointed with the utmost precision, but the Sikh position was so formidable and their cannon so numerous that it was feared by cannonade alone it was vain to hope to carry the day in any reasonable time, and it was determined to bring the issue to the arbitrament of musket and bayonet.

The attack, in conformity with this determination, was commenced at nine o'clock, when Colonel Stacy's brigade, supported by Colonel Lane's horse artillery and Captain Horsford's and Fordyce's foot batteries, advanced steadily in line towards the enemy's works. The infantry under Stacy, supported by Wilkinson's brigade, moved on steadily and coolly, halting when necessary to correct any imperfections in their line.

About 1200 yards of deep sand had to be traversed. The artillery went on at a gallop, taking up a succession of positions until within 300 yards of the enemy.

The simultaneous roar of 120 pieces of ordnance now resounded

along the Sutlej. The slaughter was terrible ; and so hot was the fire of musketry, camel-swivels, and cannon, that it seemed for a moment impossible that the entrenchments should be won.

On our soldiers went under a storm of grape and musketry, now opening on them from the opposite side and focus of the entrenched position. A shout, a run, and a fire had no effect ; the heaviness of the ground over which they had passed had fagged the men.

The Sikhs saw their danger ; but, confident in the power of their guns and impregnability of their position, stood firm and fought bravely. The enemy's cavalry, ordered to the rescue, was now observed preparing for the charge. A square was formed, the gallant Sepoys coolly closed in on their own centre ; the enemy's horse took warning, and withdrew.

In a moment the line was reformed and the troops advancing, but not a man had as yet passed the entrenchments. The Sikhs showed signs of wavering as they saw our column slowly and undismayed move on. Her Majesty's 10th Foot, under Colonel Franks, charged without firing a shot till within the entrenchments of the enemy ; the 53d came next. The Sepoys of the 43d and 59th emulated the Europeans in coolness and determination.

The brigade of Colonel Ashburnham now came to the support of that of Stacy. Generals Gilbert and Sir Harry Smith threw out their light troops, aided by the artillery, to threaten the other portions of the entrenchments.

The Sikhs attempted to throw the whole force within their camp upon the two brigades which had entered, and the battle raged with terrific fury all along from right to left. Our heavy guns had been first directed to the right, when their fire required to be gradually suspended. The Sikhs strove with indomitable fury to recover, sword in hand, the positions from which they had been driven at the bayonet's point ; nor was it till the weight of three divisions of infantry, and the fire of every piece of artillery belonging to our army had been felt, and the cavalry under Sir Joseph Thackwell had, in single file, burst through the openings made by the sappers in the entrenchments, reformed, and charged on the other side, that the victory was won. The 3d Dragoons overcame every obstacle, galloped over and cut down the men still standing at their guns, and the victors pressed closely upon the enemy on every side. Now their fire first began to slacken, and then ceased.

Regiment after regiment moved steadily forward, and fearful volleys of musketry were poured upon the retreating foe.

The few parties first retiring were now quickly followed by vast masses making for the bridge. Thousands betook themselves to the river, which a sudden rise had just rendered unfordable. The bridge meanwhile had partially sunk, and was totally inadequate for the conveyance of the vast multitudes pressing towards it.

This battle had commenced at 6 and was over at 11 o'clock ;

the hand-to-hand combat had begun at 9, and lasted scarcely two hours.

The river was full of sinking men. For two hours volley after volley was poured in upon the human mass, the stream being literally red with blood, and covered with the bodies of the slain. At last, the musket ammunition becoming exhausted, the infantry fell to the rear; the horse artillery playing grape till not a man was visible within range. No compassion was felt, or mercy shown. Not only had our own loss been excessively severe, but the enemy during the earlier portion of the day had mutilated or murdered every wounded man that fell into their hands. The coolness and order with which the enemy retired, notwithstanding the havoc made amongst their ranks, were remarkable. On reaching the farther bank of the river their columns moved out of range of our fire and pitched their tents, which they had sent across at the commencement of the action. Three or four heavy guns, which had in the course of the fight occasionally played upon us from time to time, saluted the camp-followers engaged in collecting the spoil. The bridge was partly burned, partly sunk, and latterly destroyed by the engineers. The camp was in several places set fire to by stragglers, increasing the horror of the scene of carnage.

Of 35,000 men who had that day maintained so stout but so unavailing a fight against us, more than one half must have been killed or wounded—not fewer than 10,000 are believed to have perished. 67 guns, with upwards of 200 formidable camel-swivels, numerous standards, and munitions of war, fell into our hands.

In an engagement so bloody and obstinate, even though of brief duration, the loss of the assailants could not but be severe. Our total casualties amounted to 2383; of these 13 European officers were killed and 101 wounded. Among the slain were the gallant veteran Major-General Sir R. Dick and Lieutenant-Colonels C. C. Taylor and Ryan. The Governor-General throughout was in the thickest of the fight, although he did not hold a separate command.

. . . When the firing was over through the exhaustion of the infantry ammunition, the banks of the river exhibited an extraordinary scene. Hundreds of bodies were lying upon the margin in every conceivable attitude, those who had been killed outright were stretched generally upon their faces as though they had stumbled and fallen during headlong flight, others were lying on their backs with the arms and legs thrown wide apart; some had been terribly

mutilated by artillery fire : many were hacked by sabres. Among these bloody witnesses of the struggle, our tired but victorious men were scattered, all eyes being directed to the opposite side of the river where the remnant of the enemy's forces were still retreating from the occasional shells fired at long range from our heaviest guns.

The trumpets sounded in various directions through the abandoned camp that had been so hardly won. The men who had thrown themselves down upon the river's bank exhausted, to rest after the arduous struggle, sprang to their feet, and each man hurried to the ranks of his particular regiment. It was a gallant but a piteous sight. The ground was so thickly strewn with dead that it was difficult to find clear space upon which the troops could muster.

Parties were attending to the wounded, and were searching among the heaps of slain for those whose uniform bespoke the British side. As regiment after regiment of horse and foot fell in, the reduced ranks exhibited the fatal nature of the fight. There were men still bleeding from recent wounds hurriedly bandaged, whose courage had scorned retreat ; and many pale faces but stout hearts might have been seen among the serried lines, whose knees were trembling from faintness through loss of blood, but whose pride kept them in the ranks which they had resolutely sustained in the rush towards victory.

A cavalry regiment formed up ; and as the trumpet repeated the shrill call, the troopers could be seen, some trotting, others walking their active horses from various directions, while several men whose horses

had been killed drew up in line together on foot. The horses had suffered severely. Many who were now in line were wounded by sabre cuts, and the gashes yawned wide, from which the blood trickled down their seemingly unconscious flanks. Several poor animals limped with difficulty into the line with their heads hanging heavily upon the rein, as though hardly able to support the weight.

Many of the troopers were bandaged in various places, and covered with dust and blood. This was the 3d Bengal Light Cavalry; but where was Everard?

The Colonel was pale with loss of blood from two sabre cuts. His horse had been shot through the fleshy portion of the haunch, and was still bleeding. His face, bronzed by years of constant exposure to the sun of India, looked almost livid as, quivering with emotion, he spoke a few words of grateful encouragement to the reduced troops before him, and referred to those who, although fallen, had brought honour to the regiment. This was Colonel Selwyn; he had already seen that Everard had been cared for in the hospital tent. In the latter portion of the action when the cavalry in single file charged through the narrow entrance made by the sappers through the enemy's entrenchments, Everard's horse had been killed by a musket shot, and at the same time he had been severely wounded by a Sikh, who, profiting by the opportunity, had rushed forward and slashed him across the back with his sabre as he was attempting to extricate himself from his dead horse. A shot from his pistol killed his assailant before he had time

to repeat the blow, but in return he was himself immediately shot through the thigh, and would have been slaughtered by a small body of desperate men who had rushed to the attack, had not the sabres of his own troopers come to his assistance. Unfortunately, in addition to his wounds, he had been trampled upon by horses during the struggle when the cavalry poured into the enemy's entrenchments.

. . . In the morning of the 20th February the British army appeared under the walls of Lahore, where no resistance was shown. Preparations were made for sending Dhuleep Singh to his palace under an escort of the British troops.

On the 22d the citadel of Lahore and a part of the palace was formally taken possession of by the British authorities. On the same day a general order was issued by the Governor-General of India, dated Foreign Department, Camp Lahore, February 22, 1846.

The British army has this day occupied the gateway of the citadel of Lahore, the Badshahee Mosque, and the Hooxooree Bagh.

The remaining part of the citadel is the residence of His Highness the Maharajah (Dhuleep Singh), and also that of the families of the late Maharajah Rungeet Singh, for so many years the faithful ally of the British Government. In consideration of these circumstances, no troops will be posted within the precincts of the palace gate.

The army of the Sutlej has now brought its operations in the field to a close by the dispersion of the Sikh army and the military occupation of Lahore, preceded by a series of the most triumphant successes ever recorded in the military history of India. The British Government, trusting to the faith of treaties and the long subsisting friendship between the two States, had limited military preparations to the defence of its own frontier.

Compelled suddenly to assume the offensive by the unprovoked invasion of its territories, the British army, under the command of its distinguished leader, has in sixty days defeated the Sikh forces in four general actions, has captured 220 pieces of field artillery, and is now

at the capital, dictating to the Lahore Durbar the terms of a treaty, the conditions of which will tend to secure the British provinces from a repetition of a similar outrage.

The Governor-General being determined, however, to mark with reprobation the perfidious character of the war, has required, and will exact, that every remaining piece of Sikh artillery which has been pointed against the British army during this campaign shall be surrendered.

The Sikh army, whose insubordinate conduct is one of the chief causes of the anarchy and misrule which have brought the Sikh State to the brink of destruction, is about to be disbanded.

The soldiers of the army of the Sutlej have not only proved their superior prowess in battle, but have on every occasion with subordination and patience endured the fatigues and privations inseparable from a state of active operations in the field. The native troops of the army have also proved that a faithful attachment to their colours, and to the Company's service, is an honourable feature in the character of the British Sepoy.

The Governor-General has repeatedly expressed, on his own part and that of the Government of India, admiration and gratitude for the important services which the army has rendered.

. . . Thus ended one of the most glorious episodes of the military annals of British India. Everard Harcourt's wounds were serious, and he was granted leave for England. In the batch of promotions which quickly followed this series of important victories his name appeared in the list of colonels.





CHAPTER VII.

TWENTY years had passed away since Everard Harcourt, as a young cadet with a full heart and empty pocket, had parted from his boyish first-love, Eveleyn. How often that scene had been recalled to his memory! how vividly it had appeared to his imagination! The old bridge, the moss-grown stones, the clear stream beneath with the rounded pebbles, and the large rocks where the biggest trout were always hidden. In the burning heat of India, the ripple of this homely river had frequently been longed for, and the shade of those overhanging woods would have been welcomed as paradise in the pitiless sun of the scorching plains. When lying wounded after Sobraon's bloody fight, and the fever of his blood produced a temporary delirium, his wandering brain built up dissolving views of long-past scenes, and peopled them with shadows of those who once were dear. There was one form always flitting before every dream, sometimes disappearing vaguely, but again recurring in changing shapes, though ever the same being; this was Eveleyn. The Eveleyn who had vowed fidelity, but had not been true.

And Eveleyn was a widow: with only two children: both girls.

Everard was now in his forty-first year, and she was under forty. Although her early youth was past, she would be still handsome. She was in comfortable circumstances ; Everard was also in affluence through the death of an uncle, who a few years ago had left him a considerable fortune. He built up a romantic future, where a return to his first and only love should be welcomed by the object of his affection after twenty years of absence. He determined to write to her, merely to recall his existence to her memory, to describe the reason of his return, owing to his recent wound, and to express a hope that he might renew the acquaintance of his boyhood, if she had not entirely forgotten him.

Twenty years had not only changed persons, but the rapid progress of the age had entirely transformed the means of travelling since Everard had first quitted England. A fine class of steamers belonging to the Peninsular and Oriental Company conveyed passengers to Suez, at which place they crossed the desert of eighty miles to Cairo, in two-wheeled vans drawn by four mules ; and passing down the Nile, and the Mahmoudeeah Canal to Alexandria, were transhipped to other vessels of the same Company either direct to Southampton, or to Malta, from whence by fast steamers they could reach Marseilles, and travel through France to Dover.

Everard's wounds were not sufficiently healed to permit his removal until the end of April.

He arrived in London early upon a bright day in May.

. . . There is no portion of the globe where solitude

is felt so keenly as in London by an utter stranger. When Everard had quitted England more than twenty years before, he was a mere boy without a town acquaintance ; he returned as a man who had been exiled during the best years of an active life : and he knew no one. In the vast crowds of his own countrymen that were hurrying through the streets as though in quest of some object of immediate importance, he could not recognise a friend, or discover a face that he remembered to have seen before. For so many years he had been accustomed to a coloured population, that he felt like a mere grain of sand upon the sea-shore among the crowded masses of white people which thronged the thoroughfares.

He did not know his way about London, and he sauntered heedlessly along the principal streets of the West-end, gazing into the shop windows, and exhibiting the unmistakable peculiarities of a stranger. He was looking into a large print-shop where some fine engravings of Landseer's Highland scenes had attracted the attention of several passers-by, who, like himself, stopped to admire the artist's productions through the plate-glass window, when a person of gentlemanlike appearance who was similarly engaged, suddenly turned round, and, with a warm expression of recognition, stretched out his hand. . . . "Who would have thought of meeting you thus unexpectedly!" the stranger exclaimed. "When did you return home? what good fortune to meet you thus!" . . . At length Everard had found an acquaintance who was evidently delighted to see him, as he had grasped the hand which was instinctively

put forward ; but who the friend was, for the life of him he could not remember, at the same time he felt ashamed at his lack of memory. "We shall meet at the club," continued his old acquaintance, "and we will chat over old times ; it is impossible to converse in the horrible noise of these crowded streets ; I have an engagement at half-past three, and I have not many minutes to spare. Can you tell me the exact time ? my watch is rather slow, I fear." . . . While speaking he drew a handsome gold watch from his pocket, and Everard having referred to his own, exclaimed, "You are late already ; it is past the half-hour." . . .

"Good heavens ! late ? I would not be late for a hundred pounds. Good-bye ; so glad to have met you ; we shall see each other at the club ; good-bye," and away went his old friend, who had evidently missed his engagement.

"I wonder who that fellow is ?" thought Everard to himself as he continued his stroll westward towards his hotel in Jermyn Street. . . . "He knows me, but I haven't the faintest recollection of him ; . . . not brown enough to have been in India recently ; I wonder who he is ? . . . What club does he mean, I wonder ? he must have mistaken me, I think, for I am not a member of any club in London." . . .

With these thoughts Everard walked slowly until he crossed Piccadilly opposite St. James's Street. A wretched blind woman, who was led by a small dog which carried a basket in its mouth for alms from any charitable passer-by, was nearly run over by a careless cab-driver, and would have been knocked

down had not Everard caught her at the instant and prevented a collision. When safely landed on the pavement, his first instinct was to place half a crown in the little dog's basket, in response to the appeal from the inquiring eyes of the dumb but faithful guide. He fumbled in his various pockets for his purse. It was very odd; he tried the right, and left; it was not there! He unbuttoned his coat; perhaps, although unlikely, it might be in a waist-coat pocket. . . . A piece of gold chain was hanging loosely from the link secured within a button-hole! . . .

“‘Good-bye; . . . we shall see each other at the club!’ Damn the fellow's coolness!” slowly ejaculated Everard, who now discovered that his watch had disappeared in company with his purse, and that his silk handkerchief had also escaped from his possession.

“What a fool I am to forget that I have returned to a land of thieves!” exclaimed the innocent victim of curiosity in London streets. “For twenty-one years I have been away from this civilised country, and I have never lost anything but my temper, and I'm cleaned out here on the first day of my arrival. . . . Poor old woman,” he continued, “you shall not suffer; . . . just come round the corner to my hotel in Jermyn Street, and your little dog shall have a dinner, and yourself a remembrance also.”

A letter was waiting at the hotel addressed to Lieutenant-Colonel E. Harcourt, in a lady's hand. Everard, as is common with most people, scrutinised the seal and the post-mark together with the hand-

writing, instead of opening it to resolve the uncertainty of the writer. "Cheltenham" was the post-mark. The hand-writing bore a striking similarity to one which he could never forget. He broke the seal, and read as follows:—

DEAR COLONEL HARCOURT—It seems strange for me to address you thus, as my recollections of old times that were so vividly recalled by your letter, restore you in the simple and early association of my girlish days. I can hardly believe that so many years are past; sorrows and joys have alternated in my lot, and, as usual in the average of human lives, the joys have been in small proportion to the sorrows. Still we cling in memory to the happy days, and forget those of gloom; and your handwriting brought keenly to my mind the old scenes at Temple-Combe, which appear at this distance of time like the dream of a past existence. I and my two girls have a quiet home in Landsdowne Place, in Cheltenham. Should you come this way, you will find many old friends, as Cheltenham is the paradise of Indian officers, who have served abroad until they have earned the reward of being forgotten in their own country. Here they meet, and form new friendships through the medium of a common disappointment, which links them together in the bonds of general discontent.

Your name is so well known that of course you will find friends everywhere, and you will be independent of such an asylum as Cheltenham; but should you come this way, I need hardly say how very glad I shall be to see you, and to show you my two dear witnesses of the long interval that has elapsed since we last met, some twenty-one years ago.—Sincerely yours,

EVELEYN ROBERTS.

"I shall go to Cheltenham to-morrow morning, and get out of this horrible crowd of pickpockets, and uproar," muttered Everard to himself. "Poor Eveleyn; she fancies that I am overrun by friends in this great wilderness London; one friend has found me out—and cleaned me out; and I believe that is my sole acquaintance in this metropolis."

The following morning saw Everard on the way to Cheltenham. Here was another change since he had quitted England! Railways were rapidly super-

seding the old methods of travelling, and instead of a nine-hours' journey upon the box of a stage-coach with a fine team of horses, and sociable coachman to while away the time between the ten-mile intervals of change, travellers had become accustomed to the luxurious imprisonment of first-class carriages in railway trains, which reached Cheltenham in three and a half hours.

A hard struggle had been maintained in many places against this hateful innovation.

The city of Worcester had manfully and obstinately opposed the projected line, and had successfully resisted the passage of the bill through Parliament. Great was the triumph of the far-seeing Worcester inhabitants in thus securing their town from the visitation of such a scourge as a railroad. It was argued by the experienced residents, "that the morals of the population would suffer by the advent of crowds of strangers of doubtful characters." The country gentlemen declared that "the hunting would be utterly destroyed, as the fox would have it all his own way, and could cross the line of embankment at any point, while the horses could not follow." Imagine the horror of a fox running straight along the line followed by a pack of hounds while a train should be approaching! the fox would be run over, and the whole pack destroyed! It was generally agreed that railways would destroy the country; England would no longer be England. Imagine a lovely landscape intersected by a long straight line of rail, with a puffing, panting, shrieking, smoking engine tearing along! instead of the dear old stage-coach with its

fine horses and jolly coachman that everybody to the smallest child was glad to welcome. What would become of the nice comfortable inns at every ten-mile stage? the proprietors would be ruined; the servants would go to the workhouse. What would become of all the horses when the coaches should cease to run? horses would fall in price, and would not pay for breeding. What would become of all the blacksmiths who shod the horses? The idea was too distressing to think of seriously. . . . And then, what would be the moral effect of railways upon English people generally? it would be ruinous. A well-known stage-coachman, who had driven his coach for thirty years, shook his head gravely at the approaching ruin. "Accidents, sir, will happen, and will be awful. If the coach upsets occasionally, why, *there you are*; but if a train upsets, and no road, and not a public near, *where are you?*"¹

White-headed old philosophers contemplated the change with serious misgivings. "A system of rapid and cheap locomotion will be the moral destruction of the English character. The English mind is naturally conservative. An Englishman of the middle, and especially of the agricultural and working classes, loves his own home and its surroundings; his mind is contented with small desires; he seldom moves more than a few miles radius from his native village.

"Railways will change this excellent trait of character, and will engender discontent. The country will lose its conservative nature. Strangers will in-

¹ All these arguments were actually used against the introduction of a railway system.

trude upon hitherto unvisited districts; they will introduce new ideas, and new-fangled customs. Our simple village folk will interchange with foreigners¹ their views on many topics; they will have a yearning for the outside world, and a craving for things which had never entered their imagination. This will give birth to a desire for travelling. Every move necessitates an outlay. The women who were satisfied with simple gowns will consider it impossible to make an outing without a new dress, or a new bonnet. This will create extravagance. The same wife, or daughter, who was contented before she left her home, will be jealous of others whom she meets abroad with greater finery; this will breed covetousness and envy. She will blame her husband, as she will feel neglected.

“Domestic clamour will drive a hitherto good husband from his home: his refuge will be the pot-house. Extravagance will become the rule. Wages which formerly contented them will not suffice for increased and unnecessary expenditure. The labourer will give less work, but demand higher wages, in proportion to the extravagant increase of his expenditure. This will engender a bad feeling between master and servant. The political agitator will appear, and class will be excited against class. Servants will never remain steadfast to their employers. The easy and rapid system of locomotion will create a constant love of change. The cheap postage will induce a ridiculous correspondence among maid-

¹ The name by which all strangers were known in some counties among the poor.

servants ; this will create immorality and dishonesty ; they will purloin stationery belonging to their mistress, and pass half their time in writing love-letters. The railways will afford luxurious means of travelling ; thus, the maid who would have hesitated to make a journey of ten hours in the rain outside a coach, will lightly undertake a journey to break the *ennui* of her situation. The poorer order, who are now contented with cotton or woollen, will crave for silk. Vanity will increase to a frightful degree, as every girl who travels will seek for admiration. Money that should be frugally accumulated will be squandered heedlessly upon the person. This desire for dress, and frivolity and constant love of change, will undermine the national character. Girls whose vanity excites the desire for money will become unchaste. The village labourer who now attends his church in a clean smock - frock will desire broadcloth ; the simple plough-boy will feel ashamed of his appearance in the clothes which his fathers would have been proud to wear. All these immoral changes will be the result of railways ; and I hope I may not live to see them," exclaimed a thoughtful old gentleman of my acquaintance, who represented the now defunct old Tory.

. . . Cheltenham had so far succeeded in resisting the railway movement, that the station was erected at a great distance from the town ; thus, when Everard arrived he had to drive in an omnibus nearly two miles to the Plough Hotel, which at that time was one of the best of the good old-fashioned and comfortable inns of England.

The cooking was excellent, the attendance good, and there was a degree of comfort in the coffee-room that was most enjoyable. The port-wine was of the best quality, and as it was yet light when Everard had finished dinner, he despatched a messenger with a short note to Landsdowne Place to notify his arrival, and to ask permission to call after luncheon on the following day.

It would be difficult to define the feelings of the writer, or of the recipient of that note. . . . Everard was no longer in actual love, as the lapse of so many years, coupled with the fact that Eveleyn had married another, and was the mother of grown-up children, had damped the ardour of his youth; but he still cherished a deep affection for the Eveleyn Malcolm of his boyhood as he pictured her to his recollection.

Although he had long since ceased to wear the miniature, it was safely cared for in a corner of his despatch-box, together with the opal ring, and he determined to arm himself with both these early treasures on the morrow.

When the note reached Mrs. Robartes (Eveleyn), her daughters remarked a more than usual earnestness in her demeanour as she hastily penned a reply, begging Colonel Harcourt to come to luncheon on the following day, instead of delaying his visit to the formal hour of an afternoon call.

She had frequently mentioned his name in conversation with her girls, but although she had exhibited a more than usual interest when the news was received of his severe wound, she had never hinted a suspicion of the engagement which had formerly

existed between herself and Everard. It would be impossible to deny that her heart beat quicker than its wont when she handed her letter to the servant ; and she inwardly acknowledged a strange mixture of feelings as she stepped from the drawing-room into her conservatory, and commenced gathering flowers into a small bouquet, for no purpose that she could explain to herself, except that it relieved a temporary embarrassment which her daughters might have observed.

On the following morning she perhaps unconsciously was longer at her toilet than was her usual habit. She might have regarded herself more critically in the mirror, and have endeavoured to form an unbiassed estimate of the change which time had wrought, and have wondered whether Colonel Harcourt would discover in the woman of forty the Eveleyn of his youth ; her face was still handsome, but in the well-rounded figure there was a marked development from the sylph-like form of Eveleyn when eighteen. . . . The hours passed heavily.

In the meantime Everard had been occupied by feelings somewhat similar. "I wonder whether she will recognise me?" he thought. There certainly was a change from the boy of twenty to the fine powerful frame of the man of forty-one, but there were few men to be compared with Colonel Harcourt in good looks and general personal appearance, of which, although not vain, he was well aware. He could not resist the temptation of wearing the opal ring, which fitted his little finger. Perhaps she would not recognise it.

The morning would not fly ; but every hour dragged its slow length most tediously. Everard had read the papers ; he had watched the clock till it appeared to go slower and slower the longer he gazed upon the dial. At length, wearied and impatient, he seized his hat and cane, and strolled leisurely up the promenade, hoping to pass away the time unconsciously until the hour of invitation.

Whether his legs instinctively quickened their strides in sympathy with the impatience of his brain can never be decided, but the result brought him to the door in Landsdowne Place nearly half an hour before he was expected. Mrs. Robartes was in her dressing-room ; perhaps with some anxiety taking one more look in the tell-tale mirror. Her eldest daughter (named Eveleyn after her mother) was in the drawing-room when Colonel Harcourt was announced.

As he entered the room, he started, and a blush flushed his bronzed features. "Eveleyn !" he exclaimed, "is it indeed possible ?" but immediately recovering himself as the young girl stepped forward to receive him. "Forgive me," he said, "and pardon my first surprise ; twenty years have passed since I parted from your mother ; those years seem like a dream from which I am awakened by your presence ; you are indeed the image of the Eveleyn Malcolm that I left behind ; the likeness is quite marvellous, and for the moment I could hardly persuade myself of your identity."

"My mother will be here directly," replied the lovely girl, whose cheeks were slightly tinged with

rose-colour after the earnest introduction of her visitor. "She will be disappointed at not being here to receive you, but I think our time must be rather slow."

"Quite the contrary, I am too early, and must excuse myself by telling you the truth; I was so very dull alone at the hotel, and anxious to renew my acquaintance with Mrs. Robartes, that I walked rather quicker than I intended. It began to rain, therefore unwittingly I must have hurried, and I am here before the proper hour." . . . At this instant the younger sister entered, and was immediately introduced by the elder. There was only a year's difference in their age, but the younger had no resemblance to her mother, and although of average appearance, she had no great personal attractions. . . .

"I will tell my mother that you are here, if you will excuse me for a few minutes," said Eveleyn; and in the same instant she disappeared, leaving Everard *tête-à-tête* with her sister. Hardly five minutes had elapsed when they appeared to have entered upon an acquaintance. Everard had talked of horses, finding that she was fond of riding, and that she had a pony of her own; he had already suggested riding parties; there was no artificial *mauvaise honte*, but the young girl thought him a charming companion, so unlike the stiff and conventional manners of the everyday throng.

The door opened, and a lady entered, of handsome and dignified appearance, with a face, full of expression which animated features of exquisite regularity. Her large blue eyes spoke almost more than words, as she welcomed Colonel Harcourt to her own home



'IS IT POSSIBLE THAT TWENTY YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE WE
LAST MET?'—p. 279.

after the long exile from his country. There was no embarrassment in her manner, but a genial warmth of character seemed to guarantee the sincerity of her nature.

Everard had advanced to meet her, and for a few moments grasped, without relaxing her outstretched hand. He paused before he spoke, and gazed at her as though he was at a loss for words to express his feeling. "Is it possible," he at length exclaimed, "that twenty years have passed since we last met? what a lifetime that appears! and yet it seems but yesterday that I said 'good-bye.'"

There was a slight tremor in her frame, and a nervous twitching of her lip, as she released her hand from Everard's apparently unconscious grasp, and replied, "You have made the acquaintance of my daughters, Colonel Harcourt, without my introduction; they mark the interval of time, and make me feel old indeed; still, as you say, it is hard to believe that so many years have fled. . . . And you have been grievously wounded, and have been exposed to fearful dangers of all kinds! How much you will have to tell us! but are you quite recovered from your hurt? You are looking wonderfully well, and although changed, I should have known you anywhere." . . .

"My wounds were serious, but, thank God, I have no cause to think of them; I am perfectly recovered. I was more fortunate than many, who, poor fellows, will remain cripples for their lives. Honour and glory are dearly purchased at such a sacrifice, but the war was not of our seeking, and the result has

been glorious for the country. I shall now have my reward in the repose of England, where I have few friends that care for me. In twenty years we appear to be forgotten, and are reckoned with the dead."

"You will regard us as friends, I hope," exclaimed the elder girl Eveleyn.

"Of course we shall expect that," continued Mrs. Robartes, "and I have much to tell you of people that we both knew and loved when we were young, all of whom are either married or dead; mostly the latter, as few remain whom you would recollect."

"What became of poor old 'Sailor,' my dog that I left with you? I suppose he must have died long ago?"

"Not so many years as you might think. I took great care of him, poor dog; he was quite one of the family, and he lived to be fifteen years old; but he got blind and deaf, and at last he was handed over to our doctor for a merciful deliverance."
. . . Luncheon was announced, and Everard was seated upon Mrs. Robartes' right. "Allow me to assist you," he said, gently taking the carving-knife and fork from the fair hands of his hostess. "I cannot allow you to become a slave to our appetites; I think after twenty years' experience in Indian chickens, I am almost a professor in the anatomy of a fowl."

A sudden blush, almost immediately succeeded by paleness, passed over the features of Mrs. Robartes, as for the first time she observed the opal ring upon Everard's finger; that same ring which he had given her upon the evening of bitter parting upon the bridge

at Temple-Combe ; the pledge of his vow to remain true : this pledge, that had been returned by her, was a witness of her inconstancy ! And the ring itself ? was a pale, cold stone absolutely devoid of fire or colour, as though it were merely a piece of cornelian ! The beautiful colours of the opal had vanished, and a dull milky white pervaded the surface.

So fixed was her look upon his hand, that Everard, for the moment being innocent of the cause, instinctively turned his eyes in the same direction, and was positively startled at the appearance of the ordinarily fiery stone. "Good heavens !" he exclaimed in a subdued voice, "I have never seen this before !"

Mrs. Robartes had quickly recovered her self-possession, and without an allusion to the subject of surprise, she adroitly turned the conversation.

Everard, on the contrary, although by no means superstitious, could not shake off the curiosity and shock which this peculiar incident had occasioned. Although he conversed upon various topics as though nothing had occurred, he occasionally glanced furtively at the ring, which for the first time in his life had showed signs of approaching trouble.

The afternoon passed away most agreeably ; the hours flew ; it was difficult to say which of the three ladies was most sorry when he left ; but as he had promised the two girls to join them in their ride on the following morning, they had a pleasure to which they could look forward.

. . . When Everard left the house to return to his hotel, he could not resist an immediate examination of his ring. He had mechanically drawn on his

glove after parting, but before he had walked a hundred yards he drew it from his left hand and regarded the opal attentively. Every colour of the rainbow danced and played upon the beautiful stone with sparkling rays of fire! "Very odd," he thought to himself; "there can be no doubt that it was as pale and cold as a piece of ice a few hours ago; and *she* noticed it, I am positive. There cannot be any truth in such an absurd superstition, as material objects can only be affected by physical causes; maybe the shower of rain wetted and chilled my hand before I arrived at Landsdowne Place. Cold will sometimes affect an opal, and the variations of the colours in sympathy with the sudden changes of temperature may have originated the ridiculous belief in its magical properties. Certainly I have never worn it until this day, and it has always appeared bright whenever I have looked at it in its case. It is of no use to speculate upon the cause; there is nothing the matter with it now; but I shall not wear it again."

"She is still very charming," Everard continued to soliloquise. "Her face would be perfect if it were not quite so round; her eyes are as clear and as lovely as ever; her teeth are faultless; her figure—there is a good deal of that, certainly; rather too much for the taste of connoisseurs. What a pity it is when a lovely girl grows bulky! I daresay, at some day or other, that beautiful second edition of herself, young Eveleyn, will develop like her mother. What a sad future—shocking to think of! I wonder why they get fat? Don't take enough exercise, very

likely. Eat too much, very probably ; most English women eat too much ; cold climate ; good appetites. Long nights in winter ; sleep too much. Tea in bed in the morning ; then heavy breakfast ; luncheon at half-past one ; take a drive ; come home ; tea and bread and butter, buttered toast, strawberries, etc., at five ; chat and read till dressing time ; then heavy dinner after seven ; tea after that in drawing-room ; go to bed again—and then wonder that they grow fat ! I wonder they are not like balloons. However, my old Eveleyn is still a delightful companion ; and young Eveleyn is the most extraordinary likeness of what I remember her mother—a perfect *facsimile*. A good straightforward girl, too ; no nonsense or absurd shyness about her. Fond of riding. Her figure would look well in a habit. Mother's figure wouldn't do on horseback ; no, it really would *not* do in a habit. What a pity ! I shall ride with them to-morrow ; both nice girls, but the eldest is certainly a charming reproduction." In this train of thought Everard at length arrived at his hotel. . . .

. . . Cheltenham was full of old Indian officers, and in a few days Everard had fallen in with many acquaintances. Lord Fitz-Hardinge's hounds were one of the best packs in England, which would render the next winter agreeable ; and the intervening months would afford ample time for the formation of his stable. For the present he could hire good horses at Griffith's, and hardly a day passed without his escort to the two young ladies from Landsdowne Place, who had quickly regarded him in the light of their mother's old friend, and their natural protector.

Months passed away in this agreeable companionship, and Colonel Harcourt was accepted as quite one of the family. Nothing could be undertaken by Mrs. Robartes without his advice; he was their chaperon at public concerts, and attended them at balls in the Assembly Rooms. The busy tongues of Cheltenham gossips had for a long time past discovered food for scandal; but no one could quite venture to couple any one name with that of Colonel Harcourt. Some declared, of course, that he was engaged to Mrs. Robartes; others gave a knowing look, and suggested that a man of forty, handsome, and distinguished, would be a better match for the daughter than the mother. One old lady of seventy years' experience shook her head and expressed an opinion that, if the mother wanted him, she had better send her daughters away on a long visit.

In the meantime, Colonel Harcourt, who was quite unconscious of the tattle of society, had been imperceptibly drifting into a position that could not continue without more serious development. The young Eveleyn had a beautiful voice, and Everard sang with her the same duets that he had sung in his early youth together with her mother. His daily rides with the two sisters were frequently extended to great distances; and somehow or other, although his attentions to Mrs. Robartes were more than courtesy actually demanded in warmth and intimacy, the demeanour of the sisters left no doubt that they considered him their own private property. He frequently bought them little presents, but he almost as often gave thoughtful souvenirs to their mother.

If any new invention in nicknacks appeared, it was certain to be found in the possession of some member of the family, and always from the same donor.

Young Eveleyn's horse had gone lame, and the morning ride could not take place. After a few days it was pronounced to be again sound ; but when the animals were brought to the door, a beautiful new horse appeared instead of the incurable. This little deception and surprise had been arranged by Colonel Harcourt. Of course, the new horse was a perfect lady's hack ; easy in its paces, graceful in carriage, with a temper that even the rider might be proud of. This thoughtful present enhanced the pleasure of the renewed rides, and there could be no doubt that in her young and untried heart, Eveleyn had so far cherished the first spark of an affection that a direct proposal would have fanned into flame.

In this happy family society a year passed away. It would be quite impossible to define the feelings of the three ladies, beyond the fact that they all loved him extremely without being absolutely in love. The elder daughter was nineteen, the younger nearly eighteen ; and although neither had ever contemplated the possibility of Colonel Harcourt being in love with one or the other, they would have been surprised and positively distressed should he have become engaged to a stranger. Mrs. Robartes treated the affection of her daughters for Colonel Harcourt as a natural consequence of his position, and of his former relations to herself ; but that he should be in love with Eveleyn while she was herself in existence never occurred to her unsuspecting mind. She had

no doubt that he would renew his suit, and that he wished to obtain the respect and affection of her girls before he should compromise himself by assuming the position of their stepfather. Her late husband had died wealthy, and both girls were left a considerable fortune in addition to her own ample dowry. As Colonel Harcourt had never for one moment questioned her respecting such financial matters, she felt confident in his undivided affection for herself.

It was about fourteen months after his arrival in Cheltenham that he was spending the evening at Landsdowne Place, and was playing chess, his favourite game, alone with Mrs. Robartes. The daughters were in the music-room trying over some new accompaniment.

"How badly you are playing to-night!" exclaimed Mrs. Robartes. "I shall take your queen; and the same move will be fatal; it will be checkmate."

"Check!" cried the gratified victor. "You have lost your queen, and I don't think you can escape from your position. It is really so; checkmate!"

Colonel Harcourt looked abstractedly at the board, and at the piece which his adversary still held triumphantly in her pretty hand. After a long pause, during which he apparently gazed at the hopeless condition of his king, he at length raised his eyes, and encountered the kindly but victorious expression of her face. "At last," sighed Colonel Harcourt, "I have screwed up my faltering courage in my defeat. You have taken my queen, and I am going to ask you seriously to give me an exchange, one that shall always be my queen; that none but

death shall ever take—and then, it would indeed to me, be the last checkmate.”

Mrs. Robartes was not exactly confused. A widow has, of course, experienced the delicate advances of a lover, and the somewhat excited and perhaps ambiguous phraseology of the proposal. The reply to Colonel Harcourt's impassioned request could only be met by an important question, which, after a few moments of grave consideration, she gently asked—“And who will be that person in exchange for a lost queen?”

“Your daughter Eveleyn ; the one who reminds me of those days of early happiness when in my boyhood I first loved. She brings back the past as vividly as though no time had disappeared, and when I look at her lovely face and listen to her voice, I feel that it is the same Eveleyn who gave me this fair keepsake, and vowed she would be true.” He had drawn from his breast the miniature, which he placed in her hands. At the same time he slipped upon her finger the opal ring, which shone with fiery brilliancy. “Take back this ring, and let it remain a gauge of true affection of a different type.” Colonel Harcourt would have continued, but Mrs. Robartes, pale, and apparently hardly conscious of her movements, slowly rose from her seat without a word in reply. She looked fixedly at the miniature, and at the opal upon her hand, and, without speaking, she left the room.

Everard was excited and distressed. He felt that he was still loved, and that she had perhaps expected herself to have been the exchange for the lost queen.

He paced the room in considerable agitation, and various conflicting emotions induced a rapid train of thoughts.

He had become desperately in love with the younger Eveleyn, and he had every reason to suppose that his affection was returned. Then in his heart he analysed his secret feelings, and confessed to himself that if no daughter had existed he would most certainly have proposed to Mrs. Robartes, as a renewal of their original engagement ; but the daughter did exist, and she was the counterpart of the girl to whom he was engaged more than twenty-one years ago. The existence of the daughter was a sufficient proof of his Eveleyn's inconstancy, while he had never loved another woman since the day they parted, —in fact, throughout his life. He could not conceal from himself that when in India, the news had been received of her widowhood, he had inwardly looked forward to an alliance with her upon his return to England. He had hurried down to Cheltenham as quickly as possible. Of course, she was changed, but still she was very handsome, and in many ways superior to an inexperienced girl. He was himself changed, as a man of forty-two is not like a stripling of twenty. He was deeply grieved to have caused her pain. Then why had she married? If she had only remained constant, he would have been true as steel. Ah, that beautiful second edition! If it had not been for that.

. . . While he was thus revolving a series of useless reflections through his mind, which did not affect the painful fact in the least degree, the younger daughter

entered, and with some slight embarrassment explained "that her mother was a little indisposed, but hoped that would not interfere with his usual ride to-morrow."

Everard took leave at once, with a complimentary message of regret at Mrs. Robartes' indisposition.

The following morning he rode up to the accustomed entrance; he was a little before the usual time, as the horses were not waiting. Dismounting, he walked into the house, and was shown into the library, where the younger Eveleyn in her riding habit, was seated at the writing-table. She was alone, and had just sealed a letter.

Upon Colonel Harcourt's entrance she hastily rose and welcomed him, and almost immediately exclaimed—"I must show you my present that my dear mother gave me this morning; it is so beautiful, and she told me that she had it when a girl from a dear friend of hers, and that some superstition is connected with the stone of this ring, which is a lovely opal. It is supposed to shine brightly when good fortune is approaching, but to lose its colours in adversity. Look how it sparkles now!"

"It is indeed bright," replied Everard, who gently took her outstretched hand to examine more attentively the gem; "brighter than methinks it ever was before. I see good fortune in these playing colours that gives me hope. It is a ring that I gave your mother when she was about your age. Whoever wore that ring was linked with me in destiny. It came back to me in India many years ago. I placed it once more on your mother's finger last evening,

when I asked her a great favour—the fact of your wearing it, tells me that she has granted my request.”

Everard had not released her hand. “What request could that have been?” asked Eveleyn blushing. “Your mother vanquished me at chess, and took my queen. I asked her to console me for my loss by an exchange, and that my queen should be her daughter Eveleyn. I placed this ring upon her finger as the connecting link of olden times; this ring was a betrothal, and she has answered by placing it upon your sweet hand. Dearest Eveleyn,” continued Everard, “I have waited long and patiently before I ventured to obtain your love; if I have gained it, believe me when I declare that I will devote my life to you and to your happiness.”

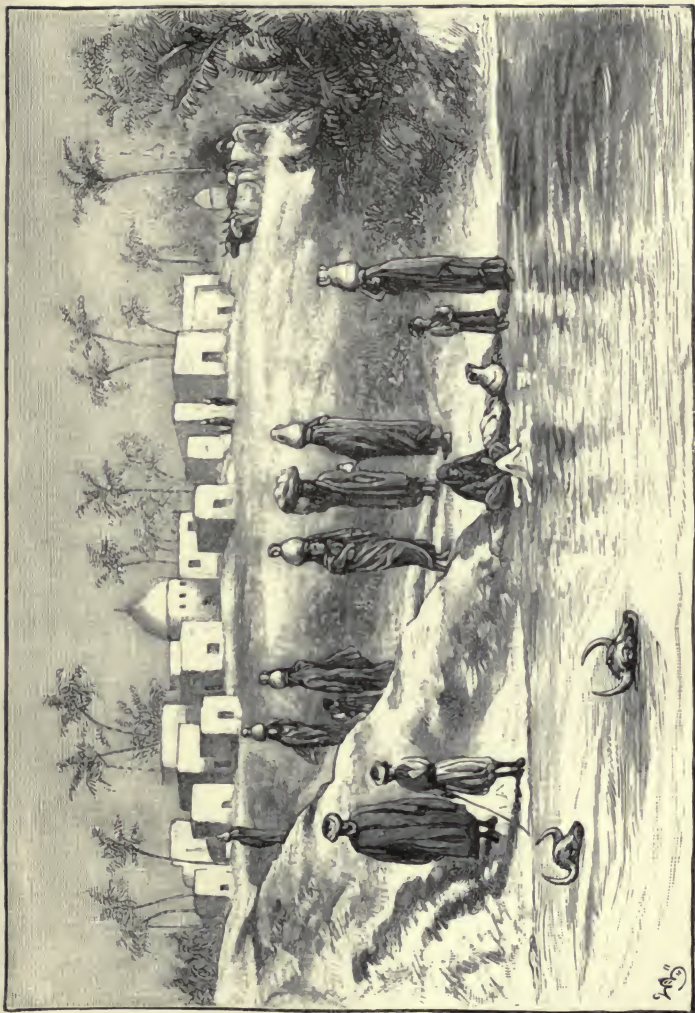
Eveleyn looked very beautiful. She did not withdraw that little white hand upon which the stone sparkled as though nourished by fresh fires kindled by Everard’s enthusiasm. Everard kissed the hand he grasped, and gently drawing her towards him, pressed his lips to her forehead as she blushing bent her head.

. . . They did not ride that morning.

* * * * *
* * * * *

CONCLUSION.

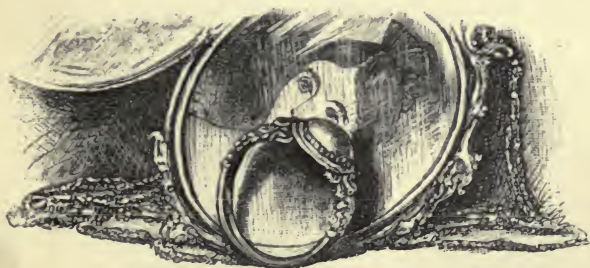
It is quite probable that a difference of opinion may exist among many persons as to the course



HASSAN ALI'S VILLAGE ON THE NILE.—p. 29.

which Colonel Harcourt pursued. Some will aver that the mother was hardly treated ; others will declare that, as she had become a widow, she had no right to expect a one-sided constancy. I knew all these characters personally, therefore I have adhered to the main facts of the story, and cannot be responsible for their actions. It will, however, be gratifying to all readers to be assured that Mrs. Robartes never showed the slightest jealousy of her daughter, who was married to Colonel Harcourt a few months after the game of chess. They were thoroughly happy in each other, and had a family of lovely children ; and Mrs. Robartes occupied the enviable position of a mother-in-law who was sincerely loved, and welcome at all seasons.

For the descriptions of the various actions of the Sikh War I am indebted to the kindness of Lieut.-General Reynell Taylor, C.B., who was himself severely wounded at Moodkee ; therefore the short sketch of the war on the Sutlej may be accepted as accurate history, having been compiled from various official documents in his possession.





IV.—HASSAN ALI AND THE GOLDEN BASIN.

[This story was told me by Lieutenant-Colonel Abd el-Kader when an officer under my command. He knew the personages of the tale. This gallant officer was killed in the defence of Tel el-Khebir, his regiment having deserted him.]

CHAPTER I.

THE Civil War in America, which entailed the blockade of the Southern coasts, had impeded the exportation of cotton, and the operatives of Lancashire were in dire distress; mills were closed in the absence of the raw material, and the cotton famine brought misery to the homes of those numerous hands which were busily employed in the manufacturing industries of Great Britain.

A great war must necessarily be calamitous throughout the area of active operations; but the collateral effects are felt in countries far distant from the battlefields, and may be equally disastrous to those who are innocent sufferers through the disturbance of the commercial equilibrium.

At this critical period, when Lancashire attracted the sympathy of all benevolent hearts throughout

Great Britain, the productive powers of Egypt contributed to allay the general distress, by an extraordinary supply of cotton, which was directed to the great centre of commercial activity, Liverpool.

Egypt exhibited a sudden impulse, that awakened the vast resources of her soil in response to the demand, which appealed to the interests of the fellaheen, or cultivators of the land. These agricultural people, who had hitherto cultivated beans, lentils, and cereals, with only a small proportion of cotton, quickly discarded the ordinary crops, and concentrated their attention upon the more remunerative production. Every available acre represented a cottonfield, and the famine prices of England created a golden shower upon the lands of Egypt, as the British sovereigns flowed in a continuous stream towards the soil which had yielded a supply in the hour of Lancashire's necessity.

The hitherto poor fellaheen grew suddenly rich. Those who had seldom possessed silver became acquainted with gold, and that in no trifling quantity. Masses of English coin discovered the mysterious path, and travelled into remote districts, where the rich alluvium of the Nile brought forth, and quickly ripened the snowy bolls of cotton, which vied in quality with the finest samples of New Orleans. A new birth appeared to have raised Egypt from her low estate, and to have exalted her unexpectedly to a position of importance ; the poor had, by a sudden transition, become rich.

. . . Hassan Ali was a fellah, the proprietor of a small farm upon the banks of the Nile in the neigh-

bourhood of Siout. He was a typical example of the ordinary fellah, a devout Mussulman, intensely ignorant of the world, but exceedingly acute in all matters that concerned himself. He had, by judicious presents, continued upon the best terms with the tax-collector, and had paid all imposts with a regularity that had earned the respect, not unleavened with the suspicions, of the Mudir or Governor, who considered him to be possessed of hidden wealth. No land was better farmed than that of Hassan Ali. His numerous children were mostly grown up; the elder sons were strong and industrious, the daughters were handsome and well-developed lasses, who looked after the cows and buffaloes, tended the goats and sheep, made cow-dung cakes for artificial fuel (according to the Egyptian custom in lack of wood or coal), and worked hard in the fields from sunrise until evening. At that hour they might be seen wending their way to the river's margin in stately and graceful forms, each balancing upon her head the large water-jar of many gallons, to be filled with Nile water for the domestic wants. The younger children carried the spare clothes to be washed in the same turbid stream, and the family of Hassan Ali would have exhibited the most perfect models for a painter, could he have studied their well-rounded limbs, and graceful figures as they bent over the Nile performing their ablutions, finally ascending the steep bank, each with her heavy jar superpoised, and self-supported, upon her head.

The strong wind blew the simple but long blue shirts firmly against their bodies, and left few secrets to the imagination, as they marched in a line proudly

and erect towards their father's home. They wore no veils when thus engaged, and their olive-brown complexions, and finely-chiselled features, were brightened by black eyes that sparkled with mirth and fire. The home was the usual primitive abode of an Egyptian fellah; a small flat-topped building about twelve feet high, constructed of sun-baked bricks. The roof of clay and chopped straw, tempered into a species of cement, was piled with the stalks of maize to a height of several feet. This covering would protect the surface from the burning sun, and would act as a non-conductor to cool the chambers beneath. The walls were disfigured by innumerable circular or plate-shaped forms, which adhered like huge pancakes of a brown conglomeration. These were the productions of chopped straw and cow-dung temporarily fixed against the walls to dry, after which they would be piled away for use, to heat the ovens, instead of more costly fuel. The house of Hassan Ali, and the buildings by which it was surrounded, formed a detached cluster, separated by only a few yards from a number of similar dwellings without any attempt at architecture, and somewhat inferior in pretension to the numerous conical dove-cots which towered above the low flat-roofed houses of the fellaheen. These pigeon-houses are a well-known feature in Egyptian villages, and frequently are congregated in sufficient numbers to form little towns, independently of the dwellings of the natives. Earthenware pots are used instead of bricks in their formation, upon a circular base of about ten feet in height; upon this firm foundation, the pots are

cemented with mud and chopped straw, with their open mouths inside the conical building. The pigeons make their nests within these convenient holes, and small apertures are left for their entrance and exit. Sticks are arranged outside the structure, for perches, and thousands of birds assemble in the welcome asylums, producing not only young ones as a reward for the builders, but also a valuable quantity of manure, which is sold by measure, for the benefit of various crops.

The Egyptian fellah is not renowned for cleanliness, and Hassan Ali's small establishment was no exception to the rule. A number of young buffaloes were either lying, or rolling in the dust, close to the unswept entrance. The usual village dogs were prowling listlessly around. Fowls in great numbers were masters of the situation, some upon the roof, others scratching in the deep dust and rotten manure heaps, while an audacious few were actually within the farmer's dwelling. Young calves were secured by ropes to the trunks of overhanging date-palms, while their mothers turned the adjacent water-wheels which raised the needful supply from the river for Hassan Ali's fields—no animal of the ox tribe in Egypt being exempt from labour, whether male or female.

The abode of Hassan Ali commanded a view of the bounteous Nile, upon which the existence of the entire population of Egypt must depend. He did not comprehend the beauties of gorgeous sunsets, or the quickly-changing hues which threw a glow of purple after the departed brightness, that faded into

a silvery gray of admirable transparency ; such marvellous effects of colouring were lost upon his intellect ; but as a devout Mohammedan he prayed for an average rise of the mighty river, which should ensure the success of his cotton crop, the greater portion of his farm having been devoted to this coin-producing plant, to the neglect of the ordinary cereals.

Hassan Ali was about fifty years of age ; he was tall, stately, and of dignified demeanour. He had a profound contempt for Christians, and for Europeans generally, of whom he had no experience excepting the distant view obtained of their numerous diah-beeahs which annually ploughed the waters of the Nile, when conveying them upon their insane, and incomprehensible errand to examine the ancient monuments of Egypt.

Hassan Ali had just finished his prayer at sunset, and he entered his home—the labour of the day was done. The most important personage of the household—to whom we have not yet been introduced—was in an unfortunate humour ; his wife's voice, in scolding tones, was heard before he entered the threshold, and Hassan Ali, although he feared no man, was almost timorous of his wife. She was a handsome woman, not over-clean ; but upon this particular evening she was certainly in the worst of tempers.

It appeared that a female friend had been paying her a visit, and had confided to her the fact, that her husband had returned from Cairo, where he had purchased the most exquisite additions to their household goods in the shape of Persian rugs, Euro-

pean looking-glasses, French lamps to burn paraffin oil, and a host of minor objects, not one of which did Hassan Ali or his wife possess. She accordingly felt herself neglected by her husband, who, having realised a large sum by the sale of last season's cotton, with the best prospects for the approaching crop, had positively done nothing with his money; but, having paid off some outstanding liabilities, he had buried a considerable amount of gold (British sovereigns), in an earthen pot, in some secluded spot known only to himself. He had bought nothing for his wife, nor for any member of his family, with his newly-acquired wealth, and she, as a dutiful and hard-working partner, felt herself aggrieved; she was therefore in a temper. Upon her husband's entrance she continued her scolding tones, directed at no one in particular, but including the entire world in a general condemnation, with every now and then a declaration that "Hassan Ali would not care whether she died or lived."

The handsome daughters had returned from the river; the stalwart sons came home from the fields; the younger children had collected cotton-sticks for fuel, which fed the fire upon which the evening meal was stewing in a large copper pot. A slave-girl of about eighteen brought an old copper basin and jug, for her master and mistress to wash their hands, before they should sit together with their family around the huge wooden bowl, (or ghadda) and dip their fingers into the collective dish. The stew was fragrant: a mixture of red lentils, onions, pumpkin, and a small allowance of a young kid that had been

killed upon the same morning. "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith," was a proverb apparently unknown or unobserved by Hassan Ali's wife, and his Fatima's tongue never ceased to scold, although her mouth was filled with the stew of her own cooking.

"A pretty jug and basin (gebreek) to hand round to a man who buries a heap of gold!" she exclaimed. "A thing that was battered and broken in the days of your grandfather, and only holds together by its own weight in solder where it has been mended in a hundred places. . . . I would rather wash my hands in the river than use such a shabby old kettle. A nice thing indeed when a guest arrives! And I have to bear the disgrace, not you. But you don't care, you old miser; you wouldn't care whether we had a full dish or an empty one, so long as you can heap up gold and hide it away from your wife and family! . . . There's Mustapha's wife, only fifty paces distant, with her house full of new things. There's Mahomet Hussein's house, bright with copper pots, and his wife and daughters take them down to the river to wash them twice a day, only to show off their riches; and we have a lot of old things full of dents and bruises, that haven't been tinned for the last twelve months—and don't blame me if some day you're poisoned with verdigris, or perhaps the whole family. You wouldn't care if I were poisoned—not a bit—you'd get a young wife within a month; very likely about fifteen, about the age of your youngest daughter. That's what you want, I know; you can't deny it, Hassan Ali!" continued the irrepressible

scold, almost without taking breath in her angry volubility.

It was a bad time for the frugal Hassan Ali, as the wife had started a subject upon which she gained the adherence of her daughters. They all joined in a chorus of complaint respecting the condition of the family utensils, as it was the special duty of the females to scour these necessary articles in public at the river's side, where the women of the villages congregated daily in a similar occupation. The daughters looked forward with domestic pride to the day when they also should be able to exhibit new and shining pots, and thus gain the admiration and excite the envy of their neighbours.

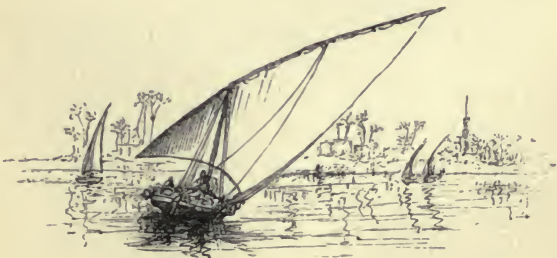
"Why don't you go to Cairo?" demanded the impatient Fatima. "Why don't you put your cotton on board a vessel and go yourself to market? Your whole family are ashamed of their position. Take a bag of your buried gold, exchange some of those foreign coins with a naked infidel riding upon a horse, and bring us all back something useful—clothes for the girls and boys, carpets and rugs, kerchiefs for our heads, new shoes, pots and pans, and, above all things, a beautiful brass gebreek and teshti (jug and basin), with a handsome perforated centre to contain the soap."

It was impossible for Hassan Ali to withstand the combined attack; even his sons had joined in the family revolt. He capitulated. He agreed that evening that he would undertake the journey to Cairo by a vessel that should be laden with beans and lentils, as his cotton crop would not be ready.

It would be a voyage of about ten days, as the wind was northerly, and the vessel must depend upon her oars in descending with the stream.

This determination was a serious effort to Hassan Ali, as he had never before travelled ten miles from his own home, and the anxiety of the preparations kept him awake at night ; but there was no escape from his resolve, as his wife and daughters urged his immediate departure, lest by some unforeseen accident it might be prevented.

The day arrived. The vessel was heavily laden with the produce of his farm, and that of others which he had freighted to make up a cargo, as the greater portion of his land was devoted to the cotton crop. Fatima and her daughters were in the best of humours, and, as they embraced Hassan Ali, they burst into the shrill quivering cry, which, among the Arab women, may denote either joy or sorrow. The strong-backed sons shoved off the boat from the muddy bank, and the swift stream assisted the first strokes of the oars and carried the vessel into the middle of the river. Hassan Ali had started upon his first voyage to the great city of Cairo.





CHAPTER II.

A VOYAGE down the Nile, although a commonplace excursion to many Englishmen, was a novelty to Hassan Ali, who had existed for fifty years upon the margin of the river. He took but little notice of the scenery, but was intensely interested with the crops which fringed the otherwise yellow plain with a belt of green. The buffaloes which turned the countless water-wheels, the flocks of sheep and goats, the camels and oxen, were more attractive to his tastes than the ancient burying-places and caverns in the perpendicular heights, which in many places rose abruptly from the river. Hassan Ali spread his carpet upon the deck at the usual hours of prayer, and performed his devotions unmoved by the novelty of his position, and undisturbed by the roar of water which proceeded from the bows of a diahbeeah dashing forward in full sail against the resisting stream. Thus day after day his vessel advanced towards Cairo, until at length the pyramids could be plainly seen upon the west, their sharp outlines clearly defined against the yellow sky, while upon the Eastern heights the brightest glow of a setting sun shone upon the mosque and tall minarets of Cairo's citadel. Even Hassan Ali's obtuse nature was at length

aroused by the marvellous beauty of the changing tints of colouring, which varied every instant as the sun sank lower upon the horizon. One moment of bright vermilion melted quickly into a purple so delicate that no painter's art could produce a like effect ; then a rapid gleam of silver, changing to a bluish gray ; and a peculiar death-like pallor upon the rocks and mosque, as every colour fading into neutral tints, told that the day had closed, and the sun had sunk to rest.

Cairo was a wilderness to the untravelled Hassan Ali. He had passed the night on board his vessel ; after his morning prayer, he dressed himself in his best clothes, and taking a bag of three hundred British sovereigns in his hand, and a stout staff as his protector, he sallied forth to visit the great city and to make his purchases.

An incomprehensible feeling of shyness took possession of the unsophisticated fellah as he mingled with the vast crowd of utter strangers. The donkeys jostled him, carriages nearly ran over him ; but at length he reached the street called the Moski, where the best shops are situated, and continuing this direction until he arrived at the copper bazaar, he turned to his left, and after an admiring glance at the contents of several open stalls he entered the Khan el-Halil, which narrow alley, covered in by boards loosely laid upon beams to obstruct the sunlight, appeared as a quiet solitude after the bustle of the thronged thoroughfares from which he had escaped.

A stranger is easily detected, and Hassan Ali was at once perceived to be a visitor. He was

accosted by the various dealers, who pressed him to purchase their wares, but he stoically resisted their importunities, as he determined wisely, to walk through the bazaar, and examine the various goods before he should venture upon a selection.

Gold-embroidered silks as coverings to Arab coffee trays, tablecloths of similar material, door-hangings of exquisite needlework; ladies' slippers brilliant with gold tinsel; jewels, amber mouthpieces for chibooks (the long jessamine pipe-stems), and a host of alluring objects, both modern and antique, were exposed to the view of the wondering Hassan Ali. At length he stood before a shop, his attention being riveted to an example of all that he desired; there was the identical basin and jug which his wife had begged him to procure! . . . It was of exceeding beauty; although it was surrounded by many costly articles of various qualities, the tall and brilliant jug outshone them all. . . . Unfortunately it would be beyond his means, as it was evidently of pure gold: no other metal could have exhibited such admirable lustré.

The dealer had immediately recognised his opportunity, and without a word being spoken, he reached the jug and basin from their stand, and presented them to the admiring Hassan Ali. . . . "God is great and Mahomet is his Prophet!" exclaimed the dealer, "has he not directed you to the spot where you can obtain all that your soul desires? and am not I his servant who shall supply my brother's wants? You want this gabreek and teshki: here you have discovered the exact article of which you

were in search, and you will never find anything superior, even should you wander for a lifetime through the bazaars of Cairo. . . . You come from the country, probably from the south?" continued the dealer, who saw that his victim was an utter stranger.

Hassan Ali for the first moment since he had left his vessel, recovered his self-confidence, and felt that he had fallen into good hands; he accordingly confided to his new acquaintance the entire object of his journey to Cairo, and his wife's desire to possess a really good and handsome jug and basin that would bring honour to the establishment when handed to her guests. "But," continued the innocent stranger, "I feel that I cannot afford anything so magnificent as this golden basin and jug, although I have made much money by my cotton, and inshallah (please God) my next crop will be of still greater value; but gold must always cost gold, and I have only this bagful of the infidel's coins (may God forgive me for possessing them), and I fear it will be hardly sufficient for such a purchase."

To the amazement of the dealer, Hassan Ali untied the mouth of his bag and exhibited the mass of British sovereigns. . . . The dealer could hardly believe his eyes: this ordinary fellah was possessed of such wealth, of which he evidently did not understand the value; and he imagined that the highly-burnished brass basin and jug were of pure gold!

This was indeed a glorious opportunity; an utter stranger, who lived in a distant province, to which he was about to return immediately! . . .

"My brother," replied the dealer, "gold is our

only true friend, which God has given us to remain unchangeable ; gold will be always gold, and will have the same value in weight independently of the shape it may have assumed under the hands of the workman. If you desire this jug and basin, I will regard you as one good Moslem should regard his brother, and I will exchange them weight for weight against the coins of the infidels (may God curse them !), charging you nothing for the delicate workmanship. You will perceive how beautifully the false bottom of the basin is perforated, to allow the water to pass through into the real bottom ; you will see that the perforation is so arranged as to represent in letters a verse from the Koran (may our blessed Prophet protect us). 'Mashallah' is easily distinguished in the bottom of the basin ; thus as you replace the soap upon the centre (you will observe how prettily this elevated portion is arranged), as the water for the last time is poured over your hands by the slave holding the gabreek, or jug, you will see God's blessing actually inscribed in letters of the purest gold. Then, again, you must remember that such property will always represent real value, which you may any day wish to exchange again for coin. Weight for weight I shall charge ; and not one piastre for the beautiful workmanship. You will require a few embroidered towels, as it would be impossible to present so exquisite a jug and basin to your guests without some gold and silk embroidered napkins as an accompaniment ; I shall content myself with a small profit upon them to repay the loss upon the golden basin."

Two hundred and some odd sovereigns were poured by Hassan Ali from his heavy bag into the dealer's scales against the weight of the jug and basin. Ten fine embroidered napkins were purchased; and the dealer with extreme kindness insisted upon himself carrying the valuable jug and basin wrapped in a silk scarf, which was to be accepted as a present for the wife. He acted as guide to the unprotected stranger through the carpet bazaar, where Hassan Ali purchased various Persian rugs, and by degrees accomplished all his mission. The dealer walked the entire distance to the vessel in company with the now important Hassan Ali. He was no longer the meek and bashful personage who had that morning emerged from his ship overpowered by his own humility. Two donkeys were driven behind him laden with the purchases of the day, and their loads were carefully unpacked, and stowed away in Hassan Ali's half-furnished cabin. There, both he and the honest dealer rested themselves, and sipped coffee, and smoked nargilis for nearly an hour, discussing the probable continuance of high prices for cotton, and the danger of an increased taxation, should the Effendina (Khedive) arrive at the conclusion that the fellah was becoming rich. The dealer advised the immediate departure of Hassan Ali, as he painted the danger of thieves in glowing colours.

Thus, in a few days he had sold his beans and lentils, purchased a cargo of wood, and having taken an affectionate leave of his friend the dealer, whose name was Ibrahim Mahomet, the large sail was spread to the strong north wind, and Hassan Ali was speeding homewards to his wife and family.

Those who from a state of poverty become suddenly rich, have seldom a true appreciation of the actual value of their newly-acquired wealth ; Hassan Ali was no exception, and he had parted with the gold coin, to which he had been entirely unaccustomed, with less reluctance than he would formerly have exhibited in the expenditure of silver : he and many others of his class considered that the good time had arrived when the infidels depended entirely upon Egypt for their supply of cotton, and that the extraordinarily high prices would be permanent.

It is a curious fact that no visible benefit remains of the vast influx of gold coin caused by the cotton famine, and the fellah of Egypt is now in a poorer position than was ever known in modern experience ; his land is heavily mortgaged, and an enormous acreage has passed into the hands of strangers (principally Greeks and Jews), who have foreclosed their mortgages, the fellah being overwhelmed by a ruinous rate of interest.

The vessel sped onwards, and Hassan Ali looked forward with pride and satisfaction to the day of triumph when he should arrive at his own home, and exhibit his treasures to his wife and family. Nothing had been forgotten ; there were copper utensils sufficient for at least two families, in addition to carpets, clothes, and many articles besides those which were included in his wife's demands. Then, what would she say to the gold jug and basin ? Few pashas in the land possessed such things. What would her neighbours say ? What would her surprise be when he should unpack the lovely pieces of rose-coloured

French soap that he had purchased expressly for the golden basin? and the gold and silk embroidered napkins? The vessel was travelling fast, but not fast enough for Hassan Ali's desires, as he was longing for the day of his arrival.





CHAPTER III.

AT length the minarets of Siout were descried in the early morning after a night of fair and steady breezes. Hassan Ali's devotions at sunrise were coupled with thanks to God for his protection from thieves and other dangers of the traveller, to whom he had granted a safe return. Siout was passed, and the vessel's head directed towards a dense grove of date-palms, behind which, close to the river's margin, was Hassan Ali's village. Some women upon the bank who were descending with their water-jars, recognised the boat, and placing their jars upon the ground, they ran back to give the welcome notice of his arrival to the expectant Fatima, who, although a chronic scold when her husband was at home, had felt his absence to a degree that had astonished her surroundings, and excited a surprise even within herself. She had never known him to be absent, and now that the news of his return was so suddenly announced, she let fall a dish that she was in the act of cleaning, and screaming for her numerous children, who collected with extreme celerity, they quickly formed an important family group upon the high bank of the river, where they were joined by a crowd of female neighbours, as the news had spread, and the usual

shrill cry of welcome greeted the happy Hassan Ali as his boat touched the shore, and he sprang to land.

There was a general embracing; the strong-backed sons rushed down to their father's vessel, and struggled up the steep bank laden with various bales, all of which they carried to the home, assisted by numerous friends, who were curious to examine the contents.

At length everything was safely deposited in the house; the friends were dismissed, and Hassan Ali promised to exhibit his purchases after the morning meal.

In the meantime those who had assisted in the labour of transporting the heavy packages had spread exaggerated reports of the weight and value of the unknown contents, and had excited the curiosity of the village. No meal had been so hurriedly consumed as that family breakfast upon the morning of Hassan Ali's return, as every member, from Fatima to her youngest child, was dying to unpack the curiosities from Cairo.

The meal was finished, the empty wooden dish was carried from the room; the floor was swept, and clean mats were laid upon the hardened ground to protect the expected finery from dust. Bale after bale was opened; Persian rugs were unfolded, and spread upon the mats, amidst the exclamations of pleasurable surprise from every person present.

Bright red copper utensils of every shape and form were extended in rows, and the daughters could hardly restrain their impulse to carry them at once to be scoured at the river's side, as a public exhibi-

tion of their father's reform in his establishment. But they had to wait ; a host of lovely articles were being unpacked ; there were embroidered kerchiefs for every female head ; and Hassan Ali won a spontaneous embrace from his wife Fatima, when with his own hands he arranged a gold embroidered scarlet muslin upon her jet black hair. Every girl was immediately attired ; the thoughtful father had not forgotten to provide hand-mirrors, thus every one could admire her own personal appearance when decked with the finery of Cairo. The sons had their share of presents, and never had there been a morning of such unmixed delight as upon that day of Hassan Ali's return home.

At last all the bales and parcels were unpacked, and a list was made of their contents ; but an ominous silence betokened a reaction in the mind of Fatima.

"Surely," the good woman rather dolefully exclaimed, "you cannot have forgotten the jug and basin? . . . That was the principal object of your long journey ; and I have told all my friends that you would bring me something quite out of the common in the way of basins. . . . A pretty fool I shall look if they ask me 'where the jug and basin are?' and I shall have to make an excuse and say" . . . Fatima's tongue was about to become relaxed, and to launch forth in its usual style, when a peculiar smile upon Hassan Ali's features denoted some mystery, and he rose slowly from the ground and took from beneath his large capote, which he had thrown into a corner, a considerable parcel that was packed with extreme care. He cut the twine which

sewed a strong cloth together. This being removed, exposed a finer covering, which protected the silken scarf in which the costly treasure was concealed. All eyes were concentrated upon the mysterious object. The scarf was unfolded, and the jug and basin were discovered wrapped in tissue paper. He threw the scarf across his Fatima's shoulders, then quickly tore off the delicate paper covering, and suddenly exposed to view the glittering present. A tablet of rose-coloured scented soap was already in the centre. "There!" exclaimed the triumphant and delighted husband, "there is the jug! there is the basin! both of pure gold, weighing more than two hundred of the foreign guineas! And now my Fatima possesses what a pasha would be proud of—a golden jug and basin, purchased with money honestly earned by the cotton which her own hands helped to gather."

A general silence followed this announcement. There was a feeling almost of awe as Fatima and the whole family gazed at the glittering mass of precious metal. Her first thought, which rapidly passed through her mind, was "that it was a monstrous outlay and quite unnecessary; as a brass utensil of the same kind would have been equally serviceable, and would have looked nearly as well;" her second thought quelled the first remonstrance, as she reflected with true delight upon the intense envy that would be created among her friends and acquaintances by the fact that she possessed a jug and basin of pure gold; she also reflected that the money, or at least the value, was actually there, and would remain in her hands, instead of the coin being con-

cealed in some buried corner unknown to any one excepting Hassan Ali. These reflections were only the work of a few instants, and the effect was so gratifying that she sprang from the mat upon which she was sitting, and embraced her husband heartily ; an example that was followed in succession by all the daughters, until Hassan Ali was almost breathless through domestic suffocation.

Each member of the family now smelt the rose-coloured soap, and exclaimed, "Mashallah!" as it was successively replaced in its central position.

It was now proposed by Fatima, and unanimously resolved, that the mats which covered the earthen floor should be at once covered with carpets, and that Persian rugs should be laid upon the stretchers which are used as bedsteads. All the various articles were arranged so as to form an imposing display, as it was more than probable that during the day, visitors would drop in to inquire after Hassan Ali's health, to obtain the news from Cairo, and to assure themselves of the truth of reports that had been spread concerning the valuables that he had collected during his journey.

The black slave-girl Mostoora was instructed, and quickly drilled in the correct method of handing round the golden basin and jug, should any persons wish to wash their hands ; and she was to be careful in the arrangement of the gold embroidered napkins, which were to be carried hanging across the left arm between the elbow and the wrist.

This drill was hardly completed before four of the daughters seized upon the largest new copper utensils,

and rushed off to scour them unnecessarily in the river.

Fatima had not to wait long before the expected visitors appeared. The four daughters, who had rushed to the river margin with glittering new copper pots, had acted as an advertisement, and the numerous maidens by the riverside had scampered home with the news that Hassan Ali had brought the most lovely pots that ever were seen, and that his daughters were so proud that they would hardly stoop to scour them. Accordingly a considerable number of the female neighbours found time to pay Fatima a visit to congratulate her upon her husband's happy return.

Mustapha's wife Halima was a bosom friend of Fatima ; they had confided to each other the secrets concerning their families, and of their respective husbands. It was Halima whose husband had first aroused the envy of Fatima by his arrival with various household treasures which eclipsed Hassan Ali's poor establishment ; it was only natural that Halima should be the first to arrive to offer her salaams upon the safe return of her friend's husband, and to inspect the recent acquisitions. It was equally natural that Fatima should take extreme pleasure in exhibiting to her friend Halima the valuable additions to her household goods, as evidences of her husband's devotion to herself, not without a slight tinge of satisfaction at the superiority of the presents to anything that Halima had received from Mustapha ; the golden basin and jug would utterly eclipse anything within the province !

Thus certain of victory, Fatima received her friend.

Fatima was washed and clean ; her beautiful hair was tidy, and a fine scarlet muslin, embroidered with gold, edged by little bells of the same metal, was artistically arranged around her head. She wore a new dress, or dark-blue silken mantle, which enveloped her figure from her shoulders to near the ankles ; with full trousers of the same material which had arrived that day from Cairo. Her naked feet were in slippers of red velvet and gold embroidery. Her naturally fine eyes were carefully edged with black antimony, which increased their size and brilliancy. Altogether Fatima was a beautiful woman, and hardly to be recognised in her new and graceful attire ; she was seated upon a bedstead covered with a Persian carpet, when Halima entered the changed abode.

For the first moment her greatest friend started in astonishment at the extraordinary change in the establishment, and at the wonderful transformation in Fatima, whose appearance was so entirely foreign to her usual mode of life. Fatima, perceiving the embarrassment of her friend, burst into a fit of uncontrollable laughter, at the same time advancing, and insisting upon her being seated upon one of the new Persian rugs. The two women then indulged in a mutual fit of merriment upon the changed state of affairs, and Fatima clapped her hands three times, and the slave-girl Mostoora entered that same instant, as though her mistress had been a sultana.

“Bring coffee!” and Fatima’s order was hardly uttered, when Mostoora again appeared, with the coffee cups in silver zarfs (or egg-cup-shaped holders),

upon a tray of the same metal, all of which Hassan Ali had brought from Cairo.

It was impossible for Halima to suppress her astonishment, and the two friends once more indulged in a good laugh at the absurdity of the change from dust and poverty to the extremes of civilised society.

“You have seen nothing yet,” exclaimed Fatima, as she again clapped her hands, and the ever-ready Mostoora instantly appeared: “bring the golden basin.”

In a few moments the magnificent jug and basin were brought in; the embroidered napkins were upon Mostoora’s left arm, the rose-coloured tablet of scented soap in its central position. The history and the value of the costly treasure were explained to the bosom friend, but she was requested to keep it a profound secret. She only exclaimed in response, “Mashallah!”

At this juncture another visitor arrived; this was Mahomet Hussein’s wife Fadeela, who was also a friend of Fatima’s, but who usually considered herself superior.

Coffee was again produced; the silver cups were enviously admired; the golden jug and basin and the embroidered napkins were again exhibited, and once more the exclamation “Mashallah!” was uttered in reply.

At length the two friends rose to depart at the same instant; their congratulations were fervent, and they left the house together.
. . . “Who could have believed that Fatima would make such a fool of herself only upon the first day

of Hassan Ali's return?" exclaimed Fadeela to her companion before they were three paces from the threshold. "The pride and conceit of some people disgust me!" continued the same speaker; "why, she is decked out like a pasha's wife in silk and gold, although only yesterday she was scrubbing out their wretched old hovel, which is now spread with lovely carpets! Silver cup-stands upon a solid silver tray! Hassan Ali is an ass, and his wife rides him as she pleases!"

"I don't blame her so much for the silk gown," said the bosom friend Halima, "as she can take that off when she chooses to be herself again, but the golden basin is indeed a presumptuous error; I never heard of such a thing before; and for an ordinary fellah to possess such an unnecessary treasure, is an audacity that will excite suspicion. How can Hassan Ali be fool enough to parade his suddenly-acquired riches in such an ostentatious manner? The Mudir will hear of it in a few days, and the police will have their eyes upon the house. I wouldn't have such a thing in my house for the world, as I should be afraid of my life; it is a regular bait for thieves. What a lot of hand-washing there will be!" continued the bosom friend; "the golden basin will be shown off upon every possible occasion; when our hands are dirty it will only be necessary to make a call on Fatima, and it is sure to be brought round, together with the rose-coloured soap, and the embroidered napkins. What a pity that people should be so foolish!" A burst of laughter from the companion Fadeela interrupted any further remarks on the part

of Halima, as they met several women of their acquaintance who were evidently on the way to visit Fatima.

“You won’t find Fatima!” shouted Fadeela, “you’ll find a grand sultana in silks and gold slippers; and you’ll wash your hands in a basin of solid gold!” The two parties met, and Fadeela confided to her friends the absurdity of Fatima’s pride, and intimated that the golden basin would assuredly be produced under some excuse or other merely for the opportunity of an ostentatious display.

The women paid their visit, and they experienced precisely the same entertainment; the golden basin made its appearance, and they left the house with similar feelings of envy, and criticised in the harshest terms the presumption and bad taste of Fatima.

For some days Hassan Ali’s house became the centre of attraction; the news had spread to the neighbouring town of Siout, and parties called upon Fatima out of sheer curiosity to see the magnificent objects which Hassan Ali had been fool enough to present to his wife—a “basin and jug of solid gold!”

Unfortunately the sudden accession of wealth thus ostentatiously displayed did not increase the number of Fatima’s friends; while those of Hassan Ali pronounced him to be insane. Even Halima, the bosom friend, had ventured in private to expostulate with Fatima upon the folly of such a possession as a golden basin for a woman in her rank of life, and the indelicacy of making an unnecessary exhibition of such an object whenever visitors appeared. Fatima received this friendly advice in a manner that is not

uncommon in the world, and she resented the well-meant interference ; in fact, Fatima assured her daughters that " Halima was not the true friend she had believed her to be, and she was envious of her possession of that great treasure, the golden basin."

Thus a coolness arose between the hitherto bosom friends, while those who had been only acquaintances, took an absolute dislike to Fatima, who was generally regarded as puffed up with an absurd idea of her self-importance, simply because her husband had been fool enough to purchase a golden basin. In a few weeks, after the general curiosity had been satiated, scarcely a visitor ever appeared within the doors of Fatima's dwelling. The golden jug and basin and the rose-coloured soap, with the embroidered napkins, were always ready to be produced ; but nobody called, and both Fatima and her daughters were lost in vain conjectures. What could be the reason ? . . . When the daughters marched erect to the river with the bright copper utensils to scour, there was a general titter among the crowd of village girls, as though they were the objects of some mysterious joke.

This was an unpleasant result of Hassan Ali's extreme kindness in considering to the fullest extent the requirements of his family ; but even a worse effect had been produced by his generosity, in a general demoralisation of the domestic relations of the village. Whenever a wife quarrelled with her husband, she abused him for stinginess, and contrasted his meanness with the devotion of Hassan Ali, who had almost made himself notorious for extravagance by his handsome behaviour to his wife. The women

generally upbraided their husbands for neglect ; if they wanted any article of household use, they invariably brought forward the names of Fatima and Hassan Ali. "He is something like a husband ; . . . look at his wife ! he knows how to value her : she does not sit in rags ; she dresses in *silk* ! his daughters are not ashamed to appear at the river to wash old worn-out pots ; they carry bright copper on their heads ; and the family wash their hands in a golden basin ! that's a pattern husband (God bless him !) : and not such a man as God has given to me, for my sins !" In such a strain would a wife complain of her lot.

This was a serious position of affairs, and somewhat contradictory ; although both Fatima and her daughters had lost many friends through envy and uncharitableness, while Hassan Ali was regarded as next door to a fool by his male acquaintances, their names had become household words in all family contentions. The Mudir, having heard many stories of the wonderful jug and basin, determined one day to visit Hassan Ali's house, and to himself inspect it.

To the extreme perplexity of Fatima, who was in her common and ordinary attire, a cavasse suddenly entered the door, and announced the arrival of His Excellency the Mudir of Siout !

Before the poor woman had time to arrange her appearance for the reception of so important a personage, the great authority entered her apartment. She immediately requested him to be seated, and with many apologies for her unreadiness to receive so gracious a visit, she summoned Mostoora. Coffee

was at length produced in the silver cups, although some delay had taken place, owing to the fact that the silver, and the golden basin had been locked up for some weeks in a strong wooden box for safety, as no visitors had appeared to render their use necessary.

The Mudir asked after Hassan Ali, who was engaged in his farm labours ; then, to the delight of Fatimā, he informed her that "he had heard of a wonderful jug and basin of pure gold which her husband had brought from Cairo, and he should much like to see so great a novelty." In a few minutes it was produced by Mostoora, together with the embroidered napkins, and was presented to the Mudir.

Somehow or other, whenever we wish things to look their best, by some evil agency they do not shine their brightest, and this day the jug and basin, which had probably been put by wet some weeks ago, were by no means impressive in their brilliancy ; . . . some ugly patches of green in various places, especially in the perforated bottom of the basin, detracted from its hitherto valuable appearance, and at once caught the eye of the vigilant Mudir. He examined it carefully, and even rubbed it with his fingers, and *smelt the surface !*

"This cannot be the basin and jug of which I have heard so much," exclaimed the great authority. . . . "You are deceiving me, good woman, doubtless apprehending that I should covet your costly treasure. This basin and jug are only ordinary brass, and have evidently been neglected instead of being kept clean."

"*Brass!*" responded Fatima, who, in spite of the Mudir's august presence, could no longer restrain her temper at such an insulting assertion. "*Brass!*" she ejaculated in a voice of derision, "why, Hassan Ali paid upwards of two hundred golden coins weighed in the scales against that golden jug and basin. . . . It is the purest gold; and the dealer charged him nothing for the workmanship, as he made other purchases at his establishment."

Once more to assure himself, the Mudir scratched the green patches with his knife, and again smelt the surface; after which, he returned the golden basin to the slave-girl. . . .

"The dealer, whoever he may be, is an unmitigated scoundrel," he quietly replied, "and your husband must at once proceed to Cairo and denounce him; he has sold him brass, weight by weight for gold. Mashallah!" continued the Mudir; "but I wish the rascal were in my province that I could bastinado him. Hassan Ali must be a fool to throw away his money in such a reckless manner. Send for him immediately," continued the now angry Mudir, "and we will at once take this matter up, and make an example of the Cairo robber." . . .

Several people had collected at the open door when the Mudir had entered, and they overheard the conversation. Two or three women at once scampered off to Halima and Fadeela's houses, to convey the intelligence that "Fatima's grand treasure the golden basin was only ordinary brass, after all the fuss that had been made about it!" From house to house the messengers of evil tidings rushed with indescribable

delight in spreading news that must cause positive dismay and humiliation to the unfortunate Fatima and Hassan Ali.

The Mudir had taken his departure, and Fatima and her daughters were busily examining the insulted treasure. It was very green in several places, and generally dull in colour. They smelt it, and could not deny that it was very brassy. After a few minutes passed in extreme perplexity, Fatima threw herself down upon her Persian rug and sobbed aloud. . . . Her daughters endeavoured to pacify her, and after the first paroxysm of grief was over, she was able by words to give vent to her feelings. . . . "What an ass! what an ass! oh, worse than an ass is Hassan Ali! Two hundred and odd gold coins weight for weight in exchange for a brass jug and basin! and the idiot does not know brass from gold when he sees them together! O Mahomet, O Prophet, did you ever know such a fool? to go all the way to Cairo to be plucked like the feathers from a pigeon! and to bring me a present only to make me ridiculous in the eyes of my friends. . . . 'Hassan Ali and his Golden Basin' will become a story for young and old; the children will call him an ass, and the old will exclaim, 'An ass is not such a fool.' O Fatima, what have you done to deserve this affliction? is it not a punishment for your folly in becoming the wife of an idiot?"

As this lament was uttered in the loudest tones, the neighbours had flocked in, and before half an hour had elapsed, the fact of the Mudir's discovery had been made known through a considerable portion

of the adjacent town. Fatima was quite inconsolable, as she was painfully aware of the satisfaction that would be felt by her jealous neighbours, to whom she had so frequently exhibited with pride her golden jug and basin. She now turned from these objects with disgust, as they lay before her shorn of all respect, but passive tokens of the keenest disappointment. . . . At that moment Hassan Ali entered the apartment, and almost at the same instant the lately passive jug and basin exhibited their active principle by flying at his head, urged by the angry hands of his ungrateful spouse. . . . "Take back your golden jug and basin, you old idiot, and be off at once to Cairo, ox-headed animal that you are, with no more brains than a camel! . . . Bring back the two hundred golden coins you have exchanged for brass! why did you not smell it before you paid for it, as any sane person would have done? why did you not scratch it with a knife, or try it with vinegar, or lemon-juice? you wooden-headed buffalo! as any child would have done before parting with a whole bagful of gold. . . . Take a thick stick (naboot) with you, and break the robber's bones who cheated us out of our good money, and take the rubbish with you that you brought as a present to your poor wife, to make her the laughing-stock of every one who knows her!"

How long the forcible lamentation of Fatima would have continued, it is hard to say, if her husband had attempted a reply, but Hassan Ali had stood like a man only half awake; he had picked up the jug and basin which had been hurled at his unfortunate head, and recognising in their dull and

green appearance the horrible reality, he had seated himself upon the ground, overpowered with a sense of shame and mortification, and had hidden his face between his hands. Even his wife pitied him; Fatima's tongue ceased its attack, and spared him.





CHAPTER IV.

THE vessel was ploughing along the waters of the Nile. Hassan Ali was again on board, and it appeared like a dream that he had been to Cairo and returned, so exact was his position as formerly on board his boat, once more laden with the same agricultural produce, beans and lentils. . . . But there were passive witnesses of his former visit, in the brass jug and basin, which were stowed away within his cabin, to be produced in evidence of the dealer's rascality in Cairo. The Mudir had given Hassan Ali a letter to the Cadi, who was a personal friend, therefore he would be properly supported upon his arrival.

In the meantime, as Hassan Ali was progressing on his voyage, Fatima was recovering from the first shock of disappointment. She had passed through the painful ordeal of friendly visits of condolence, which were in reality triumphant invasions of those who delighted in her humiliation; but the usual reaction set in, and after the gratification of seeing her thoroughly humbled, her friends and acquaintances really pitied her, and of course laid the entire blame on the absent husband. This change in their feelings somewhat consoled her, but she could not help bewailing the loss of what had given her such

intense pleasure. Halima was again her supporter and adviser, now that the myth of the golden basin was acknowledged, and she felt assured that Hassan Ali, made wiser by experience, would return victorious with the coin recovered, the dealer punished, and an honest brass jug and basin of the best quality, instead of a spurious imitation.

. . . Hassan Ali arrived in Cairo, and at once set forth upon his errand, taking with him the brass imposition, with which he safely arrived at the Khan el-Halil. In a few more minutes he stood before the dealer's shop, and met him face to face.

"Good morning, my friend!" exclaimed Hassan Ali; "I have returned earlier than I expected, as my wife was so charmed with the golden jug and basin which I purchased of you, that she has commissioned me to buy another. . . . Can you sell me another of the same quality by an equal weight in gold coin?"

The dealer regarded Hassan Ali with a vacant stare, as though he had never seen him before. . . . "God is merciful," he replied, "and your wants shall be supplied, but you must be under some misapprehension respecting the transaction; I never sold you a jug and basin; you must have mistaken the locality, and the person with whom you dealt!"

This was too much for the patience of the usually taciturn Hassan Ali, who immediately produced his brass jug and basin which he had purchased as pure gold, and laying them upon the counter before the open stall, so that the keepers of the adjoining stalls could see them and overhear the conversation, he continued: "I paid you weight for weight in

gold coin for these two articles which you sold as solid gold of pure quality. I trusted to your word, believing you to be a man of honour and a good Moslem ; they have been exhibited to my friends in the belief that they were precious metal, and the Mudir of Siout was the first to discover the abominable fraud. . . . I give you this chance—refund the money and take back your brass jug and basin ; or take the alternative of a summons before the Cadi.” . . .

Hassan Ali had spoken these decisive words with precision and dignity, and the dealer with extreme deliberation examined the jug and basin. After a few moments he returned them to Hassan Ali, with an emphatic exclamation :

“God is great, and Mahomet is his Prophet ! but I never had such trash as this in my possession. These things are brass, and, as I said before, you have mistaken your locality, and probably you have been imposed upon. I never saw you in my life !”

The usually quiet Hassan Ali literally trembled with rage at this impudent repudiation. “What !” cried he, . . . “dog of an impostor ! do you dare to deny the fact that I paid you upwards of two hundred foreign gold coins weighed in those same scales which I see upon that shelf, as equal to the weight of that jug and basin, which you falsely declared to be of pure gold ? Can I not produce witnesses from the dealers in the carpet bazaar, to whom you introduced me for the purchase of Persian rugs ?”

At this moment the owner of the adjoining shop, with whom the dealer was, unfortunately for himself,

at variance, intruded upon the discussion, and asked Hassan Ali the name of the person who had sold him the basin in dispute.

"Ibrahim Mahomet," immediately replied Hassan Ali; "and I swear by the holy Prophet that is the man, whom I will bring before the Cadi before the sun shall mark mid-day."

"His name is Ibrahim Mahomet," replied the neighbour, "and you may call me as a witness, for I heard every word of the transaction, and thought you the biggest fool in the creation when you parted with English gold in exchange for its weight in brass."

"Patience, I beseech you!" now exclaimed the dishonest dealer, when he perceived that his position was becoming serious. . . . "I begin to recollect something about a basin and jug some months ago; but my memory must be refreshed by a reference to my books, and as my clerk is absent, I must request some little delay before I can examine the details of the transaction."

Hassan Ali, pale with rage, had not waited for the completion of his sentence, but, armed with his jug and basin, was in full march down the narrow alley, holding by the hand the voluntary witness, with a stern determination to appeal instantly to the Cadi for a restoration of his money.

They were not long in reaching his court. They entered through an archway into a small courtyard, and were admitted into the divan. It was a large room, with a cushioned divan across the farther end, in the centre of which the Cadi sat, while upon the divans without cushions on the right and left of the

apartment were numerous persons seated, who were either witnesses in forthcoming cases, or had to wait until their own suits should be adjudicated.

Hassan Ali asked an attendant to introduce him to the Bash Katib, or chief secretary ; and delivering the letter from the Mudir of Siout at the same time, slipped a British sovereign into his hand, and begged him to hand the letter instantly to the Cadi, and to hurry the case forward.

. . . The golden douceur had an immediate effect, and the letter was presented to the Cadi, who appeared to study its contents.

. . . "Where is this Hassan Ali?" inquired the Cadi, after having read the letter from the Mudir of Siout. . . .

Hassan Ali immediately stepped forward, and stood with his hands folded across his breast. "I am your Excellency's servant," he replied, "my name is Hassan Ali, and I was the bearer of the letter from the Mudir of Siout."

"What is the nature of your complaint?" continued the Cadi.

Hassan Ali in reply gave a detailed account of the transaction from the commencement of his first acquaintance with the pious dealer, Ibrahim Mahomet.

The Cadi was a stern-looking man of about sixty, but his long gray mustachios curled with a hidden smile at Hassan Ali's description of his golden jug and basin, and at the dealer's professions of disinterested friendship. At the same time he gave orders to an officer of the court that the dishonest dealer should be instantly brought before him.

Within half an hour Ibrahim Mahomet appeared in custody of a police official, and was confronted with his accuser, and the witness his next-door neighbour.

The accusation had been reduced to writing, and it was read to the accused in the presence of a crowded court. At the termination, he was asked by the Cadi for his defence. Instead of attempting an explanation, he remained silent, knowing that no escape was possible, owing to the presence of his next-door neighbour, who had been a witness to the sale of the jug and basin.

"Do you confess the crime?" asked the Cadi, . . . "or have you anything to offer in defence of the accusation? . . . Speak without delay. . . . Is it possible that you, a Moslem, residing in this city of Cairo, should defraud in this incredible manner a brother Moslem, who, from his want of experience in the rascality of human nature, has, as an utter stranger from a distant province, been foolish enough to believe in your honour?" . . .

"Excellency," replied the now trembling dealer, . . . "it is true that I am a good Mussulman; but not true that I defrauded this man, Hassan Ali."

"How is that?" replied the Cadi. . . . "Do you deny that you sold him this brass jug and basin for its weight in gold, you at the same time knowing it to be only brass?" . . .

"Excellency," stammered Ibrahim Mahomet, "the facts are these: I am a poor man; . . . I am merely dust that you may tread under your feet, but I am a true believer. I pray three times a day, and

I trust in God's mercy through my faith in our holy Prophet. It is written in the second chapter of our blessed Koran : '*O true believers, beg assistance with patience and prayer, for God is with the patient.*' I have begged assistance with patience and prayer, believing that my prayer would be considered, and my patience would be rewarded. As a poor man, I have prayed for wealth, that would enable me to give alms to the needy. . . . I was standing in my shop one morning, wondering when the blessing of God should be extended to me, and almost losing hope in the efficacy of prayer, when suddenly, a messenger sent specially by God presented himself before my door ! . . . This was a man from a distant country, a mere buffalo, an ass, upon whom gold had been showered unworthily, for he did not know its value. He carried in his hand a large bag of golden coin. . . . When I saw this heaven-sent messenger, I knew that my prayers had been heard ! . . . Could I insult Him to whom I had addressed my prayers, by refusing this gift specially addressed to me in reply ? . . . Was it not a miraculous ignorance that obscured this man's perceptions ? was not this destiny ? could it be only chance ? . . . He declared that a brass jug and basin were pure gold ! I feared to trifle with Providence, and I accepted the decree of fate ; I knew that my petition had been favourably received ; therefore I weighed the brass utensils honestly against the heaven-sent coin ; not a quarter of a gramme did I take in excess (I swear by the holy Prophet), but I gave honest weight, the scales evenly balanced,—if anything, in favour of the stranger. . . . O Cadi, this

is the truth. . . . I awoke on the following morning as though from a dream : the stranger was gone, but the heaven-sent gold was beneath my pillow. This was God's blessing, which I dared not neglect ; have I not acted with reverence ? where is my error, O Cadi ?”

The Cadi had regarded the hypocritical dealer with an aspect of undisguised disgust ; and he replied :

“You have quoted from the second chapter of the Koran, as a vile palliation of a detestable rascality. You should know these words from that same chapter of the holy book : ‘*Eat and drink of the bounty of God, and commit not evil on the earth, acting unjustly.*’ The same chapter from which your lying lips have dared to quote, contains this sentence also, which you have evidently forgotten, but Mashallah, I will impress it upon your memory : ‘*Oh that they who act unjustly did perceive, when they behold their punishment, that all power belongeth unto God, and that he is severe in punishing.*’

“The law is the instrument of God's will,” continued the Cadi. “You are guilty not only of a base fraud, but you have blasphemed in appealing to the sacred book in support of your hypocrisy. . . . *Bal-tàgi!*” loudly called the angry Cadi. The officer of the court stepped forward. “Take this dog and give him one hundred lashes upon the soles of his feet ; the bastinado will inspire him with the true meaning of his quotation from the Prophet's teaching.

“After that,” continued the Cadi, “see that he returns the gold weight for weight as he received it in exchange for his brass basin.”

It was in vain that the discomfited dealer pleaded for forgiveness and offered to return the coin : he was at once seized, and the sentence was carried out without delay. He was then seated upon a donkey, as his feet were tender after the severe punishment, and, accompanied by an officer and Hassan Ali, he returned to his shop, where from his strong box he produced an equal amount of gold coin weighed against the jug and basin, which once more returned to his possession.

The victorious Hassan Ali lost no time in securing his gold, and within half an hour he had purchased for three British sovereigns a very beautiful brass basin and jug, for which a few months earlier he would have paid their weight in gold, so perfect was the resemblance ; but this time he assured himself of the reality, *by the smell*, as his Fatima had suggested.

. . . It was a day of triumph when Hassan Ali once more landed from his vessel, and returned to the bosom of his family with his recovered coin, and the story of his success. In addition to the handsome brass jug and basin, he had purchased a present for his wife ; this was a mirror in a gilded frame. Whenever she felt inclined to scold, she was to gaze upon this silent monitor. This she agreed upon, and it is to be hoped that the reflection acted as a preventive. On the other hand, whenever her husband became too positive in any domestic argument, she asked him "whether he had ever heard of a certain Hassan Ali and his Golden Basin ?"



V.—SOMETHING ABOUT DOGS, AND MY GRANDFATHER'S STORY.

THERE are innumerable anecdotes of the sagacity exhibited by dogs, and although in many instances some exaggerations may have unwittingly been added to the descriptions by their enthusiastic admirers, there can be no doubt that the dog possesses in a high degree those virtues which are most esteemed in man.

A dog takes his master "for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness or in health." Fortune may forsake the owner, and the dog that was fat in the days of prosperity will grow lean upon the scanty meal of adversity; but it will still be true. When the friends of brighter days look coldly upon us in those of poverty, we may be sure of one steadfast friend that will never desert us—the dog will be unchangeable in its affection.

What an error it appears to be in Nature's mysterious arrangements, that a dog should be so short-lived! At the age of ten our faithful companion is old, and we have to mourn for its loss at the very time that it has become almost a member of the family. What would be the limit of a dog's intellect if it could exist

during the average lifetime of a human being? It might perhaps develop to a dangerous degree, and be the critic of its master's actions. A cynical dog would be disagreeable—it would know every secret of its owner's movements, and would divine his thoughts; it might perhaps lose respect for its master, and knowing him better than the world, might conclude that the man who was considered clever, was little better than a fool. That would be an ill-natured dog, and under such conditions the family compact could not continue unbroken; the dog, having lost respect, would probably forsake its master, and the general reputation of its species would suffer in consequence. Perhaps Nature is right, and the dog must die at an early age before it has learned to despise the human being.

Nevertheless, although I should wish to curtail my reflections upon dogs, it is almost necessary, when regarding them as a whole, to take into consideration the wonderful variety which represents this species.

If we compare a greyhound, a Mont St. Bernard, a French poodle, a German dachshund, a pet toy-terrier, and a Maltese mass of white silky hair which conceals some small animal within, we can hardly believe that the incongruous varieties are all included in the same term "dogs"! There can be little doubt that certain varieties exhibit a far higher order of intelligence than others. The question, "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?" proves that the Oriental dog was never highly esteemed, nor did it occupy the position of its European repre-

sentative ; but it probably existed in a semi-wild state as the scavenger of large cities, precisely as it may be seen at present in the streets and suburbs throughout the East, from Constantinople to Bagdad. But although the dog was despised in the East, and was not often regarded as man's companion, the general characteristics are not wanting ; and I have known cases where the animals have exhibited extreme attachment to persons who have adopted a foundling in the shape of a houseless castaway.

It is beyond question that the natural instincts of the canine race can be immensely developed by education, and that an improved brain of highly educated dogs will usually ensure hereditary intelligence. We see this proof of evolution especially in the sheep-dogs, which for many generations have been taught their duties, and perform marvellous feats of sagacity in picking out strange sheep from their own large flock, and driving the intruders off the mountain-side in the Scottish Highlands. The pointers, setters, and retrievers are well-known instances where hereditary superiority has been ensured by judicious breeding ; while the least sagacious is the greyhound, whose extreme speed enables it to overtake almost all other animals ; therefore the one and only object of its life is to pursue ; this pursuit does not tend to brain development, as little intellect is required : it is simply a physical superiority in length of leg, muscular loins, and good wind.

When I was a boy, my grandfather frequently told a story concerning a dog which he knew, as a more than ordinary example of the fidelity so fre-

quently exhibited by the race. This animal was a mastiff that belonged to an intimate friend, to whom it was a constant companion. It was an enormous specimen of that well-known breed, which is not generally celebrated for any peculiar intelligence, but is chiefly remarkable for size and strength. This dog had been brought up by its master from puppyhood, and as the proprietor was a single man, there had been no division of affection, as there would have been had the dog belonged to a family of several members. "Turk" regarded nobody but his owner. (I shall now honour Turk by the masculine gender.)

Whenever Mr. Prideaux went out for a walk, Turk was sure to be near his heels. Street dogs would bark and snarl at the giant as his massive form attracted their attention, but Turk seldom condescended to notice such vulgar demonstrations; he was a noble-looking creature, somewhat resembling a small lioness; but although he was gentle and quiet in disposition, he had upon several occasions been provoked beyond endurance, and his attack had been nearly always fatal to his assailants. He slept at night outside his master's door, and no sentry could be more alert upon his watch than the faithful dog, who had apparently only one ambition—to protect, and to accompany his owner.

Mr. Prideaux had a dinner-party. He never invited ladies, but simply entertained his friends as a bachelor; his dinners were well known; the best cuisine and the finest wines were but secondary to the quality of his guests, who were always men of

reputation either in the literary world, or in the modern annals of society. The dog Turk was invariably present, and usually stretched his huge form upon the hearthrug.

It was a cold night in winter, when Mr. Prideaux's friends were discussing the third bottle of port after dinner, that the conversation turned upon the subject of dogs. Almost every person had an anecdote to relate, and my own grandfather being present, had no doubt added his mite to the collection, when Turk suddenly awoke from a sound sleep, and having stretched himself until he appeared to be awake to the situation, walked up to his master's side, and rested his large head upon the table.

"Ha ha, Turk!" exclaimed Mr. Prideaux, "you must have heard our arguments about the dogs, so you have put in an appearance."

"And a magnificent specimen he is!" remarked my grandfather; "but although a mastiff is the largest and most imposing of the race, I do not think it is as sensible as many others."

"As a rule you are right," replied his master, "because they are generally chained up as watch-dogs, and have not the intimate association with human beings, which is so great an advantage to house-dogs; but Turk has been my constant companion from the first month of his existence, and his intelligence is very remarkable. He understands most things that I say, if they are connected with himself; he will often lie upon the rug with his large eyes fixed upon me as though searching my inward thoughts, and he will frequently be aware instinctively

that I wish to go out ; upon such times he will fetch my hat, cane, or gloves, whichever may be at hand, and wait for me at the front door. He will take a letter or any other token to several houses of my acquaintance, and wait for a reply ; and he can perform a variety of actions that would imply a share of reason seldom possessed by other dogs."

A smile of incredulity upon several faces was at once perceived by Mr. Prideaux, who immediately took a guinea from his pocket, and addressed his dog. "Here, Turk! they won't believe in you! . . . take this guinea to No. — — Street, to Mr. — —, and bring me a receipt."

The dog wagged his huge tail with evident pleasure, but to the danger of the wine-glasses upon the table, and the guinea having been placed in his mouth, he hastened towards the door ; this being opened, he was admitted through the front entrance to the street. It was a miserable night ; the wind was blowing the sleet and rain against the windows ; the gutters were running with muddy water, and the weather was exactly that which is expressed by the common term, "not fit to turn a dog out ;" nevertheless, Turk had started upon his mission in the howling gale and darkness, while the front door was once more closed against the blast.

The party were comfortably seated around the fire, discussing the most excellent wine, and much interested in the success or failure of the dog's adventure.

"How long will it be before we may expect Turk's return?" inquired an incredulous guest.

“The house to which I have sent him is about a mile and a half distant, therefore if there is no delay when he barks for admission at the door, and my friend is not absent from home, he should return in about three-quarters of an hour with an acknowledgment. If, on the other hand, he cannot gain admission, he may wait for any length of time,” replied his master.

Bets were exchanged among the company—some supported the dog’s chances of success, while others were against him.

The evening wore away ; the allotted time was exceeded, and a whole hour had passed, but no dog had returned. Fresh bets were made, but the odds were against the dog. His master was still hopeful. . . . “I must tell you,” said Mr. Prideaux, “that Turk frequently carries notes for me, and as he knows the house well, he certainly will not make a mistake ; perhaps my friend may be dining out, in which case Turk will probably wait for a longer time.” Two hours passed ; . . . the storm was raging. Mr. Prideaux himself went to the front door, which flew open before a fierce gust the instant that the lock was turned. The clouds were rushing past a moon but faintly visible at short intervals, and the gutters were clogged with masses of half-melted snow: “Poor Turk!” muttered his master, “this is indeed a wretched night for you. . . . Perhaps they have kept you in the warm kitchen, and will not allow you to return in such fearful weather.”

When Mr. Prideaux returned to his guests he could not conceal his disappointment. “Ha!” ex-

claimed one who had betted against the dog, "I never doubted his sagacity. With a guinea in his mouth, he has probably gone into some house of entertainment where dogs are supplied with dinner and a warm bed, instead of shivering in a winter's gale!"

Jokes were made by the winners of bets at the absent dog's expense, but his master was anxious and annoyed. The various bets were paid by the losers, and poor Turk's reputation had suffered severely.

. . . It was long past midnight: the guests were departed, the storm was raging, and violent gusts occasionally shook the house. . . . Mr. Prideaux was alone in his study, and he poked the fire until it blazed and roared up the chimney. . . .

"What can have become of that dog?" exclaimed his master to himself, now really anxious; "I hope they kept him; . . . most likely they would not send him back upon such a dreadful night."

Mr. Prideaux's study was close to the front door, and his acute attention was suddenly directed to a violent shaking and scratching, accompanied by a prolonged whine. In an instant he ran into the hall, and unlocked the entrance door. . . . A mass of filth and mud entered. . . . This was Turk!

The dog seemed dreadfully fatigued, and was shivering with wet and cold. His usually clean coat was thick with mire, as though he had been dragged through deep mud. He wagged his tail when he heard his master's voice, but appeared dejected and ill.

Mr. Prideaux had rung the bell, and the servants, who were equally interested as their master in Turk's failure to perform his mission, had attended the summons. The dog was taken downstairs, and immediately placed in a large tub of hot water, in which he was accustomed to be bathed. It was now discovered that in addition to mud and dirt, which almost concealed his coat, he was besmeared with blood! Mr. Prideaux himself sponged his favourite with hot soap and water, and, to his astonishment, he perceived wounds of a serious nature: the dog's throat was badly torn, his back and breast were deeply bitten, and there could be no doubt that he had been worried by a pack of dogs. This was a strange occurrence, that Turk should be discomfited!

He was now washed clean, and was being rubbed dry with a thick towel while he stood upon a blanket before the kitchen fire. . . . "Why, Turk, old boy, what has been the matter? Tell us all about it, poor old man!" exclaimed his master.

The dog was now thoroughly warmed, and he panted with the heat of the kitchen fire; he opened his mouth, . . . *and the guinea which he had received in trust dropped on the kitchen floor!* . . .

"There is some mystery in this," said Mr. Prideaux, "which I will endeavour to discover to-morrow. . . . He has been set upon by strange dogs, and rather than lose the guinea, he has allowed himself to be half killed without once opening his mouth in self-defence! Poor Turk!" continued his master, "you must have lost your way, old man, in the darkness and storm; most likely confused after the

unequal fight. What an example you have given us wretched humans in being steadfast to a trust!"

Turk was wonderfully better after his warm bath. He lapped up a large bowl of good thick soup mixed with bread, and in half an hour was comfortably asleep upon his thick rug by his master's bedroom door.

. . . Upon the following morning the storm had cleared away, and a bright sky had succeeded to the gloom of the preceding night.

Immediately after breakfast, Mr. Prideaux, accompanied by his dog (who was, although rather stiff, not much the worse for the rough treatment he had received), started for a walk towards the house to which he had directed Turk upon the previous evening. He was anxious to discover whether his friend had been absent, as he concluded that the dog might have been waiting for admittance, and had been perhaps attacked by some dogs belonging to the house, or its neighbours'.

The master and Turk had walked for nearly a mile, and had just turned the corner of a street when, as they passed a butcher's shop upon the right hand, a large brindled mastiff rushed from the shop-door, and flew at Turk with unprovoked ferocity.

"Call your dog off!" shouted Mr. Prideaux to the butcher, who surveyed the attack with impudent satisfaction. . . . "Call him off, or my dog will kill him!" continued Mr. Prideaux.

The usually docile Turk had rushed to meet his assailant with a fury that was extraordinary. With a growl like that of a lion, he quickly seized his

antagonist by the throat ; rearing upon his hind legs, he exerted his tremendous strength, and in a fierce struggle of only a few seconds, he threw the brindled dog upon its back. It was in vain that Mr. Prideaux endeavoured to call him off, the rage of his favourite was quite ungovernable ; he never for an instant relaxed his hold, but with the strength of a wild beast of prey, Turk shook the head of the butcher's dog to the right and left until it struck each time heavily against the pavement. . . . The butcher attempted to interfere, and lashed him with a huge whip.

“Stand clear! fair play! don't you strike my dog!” shouted Mr. Prideaux. “Your dog was the first to attack!”

In reply to the whip, Turk had redoubled his fury, and, without relinquishing his hold, he had now dragged the butcher's dog off the pavement, and occasionally shaking the body as he pulled the unresisting mass along the gutter, he drew it into the middle of the street.

A large crowd had collected, which completely stopped the thoroughfare. There were no police in those days, but only watchmen, who were few and far between ; even had they been present, it is probable they would have joined in the amusement of a dog-fight, which in that age of brutality was considered to be sport. . . .

“Fair play!” shouted the bystanders. . . . “Let 'em have it out!” cried others, as they formed a circle around the dogs. . . . In the meantime, Mr. Prideaux had seized Turk by his collar, while the

butcher was endeavouring to release the remains of his dog from the infuriated and deadly grip. . . .

At length Mr. Prideaux's voice and action appeared for a moment to create a calm, and, snatching the opportunity, he, with the assistance of a person in the crowd, held back his dog, as the carcass of the butcher's dog was dragged away by the lately insolent owner. . . . The dog was dead!

Turk's flanks were heaving with the intense exertion and excitement of the fight, and he strained to escape from his master's hold to once more attack the lifeless body of his late antagonist. . . . At length, by kind words and the caress of the well-known hand, his fury was calmed down. . . .

"Well, that's the most curious adventure I've ever had with a dog!" exclaimed the butcher, who was now completely crestfallen. . . . "Why, that's the very dog! he is so . . . that's the very dog who came by my shop late last night in the howling storm, and my dog Tiger went at him and towzled him up completely. I never saw such a cowardly cur; he wouldn't show any fight, although he was pretty near as big as a costermonger's donkey; and there my dog Tiger nearly eat half of him, and dragged the other half about the gutter, till he looked more like an old door-mat than a dog; and I thought he must have killed him; . . . and here he comes out as fresh as paint to-day, and kills old Tiger clean off as though he'd been only a biggish cat!"

"What do you say?" asked Mr. Prideaux. . . . "Was it your dog that worried my poor dog last night, when he was upon a message of trust? . . .

My friend, I thank you for this communication, but let me inform you of the fact, that my dog had *a guinea in his mouth* to carry to my friend, and rather than drop it, he allowed himself to be half killed by your savage Tiger. To-day he has proved his courage, and your dog has discovered his mistake. This is the guinea that he dropped from his mouth when he returned to me after midnight, beaten and distressed!" said Mr. Prideaux, much excited. "Here, Turk, old boy, take the guinea again, and come along with me! you have had your revenge, and have given us all a lesson." His master gave him the guinea in his mouth, and they continued their walk. . . .

. . . It appeared, upon Mr. Prideaux's arrival at his friend's house, that Turk had never been there; probably after his defeat he had become so confused that he lost his way in the heavy storm, and had at length regained the road home some time after midnight, in the deplorable condition already described.

. . . It is needless to comment upon this incident, which exhibits a devotion that is seldom equalled; but I cannot omit the relation of a story equally authentic, and far more painful in its results, which was told by an intimate friend of mine who knew both the dog and its owner.

THE SCOTCH COLLIE.

A Highland farmer owned a very clever collie bitch. The farmer attended market with regularity, and rode from his farm about eight miles once a

week, driving his cattle and sheep before him with the assistance of his dog.

Unfortunately, the farmer was a lover of whisky, and upon market days he was always too drunk to return home in the evening with the cattle which he had purchased, or with those of his stock which had remained unsold. Upon such occasions, he gave the animals in charge to the collie bitch, and she invariably conducted them safely to her master's farm, where they were received by his wife and her assistant, who well understood the propensities of the master ; he would surely arrive with some excuse upon the following morning.

This being his usual custom, it was an accepted occurrence that the collie would drive the sheep and cattle home, and the dog became well known throughout the neighbourhood. . . .

It so happened that this intelligent and faithful creature was expecting puppies, and her master, who was of a thoughtless and inconsiderate nature, had omitted to notice her condition, which would make it dangerous to employ her until her little ones should be born. . . .

It was a bitterly cold day in winter ; the snow lay deep upon the ground, and serious drifts had destroyed many sheep, and caused the shepherds immense trouble to rescue their flocks from some of the deeper corries ; when as usual, the drunken farmer, at the close of a market day remained to drink his hot toddy before the comfortable peat fire, and sent his poor bitch late in the afternoon to conduct his sheep homewards.

She started in command of her little flock ; there were a few strange sheep that required much management to keep them all together, and she had to run here and there, and bark, and sometimes slightly bite to let them know that she was not to be trifled with, but must be obeyed. She had marched them a few miles and it was getting dark, when her time came upon her, and there were no means of resisting Nature's laws. She was obliged to halt by the roadside, and there, upon the snow, a puppy was deposited, thus hurriedly born into the cold world. In her pain and weakness the unfortunate bitch left her pup, and crawled after her straggling charge, gathering the sheep together, and driving them along the road. . . . Other pains got hold upon her, and several puppies were born, and were left in the deep snow ; the mother's instinct of affection was overpowered by the sense of a duty to which she had been inured ; and still she struggled on, and drove her flock. Eight or nine pups were born, and abandoned in various places during this cold march ; but the bitch arrived with her charge after dark, and delivered her sheep safely to the farmer's wife. She then disappeared a short time afterwards, and before the farmer's wife had gone to bed, the poor bitch arrived shivering and weak with a puppy in her mouth, which she laid upon the hay in the corner where she was accustomed to sleep. . . . All through that night in the cold snow and the thermometer below zero, she travelled to and fro, bringing each time a frozen dead puppy in her mouth, and laying it by the side of her unhappy offspring, until she had

gathered them all together. She then lay down, and endeavoured to make her dead puppies suck.

The farmer's good wife had sat up for many hours ; she had warmed gruel and soup for the faithful bitch, and she would not herself retire to bed until she had seen her curled up to sleep with her dead family. She thought it better not to disturb her, but to let her sleep and fancy that they were alive. "She'll be ower unhappy, puir boddie, when she wakes in the morning," said the farmer's wife, as she laid her own head upon her pillow.

At daybreak the good woman was astir, and straightway she made some gruel warm, and took it to the corner where the mother was curled up comfortably with her dead family.

The bitch did not answer to her name. She had arranged her pups to comfort them with her warmth, and with milk, could they have required it ; but she herself was stiff and cold ! The poor mother had succumbed to over-exertion and the severe winter night ; she was dead, with her little ones beside her !





VI.—ELEPHANT TALES, AND REMINISCENCES OF NATURAL HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

THERE are few animals that can be captured in their wild state and become domesticated and serviceable to mankind. We see the dog in the position of man's natural companion ; but it is always the domestic breed, and not the wild animal that has been tamed. The reindeer is also reared like the ox ; and although the young may be caught wild, and trained to draw the sledge, the ordinary custom is to breed them precisely after the manner of farm cattle. The wild buffalo of Ceylon is sometimes captured ; but it never exhibits any intelligence. Horses in South America form an exception, and are rendered serviceable. But there is only one animal that appears to exhibit a capacity for man's companionship when caught in its wild forests and trained for general usefulness—this is the elephant.

From time immemorial this sagacious creature has been used in India, not only as a beast of burden, but as an accessory to the pageantry of native rulers. Although both the Asiatic and the African species

were known to the Romans and the Carthaginians, as proved by their delineation upon ancient coins, it is a curious fact that we do not find any allusion to the elephant in the Scriptures. The hippopotamus is mentioned under the name of Behemoth ; models of this animal are numerous, and drawings abound upon Egyptian temples. Ivory is alluded to upon several occasions ; but we have every reason to suppose that, at the time the Pentateuch was written, the elephant was quite unknown to the Egyptians, except perhaps by tradition.

It was a well-known custom of those people to portray every animal with which they were acquainted, upon the walls of their temples and other public buildings, or to imitate them in bronzé, clay, or some vitrified material ; but no elephant has ever been thus illustrated, except during the comparatively recent period of the Roman occupation. A small figure of an African elephant, neatly carved in stone, may be seen in the museum at Boulak. This was shown to me by that highly-respected savant Brugsch Bey as a great curiosity ; but he felt confident, from the locality in which it was discovered, that its age was as recent as the Christian era. This is a very curious proof of the limited knowledge of geography possessed by the ancient Egyptians, who were accredited with superior learning.

We hear that peacocks were brought to Solomon. Although the mention of a bird so commonly known would in the present day have little significance, it must be remembered that in ancient history such a fact affords a valuable clue to the first opening of a

commercial route to a hitherto unknown country, from which some production would be transmitted as a valuable present to the reigning monarch in a land where the object would be a novelty. The peacock does not exist in any portion of Africa, but abounds in a wild state in Ceylon and India. The bird is unknown in Arabia; thus an offering of peacocks, suggests, and conclusively proves a communication with one or both of the distant countries named.

Although Josephus gives an interesting biography of Moses which is not afforded by the Old Testament, and describes his prowess as a general, when in command of the Egyptian army he drove back the Ethiopian invaders and laid siege to Seba (the present Soba, near Khartoum), upon the Blue Nile, we have no mention of the elephant! Moses was in a country where the elephant was well known, but we have no allusion to this animal in any of his writings.

We can only conclude that the elephant was never tamed, or made use of by any of the Central African races, otherwise the king of Seba would certainly have possessed them; thus, although Moses when at Seba was not far distant from the land of elephants, he would not have actually seen them, and being occupied with his military command, the subject might have escaped his attention. The fact remains that we never hear of such an animal either in Egyptian records, or in the Bible; neither is it to be seen among the innumerable illustrations of ancient Egypt.

The African elephant is a totally distinct species from that of Asia. The head is shaped in a peculiar manner, with a receding front; the brain is set ex-

ceedingly low, and rests upon a plate which just touches the base of the upper teeth ; the trunk begins at the commencement of this low and receding forehead. It is accordingly almost impossible for a bullet to reach the brain by a front shot at a large male African elephant, as the tusks are embedded twenty-two to twenty-four inches, and the great roots of this defence continue parallel within only a few inches of each other exactly beneath the trunk, and protect the approach to the brain. . . . It is much larger than the Indian species, the male attaining the height of eleven to eleven feet six inches at the shoulder.

The spine of the African variety is concave, which gives a "saddle-back" appearance ; that of the Asiatic species is arched, or convex. The well-known Jumbo of the Zoological Gardens measured exactly eleven feet at the shoulder, and weighed six tons.

The ears of the African are immensely large, while those of Asia are comparatively small. The eyes of the African are very much larger than those of Asia, and are generally of a dark colour, while the Asiatic are usually grey.

The intelligence of the two varieties is about equal ; but there is a lamentable peculiarity in the native races of Africa—they never tame or domesticate any wild animals, but merely gratify their natural savage propensity for bloodshed by a general destruction. The African elephant has therefore been condemned as inferior to its Asiatic cousin, simply because the African savage is a merciless brute, and inferior to the native races of Asia.

In nine years' experience of African savage tribes

I have never seen one pet animal in the possession of any child or adult. Arabs (Mohammedans) will frequently bring up and domesticate gazelles, ostriches, and various wild animals, from a natural sympathy and sense of charity ; but the negro knows no sympathy with helplessness, and his only instinct is to shed blood—to drive his merciless spear through old or young. This horrible trait in his character should be well considered by those whose hopeful nature induces them to take a favourable view of a future development.

The Central African tribes appear to be special varieties of the human race, precisely as their elephants differ materially from those of other portions of the world. In the past histories of most countries we find vestiges of some early form of civilisation, which, by a mysterious change, disappeared instead of being developed, and upon the ruins of ancient greatness we may build a hopeful foundation for a brighter future. In Africa, on the contrary, we may search in vain for traces of the past ; there is not a chiselled stone throughout that vast region of Central Africa which, like the printed bricks of Babylon, could prove a period of former greatness ; but as the birds built their nests in the earliest days of the creation, and have never changed their form, even so the African savage has remained unchanged, and has been a blank upon the page of history—his grass hut strengthened with canes and mud, his pottery of the rudest form and material, his bow and arrow and his spear, which, with the fish-hook and harpoon, constitute his weapons for the chase or war.

And yet we find great mysteries among these people which must remain inexplicable; tribes that have been completely excluded from the world's history, that have been shut out from all communication with the greater portions of the human race, and have only recently been brought to light by the discoveries of modern geographical research, possess in the very heart of Africa both domestic animals, and birds, which do not belong in nature to the African continent! We find among all tribes the domestic fowl in quantities; but no such bird exists in the wild state throughout all Africa.

In India and Ceylon, and in Asia generally, there are several varieties of the original wild cock and hen; but in Africa there is no bird that approaches it—the guinea-fowl being quite distinct. The question must arise, "From whence were these creatures introduced, and when?"¹

At the building of the Egyptian temples, 5000 years ago, the source of the Nile was a mystery to the learned priests. If the sources of the river were unknown, the tribes which inhabited the borders of those vast lakes were equally undiscovered. . . . And yet we find the domestic fowl, the ox, the sheep, all in the possession of a people who have had no com-

¹ We may also ask in vain concerning the origin of the camel, which has been used from the earliest ages as a beast of burden throughout the East. We find two distinct varieties, the Bactrian camel with two humps, and those of Africa, Arabia, India, etc., with only one hump; but in the history of the world we have never heard of the camel existing in a wild state in any portion of the globe. This is an extraordinary and mysterious fact, as all other domestic animals can be traced to their original wild progenitors, which exist at the present day.

munication with the outer world, and not one of these creatures is to be found as an original inhabitant belonging to the fauna of the African continent !

In like manner we find the coffee shrub, maize, tobacco, the castor-oil plant, all cultivated by the native tribes, although none of these plants are to be found indigenous throughout the vegetation of Africa.

These facts contain important and unravelled mysteries. People who differ entirely from other sections of the human race, both physically and mentally, who have been excluded from the history of the world from its creation, are discovered to be in possession of both animals and plants that do not belong to the African continent, and must positively at some period, howsoever distant, have been introduced from without ; but from whence we cannot say.

As savage tribes representing the early stage of human existence must depend mainly upon the chase, it would be natural that savage man should seek the assistance of some animal superior to himself, either in speed or strength, as an ally in his hunting expeditions. We see in Central Africa that the dog, although of an inferior and neglected breed, is associated with the savage in the pursuit of game ; but although the elephant can be captured and tamed in any numbers, the African savage proves his inferiority to the Asiatic race by entirely neglecting to make use of so mighty and faithful an ally. He kills and eats : the carcase of an elephant is a

supply for an entire village ; the fat is boiled down, the flesh is smoked and dried for a future store, the hide is prepared for the manufacture of shields ; even the skull and the bones are hewn into pieces, from which the oily fat is extracted, and the tusks remain as trophies of the chase—one of the pair being the perquisite of the chief. In many places the tusks are used for making heavy armlets ; and for trumpets ; this is accomplished by great labour in the absence of proper tools, and at a frightful waste of material.

The ordinary custom is to store the tusks in native huts, where after many years the exterior becomes discoloured by the smoke of the cooking fires. The arrival of some enterprising ivory-dealers from an immense distance may awaken a demand, and the tusks are exchanged for glass beads, copper bars for bracelets, iron molotes (native spades or hoes), or frequently for cattle and slave-girls, stolen by the same enterprising ivory-dealers and slave-hunters from some adjacent tribe.

As the elephant is of such value to an African savage that it will supply him with food, shields, and ornaments, in addition to wives and cattle in exchange for ivory, it is a natural consequence that it should form an attractive object of the chase, and that by degrees the numbers of such animals should be seriously diminished.

Fortunately for the preservation of the elephant from complete extinction, it is not only a formidable antagonist, but its extreme sagacity enables it upon many occasions to avoid, or to escape from, the wily

savage. The means adopted for its capture and destruction are various, and in some instances exceedingly cruel.

The most wholesale slaughter is effected by fire. After the rainy season, the vast prairies of Central Africa are densely covered with strong reed-like grass, which attains a height of from eight to ten or twelve feet ; this becomes straw colour when ripened by the hot sun of the rainless months, and is highly inflammable. No person who has not witnessed the prairie fire of Africa can imagine its intensity, when the flames, raging to a height of thirty to fifty feet, are driven forward by a fierce wind, and absolutely devour all that can be consumed. The roar as of thunder, added to the dense black clouds of smoke, and the loud crackling sound of countless bursting stems which resemble musketry, create an appalling picture of an element that is irresistible ; but the speed of the advance is not so great as might be imagined. For many years I have witnessed such fires in all their magnificence, and under varying conditions of wind-power ; but I have never seen the line of flame exceed a rate of five, or at the outside, six miles an hour when driven by a strong gale. Pictures of animals at full speed, followed by the fire which threatens to overtake them, are exaggerations of the artist, and convey a wrong impression ; . . . the average rate of the fire-speed is about two and a half miles an hour, and the extreme rarefaction of air caused by the great heat of a line of fire several miles in extent in most cases occasions a rush of wind which accelerates the pace of the advance, thus

raising an artificial draught or gale, without which the fire would languish.

The African elephant differs in its habits from the Asiatic species. The latter avoids the sun, and is in its wild state a nocturnal animal, which roams throughout the night in the open country, and at the first dawn of day retires to the protection and shade of the densest forests. The African variety, although active throughout the night, is to be seen at all hours of the day in prairies of high grass many miles distant from the forest shade. In this exposed position, their huge dark bodies can be easily perceived as prominent spots upon the bright yellow surface, by any person on the look-out from an elevated point. When a large herd is known to be in the neighbourhood, the villagers assemble in thousands, and a hunt upon a grand scale is organised. The herd is tracked up until it is discovered in some extensive plain of ripened grass. Natives ascend a hill, and accurately mark the position of the animals, which may probably number upwards of a hundred, or many more. The great object is to surround the herd without being discovered, and when the circle is completed, to ignite the grass, so that an unbroken line of fire shall enclose the unsuspecting animals and prevent escape. The diameter of such a circle may be a couple of miles if the large herd of elephants should be widely scattered.

The perfect organisation of these native hunts is very remarkable. Every individual thoroughly understands his work, and in an incredibly short time the circle of fire is effected.

Sometimes the elephants appear to ignore the danger until they discover the horrible fact that they are surrounded. They then attempt an escape, but the yells of thousands of savage hunters outside the line of fire scare and bewilder them; they are driven back, and in the centre of the still wide area of dense grass they may obtain a temporary rest, until the crackling roar approaches nearer, and the thick smoke drives them from their refuge, once more to charge upon the advancing flames.

Maddened by panic as the area lessens through the progress of the fire, and infuriated by the wild shouts of their pursuers, the elephants dash into the black smoke, and with an irresistible rush, blinded and scorched by the furnace-like heat, they break through the red-hot circle, and appear among the expectant crowd of eager hunters.

The unfortunate animals have been blinded by the smoke and flames. Those men, who would not have dared to approach them in the open ground until they were thus rendered helpless by loss of sight, now run boldly by their side and hurl their sharp spears behind the shoulder to reach a vital point. The savage furor is at its height; the elephants' trumpeting and screams are loud above the din of many thousand voices. . . . There is a rush of crowds, a roar of flame, and driving clouds of smoke. . . . Suddenly the flame has ceased; the circle has burned out. . . . The bodies of upwards of a hundred elephants, scorched and pierced by countless spears, lie upon the blackened plains. Young and old have

been ruthlessly massacred, including little cubs by their mothers' sides.

This is the customary method of hunting the elephant when the conditions of seasons and locality are favourable for the murderous attack; but various methods are adopted which are not dependent upon any particular conditions.

Pitfalls are commonly used throughout Africa. This is one of the most ancient methods of capturing wild animals. The arrangement of pitfalls must depend upon the peculiar conditions of a locality. In the dry season there are many facilities for this method of hunting. The banks of rivers, shrunken by drought, are generally abrupt, and do not afford the means of descent for thirsty animals: in such cases there are certain positions more favourable, where the natural inclination of the ground offers an easy access to the river, and invites the approach of such heavy game as elephants, buffaloes, rhinoceros, giraffes, etc. In these frequented passes the natives arrange their pitfalls, which are almost certain to entrap the unwary animal when hurrying after sunset from the distant jungles to slake its thirst.

These pits vary in formation. Those for the elephant are usually about twelve feet long and the same in depth, but decreasing in width downwards like the letter V, in order to jam the broad feet of the animal as it falls, and thus to prevent it from using its enormous strength to effect an escape. I have also seen circular pits about eight feet in diameter and thirteen or fourteen feet deep, resembling perpendicular wells. All pits are constructed exactly

in the beaten paths of elephants, where they have been accustomed nightly to descend to the river's brink.

When the hole is dug, the earth is carried to some distance, sufficient only being retained to cover the branches and sticks which are used to conceal the aperture. The branches having been rendered sufficiently impervious by the addition of long grass and reeds, an even surface is secured by a layer of earth a few inches thick. This is stamped and beaten firm by one man, whose weight it can well sustain. When firm, a few reeds and armfuls of grass are carelessly distributed, as though they had been dropped from the trunk of an elephant when feeding. The dung of elephants is then collected and deposited upon the apparently firm ground to complete the deception.

Many of these holes are arranged in an elephant track, whether towards a river, or sometimes in a narrow pass, where the animals are known to make a thoroughfare. If one elephant should fall into a hole, a momentary panic would ensue, which would probably ensure the capture of one or more in the adjacent pitfalls. On the following morning the unfortunate prisoners would be despatched by spears.

Smaller animals, such as buffaloes and the larger antelopes, are caught in great numbers by driving them through frequented passes, which have been previously arranged with several hundred pitfalls, like the graves in an ordinary churchyard.

Another method of destroying the elephant is by driving large herds of such animals from the open

country into jungles, where the larger forest trees have already been manned by several natives concealed in the branches, and armed with enormous lance-heads several feet in length, with a short handle weighted with a heavy lump of hardened clay mixed with chopped straw. When the elephants are disturbed by the beaters, they generally retire to the jungle, and will congregate beneath the shade of the largest trees, from the branches of which the deadly spears are dropped perpendicularly by the concealed hunters.

A spear-head of three feet in length thus dropped between the shoulders will inflict a fatal wound, as the short weighted handle is struck by the dense and tangled branches as the animal rushes forward, and the blade is therefore in constant motion, cutting terrible gashes in the vitals of the elephant.

In this manner great numbers are killed when large hunts have been organised, and the trees have been well manned.

Some of the more warlike tribes of Africa who naturally excel as hunters, fearlessly attack the elephant and destroy it by throwing spears, which, urged by a strong arm, will penetrate to a depth of two feet. The animal is literally overpowered by numbers, and its huge body bristles with spears, like the quills of a porcupine, before it succumbs to countless wounds.

The Baggara Arabs on the west bank of the White Nile are renowned hunters, and a party of only three will, when mounted on horseback, attack and kill the most savage elephant. These men are

armed with lances about twelve feet in length, or even more. The blade is exceedingly sharp, and is nearly two feet long and two inches broad. The leading hunter must attract and monopolise the animal's attention, and must encourage it to pursue him. When his horse is in full speed and the enraged elephant is in hot pursuit, another hunter gallops up from behind and drives his long spear just beneath the animal's tail, pushing it straight forward with a continued thrust, which penetrates through all the intestines, and even reaches the lungs. To effect this tremendous stab the hunter frequently dismounts from his horse when at full speed, and is not satisfied until he has driven nearly the entire length of his weapon into the body of the elephant.

The third hunter waits upon his companion to afford assistance, should the wounded elephant turn round to the attack. In such desperate encounters the hunters frequently fall victims to their courage ; but the elephant never escapes after the thrust has been well delivered.

The Hamran Arabs attack the elephant in the same manner, but use a heavy and extremely sharp sword instead of a spear. With this simple weapon the hunter slashes the back sinew of a hind leg, and disables the animal with one blow.

I have given a detailed account of this peculiar style of hunting in the *Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia*. . . . And the danger may be imagined from the fact that every one of the celebrated hunters with whom I was associated in 1861 has since been killed by elephants.

Although we find throughout Central Africa that many devices are adopted for the destruction of elephants, both the Arabs and the negro tribes are far behind the inhabitants of India, and also the Cingalese of Ceylon, in their arrangements for capturing these animals upon a large scale. As I have already mentioned, the character of the negro incites him to destroy ; thus he does not attempt to capture the elephant for any more useful purpose than food. In India, on the contrary, and in Ceylon, the flesh of this animal is rejected, and it is caught for a definite object,—to be trained for special work.

The system of kraals or keddahs has been frequently described ; but the best practical account that has ever been published upon elephant catching, and the habits of the animal generally, is that by Mr. G. P. Sanderson in his work, *Thirteen Years with the Wild Beasts of India*. That energetic officer is the Government Superintendent of Keddahs, and has for many years had the entire direction of the Indian establishment for the capture and training of the wild elephants. All lovers of natural history should study his book, as he throws a new light upon his subject, and rejects many errors that were formerly accepted as facts, connected with this most sagacious and interesting animal.

The kraal or keddah is a large enclosure of strong palisades, which should be protected from the inside by a ditch, to prevent the elephants from throwing their immense weight against the structure. The construction of this snare is an affair of many weeks,

and must depend upon the conditions of the locality, and the habits of the elephants which periodically visit the neighbourhood. It is a curious fact that elephants which travel over great distances are almost certain to return to certain places in particular seasons. If the habits of those animals are well understood, and their movements have been carefully observed, it will not be difficult to prognosticate the march of the following year, and the kraal or enclosure can be arranged accordingly, allowing space for modifications which may become necessary.

The great art in the arrangement of a kraal consists in allowing the herd to enter the approach of the enclosure without the slightest alarm or suspicion of danger. The animals can then be either coaxed or driven, until they shall have become imprisoned within the palisaded area, when the narrow entrance is quickly barricaded, and there is no escape. As these kraals are invariably constructed in dense forest, the elephants are unaware of their existence until they are fairly entrapped.

When the wild elephants shall have been thus ensnared, the assistance of tame and well-trained animals is required to secure the captives. It is then a wonderful proof of the sagacity of the tame elephants, that they endeavour to second the efforts of the natives, in securing the more restive and dangerous of the captives. This is a very ancient method of taking wild elephants, and the inhabitants of Ceylon have long been celebrated for their cleverness in both capturing, and training the animals thus

ensnared ; but it was the custom in that island to destroy the old elephants when captured, and to retain those who, although full-grown, were known to be young in years. It was supposed that the older elephants were more difficult to teach. Mr. G. P. Sanderson, on the contrary, declares that the older elephants are quicker in learning, and are generally more tractable than the younger ; therefore in Indian keddahs the lives of these useful animals are spared.

There is also another method of capturing the wild elephant in Ceylon, in which I have myself joined. The elephant-catchers are provided with ropes made from the finely-cut strips of deer's hide carefully twisted. . . . A herd of elephants is tracked up, and if the wind is favourable, the hunters can approach within a very short distance before they are perceived. Elephants about three parts full-grown are usually selected, and when the herd becomes alarmed, and rushes off in full retreat, the hunters, with extraordinary dexterity, run alongside, and slip a running noose over one of the hind legs of the animal required. The beast continues running with the rope trailing for some twenty yards behind, until, when a favourable tree is at hand, the end is quickly secured by one of the professional experts, and the elephant is a prisoner. Nooses are thrown over it, and it is rapidly made harmless, being completely entangled like a fly in a spider's web.

It is then retained captive, lashed to a tree for several days, and kept for a certain period without food or water. With judicious treatment it becomes

sufficiently tractable within a week to be led about by the trainer, to whom its tuition is to be confided.

Although the elephant is naturally extremely intelligent, there has been considerable misconception concerning its performances, many of which have been attributed to spontaneous sagacity, whereas they were the result of commands given to the animal directly by the mahout or driver. . . . It is difficult for a looker-on to understand the secret orders transmitted to the animal by the mahout, who, by a variety of words, or by the pressure of his knee or foot, or by the peculiar touch of his heavy iron driving-hook, directs the elephant in a special manner to a work that appears to originate from the animal's natural capacity. I have seen elephants, when ridden by myself through dense forest where no paths of any kind existed, clear the way in a manner which appeared extraordinary, as evincing an almost human intelligence ; but in reality every act was in obedience to an order emanating directly from the mahout.

Old Moolah Bukh was a fine tusker, and good tiger elephant, but somewhat uncertain in his temper. He was by no means pleasant to ride, as his movements were rough, and the howdah swung about like a boat in a heavy swell ; but he was perfectly sure-footed in ascending or descending abrupt inclines in the rough surface of a pathless jungle upon the steep hills of the Central Provinces in India. I have frequently seen this elephant clear a path from opposing branches of large trees that would otherwise have swept the howdah with its occupants off his back.

To effect this he would twist his trunk around the branch and endeavour to tear it down ; the bough being too strong to yield, the elephant would take a fresh hold nearer the extremity to obtain a greater leverage. Should the branch resist this new attempt, Moolah Bukh would increase the power by wrenching the tough limb at a still greater distance from its junction with the main stem of the forest tree, and then successfully tearing it from the trunk he would carefully remove the mass of entangled branches to one side. . . . Every act was in obedience to the command of his driver. I have seen other elephants perform exactly in the same manner, often as though intuitively ; but their movements were only the result of orders conveyed by the mahouts, and not instinctive efforts of intelligence. . . . This obedience to command does not detract from the reputation for intelligence that has always been acknowledged as pre-eminent in the elephant ; but, on the contrary, it proves its extraordinary capacity as the servant and companion of man. An animal that would be continually exhibiting its natural cleverness instinctively and impulsively might excel in monkey-like tricks, but would be useless for actual labour where intelligence might be necessary only in conjunction with obedience to direct instructions. The elephant in its wild state is naturally intelligent ; but it does not exceed the capacity of some birds, neither does it equal the ant or bee in wonderful exhibitions of architecture, or in domestic arrangements. On the other hand, the gigantic power of the elephant can be made subservient to the will of a human being,

not by the fetters of harness, as necessitated by the horse, ass, and bullock, but by simple tuition, as though it were a child. The monster whose unwary tread would crush out of all form the frail monitor whose voice or touch directs its movements, devotes its brain intelligence to the lessons bestowed by man, and assists him in his labour, while at other times it aids him in his more dangerous sports. . . . The most clever insects, such as ants and bees, are simply conservative in adhering to their natural instincts, and can never be instructed by man. Many animals can be taught amusing tricks ; but, as I have already mentioned, none can equal either the dog or the elephant in a development of their natural intelligence, which renders them companions to the human race. At the same time, there are certain peculiarities in the elephant which demand attention. The male is subject to periodical fits of excitement which are natural to the males of other animals, especially the stag, at the commencement of the rutting season. During these periods, which are more or less intense, the elephant may be extremely dangerous, and should be carefully watched, and due precautions taken.

Many valuable males have been sacrificed to the alarm of careless or timid attendants, who have neglected to observe such periods of irritation, and have accordingly been terrified by an exhibition of sudden and unexpected mania by an animal whose subjection depends upon the prestige of its keeper. Nothing can be more terrible than the changes from docility to madness in an elephant that has usually been the trusted companion of its attendants.

This periodical mania is generally understood in India by the term "must." Upon such occasions there are well-known symptoms which denote the approaching change ; and the animal should be kept upon a reduced and cooling diet, and the legs secured by chains arranged as hobbles, until the fit (which seldom lasts beyond a fortnight, or at most a month) shall have passed away. If the necessary precautions are observed, no accident can happen ; but unfortunately the over-confidence, or the natural apathy, of native keepers frequently leads to gross neglect ; the animal in its period of excitement destroys an attendant, and breaking from all control commits a series of atrocities, and is at length destroyed as a matter of necessity—all of which might have been avoided by the exercise of common prudence and attention.

There are innumerable instances where the lives of valuable elephants have been sacrificed, after human lives have been destroyed, during the season of mania or "must," and such losses might have been avoided had the animals been carefully watched and properly secured.

One of the most exciting examples of these periodical attacks was described to me by Mr. G. P. Sanderson, who will, I trust, at some future day afford the public an opportunity of enjoying the description direct from his own pen.

A certain male elephant of great value, belonging to the Keddah establishment, had shown signs of "must ;" but its keeper had usually controlled the animal without difficulty throughout similar periods, and he did not apprehend any danger. Suddenly

this hitherto tractable elephant exhibited intense mania, and not only destroyed its keeper, but killed several attendants. It broke away from the chain attached to one leg, and commenced an indiscriminate attack upon all within its power. The natives fled in all directions, and the elephant, who was a large tusker, at once became the terror of the neighbourhood. It destroyed the huts of several villages by tearing off the straw-covered roofs. Several of the inhabitants became victims to its ungovernable rage; the remainder saved themselves by flight. The elephant roamed at large throughout a considerable area, and the police authorities informed Mr. Sanderson of the catastrophe, requesting that immediate steps should be taken to destroy an animal that had become a public scourge.

The value of this elephant was about £600; and Mr. Sanderson at once took measures to capture, instead of killing, a creature that might recover from its temporary insanity and become as valuable as before the malady. He determined to undertake the dangerous feat himself, as he hesitated to risk the lives of native attendants.

Among the numerous elephants belonging to the Keddah establishment was a very powerful and highly-trained tusker named Choogie. This was an animal of great reputation as a fighting elephant, and was thoroughly dependable when employed in the capture of wild specimens of his own race.

Mr. Sanderson gave orders that Choogie should be got ready without delay to engage the mad elephant in single combat, in the hope of securing it alive.

Choogie was girthed tight with a simple pad saddle, upon which Mr. Sanderson took his seat, armed only with a long spear; the trusty mahout astride as usual, and confident in the prowess of his animal.

Two well-trained females, with their attendants provided with ropes, were ordered to follow at a great distance in the rear, so as to be out of sight, but ready to assist at a given signal. . . .

The whereabouts of the mad elephant being well known to the police, who had petitioned for its destruction, guides were at once forthcoming; and Choogie, without a moment's unnecessary delay, started from the camp to meet his powerful adversary, followed by the two females at about half a mile distant.

About two or three miles had been passed, the guides running on ahead and keeping a good lookout through a country of occasional jungles and open plains, more or less under cultivation, where every village was deserted by the inhabitants from fear of the insane elephant, when suddenly, at the distance of a quarter of a mile or more, an elephant was perceived in front of a small village, before which it paraded, quickly marching to and fro, as though keeping guard before a captured position. There was no doubt of the identity; this was the animal of which they were in search, and Choogie's reputation would be quickly tested.

There was a restless impulsiveness in the movements of the "must" elephant which clearly denoted intense excitement. It apparently had not observed

the presence of Choogie upon the scene, and it continued its nervous march forwards and backwards until the advancing captor had arrived within less than two hundred yards upon the level and open plain. It then suddenly halted and faced about, as though uncertain as to the character of the new arrival. Choogie advanced slowly but steadily until within about a hundred yards, at which distance he stood, and the two elephants faced each other. Choogie did not exhibit the slightest excitement, neither did he condescend to notice his antagonist, who, on the contrary, emitted several shrill and sharp trumpets or screams, and threw its trunk high in air, as though in the endeavour to gain the scent of the new comer.

In this manner the two elephants faced each other for a short interval, when the ears of the insane animal were suddenly pricked forward, and curling the trunk inwards, it backed several paces as though anxious to retreat. Choogie's mahout was well aware that such a movement on the part of the elephant was only preparatory to a determined charge; perhaps Choogie himself thoroughly understood the menace, as his attitude suddenly changed, and throwing his ears forward he also curled his trunk, but stood firm to meet the expected onset.

With a shrill scream the enraged "must" elephant rushed forward.

There was a fury in the attack that appeared almost irresistible. Choogie's mahout gave some mysterious order which none but he and his well-trained animal could have understood, and marching



HE FORCED THE HEAD OF THE ATTACKING ELEPHANT HIGH INTO THE AIR.—p. 377.

slowly forward to meet the impetuous attack, Choogie began in a most suspicious manner to lower his head as though in dread of the approaching shock.

This movement completely exposed the mahout, also Mr. Sanderson, who promptly brought his long spear to the charge, in the vain hope of turning the enraged brute that was now close upon them in headlong speed.

Still lower drooped the giant head of Choogie till his long tusks touched the ground ; in another instant his mad antagonist was upon him, but before the impact was complete, the cool and practised wrestler with extreme quickness threw up his lowered head, and catching the throat of his adversary just beneath the jaws between his powerful tusks, he too emitted a triumphant scream, and exerting all his reserved strength, he forced the head of the attacking elephant high in air, and pressing forward with a dexterous twist, threw the insane beast heavily upon its side, thus pinning it securely to the ground. The fork-like grip of the tusks upon the neck was immediately followed by Choogie's entire weight, as he threw himself upon his prostrate captive.

With extreme activity Mr. Sanderson slipped off his pad at the critical moment, and before the elephant could struggle for escape he had succeeded in passing a rope around the two hind-legs, thus completing this most daring and unprecedented capture.

The female elephants were quickly at the spot, but their services were only required to lead the prisoner to the spot from which he had escaped,

where he arrived in safe custody between his lady-police, securely bound and incapable of further mischief.

Mr. Sanderson's reward for this interesting exhibition of daring was the complete success of his anticipations, as the unfortunate "must" elephant, after an interval of rest, low diet, and restraint, returned to its former self, and was completely restored. This was a saving to the Government of about £600, the value of a first-rate trained tusker. Unfortunately some valuable lives were past restoration ; but such casualties might possibly have been avoided by greater caution on the part of native attendants.

As the male elephant is naturally subject to dangerous although temporary fits of excitement, common sense would suggest that special precautions should be taken in the necessary arrangements for the captivity of such animals as may be kept as zoological specimens. The female, being exempt from these aberrations of intellect, would at first sight appear to be more adapted for European exhibition ; but she does not represent the grandeur of the male, and is considerably smaller.

The African male being from ten feet six inches to eleven feet six in height at the shoulder is about eighteen inches higher than the Indian species. The African female being rather superior in height to the Indian male.

Although twice the circumference of the forefoot when the elephant is resting its full weight upon the limbs may be accepted as equal to the approximate height of an elephant measured vertically by a

standard from the shoulder, there are many exceptions to the rule. If a wild elephant should be killed, this method of ascertaining the height would be erroneous, as the feet would not be expanded by the weight of the animal, and the circumference would be inferior.

The African elephant Jumbo was the largest ever known in captivity, being exactly eleven feet, which tallied with the double circumference of his forefoot. I knew that elephant when it was about two years old in 1861, and saw it together with a similar companion when in the jungles of Abyssinia, where it was captured by the Hamran Arabs, and subsequently sold to an Italian collector. It passed into the hands of the French, and was given to the Zoological Society of London in exchange for a young rhinoceros. The age of Jumbo could thus be almost accurately ascertained, and he must have been twenty-three years old at the time that he was sold to America. This fact is a tolerable proof that the elephant attains its full growth in about twenty-two years, and Jumbo, having measured eleven feet, and weighed six tons after a captivity from infancy, is a sufficient guide to those who are interested in the average size attained by the African species in its wild and natural state, where it would probably much exceed such measurement.

Although much sentimental nonsense was written concerning the sale of that fine specimen of the African elephant, Jumbo, it is to be regretted that the architectural arrangements of the Zoological Society are insufficient to control a male elephant

when under the influence of periodical excitement. Such periods have a scientific interest, and should be carefully observed and noted. The elephants of the Zoological Society have been regarded as playthings for the amusement of children ; if they are to be thus used, common sense would suggest that the Society should restrict their purchases to females.

On the other hand, it may be contended that buildings and yards should be properly constructed, not only to ensure the health of the various animals, but so arranged as to secure their attendants and the public from all danger. There is no reason whatever (unless the plea of expense) for neglecting a proper arrangement. In the fighting arena for wild animals at Baroda the large open space is surrounded by a powerful wall of masonry ; this is pierced by very narrow arches, only of sufficient width to allow the passage of a man. Should an elephant or other large animal pursue one of the natives engaged within the arena, he can immediately escape by running through one of the numerous exits.

A masonry ditch of six feet width and the same depth should be arranged within the enclosure to prevent the elephant from throwing its weight against the wall. A slight bridge of a single plank opposite each aperture would enable a fugitive to escape at once ; but the fragile arrangement would be sufficient to deter the elephant, who will never attempt to cross a ditch until assured that the bridge will support its weight.



CHAPTER II.

WHEN I was at Baroda the Guikwar most kindly entertained us with various sports, among which were the combats of wild animals in the arena. Although I had imagined such amusements to be cruel, I certainly had no right to condemn anything that I actually witnessed.

A very savage bull elephant was led into the arena by about fifty men, who were divided into separate parties to command the ropes attached to its legs upon either side. A number of others were armed with long spears to keep the animal at a distance until they should have time to escape through the numerous narrow exits. When this elephant was released from the ropes it immediately charged the men, who quickly escaped like rabbits into their holes.

Another fighting elephant was introduced into the arena (which was about two hundred yards in length). This was not an Ajax in courage, and it refused to fight, being ignominiously pushed from behind by the blunt tusks of the more savage elephant.

A fresh animal was now introduced, which was apparently free from vice, and was easily guided by the attendants. This was a fine tusker, and it had

only advanced a few paces into the arena when it perceived the savage adversary. Without a moment's delay it cocked its ears, uttered a shrill trumpet, and marched steadily to the attack. The bully retreated, but being followed up, it turned round, and the two monsters clashed together, their tusks meeting with such force that a splinter weighing about two pounds was broken off, and fell from the brass ring, which terminated the sawn-off portion of the more savage elephant's. The ends of the tusks, if long, are generally shortened by the saw, and the edges protected by a thick brass hoop or ring. A half-minute was employed in pushing and struggling until the more savage elephant had the worst of the wrestling match and turned tail, pursued by the victor, who assisted its flight by a steady thrust in its hind-quarters.

A large number of men at once rushed into the arena from the numerous apertures, and an amusing scene took place, as the two elephants were to be secured. About a dozen natives were armed with immense spring nippers, which in form exactly resembled those which are used for breaking loaf-sugar. These were about two and a half feet in diameter, and opened when the two short handles were pressed together, like curved jaws; the inside of the curve was furnished with a few iron points, or teeth, similar to the tongs used for securing conger eels.

Twelve or fourteen men carried large iron tubes containing a species of rocket mixture, and these being ignited, produced an indescribable roar, emitting at the same time so dense a volume of smoke that it almost obscured the operations. The elephants

were blinded by this sudden cloud, and terrified at the roar of so large a combination of fireworks. Taking advantage of their momentary stupefaction, the men, armed with the spring tongs, rushed in from the rear, and by pressing the two handles, at the same time thrusting the opened jaws of their instruments against the hind legs of the elephants, they instantly retreated, leaving their tongs suspended upon the legs of the animals, which appeared to be almost immediately subdued. The effect of these instruments was most curious ; they inflicted no pain, but the fact of their holding fast like the grip of an animal's jaws, produced a belief on the part of the elephant that it was securely bound. Ropes were quickly attached, and the elephants were conducted with more or less difficulty to their separate stables, no harm having been inflicted upon either side. . . .

Although elephants may be taught to face danger, they are naturally timid, the exceptions being savage bulls, or "rogues." A really dependable tiger elephant is difficult to procure, and is appreciated accordingly. I once saw a ridiculous example of nervousness in an elephant that had no fear of tigers, but took fright at a small animal. I was driving jungle for a tiger with about a hundred and fifty beaters. It was reported that the animal had taken to some rocky hills covered with bush and high grass ; I accordingly selected a narrow glen about two hundred yards long by forty in width, at the foot of a hill ; this open vale ran between a thick jungle on the flat plain and the base of the rocks, towards which the beaters were approaching.

I accordingly backed the elephant which I was riding, into the thick bush at the broad end of the glen to conceal it from view, as I expected the tiger would steal downwards from the hill and probably retreat along the glen, which I thus commanded.

After waiting a considerable time in suspense, the shouts of the beaters were heard in the distance, and my elephant Moolah Bukh, who well understood the business, occasionally pricked his ears, as several peacocks ran across the open space. . . . Suddenly a hare broke cover, and at full speed ran down the glen exactly towards the spot I occupied upon Moolah Bukh, who was so well concealed that only his face protruded from the bush. The hare did not observe the elephant, and in a few seconds it ran almost between its legs as it bolted into the jungle. The effect upon Moolah Bukh was ludicrous;—he had pricked his ears when he first saw the hare in the distance, but when it approached at full speed, and suddenly rushed close to his legs, his nerves gave way, and he fairly bolted from the tiny animal, although he would have stood against the onset of a tiger.

The memory of elephants is very tenacious, and should they once take fright, or a dislike to a particular object, they will seldom forget it. I had a female elephant many years ago in Ceylon who was frequently employed in pushing down trees after they had been cut half way through by the woodmen. Upon one occasion a gust of wind tore down a tree that had been thus prepared, and as it was a quite unexpected accident, the tree fell across the elephant's

back. Nothing would ever induce that animal to remain in the forest if the men were cutting trees after that occasion ; if she heard a tree crack while the men were felling, she would immediately start, and rush headlong into the open ; she was therefore rendered useless for further work in her old employment.

In the same manner that elephants remember incidents which displease them, they will not forget either persons or places. They become disciplined in a wonderfully short period to certain hours, at which either labour or their meals should commence. I knew a clever female, who would obey her driver's command, and go off by herself to water in the late evening, and then return to camp entirely unaccompanied. I have seen her do this at a strange place when on a shooting trip, where the river was nearly a quarter of a mile distant, and could only be reached by a difficult path, through steep cliffs, to a depth of some sixty feet below the general level. She would go to the stream and drink, or bathe, and return without any undue delay.

In the mountains of Ceylon, near Newera Ellia, I have for many years watched the periodical visits of single wild elephants, which invariably adopted their old paths, stepping almost into the ruts formed by their feet in the preceding year ; this proves an accurate memory for localities.

There are no people who surpass the natives of India in the training of elephants or other wild animals. For many ages the custom has prevailed among the native princes of that country of educating not only the elephant and dog, but the leopard

and the falcon, to assist them in the chase. The Guikwar of Baroda, during my sojourn in his State, most kindly furnished me with opportunities of witnessing the excellent training of his falcons, hunting leopards, or cheetahs, and other animals. His well-known, trustworthy minister, Sir Madawa Row, can speak English rather better than most Englishmen ; his careful and judicious management of the Baroda State during the minority of the Guikwar had assured the prosperity of the country, which is well worthy of its name, "The Golden Valley." A rich alluvial soil, nearly black in colour, is highly cultivated with cotton and cereals ; at the same time the vast plain is ornamented by beautiful park-like trees, among which the mango stands pre-eminent as an evergreen during the extreme heat of summer, when most other trees have shed their leaves.

Sir Madawa Row's accurate knowledge of English was a great advantage to myself, as he afforded me valuable information which would otherwise have been difficult to obtain. Through his kindness we were allowed to inspect the immense collection of jewels belonging to the Guikwar ; these were in such numbers and variety that I quite lost my respect for diamonds and rubies, although one of the former had actually been purchased for £90,000. There were no sapphires in the collection, as the possession of that stone is considered to be unlucky, and no Indian will allow such a dangerous gem within his dwelling. This is a curious superstition, as the ruby is highly valued, although it is precisely the same stone as the sapphire, coloured blue by a different oxide.

The gold and silver batteries of field-guns were also exhibited. There are only four of these cannon, two of which are solid gold four-pounders, fitted with an internal tube of steel. The carriages are plated with gold, and the harness for the team of oxen is heavily ornamented with the same precious metal. Gold horns are fitted upon those of the oxen employed, and these animals are selected for their immense size and general perfection of appearance. The silver guns, carriages, limbers, harness, etc., were precisely similar.

The most interesting artilleryman in His Highness's service was a small green parrot. This bird was one of many which had been trained to the various exercises of a field-gun, and it was exhibited by its native tutor in our presence.

A large table was placed in the arena where rhinoceros, buffaloes, and rams had been recently struggling for victory in their various duels, and a far more entertaining exhibition was exchanged for the savage conflicts. . . . Upon this table stood a model brass cannon about eight inches in length of barrel, and a calibre equal to a No. 12 smooth-bore gun. The rammer and sponger lay by the side of the small field-piece.

About a dozen green parrots were spectators, who were allowed to remain on perches, while the best-trained gunner was to perform in public before at least three thousand spectators, the Guikwar, and his ministers, and friends, including ourselves, being seated in a raised structure similar to the grand stand of an English racecourse, which commanded

the entire arena, the parrots being immediately beneath. The gunner was placed upon the table, and at once took its stand by the gun, and, in an attitude of attention, waited for orders from its native master.

The word of command was given, and the parrot instantly seized the sponger in its beak, and inserting it within the muzzle without the slightest difficulty, vigorously moved it backwards and forwards, and then replaced it in its former position.

The order was now given "to load." A cartridge was lying on the table, which the bird immediately took within its beak, and dexterously inserted in the muzzle; it then seized the rammer, and, with great determination of purpose and force, rammed the cartridge completely home, giving it several sharp taps when at the breech. The parrot replaced the rammer by the side of the sponger, and waited for further orders, standing erect close to the rear of the gun.

The trainer poured a pinch of priming powder upon the touch-hole, and lighted a small port-fire; this he gave to the parrot, which received it in its beak at a right angle, and then stood by its gun, waiting for the word.

"Fire!" . . . At that instant the parrot applied the match, and the report of the cannon was so loud that most people started at the sound; but the pretty green gunner never flinched—the parrot stood by its gun quite unmoved. The trainer took the port-fire, which it had never dropped from its beak, and gave an order to sponge the gun, which was

immediately executed, the bird appearing to be quite delighted at its success.

About eighteen or twenty miles from Baroda is a hunting establishment belonging to the Guikwar. We were the guests of kind friends, Mr. and Mrs. Hill, he being the State engineer in the Guikwar's service, and a party was arranged for a few days sport at Dubka. Hounds were sent forward; numerous horses, under the charge of the "Master of the Horse" (these were for pig-sticking); falcons and falconers for hawking; and highly-trained cheetahs or hunting leopards for coursing the black-buck—one of the fleetest animals in existence.

A number of spare horses had been sent forward in relays to wait at certain villages, in order to change our team, wearied with the heat and the fatigue of dragging our carriages through deep dust and sand.

We started early. The Master of the Horse and others were riding, together with numerous falconers, their falcons hooded, and perched upon the thick leather gloves, which reminded one forcibly of pictures in mediæval times.

Although the country teemed with agricultural wealth, there was a certain monotony in the endless flat surface, divided into large fields by narrow hedges of euphorbia. Magnificent trees occasionally offered their welcome shade; and after a dusty drive of about two hours, we arrived at a series of jheels, or small lakes, where ducks, herons, and other wild fowl abounded. This was a grand opportunity for the falcons. The mounted men galloped furiously about, and narrowly escaped the deep muddy holes where buffaloes had

wallowed on the margin of the lake. Wild ducks in considerable flocks were quickly disturbed, but these were not the game desired ; in a short time two large cranes were started, which immediately sailed upwards, high above the lake. The hood was at once removed from the falcon's head, and with a quick jerk of the wrist the bird was thrown off upon the wing. It was curious to observe how admirably the falcon entered upon the pursuit ; it did not hesitate for one instant, but sailed away in a direct and rapid flight straight towards one of the cranes, which was about a quarter of a mile distant, high in air. As the falcon approached, the two cranes, perceiving the danger, separated in different directions, and flew upwards, but the peregrine never hesitated or swerved for a moment from the bird upon which its keen gaze had been fixed when it was first loosed from the trainer's wrist ; it now appeared to be within only a few yards of its prey, when the crane shot cleverly into the clear blue sky by a sudden turn, and rose far above its pursuer. The falcon, thus balked by the sharp strategy of the wary crane, seemed disgusted by its failure, and, with a quick whirl of its long wings, took a totally different direction, although steering upwards till it became a minute object in the cloudless space above us. It then made a wide circuit, until far away from the now happily released crane, when suddenly, having gained the altitude desired, the falcon shot with most amazing velocity obliquely towards its prey. It was a magnificent sight to witness the lightning speed of this descent, and the determination of the dash which must prove

fatal to the crane. In less time than can be imagined, the swoop of the resolute pursuer had brought it straight upon the neck of its unlucky victim, and the two birds, entangled by their struggle at an immense height, whirled round and round, always rapidly descending, the falcon holding on with relentless beak and talons, although the long and powerful wings of the crane prevented it from falling heavily towards the earth.

The horses dashed forward, every rider spurring towards the spot where the falcon was expected to bring its game to ground. All eyes were fixed upon the sky in which the struggling birds were waltzing round and round, slowly but surely falling ; the horses knew their work, and the sure-footed beasts galloped over ruts, and banks, and swampy ground, as they coursed along the margin of the lake, until at length they gained the extreme end of the water, and upon a dry level plain the falcon brought the crane to earth.

The crane was not dead, and the falconer rather cruelly took both birds in his arms to exhibit them to those who had not been able to arrive in time to witness the descent. The falcon continued to tear the neck of the crane, which I insisted should at once be put out of its misery.

We had several flights with various falcons during our journey with unvaried success, excepting one occasion where the falcon, when close to its prey, refused to strike, and relinquished the pursuit. This bird was brought back by the lure, which is merely an arrangement of feathers attached to a cord ; it

is thrown up in the air by the falconer, and its resemblance to a bird attracts the falcon. The trainer of this recreant falcon explained that it would not strike because it was above a lake, and it feared to alight upon the water. He also declared that the first falcon would have struck the crane at an earlier stage of the pursuit had it not observed the surface of the lake beneath.

I had witnessed hawking in former years, but I never felt any great enthusiasm for the sport, the pleasure of which would doubtless be increased by the ownership of the falcons, and an intimate acquaintance with their characters and capabilities. It is well known that hawking in the East is not only confined to feathered game, but that four-footed animals are captured by the falcon.

Mr. Anderson, in his work on Siberia, describes this style of hunting upon a magnificent scale, where a large species of eagle is trained to hunt the red-deer, and he himself witnessed the death of a full-grown stag that was actually killed by this powerful bird without assistance.

Dubka is a peculiar situation. The Guikwar has a hunting palace, and some comfortable bungalows near the edge of a precipitous cliff which overlooks a very broad river about a hundred feet below. He had very kindly sent on a great number of servants, with a large amount of supplies and wines sufficient for a week's enjoyment.

About two miles from the bungalow, bordered by the large river, is an extensive plain, which is flooded during the wet season. At the time of our visit the

bed of the stream was a glaring mass of dry sand, about three-quarters of a mile in width, with a comparatively small volume of water flowing through the middle, or at intervals skirting the base of high cliffs in the sudden bends, where the deep pools harboured crocodiles in considerable numbers.

The plain was generally covered with a very low creeping grass; this fed large numbers of black antelopes, which love such an extent of open and treeless ground as their best defence, where no enemy can approach unseen. No animal is more keen of sight or wary than this species of antelope, which is considered to be the fleetest of its race. This plain was to be our coursing ground with the cheetahs, therefore I must be somewhat particular in its description.

As a great portion was inundated by the river during the rainy season, the surface at the time of our visit varied according to the interval that had elapsed since the retirement of the water. A range of low hills, partially covered with trees and bush bordered the plain upon the side most distant from the river, which evidently overflowed its banks until it reached their base; thus all between the hills and the river bed was a perfectly open plain like a race-course, for about two thousand acres. Some portions exhibited a firm level surface, while those from which the river had recently receded were still muddy, the slime being trodden into countless tracks by antelopes. The approach to this plain from the bungalows of Dubka descended the hills, and entered through about a mile and a half of scattered bush.

This was most favourable for sheltering the antelopes should they retreat from the noonday sun ; at the same time, the peculiar variety of the crisp evergreen shrubs afforded a much-coveted food. The conditions of the locality were therefore most favourable for game.

I had read various descriptions of the method of hunting by cheetahs, I therefore looked forward with much interest to a sport that was only unknown to me practically.

The cheetah, commonly called the hunting-leopard, is very unlike the leopard, with the exception of being spotted. The ordinary leopard is a long low animal, short-legged, with retractile claws. The cheetah is very long in the legs, high in the shoulder, therefore tall, with a very small head, and large piercing eyes ; *the claws are not retractile.*

The tail of the cheetah is exceedingly long, the body very light, and the general structure of the animal denotes extreme speed ; in fact, I believe it to be the fastest animal in the world.

The accounts which I had read of cheetah-hunting were most erroneous descriptions, and I can only conclude that the writers who were eye-witnesses must have seen cheetahs of an inferior description, whose training was incomplete. Those of His Highness the Guikwar were superb animals, and I can give an accurate description of their performances, which I actually saw.

Ordinary books on natural history represent the cheetah as sneaking stealthily towards its game, and then attacking by a few immense bounds, which, if

unsuccessful, result in the cowardly animal retreating ignominiously to its cage.

The word "bound" hardly expresses the action of the cheetah. I have had some experience with the lion, tiger, and leopard; all these animals bound; but the cheetah when running combines the long stretch of the greyhound with the springy swing of the monkey when the latter is in full stride. There is no similarity in the action of the ordinary genus *felis* with that of the cheetah.

In the spring of 1880, on a tolerably cool morning, shortly after sunrise we left the bungalow at Dubka for the plain already described. A considerable party, including a few ladies, were on horseback, and three cheetahs with their trainers, each occupied a cart formed of open wooden bars to represent a cage, in which the animal was confined until required. The top of the cart was closed, so that two persons would have room to sit, in addition to the cheetah, who would occupy an outside place when in the proximity of game. Each cart was drawn by a pair of bullocks.

After descending the low hills which were covered with jungle, interspersed with trees, we entered upon that portion of the plain which was partially clothed with evergreen bush, broken by numerous large glades of exceedingly close grass resembling a withered lawn. At this early hour it was expected that antelopes would be found on these inviting pastures, where it would be less difficult to approach them than upon the treeless plain beyond.

A cheetah was taken from its cage, and being

hooded with a leather mask somewhat similar to that of a falcon, there was no danger of its escape in this blinded condition ; it was therefore seated with its master on the flat top of the cage, while the driver pricked up his bullocks and put the cart in motion.

For some little time we silently followed the cart, working up the wind towards the expected game ; a man was sent on in advance in order to report the presence of antelopes should any be in view when approaching an open glade through the sparsely scattered bushes.

Presently the spy ran back with the report that antelopes with two black bucks were not far distant in a glade beyond. We moved cautiously forward.

The black buck is a very beautiful creature, and to a rifle shot it is the perfection of game. The females are fawn-colour, with white bellies ; the buck is the same colour when young, but darkens after being full-grown, until on the third or fourth year it becomes a perfect black, the belly remaining white. The horns are spiral, and average about seventeen inches in a straight line from base to point, but many far exceed this measurement. The live weight of a four-year old buck in good condition is about 100 lbs. to 112 lbs., or eight stone. Indian authorities of great experience declare that an English greyhound has no chance of outrunning a black buck ; but I have never seen a trial.

This was the animal that we were now stealthily approaching. The cart was a few paces in advance ; the trainer had his arms around the neck of the



John May

DASHED STRAIGHT AT THE NEAREST BUCK. — 2. 307.

cheetah, which was sitting upon its hind-quarters upon the top of the cage in the attitude of a dog, and I was surprised at its great height when in this position.

There could be no doubt that it scented the antelopes, as every muscle quivered with excitement, although the animal was blinded by the mask or hood.

Suddenly, upon emerging from thick clumps of green bushes, we saw a herd of antelope dashing across an open glade, among them being two black bucks, about a hundred paces distant. That instant the hood was slipped from the cheetah's face, and without a moment's hesitation it sprang lightly to the ground, and with terrific speed dashed straight at the nearest buck.

The glade was hardly two hundred yards across, and the buck disappeared in the bushes upon the opposite side when the cheetah was within about thirty yards ; before any horses could arrive upon the spot, a cloud of dust rising among the green bushes led us to the place where the buck was upon its back, with the cheetah gripping it firmly by the throat. The buck continued to struggle for a few seconds, but then lay perfectly still, although not dead. It was curious to observe the steady and passive hold of the cheetah, which remained quiet, in a crouching attitude, the gripe fixed like a vice just beneath the lower jaw of the black buck, which was being deliberately strangled. The hood was quickly adjusted upon the arrival of its keeper ; a rope was passed several times tightly around the neck of the half-strangled buck, and the knife put an end to its

misery. The blood was caught in a huge wooden spoon hollowed out like a bowl with a rather long handle; from this the cheetah, having relinquished its hold of the prey, was allowed to lap the warm blood as a reward for its success.

The cheetah would be useless until the following day, as it had received its full share of food.

Each cheetah ran a course upon that day, all successfully, and there was considerable monotony in the style of hunting, excepting that upon one occasion the antelope were undisturbed, and the cheetah, instead of advancing with a direct dash when first unhooded, crept from bush to bush, and very cleverly stalked its game until upon the extreme edge of the open ground, when it at once pursued, and singling out the black buck from the herd of ten or a dozen females, struck it to the ground by a blow with the paw upon its haunch, and as quick as lightning fastened upon its throat.

. . . On the following day I witnessed several hunts, during one of which the buck turned manfully to bay, and for nearly half a minute defended itself against its active antagonist. It appeared to me that the cheetah should be employed against more worthy game, such as the samber deer; but the trainers assured me they would refuse to attack any animal of such size and strength. It was a cruel amusement for ladies to share, as their sympathies should have been with the poor black buck, which was terribly over-matched. My wife declined the sport after the first day's experience, and although I considered it to be as cruel as coursing a hare with greyhounds, or hunt-

ing with harriers, and not so bad as running a tame stag with hounds, all of which are recognised British sports, I determined to have one quiet morning without the ladies, when the party should be small, and we could take our time and stalk the buck upon the wide treeless plain, where it would have the advantage of a long start from the too fleet cheetah.

This day proved the enormous speed of the cheetah ; but at the same time it exhibited its preference for a country where scattered bushes afforded the advantage for a stealthy approach before it made its final dash in pursuit of the game in view. We had several exciting courses, in one of which the buck escaped, as the cheetah commenced the chase at about two hundred and fifty yards, and merely cantered, until the antelope had gained so great a start that the subsequent speed resolved upon by the cheetah was insufficient to make up the distance. The animal, thus disappointed at its failure, quietly returned to the cart, and leapt upon its accustomed seat. The most exciting course was run across the treeless plain, where the black buck had a fair start of about 120 yards, and the cheetah coursed its game for more than a quarter of a mile precisely as a greyhound would pursue a hare, till it at length succeeded in striking the buck to the ground and seizing it by the throat.

One of the chief difficulties in training the cheetah consists in teaching it to select the black buck from a herd, instead of attacking a female. This is a *sine qua non* in a well-educated animal.



CHAPTER III.

WE have strayed somewhat from the subject of elephants in recalling reminiscences of other animals ; but the few instances I have noticed of the training of wild creatures will increase the reputation of the elephant for superior intelligence, as it can be made useful to mankind in a great variety of ways instead of being specially educated for one particular work, like the falcon, cheetah, pointer, retriever, and sheep-dog, etc.

A thoroughly-trained elephant appears to understand its driver radically, and to be capable of obeying any order that may be given, whether it relates to a work upon which the animal is ordinarily employed, or should the direction be given for some exertion beyond its daily experience.

It is commonly asserted that the monkey closely approaches the human race in mental capacity ; but although it can be taught a variety of tricks which, in conjunction with its peculiar physical affinity to the human form, amuse the spectator as a parody upon mankind, it is a curious fact that neither the monkey nor ape can be educated to any useful purpose. They are taught only through fear, and they will perform their various antics only so long as they

are within reach of the master's power of chastisement. Should a monkey escape, it will immediately run up a tree, and when beyond the reach of the trainer's lash it would be deaf to any orders or blandishments on the part of the master, to whom it was accustomed to render complete obedience. If it had been possible to educate the ape to any useful purpose, it might have become a greater assistant to man than the best-trained dog, as its wonderful powers of climbing might have been developed in a variety of ways ; but no instance has been known of a monkey becoming sufficiently advanced in brain capacity to assist man either in his work or other occupations.

Although the elephant seldom exhibits any impromptu impulse by volunteering to perform some particular work, but prefers to await the orders of its driver, it would be unfair to deny the existence of a natural power of keen observation and reasoning which directs the animal both in its wild and domesticated state.

I remember an occasion, many years ago, when in Ceylon, I, in connection with my brother, had organised a scheme for the development of a mountain sanatorium at Newera Ellia. We had a couple of tame elephants employed in various works ; but it was necessary to obtain the assistance of the Government stables for the transport of very heavy machinery, which could not be conveyed in the ordinary native carts. There were accordingly a large number of elephant waggons drawn by their colossal teams, some of which required four elephants.

It was the wet season upon the mountains. Our settlement was 6200 feet above the sea, and the zigzag pass from Ramboddé, at the base of the steep ascent, was fifteen miles in length. The crest of the pass was 7000 feet in altitude, from which we descended 800 feet to the Newera Ellia plain.

The elephant waggons having arrived at Ramboddé from Colombo, about 100 miles distant, commenced the heavy uphill journey. The rain was unceasing, the roads were soft, and the heavily-laden waggons sunk deeply in the ruts ; but the elephants were mighty beasts, and laying their weight against the work they slowly dragged the vehicles up the yielding and narrow way. The abrupt zigzags bothered the long waggons and their still longer teams. The bridges over dangerous chasms entailed the necessity of unloading the heavier carts, and caused great delay. Day after day passed away ; but although the ascent was slow, the waggons still moved upwards, and the region of everlasting mist (at that season) was reached. Dense forests clothed the mountain sides ; the roar of waterfalls resounded in the depths of black ravines ; tangled bamboo-grass crept upwards from the wet soil into the lower branches of the moss-covered trees, and formed a green curtain impenetrable to sight.

The thermometer fell daily as the altitude increased. The elephants began to sicken ; two fine animals died. There was plenty of food, as the bamboo-grass was the natural provender, and in the carts was a good supply of paddy ; but the elephants'

intelligence was acting against them—they had reasoned, and had become despondent.

For nine or ten days they had been exposed to ceaseless wet and cold, dragging their unmanageable waggons up a road that even in dry weather was insufficient to sustain the weight. The wheels sank deep below the metal foundation, and became hopelessly imbedded. Again and again the waggons had to be emptied of their contents, and extra elephants were taken from the other carts and harnessed to the empty waggons, which were by sheer weight of animals dragged from the deep mire.

Thus the time had passed, and the elephants had evidently reasoned upon the situation, and had concluded "that there was no summit to the mountain, and no end to the steep and horrible ascent; it would be therefore useless to persevere in unavailing efforts." They determined, under these heart-breaking circumstances, to strike work; . . . and they did strike.

One morning a couple of the elephant drivers appeared at my house in Newera Ellia, and described the situation. They declared that it was absolutely impossible to induce the elephants to work; they had given it up as a bad job!

I immediately mounted my horse and rode up the pass, and then descended the road upon the other side, timing the distance by my watch. Rather under two miles from the summit I found the road completely blocked with elephant carts and waggons; the animals were grazing upon bamboo grass in the thick forest; the rain was drizzling, and a thick

mist increased the misery of the scene. I ordered four elephants to be harnessed to a cart intended for only one animal. This was quickly effected, and the drivers were soon astride the animals' necks, and prodded them with the persuasive iron hooks. Not an elephant would exert itself to draw. In vain the drivers, with relentless cruelty, drove the iron points deep into the poor brutes' necks and heads, and used every threat of their vocabulary; the only response was a kind of "marking time" on the part of the elephants, which simply moved their legs mechanically up and down, and swung their trunks to and fro; but none would pull or exert the slightest power, neither did they move forward a single inch!

I never saw such an instance of passive and determined obstinacy; the case was hopeless.

An idea struck me. I ordered the drivers to detach the four elephants from the harness, and to ride them thus unfettered up the pass, following behind my horse. It appeared to me that if the elephants were heartbroken, and in despair at the apparently interminable mountain pass, it would be advisable to let them know the actual truth, by showing them that they were hardly two miles from the summit, where they would exchange their uphill labour for a descent into Newera Ellia; they should then have an extra feed, with plenty of jaggery (a coarse brown sugar), and be introduced to the companionship of our two female elephants. If they passed an agreeable night, with the best of food and warm quarters, they would possibly return on the following day to their work, and with lighter hearts would put their shoulders to

the wheel, instead of yielding to a dogged attitude of despair.

The success of this ruse was perfect. The elephants accompanied me to Newera Ellia, and were well fed and cared for. On the following day we returned to the heavy work, and I myself witnessed their start with the hitherto unyielding waggon. Not only did they exert their full powers, and drag the lumbering load straight up the fatiguing hill without the slightest hesitation, but their example, or some unaccountable communication between them, appeared to give general encouragement. I employed the most willing elephants as extras to each waggon, which they drew to the summit of the pass, and then returned to assist the others, thus completing what had been pronounced by the drivers as utterly impossible. There can be no doubt that the elephants had at once perceived the situation, and in consequence recovered their lost courage.

It is almost impossible to distinguish the exact limit of a well-trained elephant's tuition, and to draw a line between actions that are prompted by its natural sagacity and those which are due to secret instructions from its driver ; but I have frequently remarked the extreme interest which a well-educated elephant has taken in arranging piles of heavy timber, where it was necessary that each separate piece should be laid in a straight line parallel with others. I have seen an elephant thus employed exhibit an unmistakable uneasiness when a badly-shaped log refused to lie absolutely straight, and she would push it with her head and endeavour to adjust it, even

against the orders of her driver, who scolded her for such unnecessary exertions.

For my own taste, I cannot conceive more delightful companions among animals than well-trained elephants. There is a charm in the gentleness of a creature which possesses such stupendous power. In the open-air life of a tropical climate, especially if the owner of the elephant is devoted to wild sports, there is a companionship between him and his animal that can never exist where climate compels the man to the shelter of a house, and his beast to the seclusion of a stable. When shooting in India, I was very particular that the elephants should be fed in my presence, as the attendants will usually defraud the animal of its proper allowance of chupatties (flat cakes of flour). As soon as our dinner was ready, and the table was spread at sunset in a well-swept spot outside the tents, the three elephants were always marched to within six feet of our chairs, where they stood quietly in a row, waiting for the arrival of a pile of still warm cakes. As each pile, weighing about sixteen pounds, was laid upon the ground in front of the animal for which it had been prepared, I always offered the first two or three chupatties with my own hands ; after which the drivers of the elephants sat upon the ground by their sides, and fed them in the ordinary manner.

I always had cakes arranged at night to be ready for the early morning, and it was amusing to observe the determination of the elephants to walk straight up to me when they were saddled before sunrise, and

stand with their mouths open for the expected chupattee. I am afraid I sometimes spoiled them, as I entertained them with a large basket of sweet melons whenever they could be procured ; even Moolah Bukh's hard heart was softened by such attentions, and he became much attached to me, although he was considered to be somewhat uncertain in temper, and one of his attendants was armed with an exceedingly long spear as a necessary precaution.

Upon one occasion upon a jungle trip we arrived and camped beneath a magnificent grove of mangotrees, within a short distance of a large lake abounding with wild ducks and other water-fowl. In the absence of a boat it was impossible to approach the ducks, as they were beyond the fringe of rushes, which grew in four or five feet depth of water, occupying about sixty yards from the shore to the deeper portion of the lake. I decided to ride an elephant into the reedy barrier, and to convert my steed into a battery, while another elephant should be employed in wading around the margin of the jheel to disturb the ducks, so that their flight should bring them within shot of my island-like station. This was a very successful move, and I killed a considerable number, many of which fell in exceedingly deep water beyond the weeds. Upon the arrival of the elephant that had been employed as a beater, it was decided that she should now act as retriever, and collect the numerous ducks that were lying dead, scattered in various directions upon the surface, some among the tangled aquatic vegetation.

The elephant swims deep, with only a small por-

tion of the head above water ; but as the long flexible trunk can be protruded above the surface, the animal can breath without inconvenience, although the entire head may at times be submerged. In hot weather the elephant in its wild state is passionately fond of bathing, and rolling in any pool sufficiently deep to refresh its carcass. When domesticated, it is invariably taken to its daily bath, where it is cleaned and rubbed with a piece of brick, or some soft species of stone, from head to tail, to keep the skin in a healthy condition. On the present occasion, during the hottest season in India, the elephant employed as a retriever took a peculiar pleasure in aquatic feats, and instead of swimming directly towards its game, it amused itself by diving so deep below the surface that no portion could be seen, except the extreme tip of its trunk ; even that occasionally disappeared, and the mahout astride of its neck had only his head and shoulders above the water. Having indulged in this practical joke, to the delight of itself and its well-dipped conductor, the elephant arrived at the surface, and deliberately swam towards each duck, which it reached with its trunk and handed to the mahout. There were ten or twelve of these birds to retrieve, many of which were separated by long intervals ; in every case the elephant was specially directed by its driver, but it nevertheless appeared to take a peculiar interest in its performance after the first three or four experiments.

The great drawback to the general employment of elephants is the cost of their food, which is equal in India to about six shillings a day, including the

wages of their attendants. The digestion of the elephant is extremely rapid, and in its wild state it is almost continually feeding ; therefore the stomach, which is of immense capacity, is never empty. Although the animal in its natural state is supposed to live to the age of about one hundred and thirty years, or even beyond this term, there is great mortality among the tame elephants belonging to both the Government and private owners throughout India. This is probably due to the fact of an artificial existence, including food at unnatural hours, in addition to the labour which the animal is obliged to perform at all hours of sunshine, although in its wild state its habits are nocturnal. The dark colour of the skin would absorb the sun's rays, unless protected by the shade of forests ; therefore the work of a tame elephant is generally opposed to its natural tendencies, and it quickly exhibits uneasiness and discomfort when heated during a sunny march. When drinking, it fills the trunk, which is then inserted into the mouth to inject the volume of water into the stomach. In this manner a large amount is stored, and when the animal is heated upon a journey it sucks up a supply from this internal reservoir and repeatedly syringes its flanks by emitting a jet from the trunk, to the extreme discomfort of the riders, who receive their share of an unwelcome douche.

We usually travelled upon a delightful elephant that belonged to the Indian Government. This active and easy-paced animal was remarkably good-tempered and sociable, until the sun became too powerful in the morning march ; she would then

evince her displeasure by squirting water and spray continually against her flanks in a fretful manner, and would give chase to any bullock or other animal that might be overtaken on the road. Her driver had to keep on the alert upon such occasions, lest she should strike a person with her trunk when passing by, not in actual malice, but simply from a nervous irritation caused by extreme heat.

During the Abyssinian expedition against King Theodorus, forty elephants were forwarded from India to assist in the operations. The smallest load carried by a single elephant during that campaign was thirteen hundredweight, and one very powerful animal marched with eighteen hundredweight. The fact of such creatures being rendered serviceable to our army by education produced a great sensation among the natives, and to this day their performances are remembered as a wonderful instance of British superiority.

As a rule, thirteen hundredweight is a sufficient load for an elephant, and great care should be taken in the arrangement of the saddle to avoid the cruelty and damage inflicted by a sore back.

The shortening of the tusks by sawing off the tapered ends is a great disfigurement to tame elephants, which is rendered necessary by the unnatural position to which they are trained in kneeling down. Any person who has had experience of domestic elephants must have observed that such a position is extremely disagreeable, and that a considerable strain is thrown upon the muscles when an attitude is enforced contrary to the usual habits of so gigantic an

animal. If the tusks were long, it would be impossible for an elephant to remain kneeling, as they would act as forks upon the ground, which would prevent the head from assuming the necessary horizontal position.

The constant slaughter of elephants throughout Africa must eventually diminish the amount of ivory, which is even now becoming so expensive that in a few more years we shall find a substitute in general use. The substance known as "celluloid," invented in America by a preparation of compressed gun-cotton, is already a step in the right direction, although the demand for the original material will never diminish, and must ultimately ensure the destruction of an animal that should be preserved for a more useful purpose.

The Ceylon elephant seldom possesses tusks, therefore it should be exempt from all inducements to destroy. It is now protected by the local government, although I can remember the day when a reward was offered for its destruction, owing to the damage which large herds inflicted upon the natives' crops and watercourses.

The Indian male elephants have generally finely-tapered tusks; but they are very inferior in length and massiveness to those of Africa, where the average of a bull elephant's full-grown tusks would be about one hundred and twenty pounds. I once saw a single tusk that weighed one hundred and seventy-two pounds. I have seen several pairs that weighed a little above three hundred, and a monster tusk was brought to England in 1873 which weighed *one*

hundred and eighty-eight pounds ; the latter would represent a pair equal to the great weight of *three hundred and seventy-six* pounds, which would have been worth, in London, the same number of pounds sterling. Ivory increases in value in proportion to the thickness of the tusk and the fineness of the texture. That which arrives from Angola is exceedingly dense, and has a slight pinkish tint ; it is also free from the strongly-mottled appearance that may be observed in many qualities.

The tusks of a young elephant are hollow at the base ; and although this cavity continues to the age of thirty or forty years filled with a peculiar gelatinous substance of considerable solidity, which gradually secretes an ivory-forming deposit within the tusk, the hollow becomes almost completely filled in an old elephant, and the tooth, thus rendered solid for twenty-four inches of the original cavity, enhances the value in proportion to the increased weight.

The natives of Ceylon refuse the flesh of the elephant, as do mostly those of India. I have frequently eaten it in Africa, where it is generally esteemed ; and although it is inferior to beef or mutton, I have considered it too good to waste. The fat, when boiled down, is useful for cooking purposes, or for making soap, and the foot is excellent if baked for a sufficient time in a slow oven. This is a long operation, as the result will not be satisfactory under thirty-six hours, which necessitates the occupation of the camp for a lengthened period.

The best oven for this purpose is a hole in the ground, which should be dug with perpendicular sides

like a well, about two and a half feet in diameter, and nearly four feet deep. The sides should be well smeared or plastered with tempered clay or mud, rubbed perfectly smooth and allowed to dry. In a hot climate a couple of hours will effect this. A fire should now be lighted at the bottom, and this should be gradually fed until it blazes high above the surface, fresh fuel being constantly added for some hours in substantial logs until the hole shall have become half filled with glowing embers.

The elephant's foot should be well washed, and then laid with the sole upon the embers while still wet. The mouth of the hole should then be closed in the following manner, as success will depend upon its being effectually stopped.

Some strong bars of green wood must be laid across close together; upon these, cross-ways, some smaller green-wood sticks should be arranged. This lid should be covered with a few armfuls of wetted green grass, or leaves (should grass be absent), and the mass should be well pressed together. Wetted earth, tempered into the consistency of clay, should be well beaten upon the grass until it becomes thick and solid, after which earth must be shovelled upon the mound and stamped firmly down until it resembles an ordinary grave in a churchyard. If this is carefully watered and well beaten by a spade it will form a covering that will prevent the escape of heat, and after thirty-six hours, when opened, the oven will be found thoroughly hot, while the elephant's foot will be deliciously cooked. The horny sole will detach like a shoe from a human foot, exposing a

delicate white surface like a silk stocking. This is thoroughly good eating when hot ; and with oil and vinegar when cold ; it is far better than the well-known Oxford brawn.

I am almost distressed now when I look back to the great number of elephants that I have shot ; although I find comfort in the fact that in Ceylon their destruction was encouraged by the Government, while in Africa they were never captured for domestic training, but were simply victimised for their fatal gift of ivory. At the same time that we admire this wonderful animal for its sagacity and for its useful companionship to man, we must not ignore the dangerous characters of some elephants, which are well described as "rogues." It has been advanced by ultra-adorers of the elephant's good qualities that such "rogues" are simply under the periodical excitement already described as "must ;" but this opinion is entirely erroneous, as I have proved by many years' experience. I have known elephants who had been celebrated rogues for so great a length of time that they had haunted a neighbourhood throughout a generation. Native headmen have described to me the characters of such dangerous exceptions, which had been a scourge to the country in the days of their fathers ; and long lists of accusations were brought against these delinquents, many of which I killed after an exciting encounter, with sometimes a hairbreadth escape.

Such rogues were invariably bulls of a naturally sour and vicious temperament, which had at some time successfully chased and killed an unfortunate

villager, and from that success, taking fresh courage, had repeated their attacks until the habit of homicide became confirmed. The destruction of such exceptional specimens is a positive duty ; and although at the present time the wild elephants of Ceylon are protected by law from the indiscriminate attacks that were in my early days considered to be attractive, there are certain well-known rogues whose depredations are occasionally reported to the authorities, and they are forthwith proscribed and a reward offered for their tails.

Such infuriated monsters have been known to sustain a regular pitched battle with a couple of experienced shots before they have succumbed to the last fatal bullet. I have myself seen them charge home through the smoke of the heavy rifle, whose ball has failed to stop their onset, with a desperate courage that was regardless of all danger, although, in a general description of the elephant, it would be rightly termed "naturally a timid animal." The truth is, that no general rule will apply to individuals, and we find vicious exceptions among elephants in precisely the same manner that horses, dogs, bulls, and even men and women, exhibit an evil tendency which sometimes distinguishes them from the bulk of their fellow-creatures.

As exceptions may be sometimes unfavourable, in like manner we observe the same favourable difference in the courage of various elephants that might be expected among ourselves. Some animals are naturally calm, with a healthy nervous structure which induces physical courage. These can be trained

for tiger-shooting, which is exceedingly trying to the ordinary elephant, as it is under no circumstances permitted to attack the tiger, but is taught to withstand passively the bounding charge of its adversary, and to trust to the well-aimed rifle from the howdah for its defence.

Although Moolah Bukh was an experienced hunting elephant, and would advance straight up to a tiger without the slightest hesitation or fear, he did not exactly enjoy the situation when the assailant sprang upon his trunk. I well remember an occasion when a tiger had killed one of my beaters, and so severely mauled two others that their lives were despaired of for about a week, a native arrived at the door of my tent at about 4 P.M. in considerable excitement, declaring that "a tiger had just killed one of his best cows," and begging me to immediately start in its pursuit. As the accident had happened about two miles from camp, and some delay took place in preparing the elephants, it was quite five o'clock by the time we arrived at the spot to which we had been guided by the owner of the defunct cow. I would not employ beaters, as the villagers were much distressed at the fatal casualty of a few days previous, and I did not wish to risk their lives by any fresh adventure with such dangerous animals; I therefore determined to trust entirely to my elephant, Moolah Bukh, without further assistance.

I was accompanied by my friend Mr. Berry, who was Deputy-Assistant Commissioner of the Province.

There was no delay, and the elephants being

quickly saddled, we followed the guide towards the spot where the cow was reported to have been killed. The distance was no greater than had been described, and after a succession of jungles and glades, much broken by deep watercourses or nullahs, we arrived at the main artery of the neighbourhood in the shape of a long and deep ravine, which during the rains received the drainage of numerous smaller nullahs from the higher slopes. Water was said to exist in one or two of the lower bends of this gorge, where it was probable that the tiger would have dragged its prey. Both banks of this ravine were clear and open grass-land ; at that hot season it was parched, and closely eaten by the native cattle.

As we approached this gorge I observed several vultures soaring above a jungle upon rising ground on the right hand, which covered the face of a low rounded hill, and from which several nullahs or dry watercourses descended towards the main ravine. Other vultures were soon visible, being perched upon the taller trees within the jungle, above which their hungry and sharp-eyed friends were hovering. . . . There could be no doubt that the carcass had been dragged up the hill into the thick covert, instead of being conveyed to the bottom of the large ravine, as we should have expected.

In a few minutes the native guide led us to the exact spot where the tiger had seized his cow. There could be no doubt of this, as the short dusty grass was covered with blood, and the ground showed unmistakable traces where the heavy body had been dragged along the surface for about fifty yards, until

it had disappeared within the jungle. It was exceedingly probable that the tiger might be devouring its victim at that moment, as the vultures were afraid to descend upon the spot.

Following cautiously upon the track, Moolah Bukh, who appeared to scent the tiger, led the way and forced a path through the thorny and tangled bushes until we arrived directly beneath the tree upon which the vultures had been seated. They flew off upon our approach. In a few moments we descried some white object beneath the dark shade of a dense mass of jungle; this proved to be the remains of the white cow, a considerable portion of which had been devoured. . . . It was already dusk, and there was but little chance of discovering the tiger before night; we therefore considered that it would be advisable to return to camp instead of uselessly disturbing the country, and to prepare for a vigorous search upon the following morning.

It was just dark when we returned from this reconnoissance. The tiger that I had killed on the previous day had been skinned, and the hide was extended beneath a grove of mango trees stretched by pegs upon the ground, and covered with wood-ashes to absorb the fat.

Although there were no old scars visible upon the skin, we had discovered two spherical bullets of hammered iron imbedded in the muscles of the shoulder, which must have been fired from the match-lock of some native hunter many years ago, and had failed to penetrate to a sufficient depth.

The tents were pitched beneath a tope or grove

of splendid mangoes upon the margin of a deep and sluggish stream which flowed between steep and muddy banks. I did not admire this position, which appeared to be a perfect fever nest, as it formed the narrow bottom of a small glen directly beneath the steep hill upon which the native village rested. Although there would be no risk during the daylight, I determined not to sleep in so dangerous a spot, and accordingly our camp-beds were carried to about eighty feet higher elevation, upon the bare hillside. The tent-pitchers were not to blame for so unfortunate a selection, as it was absolutely necessary to secure a shade, and no other large trees existed in the neighbourhood.

Mr. Berry's Madras servant was an indefatigable fellow ; and before I retired at night he begged me to give him a fishing-line and a few hooks, as he declared that the stream, though unprepossessing in appearance, swarmed with excellent fish, some of which he would assuredly catch for to-morrow's breakfast.

Before sunrise upon the following morning the elephants were saddled, and as I descended from the hill to the camp below I was met by Mr. Berry's servant, who, in great glee, announced the success of his night's fishing: "I catch two beautiful mock turtles, sar! Master, look here and see! . . . I cut off both heads, because he too much swaller hooks!"

The "mock turtles" were two tortoises that had taken the baits intended for other fish, and they had been decapitated, as the hooks were too deeply fixed

in the throat to allow extraction by the usual means. We always remembered the stream as "Mock Turtle River." It was a painful reminiscence to Mr. Berry, who, by sleeping in the camp that night, imbibed the germs of a fever which necessitated a temporary change of air to England.

I had arranged that Lady Baker should move the camp to a distance of about eight miles, where she should await our arrival, as the locality occupied by the tiger was directly upon the route. The tent-pitchers with the spare tents had been sent on before daybreak, and she was to follow them as soon as possible, while Mr. Berry and myself were to proceed in search of the tiger. We hoped to join her at the new camp, bearing the body as a trophy.

The natives had so far recovered from their panic that a number of men volunteered to join as beaters; but I restricted the party to twenty-five, exclusive of two or three policemen, who were our constant attendants.

Upon our arrival at the scene of the preceding evening, the vultures were quickly discerned as landmarks, perched upon the leafless boughs of the tallest trees above the thorny jungle in which the body of the cow had been discovered. I would not allow the beaters to drive the covert in the usual manner, but determined to accompany them with the two elephants, thus Mr. Berry rode a female, while I took my place along the line mounted upon Moolah Bukh. The beaters would in this manner be immediately supported in case of an unexpected attack, while a few men were left outside the jungle securely perched

upon the boughs of trees, to give an alarm should the tiger break covert in their direction.

Upon arrival at the spot where the body of the cow had been found upon the previous evening, we discovered that it had been dragged away, and upon following cautiously along the track, we at length came upon the head, which had been gnawed off at the neck, but the remainder had disappeared, neither was there any trace upon the ground beyond, which would have been plainly visible had the carcase been pulled along the surface.

We came to the conclusion that the tiger must have eaten a large portion of the animal, and having gnawed off the head, it had been able to carry the lighter burthen in its jaws without the necessity of dragging. It had probably retired with this surplus flesh to some deep and secluded nullah, within easy distance of the water, which was said to exist in a bend of the large ravine.

It was therefore decided that we should first discover the water, where we should assuredly find the fresh tracks of the tiger if it had drunk that morning, in which case it might be assumed that it was concealed somewhere in the vicinity.

Having carefully searched the jungle (which represented about ten acres) without success, we descended the broad glade until we reached the lower portion of the large ravine. This was about forty feet deep and twenty yards across, the banks being precipitous and thickly covered with leafless bushes. Following the downward course of this important nullah, we at length arrived at a sudden bend, where

a few large trees growing upon either bank denoted the presence of water in the dark gorge beneath. The elephants marched along the extreme edge of the high bank, which thus enabled us to look over the fringe of bush, and we shortly discovered a small pool of water under the shade of a few evergreens, where a low bank of yellow sand formed a clean margin that would at once exhibit the footprints of any animals that had descended to drink.

Dismounting from the elephants, we crept down the jungle-covered bank, and immediately perceived not only the fresh tracks of a tiger which must have drunk that morning, but also numerous older traces which proved this to be a drinking-place of ordinary resort. There were distinct marks of two tigers, the difference in the size of the pugs (paws) being such as to prove that a male and female had visited the spot. It was quite possible that the larger tracks, which evidently belonged to the male and were several days old, might have been those of the tiger that I had killed a few days previous, within a distance of two and three-quarter miles. In that case the tigress must have killed the cow, as the fresh pugs were the same as those which had daily visited the drinking-place.

Under these circumstances there could be little doubt that the tigress must be concealed either in the large ravine, or in one of the numerous nullahs which were its affluents.

I proposed that Mr. Berry should occupy a station at the extreme end of this large ravine at the junction of the first nullah, while I should follow

up the bank, with the beaters upon either side. It would be probable that the tigress, upon hearing our approach, would quit her lair and would steal quietly along the bottom towards the various nullahs that would offer secure retreats, in which case Mr. Berry would obtain a certain shot. I accordingly took him upon my elephant, while I left the whole party by the drinking-place to await my return.

About half a mile above this spot, at the junction of the first nullah, we observed a large tree which completely overhung the bank ; this was exactly the position we required, and Mr. Berry, being young and active, clambered into the branches with an agility that I much admired. I felt almost certain that he would obtain the shot, and wishing him "good luck," I returned upon my elephant to the spot where I had left our party.

I did not wish the men to ascend directly within the course of the ravine, but I ordered them to divide upon either side above the steep banks, and to pelt the bushes with dry clods of earth in the absence of stones. A very plucky policeman, in spite of my orders, insisted upon marching along the bottom, using a long stick to beat the bushes as though he expected only ordinary hares or jungle-fowl.

As we thus advanced, and I rode Moolah Bukh along the edge of the ravine towards the tree where Mr. Berry was already stationed, it would have been impossible for the tigress to have moved without being intercepted by a shot, and I momentarily expected to hear the report of my friend's rifle.

To my astonishment nothing moved ; there was

not a living creature within this snug retreat, and we at length arrived at Mr. Berry's tree, having drawn a blank. This was a great disappointment, and we began to fear that the cunning tigress might have absconded beyond our reach.

There was nothing else to do but to search every separate nullah which drained into the main ravine. I therefore suggested that my servant should remain with all the beaters upon a grassy knoll about two hundred yards distant, that commanded a view of the country, while Mr. Berry should occupy his place in my howdah upon Moolah Bukh. We would then devote ourselves to the examination of every nullah without risking the men, as the elephant, by marching along the margin, would enable us to overlook the bottom of each ravine—these dry nullahs being only sparsely fringed with leafless bushes, and therefore quite transparent.

It was curious to observe the peculiar effect of heavy rains in thus scoring to a depth of fifteen to twenty feet the gentle slope of grass-land, until it resembled the numerous sources of a river marked upon a map. The bottoms of all these watercourses contained a thick bed of dry leaves which had fallen from the trees and bushes now naked upon the margin. The extreme heat and fiery winds of this season, which had denuded most species of vegetation of their foliage, had rendered the leaves so crisp and brittle that nothing could move upon the surface without producing an extraordinary noise. It would therefore be impossible for a tiger to steal away along the bottom of the ravines without our knowledge.

. . . Moolah Bukh being a trustworthy elephant, and thoroughly acquainted with his work, was ready for the search, and slowly but surely marched along the extreme edge of the precipitous bank, which threatened to crumble beneath his weight. Elephants are exceedingly clever in testing the strength of the substance upon which they tread ; although to my eyes it appeared most dangerous, the animal did not exhibit the slightest hesitation, but continued to step close to the sharp margin of the nullah in perfect confidence of its strength.

Looking down from the howdah as we thus progressed, we could see every object within the water-course beneath ; even had a cat been present it could not have remained unobserved, there was accordingly no question of the discovery of the tigress should she be lying within the channel of the nullah.

In this manner we examined one ravine, then another, by working up the first and down the second, until at least two hours had been expended without coming upon a trace of the hoped-for game. There were many branch ravines and important clefts, all of which might serve to conceal a tiger, but it would have been natural to expect the animal in the cooler shade of the principal artery of the neighbourhood near the water, and as we had beaten that in vain, it was impossible to speculate upon any particular locality.

Moolah Bukh's mahout was a man of about fifty, and was equally calm as the sagacious animal which he had ridden for many years ; . . . it was asserted that he ate opium, which would account for his pecu-

liar stolidity; but although he never smiled or appeared to enjoy excitement, he was always wide-awake when the occasion required coolness with quick determination. Such a combination in the characters of Moolah Bukh and his mahout assured success, and I felt that although we had hitherto failed to discover our game, it was simply a question of patience and perseverance.

We had at length severely tried these virtues, and the country appeared to be absolutely devoid of wild animals; . . . nothing moved, although we had so carefully examined a large area of broken ground that was most favourable in appearance. The sun-heat was fearfully oppressive. At length, as we were slowly passing along the margin of a nullah almost beginning to despair, we were suddenly aroused by an extraordinary noise in the bottom of the ravine, as though a gust of strong wind had whirled through the mass of dry leaves that bedded the deep water-course. The elephant halted, and in a few seconds (the noise increasing meanwhile) a tigress bounded up the bank about fifteen yards in advance upon our side of the ravine, and with a succession of short but savage roars she charged straight towards Moolah Bukh without the slightest hesitation.

The pace was so great that she appeared to be close to the elephant's tusks in an instant. Moolah Bukh had instinctively assumed an attitude of self-defence, throwing his trunk high in air, and swinging his huge head round with such violence that it was impossible to use the rifle.

"Steady him!" I shouted to the mahout, and at

the same moment the tigress disappeared in the deep nullah close to our right, apparently as though assisted by the swing of Moolah Bukh's tusks.

With excellent nerve the elephant immediately recovered his steadiness, and answering to the driver's hook, turned sharp to the right, with the trunk almost overhanging the ravine into which the tigress had descended. In another moment she was upon the other side, and could be seen bounding along upon the open glade, her long tail whisking in the air as she galloped at full speed up a slight incline to reach the somewhat distant jungle.

Although she could be plainly seen, and offered a beautiful sight from the howdah, it was impossible to take a shot, as a high bush was exactly before us, which, although leafless, would certainly have deflected a rifle bullet. . . . The mahout moved the elephant to the right ; at the same instant I heard the crack of Mr. Berry's rifle close behind my ear, and I saw the dust fly from the ground near the hind legs of the bounding tigress. I had been waiting for a clear shot ; in another moment I fired, and the immediate result was an extraordinary somersault, as the tigress, being at full speed, turned completely over, and lay stretched in a perfectly straight line, the head being towards us, while the tail was extended along the slight incline in the direction that she was taking when the shot was fired. The effect of this sudden paralysis when the animal was in full flight, at a distance of more than eighty yards, was very grand, as death was so instantaneous that the tail never moved, but remained outstretched, as though it had been

dragged to its extreme length in an exact line with the head.

Moolah Bukh was now conducted to a spot where the nullah could be crossed, and we marched him up to the dead tigress. The bullet had struck the back of the neck, and, having completely pulped the first two vertebræ, had entered the brain; but having divided into two pieces upon contact with the hard bone, it had smashed the skull, and a sharp point of lead was protruding from the right eye. Mr. Berry had not missed his shot, and the puff of dust I had observed from the ground must have been occasioned either by the ricochet or by the instinctive muscular action of the hind foot as the bullet struck the hind-quarters within two inches of the root of the tail. Unfortunately, he was shooting with a bullet that was exceedingly hollow, and so light that it had no power of penetration, but upon the hard muscles of a tiger it split into innumerable minute fragments, or rather films of lead, which we subsequently washed out of the flesh in delicate flakes within an inch and a half of the surface.

Our people had had a beautiful view of the tigress when in full flight, and having witnessed the fatal shot, they rushed towards the scene where the common enemy lay dead. Long poles were cut, and the body of the tigress was securely lashed to cross-pieces so arranged that sixteen men could carry her, four at each extremity of the cross-poles.

In this manner we marched along the route towards our new camp, to which Lady Baker had preceded us—Moolah Bukh following close behind

the tigress, with a peculiar air of self-confidence and satisfaction at his triumphant position as chief mourner in the funereal procession of his late antagonist.

After some miles we emerged upon a wide and level plain, where we could distinguish our white tents in the far distance beneath some mighty mango-trees. As we neared these objects we perceived that our approach had been observed, and after some minutes I could plainly see the people running to the principal tent, from which my wife emerged, and there could be no doubt of their anxiety in descrying a party conveying some heavy body upon their shoulders. After the fatal accident a few days previous, they would be naturally anxious for our safe return.

A few minutes more put their fears to rest, as they distinguished the form of the tigress supported upon the poles; and upon our arrival a crowd of villagers rushed forward to relieve our men from their heavy load.

This tigress had exhibited an unprovoked ferocity in attacking the elephant before she had been dislodged by beaters. When, after a *post-mortem* inquiry, I had descended into the nullah to make an examination of the locality, I discovered a comfortable spot where she had been asleep upon the yielding bed of dry leaves, which were crushed into a small hollow by the weight of her heavy body. She had probably been suddenly awakened, either by some noise or by the scent of the elephant upon our approach, and she had at once attacked. Such an

onset would assuredly have been fatal to any unarmed native who might have been unsuspecting of danger when in search of missing cattle, or in any other of his ordinary pursuits.

The fact of the tigress having selected a distant and unimportant nullah devoid of covert, instead of harbouring within the principal ravine that provided shade and water, proved the necessity, in all cases, of thoroughly hunting up the ground instead of abandoning the search, as is frequently the case after the more likely spots have been drawn blank.

Many elephants have an intense fear of tigers; and such animals would be most dangerous to the rider, as a sudden panic might induce them to rush headlong through a forest regardless of the howdah, that would be shattered against the intervening branches. When elephants evince this dislike and timidity they can seldom be trained successfully, and no person should hazard the risk of encountering a tiger upon such a nervous animal.

I once recollect a fine female that was said to be only "somewhat uncertain," as a tiger had, upon a particular occasion, clawed her severely about the trunk. I rode this elephant one day, when fortunately we did not find the tiger. Upon the next occasion she was ridden by a friend of mine; and a fine male tiger, having been driven from some high grass upon a rugged hill, marched leisurely over the large basalt rocks exactly in front of the position where three elephants were posted about fifty yards apart with their respective riders. A sudden panic seized upon the large female (to which I have alluded)

when she perceived the tiger, and heard its low growls as it passed across the rocks within twenty yards of the station which she occupied. She started off, and bolted in the opposite direction ; the panic affected the remaining elephants, and they also ran *pêle-mêle*. It was as much as the riders could do to keep their seats by holding tight to their howdahs, and the tiger escaped without a shot being fired.

I have already observed that an elephant is exceedingly clever in determining whether the ground, or any structure, will support its weight. I have seen an elephant refuse to pass over a wooden bridge, and in preference it clambered down and then ascended the steep side of the ravine. Although in a wild state the elephant will wade through mud that will be shoulder-deep, in such cases the animal is aware of a firm bottom beneath. I have seen them enter the lakes or tanks in Ceylon when, during the dry season, the water has receded for some hundred yards and left a treacherous surface of half solid mud. There can be no doubt that the elephants which I have seen issue from the forest, and without hesitation challenge the deep morass, have frequently experienced the same locality, and have known that the swamp was not bottomless, otherwise they would hardly have ventured.

I remember once in India, at a spot where a small stream entered the Nerbudda river, I wished the elephant to cross at the junction of the tributary. This was a clever female, which would clamber up and down and along the precipitous hillsides in an astonishing manner ; but we could not induce her to

cross the mouth of this little stream, although the banks were only a foot above the water, and the ground was level upon both sides. At length the mahout became angry, and prodded her severely in the back of the head with his iron driving-hook ; at the same time he shouted certain epithets far from complimentary. The elephant, thus forced, knelt down upon the edge of the firm bank, and reaching with her trunk far beneath the water brought to the surface in her curled proboscis a mass of stinking black mud, which had evidently been deposited by the sluggish stream. There could not have been a more forcible appeal to the driver ; it clearly exhibited the danger which the sagacious animal had feared, and which it now proved to exist. Notwithstanding this tacit protest on the part of the elephant, the driver's threats prevailed, and she was forced to venture upon the doubtful crossing.

I never saw any poor creature in a greater dilemma, and at one time I feared she must be suffocated. Several times she disappeared altogether beneath the water, the driver had to swim to shore, while the struggling animal exerted not only strength but the highest intelligence to extricate herself from the perilous position. She dived her head below the surface in order to reach the greatest depth with her useful trunk ; with this she released her fore-legs from the adhesive mud which threatened to suck her down. Nearly a quarter of an hour elapsed, during which she exerted herself with all her might, sometimes turning round and round, and at all times using her trunk as an implement to clear away the mud,

and thus to form a passage. By the time that she happily effected her escape, the mouth of the stream was converted into a thick black soup. Fortunately the water was at least six feet deep, which relieved her weight, otherwise she must have been smothered.

Books have recorded so many stories of elephants that the reputation of the animal has been raised to a pitch which savours of exaggeration. The few anecdotes which I have given are nothing beyond the ordinary experiences of those who are in any manner associated with the training or management of elephants, and the fact declared by the professional authority, Mr. Sanderson, that "every action of the animal is the result of a special order conveyed by the mahout," somewhat detracts from extraordinary performances which were by many accepted as spontaneous exertions of almost human reason. Still, the important fact remains that the elephant, above all other creatures, is capable not only of comprehending the commands of its trainer, but of executing his orders, with an obedience and docility, coupled with a superior intelligence, that raise it to the highest rank in the animal creation, and confer upon it the honourable title of "The useful companion of man."



CONCLUSION.

I CAN hardly say "good-bye" finally to my Grandsons, to whom the foregoing stories have been dedicated. There are many experiences which have accumulated during a life of adventure that might be interesting to those whose lives are still before them, and there may at a future time be some temptation to produce them as a sequel to the present volume.

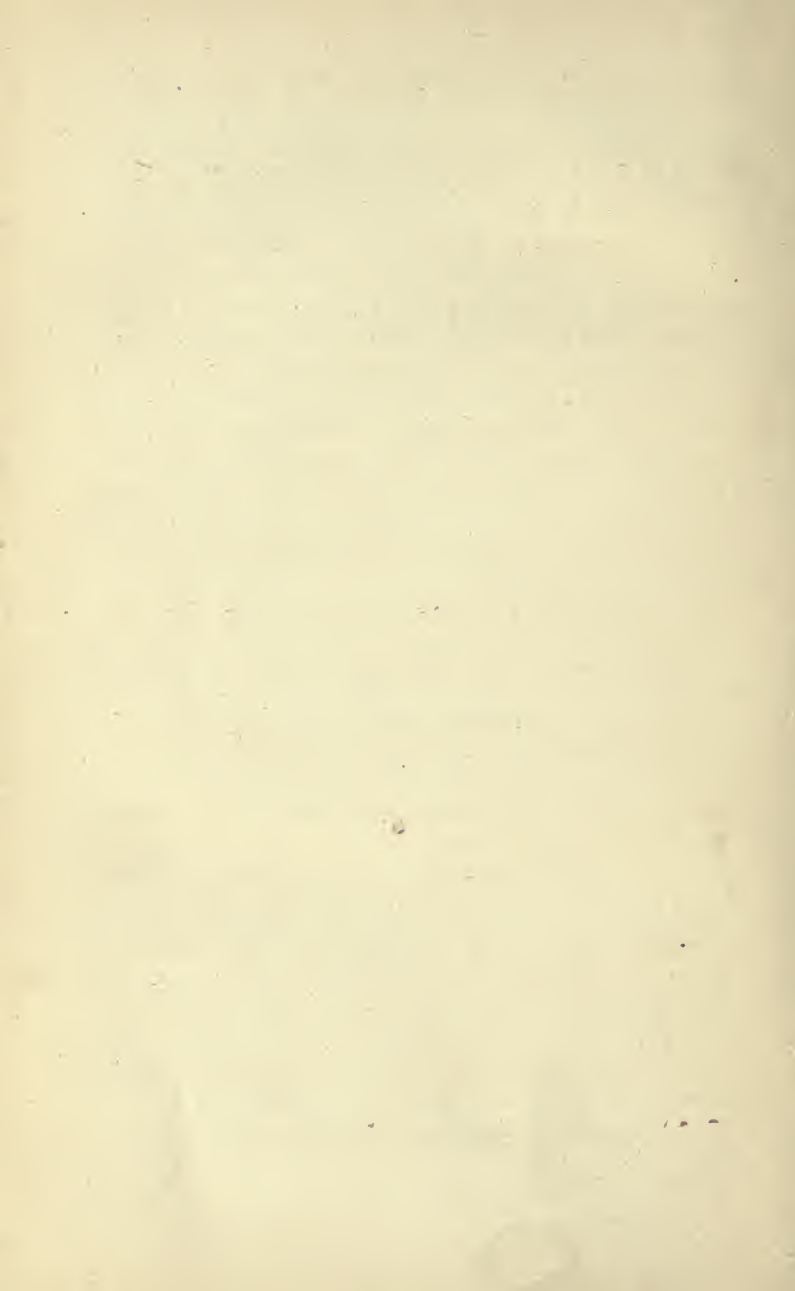
If the title of this book had not restricted my stories to actual facts, I might have increased the interest by a slight addition of romance; but every scene described has been a reality, although some few of the incidents have been enacted by myself, and introduced in the dramatic guise of an assumed character. The sporting anecdotes are not inventions, but actually took place as they have been related; they may accordingly be accepted as examples and guides to similar adventures that may be achieved at some future day by my youthful readers.

Young people will observe that the characters which attract their sympathy are not the blustering heroes of a melodramatic stage, but those combinations of honour, courage, and gentleness which form the much-respected word in English, "*gentleman*"—

a free-born title that should stimulate the ambition of both rich and poor, and may be earned by all.

In addressing these "True Tales to My Grandsons" there can be no limit of age. Grandsons may be either old or young; I have therefore arranged the few stories described for any age—excepting only that wintry and hopeless stage of human existence known as "second childhood."

THE END.



SIR SAMUEL W. BAKER'S WORKS.

CAST UP BY THE SEA; or, the Adventures of Ned Grey. A Book for Boys. With Illustrations. New Edition. Crown 8vo. 6s.

"An admirable tale of adventure, of marvellous incidents, wild exploits, and terrible *dénouements*."—*Daily News*.

ISMAÏLIA. A Narrative of the Expedition to Central Africa for the Suppression of the Slave Trade. With Maps, Portraits, and numerous Illustrations. New Edition. Crown 8vo. 6s.

"A book which will be read with very great interest."—*Times*.

"Well written and full of remarkable adventures."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

"Adds another thrilling chapter to the history of African adventure."—*Daily News*.

"Reads more like a romance . . . incomparably more entertaining than books of African travel usually are."—*Morning Post*.

THE ALBERT N'YANZA GREAT BASIN OF THE NILE, and Exploration of the Nile Sources. New Edition. With Maps and Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 6s.

"Charmingly written; full, as might be expected, of incident, and free from that wearisome reiteration of useless facts which is the drawback to almost all books of African travel."—*Spectator*.

THE NILE TRIBUTARIES OF ABYSSINIA, and the Sword Hunters of the Hamran Arabs. With Maps and Illustrations. New Edition. Crown 8vo. 6s.

CYPRUS AS I SAW IT IN 1879. With Frontispiece. 8vo. 12s. 6d.

"From the first page to the last the reader is engrossed in the story, the interest of which never for a moment flags."—*Morning Post*.

"Full of interest for the general reader, and at the same time a most valuable and timely contribution to our political knowledge."—*Spectator*.

MACMILLAN AND CO., LONDON.

NATURAL HISTORY AND TRAVELS.

Gilbert White's Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne. New Edition. Edited, with Notes and Memoir, by FRANK BUCKLAND. Illustrated by Professor DELAMOTTE. Crown 8vo. 6s.

Waterton's Wanderings in South America and the North-West of the United States. By CHARLES WATERTON. Edited by the Rev. J. G. WOOD. With 100 Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 6s.

By LORD GEORGE CAMPBELL.

Log-Letters from the "Challenger." Fifth and Cheaper Edition, revised. Crown 8vo. 6s.

By SIR CHARLES W. DILKE, M.P.

Greater Britain. A Record of Travel in English-Speaking Countries during 1866-67. (America, Australia, India.) Sixth and Cheaper Edition. Crown 8vo. 6s.

By CHARLES KINGSLEY.

At Last. A Christmas in the West Indies. With numerous Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 6s.

By W. G. PALGRAVE.

A Narrative of a Year's Journey through Central and Eastern Arabia, 1862-63. With Map, Plans, and Portrait of Author, engraved on steel by JEENS. Crown 8vo. 6s.

By BARON A. E. VON NORDENSKIÖLD.

The Voyage of the Vega, round Asia and Europe. Translated by ALEXANDER LESLIE. Popular Edition. With Portraits, Maps, and Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 6s.

By BARON HÜBNER.

A Ramble round the World, 1871. By M. le Baron de HÜBNER, formerly Ambassador and Minister. Translated by Lady HERBERT. New and Cheaper Edition. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 6s.

By A. B. MITFORD.

Tales of Old Japan. With Illustrations drawn and cut on Wood by Japanese Artists. New Edition. Crown 8vo. 6s.

By J. R. CAMPBELL, Author of "Frost and Fire."

My Circular Notes. Extracts from Journals; Letters sent Home; Geological and other Notes, written while travelling Westwards Round the World, 1875. Crown 8vo. 6s.

By HENRY KINGSLEY.

Tales of Old Travel. Re-narrated. With eight full-page Illustrations by HUARD. Fifth Edition. Crown 8vo. 5s.

MACMILLAN AND CO., LONDON.

MACMILLAN AND CO.'S PUBLICATIONS.

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN.

NEW BOOK FOR BOYS BY WILLIAM BLACK.

Adventures in Thule. Three Stories for Boys. By WILLIAM BLACK, Author of "The Strange Adventures of a Phaeton," "Madcap Violet," &c. Crown 8vo.

MR. LEWIS CARROLL'S NEW BOOK.

Rhyme? and Reason? By LEWIS CARROLL, Author of "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," &c. With sixty-five Illustrations by ARTHUR B. FROST, and nine by HENRY HOLIDAY. Crown 8vo. 7s. [Nearly ready.]

* * This book is a reprint, with a few additions, of the comic portion of "Phantasmagoria and Other Poems," and of the "Hunting of the Snark." Mr. Frost's Pictures are new.

MRS. MOLESWORTH'S NEW BOOK.

Two Little Waifs. By Mrs. MOLESWORTH, Author of "Carrots," "Rosy," &c. With Illustrations by WALTER CRANE. Crown 8vo. 4s. 6d.

By the same Author. With Illustrations by WALTER CRANE. Globe 8vo. 4s. 6d. each.

"Carrots," just a Little Boy.

The Tapestry Room.

Grandmother Dear.

Rosy.

The Cuckoo Clock.

Tell Me a Story.

A Christmas Child.

In Crown 8vo. 4s. 6d.

Summer Stories for Boys and Girls.

Hannah Tarne. A Story for Children. With Illustrations by W. J. HENNESSY. Crown 8vo. [In November.]

Anyhow Stories—Moral and Otherwise. By Mrs. W. K. CLIFFORD. With Illustrations by DOROTHY TENNANT. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d.

"They are unique among intended tales for children, alike for their quaintness of humour, their gentle pathos, and the subtlety with which lessons moral and otherwise are conveyed to children, and perhaps to their seniors as well."—*The Spectator*.

Paladin and Saracen. Stories from ARIOSTO. By H. C. HOLLWAY-CALTHROP. With Illustrations by Mrs. ARTHUR LEMON, engraved by O. LACOUR. Crown 8vo. 6s.

"As Charles and Mary Lamb made charming reading for young people out of the plays of Shakespeare, so Mr. Hollway-Calthrop has successfully done with these tales of mediæval chivalry. The language and style are chaste, the stories interestingly told, and purified of all original taint of grossness. Young people should be thankful to him for having opened the way to a better appreciation, in their mature age, of the famous poets of the renaissance."—*The Nation*, N. Y.

With Illustrations. Globe 8vo. 4s. 6d. each.

The Adventures of a Brownie.

By the Author of "John Halifax, Gentleman." With Illustrations by Mrs. ALLINGHAM.

By CHARLOTTE M. YONGE.

Little Lucy's Wonderful Globe. New Edition.

The Lances of Lynwood.

The Little Duke. New Edition.

The Prince and the Page.

P's and Q's. New Edition.

When Papa comes Home: The Story of Tip, Tap, Toe. By the Author of "Nine Years Old," "Pansie's Flour Bin," &c. With Illustrations by W. J. HENNESSY. Globe 8vo. 4s. 6d.

The Necklace of Princess Florimonde, and Other Stories. By MARY DE MORGAN. Illustrated by WALTER CRANE. Extra fcap. 8vo. 6s.

* * Also a large paper Edition, with the Illustrations on India Paper. 100 copies only printed.

MACMILLAN AND CO., LONDON.

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN, &c.

With upwards of 170 Pictures by Mr. WALTER CRANE.

Grimm's Fairy Tales. A Selection from the Household Stories, done into Pictures by WALTER CRANE. Crown 8vo. 6s.

"All should hail with gratitude this new picture book, which we recommend to every nursery and school-room, and not only to every nursery and school-room, but to every one who cares for good art."—*The Spectator*.

MR. RANDOLPH CALDECOTT'S NEW BOOK.

Some of Æsop's Fables. With Modern Instances shown in Designs by RANDOLPH CALDECOTT. From New Translations by ALFRED CALDECOTT, M.A. The Engravings by J. D. COOPER. Demy 4to. 7s. 6d.

"All are excessively funny, and it is no mere figure of speech to say, that as much genuine drollery has hardly ever been compressed into so few lines of illustration . . . The drawings in this book are as graceful as those of Mr. Walter Crane . . . It is useless to multiply descriptions of these drawings, and we can only conclude by reiterating our statement that this is emphatically a good book."—*The Spectator*.

By WASHINGTON IRVING.

With Illustrations by RANDOLPH CALDECOTT.

Old Christmas. From WASHINGTON IRVING'S "Sketch Book." With 100 Illustrations by R. CALDECOTT, engraved by J. D. COOPER. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, gilt. 6s.

Bracebridge Hall. By WASHINGTON IRVING. With 120 Illustrations by RANDOLPH CALDECOTT, engraved by J. D. COOPER. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, gilt. 6s.

The Makers of Florence: Dante, Giotto, Savonarola, and their City. By Mrs. OLIPHANT. With Illustrations from Drawings by Professor DELAMOTTE, and a Steel Portrait of Savonarola, engraved by C. H. JEENS. Cheaper Edition. Crown 8vo. 10s. 6d.

The English Poets. Selections, with Critical Introductions by various Writers, and a General Introduction by MATTHEW ARNOLD. Edited by T. H. WARD, M.A. Four Vols. Crown 8vo, each 7s. 6d.

Vol. I. CHAUCER to DONNE.—Vol. II. BEN JONSON to DRYDEN.—Vol. III. ADDISON to BLAKE.—Vol. IV. WORDSWORTH to ROSSETTI.

"Mr. Ward is to be congratulated in having published an excellently well selected collection that is not only a pleasant resource for leisure hours, but a methodical handbook to a poetical education."—*Times*.

Essays of Elia. By CHARLES LAMB. Edited, with Introduction and Notes, by ALFRED AINGER, M.A. Globe 8vo. 5s.

People's Editions. Price 6d. each; or, complete in One Volume, medium 4to, cloth binding, price 3s.

CONTENTS.

Tom Brown's Schooldays. By an OLD BOY. With upwards of 60 Illustrations by ARTHUR HUGHES and SYDNEY P. HALL.

Old Christmas. From WASHINGTON IRVING'S "Sketch Book." With upwards of 100 Illustrations by RANDOLPH CALDECOTT.

Waterton's Wanderings in South America. With 100 Illustrations. Edited by Rev. J. G. WOOD. With Biographical Introduction and Explanatory Index.

Bracebridge Hall. From WASHINGTON IRVING'S "Sketch Book." With 100 Illustrations by RANDOLPH CALDECOTT.

R/i

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY
BERKELEY

Return to desk from which borrowed.
This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.

23 Jan '51 WK

7 Dec '56 LS

REC'D LD

NOV 26 1956

14 Jul '65 VB

REC'D LD

JUL 6 '65 - 8 AM

INTERLIBRARY LOAN

1991

UNIV. OF CALIF., BERK.

YB 72848

