

SIND REVISITED

WITH NOTICES OF THE ANGLO-INDIAN ARMY; RAILROADS; PAST,
PRESENT, AND FUTURE, ETC.

BY
RICHARD F. BURTON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I. & II (Combined)

Originally Published in 1877.

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Sani H. Panhwar (2024)

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I SHOULD HAVE DEDICATED
These Pages,
DESCRIBING FAMILIAR SCENES,
TO MY OLD FRIEND AND CHIEF,
GENERAL WALTER SCOTT,
(BOMBAY ENGINEERS)
HAD HE LIVED.
I NOW INSCRIBE THEM TO HIS MEMORY.

PREFACE.

The man who first applied to Sind the nickname "Young Egypt" said, perhaps without intending to do so, an uncommonly good thing. Nothing more whimsical than the general and superficial likeness of Nature in the two "gifts of the sea," Nile-land and Indus-land. Karáchi and Alexandria, Haydarábád and Cairo, the flat-roofed mud-villages which stud the country, the First Cataracts and the Rapids about Sakhar—Bakar—Rohri and, briefly, the physical aspect of the valleys of the southern "Sindh," or ocean-stream, and of the northern Hapi, or Tesh—Tesh, have the family look which becomes brothers.

Equally noticeable are the differences of accidents, especially in those of Art. Young Egypt is very old in the annals of humanity. That pre-historic, or proto-historic, man was not wanting to her, is proved by the cores and flakes of flints, eocenic and nummulitic, which strew the heights and depths near Sakhar and Rohri. The Rám Bágh at Karáchi commemorates the passage of fighting Ráma Chandra (nat. B.C. 961), and of Sita, his wife, whose beauty and virtue have made her the type of perfect womanhood in the Land of Brahm. Sind was much as she is now in B.C. 326, when Alexander the Great overran her from north to south; and how long before his time nobody knows.

Yet, whilst Old Egypt teems with the monuments of half-a-dozen races, from the blacks of Meroe to the Macedonian, Mohammed Ali Pasha and the French architect-engineer; whilst the remains of her "enormous cruel wonders," her pyramids, obelisks, and sphinxes; her Titanic works in labyrinths, canals, and artificial lakes; and her gigantic ruins of cities and citadels, temples and palaces, still astound and instruct the northern barbarian—Young Egypt has absolutely nothing of the kind to show. With the exception of some apochryphal mounds, ignorantly entitled "Alexander's Forts," the poor list of her ancient works is contained in a few dolmens and so-called "Druidical stones," scattered over the Hálá and other hills west of Karáchi; in certain Káfir Kots, artificial lines like river—terraces, in the valleys of the Kirthár range which divides Sind from Kelat and Belochistan; and in a small collection of bricks bearing the cross-legged image of meditating Budha, with the decorations of his faith. The latter are the only proof that the Chinese travellers, Fa-Hian (A.D. 399-414), Hiuan Tsang (A.D. 628-645), Hoei Sing (A.D. 518), and Khinie (A.D. 964-976), were not mere dreamers of dreams.

One object of my volumes is to illustrate these remarkable coincidences and divergences. A flying visit in the spring of 1876 to the old haunts which I left in 1848, has also enabled me to compare the present with the nearer past, and to forecast the future of the "Unhappy Valley." The machinery of my first two editions, dating from 1851, has been retained. Mr. Sabine Baring-Gould adopted something similar for his pleasant and valuable volume, *Iceland: its Scenes and Sagas*. I have borrowed copiously,

from *Scinde, or the Unhappy Valley* (London: Bentley, 1851), whatever of enduring interest was in it; and the flattering opinions expressed concerning that early venture by the best of judges, by those who are domiciled in the country, have encouraged me to present it for a third time to the English readers. The opportunity may not be propitious; the public brain is still haunted by what has been called "the great Indian nightmare;" but I look to more than mere transient popularity, and I firmly trust that these notes, notices, and scenes in Sind will enjoy a longer life than that which falls to the generality of "light" books.

For the transliteration of Oriental words, the system of Sir William Jones, as adopted in the well-known *Richardson's Dictionary*, Persian, Arabic, and English, enlarged by Francis Johnson, has been chosen, without "improvements." Instead of the long sign (e.g., a) the acute accent has been preferred (á), but that is a mere affair of personal choice. Orientalists have, it appears to me, given themselves much needless trouble in this matter, which is of so little importance to the general reader. It is sufficient to adhere to one uniform system, even that of Lepsius, in which our old friend "Shaykh," or "Sheikh," appears queerly disguised as "Séx"; and every scholar will see what is meant, whilst those unversed in Asiatic languages will not be confused by such varieties of the same word as Sind, Scinde, Sindh, and Sindhu. The latter is undoubtedly correct, every word terminating in a vowel; but the former, which is the Arabic and Persian form, has been officially patronized.

Finally, the dedication addressed in 1851 to Lieut.- Colonel, afterwards General, Sir Walter Scott, has perforce been changed. My dear old friend finished his career full of years and honours during my flying trip in 1876, and he did not receive the last letter which I addressed to him from a country where his name will not readily be forgotten.

RICHARD F. BURTON.

TRIESTE, August 1st, 1876.

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CHAPTER I.

MR. JOHN BULL AND I LAND AT BOMBAY – THE SEASON AT THE PRESIDENCY – TRAVELLING TO SIND IN THE OLD DAY AND IN THE NEW DAY – THE VOYAGE.

"STEP in, Mr. John Bull."

"After you, sir."

The doctor advised change of air, and you wisely chose, for the winter, Western India. In days to come, this will be the favourite hibernal trip of your sons and your sons' sons. You marvelled at the Suez Canal, and the sight of the frequent Union Jack on its French waters made you feel still a man. You did not grudge your four millions. Despite the formal parliamentary assertions of Under-Secretaries pledging their faith that never were you more respected, you are so accustomed, of late years, to being slighted and pooh-poohed, that the mildest show of energy, of life, is delightful in the old house. Egypt you now look upon as your pet protégé. In these days you would not drive Mohammed Ali Pasha out of Syria, nor "chuck him into the Nile." After the repudiation of the miserable Turk, for whom you fought that miserable Crimean failure, you feel a load off your mind. That Ottoman was an incubus to you; you despised him, you disliked him, and you were ashamed of the connection, only that son of yours in the Stock Exchange would not hear a word against "Turks," till the latter "went krach," as the Austrians say, and brought down the wrath of general Europe upon his devoted and shaven head. The wretched creature's existence now rests upon the jealousies of rival Powers, and the moment these cease he drees his doom.

You sighted from afar Port Suez, once the "Grand Dépôt for Overland Babies," and now not even that. The whitewashed sepulchre of a town looks as if it had been lately bombarded, but it has done worse-incurred the wrath of M. de Lesseps. You shudder in the cool Etesian gale which, they say, that ribbon of water has drawn from the Mediterranean. You hear of snow covering the adjoining hills, Atákeh and Abu Diráj, a phenomenon unknown in the 4000 years of Egyptian history. You endure, upon the Suez Gulf, two sharp showers even in January. You are assured that the climate of the whole northern half of the Erythrean Sea has changed. You are also informed that the children of Israel never crossed the Red Sea; that the Hebrew and Coptic "Yamm Súf," Sea of Weeds, never meant the Red Sea; and that all those who consigned Pharaoh and his host to the Red Sea are in error – an error, by-the-by, which has lasted some fifteen centuries. This is tough cud to chew.

You ask me about Jeddah, and I refuse to answer, to tell a twice-told tale. You are anxious for information about the lighthouses, or rather the want of them, which makes this long, narrow barathrum a place of terror to mariners. You are curious about Mocha and its coffee; about Hudaydah and its routes into the interior; about the condition of the Ottoman in Yemen; about the treatment of the Jews in the ex-capital of the Zaydi heretics; about cholera in Arabia; about private schools at Aden, and about a host of similar statistical, moral, and geographical points. One of these days, Mr. Bull, when the jealous and impossible Turk shall again have been turned, ignominiously as usual, out of Arabia; and when the friendly, docile, and progressive Egyptian shall have taken his place, then I shall offer my services to you as courier down the eastern coast of the Erythrean Sea, up to Sena'a in Yemen, the once splendid metropolis of that hapless land whose name means "The Happy."

At Bombay you admired the changes which the labours of the last quarter-century have effected—the reclamation of the foreshore, the huge line of intended docks, the two railways, and the tram-ways. You learned that the shower of gold which has descended upon the world managed to add, here also, a New Town to an Old Town. The former, you were told, is called "Frere Town," and you marvelled at its queer and unjustifiable mixture of the Veneto-Gothic, the intensely Classical, the Claret-Case, and the verandah'd house of no order at all. You straightway dubbed Old Town "Sassoon Town," from a family which has left its mark not only upon Bombay and Poonah, Mátharán and Mahabaleshwar, but even upon your own Babylon. You studied the word "peg" at the three clubs, the Bombay, the Byculla (Bháikalá), and the Chess. You went to a ball, and found it dull; to a concert-duller; to the barn-theatre-dullest. You were invited to a Government House "garden-party," and saw fifty decently clad people promenading sadly as convicts up and down their strip of jail-ground. You attended a dinner given by the normal "gentlemanly nonentity," as the lieges say, who governs but who does not rule, and you found it fearfully long, hot, and slow. You walked, umbrella-less, in the mid-day sun, to Malabar Point, and pronounced it cool. You put in an appearance at the races and the steeplechase, and discovered almost all the horses to be half-bred Persians, and the native "jocks" a race created to lose races. Lastly, you hurried to see a regatta, and you saw nothing.

And now, having happily escaped the gaieties of a Bombay "season," you propose a trip to Sind, or the Unhappy Valley; chiefly, I believe, because all the Presidency world declares that the sun is fatal; that small-pox and cholera rage there; that plague is coming down, full gallop, from "the Gulf"—briefly, that it will be the death of you.

Here, sir, my experience may be of use. It began with the forties, when we entrusted our persons to the *Pattimúr*, a native craft that rarely made the trip under six weeks; at least during the north-east monsoon, which upon this coast blows regularly from the north-west. Yet those who could afford time did not think it wholly wasted. We landed every second day; we saw all the sights—Bassein, Dámán, Surat, and the tombs of Vaux and

Tom Coryat; Diu Head and Fort; Ja'afarábád; the ruins of Somanáth; the Dwáriká Pagoda; Kachh—(Cutch—) Mandavi, and the Indus mouths. We called upon the village chiefs; we chatted with the villagers; we learned much about the country, and we taught the country something concerning ourselves. At this season, a coasting voyage northwards in a sailing craft might have been "a beautiful illustration of the Moral Impossible," yet there are some of us who would not be sorry for another chance. It was dawdling work, true, but you felt fresh as air; you had room enough and to spare, and you were not worried by the hurry-scurry of the mail-line steamer.

Then began the transit per steamers of the "Bombay Marine," *alias* the Indian Navy; they soon became most unpopular with travellers, whom the officers heartily disliked. Nothing, indeed, is more unpleasant than to pay merchant-ship passage for naval discipline, except for navy-men to receive passengers without directly profiting by the transaction. And the items of the Imitation Navy were individuals of infinite importance, at least in their own estimation, if not in that of others. The subalterns in those steam-frigates were regular sea-satraps; under authority it is true, but not a whit the less capable of passing on authority in a style which rendered it extra authoritative. The cloth was rabid at the degradation of having to carry "soldier-officers," and of being obliged to defile their spotless decks with "dirty passengers" and "filthy sepoys." Let me sketch for you a day on board the "Merry Miss," as the sailors called the Semiramis, that confounded place of punishment with a high-flown name, now degraded to a hulk and still floating in Bombay harbour.

We rose early. Exactly at 3.30 a.m., one of your old favourites, the heroes of your juvenile years, a "Jack Tar," growled—

"Tum'le up there; goin' t' wash dex."

And if you did not obey the order instanter, he swamped you and your couch with a tubful of cold salt water. The best joke the jolly, light-hearted fellows knew was to make a land-lubber thoroughly miserable.

Rising in our day-shirts, which thus did double duty, and in certain cotton drawers called "Pájámehs"—highly advisable when sleeping *en évidence*—we chose a seat, the bulwarks, or any other elevation inaccessible to the swirling streams dashed over the quarter-deck and at our nether limbs. We then attempted ablutions; not with the priggish precision of Bengális, who begin to ply the tooth-brush in their verandahs an hour before dawn ours was a catholic, syncretistic style of lavation, performed, campaigning fashion, in a tinned pan called a "Gendí." We were thus ready for coffee on deck (6 a.m.), and presently for breakfast a meal finished rapidly, no one relishing milkless tea or tincture of coffee, which on a pinch might serve for ipecacuanha. Yet on board these "Shippes of Helle" we ate and drank like Ghúls or schoolboys, because we paid one pound per diem for our *panatica*. At noon we reassembled to "make it twelve"

by imbibing "brandy-pání" and crunching sea-biscuit. At 3 p.m. we dined with the juniors in the gun-room; for subalterns could not pass the dread portals of the state cabin, where sat the captain, surrounded by his field-officer passengers. Three hours afterwards, we again applied the spur to jaded appetite, and "took tea"—a meal consisting of a devilled biscuit and pale ale;—and from that time forwards we adhibited to ourselves as much liquid aliment and diffusible stimulant as we could dispose of, well or ill. Between whiles we smoked, generally Manilla cheroots, now supplanted by foul Dindigals and fetid "Trichies;" sometimes we inhaled a Hukkah, Shishah, Kalyún, or "hubble-bubble" to feed the comical indignation of our nautical friends—the water-pipe has now clean disappeared from Anglo-Indian society, and its place has been taken by the ditcher's dudheen or the silly cigarette.

You, Mr. Bull, must well remember what ship-cookery was in those days—how greasy fluid represented the *potage*; how the pickle-bottles contained "passenger-pickles," i.e. so hot that a pound lasted you a year; how the bluish-red or boiled-to-tatters mutton tasted exactly as if it had been cooked in the engine-room; how politeness forbade the appearance of "salt horse" and pea-soup, pork and pease-puddings, the only eatable things on board; and, finally, how the fat steam of the vegetables suggested nothing but an over-used *torchon*.

The horrors of the day began in real earnest after breakfast. We could not sit in the rattling, creaking, groaning, throbbing, shivering, steaming gun-room, redolent with the bouquet of fat meat and sour bread. The deck had a canvas awning, but it was as efficacious to protect you from Phoebus Apollo's wrath as a lady's park—parasol against a gin-palace on fire. We could not read, even if books were forthcoming, which was not the case; we found no way to talk, even with the will. Probably half a sepoy regiment was on board. Possibly, also, the party contained a "lady;" and however pleasant may be the presence of the fair sex in its normal place, on board ship-ahem! Five gentlemen were paying her devoted attentions; Nos. 1 and 2 walked arm in arm with her, each speaking in his own whisper; a third followed, holding her parasol; another preceded her with her novel, and No. 5 skirmished about her with her lapdog. Most of them were Irishmen; all were fierce as fiends; it was not commonly safe even to look that way.

At last, as six bells struck, 11 p.m., we proceeded to "turn in," if that nautical phrase apply to depositing one's person upon the contents of a large bundle-pillows, padded coverlet, sheets for those who use them, and sleeping mat-spread upon some spare place where the quarter-deck deigned to receive us. Hereabouts men lie on bed, not in bed; and every morning you may see a man taking up his bed and walking. The only amusement of the last hours was the contemplation of peculiar Anglo-Indianisms: "the fast" youth, the "grumpy" old captain, and the fashionable major, who knew what wine was.

At times our slumbers were broken by showers, a meteor not uncommon on the edge of the tropics: it was a signal to clutch up the sleeping-gear, and to bolt into the gun-room as fast as we could. The agile managed to secure a table-top, or a quiet place under it; but all avoided occupying any part of the narrow strip of thoroughfare which surrounded that venerable piece of furniture. Otherwise sleep was not sweetened by one of your favourite Ben Braces or Bill Bowlings walking slowly over your countenance with the thickest of ammunition boots. Some preparations for warmth were also indispensable. In the cold season of the North Arabian Sea, if it is Jehannum by day, by night it is generally Barahút, Mohammed and Dante's cold place of punishment. And, *par parenthèse*, especially avoid sleeping in the moonlight. You omniscient Britishers may laugh at what I am going to tell you, still it is not less true. Many an incautious "coloured person," not including my old colonel, Corsellis, has risen in the morning from his soft slumbers under "Cynthia's coolly ray," with one half of his face by no means reflecting the other, and it probably took him a year or two to recover from the effect of the moonstroke. I tried the experiment upon my Munshi from Maskat, a man of nervous temperament, who declared that it always made him ill; and true enough, next morning he looked grey-skinned, sunken-eyed, and hollow-cheeked, as if he had just risen from a sick bed.

Lastly, about A.D. 1845, the P. and O. Company relieved the Indian navy of its Suez mails, and Bombay presently began to bestir herself in establishing a Steam Navigation Company. My first acquaintance with it was not happy. The s.s. *Dwarka*, which, after carrying me in 1853 from Jeddah to Suez, foundered in 1862 at the mouth of the Tapti or Surat river, started (October 29, 1847) for Karachi. She had doubled the Cape, but she carried no pilot; not a soul on board knew anything of a coast abounding in shoals and eddies; and, lastly, when we were nearing the then dangerous entrance of our destined haven, we found the captain drowned in strong waters, and the chief officer "fighting fou." Being the senior commission on board, I took command: we soused No. 1; we tied up No. 2; the *Pioneer's* head was turned towards Arabia, with orders to steam easy all night; and next morning saw us safely ashore.

The Bombay-Karáchi line has now fallen a prey to the British India Steam Navigation Company (Limited); and this section has only one disadvantage, the result of non-competition. It is simply the dearest passage of the nineteenth century. We shall steam by the direct branch on Friday at 5 p.m., we shall land at 8 a.m. on the next Monday, and for two whole days, with as many "bittocks," we shall pay (return tickets, mind!) rupees 162, or about £4 per diem. No wonder the £50 shares are at £86, and the company turns some 12 to 13 per cent. How long this absurd monopoly will last it is hard to say. The printed list of steamers shows fifty hull distributed over nineteen lines, and connections from Southampton to Delagoa Bay, and from Basreh (Bassora) to Borneo. The inevitable "canny Scot" rules the roast, and doubtless will fight hard to keep rivals out of the kitchen. Still, methinks there is ample room for one or more competing companies; and the sooner the Austro-Hungarian Lloyds, under its

indefatigable agent, Mr. Gumpert, establishes a branch along the western coast of India, from Karáchi to Point de Galle, the better it will be for travellers and for themselves.

We shall be lucky if we catch the *Cocanada*, Captain Morris, who will make us comfortable on board, and prove himself a most agreeable and competent cicerone. The ships on this section are mostly sisters, averaging about 800 tons, with 150 horse-power, and going between eight and a half and nine knots an hour. The decks are clean, except only when the influx of native passengers makes them a lively likeness of a slaver's hold, and the brasses are bright as in the best London tavern; for there is a large crew of Surat Moslems, the descendants of the classical Sanganian pirates of Sánká, and the best of Eastern Coast seamen. The Kathiawár (Kattywar) men are mere softies; they hate discipline and regularity, and they grumble at the work, which consists chiefly of squatting on the hams, holystoning, and metal rubbing. Yet they are rationed, like English seamen, with meat or fish, bread, vegetables, and even tea.

We give a wide berth to the Prongs lighthouse, that noble work of Mr. Ormiston, C.E., who is still criticized for not building it farther out—the Anglo-Indian Public is nothing if not critical. Suffice it to say, he has his reasons, and they are good reasons; but we amateurs always will dictate to professionals. *Coconada* avoids the fishing stakes, which do not appear in any chart: they lie some seven miles west-by-north of the outer light-vessel; they are tree-trunks, which would rip up a bottom like Mississippi snags; each costs Rs. 60, and they are removed by the Koli fisher-men before each rainy monsoon. They date from the earliest days; the Portuguese did not venture to interfere with these vested interests, and we have followed the good example of our predecessors. Let us hope soon to see this dangerous patch of ground marked by a riding-light.

Our course now lies west-north-west, too far from the Gujrát (Guzerat) coast to distinguish the beauties of that riant land, the garden of Western India, with a climate partaking of the tropical lowlands and the Dakhan (Deccan) uplands. The wind, which at this season is sure to be dead ahead, sensibly increases; a gale seems in prospect; and no one, I believe, ever crossed the Gulf of Suráshtra without being in, or in the neighbourhood of, a storm.

The next day opens with a distant prospect of Diu Fort in Kathiawár, a rounded headland backed by little sand-hills, and fronted with eddies, shallows, and backwaters, while the dangerous Maláiki (miscalled "Malacca") Shoals lie higher up the bay. All know the far-famed *assedio* (siege) in which the Christian beat off the Infidel, and the grim joke of Nunho da Cunha, *humiliate capita vestra Deo*, as the bullets whistled over the heads of his "conquistadores." Here, according to Western annals, Portuguese valour never shone brighter, and, according to Eastern, never did Portuguese treachery appear in blacker colours.

A little east of Diu is Ja'afarábád, the pleasure-seat of the Sídí, or African ex-admiral; his official head-quarters are at the pirate's den, "Jazireh," which, meaning in Arabic the "Island," our people will pervert to "Jhinhira." The classical practice of plundering merchantmen was an institution upon the whole Asiatic sea-board of the Indian Ocean. It began with Hazramaut; it stretched the whole length of the Persian Gulf; it ran eastward along Mekrán; it embraced Kachh, Káthiawár, the Konkans, Northern and Southern; and it ended in India with Malabar and Cape Comorin. Don't confound these water-robbers with your John Paul Joneses and Captain Kyds. Here, for half the year, they were, as in China, peaceful tillers of the soil; during the other half, or navigation season, they launched their boats and became regular sea-Thugs. Were we to withdraw our forces from India, a week would see the industry flourishing once more, strong and lively, as if the snake had never been scotched.

We are now in blue water, clear blue as the Mediterranean; a notable change from the mud-and-mangrove-tainted seas which deform Bombay, and from the dirty-green produce of the Cambay Gulf, whose various rivers, the Sábarmati of Ahmadábád, the Mahi of Baroda, the Narbadá of Baroch, and the Tapti of Surat, produce not only ugly eddies, but an eternal current to the south. It is unpardonable to wreck a ship upon the coast of Káthiawár, where rock subtends the shore for six miles; and mud lies between that and twelve knots, at which fine hard sand begins. But the safest courses generally become the most dangerous, by carelessness in lead and look-out, even as horsemen and whips often come to grief upon the smoothest roads. The glorious old Cunard is the only company that can boast, for thirty-five years, never to have lost a life or a letter, and the P. and O. is a notable offender in the art and mystery of wrecking made easy.

A few hours after the spires and towers, the bastions and curtains, of now ruined Diu have disappeared, we make steam along a shelving sandy shore, backed by the lone and misty form of Junágarh, better known as Gírnár. It is far-famed for Hindu suicides; many a mother escapes her difficulties by vowing that a son shall hurl himself from those rosy granite cliffs, and few are undutiful enough to falsify the parent's promise. It will be long, sir, before filial piety goes to such lengths in England. We then pass the unimportant Mul Dwáriká, the old original temple. Some hours beyond it lies Patan, with its big black bulwarks and dots of white buildings; and just outside is Vírávanjan, the black Pagoda, with the towering "Gumat," or pyramid-steeple, which has taken the status —

"Of Somnath Puttun in Kattywar,"

as one of our local bards geographically and un-musically sings. I cannot tell you what has become of the sandal-wood gates before which Lord Ellenborough, in the pages of *Punch*, danced with all his might. You are right; they would have been a good "spec," fruitful as the True Cross, the *Royal George*, or Shakespeare's mulberry. Who could have

resisted the attraction of a snuff-box known to antedate five centuries? But I say no more. The Gates of Somanáth have filled more pages than the Gates of Gaza.

Here you catch a glimpse of the latter end of Rajputáná—the Land of the self-styled Children of the Sun and Moon, a nation of noblemen, whose pedigree dates, as you may guess from the family name, long before the Conquest, and who, withal, have little to recommend them beyond luminous origin, and a terrible habit of romancing that has imposed upon many, notably upon Colonel Tod. Like the Beloch, the Welsh, and other semi-barbarous peoples, they still support minstrels, troubadours, or *trouvères*—an order of men whose only occupation is to scatter the dust of many crams and "shams" over the venerable ruins of the past; and to put together as many curious and complicated fibs as they can. "Civilization" Buckle declared that the fountain and scattering-place of such distortions are to be found in pen and ink; that legends were perverted and supplemented, not by the tongue, but by paper. However, he had no practical knowledge of the subject, and perhaps he was thinking of his pet dislike, "Paul of Tarsus."

The scenery now becomes interesting enough. We run within three miles of land, and every half-hour supplies us with a change of prospect. The ever-shifting coast-scene is dotted with fortified towns and tree-girt villages, here glittering in the humid sunshine, there almost hid by dense growth; while the background is a range of lofty mountains whose forested crests, unconcealed by even the semblance of a mist, cut in jagged lines the deep blue surface of an Eastern sky. For here we approach the verge of the Temperates. The firmament is no longer, as in the tropical Konkan, a milky monochrome; the breeze is crisp and cool: now we can sit beyond its influence without perspiring, whereas in Bombay we should feel parboiled; and we recognize with pleasure that the general aspect of nature suggests Southern Italy in November.

At a distance you might mistake that lofty fretted and pinnacled tower, whose huge flag may be seen nearly 17 miles off, for the spire of a fine old cathedral in good old Normandy. It is the Pagoda of Dwarikánáth or Jagat-náth, Lord of the World, a title of Krishna; this revered spot with its sacred streams, where some half million of pilgrims annually flock to spend their money upon Moksha (emancipation from the flesh), to receive the brand of the demi-deity, to die of some epidemic, and to feed the hungry sharks that haunt the bay awaiting "cold pilgrim." I visited it in 1846, and found it a most turbulent place; now, however, the white bungalows and the sepoy lines assure us that it has a garrison from Rájkot. In November, 1859, after the great Mutiny (1857-58), the Dwariká temple and the wealthy pagoda in Beyt islet, which lies round the corner at the southern jaw-point of the Kachh Gulf, were occupied by the fugitive "Pándís," who began by plundering, and who ended by fortifying their strongholds. The mutineers were joined by the Waghars, the Jangalí or wild tribes of the adjoining Birda Hills, and at last the Bombay Government resolved upon dislodging them.

A goodly force of some 2000 men, including Hussars and a Naval Brigade, was carried to the scene of action by ten ships, of which four were transports; and fire was first opened upon yonder robbers' den, Beyt. After a short and ineffectual bombardment, which should have been prolonged till the place was evacuated, a storming party was sent in during the short twilight, and incontinently it came to grief. The mutineers had barricaded the streets, and their guns, loaded to the muzzle with grape and musket balls, had been trained to sweep the approaches. The consequence was prodigious loss of life, and though the 2000 natives were eventually dislodged, the Colonel-commanding found it advisable to revisit England. The second attack was even worse. Dwáriká was surrounded, but the astute besieged escaped by driving out a large herd of cattle, upon which the pious sepoy would not fire, and by using them as shields or mantlets. The Hussars followed, but the fugitives soon reached the Birda Hills, where they found protection amongst their Waghar friends. The loot at Beyt and Dwariká—the silver ladders to approach the idol, the lumps of gold, the necklaces of brilliants and of other precious stones, and the quantities of fine old wine cellared by the priests—was described to me by an actor in the play with a zest which made the mouth water. "Frere Hall" (Karáchi) contains two curiously carved wooden columns, taken from the temple before it was blown up; on the top stand four Krishnas playing on the flute, the Gopis and Gopáls (shepherds and shepherdesses) dance in spiral to the music, and the whole rests upon an elephant's back. The plunder may have been satisfactory, but the management was by no means creditable to our arms.

The Waghars are again "Yághí" (mutinous); and, lately, they have been at their traditional "little game" of robbing travellers and sacking villages. They refuse to till the ground, and apparently disdain honest industry in general. The example of the Bhíl and the Mápillah (Moplah) corps in Khandesh and Malabar should teach us how to treat them. But at present the omnipotent Rupee is the one worshipped idol of an impecunious Chancellor of the Exchequer both at home and in India every Machiavellian art is applied to saving a sixpence by the outlay of a shilling.

At night you remark the vast sheet of fire which spreads like lightning over the horizon-hills. The uplands are covered with brakes of the hugest bamboos, which, when dry, are readily ignited by friction and high winds. It is a favourite theme with the Hindu muse, this Forest aflame; and now that you have witnessed it, even from afar, ne you can conceive how much glowing description and tenebrous terminology may be expended upon it. Moreover, the sea seems to emulate the land; water is apparently jealous of earth. Upon the purple-black main we see long bars and plains of sparkling fire evidently bearing down upon us. It is nothing more dangerous than fish pursuing the light-bearing phosphoric atoms of the deep, yet many a startled youngster has been deluded into singing out "Breakers ahead!" The phenomenon reminds us that we here take leave of the admirable pomfret, the "Indian turbot," which you may eat every day without being weary of its firm flesh and delicate flavour. Along the coast of Kathiawár they are unusually large, rivalling in size the Johndory; but they do not extend north-

wards. According to the people, they must not turn tail towards idyllic Krishna's holiest shrine; and you will hear the same legend anent the Pallo of Sind. You now understand why the author of "By Sea and by Land" visited Bombay, despite a game leg, to eat pomfret and prawn-curry.

On the fourth noon we lose sight of land. We are striking right across the Gulf of Kachh, where the tide flows an hour longer than elsewhere. Something has been said, and there is still something to say, about the Kanthus of Ptolemy, the probability versus the possibility of the Ran ever having been an inland sea, the creation of the Allah-band (God's Dyke), the voyage of Nearchus, and the accuracy or the errors of Arrian. But I have talked and heard, read and written, about the Kanthus and the Ran, the Allah-band, Nearchus and Arrian, till the very names have become provocatives of qualm – of nausea in the throat, as the old Egyptians have it.

The world is dark, save for the sea-fire, whilst we steam along the base of the Indus delta, that "Paradise of the aquatic avifauna," whose thirteen or fourteen gapes cover 104 miles in length, and whose ever-growing banks add seven miles to our voyage of 500. Thus we miss Lahori on the Hajámri mouth, the old emporium of Sind, the site of the first English factory, and the "Larribundar" of that stout old merchant-mariner, Captain Hamilton (1699), who landed here en route to Thatha. Shortly after 9 p.m. we cross a ditch between the Manijah bank north, and the Kori or Lakhpát bank south. This is the famous "Swatch of No-ground," where the lead falls at once into 200 fathoms, and it reminds us of certain "bottomless pits" on the west coast of Africa and elsewhere. It is the submarine bed and mouth of that ancient river, the Eastern Nára, where, in the days of Alexander the Great and the Chinese travellers, the Indus debouched some sixty miles east of the present line. But you will hear and see more of that presently.

Six hours before arrival we shall reach the "Forty Fathoms Bank," and then we shall turn the good ship *Coconada's* head due north. We give a wide berth to this sea of shoals, which has absolutely no landmarks. Along the Kachh coast, low and uniform as it appears, there are at any rate scattered towns and villages, tombs, and topes. Note, also, that we have been, theoretically, steaming uphill. According to the late Archdeacon Pratt, the attraction of the Himalayas raises the sea off the Sind coast some 540 feet above its level off Cape Comorin; and thus we realize the labour of Ulysses –

"For ever climbing up the climbing wave."

This statement has lately been repeated, without quoting, or perhaps without knowing, the authority for it, by Mr. William Desborough Cooley, of pugnacious and incredulous memory, in an un-called-for little volume on Physical Geography – Political Geography being ignored because the branch is patronized by his pet enemies, the Royal Geographical Society. I can only say that this uphill-sea is thoroughly proved by mathematics, and disproved by practical experience: it ought to be the case, but it is not.

Here we are at last, after a run of 507 miles, which "Murray" stretches to 808. The extremity of that long line of fawn-coloured nummulitic hills stretching athwart-ship nearly due east and west is Cape Monz, or Muári, the seaward head of the Pabb or Hála Hills, which prolong the Kirthár Mountains. Its notch and three table-topped lumps are useful landmarks during the fogs and the Sind showers (dust-storms) which hide Manhóra; but, sad to say, it has also its debatable and debated classical name—Eiros. In front lies the regular quoin of Manhóra, separating the Bay of Karáchi from its neighbour, Sonmiyáni, some fifty miles to the north-west. This is the western staple of the southern gateway to our Unhappy Valley. The build and material—a silicious pudding of water-rolled stones, loose and crumbling sandstone, and fossil oysters of modern species, which rest upon blue clay and lignite are not unsuitable to the rest of the approach, a shore of yellow silex, backed by the fields of marshy mangrove and the dark, slab mud which form the inner region. The eastern jamb originally consisted of six or seven craggy piles of banded sandstone, the Oyster Rocks or Baur Islands, where the mollusk still survives. The group lies nearly on a meridian; "Little Andái," pierced with a cave, is the northernmost, and "Great Andái" raises its pyramidal head at the opposite end. They are to this region what the Pigeon Islands are to Syrian Bayrút, and the Needles to the last bit of Old England which detained your longing looks. Far over them to starboard appears the Cantonment, with its three landmarks—the cocky little Scotch kirk pertly fronting its big brother, and the battlemented tower of Trinity, which looks like a line of houses set on end; while further south rises a pretentious bit of misplaced Gothic, yclept "Frere Hall." The Bay of Karáchi thence stretches its depth some three and a half miles to the south-east, with a very shallow sag, and ends at Clifton, the raised left bank of the old Chíní Creek.

Now, sir, you stand within sight of the young Alexandria of our Young Egypt. Jupiter Ammon's son was Sir Charles Napier, popularly called "Old Charley," and by the natives "Shaytán ká Bhái" (Satan's brother). The juvenile title is, by-the-by, utterly inapplicable to the Unhappy Valley, the dry-nurse of the Vaidic race, and the headquarters of earliest Hindu history. The *soubriquet* from a "chaff" became a party-word, a war-cry; it arose from an official proclamation, which announced the new conquest to be "equal to Egypt in fertility," and it developed itself into a "rile." Certainly the first aspect much reminds us of General Amru's despatch to his Commander-in-chief, the Khalífeh Umar-i-Khattáb, in which he describes the land of the Nile as successively a desert, a lake, and a flower-garden. And here with the yellow shore, white silt, and black mire; the sun-burnt brown hills that stud the river-valley; the dark-green tamarisk and the date-palms; the blue air, not to speak of the Khamsin and the dust-storm, and the bluer sea, girt by its golden fillet of desert sand—the family likeness must at once strike every eye. Not only essentials, but even accidents, resemble one another. Manhóra Head is Ra'as el-Tín, and the two breakwaters tell the same tale; whilst "both ports, notwithstanding their vicinity to the mouths of silt-laden rivers, maintain a vitality

which seems mainly ascribable to the drift being kept off by the action of the prevalent winds, which in both cases blow from the port towards the river."¹

Here, sir, we stand where British arms first showed the vaunting Sindi and the blustering Beloch what the British Lion can do when disposed to be carnivorous.

As Sir John, afterwards (the late) Lord Keane, at the end of "serving forty-five years in the four quarters of the globe," was marching up to take the city, which made the knight a baron, he and his gallant men were, they say, so evil entreated by the Lords of Indus-land, who would neither fight so as to give him the opportunity of "looting" them, nor make friends and bear a hand in looting others, that a reserve force was ultimately despatched from Bombay, to be stationed in this favoured region, and to teach its rude rulers better manners.

Karachi was fixed upon as the point of disembarkation. H.M.S. *Wellesley*, 74 (Admiral Maitland), and the *Hannah* transport, having on board Her Majesty's 40th Regiment, together with a company of black Artillery, anchored, on February 5, 1839, under the walls of Manhóra Fort, and summoned the garrison to surrender.

"I am a Beloch, and will die first!" was the reply of the bold barbarian who commanded the garrison. Moreover, he despatched a few Sindi spies to "humbug" the British Admiral and the Brigadier into the belief that Manhóra was a Gibraltar, and the Beloch were perfect devils to fight.

"And so are we," quoth those not-to-be-hum-bugged personages.

Accordingly, dispositions were made for the attack. The regiment and the artillery were disembarked, whilst the seventy-four cleared decks for action. When all was ready the fort was again requested, with true British humanity, to open its gates; whereto it replied laconically, and *tant soit peu* Gallicanly, that "forts might be stormed, but they never surrender." Upon this the *Wellesley* rejoined tartly with a broadside, a regular hailstorm of balls, which, as might be expected, blew away the whole southern face of the enceinte of miserable masonry.

The breach was then reported practicable, and a gallant band –

"The full of hope, miscalled forlorn " –

pressed forward to claim the honour and glory of daring the hero's death.

¹ Page 1, "Kurrachee Harbour Works. Memoir drawn up and compiled by W. H. Price, M. Inst. C.E., Superintendent of the Harbour Improvement Works."

"British Officers and Men!" etc., etc., etc.

Inflamed by the normal expectations touching duty, which so hurt the feelings of our sailors at Trafalgar, the forlorn hope proceeded to assault. After pausing for a moment to take breath at the foot of the rock, they clambered up the steep side, and, tumbling alike over the wall and one another, dashed impetuous, with charging bayonets and the sturdiest possible hearts, right into the midst of Fort Manhóra.

Who could withstand such gallantry? The garrison, an old man, a young woman, and a boy, instantly surrendered. So did Karáchi town, and so did all the neighbouring districts.

The Governor-General of India, while annexing the harbour, "had much gratification" in opining that "the prompt and effectual measures taken for reducing Karáchi appeared to have been conducted in a manner such as to insure success." That high functionary was also pleased to praise "the forbearance both before and after the exertion of force" (what English) "displayed by the commanders, naval and military, and by the brave bands they commanded." And, finally, he put the colophon upon the proceeding by declaring that, in consequence of this trifle, the Ameers had forfeited all claims to the forbearance and the generosity of the British" (read "Anglo-Indian") "Government."

I am recounting, Mr. John Bull, the local, popular, and facetious version of the affair. Of course there is another one, and a serious. The narrator of "*The Campaign of the Army of the Indus in Sind and Kaubool*"² assures us that the flying garrison, being captured, was found to consist of twenty men. Another great authority in such matters reduces the force to four or five; and, moreover, affirms that a signal-gun was mistaken for a hostile demonstration, and that literally there was "not a shot in the locker."

"Allahu A'alam!" (Allah is all-knowing)—as Moslem divines say when compelled to relate an apocryphal tale:—"May the penalty of fiction fall with due weight upon the ficator's head!"

² P.S.—Since the MS. went to press Girnár and its adjoining peaks have been admirably described in Blackwood (November, 1876) by my friend Andrew Wilson: nothing can be more interesting than the Sweating Statue and the live Ogres haunting the suicidal heights.

CHAPTER II.

WE MAKE KARACHI—FIRST GLIMPSE AT THE "UN-HAPPY VALLEY"— NATIVE TOWN, ANCIENT AND MODERN.

"WELL, I never!"

"Of course not, sir. No one-man, woman, or child-ever sighted for the first time the face of Young Egypt" without some such exclamation.

"Oh, the barren, barren shore! A regular desert; a thread of low coast, sandy as a Scotchman's whiskers; a bald and dismal glaring waste, with visible and palpable heat playing over its dirty-white, dirty-yellow, and dirty-brown surface; a get between a dust-bin and an oven!"

Too severe! You were not so hard upon Ramleh, near Alexandria; and you will like the look of Karachi better when you prospect it from above. Here, if anywhere, Sind has some elements of the picturesque. Westward rise the broken, jagged summits of the Kohistán or Mountain-land, the Pabb Hills and other outliers of Belochistán. Their sterile walls are said to imprison lovely valleys; but sanitarium-lacking Karáchi will neglect them because she is ever looking forward to Kelát. These southernmost ramifications of the Kirthár Mountains,³ formerly called the Hálá Hills, end in the straight dorsum known as Cape Monz (Muári); and nearer to us stretches the rocky tongue which, for want of another name, we must baptize "Pír Mangyár." In early morning, when Surya, the Sun-god, is striving against Megha-Rajah, the Cloud-king, you will see some fantastic effects of colouring. Within a few yards, yon cloud-shadows tincture the detached features of our two parallel ranges with every shade of blue, blue-brown, plum, amethyst, and turquoise-blue, while the distant peaks and crags lie, rose-tipped and flushing with renewed life, against the milky cerulean sky. Now the warm rays fall upon the fawn-coloured masses of nummulite; then the distant forms of the sky-line appear almost transparent and aerial, as if melting into the upper vault. Turn eastward, and you have the flat Valley of the Indus, a luxuriant green level, blue-glazed by the intervening air. And throughout Sind you will ever see this contrast of the desert and the fertile land; of Osiris sitting side by side with his mortal brother-foe-the ass-headed Set Typhon, god of the rock.

The charms, however, are purely atmospheric, and, as usual here, noon will wash all the colouring out of the uniform, glaring, white-hot view. We must be grateful for small mercies throughout these latitudes of the nearer East. Syria was a land flowing with milk and honey only in the days before Italy and Southern France were made by man.

³ The Gazetteer has "Kirthár;" and the editor of "Stray Feathers" (1873), "Kitár:" I follow Mr. W. T. Blanford.

When I went home on "sick leave," after a voyage round the Cape in the stout teak-built ship *Eliza*, which, despite her sixty years, deposited me safely at Plymouth, the pilot-boat contained an old and "faithful servant" from Central Asia, accompanying his master to the land of the pork-eater.

"Allah, Allah!" ejaculated Allahdád, as he caught sight of the city, and the turfy hills, and the wooded parks, and the pretty seats round about the place with the breakwater; "what manner of men must you Feringhis be, that leave such a Bihisht (paradise), and travel to such Jahíms (pandemoniums) as ours, without manacles and the persuasion of the *chob* (bastinado)!"

And note the change, with the assistance of the "Harbour Improvements" and its map, the work of Mr. Superintendent W. H. Price. A quarter of a century ago we lay at anchor outside the bar till the pilot-boats chose to put off. A long billowy sea, blue tipped with white, swept directly into the narrow rock-girt jaw of the so-called port, which was more open and dangerous than the Eunostus of Alexandria in A.D. 1800. You rolled to such an extent that, if you liked the diversion, you could run from one side of the quarter-deck to the other, each time dipping your fingers in the brine. When disembarking sepoys, we generally expected some such terse report as —

"Rámji Náik drowned, Sá'b!"

Sometimes we had a little fun in superintending the disembarkation of the stout major, the stouter major's "lady," and the old black Ayah or Abigail, the stoutest of the trio. The latter would stick to the ladder, cling to the rope, and fearfully scan the insolent breakers that now bedewed her extensive display of leg, and then sank into a yawning abyss, deep in the centre of which lay her boat. Presently, with the aid of an impulse *à tergo*, she was rolled down into the "Bátelo," as it rose quivering upon the crest of an angry wave. She tumbled *rotunda* as a hedgehog, if not teres, fixed her claws in the pile of logs and boxes, pulled the veil over her modest head, and renewed the usual series of outrageous assertions concerning the legitimacy of the boatmen and the general moral conduct of their feminine relatives. At times, also, one of the shore-boats, weary of waiting, would make a deliberate attempt to escape; and the marine on guard would send a bullet whistling through the sail, so very close to the sailors' heads, that the project was at once nipped in the bud. Or some pepper-pod of an ensign — we call him a "sub-lieutenant in these days" — threatened the boatmen with "bamboo bakhshish;" whereat the little whity-browns on board would at once throw themselves into their quasi-natural element, and strike shorewards like dabchicks, with large frightened eyes, long brown nightgowns, and small brown bullet-heads glistening in the sun.

These "Bátela" appeared the crankiest of craft, but they were capable of going strangely well, half over, half under, the foaming waves. I never heard of a capsized. Seated partly on the gunwale, and partly in the drifting spray, we flew, as if teaming old Neptune's

drag, over the watery hills and dales, glided beneath Manhóra Fort, and, crossing the bar, acknowledged with a hearty "Thank goodness!" the satisfaction of finding ourselves in smooth water at last. But our troubles were not ended. When the water was ebbing—still the best time for entering—we were transferred from the larger Bátelo to the smaller Máchwá; and if the latter were wanting, as it often was, many a tedious hour was minuted by in the uncomfortable, unaromatic conveyance, or in a disconsolate ramble among the gulls,⁴ godwits (*Limosa ægocephala*), oyster-catchers (*Haematopus ostralegus*), and turn-stones (*Streptilas interpres*), along the monotonous desert shore. Finally, before the stump of pier was begun by Sir Charles, we were compelled to bestride the damp backs of brawny Sindís, or to walk with legs au naturel, and nether garments slung over our shoulders, through nearly a mile of mud and water, averaging two feet deep, and overlying strata of sharp shells and aquatic roots, which admirably performed the office of man-traps.

In those days the port of Karáchi had no pretensions to be called a port. The roadstead was dangerously exposed, and the "Town Creek," now the "New Channel," which ran up to the settlement, was too shallow to admit anything but flat-bottomed steamers and native craft. The carcasses of the larger vessels were stranded upon its mud banks, and, moored in its centre, you saw some twenty or thirty *Ghurábs* (Grabs) from Maskat, Baghlahs from the Persian Gulf, Kotiyahs from Kachh, and Pattimárs and Bátelas from the Konkan and Bombay. As, however, the whole of the coast, including that of Mekrán, the land of the *Mahi-Kh'árán* or Ichthyophagi, is notably deficient in harbours; and as this, though bad, is palpably the best, it began, immediately after the Conquest, to thrive upon the ruin of its maritime neighbours.

Presently Karáchi developed pretensions of her own; and she detected in her position, the point nearest to Europe, a pride of place, a virtue, a natural value which, improved by Art, would soon raise her high above obsolete and rococo Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay. Even as the latter almost depopulated Goa, which, in her day, served the same trick to Surat, so shall Karáchi, said the Karáchi-ites, become the *port* of Western India. This, however, will be true only when the Euphrates Valley Railway reaches the shores of Sind. It may come sooner than you expect, Mr. John Bull. At present your chief steward grudges a guarantee of five per cent. for a joint affair—not a private speculation as at home, nor a Government enterprise as in your outlying properties generally—he does not see the necessity of the line; and he shrewdly suspects that the object is not commercial, but political. However, the first "shake" in India, or in the outer Orient, will show him that, if your Eastern estate wants anything, it wants the Euphrates Valley Railway, almost as much as does your Western the conscription, or carrying out the militia law.

⁴ At Karáchi chiefly the *Larus Occidentalis*, and on the Sind Lakes *Larus Argentatus*. The terns are of eight species, including the large river-tern (*Sterna Aurantia*).

Accordingly, the expenditure of public money, under the Conqueror of Sind, became ultra-liberal; an army of 20,000 men was collected at Karáchi, and, as the niggard land provides scarcely sufficient grain to support its scanty population, the import trade became brisk and regular, and even the export could not help improving. It was then resolved that Karáchi should have all the advantages required by her strong young constitution. Accordingly, a stone pier was designed to run from the native town half-way down the creek. The work had its difficulties; at first it sank nearly as fast as it could be built. But Patience and Perseverance, they say, "won a wife for his Reverence." It is now the "Napier Mole Road," or "Causeway," connecting Kyámári Island, that long yellow line of sandbank, east of the harbour, with the white and green expanse which we call *terra firma*. Estimates were ordered to show what expense would attend blowing up the bar. This ugly feature was a core of rock, garnished with fine sand heaped up by the south-west monsoon as it met the regular outpour of the Chíni backwater, commonly called "Chinna Creek," and at times of the Liyári or Malyári Fiumara winding north of the Extensive fieldworks and fortifications, intended to form a depôt for the material of war, were made to rise from the barren plain. Thus the harbour-improvements were begun by the busy brain of eagle-eyed Sir Charles Napier, who claims the glory of inventing Karáchi, even as Alexander immortalized his name by perhaps his greatest exploit, the choice of Alexandria as the port-capital of the Levantine world.

And now observe the change. We will begin with Manhóra, the conglomerate – capped, quoin – shaped rock of warm yellow sandstone, rising ninety feet above sea level. It is nearly a mile in length from north-west to south-east, and it shelves towards the shore till it sinks into sand and muddy swamp, overgrown by vegetation and overflowed by every high tide. Upon the summit of this feature, which reminds me of Gwádir (Jawádur) and Maskat, rises the poor old fort whose tale has been told. Now it is carefully whitewashed, and capped with a dwelling-house; one bastion bears the Fanal, a poor catoptric affair which, though 119 feet high, and officially commanding a range of seventeen miles, is often invisible beyond six. From the hill-base projects to south-and-by-east a strip of breakwater some 500 yards long: it is built of concrete blocks, not laid "higgledy-piggledy," as at Port Sa'íd, but ranged in order by a "Triton," or lifting engine, and tipped with a lamp-post, the lamp looking from afar much like a perched crow. Very mean and poor, after the Egypto-European works at Alexandria and Port Sa'id; but meanness is the characteristic of the magnificence of Ind and Sind. At any rate the pier is useful: once within its embrace you glide through water smooth as a mill-pond, and the south-west monsoon is no longer at liberty annually to repair the bar. Two dredges and a half are still working in the Manhóra or outer port, and a line of white buoys shows the channel to the inner basin.

On the right is the East pier, the head of "Kyámári Groyne," generally called "the training Groyne," which continues the "Napier Mole Road." The two walls form an entrance – channel 500 yards broad, 900 yards long, and now 28, or officially 25, feet

deep. Here is the Manhóra harbour, where the largest merchantmen and most of the steamers lie. You will remember that the first direct ship from London, the *Duke of Argyll* (800 tons), made Karáchi in October, 1852; the year grace 1876 already shows us fourteen, and expects some twenty sail. On the left we see the white-washed bungalows of the telegraph *employés* and the three pale-faces constituting the pilot-corps; whilst above them, on the slopes of Manhóra Cliff, rise "Saint Paul's," a stiff little English church, with its red-tiled roof and pierced wall for belfry, and a Hindu Dewul with pyramid domes, which does not so much offend the eye. Nothing is more remarkable in Sind, where, generally, the dead are the better lodged, than the extent of "native" burial-ground. Even this neck of land, which tails off the Manhóra quoin, is covered with flat-topped Sunni graves, whose sandstone-slabs bear Arabic sentences in the Suls and Ruba' characters. The jackal and the utilitarian have made sad work of them, despite the annual fair and the venerable presence of a Pír, saint or santon. This also is the dwelling-place of Mr. W. H. Price, who has most worthily continued the work laid down by the late Mr. James Walker, and begun by Mr. W. Parkes. Unfortunately his health has suffered severely from overwork and exposure.

I have no intention, sir, of entering into the history of these harbour-improvements, the first undertaken in India, and the most successful of their kind, despite the opposition of obstructive Colonel Tremenheere. Mr. Price's "Memoir," maugre its official and arithmetical form, is an eminently readable paper, showing how the severest difficulties were met and mastered with hardly a single hitch. The leading idea was to make the creek-scour clean, drain, and deepen the channel. With this view the notch was opened in the "Napier Mole Road," and the Chíni backwater was dammed and diverted into the general outpour. There were, and there are still, some misgivings about the shoals of tenacious black mud, a peat of mangrove formation, deposited in parts of the port; but the engineers declare that it will disappear, and their past success entitles them to our reliance for the future. It has a malignant look, that moist and poisonous black coat; it is a shirt of Nessus, which "seems to exhale the essence of all the evil things of the earth and of the waters below the earth."

This year, *on dit*, a liberal sum has been granted to push on the works; and, as you see, much remains to be done. The breakwater is almost below water-level, and some exceptional storm may break it or even carry it bodily away. The lighthouse calls for more light. There is no room in the harbour to wedge the fleet of ships which will be wanted for the passenger-traffic, and which are wanted for the growing grain-trade. For Karáchi is now, like Odessa, Bombay, and Melbourne, a "farinaceous city;" she exports wheat and other cereals from Bahawalpur and the upper Indus Valley: when she shall be subjected to the Panjab, which will prefer her to Calcutta and Bombay, we may expect to see her attain her full development, and stand in readiness for the Euphrates Valley Railway.

Listen to what I wrote as early as 1851 concerning Karáchi Bay, the western boundary of India, as that of Bengal is its eastern: "Kurrachee" – so we spelt it in those days, after the "ultimatum" of that irrepressible Scot, Dr. Gilchrist – "wants many an improvement, which perhaps old Time, the great Progressionist, has in store for it." To Him we look for the clearing of the harbour, the drainage of the dirty backwater, and the proper management of the tidal incursions. He may please to remove the mountains of old rubbish which surround and are scattered through the native town; eventually He may clear away the crumbling hovels which received us at the head of the Custom House "Bunder," and occupy the space with an erection somewhat more dignified. Possibly He will be induced to see the pier properly finished, to macadamize the road that leads to camp, to [derive from the Indus a large canal which, equally adapted for navigation and irrigation, would fertilize every mile of the barren and hopeless-looking waste to the north-west; to] superintend the growth of a shady avenue or two, and to disperse about the environs a few large trees, which may break the force of the fierce sea-wind, attract a little rain, and create such a thing as shade. [Thus alone can Sind become what the native rhapsodist termed her, not in bitter irony, *Rashk o raghbat-i-haft Bihisht*, the envy and jealousy of the Seven Heavens.] We trust implicitly in Time. Withal we wish that those who have the power of seizing Him by the forelock would show a little more of the will to do so. The old gentleman wears a fashionable wig, curly enough in front, but close-cut behind as a poodle's back; and we, "His playthings, are always making darts at the wrong side." Confess, sir, that this is not a bad forecast.

But we are still distant from our destination, and kind Captain Morris offers us his gig. Why the B. I. S. N. Co.'s steamers should lie in the lower harbour, three miles and a half from the "native jetty," no one can say; the principal effect is to add four annas to the carriage of a parcel. We row up the land-locked channel, passing on our left the workmen's village in "Bábá Island," which, a quarter of a century ago, was a naked sand-patch; and by the bright green mangroves we trace the yellow sandy mouths of the network of creeks, known only to those who shoot "king-curlews." At the Kyámári, or upper harbour, we find red buoys intended for her Majesty's cruisers, and a large vessel disembarking what the perfume proclaims to be creosotized railway-sleepers. Hard on the right, three wooden piers project from the east end of Kyámári Island: the Commissariat, the Custom House, and the Railway or passenger jetties, all communicating more or less directly with the iron road which sweeps behind them. A coloured Karáchi-ite "Dubash," who speaks English, takes us in hand civilly but firmly; we enter an article called by courtesy a carriage, drawn by two lean *garrons* and tooled by a "Sídí," a Zanzibar negro, probably a descendant of emancipated slaves; and black Jehu has as much feeling for his beasts as if he were fresh-driven from the forests of Unyámwezi. And now let us be en route as soon as bag and baggage can be stowed away.

⁵ The sentences in brackets are later additions.

You do not regret leaving Kyámárí; whilst the air at sea is brisk and cool, this place swelters with eternal heat. We drive furiously—such is the general habit of the sable Automedon—along the two miles of macadam, justly called the "Napier Mole Road;" and we remark an inscribed memorial-obelisk posted where the last salute was fired, when the Conqueror last touched his own conquest (Oct. 1, 1847). We cross, by a fine screw-pile bridge with iron railing, the "notch," or tidal opening, opened in the Napier embankment when the damming of the Chíni backwater was determined upon; and we leave to the left the large "native jetty," crowded with "hackery" carts. Beyond it, where the Liyári Fiumara debouches, is a grand perspective of swamped boats, mud, and logs. The Custom House is a handsome building with five arches *à cheval* upon the road, and the Pattewálá, who here represents the search-officer, condescends, after a few words of explanation, to let us pass with unopened boxes. By way of contrast with it we have a white-domed and latticed tomb, and a mosque which has survived the destruction of its kind.

Here we enter the "McLeod Road," a graceful memorial to that ardent Karáchi-ite, my old friend John, deputy collector of customs, who died of a trip to Hinglaj in December, 1853. The style of the well-tiled dwelling-houses built by Europeans pleases us as much as their material does the reverse. All are faced, roughly speaking, north and south, the latter direction being seawards, a benefit which Bombay cannot enjoy; in the upper story they have deep and shady verandahs, and some of these retreats are adorned with round arches and monolithic pillars. On the other hand, the material is a loose and half-formed sandstone from the quarries near Ghisri, which a late traveller calls "Ghuznee" Bandar. The warm, sunny colour disdains glaring whitewash, or the ugly bluewash and other tints affected by the Goanese, but the surface seems to melt away in the damp sea-breeze, and the crumbling façades become painfully shabby after a short course of years. Perhaps storing it till the quarry-water has evaporated, might do some good. Passing on the right a large and spacious building, the court-house, of old the Bombay Bank, we turn into the office of the B. I. S. N. line. We inspect the winnowing machines, and we are lucky enough to receive from Mr. W. Thorburn a hospitable invitation to take up our quarters at his comfortable house in camp.

We carry, it is true, introductory letters for a pair of young *employés*, but they will not be of much use—economy and "privilege leave" are both terribly adverse to the guest—right. One gentleman will not even return your cards before your departure from the province; the other will send you, after a delay of six hours, some such production as this, marked outside, "On Her Majesty's Service":—

"DEAR MR. BULL,

"I have just received Brown's letter, and regret that my father expects the house to be so full to-day, owing to the Joneses arriving from Hyderabad and the

Robinson's (*sic*) from Manora, that he cannot have the pleasure of inviting you to stay in Luckingham House during your stay in Kurrachee.

"Please let me know if I can be of any use to you, and where you are thinking of residing in Kurrachee.

(Signed)

"Yours very truly,

"A. B. PINCHER."

There is, I may tell you, a neat little club, but it lacks chambers. Karáchi cannot yet boast of an hotel; nor will she before she belongs to the Panjab. In fact, without Mr. Thorburn's kindness, you would have lodged at the travellers' bungalow—a refuge for the wholly destitute of friends. The establishment is neat and tolerably well kept by an Italian, Signor N—; but the charges are abnormally extortionate, even for the messmen of travellers' bungalows in general, and the municipality would do well to abate this nuisance.

Before making camp, let us at once visit the native town. Karáchi, you must know, has been identified by some palæogeographers, since the days of Dalrymple's "Crotchey" or "Caranjee" (1795), with Crocala or Krókala, the island whence Nearchus sailed for Mekrán and Persia, and some old maps inscribe it "Alexandri Portus." The principal reason seems to be that it stands in a department still called Krakraleh or Karkalla. There are two objections to this theory. Karáchi was built and walled round only about a century and a half ago by Máí Murádi, the wife of a Jokiya chief; before that time the fishermen lived on board their boats.⁶ Fort Manhóra dates from only A.D. 1797. Secondly, no ruins of any antiquity have been found in, near, or about it. On the other hand, 2000 years or so give time and enough for a total change of site, or for burying fathoms deep the old remnants.⁷

You observe the lines of oyster shells which define the shore, and the baskets of live mollusks offered to us at every corner. Those, sir, are the produce of our once celebrated pearl-fishery. They are considerably larger than your natives—do you remember them in these hard times?—and their contents are not quite so well-flavoured. They also

⁶ The Gazetteer (*sub voce*) gives a long account of the foundation of Karachi, but all comes from a suspected source.

⁷ I am not aware that the country about the lower Eastern Nára and its debouchure, the Kori Creek, has yet been carefully examined by any antiquary. The best maps show the one large and two small islands, which may represent Crocala and Bíbakta (Arrian), the latter called Bibraga by Pliny and Biblus by Philostratus. But it is more than probable that the whole sea-front has completely changed within the last few centuries. Still, it is within this shore that we must look for Barbarei, Pátala (Pattala or Pattali), Susicana, Bonis, Kolaka, the Naustathmus Nearchi (near Lowry Bandar?), Stoura, Káumara (which has a fanciful likeness to Kyámári), Koreatis, and other classical posts.

afforded a very barbaric Margarita,⁸ of dingy hue, somewhat larger than a pin's head. This source of revenue, such as it was, has been long ago dried up, not by the "ignorance and folly of the Amírs," but by the stolidity of certain local officials, successors to that well-abused dynasty, and by the rapacity of certain black servants of a white house which contracted for the fisheries, and which mercilessly fished up every shell it could find. You bear in mind what a similar want of a "close season" has done nearer home.

Karachi town, when I first became acquainted with it, was much like the Alexandria of a century and a half ago: a few tenements of stone and lime emerging from a mass of low hovels, mat and mud, and of tall mud houses with windowless mud walls, flat mud roofs, and many Bád-gírs or mud ventilators, surrounded by a tumble-down curtain-cum-bastions of mud, built upon a humble platform of mud-covered rock. The mud (Káhgil), hereabouts used as adobe or sun-dried brick, and the plaster that binds it, are river-clay (silt or warp) thrown into a pit, puddled with water, trodden till ready for use, and mixed for the outer coating with finely chopped straw. This chaff acts as hair in English mortar: without it, as the Children of Israel learnt, the bricks would crumble to pieces in the shortest possible time; and throughout Sind, perhaps I may say Central Asia, this morose-looking mud is the favourite material, because it keeps out heat and cold. Such was the Fort or official town. Formerly it fined off into straggling suburbs of "Jhomprís," booths of tamarisk branches and thorns, and it extended from both banks of the Liyári Fiumara northwards, to the Creek-head at the south. On approaching it, three organs were affected, far more powerfully, however, than pleasantly, viz., the Ear, the Nose, and the Eye. The former was struck by the tomtoming and squeaking of native music; by the roaring, bawling, *criard* voices of the people; by the barkings and brayings of stranger-hating curs, and by the screams of hungry gulls fighting over scraps of tainted fish. The drainage, if you could so call it, was managed by evaporation: every one threw before his dwelling what was not wanted inside, whilst dogs, kites, and crows were the only scavengers; and this odour of carrion was varied, as we approached the bázárs, by a close, faint, dead smell of drugs and spices, such as might be supposed to proceed from a newly made "Osiris."

The eye again noted a people different from their Indian neighbours. Their characteristic is a peculiar blending of the pure Iranian form and tint with those of the southern Aryans. Their features are regular; their hair, unlike the lank Turanian locks of the great Peninsula, though coarse, is magnificent in colour and quantity; the beard is thick, glossy, and curling; and the figure is manly and well-developed. You knew the Moslems by their hirsute chins, by their slipperless feet, by their long calico shirts, and by a pair of indigo-dyed drawers extending from waist to knee. They also wore the Sindi hat, now waxing rare; it was an inverted "tile," with a brocaded cylinder and a red

⁸ Arrian expressly tells us that Mapyapírns is an Eastern word, and we find it in the Arabic and Persian "Murwárid," a pearl.

upper brim: the latter in the few survivors seems to grow wider and wider every year, and now it threatens to cut out the Quaker's broad-brim; — that small boy's "Siráiki topi" must measure nearly eleven inches across. Hindus were distinguished by fairness, or rather yellowness, of complexion, a dab of vermilion or sandal-wood between the eyebrows, and the thread of the twice-born hung over the left shoulder and knotted against the right side. The descendants, male and female, of African slaves abounded: we met them everywhere with huge water-skins on their brawny backs, or carrying burdens fit only for buffaloes. The women of the Moháná (fishing caste) were habited in sheets, which covered the head; in the "Gaj," or tight embroidered bodice; in red skirts, and in long pantaloons of coloured cotten tightened round the ankle. This characteristic race, whose language would make Billingsgate blush, seldom wore veils in the streets, modesty not being one of their predilections; nor were they at all particular about volunteering opinions concerning your personal appearance, which freedom in the East, you must know, is strange.

And now Karáchi, after growing from 6000 to 45,000 souls, has become, externally at least, mighty respectable and dull. The stragling suburbs have been removed, and the general shape is a broad arrow-head pointing northwards, and striking the Fiumara, or Sukhi Naddi (dry river), as the Hindis call it.⁹ The material is still the old, dull-grey mud, on foundations of stone; but it is lighted up and picked out with more chunam and whitewash. The dark, narrow alleys have been improved off, except in the bázárs; the streets are wide, open, and glaring; each has its name and its pair of *trottoirs*, whilst the quasi-civilized *reverbère* contrasts with the whitewashed and beflagged tombs of various Pírs, or holy men, still encumbering the thoroughfares. There is a general Bombay look about the place, the result of deep eaves supported by corbelled posts; of a grand Hindu establishment or two; of the new market-place, and of large school and native police stations. And it will improve still more, under the blessing of Agni Devta, the Fire-god; only yesterday, as we may see by the smoking black heaps, a quarter of the town, to the right of the Liyári, was happily improved off.

Striking from the river-bank by "Ali Akbar Street" towards the cantonment, we pass the new Hindu Dewal, a whitewashed pyramid with its usual broken outlines; the Church mission-house, school, and church with its lancet windows; the Government school, with its tall clock-tower; and the new Dharmsálá, built by a native, with its couple of onion domes, evident imitations of a Sindi tomb. To the right of the Bandar Road, which connects the port with the "bush," runs "Ghárikatá Road," leading to the large iron-foundry and engineering works of the energetic Mr. Dawvid Mackenzie, who built the Napier barracks, and who is building the State Railway. Here, too, are the telegraph establishment, denoted by a huge signal-staff, and the post-office, which might profitably be on a much larger scale. We then pass attempts at gardens, and thin plantations of cocoa-nuts, no longer surrounded by dwarf and broken walls of puddle.

⁹ "Hindu" is used for Pagan, and "Hindi" for Moslem; and "bázár" is distinguished from "Bazaar."

That lofty clump to the right shelters some houses inhabited by holy characters; and a riveted tank, full during the rains, distinguishes the Rám Bágh, or garden of Ráma Chandra, who must not be confounded with Parashu Ráma, or Ráma of the battle-axe, living in B.C. 1176(?).¹⁰ The mighty hero and demi-god named after the moon here passed a night, some few million years ago, a term by us reduced to B.C. 961(?), when he and his pretty wife Sita were, like ourselves, merrily gipsying about the Unhappy Valley towards holy Hinglaj. There are three other tanks, which drain the adjacent lands after heavy showers; and the sooner they are clothed with stone, and subjected to European superintendence, the less we shall suffer from the excessive and pernicious damp of Karachi.

On the left are the Ranchor lines, the dwelling-place of characters quite the reverse of those tenanted by holy Rám-Bágh and missionary Christ Church. We then strike the oldest cemetery, which in the unhealthy days of yore numbered its holocaust of victims. That prim building, not unlike a church, is the Small Cause Court, and the successful rascality which goes on within its walls suggests a modification of a certain proverb anent honesty. Then we come to the Travellers' Bungalow, advertizing itself in large letters: there are two detached cottages to the south, and to the north a big block, with an attached billiard-room. We have now nothing to do beyond following "Kacheri (Cutchery) Road," and a mile of exceedingly dusty and disagreeable highway will conclude our total of five, and land us at our destination-camp.

¹⁰ Lieutenant-Colonel Sleeman ("Rambles and Recollections") proposes the following crucial dates :-

Parashu Ráma	born B.C. 1176.
Ráma Chandra	born B.C. 961.
Yudhishtira	born B.C. 575
Krishna	born August 7, A.D. 600.

I may briefly state my conviction that the antiquity of Hindu history advocated by Sanskritists is a mere delusion. The Greek travellers after Alexander's day, though mentioning letters and writing, do not allude to Indian literature. The earliest inscriptions date from King Asoka, the grandson of Chandragupta (Sandracottus), B.C. 275-250. The earliest cave-characters are, according to the late Dr. John Wilson, of Bombay, derived from a combination of the Phoenician and Greek alphabets; and writing was probably long confined to the "Brachmanes," a particular tribe. The Yugas and eras were astronomical; the heroes, like the Rámas, were legends of ancient race-struggles; and the claim to fabulous antiquity is simply that of every barbarous race.

CHAPTER III.

THE CANTONMENT, KARÁCHI, AND ITS "HUMOURS" – THE ANGLO-INDIAN ARMY "ROTTEN FROM HEAD TO FOOT" – SOCIETY AND POLITICS.

Your first night in Sind, Mr. Bullhow did you like it? This is early November, the opening of the cold season: what can Murray's Handbook mean by saying, "He [the traveller] will have to encounter, except from the 1st of December to the 1st of March, intense heat"? I have wandered about every part of the Unhappy Valley, especially its western frontier, the Baluch Hills,¹¹ and I have everywhere found that the cool season begins with October, and does not end till April is well on. But my able friend, the author of "*Dry Leaves from Young Egypt*," is adverse to the old Conqueror; at least so I read (p. 472): "Sir C. Napier, by a series of aggressive measures, forced the Amírs of Haidarábád to open resistance; and, having defeated them at the battle of Miyání, on the 17th of February, 1843, and again on the 24th of March, at Dappa or Dabba on the Phulelí, annexed the whole country." Despite the "Peccavi" motto proposed by Mr. *Punch* for the Devil's Brother, the aggressive measures in question were begun by the late Sir James Outram, greatly to whose disgust they were carried out by Sir Charles Napier.

The secret history of the whole transaction will, I hope, presently appear in the autobiography of my old friend, Mirzá Ali Akbar Khán Bahádur, who has undertaken his memoirs at my special request. He was on field service from the march into Afghanistan (1838) to the reduction of Sind (1843), and for nine years he served his employers with honour and honesty. No sooner, however, had Sir Charles left the country than a cruel blow was struck at his favourite Munshí (secretary), apparently with the object of pleasing the now defunct Court of Directors and of annoying the veteran, who resented the manœuvre strongly. A charge was preferred against him fictions, such as keeping racers, which were wholly imaginary, and a magnificent house, which sold, to my certain knowledge, for £60, were pushed forward in official documents; the accused, whom Sir Charles Napier called an "excellent public servant," and of whom he ever spoke in the very highest terms, was characterized as an unscrupulous though clever and agreeable rogue.¹² Briefly, the Mirzá was removed

¹¹ "It does not appear that he (Capt. Burton) had any opportunities of being acquainted with the Bilúchís of the Hills" (p. 473, 1859). My old and valued chief, Gen. Walter Scott, B.E., who died before receiving my last letter, could have told another tale.

¹² From his Excellency Sir C. J. Napier, K.C.B., to the Right Hon. the Governor-General of India in Council.

"Kurrachee, 14th September, 1847.

from the service, and his pension was refused—an injury added to insult. The deed was done in 1847, yet even now, methinks, it is not too late to make amends for it. The East India Office cannot, of course, enter into a question which was decided thirty years ago, but it could find some Government appointment to do away with the stigma so unjustly cast upon, and to cheer the declining years of, a good and faithful *employé*, "an excellent public servant."¹³

In later April, Mr. John Bull, I should have your couch placed in the verandah; secured, however, from the land and sea breezes, which are liable to cause "chills:" you never could have endured the 90° F. heat of an inner room. Now I come to awake you at 4.30 a.m., and take you to constitutionalize a little before the sun appears. The great secret of health in this arid part of the East lies, believe me, in the daily habit of a long walk, not a lazy canter, during the morning-fresh. The sensible man is followed, at such times, by his horse and its keeper; and, when tired, he mounts and gallops back to quarters. Nothing more fatal, to soldiers at least, than the systematic avoidance of light which prevailed, for instance, in the Bengal army. Officers and men whose pale and etiolated

"MY LORD, "I have the honour to enclose to your Lordship the memorial of my Moonshee, Ali Akbar Khan Bahadoor, together with a copy of a letter written to Lieutenant-Colonel Outram, my predecessor as Political Agent in Sind.

"From the moment of my arrival I found the Moonshee all that Lieutenant-Colonel Outram's letter says of him. I have no hesitation in saying that, for the five years during which I have commanded in Sind, Ali Akbar has been of the greatest service, and I feel under very great obligations to this excellent public servant, in whom I have very great confidence, and repeat Lieutenant-Colonel Outram's words, 'It is with truth, and in mere justice, that I declare I never have witnessed services, by any native Indian, more zealous, more able, or more honest than such as Ali Akbar has rendered to Government under me for five years.'" He has been attacked by a party inimical to me, and merely, I believe, because he is my Moonshee. I have not taken his part. I left him to defend himself, and their ill-natured attacks have died a natural death. I now feel it to be my duty to recommend this able and faithful public servant to your Lordship in Council, and I hope that his petition may be granted, to be allowed to retire from the service on two hundred rupees a month, this being half his present pay.

"If his length of public services be short, it will be recollected that it has been, through the difficulties and dangers of the Afghan and Sind wars, a time of incessant exertion, including the dangers of two general actions, in which he conducted himself bravely. If the prayer of Ali Akbar's memorial be granted, I can assure your Lordship in Council that few things would be more grateful to me. "I have, &c.,

(Signed)
"C. NAPIER,
"Lieut.-General, Governor of Sind."

¹³ Colonel A. B. Rathborne, an old Sindian, has just published the following weighty words: "There is a saying attributed, I believe, to the great Mahomedan Prophet, that an hour of justice is worth a life of prayer.' It is a maxim which, I am sorry to say, our Government in India too often violates in the pursuit of what it deems policy; not remembering that no object ought to be paramount in the statesman's eyes to that, not only of doing justice to the best of his ability, but also of *remedying any act of past injustice*, no matter at what cost to his own feelings, or to the feelings of those serving under him, if it only be made clear to him that injustice has been done." - "The True Line of Defence for India." London: East India Association, Westminster.

skins struck the eye at once, suddenly sent upon a campaign where severe exposure is inevitable, sank under the baptism of fire—sunstroke and other horrors. The more you know of the Greater Light the more, I grant, you will and should respect it; but this only means that you should take due precautions. Mr. E. B. Eastwick tells us, "An English jockey-cap, with a muslin turban twisted round it"—he might have added a flap to defend the carotid arteries, and a Kamarband or shawl to guard the pit of the stomach—"and wetted occasionally, will be the best defence against the frightful heat of Sindh." Personally, I hold to the white umbrella, which the disciples of General John Jacob (of whom more presently) consider "effeminate." It must be owned, however, that on horse-back, especially when riding fast, it is inconvenient as well as unsightly. In the evening you can repeat your ride, or play golf, badminton, the almost obsolete croquet and tennis, or the still favourite rackets and polo.

We can now, if you please, perambulate the camp, and devote the evening and the morrow to a few excursions in the immediate neighbourhood of Karachi.

Karáchi is still the capital village of the local government, and the head-quarters of the European regiment. Under the *Conquistador* the camp usually numbered about 5000 to 8000 men, both colours and all arms included. This strong force has been greatly reduced. The "boss" is now a brigadier-general, commanding the station (where he resides) and the Sind district, no longer a division: it may, however, recover its honours when annexed to the Panjab. He has no adjutant-general; only a brigade-major and a quartermaster-general. The single white corps is the 56th, and the "Pompadors" detach two companies to Haydarábád. Here we have no cavalry. Three corps of the Sind Horse (about 1480 sabres) are stationed at Jacobábád, their head-quarters; they also man all the adjoining outposts. The arms are carbine and sword; the uniform is almost that of the Cossack, the old Crimean Bashi-Buzuks, and the irregular cavalry in general green tunics and overalls; turban, riding boots, and black belts. The native infantry at Karáchi is now the 2nd Beloch Regiment (29th Bombay Native Infantry). They wear light serge blouses in working costume, and green tunics with red facings for full dress; loose blue "Pagris;" madder-stained knickerbockers—"cherubim shorts" are excellent for wear—and white, which should be brown, gaiters covering blucher boots. Their weapons are those of the Sepoy line generally. At Jacobábád, on the north-western frontier, are also Jacob's Rifles (30th Regiment Bombay Native Infantry), averaging some 700 men armed with Sniders, and habited in Khákí, or drab-coloured drill. Haydarábád, besides its two white companies, is garrisoned by the 1st Beloch Regiment (27th Bombay Native Infantry), known by its looser turbans.

The artillery of the Sind district is now commanded by a lieutenant-colonel, residing at head-quarters. Under him are two field batteries of white troops; one stationed here, the other at Haydarábád. Finally, at Jacobábád there is a mountain train, about 150 men, with two mortars and as many howitzers (all 4 inches), which are to be exchanged for steel breechloaders weighing 200 pounds, and drawn by the sure-footed mule. A move

has lately been made in the right direction as regards the "gunners," and presidential jealousies have been abated by appointing a Director-General of Ordnance for all India. Still, the mountain-train is left almost inefficient, the complaint of universal India; fourteen mules are short, and the commanding officer, Captain Young, an officer of twelve years' experience in Sind, "passed" also in the native languages, could hardly take the field in full force without great delay.

Thus, you see, Mr. Bull, Sind has utterly eliminated the Sepoy, whilst India has reduced her Sepoy army to a mere absurdity. The claims of economy, the delusive prospect of peace, and last, not least, the loud persistent voice of Prophet and Acting-Commissioner, General John Jacob, and his "silahdar system," prevailed against the old organization and common sense. He was in many ways a remarkable man, endowed with that calm and perfect confidence in himself which founds "schools," and which propagates faiths. Accustomed to base the strongest views, the headstrongest opinions, upon a limited experience of facts, he was an imposing figure as long as he remained in obscurity. But, unfortunately, one of his disciples and most ardent admirers, Captain (now Sir Lewis) Pelly, published, shortly after his death, an octavo containing the "Views and Opinions of General John Jacob,"¹⁴ and enabled the world to take the measure of the man.

General John Jacob's devotion to his own idea has left a fatal legacy, not only to Sind, but to the whole of India. Sir Charles Napier, a soldier worth a hundred of him, had steadily advocated increasing, with regiments on service, the number of "Sepoy officers" – then six captains, twelve lieutenants, and four ensigns. The Conqueror of Sind protested that the "Regulars" were not regular enough, the best men being picked out for staff and detached appointments. The "butcher's bill" of every battle, I may tell you, gives nearly double the number of casualties among the "black officers," as we were called; and at Miyáni we were six deaths to one "white officer." The reason is obvious; the "palefaces" must lead their companies, wings, and corps, otherwise the natives, commissioned, non-commissioned, and privates, will not advance in the teeth of too hot a fire. We are already made sufficiently conspicuous by the colour of our skins and by the cut of our uniforms, while the enemy is always sharp enough to aim at "picking" us "off."

General John Jacob proposed, in opposition to the Conqueror of Sind, to supplant the Regular system by the Irregular, which means diminishing the number of Englishmen. Having the pick and choice of the Indian army at his disposal, he succeeded in fairly drilling and disciplining his Sind Horse; *argal*, as the grave-digger said, he resolved that the Sind Horse should become a model and a pattern to the whole world. He honestly puffed his progeny on all occasions, even when it least deserved praise. During our four months' raid on Southern Persia, the Sind Horse was pronounced by all the cavalymen

¹⁴ Smith, Taylor, and Co., Bombay, 1858.

present to be the last in point of merit; the same was the case in Abyssinia; and during the Mutiny many of his men were found among the "Pándís." Yet he puffed and preached and wrote with such vigour that the military authorities, worn out by his persistency, and finding that the fatal measure would save money, gave ear to the loud harsh voice. In an inauspicious hour the whole Regular Sepoy force of India was not only irregularized: it was, moreover, made a bastard mixture of the Regular and the Irregular.

The result is the ruin of the Indian army. The system itself is simply a marvel. The corps have either too many officers or too few. For drilling purposes you want only a commandant, an adjutant (who should also be musketry-instructor), and a surgeon; or at most the three combatants who led the old Irregular corps. For fighting you require, besides the field-officers, at least two Englishmen or, better still, three per company. It is, I own, possible to increase the normal complement by free borrowing from the staff corps, and from the rest of the army, but every soldier will tell you that this is a mere shift: the officers must know their men, and the men their officers.

Again, under the present system, which effectually combines the faults of both the older, and the merits of neither, your infantry corps with its full cadre, of which half is usually absent, theoretically numbers nine European officers. One, the surgeon, is a non-combatant, and two, the adjutant and quarter-master, are usually represented by the wing subalterns.

An English regiment, with its cadre of thirty, mounts only its field-officers and adjutant. An Indian corps—would you believe it?—mounts the lieutenant-colonel commanding; the major, second in command; the two wing officers, the two wing subalterns, the adjutant, and the quarter-master. The result is to incur the moral certainty of their all being swept away by the first few volleys. True, you have sixteen native commissioned officers, forty havildars (sergeants), and the same number of náiks (corporals), a total of ninety-six. But the belief that Sepoys will fight, without Englishmen to lead them, is a snare, a sham, and a delusion.

A host of other evils besets the present state of things. Your cavalry corps are so weak in officers, rank and file, that a six months' campaign would reduce them each to a single troop. Your infantry regiments, eight companies of seventy-five bayonets each, or a total of 640, have not been reduced to the form now recognized as the best tactical unit. Again, officers are still transferred, after six and even seven years' service, from the white to the black line, thus bringing them upon the Indian pension-list without having served the full time. They also want *esprit de corps*; they dislike and despise "Jack Sepoy," and their chief object in life is to regain something more congenial than the outstation and the dull, half-deserted mess. Again, at the other end of the scale, field-officers of twenty-five to thirty years' Indian service, are made to do subalterns' work. Regimental zeal is being annihilated; and the evil of senility is yearly increasing. Let me

relate a case which you shall presently see for yourself. Major A-, who has served in a corps for nine years, who has seen three campaigns, and who for three years has acted second in command, lately finds himself superseded by a lieutenant-colonel, when he himself expects to become lieutenant-colonel within six months. What is the result? He is utterly weary of the service; he has lost all heart for its monotonous duties. "An old subaltern," says one of your favourites, "is a military vegetable, without zeal as without hope."

Again, the new furlough regulations, after abundant "considerings," have turned out so badly that all who can cleave to the old. Why grant leave, with full pay and allowances for six months, to Kashmir and to the depths of the Himalayas, and yet refuse it to the home-goer, under pain of English pay? Why should the Civil Service have, and the military lack, "privilege leave"? Why thus adhere to old and obsolete tradition, so as to make the soldier's life as unpleasant as possible? Why – But at this rate, sir, "Whys" will never end.

Sir Henry Havelock's truthful statement in the House of Commons, that the Anglo-Indian army is "rotten from head to foot," has surprised the public mass which puts trust in Pickwickian and official declarations. We, who know the subject, declare that the Indian is, perhaps, in a worse condition than the home force; and we assert that the idea of opposing regiments, so officered and so manned, to the Russians, or even to the Afghans, is simply insane.

Do not disbelieve me, Mr. John Bull, because my language is not rose-watered. The Old Maids' Journal (*Spectator*) – ancient, but not very pretty, virginity has lately been berating me for seeking "cheap credit" by "pointing out how much better duties might be done by persons whose business it is to do them." But officials are ever in trammels, whilst we critics, who look only to results, are not; moreover, a man is hardly omniscient because his work is in this or that department, or even because he holds high rank in this or that service. And did not Voltaire think and declare that, of all the ways of Providence, nothing is so inscrutable as the littleness of the minds that control the destinies of great nations?

Some have distinction, you know, forced upon them; others win it by means which honest men despise. They never report the truth, unless pleasant to the ear: they calculate that, possibly, the disagreeable will not occur; and that, if it does, their neglect will be slurred over and forgotten. "Plausible and specious," they can preach and they can lecture; they can talk "soft sawder," and they can quote platitudes *ad infinitum*. These superficial specimens of humanity, who know which side their bread is buttered, owe their rise, their stars and ribbons, their K.C.B.'s and pensions, not to the sterling merits of courage and ability, of talents and manliness, but to the oily tongue that knows so well to work the oracle, and to a readiness of "changing tactics as the

chameleon changes colour." In short, these gentlemen have mastered the "gospel of getting-on;" the species "neglected Englishman" has not.

Thus you have no right to be surprised, as you often are, when some notorious incapable, intrusted with an office of the highest responsibility, comes to grief. His "Kismet," his "Nasib," his star, have been in the ascendant, and he has done nothing to obscure them by personal merit, by originality, by candour, or by over-veracity. These qualities are sure to make enemies, and the Millennium must dawn before your friends—private, public, or political—will look after you with the vigour and the tenacity of your foes.

But so rotten is the state, so glaring is the inefficiency, of the Indian army, that you will not be astonished to hear reports of "organic changes" and fundamental reforms, or even to see a return to the old system. Strange to say, Lord Northbrook, the civilian, saw the necessity of reorganization. Lord Napier, the soldier, who, during the Abyssinian campaign, sent for officers to every Presidency, ignored it. Perhaps the Napierian clique took the opportunity to oppose, tooth and nail, the efforts of another service. The Shi'ahs, who, you know, abhor the Sunnis bitterly as Roman Catholics hate Protestants, when any mode of action left to private judgment is proposed, always choose the line opposed to that taken by their heretic enemies—*raghman li-'l-Tasannun*;—"in adverse bearing to Sunnship," as the religious formula runs.

Let us now return to camp.

Karáchi cantonment stands upon a slope which commands a view of sandy Kyámári, the pinnacled Oyster Rocks, and the Manhóra quoin. Eastwards it is limited by the head of the Chíni, now a mangrove-grown swamp uncommonly fetid in the hot season, and kept from spreading northwards by the raised road to that little chain of truncated cones, whereon are built Honeymoon Lodge, Clifton, and Ghisri. In this direction, also, is the Frere railway station for camp, distant six miles from the Kyámári head, whence the line winds to the south of the cantonment: two tall smoke-stacks mark the place from afar. Here also was founded the inevitable Frere Town, but unhappily it did not progress beyond the fourth house. The surface is a hard, dry crust of sand, gravel, and silt, thinly spread over beds of stone and pebbles. Water, salt as that of the sea, underlies the surface at three to seven feet. This also is the average depth of the wells: the best supply in camp is in the compound of Messrs. Treacher and Co. When its horizon is shallow, the houses suffer; the lower part of the walls is damp-stained, and the inmates have reason to fear fever.

The streets of camp are level roads of exemplary breadth, macadamized with the crumbling sandstone, whose dust no possible amount of wetting and watering has power to lay. The little stream-beds are bridged over, and the oil-lamps at night cry for gas. The "compounds" which flank the thoroughfares are now girt with masonry; the

milk-bush hedges, which sheltered snakes and various abominations, and the wire-fences, which broke many a leg as the owner was riding home in the dark, have clean disappeared. Philologists, by the way, derive the word from the Portuguese *Campanha*; the facetious explain it as a composition of the courtyard and the garden. The vegetation is of that hardy sort which can thrive upon salt water: the scraggy casuarina—as yet the eucalyptus has not had a fair trial—the tamarisk, the Babúl (mimosa), the *Salvadora persica*, and an occasional date-palm; besides cactus, aloes, and euphorbia, oleanders, and a variety of salsolaceous plants. Turf is a clear impossibility, and those who attempt to grow European shrubs and flowers must seek a sheltered spot, and nurse them carefully as though they were "Europe babies."

It is easy to detect the humble dwellings of the primitive colonists (1844), sheds of wattle and dab, more or less whitewashed, in the shape of single-poled tents: they are now degraded into stables or servants' offices. The first step was followed by double-storied houses, with extensive ranges of rooms and thickly-stuccoed flat roofs, made to be promenaded. These, however, arose only when men could calculate upon being stationary for a time at the "station" of Karáchi. Except in a few instances, all were bungalows, parallelograms of unlovely regularity, with walls of sun-dried brick, double-whitewashed to promote cleanliness and glare; sometimes level above, more often pent-shaped with red and blue tiles; while the pulled-out eaves, prevented from falling by clumsy brick or rough wooden pillars, made the interiors pleasantly or painfully dark. Each had its dependent lines of dirty, dingy "cook-houses," dens for the blacks, and other conveniences, built far enough off to temper the pungency of the screams and the steams that escaped through the doorless doorways. Finally appeared a few pretentious erections, built in no earthly style of architecture, which puzzled you as to their intentions: these were the "follies" of Anglo-Indian clerks and mulatto writers, a race of men which ever hugely delights in converting rupees to unlovely masses of brick and mortar.

Yet there was some character in camp, and each domicile spoke plainly enough for its tenant. Here the huge stuccoed pile, with tall arches and bright "Chiks," or blinds, between, towering above a thick screen of euphorbia, which took the labour of a dozen men to water, denoted the commissariat or the staff officer. How well I remember this one, where the devout owner, generally known as "Dismal Jemmy," forbade his servants to feed his horses, but made them drive and drag him to church, on the "Sawbath." There, the small neat building with jealously curtained windows, a carriage under the adjoining shed, comparatively clean outhouses, and an apology for a garden, kept up in the face of many difficulties, pointed out the captain or field-officer with the white wife. A little beyond it another bungalow, trellised round with bamboo-work, a gaudy palanquin lying near the dirty huts, and two or three jaunty, debauched-looking "darkies," dressed in the height of black dandyism, showed manifest traces of the black

wife, the "Búbú."¹⁵ Further still, you remarked a long low range of stained and dilapidated buildings, under whose broad verandah still slept three or four young gentlemen, despite the glittering morn, the yelping of a dozen terriers, and the squabbling of as many Mhár or Pariah servants, each exhorting his neighbour to do *his* work that was a Castle of Indolence, in which several subalterns of a white regiment chummed together, for the greater facility of murdering Time. Again, you observed a mean-looking bungalow, with appended stables and kennels, which were by far the best part of the establishment; the fine head of a castey Arab peeping from the loose box being the only sign of life about the place: that was a "Duck"¹⁶ Subaltern Hall." The two latter tenements were in a state of admirable disorder: the fences were broken down by being used as leaping-bars, the garden was destroyed by being made a ringing-ground, and the walls were pitted with pistol-shot and pellet-bow. Near each, a goodly heap of dusty "Marines," which had travelled from the generous vineyards of the South to do their duty on the parched plains of Sind, lay piled, hard by shattered six-dozen chests, old torn fly-tents, legless chairs, and other pieces of furniture that had suffered from the wars within doors. The bottle difficulty, indeed, is not yet solved. When I entered the Unhappy Valley, we used to exchange one for a fowl: now they are mere rubbish till breweries shall be established; and he who patents some profitable way of converting the waste glass into rupees will make his fortune. For princely incomes have arisen from bottles; witness, to quote one of many, Sir Jamsetji Jijibhai, "Báttli-wálá" and Baronet.

Time, which found Karáchi camp built of unbaked brick, has now turned it into stone. The huge dirty Sadr, or high, bázár, "full of shopkeepers and servants, soldiers and sepoys, ladies of no virtue to speak of, nude children, and yelping curs—a scene strictly in the Eastern low-life style"—which disgraced the camp, has now been broadened, cleansed, and converted into a general market. Some of the houses, for instance that of Adam Ali, are remarkably good and, where the high-road runs, all the hovels have made way for a dickey of "*pakka*"¹⁷-built stores in the newest Sindi style. We find the *modiste*, Madame Schlepper, who occasionally suffers from a creditor slipping away; Mr. Davidson, an old soldier, keeping a general store; the photographic rooms of Mr. Michie; and, finally, Mr. Speechly, the apothecary, who, here as elsewhere, soon becomes rich by selling pennyworths for sixpences. The "large, roomy bungalows, oblong, single-storied buildings dressed with mathematical precision to the front," are become five huge blocks, costing as many lakhs and more, extending over an immense

¹⁵ A Western Indian corruption of "Bíbí."

¹⁶ Ducks, Bombayites - from the bummalow or bobil, the dried fish still called "Bombay Duck;" "Qui Hyes," Bengalís - from the eternal "Koi hay?" (who's there?) that took the place of bells; and lastly, "Mulls," or Madrassís from the Benighted Presidency, because they lived upon' water and malligatawny, or they made a "mull" of everything they attempted.

¹⁷ "*Pakká*" (ripe), opposed to "*kachá*" (raw), is an indispensable word in the Anglo-Indian dialect. Your "*pakká*" house is of stone and mortar; and your "*pakká*" appointment is the reverse of a "*kachá*," or acting one.

space east of the Staff Lines, with arched verandahs in the second floor to catch the sea-breeze: nowhere is the British soldier better lodged and cared for than in the Napier Barracks, built about 1868. During her childhood Karáchi had two race-courses and no church. Then she broke out into a Protestant chapel with very little outward show, and a Roman Catholic chapel built palpably for effect: in these days it appears a mean white structure of the poorest Portuguese type, thoroughly, "sat upon" and dwarfed by St. Patrick's to the north-north-east of the Napier Barracks. And the Church in general is magnificently lodged. The Parsís have a latticed fire-temple in the bázár. The Catholics have grown a large and splendid nunnery and girls' school near the old cemetery. The Methodists have a chapel, parsonage, and school close to the bázár; and we shall presently prospect the Kirk and the Established Church. The station "devil-dodger," as his reverence was irreverently termed by the subalterns, who bestrode his old grey Rosinante in the costume of his cloth, a black tail-coat and a tile covered with white calico, has been multiplied by six, most of whom wear the *petit collet*. The "species of barn intended for the accommodation of the drama" has developed into a tolerably neat little theatre, where strollers sometimes appear during the season: this begins about the end of March, when the Commissioner and the staff-officers return from district work. The "iceless receptacle for Wenham Lake ice" is supplanted by a tall-chimney'd manufactory, which produces, however, an unpleasant substitute. Aerated, unduly called soda, water is made at the rate of half an anna per bottle; it smacks unpleasantly of its native element, and the *connoisseur* pronounces it much inferior to that of Sakhar. There is a club which wants only a new club-house, with a decent-sized dining-room, and chambers for the passing stranger: here, if truth be spoken, early play is on a liberal scale. There is even reform and repair in the uncanny-looking yellow and white building, the old Freemasons' Lodge, accommodating some nine different items, for which I must refer you to Handbooks: the natives will call it Jádú-ghar, or "Sorcery-house." The vulgar estimate of the respectable order is that we represent a band of sorcerers, who meet in the *φιλαδέλφειον* to worship the Shaytán, the "horned man in the smoky house," and to concert diabolical projects against the Chosen People of Allah themselves. The more learned Oriental believes the mystic craft to be a relic of Monotheism, and especially of Guebrism, embedded in the modern structure of Christianity. It is the fashion, I may observe, with Moslem free-thinkers to hold the Emperor Aurelian's opinion, that, "among all the Gods, none is truly worthy of adoration but the sun;" and, impressed with this idea, Mr. Bull, their minds naturally detect lurking Guebrism in all beliefs.

The West End of Karáchi is where the old Staff Lines run from north-north-west to south-south-east, where the grandees dwell, and where his Excellency the Governor or the Commissioner, as the case may be—titles are frail things hereabouts—holds his little court. Five straight and precise roads,¹⁸ mediævally called "streets," run parallel with

¹⁸ Beginning from the east are-1. Napier Road; 2. Military Lines, alias Frere Street; 3. Staff Lines, alias Elphinstone Street; 4. Clifton Road, alias Victoria Street; and, 5. Kacheri (Cutcherry) Road.

the shore and extend to the railway station, or converge towards "Clifton." Let us choose Frere Street, No. 2, and begin at the southern end. Here, despite the vast growth of building, my eye at once detects the whitewashed, single-storied, arcaded, and tiled bungalow, which we once considered a palatial building, the work of Sir Charles Napier's Military Secretary, Captain "Beer Brown," of the Bengal Engineers;—poor fellow! he lived upon, and died of, a dozen of Bass per diem! The third going westward, a rickety old badminton court which threatens to cave in, is the office of the Sind Canal Survey Department;—ah! Mr. Bull, were I a woman, my first act would be to "sit down and have a good cry!" Only one of the joyous crew still breathes the upper air of Karáchi, Colonel W. R. Lambert, now its collector.

But the "cry" would soon be turned into a hearty laugh by that pretentious affair of crumbling stone known as "Frere Hall." The downpour and deluge of gold which flooded Bombay in A.D. 1860-64, and which converted even the "buggy-wálás," or cabbies, into shareholders, afforded a drizzle or two even to far Karáchi; and hence we may explain the abnormal growth. We cannot but regard this Gothic monster with a kind of what-the-dickens-are-you-doing-here? feeling. It was intended for Dárbárs (levees) and other such occasions where no Dárbárs are held; and, these failing, the big hall has been converted into dancing and supper room, whilst the ground floor has become a library and a municipal museum. This "noble building," as the Gazetteer¹⁹ calls it, opened in October, 1865, and was called after the Governor of Bombay, who had been Commissioner in Sind between 1851-59. The designer, Capt. St. Clair Wilkins, R.E., was probably ordered to prefer the "Veneto-Gothic," so fit for Venice, so unfit for Karáchi;—it is to be hoped that the new club will *not* adopt Veneto-Gothic. The externals are all hideous—the heavy and tasteless eastern porch, the solitary octagonal tower, and the crosses and circles of white Porbandar stone; while the stilted roof-spirelet, covered with Muntz's metal, is right worthy of a gentleman's stables. The grounds, partly railed and planted with milk-bush, cover some fifteen acres, and here the evening band of the white regiment attracts carriages and horses. The main use of Frere Hall is to serve the shipping as a landmark: from the offing, the tower and spirelet of this portentous and pretentious erection in crumbling sandstone suggest an honest Moslem Idgah. Mr. Commissioner, indeed, seems to have proposed for himself three main objects in life: (1) building Frere towns; (2) building Frere halls; (3) building Frere roads, which have a truly Imperial look—on paper.

Of the interior we may speak gratefully. The south-eastern room is furnished with Pattiwálás (belt-men or peons) and a few newspapers: its sole fault is the extreme dullness of the view. The central ground-floor, corresponding with the big hall, is a library containing nearly 8000 volumes; and, curious to say, it makes annual reports

¹⁹ "A Gazetteer of the Province of Sind," by A. W. Hughes, F.S.S. 898 pages 8vo. With Maps and Photographs. London: Bell, 1874. I need hardly say anything in praise of this laborious work, a mine of information, which is now appearing in a second and corrected edition.

and owns a catalogue.²⁰ The marked deficiency is in books of local interest, but that seems to be the inherent fault of all these institutions. The north-western room is the municipal museum, which, like the library, is under Mr. Murray; he is preparing to follow in the footsteps of my old friend Stocks, and to publish on the botany of the province. Here are specimens of the Indus boats, mostly misnamed; the Kási,²¹ or glazed and encaustic Persian tiles, by some called enamelled tiles, whose facing forms, or rather formed, the celebrated "Porcelain Tower of Nanking" – these are of the finest quality, taken from old mosques and tombs; a few birds, beasts, and fishes; blocks of wood and stone; and, lastly, the gem of the collection, the one hundred and thirteen bricks which Mr. W. Cole, now Collector of Customs, dug up from the old Buddhist temple below Jarak. The most remarkable piece is a terra-cotta alto-relief of Budha, with the usual pendulous ears, and hands crossed over the breast, sitting in tailor-position, as he was supposed to meditate and contemplate under the Bo-tree. Here his shrine is a small temple, formed by a dwarf column on each side; the beaded summit expands into the upper three parts of a circle, a full-blown "glory." Below the figure, two dogs face each other; and, on the proper left, a ram is shown by its horns. The whole is artistic, and contrasts strongly with the barbarous mask which suggests only the Moabite pottery, made at Jerusalem and sold to Berlin. The other important pieces are lions' heads, with four bead-strings radiating from each mouth; two fragments of elephants' heads and trunks; geese admirably executed, and a small altar of classical shape. Many of the bricks bear leaves which suggest the acanthus, some have the seven-ray'd star, and others the dice-pattern deeply sunk. This valuable collection, instead of being heaped on the floor, should be grouped and framed.

Truly the distances of Camp Karáchi are far more magnificent than those of Washington. Walking up the Staff Lines to the north-north-west of Frere Hall, we stand, with absolute amazement, in presence of Trinity Church, which dates from 1852-55. The body seems to have been added as an after-thought to the steeple; and the apsidal chancel suggests only the section of a certain article admirably copied, as in the Albert Music Hall, Kensington. Of what could my old friend, John Bull, have been dreaming when he begat this "fright?" The tower, said to be taken from some Italian horror, consists of six stages, 150 feet high, beginning with the clock and ending with the battlements; the windows increase upwards from one to four, giving the idea of a pyramid standing upon its apex; and, they say, the upper story, which, like No. 5, contains also four lights, was added for the benefit of the shipping. Altogether the thing

²⁰ The "Twenty-Second Annual Report" (Kurrachee, 1874) shows 7011 volumes, of which 943 are novels, and 588 "voyages and travels"-a fair proportion. The "Catalogue of the Kurrachee Municipal Museum" is a separate publication of eighty pages.

²¹ I presume the word is a corruption of Kasháni, i.e. made at Káshán in Turkistan, the Casciani of Benedict Goës ("Cathay and the Way Thither," p. 573): the Syrians call it "Kaysháni." The first porcelain furnace was in the province of Keangsy, early in the seventh century (Davis's Chinese, ii. 255). Since the thirteenth century the Kási has been much used by the Moslem world: I shall have more to say upon the subject.

suggests a hammer with the handle turned heavenwards: a steeple was proposed for it, but even the Karáchi-ite could not stand *that*.

We now leave on the left the old Residency, noted by its huge flag-staff. Built for the humble days of Sir Charles Napier, it has been gradually extended, like an English country house, and now it is a chaotic agglomerate of white walls and tiled roofs. It is at present occupied by General Sir William L. Merewether, K.C.S.I., C.B., etc., etc., etc., an officer who, by entire devotion to the interests of this province, the scene of his distinguished career during the last thirty-three years, has "made epoch" and history. Beyond it, also to the left, are the three blocks of artillery-barracks, arched below, as those for the infantry are arched above. And we will end this dusty walk with a glance at St. Andrew's, the Kirk designed by Mr. T. G. Newnham, Deputy Agent, Indus Flotilla. The steeple, fourteenth-century Gothic, is by no means so absurd as that of Trinity; but the roof ridge is too high, and the long walls are unjustifiably broken into ten, instead of three or five, gables on each side—here, again, half would be better than the whole. Apparently it is unfinished the rose window is a ventilator which wants glass, and there is a hole where the clock should be. As it squares up to its tall brother of the Establishment, the Kirk suggests a small pugilist offering to fight a big drayman for a pot of porter.

The intensely military aspect and sound of Karáchi have vanished with the days when she contained, besides artillery and cavalry, three white and as many black regiments. You may take your morning walk without that "Dutch Concert" and "Devil's Tattoo" of martial music. You no longer see the squares dotted with Johnny Raws, under the adjutant's watchful eye, in every grade of recruitism, from the rigid miseries of the "goose-step," to the finishing touch of the sword and the bayonet exercises. Our old friend Brigadier Dundas, generally called Dunderhead, is no longer here to insist upon uniform as often as possible; and white stuffs with regimental buttons are considered sufficient for show. I know no spectacle more ridiculous than one familiar to our old days, an officer of horse-artillery, all plastered with ginger-bread gold, being stared at by an admiring circle of a dozen half-naked blacks.

Karachi, you see, has changed in many other points during the last quarter-century. The steamer and the railway, the telegraph and the counting-house, the church and the college, have gained the day against artillery, cavalry, and infantry. The "mercantile" element has become a power; and even the stockbroker, though limited, is not unknown. The Church, I have told you, now numbers half-dozens where she had formerly single "pastors," and the sheep are folded with a regularity which suggests reasons for such devotion. When you meet the Sunday promenader bound for "Dr. Greenfield," he probably does not intend to promenade alone. Finally, the school has

become as prominent an institution as at home, and it threatens, in Sind as in Syria, to build a room and to keep a master for every head of boy and girl.²²

I will not precisely assert that hospitality has been relegated from the centres to the extremities, the out-stations, but the general impression left by a flying visit is something like it. Men can no longer afford to keep open-house; the frequency of furloughs supplies other ways of spending money. The depreciation of the rupee, not to mention the utter want of small change, is a sound and sore grievance to those who must remit home. While prices have prodigiously advanced, salaries have not. Add to this the dreary dullness of a small station, confined in numbers but not in space, with a mixed society which does not mix well. The natural effect is to make the exiles dislike one another heartily, or to love one another only too well. And Anglo-Indian society is somewhat like that of the United States – English with the pressure taken off it. Despite the general church-going, scandals occur with curious persistency, and Mrs. A. rides out as regularly with Captain B., as that officer drives with Mrs. C. Finally, there is a dawdling, feckless, ne'er-do-well way about Karáchi, far more Asiatic than European. If you want tea at 5 a.m. instead of 6 a.m., the lazy servants listen and say, "Achhá, sá'b" (Yess'r), and never obey. If you order a carriage, it will come at its own convenience. So you are not surprised to hear of the fate of an officer who, having a fad for "doing things in time," found life so very hard upon the nerves that he preferred to it the death of Seneca.

Politics are at this moment absorbing public attention. Sind, in the days of Sir Charles Napier, could stand alone; now she cannot. Her manifest destiny is to become the line of transit and traffic, the harbour of export from the Panjáb, which will then cease to ship goods *via* Bombay and Calcutta. When Lord Northbrook visited Karáchi, he was petitioned by the merchants to amalgamate; unfortunately that Grand Moghal, although, as a rule, by no means averse to improvement, replied Napoleonicly, "*Je n'en vois pas la nécessité.*" His successor will probably recognize a fitness of things palpable to the vague but useful personage "any schoolboy." The Governor of the Panjab will then resort to Young Alexandria for sea-bathing; and an economical Ministry will no longer see the propriety of keeping a Commissioner at the rate of four thousand rupees per mensem.

And a little war upon the frontier is again threatened. Sir W. L. Merewether first proposed to support the Khan of Kelát against his unruly Sardárs (chiefs); and then, "turning north by south," he talked of deposing the Amír, Khudádád. Whereupon the Supreme Government took away the political charge of the frontier, reducing the Commissionership to a mere affair of revenue and internal and external administration; while, more unpleasant still, the marches were placed under the command of Colonel

²² The Gazetteer (p. 370) gives a list of ten "educational establishments," receiving grants and aids from the municipality. Add at least five more and you have a fair proportion for a city which can hardly number 50,000 souls.

Munro and Major Sandeman, the latter a *persona ingrata* to the Commissioner. A force has lately (March, 1876) been marched upon the Bolan Pass and Kelát²³ with abundant mystery. It is reported that it will summer there; and hope is freely expressed that this step means annexation. Kelát, provided with a good carriage-road, would make a charming *sanitarium* for Sind: it is a land where the apple flourishes, and where frosts are hard: the Unhappy Valley wants this snug and cool retreat, and presently she will have it.

I cannot think well of such interference between native princes and subjects. The rights of the question are often unknown at head-quarters. If you assist the rulers, you always make one ingrate and enemies by the thousand; if you support the Sardárs, you sow rebellion, present and future, and you must expect to reap the results. Let me hope that the Baroda *imbroglio* will not be repeated, and that, if the chief is unfitted to command and his chieftains to obey, we shall simply garrison the city and hold the country.

"What! More annexation?"

Yes, sir. In and about India you must move on: to stand still is to fall back. Please remember Prince Bismarck, "A nation which voluntarily surrenders territory is a nation in decay;" and carry out his dictum to its just conclusion. This anti-annexation mania, which was a mere reaction after the general "conveying" of 1835-45, is happily passing away; but it did look at one time very much like putting up the shutters and closing the shop. England is a country of compromises; India is not. Here you must choose your line of conduct and never deviate from it. Had a late Viceroy said to the Gáikwár, "You do not suit me: leave that seat: I will appoint a better man!" all India would have understood him. But he almost provoked a "row" in the Maráthá country by putting in orders a committee of native princes, as the English fashion is, and then, as the English fashion is not, by overruling their decision.

²³ The force proceeding to the Bolan Pass, so late in the year and under command of Captain Humfry, instead of Colonel Hogg, escorts a kafileh of 2000 camels, and numbers-
55 men, half-battery, mountain-train.
100 sabres, Panjab Cavalry.
227 sabres, 3rd Sind Horse.
276 men 4th Panjab Rifles.
217 men Jacob's Rifles (30th Bombay Regiment).
Total 875 men.

CHAPTER IV.

CLIFTON – GHISRI BANDAR – THE ALLIGATOR-TANK.

THE sun is sinking slowly towards his couch of purple and gold in the western main; we have still time to drive over the couple of miles that separate from us "Clifton."

Clifton! How many recollections are conjured up by the word. Again you see the Vallambrosa of Old England with its turfy downs, its wood-grown chasm, and its classic stream, the Fiume Sebeto of which the poet sang:

"Tanto ricco d'onor quanto povero d'onde."

Clifton! you exclaim, in doggerel-poetical you may not become –

"Powers of heaven! and can it be
That this is all I came to see?"

Yes, sir, such is Sind; but note the peculiarities of the drive. Yon huge pile beyond the New Barracks is the Napier Hospital; nearer us is the ground where the Scotchmen play golf over the roughest of Nálás (nullahs); this bit of metal awning is Frere Station; those vast yellow buildings, with the tall smoke-stacks, are the railway workshops. As we pass through the iron-road gate we find the usual knot of male nurses and female nurses, of babies and "Europe" dogs: the four seem everywhere to herd together. Further to the east of the embanked road lies the new race-course, marked out by white posts and broken-down sheds called Grand Stand. To the east-north-east is a brilliantly lime-washed truncated cylinder of masonry, the Dakhmeh, or charnel-house, of the Parsis, to which some poetically inclined ninny has given the popular name, "Tower of Silence." Further on, north of the railway, you see the quarries which built new Karáchi. Some way to the right rises the "Observatory," where no observations are, have been, or ever will be made it is a stout little bit of building without entrance, the door being blocked, and snakes are said to have taken the lease. The lump supporting it is old "Bath Island;" and the salty ground, of dull chocolate with snowy efflorescence, together with the pestilent smell, show the mangrove-haunted mouth of the Chíni backwater: it formerly overflowed the plain subtending the eastern part of the harbour. The Persians say of Sind –

"The smell of death is in our noses;"

and let the man who would understand the full force of the expression, take up a handful of earth immediately after a shower, and submit it to the action of his olfactories. The fact is that even the soil of the desert is strongly impregnated with decayed matter, animal and vegetable; and, when the Sarahá is swamped, all the South of Europe will become uninhabitable. After three miles or so, the road ascends a quoin-shaped buttress of dust and rugged rock, incipient sandstone, capped with a hard conglomerate of water-rolled pebbles, embedded in silicious paste. It tails off inland: seawards the face is more or less abrupt; and here, at the "Points," very different from Máthárán's and Mahabaleshwar's, are a few masonry benches, and half a dozen Sind "villas," which have not increased in number during the last quarter-century. They still represent the three normal types; the single-poled tent, the double-poled tent, and the cow-house, of which the Commissioner's quarters in camp supply the most characteristic specimen. And already there is a grim modern ruin which speaks of progress the wrong way. Such are the uncomely features of the "Civil Marine Sanitarium," Clifton in the Far East, which took its name from the birth-place of the old Conqueror.

However, the breath of the Arabian Sea is deliciously fresh and pure; whilst all the surroundings

"Of sea and cliff and silver strand;"

the blue plain bordering Father Indus, the brown hills of Pír Mango, the azure crags of the Pabb Mountains, and the long chord of the Bay made continuous by the Chíni dam, contrast well with bare and dismal Karáchi camp. The bathing, too, is good; the piles, once planted by way of barriers against ravenous sharks, have been removed, despite the tradition of a soldier eaten in the hoar depths of a remote antiquity; and a wooden gangway has been laid to defend the feet. Turtle (T. *Indica*) is sometimes turned; unfortunately, the Bábarchís (*Anglicè*, "cook-boys") ignore the art of cooking them. We hear of basking sharks²⁴ sixty feet long but these monsters, whose splendid fins have been exported to China, and whose oil is used in Arabia for defending boat-bottoms from the *teredo*, are apparently non-anthropophagous. The Hindus lately opened a fane to Mahadeva in a chevron-shaped hole, apparently worked and turned by the ceaseless action of wind-blown sands, and the attendant "Jogi" rears pigeons for devotion, not for pies. The third person of the Hindu Triad, you will remember, became incarnate at Meccah in the form of a pigeon and under the title of Kapoteshwar "Pigeon-god." The pious have also dug a well, but the supply is like brine. The great inconvenience of this favourite watering-place, this Sindian "Ramleh," is that it affords absolutely nothing, not even drinkable water. You must send to the Sadr—, or high, bázár, of camp for all you

²⁴ The sharks are *Carcharias vulgaris* (white shark); *Zygonia laticeps* (hammer-head); *Squalus fasciatus* and *S. pristis* (saw-fish); and *Squalus Raja*.

want, and on such occasions your servants have a pleasant trick of taking six hours to do what should occupy two.

Here, sir, we used to assemble to bathe, to "tiff," not in the English sense of the word, and to "már," or slaughter innocent crabs. At times some such scene as this took place, to be duly recalled and revered by memory.

A dozen young gentlemen smoking like chimneys at Christmas, talking and laughing at the same time, mount their Arabs, and show how Arabs can get down a puzzling hill and over loose hillocks of sand. They all form line upon the bit of clear hard beach which separates the sea from the cliff. There is a bet upon the *tapis* there.

A prick of the spur and a lash with the whip: on dash the Arabs, like mad, towards and into the Arabian Sea.

A long hollow breaker curls as it nears the land, and bursts into a shower of snowy foam. Of the twelve cavaliers only one has weathered the storm, kept his seat, and won the day. Eleven may be seen in various positions, some struggling in the swell, others flat upon the sand, and others scudding about the hillocks, vainly endeavouring to catch or to curb their runaway nags.

This boisterous jollity is now numbered with the things that were. A few dull-looking whites promenade the strand, probably talking shop or bemoaning an eighteen-penny rupee; and, considering how loudly Karáchi and Clifton boast of their climate, the denizens do it injustice; they look subject to liver as well as to the *ennui* plague. I never saw in India more pallid women or apstier children; Karachi seems to carry most of her green upon the cheeks of her "pale faces." Only some half-dozen weary, service-worn men remember with amazement the high spirits of Clifton's youth. The crabs are safe, and so is game generally – no one can now afford the heart, even if he has the coin, for Shikár. Yet here Lieutenant (now Colonel) Marston excelled every native sportsman in stripping the highlands of Ibex and the *Gad* (wild sheep), and Lieutenant Rice began a career which ended with his becoming the Champion Tiger-shot of the world. The political economist, the Liberal statesman, and the Manchester School generally, will opine that the change has been for the better. I hope you do not.

It is now time to return homewards. We will drive a few yards to the east-south-east and visit Ghisri a counterpart of Clifton in all points, except that here, instead of the bungalows, is a Government or "Military Marine Sanitarium." The *matériel* is represented by three prim stone-boxes like detached villas, with green chiks or screens for officers; long, mud-roofed ranges of quarters for men; and a *rond point*, whence visitors can prospect the sea and the crater-like heaps of loose sand. Suggesting the moving mounds thrown up by the Nile about Syrian Bayrút, they have rendered Ghisri

"Bandar" (port), distant four miles from Karáchi, and once the nearest embarkation place on the Indus, or rather the Ghárá Creek, a name and nothing more.

But how lovely are these Oriental nights! how especially lovely, contrasted with the most unlovely Oriental day! This south-western fag-end of the Unhappy Valley is a desert plain of sand and dust, of silt and mud, with pins and dots of barren rocky hill, cut by rare torrents after rain, broken into rises and falls by the furious winds, and scarcely affording enough of thorns, salsolæ, and fire-plants, as they call the varieties of euphorbia, to feed a dozen goats and camels. Yet the hour, somehow or other, invests even this grisly prospect with a portion of its own peculiar charms. The heavy dew floats up from the sun-parched soil in semi-transparent mists, at once mellowing, graduating, and diversifying a landscape which the painful transparency of the diurnal atmosphere lays out all in one plane like a Chinese picture. The upper heights of the firmament-vault are of the deepest, most transparent, and most pellucid purple-blue, melting away around its walls into the lightest silvery azure; the moonbeams lie like snow upon the nether world; there is harmony in the night-gale, and an absence of every harsher sound that could dispel the spell which the majestic repose of Nature casts upon our spirits.

And now for the alligators. In former days we should have sent off our tents, and mounted our nags to canter joyously over the seven miles of bad ground separating Karáchi from Pír Mango. But the horse, here and elsewhere in British India, has made way for the carriage, a step in civilization from which the Argentine Republic expects great results. The local Hansoms and "Huglies" are open barouches, drawn by two skeleton nags: we have a unicorn of these phantom steeds, and you will presently see why. The trap and three is hired from the old Parsí, Merwánji Burjoji: we especially name 5 a.m., and we are kept waiting till 6, so as to get more sun than we want. Here time is not money, but an enemy to be disposed of; and the dawdling, inconsequent way of life is very heavy upon the nervous systems of new-comers. At last the low-caste Hindu driver, grinning wide at our objurgations, begins to flog his lean nags into a rough canter up the No. 1, or Napier Road; through the Sadr-bázár; past the huge pile of Government School, over the "Irish bridges" or ill-paved dip-watercourses of masonry, and along the face of the tattered, half-ruined, melancholy bungalows which, in the days of "Old Charley," were looked upon as palatial abodes. On the right are the blue sheds of the 2nd Beloch Regiment, and in front lies a crumbling camp-bázár which once supplied the "Soldiers' Lines." It preserves its trees, for here a booth with shade is like a corner shop in London. We must walk through the Government Gardens to understand the way in which everything but mere "duty" is neglected throughout Sind. Like the cemeteries of the United States, these are the prettiest places in the land; yet, with the sole exception of Shikárpúr, they are left to Nature and the "nigger." The Karachi establishment gardens, of about forty acres, lie on the northern outskirts of camp, hugging the left bank of the Liyári river, the only site where a sufficiency of sweet water is procurable. Their few acres of poor mean land, grandiloquently named,

contain a multitude of wells and Persian wheels; a circle where the band plays to pallid ladies in the evening, especially Saturday; an archery ground, with one mud butt in ruins; a field of staring holly-hocks, a large swimming bath in the worst condition, and a cricket-ground well cracked by torrid suns. The grass is being uprooted by a native, and to the question "Why?" he replies curtly, "Bayl ke wáste" for the bullock. The shady and avened promenades divide a considerable expanse of vegetable-beds, especially lettuces, cabbages, and onions. Formerly residents, on paying a subscription, got their green meat gratis; now, they go to the bázár for their "garden-sass."

We thread the dusty roads through the Government Gardens, and presently dash across the wide Liyári, beyond reach of civilization, which is here represented by brick bridges and evil smells. We cross this "Nai" (Wady or Fiumara) at full gallop. We might be going to Donnybrook Fair; and you feel almost inclined to whoop, and to flourish your umbrella by way of shillelagh. After heavy showers in the hills, the broad deep bed can hardly contain within its wooded and garden'd banks the dashing, crashing torrent of frothing yellow mud. In autumn and winter the bed is bone-dry, save here and there a pool near Karáchi town, where the little brown-blacks disport themselves in their quasi-native element. Water-pits have also been sunk, and round the margins crowd dames and damsels, fair and dark, young and old, of high and low degree, each with earthen pot on head, and mostly carrying an infant riding across-hip, and clinging to the parental side like a baby baboon. There is an immensity of confabulation, a vast volume of sound, and, if the loud frequent laugh denote something more than what the peevish satirist assigned to it, there is much enjoyment during the water-drawing. The goodwives here prepare themselves for the labours and "duties" of the day, such as cooking their husbands' and children's meals, mending clothes, gossiping, scanmag'ging, and other avocations multifarious.

Beyond the influence of the Fiumara stretches a level surface, bald and shiny as an old man's pate, with an occasional Bismarck—bristle in the shape of cactus, asclepias, wild caper, and low scrub. The vegetation is bowed landwards by the eternal sea-breeze and, for "serious" growth, walls would be required. One of the normal "Frere roads" has been laid out by the simple process of cutting a ditch on either side, but the cart-ruts are so deep that we prefer driving "promiscuously" across country. We edge gradually towards the low ridge of yellow-brown limestone, the Pír Mango Hills, which bound the northern extremity of the Karáchi desert. After dashing through a couple of smaller Fiumaras, we strike a notch in the range, and turn to the left up a bit of rudely-made road, which dams the Nálá (nullah) draining our destination. The general look of the thermal basin, or rather basins, for it is a double feature divided by a rock-rib into eastern and western halves, is that of an oasis. The two thick groves of dates, cocoas, and tamarinds are surrounded, except on the north, where the drainage enters, and south, where it flows off, by a broken rim of limestones and sandstones with a strike to the north-west, and tilted-up at an angle of 20°, forming cliffs some five hundred feet high, and fronting towards the inner floor. In earlier days we should probably have

found our tent pitched upon the borders of the marsh, under a thick and spreading tamarind, which has now gone the way of all wood. The natives have a saying that sleeping beneath this "Date of Hind" gives you fever, which you cure by sleeping under a Ním-tree (*Melia azedirachta*), the lilac of Persia. Once, and but once, to shame them out of this notable superstition, I tried the experiment on my proper person; but, sir, like the prejudice-hating commercial gentleman and his ship *Friday*, I caught a "chill" in the cool, damp shade, which made me even more credulous upon that point than my informers were.

As the crocodile was in Old Egypt, so the alligator is still a quasi-holy animal in Young Egypt and in Pokar or Poshkar of Rajputáná. They come, it is said, from the "Habb," a word meaning the "stream where many streams meet," about ten miles to the west; or they work their way overland from the Indus—a feat well within the power of these saurians. I believe that many are brought when young by Fakirs and religious mendicants. They are of the man-eating species, with shorter snouts than those owned by the harmless gavial (*Gavialis longirostris*), with white gapes, and a double keel of caudal serrations ending in a single line. The people still assure you that the buffalo is the only beast they will not touch. On the Indus there is also an ichthyophagous alligator called Sísár, whose round muzzle bears a knob. It is eaten by the Mohána or fishermen, and you can imitate the meat by cooking steaks of what soldiers call "bull-beef" between alternate layers of stock fish.

"Pír Mango,"²⁵ as the natives term him, or "Muggur Peer," the Alligator Saint, as we corrupt the name, was a holy Moslem hermit who, about the middle of the thirteenth century, settled in this barren spot and, to save himself the trouble of having to fetch water from afar, caused, Moses like, a stream let to trickle out of the rock. On the northern hill-crest a whitewashed stone shows where he prayed for thirteen years before he "found grace." Presently he was visited by four pilgrim brothersaints, who, "without rhyme or reason," as Mrs. John is apt to say, began to perpetrate a variety of miracles. His Holiness Shaykh Lal Shahbáz, now of Séhwan, created a hot mineral spring, whose thick, slaty-blue, graveolent proceeds settled in the nearest hollow; the Right Reverend Faríd el-Dín metamorphosed a flower into a monstrous saurian; the holy Jimál el-Dín converted his "Miswák," or tooth-brushing stick, into a palm-shoot which, at once becoming a date-tree, afforded the friends sweet fruit and pleasant shade; while the Very Venerable Jelál Jaymagá made honey and melted-butter rain from the trees. After four years of contubernation, the friends urged Háji Mango to accompany them upon the supererogatory pilgrimage; but he refused to leave his beloved alligators and, opportunely taking the route for Firdaus (Paradise), he left his remains to be interred by the fraternity close to the scene of their preternatural feats. This place was an old Hindu pilgrimage, for the Pagans still visit it to worship Lálá

²⁵ Pír (or Háji) "Mángho," the supposed Arabic form, is found in the Gazetteer: "Mango" is correct Sindi. Mr. E. B. Eastwick prefers Pír "Mangah," the Persian form: others give Pír "Mangyár" and "Manghyár."

Jasráj, and in reverence of the hot water. They are not, by-the-by, the only geologists who have mistaken for true vulcanism what is probably the result of sulphur pyrites veining the subsoil. There are many similar "Jwálá-mukhís," or fiery mouths, along the Mekrán coast; and even the Moslems derive this thermal spring from the holy Ráví river of the Idol-worshippers.

We dash through the last sand-track, some six inches deep and, after an hour and a half of hard gallop, we draw reins below the new Travellers' Bungalow. Facing the ruins of its predecessor, it is a dismal-looking article, of the cowshed type, bare and shadeless. No messman is needed, for the Anglo-Indian community is too idle and apathetic to ride or drive so far. The "Dálán," or central feeding-room, has been monopolized by a cheeky Parsí; and the two northern dens, devoted to "Sahib Log," suggest cats and condemned cells. Here we are waited upon by the Mujáwir, "Miyan 'Mutka," a son of the grim old Fakír, who died about twelve years ago: he is a civilized man, speaking a little English and Persian, and, what is far better, an excellent Shikári; who knows exactly where game is to be found on the Pabb Hills, the blue line that forms our western and northern horizon. He takes us in hand, and leads us, past a brand-new Dharmśálá, and through long graveyards with sandstone tombs and carved head-pieces representing the male turban, to the Alligator-tank proper. A couple of kids precede us, but this time they will escape with uncut throats. As the holy lizards used to "Stravague," occasionally biting off a leg and picking up a nice plump child or two, they have been ignominiously prisoned within a mud-wall, in places crested with broken glass: here we must stand upon stones to look upon the forty head of big saurians, some bathing in the waters, others basking upon the bank. The dark recess, formed by a small bridge thrown over the narrow brick-canal which drains the enclosure, is broken down; and thus we miss a characteristic scene when Mor Sahib (Mister Peacock), the grisly monarch of the place, a *genus loci* some eighteen feet long, emerged in "alligatoric state" from his recess in the warm, bluish, sulphurous stream, and protruded through the gurgling and bubbling waters his huge snout and slimy white swallow, fringed with portentous fangs, to receive his offering of kid-flesh. I believe his title to be a mere euphuism, even as the Yezídís, called by their enemies "Devil-worshippers," converted Satan into Malik Táús (Peacock Angel). Mr. E. B. Eastwick, however, opines that "the appellation is probably derived from a demon with five heads, destroyed by Krishnah, and from which that god is called *Murári*," or Mur's enemy. But why, may we ask, should the name of a man-eating Rákhshasa, or fiend, be applied to this venerated goat-eater? Nor can I see any reason for believing, with the same author, that these creatures derive their sanctity from the place, being regarded as *ikétal* (mediums of supplication), like the sparrows of the "Branchian Oracle" (Herod. i. 159).

The scene has been sadly civilized and vulgarized by Cockney modern improvements: evidently the British *bourgeois* has passed this way. Formerly this Khírkand, or milky water, gushed free out of the rock which supports the whitewashed dome and tomb of the holy Háji; now it is received into a double tank of masonry, where bathing invalids

enjoy a temperature of 98° F.,²⁶ and into a lower subdivision out of which cattle drink. From the source it passed off into the old "Magár Táláo," or Alligator-tank proper, still denoted by a bald patch and a border of trees. The little bog was a network of warm shallow channels, and of cooler pools foul and stagnant with the thick dark-blue sediment, broken here and there by lumps of verdant islet and tussocks of rushy vegetation. Though not more than 400 feet down the centre, by half that breadth, it contained hundreds of alligators some said a thousand varying in size from two to twenty feet. The *tout ensemble* of the scene struck the eye strangely: the glaring steel-blue vault above, vividly contrasting with the green date-trees and the greener cocoas of the oasis, stretching about a mile in length, and set, like an emerald, in the tawny gold of the surrounding desert; the uncanny hue and form of the Stygian swamp, intersected by lines of mineral water; the quaintly-habited groups of visitors, and the uncouth forms of the sluggish monsters, armed with mail-coats composed of clay whitened and hard-baked by the solar ray. All was *hors de tenue*, like a fair woman clad in the "Devil's livery," black and yellow, or a dark girl drest in red, which, the Persians say, would make a donkey laugh. Most of the pilgrims, too, were Kanyaris, or dancing-girls from Karachi, and even modest women here allowed themselves a latitude of demeanour, usual enough in sacred places, but still quite the reverse of the strictly "proper." During the exciting moment which decided whether Mister Peacock would, or would not, deign to snap at and to swallow the hind-quarter of kid, temptingly held within an inch of his nose, Curiosity kicked out Etiquette; faces were unveiled, and backs of heads were bared in most unseemly guise. "Wah! wah!!" (hurrah! hurrah!) shouted the crowd as things ended well; and as the old Fakír, at the same time confiscating by way of perquisite the remnant of the slaughtered animal, solemnly addressed the donor, "Verily thy prayers are acceptable, and great will be thy fortunes in both worlds!" When one of the minor monsters sallied forth in huge wrath, the groups that thronged the margin of the swamp, throwing stones and clods at its tenants, were too much terrified to think of anything but precipitate escape. And at the fountain-head a bevy of African dames and damsels was wont to lave their buffalo-like limbs, with about as much attire as would decently hide a hand.

There was "skylarking," too, in those days; and the poor devils of alligators, once jolly as monks or rectors, with nothing in the world to do but to devour, drink, and doze; wallow, waddle, and be worshipped; came to be shot at, pelted, fished for, bullied, and besieged by the Passamonts, Alabasters, and Morgantes of Karachi. The latter were the denizens of the tents; subalterns from camp; strangers in stranger hats and strangest coats, who, after wandering listlessly about the grove, "making eyes" at "the fair," conventionally so called, offering the usual goat and playfully endeavouring to ram the bamboo-pole down Mister Peacock's throat, informed the grave Fakír, in a corrupt and infirm dialect of "the Moors," that he was an "old muff." They were generally accompanied by a scratch-pack of rakish bull-terriers, yelping and dancing their joy at

²⁶ Lieutenant Carless, of the Bombay Navy, in 1837 made it 133° F.

escaping the thralldom of the Kuttewálá, the dog-boy; and when Trim, Snap, or Pincher came to grief,²⁷ they would salute the murderer's eyes and mouth with two ounces of shot, making it plunge into its native bog with a strange attempt at agility, grunting as if it had a grievance. The Fakír, propitiated with a rupee and a bottle of cognac, retired in high glee, warning his generous friends that the beasts were very ferocious and addicted to biting. The truth of this statement was canvassed and generally doubted. On one occasion the chief of the sceptics, Lieut. Beresford, of the 86th Queen's, who made one of the best girl-actors in India, proposed to demonstrate by actual experiment "what confounded nonsense the old cuss was talking."

The small pyrrhonist looks to his shoe-ties, turns round to take a run at the bog, and charges the place right gallantly, now planting his foot upon one of the little tufts of rank grass which protrude from the muddy water, then sticking for the moment in the blue-black mire, then hopping dexterously off a scaly serrated back or a sesquipedalian snout. He reaches the other side with a whole skin, although his overalls have suffered from a vicious snap: narrow escapes, as one may imagine, he has had, but pale ale and plentiful pluck are powerful preservers.

Not unfrequently an alligator ride was proposed; and the Coryphæus of the party, who had provided himself with a shark-hook, strong and sharp, fixed the quivering body of a fowl on one end, and, after lashing the shank by a strong cord to the nearest palm, began to flog the water for a "Mugur." The crowd pressed forward breathless with excitement.

A brute nearly twenty feet long, a real saurian every inch of it, takes the bait and finds itself in a predicament: it must either disgorge a savoury morsel, or remain a prisoner; and, for a moment or two, it makes the ignoble choice. It pulls, however, like a thorough-bred bull-dog, shakes its head as if it wished to shed that member, and lashes its tail with the energy of a shark which is being battered with capstan-bars.

In a moment the "wild rider" is seated, like a Maháut or elephant driver, upon the thick neck of the reptile steed, which, not being accustomed to carry weight, at once sacrifices the tit-bit and runs off for the morass. On the way it slackens at times its zigzag, wriggling course to attempt a bite; but the stiff neck will hardly bend, and the prongs of a steel carving-fork, well rammed into the softer skin, muzzles it effectually enough. Lastly, just as the horse is plunging into its own element, the jockey springs actively on his feet; leaps off to one side, avoids the serrated tail, and escapes better than he deserves.

²⁷ In my first account I made the alligator kill a dog with a sweep of the tail; this is the universal belief of the natives, but there are grave doubts of its ever being done by alligator or crocodile.

The same trick, you may remember, was played by the late Mr. Waterton (de Waterton) upon a certain Cayman, which I have seen in the old hall near Wakefield. The Public, skilled at swallowing the camel of an impossible cram, strained at the gnat of an improbable adventure, flatly refused belief, and said so. Whereupon the great traveller grimly revenged himself by publishing, as a frontispiece to his next volume, the portrait of what he called a "nondescript": a red monkey, to which his cunning scalpel had given all the semblance of a man. His critics, accepting the "missing link," canvassed it in lengthy and learned articles galore: Mr. Waterton had the laugh on his side; the credulity of the incredulous was much enjoyed, but the Public never again gave confidence to the author of the "sell." Never again: so he who laughed did not win.

"Skylarking" at Magar Táláo is now no more. Miyan Mutka, the Mujáwir, enters the *enceinte*, and, like a menagerie-servant, stirs up the inmates with a long pole. They open their pale gapes and roar the usual hoarse bark; when the succession of pokes and pushes becomes too vigorous, they bite angrily at the wood and, finally, without attempting to use the tail, they plunge into the puddle. Apparently they are hungry; many of them lie with open jaws, and all seem to scan us wistfully with their cold and cruel eyes.

We then pass the shrine of Pír or Háji Mango, together with the newly washed "Ziyáratgah," or visitation-place. It is a domelet, with a long flight of stone-steps and an adjacent mosque, the latter, a mere open shed, crowning the sandstone rock that rises above the lush and straggling grove. It preserves its sanctity, as we see by the handsome modern tomb of yellow-glazed tiles, lately built for himself by one Jíwan Misri. More grave-yards and a small Dharmśálá lead, after half a mile, to the second water: the dwarf valley below actually shows, amongst the tall dates, a few yards of short clean turf, pearled with the morning dew. Ascending a slope studded with tombs that cluster about a white building, the Nisháni or Thikáná (dwelling-place) of the great Kalandar, Lál Sháhábáz, we find the subsidiary water welling from the hill-side. The spring, a small bowl paved with green slime, bursts into little bubbles, and shows a temperature of 129° F. as warm as the hand can easily bear it. The light-hearted subaltern of bygone days explained the phenomenon by the fact that the holy inmates of the burial-ground were "getting it piping-hot below." From the cactus-grown rock-knob above, we have a good view to the west of the "Pabb Hills:" the Mujáwir explains the name to be a generic term for a long ridge. He places them at a distance of forty instead of twenty miles, and discourses eloquently concerning the visitation-places of Hasan, Hosayn, and Sháh Beláwal. Here, through the northern drainage-gap, runs the road to "The Estate," a fine orchard and kitchen-garden, belonging to a general favourite, the late Murád Khán. This native gentleman kept on damming the Habb River with curious perseverance, despite repeated breakages, and, when his property became valuable, he died. As Government has a lien upon the farm, a tramway is now proposed. We are joined by a tall old Darwaysh, who calls himself a Mari Beloch, and assures us that this water, like No. 3, comes from the Chenáb. As he cannot even answer

my question concerning the reverence due to his Kashkúl or begging-bowl, he will go away fee-less and discontented. Thence we walk a few yards to the south, and come upon a double-headed spring, whose dribbles, says the Fakír, are hot in one and cold in the other direction. Unhappily the thermometer showed 118° F. for the south-eastern, and 90° for the north-eastern pool. Here are a couple of tanks, one of them containing two large and a single small alligator. This rival establishment owns an excellent Dharmśálá, built at an expenditure of Rs. 1500 by one Tuhár Mohammed, a Mehman; and a Hindu booth or two under the shady trees supplies pilgrims with the necessaries of native life.

We are in luck. There is a *Melo* or Pilgrims' Fair at the Saint's tomb, and Sindi picnics here become more popular as Europeans' visits diminish. I regret to observe, Mr. John Bull, that we are not in the most respectable society. Our characters will not be worth a fig if we wander about amongst the Kanyaris and Koblis, Anonymas and Hetæras; but we may safely indulge in a "Sídi dance. Sí-d-í," you will understand, is the Arabic for "my lord;" a term vulgarly applied to the Zanzibar negroids, who at home call themselves Wásawáhíli. To be polite you say "Habshi," or Abyssinian: so the Sídi (don't write Seedy) of Jazíreh, the ex-pirate's den off the Northern Konkan, is known as the "Habshi." One day Sir C. Napier took it into his head to manumit all the Sind blacks, who were at once turned out of house and home. There was general wailing and gnashing of teeth; few, however, starved, because life is easy in these latitudes; and now, a generation after their manumission, the number seems to have increased. But you must not run away with the idea that this would be the case in the United States, or even in the Brazil. Query, would not the philanthropist rather see them die free than live and multiply in bondage?

The preparations are easily made. Fantastic flags are planted in the ground; and the musical instruments, a huge Dhol or tree-drum, and sundry horns, are deposited in the shade. As dancing is an "act of prayer," is a prayer upon the legs, the performance opens with a burnt-offering of bad frankincense in a broken potsherd. The musicians then strike up, while the chorus roar a *recitativo*, tomtoming, trumpeting, and drum-drubbing, with all the weight of their mighty muscular arms and with the whole volume of their loud and leathery lungs.

The *corps de ballet* is composed of several Táifehs or sets, each represented by any number of dancers, male and female. They have tasted of English liberty, and now they are impudent as London cads or an ancient noble-woman's pet courier. At first the sexes mingle, each individual describing, round the central flag, a circle of pirouettes, without any such limitations as time or step, and chanting rude ditties with hoarse and willing throats. Then the *ballerine*, separating themselves from the male *artistes*, group together the fascinators! — whilst one advances coquettishly, wriggling her sides with all the grace of a Panjáb bear, and uttering a shrill cry, the Kil and Zaghrítah of Persia and Egypt, which strikes you as the death-shriek of a wild cat. After half an hour of these

pas seuls, the host of male *vis-à-vis*, excited beyond all bounds, and thrilling in every nerve, can stand inactivity no longer. They plunge forward prancing; they stop short, squatting suddenly on the ground; they spring up and wave their arms, shouting and howling all the time more like maniacs than common mortals. The perspiration pours down their naked forms, they pant and puff like high-pressure engines; still they keep the ball going. At times it is necessary to revive one of the performers, who has fainted with over-excitement, fatigue, and strong waters. His ankles are seized by the nearest pair of friends, who drag him testily out of the ring, dash a potful of water over his prostrate form, and leave him to "come round" when he can. The moment he opens his eyes, be sure that, *treu und fest*, he will return to the charge, game as a bull-dog, and dance himself with all possible expedition into another fit.

Mr. Bull, and ye admirers of the olden time, ye classical lauders of hoar antiquity, will you excuse me if I venture upon one query? When those heavenly maids, Music and the Ballet, first came down from Indian Meru or Ethiopian Meroe, loved of the gods, to one of the many Olympuses, and condescended to take an engagement with Young Greece, did they, think ye, appear in the primitive, natural, and unaffected forms which they still display to ecstasize the Sídi sons of Young Egypt? I humbly opine they did.

As we return homewards we pass by a Káriz, one of the subterranean aqueducts used for irrigation throughout Central Asia. It is formed by sinking a line of shafts, used for repairs as well as excavation, at intervals of about twenty yards, and connecting them by a narrow tunnel dug, at the requisite depth, below the surface. Thus the irregularities of level are overcome, and water is brought down from the hills without evaporation or the danger of being drawn off by strangers. The long lines of earth-mounds, indicating the several apertures, is a familiar feature in a Sind, as in a Persian, landscape. It is wonderful how accurately the mountain-folk can determine by the eye rising and falling ground, and how skilfully they excavate with their rude tools; in some cases, however, as here, the work ends in a failure.

CHAPTER V.

THE MARCH FROM KARACHI THE MEMORY OF THE PRETTY PERSIAN GIRL.

We must spend a week at Karachi. Land-travel in these regions requires something more than simple European preparations of portmanteau, dressing-bag, and hat-box, and, just at present, the weather is not propitious. I hardly expected we should escape in the Khamsín season, between November and June, one of the local scourges, a dust-storm. When we rose in the morning, the sky lowered and the air was dark; the wind blew in puffs, and it felt unusually raw and searching. If about 8 a.m. you looked towards the Hálá-Kirthár Hills, which spread their last outliers over the south-westernmost flank of the great river-plain, you saw a "devil," a towering column of sand and dust from the rocky ridge, mixed with powdered salt from the arid flat, flying, fast as it could, from angry, puffing Boreas, whom we here call the "Shimál."²⁸

The gale grows, blast pursuing blast, roaring and sweeping round the walls and over the roofs with the frantic violence of a typhoon, a cyclone, a tornado. There is horror in the sound; and then the prospect from the windows! It reminds me of Firdausi's stupendous imagery: one layer has been removed by the battle-tramp off the face of Earth, and has been added to the Seven Heavens.²⁹ You close every crack and cranny in the hope of alleviating the evil. Save yourself the trouble! all such measures are in vain. The impalpable atoms with which our atmosphere is charged would pass without difficulty through a needle's eye; judge, then, what easy thoroughfares they must find the chinks of these warped doors and the cracks of these puttyless munnions.

It seems as though the pungent saltpetrous dust recognized in our persons kindred matter. Our heads are powdered in five minutes; our eyes, unless we sit with closed lids, feel as if a dash of cayenne had been administered; we sneeze as schoolboys do after a first pinch of "Irish blackguard;" our skins are grittier than a loaf of *pain de ménage* in the French *Province*, and washing would only add to the irremediable nuisance.

Now, sir, if you wish to let your family and old cronies at home see something of Eastern luxuries, call for lighted candles and indite an "overland letter." It will take you at least an hour and a half to finish the normal four pages, with the pen which becomes clogged, and the paper which is covered, every few minutes. Moreover, your spectacles require wiping at least as often as your Gillott; and finally, when the missive comes to hand it will contain a neatly flattened cake of glittering mud and micaceous silt,

²⁸ In Arabic the word means the north wind; but Sind applies it to the north-wester, the usual direction of the north-east monsoon.

²⁹ Moslems believe in seven heavens and as many earths, concentrically disposed, like the coats of an onion; an idea evidently suggested, to the Egyptians and Greeks, by the seven planets.

moulded to the form of the paper. Tell Mrs. Bull that you went without your "tiffin " luncheon, I mean; that you tried to sleep, but the novel sensation of being powdered with dust made the attempt abortive; that it is impossible to cook during these storms; and that if the gale last much longer you expect to be "in for" a modification of your old favourite "intramural sepulture." However, the wind will blow itself out about 5 or 6 p.m.; at this hour it sometimes rises on the Indus banks, but on the coast, as a rule, it goes down with the sun; and even should it continue during the night it will be mild compared with what we endure by day.

Karachi, I have told you, is famed for healthfulness, the maximum summer heat seldom reaching 90° to 92°³⁰ F., although 115° have been recorded; this average is some 20° less than at Haydarábád and Sakhar in Upper Sind (110° to 112°). Moreover, the sea and land breezes are tolerably regular, and, aided by the heavy dews, which roll from the roofs like thin rain, they mitigate the fierce and sickly heat and glare of a region seldom cooled by showers. We are in north lat. 25°, just beyond the verge of the Tropic, where the Indian of summer is exchanged for the wintry downfalls of the Temperates, and yet, without including the occasional furious deluges,³¹ we cannot reckon upon more than 7 inches annually to 86 at Bombay.

Maritime Sind may be said to have four seasons, consisting of double winters and summers. The first cold weather lasts between November and March; the second is a break in the great heats, extending from August to September. This cool and cloudy period is little known beyond the seaboard, because due to the south-western monsoon, which the Board of Trade compels to begin in April. Alexandria and Cairo show similar variations of dry heat and damp heat, due to the abundant moisture of a high Nile. Finally, the arid alluvial soil, the gift of the Ran and the detritus of the rocks, breeds none of that fearful miasma which arises from the reedy swamps near the Indine embouchures, and which makes its huge delta more malarious than the fatal Pontine Marshes.

But Karáchi, like Aden, Maskat, Bushehr (Bushire), and other hot-dry, tropical and sub-tropical climates, though, generally speaking, salubrious enough, has recurring crises of sickness, and suffers severely from the visitation of epidemics—small-pox, dysentery, typhus, and especially cholera. At such times she can show an amount of mortality which shames even S'a Leone, celebrated as the Dark Continent is for running up tremendously long bills of that nature. None of us old Sindis will ever forget the terrible cholera of 1846³² when, despite every care, the Royal Irish (86th Regiment) lost half its numbers. Nor were those of '53, '61, '65, and '69 less fatal. At the same time, I believe

³⁰ The maximum in the shade is 117°, the minimum 39°, and the approximate mean 82°. At least, so says the excellent Gazetteer.

³¹ The rainfall is very uncertain, varying from 2 to 28 inches: between 1856-57 the average was 7 inches 35 centimeters.

³² This was the second great Asiatico-European attack, lasting from 1846-48: number one was 1830-32.

with Doctor Buez, Consul de France and Sanitary Officer at Jeddah, the port of Meccah, that the focus of this malignant, medico-baffling pest is the Indian Peninsula, whilst Sind is affected only by derivation; therefore, that the invasion can be kept out by carefully-conducted quarantines.³³ On the other hand, small-pox is here endemic, and despises borrowing anything of virulence from Arabia.

You have now every "strict necessary" for your long march: a Bechobá, or single-fly, pole-less tent, the justly prized manufacture of Bengal, which generally outlasts a couple made at Bombay. The two side-flaps are for your people to sleep under. Your stud is an old Arab, a veteran hog-hunter and a steady roadster; also an Afghan Ghúnt, Yábú or Chár-Gúsheh (the "split-eared"), as they call their breed of short, stout, shaggy ponies, somewhat like the Iceland "hross" in winter coat; a Sándni, or single-humped dromedary for your own riding, and four luggage-camels to carry your canvas-house with its belongings table and chair, canteen and crockery, cot, carpet, and chest of drawers. The other animals number nine, *viz.*: "Pepper," a spiteful little fox-terrier, the best possible bodyguard during our march; a head servant, at once butler, footman, and valet; a "boy" of forty, his *aide-de-camp*; a cook; two horsekeepers," who can hardly be called grooms, and a pair of camel-drivers. We must also take a washerman and certain unclean drudges for general work.

There are two ways of making Ghára, the first of our nine stations³⁴ on the way to Haydarábád. If, preferring water with a view to save trouble, we take boat somewhere above old Ghisri Bandar, we shall probably find ebb-tide in the Ghára creek, the large navigable branch which debouches between Karachi and the Piti or Bhagár mouth; a

³³ "Report on Jeddah," second edition. See also the "Report concerning the diffusion of Cholera and its prevalence in Europe during the ten years of 1865-74;" published by the Board of Trade. Mr. Netten Radcliffe's valuable paper "traces from point to point that westward diffusion of cholera in the Eastern Hemisphere which, beginning in 1863, continued uninterruptedly to 1873."

³⁴ The following are the names and distances differently given by (1) the Quarter-master-General, and (2) the Gazetteer:-

	Miles	Furlongs		Miles.
1. Karáchi to Jemádár Kí Lándhí	13	1	Landhi	12
2. Watáji	15	1	Pipri	10%
			Watáji	5%
3. Ghára	9	5½	Gháro	9½
4. Gújáh	12	1	Gujo	12
5. Thatha (about half-way)	8	4	Thátá	10
Sub Total	58	4		58%
6. Hiláyá (properly 15.2)	16	6	Helaia	16
7. Jerruck (Jharak or Jhirka)	16	4	Sonda	6
			Jirkh	10
8. Ver (properly 12.4)	18	4	Aunpur	11
9. Kotri (properly 11.4)	5	4	Kotri	14
Grand total	115	6		110%

desolating sun and a stiff breeze dead in our faces. I have tried it more than once. So we will make up our minds to start the servants directly, with orders to march upon the Jemádár's Lándhi, or station, so called because years ago some native official here built a mud-tower.

Our route lies east with southing of Karachi, over the low hills, and the little desert where the dust-storms love to wander. There is nothing remarkable in it, except that we are morally certain to lose the road – if such name can be given to the one in a thousand footpaths and hoof-tracks into which we happened to fall when we left the cantonment so regularly every half-hour, that our journey will more than double its proper length.

That pole on the summit of "Gibbet-hill," the mound we are now passing, marks the spot where a celebrated Sindi "Wildfire Dick," Fakiro by name, paid the last penalty of the law for murdering an English officer in cold blood. An old hyæna prowls about the spot, and the credulous natives believe him to be the Kakodaimon whose foul influence impelled the freebooter to do so unlucky a deed.

Observe, every one we meet is in peaceful guise. One of the first orders issued by the Conqueror of Sind was that no man should carry weapons abroad. It was a fair specimen of the old warrior's shrewd, wise, despotic rule: tardy Bombay did not take warning till after the great Sepoy-mutiny. Large bodies of armed men were thereby prevented from meeting to concert conspiracies, and quiet people saw with astonishment and admiration that the personal safety of the subject was become a public, not a private, care. Many a Karáchi-ite, in 1850, remembered the day when no man dared walk from the town to the Rám Bágh, a distance of half a mile, without sword and shield, matchlock and dagger.

To show you what the value of human life was in those days: Some years ago a clan of Beloch had wandered down from their native mountains, and had pitched their tents on the plain that lies to the north of the cantonment. It is related that on one occasion an old widow sent forth her only son to collect a little "rhino" from any travellers he might chance to meet. She buckled on his sword like a Spartan mother, praying lustily the while, and followed with anxious eyes his lessening form, making it the object of many a heart-breathed benison.

It was the boy's maiden foray, and he started upon it with the determination not to disgrace the lengthy line of celebrated thieves, his ancestors. The first person he met was a Sindi, trudging along on foot, armed, as usual, *cap-à-pié*, and carrying on his back an earthen pot-lid, the extent of his morning's purchases at the neighbouring market-village.

To cry "stand and deliver!" was the work of a moment. As rapidly, too, the order was obeyed a Southron of these plains seldom dared to bandy words or blows with an armed Highlander.

The young Beloch secured the pot-lid.

But the dark idea of the maternal disappointment and disgust at the paltry nature of his virgin booty, and the danger of being designated a "prigger of pot-lids," settled heavily upon the lad's sensitive mind. What was he to do? Suddenly a bright thought dispersed the gloomy forebodings. He cut down the Sindi with his good sword, struck off his head, placed it upon the platter, and carried it in triumph as a "Peshkash," or honorary offering, to his mama.

"And hast thou really slain this Sindi dog for the sake of this pot-lid, two of which go for a penny, O my son?" anxiously inquired the venerable matron, with a beating heart.

"Wallah by the Lord I did, mother!"

"Then happy am I among the daughters of the Beloch, and blessed be thou, my boy! and thy sons! and thy sons' sons! for ever and ever!" quoth the widow, bursting into a crying fit of joy.

We, however, use the privilege of the ruling race, as our holsters show; not so much for the purpose of safety, as with the object of impressing upon the natives a sense of our national superiority. The only dangerous animal we are at all likely to meet with here is some native rider's runaway jade. Remember, if you do see one charging us, with tail erect and head depressed, whinnying like the Fire-king's steed, draw your revolver, and put the brute at once *hors de combat*.

Our first day's march is interesting in one point of view: during the whole morning's ride we see not one inch of cultivated, though every second mile of it is culturable, ground. The road crosses a number of Fiumaras the Wadis of Arabia Deserta all sand at this season, and stretches over a succession of heavy shingles, bare rocks, and burning deserts, which would not be out of place in Bedawi land.

There is the Jemádár's station. It is a fair specimen of the village in Southern Sind: the component matter consists of a well, a few shops or booths of bush and matting, where vendors of grain, sweetmeats, vegetables, and clarified butter expose their scanty stores, and a ragged line of huts, half-mud, half "rain-dropping wattles, where in foul weather the tenant (like poor Paddy) can scarcely find a dry part to repose his sky-baptized head;" and where in summer seasons the occupant, one would suppose, is in imminent deadly peril of sun-stroke and brain-fever. Our tent is pitched upon a dwarf plain near the road, our effects are scattered over its withered grass-plat, and our people are

loitering about the bushes beyond, or squatting under the single tree, in expectation of our arrival. There is a Travellers' Bungalow, to the right or east of the camping-ground, with the messman and the two normal big rooms; but we will prefer the canvas house to his brewed tea and his "sudden death," as the *Spatchcock* is here facetiously called.

You dismount, somewhat stiffly. It is your first ride after some months, and a long canter is apt to produce temporary inconvenience. You will doubtless feel better in the afternoon.

And now for breakfast, *d la Sindienne*: Bass usurping the throne of Hyson, chapátis³⁵ scones or unleavened cakes of wheaten flour, salt, and water-doing duty as buttered toast; and a hot curry the succedaneum for cold meat or "frizzle of bacon."

If there be anything of the wanderer in your disposition, Mr. John Bull, and I know there is, you will soon like this style of life. The initiation is, of course, an effort. After gliding over railroad at the rate of forty miles per hour, you are disposed to grumble at our creeping pace. At the halt, you miss your "comforts," your hotel you have abolished the inn—your newspaper, and your thousand unnecessary necessaries. One of your camels has fallen down and broken half your crockery: you need not turn up your eyes in despair; it is as easy to drink ale out of a tea-cup as from a tumbler. Your couch is a wreck; never mind, we will rig up another, in the shape of a wooden frame, listed along and across, with a hook at each corner, and secure it between two bullock-trunks. Our servants, I hear, have been fighting, as Turks are said to do: this is a real annoyance, which we must crush in embryo, if we want to live in peace.

We summon the offenders. After some delay, natural to the man who expects no good to come of haste, appear Messieurs Rámá and Govind, plaintiff and defendant.

"O sons of doggesses! What shameful work is this?"

"Sá'b, is it by your order and direction that thy man smites me upon the lips with his slipper?" asks Rámá, blubbering.

"Sá'b, is it by your order and direction that this man calls my mother naughty names, and tells me that I eat corpses?" inquires Govind, fiercely.

We dismiss both parties, with a little counter-irritation applied to something more tangible than the part chafed by angry words. Those fellows, both having reason, as they imagine, to abuse us, will be on the best possible terms before sunset, and they are not likely to quarrel again soon, much less to annoy us with their quarrels.

³⁵ These are the "mysterious patties" of the unlearned Sir Charles Wood (Lord Halifax), which, before the Mutiny, served the mutineers like the Fiery-cross of the Scotch Highlanders.

The sea-breeze blows freshly here, and after breakfast you will enjoy a nap exceedingly. Now, Mr. Bull, I will tell you how I employed myself whilst you were dozing away the forenoon.

Do you see that array of striped tents, those scattered boxes, neglected bags, and heaps of camel-litters, in whose glaring shade repose some dozens of long-bearded individuals, with huge conical caps of lamb's wool, fierce eyes, thick beards, loud voices, and a terrible habit of profane swearing?

They are Persians, escorting one of the prettiest girls ever seen to her father's house near Karachi.

The first thing which attracted my attention after you went to sleep was the appearance of a little slave-boy, who, when his fellow domestics addressed themselves to the morning siesta, kept walking about the entrance of our tent, looking in at times, and taking every precaution to evade all eyes but mine. I awaited an opportunity, and called him up. He removed his slippers, *salám'd*, bending forward with his hand on his right thigh, a respectful style of salutation, called in Persia the "Kurnish," and then stood up to be catechised.

"Who art thou, son?"

"My name is Lallu; my birth-place Bushehr."

"And what is thy employment?"

"I serve the Bábí, in the house of the great Sardár (chieftain) Z Khan."

"Indeed! thou art a wonderful youth. Dost thou like goodies? Then take this rupee, go to the *bázár*, and stuff thyself. If thou wishest to come here presently and chat awhile, there is no fear *baki nist*."

The little wretch, who scarcely numbered twelve summers, looked knowing as an "Arab" in your city of infant phenomena, again bowed, shuffled on his slippers, and departed with a grin and a promise to return.

Then, taking my pen and ink, I proceeded to indite the following *billet doux* upon a sheet of bright-yellow note-paper, the "correct thing" in this early stage of an *affaire (de cœur)*, we will call it:

"The Rose-bud of my Heart hath opened and bloomed under the Rays of those sunny Eyes, and the fine Linen³⁶ of my Soul receiveth with ecstasy the Lustres which pour from that moon-like Brow. But, woe is me! the Garden lacketh its Songster, and the Simum of Love hath dispersed the frail morning Mists of Hope. Such this servant (i.e. myself) knows to be his Fate; even as the poet sings:

"Why, oh! why, was such beauty given
To a stone from the flint-rock's surface riven?"

"Thus also the hapless Inditer of this Lament remarketh:

"The diamond's throne is the pure red gold;
Shall the Almás ³⁷ rest on the vile black mould?"

"And he kisseth the Shaft which the Bow of Kismet hath discharged at the Bosom of his Bliss. And he looketh forward to the Grave which is immediately to receive him and his miseries. For haply thy Foot may pass over his senseless Clay; the sweet influence of thy Presence may shed Light over that dark Abode."

After sealing this production with wax jaundiced like the paper, I traced the following lines with an unsteady hand, in very crooked and heart-broken characters, upon the place where "Miss A —," etc., etc., would have been:

"The Marks on this Sheet are not the Stains of Smoke (i.e., ink),
They are the black Pupils of my Eyes dissolved by scalding Tears;
Ask of my Heart what its Fate is, and it will tell thee
That when Tears are exhausted,
Blood from it will begin to flow."

When the slave-boy reappeared we renewed our dialogue, and after much affected hesitation he proceeded to disclose further particulars. "Etiquette" forbad his mentioning the Khánum's name; on other subjects, however, the young Mercury was sufficiently communicative, and at last he departed, with a promise to put the missive into the fair hand when he could, and to report progress in the course of the afternoon.

Now, Mr. Bull, be asleep if you please! Lallu is hovering about the tent again, and the presence of a "party" *en tiers* the *terzo incommodo* operates unfavourably on these occasions. Turn your face towards the tent wall, sir!

"Well, son?"

³⁶ This Oriental image may not be familiar to the English reader. In Persian poetry, the linen-stuff called "Karbás" is supposed to be enamoured of the moon.

³⁷ The adamant or diamond. The verses are far-famed Nizami's.

"I have laid the high letter before the Khánum."

"And what commands did Her Huzúr (highness) issue?"

"Híck nothing. "

"Indeed!"

"Except that the Khánum wished to know if Your Worship is learned in physic, and has any European remedies."

"Take my prayers and compliments to the Presence and put in this petition, saying, That in half-an-hour I will lay before Her Excellency what we men of medicine in Feringistán consider the Elixir of Life."

I scarcely know what to do. Perhaps, sir, you do not diagnosticize the fair one's malady? A flask of curaçoa or noyau would cure it at once, but we have none with us. Brandy she will dislike, sherry she will find cold, and ale nauseous.

I have it!

We did not neglect, when at Karachi, to lay in a little store of coarse gin, intended as a *bonne bouche* for the Sindis. See what ingenuity can effect! I mix up a bottle of it with a pound of powdered white sugar, simmer over a slow fire, strain, flavour with an idea of Eau de Cologne, and turn out as dainty a dram, sweet and strong, as any Bacchus-loving Oriental queen could desire.

The boy is delivering to his mistress the Elixir of Life, and a certain accompanying message from the Jálínús (Galen) of the age, viz., your humble servant. If you peep through that crevice in the tent wall you may catch sight of her.

Is she not a charming girl, with features carved in marble like a Greek's; the noble, thoughtful Italian brow; eyes deep and lustrous as an Andalusian's, and the airy, graceful kind of figure with which Mohammed, according to our poets, peopled his man's Paradise!

How laggingly Time creeps on! When will it be evening? Oh, that I could administer a kick to those little imps, the Minutes, that would send them bumping against one another, bow and stern, as the eight-oars in a rowing match on old Isis! I shall be admitted into the Presence as a medico of distinguished fame, and you may accompany me to play propriety and to enlarge your ideas, sir.

Confusion! what are they doing?

The litters are being hoisted upon the camel's back, and that grim senior, the Khánum's male duenna, has entered her tent!

Oh, "my prescient soul!" The Beauty comes forth, muffled and wrapped up; the beast, her dromedary, kneels; she mounts, turning her latticed³⁸ face towards us; I hear a tiny giggle; she whispers a word in the ear of the slave-girl that sits beside her; the auditor also laughs; they draw the litter curtains; the camels start.

³⁸ Modest women, in Persia, when they leave the house, always wear the "Burk'a." See Chapter XVI.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LEGEND OF BAMBRÁ, THE RUIN SINDIA DESERTA THE FAREWELL ORDER OF A COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, AND THE CAMEL-RIDE.

We are now progressing towards Watáji, the second stage, or twenty-eight miles, from Karáchi, on the road of the Five Torrents-about which anon. Our diaries will record something of this kind:

"Number two march, also rocky and sandy, ended at the unusual convenience of a caravanserai; a deserted mosque, half-exposed to the winds of heaven, having been desecrated into utility."

Native travellers, you observe, sir, have scribbled over the well-plastered walls, precisely as if they had been Greeks, Romans, or Englishmen. I once saw the paws of the Sphinx, when unburied by the late Duc de Luynes, and noted that they were covered with old travellers' scrawls. For

"Nomina stultorum semper parietibus insunt."

Here also our compatriots have not forgotten to write and scratch many a "GREEN" and a "BROWN" sprawlingly over the more modest signatures, and the less striking inscriptions of their black and brown "fellow-subjects."

A few of the Oriental compositions are amusing enough. This one, for instance:

"Matters are come to a pretty pass, ye Moslems,
When Christian hounds eat pork and drink wine in the Mosque!"

Some patriotic, probably "unemployed,"³⁹ individual of the olden day has recorded a burning wish in the following terms:

"O Sher Mahommed,⁴⁰ turn the reins of thy steed towards Sind,
And with one flash of thy scimitar consume Napír!"

And a little below, fanatics in their cups, I suppose have been hard at work. One gentleman writes:

³⁹ "Employment," in Sind and Hind, always means a salary from Government.

⁴⁰ The only Amir who showed courage or conduct in attacking or resisting us. Sir Charles Napier called him the Lion (Sher) of Sind.

"A lakh of evil curses light on the head of Umar
The son of Khattáb!"

Near which an orthodox Moslem has thus noted his violent detestation of such a schismatical, heretical, and damnable sentiment:

"Oh, base-born one, mayst thou die a hateful death,
And may dogs make a divan of thy tomb!"

Watáji, in 1876, has nothing but a campingground near the banks of the Gaggá Fiumara, which supplies excellent water. It is fronted on the opposite side by the Government Gardens, where mangoes grow, and here we find the policeman, who, like the British flag, seems to gird the habitable globe. He is dressed in blue, with red turban and Kamarband, and his long boots show that he serves "indifferent well on horseback and on camel-back."

From Watáji to Ghará, nine miles, this morning a plain such as Sind only can display. I feel almost disposed to point out the marks of the old coast, and to lecture you upon the "geology and extinct fishes" of the country. However, that hill, a few hundred yards off the road, rising abruptly on one side from the sandy flat that skirts the neighbouring creek, and on the other gradually sinking into the broken, bushy, rocky ground behind it, will supply us with half an hour's "story-telling," certainly much more rational, and probably a little more amusing.

Bambrá, which some identify with the old Alexandrian city, Barbarei, or Barbariké, whilst others here hit upon "Debul Bandar" (Thatha), is said by the natives to be the most ancient seaport in Sind. Nothing of its former state now remains; nought save the foundations of houses, curtains, bastions, and amorphous heaps, with the ghostly legends which haunt the deserted hill-top. The spade might do good service, but regular excavations, like those of the Great Master, Schliemann, not a few days of desultory amateur-digging, are required.

Tradition, possibly confounding this Bambrá, or ruined settlement, with another further north, asserts that the city and its citizens were swallowed up in one night because of the prodigious wickedness of its ruler, Dalurá.⁴¹ This ungodly king, who is also called Dilora, Dilu Ráhi, and Dalu Ráhi, claimed a certain feudal right from the daughter of a Moslem Shaykh, and the prayers of the father caused a tempest and an earthquake which demolished the city. Written history in Sind mentions no Dalurá; but the same tale is told, with a slight variant, both at Aror, the old capital of Sind where the same king's "improper" conduct caused Mehrán, the Indus, to leave its bed; and at

⁴¹ 1 See Chapter XXVIII.

Brahmanábád, near Hálá town,⁴² where, at last, he, his courtiers, and his unbelieving subjects, all perished amidst the ruins of that Young-Egyptian Canopus. The feudal custom alluded to was not unknown to the Hindus, especially to the Rajputs; but to the Moslems it would be an abomination justifying the immediate action of their Providence. Bambrá is still a celebrated locality in this part of the world, on account of the following bit of rude poetry which the bards and minstrels have associated with it: In the days when El-Islam began to take firm root in Sind, and, like the glorious Túbá⁴³ of Paradise, to afford sweet perfume and grateful shade and goodly fruit to the erring souls that wandered over the Saharás of transgression, worshipping wood, stone, and metals, the wife of one "Náo," a Brahman of Thathá on the Indus, bare him a daughter. She was a lovely child, but the astrologers, having consulted their books, declared her fate was to become a Moslemah, to marry a foreigner, and to disgrace her family. Determined to avert this prodigious evil from themselves, the parents placed the babe in a coffer with a rich bracelet, and committed it to the safeguard of the sacred stream. "Mother," as the poet sings, "never nursed Sassúi;⁴⁴ the wild waves cradled her on their rough bosom, and the wilder winds howled her lullaby."

By the decree of Destiny and who can escape it? the ark floated down to Thul Bambrá, in those days a flourishing idolatrous city, "Mahara" or "Mansawar," high, with glittering spires and proud palaces, whose walls towered majestic as monarchs over the surrounding country, and whose gardens bloomed beautiful as the plains which Houris tread.

A washerman, who was plying his craft on Indus' bank, drew out the coffer, and, astonished at its beautiful contents, called to the by-standers, his "disciples" or apprentices, "See, O men, the tricks of the World; to the childless, a child is borne by the River!"

After the lapse of years, the fair Sassúi became the boast and the beauty of Bambrá. No scimitar ever dealt more deadly wounds than did the curve of her eyebrow; no shaft pierced deeper into man's heart than the lashes that guarded her lovely orbs; her brow shone dazzlingly as the light of day, and her hair gloomed deeply as the midnight murks. Speaking in English, she was a very pretty girl, and made a considerable sensation in society.

As the fair one was sitting and spinning with her companions at the window of her Atan, or "bower," a travelling trader happened to pass by. The maidens, admiring his

⁴² The ruins, which proved to be purely Hindu, showing how little the Moslem conquest had affected the country, were explored in 1854 by the late Mr. A. F. Bellasis, of the Bombay Civil Service, and by Captain (now Major-General Sir F. J.) Goldsmid. A good account of their discoveries will be found in Murray's Handbook (p. 449); a better in the "Sindh Gazetteer," sub voce.

⁴³ The wonderful tree in Mohammed's heaven, derived from the Jews and the Apocryphal Gospels.

⁴⁴ The name is supposed to be in full "*Sunsdr men Súi*," which would mean "the heard of in the world," the famous.

handsome presence, called him in; he was a Hindu, so they were not under apprehensions of his regards. Presently began a conversation consisting of coquetry and curiosity in equal parts. After many questions and answers, they found out that he was servant of one Ári, a Beloch chief, whose city was Kech, in the province of Mekrán. Furthermore, the conscientious Bábiho, when highly complimented upon the subject of his comeliness, declared himself an Ifrit⁴⁵ a fright, as we say, in comparison with his young master, Punhú Khan.

Forthwith the fire of love arose from the fuel of Sassúi's heart; for, as saith the wise man,

"Oft-times the Ear loveth before the Eye."

Surrendering herself to the tyrant with amiable *abandon*, she indited, or rather caused to be indited, a note of invitation to her unseen flame, and sent him a present of handsome raiment a delicate hint, I presume, to come dressed like a gentleman.

Punhú, by the subtlety of Bábiho, the bagsman, obtained leave of absence from his father's home, visited the fair Sassúi, loved and woo'd her, and lived in her adopted parents' house under the humble disguise of a washerman till, Ya'akúb-like, he won his prize and wedded his mistress. A world of happiness now lay before the pair, who prepared for a charming cruise, *en tête-à-tête*, down the stream of Time. But upon the Indus, as elsewhere, there is a snag called Circumstance, upon which the frail barque of Love is sorely apt to strike.

Men relate that when Ari, the proud old Beloch, heard of his Benjamin's disgraceful conduct, he tore off his turban, and dashed it to the ground; scattered ashes upon his vestments, rent his skirts, spoiled his shirt-front, and positively refused to wash. Moreover, he sent at least a dozen of his stalwart sons to fetch the fugitive home; and (though this is a mere conjecture on my part) I doubt not that he occupied himself sedulously during their absence in preparing a stout rod for the benefit of the young gentleman's feet. The hard-hearted fraternity, furious at the idea of a Beloch degrading himself by taking in foul linen, hastened to Bambrá; and thence, in no wise appeased by their sister-in-law's beauty, kindness and skill in cookery, succeeded, partly by force and partly by stratagem, in carrying off Punhú, very much disguised in liquor, upon the back of a high-trotting dromedary.

Who shall describe Sassúi's grief when, awaking at dawn, she opens her charming eyes, and looks lovingly, and finds no husband by her side? She does not faint – Sindi women still have so much to learn! – but she shrieks "Wá waylá!" and wrings her hands, and weeps rainy tears thick as the drops that patter upon the hill over which her lover is

⁴⁵ The Arabic word is Ifrit, an iambic, according to our ideas. The Muse of Anglo-Eastern poetry ("where Ghouls and Afrits rave") has changed it to afrit (pronounced Aye-frit), and made it, moreover, a trochee.

being borne. The fresh footprints upon the sand reveal the terrible truth, and the deserted bride feels that for her there is left but one course-pursuit.

Her poor mother reminds her of her home-duties she heeds not the maternal words. Her companions thus prognosticate, as friends are fond of doing, all manner of disasters, concluding with sudden death:

"Go not forth, O Sassúí! to the wild, where snakes lurk,
Where wolves and bears sit in ambush for the wayfarer,
Where fierce hornets buzz." etc., etc., etc.

She merely forbids them to accompany her they never offered to do so, be it observed in these moving words:

"Follow me not, O dames and damsels,
Lest haply, when dying of thirst, you curse my husband!"

And she sets out on foot, alone, without kit or provender, for a two-hundred-mile march across a dreadful desert and still more dreadful hills. What a barbarous land it must be that can dream of producing such a woman; or rather, what a curious state of society it is that can read so improbable an incident and not reject it and call the author "loon! "

The road of the Five Torrents, over which we travelled yesterday, sir, was in those days a waste of waters the bereaved one dried them up by the fervency of her prayers and, by similar efficacious means, caused the drainage of the hills to flow down ready-scooped-out channels. I pass over the wide field of description: the novelty of the lady's feelings, the peculiarities of her ejaculations, the variety of her apostrophes, and the praiseworthy intensity of her perseverance, in spite of sun, Simúm, and sore feet; and hasten to be in at the catastrophe.

Sassúí presently reached the Pabb Mountains, where, faint with thirst, she applied to a goatherd for a draught of milk. Now Fate had so disposed it that this wretch, a perfect Caliban in hideousness, had been told by old Sycorax, his mama, that a beautiful bride would about that time meet him in the wild. Seeing the fair wanderer, he at once determined that she was the proper person, and forthwith began a display of affection and gallantry, decidedly inconvenient, to say the least of it, under the circumstances. At length the unfortunate wife, driven to despair, again petitioned to Heaven to preserve her honour, which it did by the rough and ready expedient, commonly adopted in Sind, of causing her to sink bodily beneath the yawning ground. Whereupon Caliban, convinced that there was some mistake about the matter, fell, monster though he was, to howling over his wickedness, and to piling up a mound of stones, a couthless tribute to departed purity and loveliness.

As usually happens, or is made to happen in such cases, Punhú, who had slipped away from the grim fraternity, arrived at the identical spot of his wife's vivi-sepulture, shortly after the cairn had been built. Suddenly he hears a voice from below he stands he listens –

"Enter boldly, my Punhú; think not to find a narrow bed.
Here gardens bloom, and flowers shed sweetest savour;
Here are fruits, and shades, and cooling streams,
And the Apostle's light pours through our abode,
Banishing from its limits death and decay."⁴⁶

Can he refuse to comply with the last request? Ah no!

"Not such his faith, not such his love."

He prayed, and was swallowed up, and became a saint accordingly.

Look at that unhappy hole: it is Bandar Ghárá.⁴⁷ The dirty heap of mud-and-mat hovels that forms the native village is built upon a mound, the *débris* of former Ghárás, close to a salt-water creek, bone-dry in March, which may or may not have been the western outlet of the Indus in Alexander's time.⁴⁸ All around it lies a

"Windy sea of land:"

a waste of salt flat, barren rock, and sandy plain, where eternal sea-gales blow up and blow down a succession of hillocks, warts upon the foul face of the landscape, stretching far, far away, in all the regular irregularity of desolation.

You see the Travellers' Bungalow standing where once was a tall, dense inclosure of bright-green milk-bush; and you may still trace the foundations of the Sepoy lines which we of the 18th Bombay N.I. built in the year 1844. Our predecessors had not dreamt of barracks or bungalows, because they knew that their time of field-service in Sind was ended; but we, who had four or five years of it in prospect, found ourselves in a different position.

⁴⁶ These lines contain the popular superstitions upon the subject of the Faithful that die in the odour of sanctity. Their graves are wide and light, rather pleasant places than otherwise, and their bodies are not really dead and liable to decay, like those of ordinary mortals. No true Moslem doubts for a moment that his Apostle's corpse, were the tomb opened, would appear exactly as it did in life. The "tale of true love" is also based upon the Súfi idea that the sentiment sanctifies the lovers, because it is an earthly copy of the Soul yearning for the Creator.

⁴⁷ In Sindhi, Gháro; the terminal o, as in Gujrátí and Rommany (Gipsy), taking the place of the Hindustani *a*. It means a deserted branch of the Indus generically.

⁴⁸ It may have been a "western outlet of the Indus," but certainly not "in Alexander's time." See Chapter XXVIII.

In this part of the Unhappy Valley, sir, the summer heat often reaches 117°; for a tent add perhaps 7°.

Now, 124° or 125° of Fahrenheit, lasting, mind you, for months together, is exceedingly likely to hurry and hustle one half-roasted into one's hot grave. However strong a man may be, his eyes burn, his ears sing, and his brain turns dizzy under the infliction sleepless, appetiteless, spiritless, and half-speechless, he can hardly be said to live: at the end of the season, if he reaches it, looking at his face, you would pronounce him to be in a "galloping consumption."

Build or burn, then, was our dilemma. The only chance of saving health a soldier's all in all was to house ourselves. But there lay the difficulty.

It was possible, in those days, to live upon one's pay and allowances; so many a papa who was liberal to a son in one of the home regiments pooh-pooh'd the idea of sending a pice per annum to one in the Company's service. And the Conqueror of Sind had been pleased to issue one of his violent and eccentric orders against debt. It was offensive, withal, pretending to teach us that a master who robs his men of their wages in order to give "champagne tiffins" to his friends is not acting like an officer and a gentleman. We were by no means grateful for such simple commentaries on the laws of honour, and we the impecunious were put upon our mettle; so I, as well as other subs., spent a hot-season-and-a-half under a subaltern's tent. None of us died, because we were seasoned vessels; but imagine, if you can, the salamander-life we were compelled to lead. And there, on the border of the Ghára creek, lies the old village which saw so many of our "little games." Still the same heap of clay-hovels, likest an African termite-hill, with its garnishing of dry thorns artlessly disposed as the home of a nest-building ape. How little it has changed, how much have we! But *chut!* The wisdom of youth is to think of, the wisdom of mature age is to avoid dwelling upon, Self.

You had better mount your dromedary, for the first time, on this morning's sandy march of six miles. You need not be afraid of approaching a quiet beast; only do not get into the habit of walking carelessly within reach of camels' tusks and hind legs. The kick is awful, so is the bite: the brutes hold like bull-dogs and, with the leverage afforded by their long pliable necks they can twist your arm off in a minute. It is a turkey-cock against a chicken.

Before throwing your leg over the framework of wood, padded and covered with a thickly quilted, gaudy-coloured, silk-cushion acting saddle, shake the bells that garnish your animal's necklace of blue beads a talisman against the *malocchio* and give it a bit of biscuit. If you startle it when mounting, it is very apt to convert the squatting into a standing position with a suddenness by no means pleasant. There, you are on now! Hold the nosestring lightly; give head, and after once putting it in the right path, let it do what it pleases.

My first ride was not such a pleasant one as yours, partly my own fault for mounting a baggage-camel. After considerable difficulty in getting on the roaring, yelling beast, I found it necessary to draw my sword, and prick its nose, each time that member crept round disagreeably near my foot. Finding all efforts to bite me unavailing, the beast changed tactics, and made for every low thorn-tree, as close to the trunk as possible, in the hope of rubbing off the rider. This exercise was varied by occasionally standing still for half an hour, in spite of all the persuasive arguments in the shape of heels, whip, and point with which I plied the stubborn flanks. Then it would rush forward, as if momentarily making up its mind to be good. At last my "Desert Craft" settled upon the plan of running away, arched its long bowsprit till its head was almost in contact with mine, and in this position indulged in a scudding canter. The pace felt exactly like that of a horse taking a five-barred gate every second stride.

Fortunately for me the road was perfectly level. Presently snap went the nose-string! My amiable *monture* shook its head once or twice, snorted a little blood from its nostril, slackened speed, executed a *demi-volte*, and turned deliberately toward the nearest jungle.

Seeing a swamp before us, and knowing that a certain "spill" was in prospect (these beasts always tumble down, and often split their stomachs on slippery mud), I deliberated for a moment whether I should try to chop my property's head open, or jump off its back, risking the consequences, or keep my seat till it became no longer tenable. And my mind was still in doubt when, after sliding two or three yards over the slimy mire, the brute fell plump upon its sounding side.

Somehow or other the Arabs' superstition about the so-called "patient camel" is not without foundation; they assure you that no man was ever killed by a fall from these tall louts, whereas a little nag or donkey has lost many a life. Certainly I have seen some terrible "rolls," and have myself been dismounted about a dozen times, yet not even a trifling accident occurred. The cause, of course, is that the beast breaks the fall by slipping down on its knees.

Should, however, your dromedary, when trotting high at the rate of ten or eleven miles the hour, happen to plant its foot upon the stump of a tree, or to catch in a bandicoot's hole, it might so be that, after a flight of a few yards, you would reach *terra firma* with an impetus calculated to put the Arab proverb out of joint. Still, remember, there is a knack in falling, as Mr. Assheton Smith knew. You may let a corpse drop from a height of twenty feet without breaking the smallest bone, and a drunken man, after tumbling from the gallery of a theatre, will, perhaps, walk quietly home. So, also, you may roll off your camel with as little injury as a sack of wheat would incur, if you only have the presence of mind not to catalepsy your members. Let every limb be lax and bending: it

is by the strong muscles being in a state of convulsive rigidity that compound fractures are caused.

The "Ship of the Desert" is the reindeer of the Sindis, an animal of many uses. They drink the milk it tastes rather salt and thin at first, but the palate soon becomes accustomed to it; they make butter of it, and they use it for confectionary. The flesh of the camel-colt is considered a kind of religious meat: it is infinitely superior to horseflesh, and reminds one not a little of coarse veal.

Thousands of Sindis do nothing but rear camels; in the districts where tamarisk and mimosa abound, the country is covered with their straggling herds; and some tribes—the Jats, for instance—live by practising farriery, if I may so call it. There are about fifteen breeds peculiar to the province; the best, however, are imported. The small, stout, shaggy animals, regular camel-Shetlands, come from Maskat and Mekrán; the tall, large, white dromedaries from Jaysalmír; the "Bukhti," a dark, short-legged, shaggy, lion-maned, two-humped beast, the cart-horse of the species, from Persia, Balkh (Bactria), and Bokhárá. Under the native princes this branch of the import trade was much encouraged, and 50£ was not an unusual price for a noted Sándni, or riding-camel in fact, the dromedary, which, as the world now know, means a "runner."⁴⁹

These animals are not taught in Sind to pull. In the Bengal Presidency they have been trained to draw guns, and did excellent service in the north-western parts of India, where the deep and sandy roads punished the artillery horses and bullocks severely. I have seen them also harnessed to carts in Egypt—by Frenchmen, not by Egyptians. For carrying burdens they are invaluable. They will travel for months together when laden lightly, say up to two hundred pounds, if allowed sufficient time to forage for their scanty food in the woods; and never halted, as well as never hurried, on the line of march. Whilst travelling, each has one pound of barley per diem, reduced to flour, kneaded with water, and made into lumps, which are thrust down the throat; the Persians call this ration "Nawáleh." When severe work is in prospect, the camel-men sometimes add a little intoxicating hemp, mixed with clarified butter. Our ruinous losses in commissariat camel-flesh have mainly been occasioned by neglecting these precautions: to which may be added our utter ignorance of the animal's many and various diseases. On one occasion I saw a friend administer a bottle of cognac to a favourite Sándni by way of curing a stomach-ache. The dose did so most effectually, for the dosed died, drunk as drunk could be, half an hour afterwards.

In this province camels are never taught to canter or gallop, as in Arabia and Belochistán. A well-trained dromedary's trot is by no means disagreeable; any other pace feels as if you were riding two animals at once. Where a pocket-compass or a

⁴⁹ "Camelus dromedarius," applied exclusively to the one-humped variety, has misled, and still misleads, many who should know better.

sextant is the only instrument which a traveller can safely use, the camel acts admirably as a perambulator. The result of my many observations was that the animal in Sind, when treading on level ground, not rough or stony, takes per second one step, exactly equal to a yard; that is to say, 3600 yards, or two statute miles and eighty yards per hour.

My calculation agrees precisely with that of Volney. Burnes estimates 3700 yards, when marching over soft and sandy soils; this is probably correct; but I doubt that a string of camels generally moves so fast as 3833 yards per hour, as in one part of his Travels he computes them to do. Captain Burnaby says two miles and three quarters: the general mean of travellers ranges between two miles and two and a half.

That half-deserted, ruinous-looking village is Gújáh or Gújo, some twelve miles from Ghára. It had an old mud mosque, used like an Iceland "Kirkju" (church) by travellers, but as the place was full of natives, and consequently in the last state of filth, we usually camped under yon cool-looking fragrant mango-tope.⁵⁰ It also contained a celebrated Sayyid, a gentleman of the blood holy, very polygamous and very unapproachable.

⁵⁰ Tope is the Anglo-Indian name for a tuft of trees, particularly mangoes.

CHAPTER VII.

THATHA AND ITS HOLY HILL.

NAGAR, everywhere pronounced "Nangar," Thathá, the city, par excellence, is a place of many lions. For the convenience of sight-seeing we will deposit our Penates near that bit of water which skirts the foot of the Mekli Hills, about a mile south-east of the town. We now stand nearly sixty miles from Karáchi, and six above the delta-apex where the Sita (Sátá), or eastern, and the Bhagár, or western, branches fork. The situation is evidently important, and perhaps the old emporium may still see good times. Some have identified it with Alexander's Pattala, chiefly, it would appear, from a faint and fanciful verbal likeness; but it was built in A.D. 1522, (Macmurdo), and it derived its name from the "Thath," shore or bank of the Indus, now distant four to five miles.

The ex-capital of Lar, or Lower Sind, is now, indeed, fallen from its high estate. The population, once 300,000 (legend), has declined to 5,000; the thirty miles circumference⁵¹ (Burnes) has shrunk to ten; and of its 5000 looms, which produced the shawls and silken stuffs, celebrated throughout Central Asia, scarcely remain a dozen. These *lung*, scarves, or waistcloths, of mixed silk and cotton, or silk and gold, are supposed to be the *zone* of the Periplus. Finally, of its 400 colleges, not one is now in existence. The Jam'a Masjid, or cathedral—mosque of Aurangzeb, dated A.D. 1661, with its towering walls and huge arches, still stands to show the ancient munificence of the Moghal's viceroys, but all around it, far and near, is a squalid congeries of ruined or half-ruined hovels. Some of the streets are nearly blocked up by the masses of adobe (unbaked brick), which are allowed to moulder where they tumble; and in many quarters, natural squares have been formed by the simple process of a block of houses sinking to the ground. Each severer inundation sweeps away part of the suburbs exposed to its violence, and the rising places, such as Karáchi and Haydarábád, every year draw off a portion of the wretched-looking population. The last injury has now been done to it by the railway, as you will see on your return.

We used to dine at the Travellers' Bungalow. Not that the old Portuguese "messman" was likely to rival Verrey; but the building, the Company's old factory, had a history. In A.D. 1758 Ghulám Shah, a prince of the Kalhóra dynasty, then ruling the province, gave the Hon. East India Company permission to establish a depôt in his dominions, with a view to encouraging trade between Sind and India. This commercial connection was rudely broken off by the miserable Sarfaráz Khan Kalhóra, in 1775. The venerable pile, formerly inhabited by Mr. Crowe, the first British Resident, has seen many a vicissitude.

⁵¹ I see no reason to reject Lieut. Wood's suggestion, that the ruins, extending some thirteen linear miles from south-east to north-west, are remains of the Thathás, successively built and deserted as the river shifted its course.

How well I remember a breakfast with glorious old Sir Robert Sale, whom we sucking *militaires* held the type and exemplar of the British soldier. The inner quadrangle, or clear court, was surrounded by a wooden gallery which gave the caravanserai no small resemblance to an antiquated English inn—say, the Bull in Holborn. This hollow square apparently began in Africa, passed over to Arabia, migrated to Spain, and thence reached England *via* Galway. Intended for defence and privacy, it is one of the oldest forms of house-architecture known to the civilized world. The chambers that looked out upon the *patio* were large and high; many of them had been for some time in a ruinous condition, with huge holes in the threatening floors and ceilings. A long flight of steps led to a flat roof of cement, whence we chanced to see some amusing scenes. Sindis, Mr. Bull, sleep upon the roofs of their houses, and use them for a rich variety of domestic purposes.

Look! there is a party of "young persons" enjoying their favourite game with the Kheno (ball); their heads are bare, and their muslin chemises are not of the most decorous cut; they run about, shout, and push one another in their excitement, exactly like a bevy of English hoydens.

A little beyond, a busy housewife is spreading the night's resting-place: a couch as unartificial as could be desired, being nothing but a four-legged framework of wood, like your tent—bedstead, with fine cords instead of tape, and the whole covered with the usual quilt.

There you view a little group, sitting at prayers upon a rug the head of the house, that venerable senior with the long white beard, is teaching his children to chaunt the Koran. It is a highly devotional spectacle, and the voices of the juniors are soft and pleasing. You need not fear to distract their attention: none of the party understand what is being gravely repeated any more than a parrot would; so they can stare without disturbing their minds.

You look curiously at that whity-brown object which catches your eye in the deepening shades of eve. That is a Sindi performing his ablutions *in purissimis naturalibus*—still a custom in these regions.

A word in your ear, Mr. Bull. Should that little boy with the long hair down his shoulders (you recollect remarking him when we entered the bungalow?) come up to you, asking if you want anything, give him, or pretend to give him, a touch of the horsewhip. He is touter-general for the Kanyaris, or dancing-girls: as you are a married man, and a *pater-familias*, with a character, I cannot allow you a "Nách" (ballet) at a place so disreputable as Thathá. And now there is not even a Travellers' Bungalow here. We find, however, the inevitable police-station and court, the post-office, and the dispensary, presided over by the Eurasian apothecary.

The cool of the morning will be a good time for visiting Kalyán Kot, a ruin about a mile and a half from Thathá. We ride a couple of miles or so along the skirt of the Mekli hills, on the west of the city: the ridge, or ground-wave, one mile broad by eight long, and barely a hundred feet high, trends from north to south. We pass through stubbles, every stalk of which is as thick as an elderly gentleman's walking-cane: here the blithe "clock-clock" of the black partridge resounds from the neighbouring brakes; the hoopoo trots before us in fun; the lark hardly rises from the path; the jackdaw-like crow scans us curiously, and the wild pigeon darts across the line; the *tittara*, or gray partridge, rises in coveys from the wayside; every now and then a timid hare, scarcely bigger than a small tom-cat, flies from our approach; or a fat jackal, returning from making a night of it, stands to look at us cunningly and officiously, as if he were the paid spy of the animal creation.

Kalyán Kot, meaning in Sanskrit "Fort Prosperity," was whilome a place of fame. Our fellow-countrymen describe it as an "immense camp, said to be the work of Alexander the Great:" the people have a tradition that it is the feat of fairy hands. Sir A. Burnes and Lieut. Wood incorrectly write and translate it *Kullan Kot*, the "Large Fort:" the Moslems call it Toghkakabad; but none of them ever dreamt of connecting it with the Macedonian. Its appearance belongs to an age anterior to the general use of gunpowder: the round towers, of mud, revetted with kiln-burnt brick, which break the line of the outer curtain, are, you see, within easy bow-shot of one another. The *enceinte* contains a vast raised platform, a parallelogrammic *terre pleine*, for which the large tank below the ruins was probably excavated. Within, where masses of masonry, shaken by Time or Pluto, have fallen into fantastic shapes resembling at a distance huge red rocks, there is Sindian desolation: a hard surface of dry "Kahgil," adobe, or unburned clays, thickly sown with bits of vitrified brick and tile, a broken wall or two, and a domed tomb converted by the pigeons into a dovecot: by these things we know that man has been there.

Riding along the crest of the hill towards our tents, we pass over the spot where the unfortunate 22nd and 26th Regiments, Native Infantry, were stationed when Bombay first occupied the country. After a few months, they were disorganized and nearly destroyed by the fatal miasma of the plains. One of these corps had 1576 cases treated in hospital between August and January of the same year. Every scrap of building has disappeared in Lower Sind such materials, especially wood, are too precious to continue long unappropriated. But we can trace the foundations of the lines, and the ditches that surrounded them; probably they will last out the century. There is so little rain, that it takes many a season to obliterate deep marks from the hard, gravelly soil.

And now for the great lion of Thatha.

The "cities of the dead," I may observe, are the only populous places in Young Egypt. Many of the principal settlements must contain their hundreds of thousands: and these

are never reopened for lodging new arrivals. The reason of the crowding is that the people, being divided into clans, are fond of burying their relations together: thereby the departed souls have the benefit of "spiritual confabulation," and the survivors have no difficulty to find out the grave over which they wish to chaunt the Koran or to recite supererogatory prayers. Ghostly benefit is also to be derived by sleeping in the neighbourhood of some holy man. The practice has its sentimental side, but the demerits are greater than the merits. At this moment (March, 1876) we are threatened with an attack of real Plague from the Persian Gulf, where such interment has made Kerbelá a focus of infection.

This spot, as the first *coup d'ail* must convince you, is one of peculiar sanctity. In A.D. 1500, Jam Tamáchi, the Sammah Prince (about whom presently), by order of a distinguished saint, built a mosque upon the hills which he called Mekli, or rather Makkali, "Mecca-like," for virtue and sanctity;⁵² and directed that thenceforward this should be the holy locale, in supersession of Pír Pattah⁵³ on the Bhagár Creek, formerly the pet *Père Lachaise* of defunct Sindis.

Presently another distinguished saint, Miyán Malúk, discovered, by the following peculiar test, that the Mekli hills had, in the olden time, been honoured by the revered presence of Hasan and Hosayn, the grandsons of Mohammed. An ignorant goatherd was in the habit of driving his flock over the rocks, and every day he observed, with increasing astonishment, that the animals studiously avoided planting hoof upon a certain place. The next thing in due order was a vision, which the seer did not quite understand, but which, when communicated by him to two learned and pious individuals, caused them to perform their orisons with such fervour, that neither they nor others could question the preternatural nature and origin of the "unction." They marked out the spot with stones; a governor of Thathá walled it round, another built a grand dome over it, and thus it gradually rose to the dizziest height of sanctity.

Men hastened to be interred on the Mekli hills; it is calculated that the burial-ground contains, within its six square miles, not less than a million of tombs. Saints and santons to the number of three thousand-seventy-four of them immortal names in Sindi story, but very uninteresting ones to you, sir— there depositing their venerable mould, increased its value as a cemetery to a prodigious extent. Like the stony-hearted Kevin, who obtained from Heaven that all buried within the compass of the Seven Churches shall be saved on the Day of Judgment, their Moslem Holinesses obtained permission, when they shall rise again, to carry the bit of hill bodily, contents and all, into the

⁵² Munshi Lutfullah's Autobiography (p. 283) derives the name from a fishwoman who lived here before the city was built.

⁵³ Murray's Handbook (pp. 482-83) says that the abolished cemetery was Pír Panjah, ten miles south of the present town, and suggests that it deserves to be "worthily described." Nor can I explain what the writer means (page 481) by "a range running from west to north."

Courts of Paradise. No wonder that it was and is considered a luxury to be inhumed in such a locality; no wonder that people were and are made to pay for it!⁵⁴

From a distance the effect of the scene is imposing. The summit of the rocky ridge that looks eastward upon the city of Thathá is crowned by an immense *Íd-gáh*, where public prayers are recited on the two great festivals of the Moslem year, called the *Íds*. It is the usual long wall; with a low flight of steps leading to the central niche, where the preacher stands, and with tall slender minarets of elegant form springing from either extremity. As the inscription shows, Yusuf Khan, Governor of Sind, built it in A.H. 1043-1633. Behind the *Íd-gáh* rises an infinite variety of mausolea and sepulchres, many ruined by the earthquake's shock, more crumbling to decay beneath the "winnowing wings of Time;" a few, and but very few, preserved by the pious hands of descendants and disciples. Vaulted domes, arches, and towers; porticos, gateways, and colonnades, rise in long succession above shapeless heaps and mounds, whose remains no ivy, loved of Bacchus,⁵⁵ invests with its green winding-sheet. The piles of stone are naked, desolate, and unaltered, as on the day when they sank to earth; here and there a tuft of parched-up grass and a thorny tree bowed by the winds and bare of leaves, adding desolation to the desolate spectacle. Many of the edifices, the tombs of Amirs, Jams, and Sayyids, must have been the labour of years and years. In some the cupola, surrounded by a ring of smaller domes, rests upon a single or a double colonnade, enclosing a gallery and platform, broken by pointed arches in each of the four fronts; others are girt by lofty stone walls, forming square court-yards, with gates leading to the different doorways. Some consist of heavy marble canopies, supported by light fantastic columns, and sheltering a parallel line of tombstones; and many are built of coloured and glazed Dutch tile and brick, which, by-the-by, might rival those of old Rome. No chiselled stone could have a sharper edge or a truer form: so carefully is the material mixed and burned, that it rings like metal, and breaks almost as clean as glass. When stained and glazed, they look as if enamelled; and nothing can be richer than the appearance of the inscriptions, in large white letters upon a dark purple ground. They were probably made by Persian bricklayers, who are celebrated throughout the East for their skill in this craft. The gaudy "*Chíní Gumbaz*," (porcelain domes) as they are called at Haydarábád, in the Dekhan, have more the appearance of pleasure-houses than mansions of the dead, as they stand out bright and singular from the general expression of monotonous melancholy; whilst upon all pours down the gay radiance of an Eastern sun, and the azure reflection of a cloudless sky, its hues of undying brightness contrasting tritely, yet how impressively, with the transitory memorials of earthly splendour!

We pass over the hill. Every now and then some strolling Fakír, grim as the ruins amidst which he stalks, frowns at the intrusion of the stranger, or a pariah dog barks

⁵⁴ Yet Captain Hamilton, in 1699, found only forty-two "fine large tombs, which, from the plain, appeared to be a small town." One of them had cost two "lack of rupees," then worth £25,000.

⁵⁵ The historians of Alexander remark the absence of ivy, with one exception, in these regions.

when we approach, and flies frightened by the echoed sound of its own voice. If we enter a mausoleum, the noise of our footsteps, returned by the hollow ground, disturbs the hundred tenants of the porticos, the niches, and the projections of the domes.

A closer inspection is by no means favourable to the view. There is a satiating minuteness in the details of decoration with which the tombs are covered; in the largest and most magnificent, every stone of the edifice itself, its walls and its gates, is elaborately carved in relief. Your eye rejects the profuseness of square and circle, spiral and curve, diamond and scroll-work, flowers, border-pattern, and quotations from the Koran in characters whose chief beauty is illegibility. In vain you look for a straight line; the architects were not sufficiently artful to succeed in the simplicities of art: they are like the goldsmiths of India, who can make anything but a plain flat surface. As a traveller justly observes, the effect of the *tout ensemble* is an appearance of tinsel tawdriness which results from injudicious over-ornament.

In these countries very little of "the history of a people is to be learned from their sepulchres," and the Moslems want the mania of historical epitaph and laudatory inscription which as often render our Christian monuments the means of mirth as of melancholy. Here the date of the "debt having been duly paid," sometimes a turban or a name, and rarely a Persian couplet or a verse from Holy Writ, are the scanty scraps of information afforded to the inquirer concerning the venerable defunct. That long tombstone of white alabaster, under the bold cupola lined with blue and varnished tiles, painted with flowers and arabesques so as to resemble the richest porcelain, is an exception to the general dulness, and bears rather a pretty idea:

"Weeping thou didst enter this world of woe,
Smiling thou departedst to that land of joy!"

This is the mausoleum of a Sayyid who, wonderful to relate, is said to have been a Kázi, a judge, and yet an honest man. He died in the odour of sanctity, literally as well as figuratively, amidst an overpowering aroma of musk from the apothecæ of Paradise.

If you have any little pain flying about you, Mr. Bull, such as a twinge in the side or a slight abrasure of the skin, now is your time. Rub it against the alabaster (with faith, mind), and you will assuredly recover. This is one of the great advantages of having holy places close at hand; where hospitals, dispensaries, and surgeries do not abound they are *impayables*.

You may wish to know what supernatural and preternatural powers are attributed to the saints of Sind. I offer you a *resumé* of the miracles which most commonly edify the mind and confirm the belief of the Faithful:

Causing the birth of children, especially in cases when the ages of the parents render prolificity a physical impossibility. Also, on occasions of ingratitude being shown by such parents, obtaining from Heaven that the blessing of issue may be summarily withdrawn from them.

Curing all kinds of diseases and complaints, structural, organic, and what not. The *modus medendi* is, generally, the administering of a drop of water to the patient—water—cure in embryo, you observe—or passing the hand over the part affected, a rude form of animal magnetism. The maladies are of the class upon which the hydropathist and the mesmerist love to exercise their natural magic, such as deafness, dumbness, blindness, hysteria, and nervous affections; but failures are common, and success must, I fear, be pronounced rare and unsatisfactory. However, men forget the failures and remember the successes.

Under the third head may be ranked a vast variety of extraordinary feats, such as saving, when invoked by them, shipwrecked mariners or lost travellers; appearing in person at a distance to protect a friend against unseen danger; changing female to male (never the reverse), seniors to juveniles, sots to scholars, sinners to saints, and Káfirs (Infidels) to El-Islam; saving a person's life by directing the stroke of death to another quarter; exercising dominion over birds, beasts, and fishes; causing youths' beards to grow; living on nothing, like English "fasting-girls," for an unconscionable time; totally abstaining from drink and sleep; watering a whole caravan with the contents of a single pipkin; ordering the wild trees of the forest to produce honey and clarified butter; restoring existence to the dead; putting to flight the Fiend and his emissaries; intuitively knowing men's minds and secret thoughts; compelling inanimate objects to act as though they had vitality and volition; breaking through walls and doors in spite of chains and fetters; visiting Hell for the purpose of saving one of its victims; and flying bodily up to Heaven.

Briefly to trace the career of a single miracle which happened under my own eyes: A boat sails, we suppose, from Karachi to Bombay. About the Gulf of Kachh (you recollect the Kanthus of Ptolemy?) a hurricane obliges the crew to put back. During the violence of the storm they were praying much more lustily than they were working, and being natives of the same village, they all implored the aid of one Pír, the live patron-saint of the place. Well, they were saved. In due time, when they return to their families, and talk over the affair with their friends, feeling that the adventure in its simple shape is ordinary and uninteresting, they will begin, consciously or unconsciously, to make it more presentable by adding a few ornaments. The head liar of the party, and there is always at least one, swears by Mohammed's beard that as he ejaculated "Save me, *Miyan Mitho!*"—Reverend Mr. Sweet, a plebeian, but a very celebrated name in the Valley of the Indus—the form of the holy man rose before his eyes, bidding him be of good cheer, for that assuredly no harm should come to him. The rest of the crew either believe the invention, or wisely pretend to do so; or they foolishly lose reputation, and

subject themselves to be dubbed "Atheists" and "Infidels" by contradicting it. The saint, on the other hand, when consulted, is sure to declare that, hearing a sorrowful voice calling from afar upon his name, he threw his spirit in the direction of the sound; perhaps, also, he will condescend to accept a little present or two.

A fair basis for carrying weight is now laid, and the superstructure may or may not become gigantic. If favoured by circumstance, the young miracle grows apace in strength and station. After a few years' careful nurture and consequent development, it develops into adult form. The ship sank to the bottom of the sea, whence the Pír raised it with his potent hand. Then it blooms through a glorious manhood of celebrity and, in green old age, it looks forward to being embalmed in the leaves of some Persian book for the instruction and edification of posterity. Hume did not believe in (modern?) miracles, because he never saw one: I do not for the converse reason, having seen so many. And in the XIXth Century the Protestant half of the Western world utterly rejects and ignores what the Catholic other half most firmly holds to; whilst the few indifferent content themselves with proposing a "Scientific Commission."

By this time you must be deadly tired of saints and their performances, Mr. John Bull, especially as you are one of those sturdy-minded Northerners who do not require everything to be

" – oculis subjecta fidelibus,"

before it can take its seat in the penetralia of your reason and belief. Before we leave these reverends, I must, however, with your permission, translate that short ode which some poetic hand has inscribed upon one of the walls in honour of his Murshid, or spiritual teacher. It is, I should inform you, the production of a Súfi, a tribe of mystic devotees who hold tenets somewhat similar to the Platonists and the Gnostics of your faith in early days, and it teems with the commonplaces of their poetry: the negative entity of the World of Matter, the positive existence of the human Soul as a Particle of the Eternal Spirit; enjoyment of what the Hindus call Máýá, or the illusions of mundane existence, and devotion to earthly, the imperfect type of heavenly, Beauty and Love.

I.

They⁵⁶ deem the world a lovely dream,
Floating before man's waking eyes –
A dream of phantom weal and woe;
Unreal smiles, illusive sighs.

⁵⁶ The third person plural in Persian is politely used for the singular: "they" for "he." I have retained the Oriental idiom, the present for the past, "they deem" for "he deemed:" and the reader may consider the lines an exposition of the tenets of the sect, as well as the eulogy of a Master.

II.

They question not His will, nor why
He placed them in this passing scene,
That bars them from those happy realms,
Thro' Memory's mist yet dimly seen.

III.

By them a thought, a sigh, a tear
In lonely meditation shed,
Are held far holier acts of prayer
Then bended knee or bowed head.

IV.

Their Masjid's roof is Heaven's high vault,
Its walls, the horizon's ample pale,
Its floor, fair Nature's wide expanse
Of stream and sea, of hill and dale.

V.

On flowery meads, in vocal glades,
Where tuneful choirs sing hymns of praise,
'Neath perfumed shrubs, near bubbling rills,
They love to pass their similar days.

VI.

Their lips shrink not with Záhíd⁵⁷ fear,
To taste the wine-cup's bubbling kiss,
Nor shun their ears the cithern's song
That brims their souls with earthly bliss.

VII.

Their eyes may rest on woman's face,
On youth and beauty's form divine,
Where parted sparks of heavenly light,
In clear reflection purely shine.

VIII.

Love knows with them no carnal joys,
No sensual sweets, no low desire;
They nurse its bright and holy flame

⁵⁷ The Záhíd is an ascetic, or rather a Philistine, to whom wine and music and the Súfi are abominations.

As Guebres feed their perfumed fire.

IX.

Their only good, good done to man
To harm mankind, their only ill:
All other good and ill they hold
The wild caprice of mortal will.

X.

Life is to them the arch that spans
That dark abysm – Eternity;
They build not on its narrow way,
But tread it, Allah! seeking Thee.

Turning tent-wards, we come upon another venerated locality, a walled inclosure, surrounded by lofty Pípals—the *Ficus religiosa*, a sacred tree amongst Hindus, and probably the origin of our debated "poplar." During this morning's ride I remarked to you some places of Hindu pilgrimage; certain upright stones stained with vermilion, and decked with huge garlands of withered flowers, upon the margin of a small deep tank, girt round by grottoes and caverns, Nature-cut in the mass of honeycombed limestone, near Kalyán Kot. Here, again, we have traces of the same "Gentoo"⁵⁸—worship, as we see by that recent attempt at delineating a lady of masculine habits mounted upon a peculiar breed between the tiger and the king of beasts. The personage depicted is Singhuváni, the Lion Rider,⁵⁹ a local incarnation of that multinomial goddess, Devi, Durgá, Parwati, or, as we allegorize her, Active Virtue. If you take the trouble to look into Ward's Hindoos, into Moor's Pantheon, or any other popular work upon the subject of Hinduism, you will marvel how she earned so respectable a title, Active Viciousness appearing to be the general character which Mythology assigns to her.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ From the Portuguese "Gentío," a Gentile, a heathen, mostly limited to idol-worshippers, but sometimes applied to Moslems.

⁵⁹ The ancient Hindus well knew the habits and peculiarities of the lion; their modern descendants confound its name and nature with the tiger.

⁶⁰ Nothing can be more absurd than the effect produced by Hinduism, smartly dressed up, as it has been in European clothing: a system of wild superstition explained, emblemized, and typified by Western speculators till its very form ceases to be recognizable.

The male Triad of the Hindus, Brahmá, Vishnu, and Shiva, are merely personifications of the Almighty power, the Brahm, or Demiourgos, in the three several being-modes of Creation, Preservation, and Destruction: the female Triad is that same power in exertion; their very name, "Saktí," tells us so, clearly as language can. Durga is the active destroying phase of the destroying deity Shiva who, in Hindu thought, leads directly to reproduction, and she is elaborately anthropomorphized, or, let us say, made a personal goddess—now an angel, then a fiend - *les extrêmes se touchent*. To consider her the "ideal personification of active virtue incarnate on earth," employing all her celestial weapons "against Maïssassoor, the buffalo-headed demon of vice," etc., etc., is to graft a Western upon an Eastern idea, to the utter confusion of all ideas upon the subject.

You look towards me for some explanation of those stones, daubed with red. Mr. Bull, as you may chance to repeat my conversation at home, I must place the seal of silence upon my lips, much as I regret so to do. But if you are not thoroughly tired of the article Faith, I can read you a lesson upon certain peculiarities observable in this corner of the world, which may set you thinking awhile.

El-Islam, the religion promulgated by Mohammed, was, in his day, sufficiently pure Deism; the Eternal Being is as impersonal as could be expected, taking into consideration the difficulty of making the idea intelligible to the Perceptives and Reflectives of a barbarous race. The Faith conceived, born, and bred amongst the rugged hills trodden by the Wild Man, formed a *point de réunion*, round which collected all the scattered and hostile tribes. For awhile the human stream stood gathering bulk; presently, chafed to fury by intestine commotions, and driven headlong by the winds of passion, it overflowed its margin, and poured down like a desolating torrent upon the civilized world about it.

But when the excitement of invasion and battle, of plunder and massacre, had passed away, the heterogeneous mass of converts, forcibly incorporated with the original stock of the Faithful, found time and opportunity to shuffle not a few of their old tenets and predilections into the system of monotheism thus forcibly thrust upon them.

The banks of the Indus were, in remote ages, the cradle and hot-bed of Hinduism; Mulután was its stronghold, and Sind was as abundant in Budhism, as it was in the Brahmanism that destroyed it. The Delta had Holy Places in numbers, and marks of the old religion still extend far westward of the mountains that separate us from the deserts of Mekrán. How, or at what time, the descendants of the conquering Arabs made these venerated spots their own, history, being written by themselves, of course says not. Probably they took the first opportunity to bury some distinguished corpse in the place which they determined to appropriate; and then, in spite of the pagans, connected the site in question with their own faith. One thing you may observe: almost every celebrated locale in Sind still displays distinct signs of original Hinduism; moreover, the worshippers of Brahma have Sanskrit names for the sainted *incolæ* of the principal mausolea; and the Polytheist, as well as the disciple of Mohammed, continues to attend the fairs and pilgrimages which periodically recur at the tombs and other Holy Places.

And most amusing to an indifferent observer are the zeal and violence with which the "professors" of the two rival creeds advance and refute their claims and right of property to the disputed person of some noted devotee.

Before leaving the ex-capital of Lár, we will, please, lay in a store of what is usually known as "Thathá-work," probably because made at Hálá, north of Haydarábád. The

material is a cylinder of Bhán, or willow-poplar (*P. Euphratica*),⁶¹ soft and easily yielding to the turner. The lacquering is done by applying successive layers of sealing-wax—yellow, red, green, and so forth—to the article, whilst made to revolve by the lathe, and lastly, the patterns are punched and cut out at different depths by hand. This rude decoration is a favourite in Sind; you will see it on the constable's staff, the bed-posts, and the ox's yoke, as well as on work-cases, *étuis*, and cigar-boxes.

⁶¹ This is supposed to be the "willow upon which Hebrews hanged their harps.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CAPTURE OF THATHA IN THE OLDEN TIME.

It is related by the chronicles of antiquity that in days gone by, and in ages that have long fled, Sind was a lovely land, situated in a delightful climate; a fertile plain, traversed by the beneficent Mehrán,⁶² with large, flourishing, and populous cities; orchards producing every kind of tree and fruit, and gardens that were the reflection of Irem,⁶³ and the envy of the Seven Heavens. It was governed by a powerful monarch, who had mighty hosts and impregnable forts; whose counsellors were renowned for craft, and whose commanders were celebrated for conduct. And the boundaries of his dominions and provinces extended as far as Kanoj and Kashmir, upon whose south-western frontier two towering cypresses were planted by one of the Ráhis – the Hindu Rajahs of Sind.

During the Khalifat of the Chief of True Believers, Umar the son of Khattáb (whom may Allah bless!), it was resolved, with the permission of Allah, to subject the sinners of Sind to the scimitar of the saints-militant. But it so happened that the captain of the Moslem armament, being opposed by a Brahman general, was killed and, after much slaughter, his troops were discomfited; many were slain, and the rest were made prisoners.

Again, at the time when great Usmán (upon whom be Allah's approval!) occupied the seat of power, it was ordered that one Hakim, a confidential agent, should be sent to Sind to spy out and discover the state of affairs; but the reporter caused the expedition to be abandoned by saying that the water was black, the fruit sour and poisonous, the ground stony, and the earth saline. When the Caliph asked him what he thought of the inhabitants, he replied, "They are faithless."⁶⁴

Then, during the rule of Ali (may his name be exalted!), a force passed over from Mekrán, and was opposed by a large army of the hill-men; but the Moslems, calling on the Most High, began an impetuous attack, and the noise of the shouts terrified the foes, who cried for quarter whilst they fled. From that time, on occasions of conflict, the "Allahu!" was ever heard amongst those mountains. But when the tidings of the Khalifah's death arrived, further advance was stopped.

⁶² The classical and poetical name for Father Indus, very little known beyond its banks. So "Hapi," the Nile, was known to ancient Egypt as Tesh-Tesh, and by a variety of other names.

⁶³ A celebrated Paradise, or garden, made in Arabia by one Sheddád - very useful in Oriental comparisons.

⁶⁴ That Hákim must have been a most discerning traveller; his brief account of Sind and the Sindis is a perfect specimen of pregnant truth. It beats even the midshipman's proverbial reply to some question concerning the manners and customs of the Maskat people: "Manners they have none, and their customs are beastly." Sindi history repeats the dictum of Hákim in modern days, apparently not understanding its profound satire.

Now the land of Serandíp (Ceylon) is of the Ruby Islands; from this had been sent some Abyssinian slave-girls, with many valuable jewels and presents for the high and mighty Lord of the Faithful, Abd el-Malik bin Marwán, the Ommiad, and for his deputy, Hajjáj bin Yusuf, Lieutenant of Mesopotamia, whose capital was Basrah (Bussorah). By chance the eight boats that conveyed them were driven by a storm into one of the ports of Sind on the Sea of Omán, and the robbers of the place seized them as plunder. When the Moslem agents represented to the King of Serandip that the property belonged to the Khalifah, he said, "If this your tale be true, pay a ransom and buy release!"

In that assemblage were certain women in the purity of El-Islam, who had intended performing the Pilgrimage to Meccah, and visiting the capital of the Khalifah. One of these, seeing herself a captive in the hands of the uncircumcized, raised her hands to heaven and cried out thrice, with a loud voice, "Hear us, O Hajjáj!"

This intelligence being conveyed to Hajjáj, when he heard that the woman had complained thrice, using his name, he arose from his seat, unsheathed his sword, and replied, three times, "Labbayk, I attend thee!"

Umar bin Abdullah said to Hajjáj, "Commit this momentous business to me; I will proceed to El-Sind and El-Hind." But the Lieutenant replied, "I have consulted the astrologers, and they report that the period has arrived for the setting of the star of Unbelief, and for the bright dawning of true Religion in those benighted lands; in short, that El-Sind and El-Hind will fall to the hand of my son-in-law and nephew, Mohammed bin Kásim El-Sákifi."

In the course of days, Abd el-Malik, the potent monarch, departed to his home in Paradise, and his son El-Walid became in his stead Allah's Shadow upon Earth. When his power was settled on a firm basis, Hajjáj urged him to renew the war with the Infidels, for the purpose of releasing the Moslem captives and of punishing the Hindu transgressors. So the new Khalifah issued all necessary orders to the public treasury, for the preparation and the equipment of a force.

In one month was collected an army of 15,000 men, 6000 of whom were horse, 6000 riders on tall Bukhti (Bactrian) camels, with 3000 foot, and five catapults for levelling forts, together with rockets, fire-arms, and other instruments of war, as used by the unbelievers of Rúm (Constantinople).

The host of the Moslem marched from Mesopotamia through the province of Fárs (South Persia), and passed along the deserts of Mekrán; then, taking boat, they arrived at the mouth of the mighty Mehrán, and ascended the eastern bank of the stream, to avoid the host of Káfirs which had collected to oppose them on the western road. They

advanced without opposition, till at length they saw before them, on the other side of the Indus, the tall walls and huge dome of Dewal,⁶⁵ the principal port in Sind.

Mohammed bin Kásim then directed the chief of his engineers to make vessels for the passage of the river, and to build a bridge: this was done by filling large canoes with stones, and by laying planks crosswise from side to side, after fastening them firmly with wedges. Then, by the help of Allah, the army of El-Islam began to pass over, and with showers of arrows confused the Infidels that pressed forward to oppose them on the opposite shore. A considerable body succeeded in crossing the stream; cleared the plain of enemies; and took up a position, at the head of the bridge, until the rest of the army could join them.

When the General had collected his host he performed the duty of Imám⁶⁶ at their head; and then, causing the camel-saddles to be heaped up in the form of a pulpit, he addressed the soldiery as follows:

"The river is in your rear, the foeman is in your front; whoever is ready to yield his life, which act will be rewarded with the eternal happiness of the martyr warring in the cause of Allah, let him remain and enjoy the honour of conflict. And if there be any one among you who, on further thought, hath not spirit to oppose the enemy, let him remember that the road of flight will be no longer open: he will assuredly be drowned in the River, or else fall into the hands of the Káfir. So let these now take leave of us, for brave men determine either to do or die."

Of the whole force, only three, one under the pretence of an unprotected parent, another of a motherless daughter, and a third of want of means, left the army. The rest declared that they were only anxious for battle.

For some days the Infidels, in fear and dismay, made no attempt to fight. Presently, reproached and taunted with cowardice by Jaypál, their Captain of War, they issued swarming from the gates, with horses sheathed in armour, and war-elephants with steel Haudahs; and their leader, as was the custom of the Hindus in that day, carried during the fight an iron mace, pointed and spiked; and with it he clove the head of every warrior whom he smote. After a bloody battle, which lasted until the setting of the sun, the Moslems retired with saddened hearts; the world was yellow before their eyes; they saw nothing before them but defeat and disgrace, nought behind them but despair and destruction.

On the next morning Jaypál again came forth with his host of armed warriors and beasts, and again he forced his way through the soldiery despite all their opposition. At

⁶⁵ Supposed to be the modern Thatha. It was called "Dewal," or "Debal," from its celebrated Dewálya, or pagoda; literally, the "house of the Deva, or god;" and the Arabs and Persians still know it by no other name.

⁶⁶ The "Imám," in Moslem devotional exercises, is the fugleman who prays in front of a family or a congregation.

first the army of El-Islam became confused; but Mohammed bin Kásim, in alarm, offered up the incense of his prayers and groans at the shrine of the Most High, who favoured him, and at length vouchsafed to him the victory. Jaypál's war-elephants, plied with rockets and missile fire, took flight, and in their confusion fell back upon their own people, many of whom were thus destroyed; and crowds perished at the gates of the city, vainly attempting to flee from the dagger of Destiny.

Now, in the centre of the Fort of Dewal was a place of idols, forty rods high, and on it a dome⁶⁷ also rising forty rods; the summit bore a silken flag with four tongues, the work of a potent necromantist. None of the Islamites knew this, till, on the evening of the day of victory, an old Brahman, issuing privily from the fortress, came and stood at the gate of the pavilion in the presence of Mohammed bin Kásim.

"I learn from my books," quoth the idolator, "that this country will be conquered by the scimitar of the strange religionist; that the appointed time is at length come, and that thou art the instrument in the hand of Fate. I am here to show thee the way.⁶⁸ Those before our times constructed this temple as a talisman. Until the spell is broken thy difficulty and danger endure. Order some stratagem, so that the banner on yonder dome, together with that part of the edifice, be thrown down."

Mohammed bin Kásim took thought that night. In the morning he consulted the engineer of the catapults, who said, "If thou givest me ten thousand pieces of silver as a reward, I will undertake, by some means or other, to bring down the flag and cupola in three shots; if I fail, let my hand be cut off."

At the blast of the trumpet the host assembled in battle-array, each cohort taking its place round the green banner which belonged to it. Every man stood silent as the dead, whilst the machine, laden with a ponderous stone, was brought to bear upon its distant mark; and a universal shout of "Dín! Dín!"⁶⁹ broke from their breathless lips as the shivered flag-staff flew far away, bearing with it the talismanic banner.

Again the instrument was charged; this time its heavy load dashed against the dome, which rocked and swayed as from the effect of an earthquake. The bearded warriors then drew their scimitars, and, led by the chieftains, moved onwards in order and rank, silent with expectation.

⁶⁷ Probably the pyramidal "Gumat," spire or tower, which rises from the parallelogram and covers the holy of holies. The Dwariká Pagoda is doubtless built much in the same fashion as the "Dewálya" of ancient Thatha.

⁶⁸ This recalls to mind the Christian priest who, having discovered, or pretended to discover, or supposing that he had discovered, in the Book of Daniel the future greatness of the Saracen Empire, admitted a party of Arabs into Damascus.

⁶⁹ "Faith! faith!" the old Arab war-cry.

A cry arose within the fort. The besiegers turned their eyes in the direction of the sound. When the veil of dust which concealed the temple floated away upon the pinions of the breeze, not a stone remained visible to mark the place where the lofty pyramid-spire once stood.

Again rose the loud cry, "Dín! Dín!" and the turban'd ranks, bearing the battering-rams, dashed furiously at the fortified entrance. The warders and defenders of the walls, struck with preternatural terror, fled their posts. In a few minutes the split planks and gates torn from their hinges afforded an easy passage to the assailants. Thus was Dewal lost and won.

For three days there was a general massacre of the inhabitants. The victors then brought out the Moslem prisoners, and captured immense property and treasure.

Before throwing down the pagoda and substituting the mosque and the minaret in its stead, Mohammed bin Kásim, ordering the attendance of the Brahmans, entered the temple, and bade them show him the god they adored. A well-formed figure of a man on horseback being pointed out to him, he drew his sabre to strike it, when one of the priests cried, "It is an idol and not a living being!" Then, advancing towards the statue, the Moslem removed his mailed gauntlet, and placing it upon the hand of the image, said to the by-standers, "See, this idol hath but one glove; ask him what he hath done with the other."

They replied, "What should a stone know of these things?"

Whereupon Mohammed bin Kásim, rebuking them, rejoined, "Verily, yours is a curious object of worship, who knows nothing, even about himself."⁷⁰ He then directed that the Brahmans, to distinguish them from other Hindus, should carry in their hands a small vessel of grain, as mendicants, and should beg from door to door every morning; after which he established a governor at Dewal, and having satisfactorily arranged affairs in that quarter, embarked his machines of war in boats, sent them up the river to Nerunkot (Haydarábád), and advanced with his army by land in the same direction.

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⁷⁰ A somewhat similar story is told of Mahmúd of Ghazní, the first Moslem Prince that took the title of "Sultán," now affected by a host of petty Arab chiefs. Entering as a conqueror the great pagoda of Dwariká, he had the usual religious wrangle with the Brahmans, who besought him to spare their idol-god. He smote it with his mighty Gurz (mace), when the hollow figure was found to contain immense treasure in diamonds and precious stones. After all, these Moslems simply misunderstood the Hindus. The latter would have told them that the idol is only the manifestation of the god; the Kiblah, the point of prayer; the holy-fire of the Guebre, the Jerusalem of Christianity, the Meccah of El-Islam. A learned Roman Catholic will assure you that he looks upon a statue or a picture as the photograph of a parent or a friend. But the question is, What do the ignorant think of it? Why do they prefer, for instance, one Madonna to another? And, finally, is the use of the image equal to the extent of its abuse?

To-morrow morning we start early, along the beaten track, to Shaykh Rádhan, the next halting ground.

CHAPTER IX.

SHAYKH RÁDHAN – FEVERS – THE HOWLING WASTE.

WHEN we reach Jarak,⁷¹ then, Mr. Bull, you have my full permission to perform a pilgrimage to the banks of the Indus, and to become as classical and intensely rapturous as you please, or as discontented and grumblingly matter-of-fact-with you, I know, it is a toss-up which. We cannot conveniently visit it this dark morning, though it is only three or four miles off; moreover, in the appearance of the stream about Thathá there is little to interest the most excitable mind.

The shades of night seemed to be dispersed by a silvery flood which, pouring down upon us from the eastern sky, scattered itself abroad in jets and streaks; then, suddenly as it appeared, the light faded before your eyes and deeper darkness than before, investing the forms of earth, hung from the gigantic ceiling above our heads. This is the "false dawn," as Orientals call it. They suppose that the "Shams" (sun), rising from her nightly couch amidst the glooms of the nether world, casts her first look upon us through a hole in the mountain of Káf,⁷² and then, still mounting upwards, she is for a while concealed from view by the dark flank and misty peaks of the fabled range.

And now appears the "true dawn," pale at first, brassy-yellow, and cold, but gradually reddening and warming as the orb of day approaches the horizon. It is accompanied by a damp and chilly wind, the Dam-i-Subh, or breath of the morning, which Moslems consider the sign that Nature is offering up her first tributes of praise and worship to the Eternal Author of her being.

You will soon be a proficient in the study of "mornings and evenings." Own that when you left England your mind was misty in the extreme upon the subject. You had a dim idea that day begins about 5 a. m. in summer, 8 a. m. in winter—your day at 9 a. m. all the year round, not with a view of dawn, but an inspection of the breakfast-table. So I doubt not that all I have been showing to you is a novel as well as a curious sight.

A beautiful sunrise! It is, generally speaking, a tame affair hereabouts compared with the sunset. A bank of cloud fantastically shaped, brighter than burnished gold below where illuminated by the unrisen luminary, and darkly purpling above, lies upon a ground of glowing crimson sky, which softens off towards the upper part of heaven's dome into the sweetest imaginable rose colour. The sun

⁷¹ The word is written in a variety of ways: Jerruck (old style), Jarak, Jirkh, Jhirak, and Jhirkah. I choose the simplest.

⁷² A fabulous affair, made, by Arabian geographers, to encircle the earth, and translated, in English dictionaries (why, Heaven knows!), "Caucasus."

"Looks through the horizontal misty air,"

slowly topping the blurred and dotted line of the horizon that seems loth to part with the lower limb; its aspect is red and raw, as if exposed to the atmosphere of a polar latitude, and for a while it retains the egg-like form in which it first appeared to view. We can now look Sol in the face without a wink.

This is the hour when the mighty Enchantress, Refraction hight, loves to display her choicest feats. See that noble fortress, with towering keep and lofty flagstaff, rising above yon long range of buildings, avenues of spreading trees radiating from it in all directions, and a broad expanse of water sleeping in its cradle of cape, and promontory, and shelving shore under beetling bank and darkling hill – of what does it remind you? Windsor Castle?

And now what do you see? Three broken-down hovels of wattle-work, a withered tree and half a dozen stunted bushes on a barren plain of black mould, crusted over with the glittering efflorescence of salt. No wonder that Poesy, the amiable purloiner of all Nature's choicest charms, has long since made the theme her own. And no wonder that her bantlings still continue to work the subject in every possible form of commonplace.

Turning from the poetical to the practical, let me direct your vision to that place full of low bastard-cypress.⁷³ Do you see a pearly white drop hanging here and there from the top of a feathery branch? It is not dew, but tamarisk-honey, *turanjebin*, as the Persians call it; manna, as we have mis-named it. Here the people use the "Ugam" or "Maki" for medical confectionery; a biblical acquaintance of mine discovered that this stuff was the identical article with which the fugitives from Egypt were fed in the wilderness. I ventured some objections, especially a compassion for the internals of the House of Israel; for I assure you, Mr. Bull, the effect of this "turanjebin" is the reverse of astringent. But my jibe served no purpose. He had discovered "manna in the wilderness," and he preferred throwing out the trifling distinction between meat and medicament, to parting with his *trouvaille*. And he was treading the path which greater "rationalists" had marked out. Burckhardt, following Seetzen, was also of opinion that the manna of Scripture distils from the *tarfá*, or tamarisk. 'Háji Ibrahim is right when he states that the gum is called "mann" (manna) by the Bedawin; but he notably deceives himself, and the truth is not in him, when, to make out a stronger case, he believes that the tamarisk nowhere now yields it, except about Mount Sinai. These people make one lose patience altogether. The idea of feeding for forty years on a mild cathartic! Either accept your miracle or reject it, but do not play fast and loose with it, nor offer rational explanations more incredible than the miracle itself.

⁷³ Alias Tamarisk. Curious that this shrub has been confounded with the tamarind-tree by so profound an Orientalist as the late Baron de Sacy: "*On les eût pris pour les gros tamarins*," etc., is his mistranslation of طرفا (tarfá).

Mr. Bull, once for all, you must not attempt to ride over bridges in the valley of the Indus. Never mind the risk of a roll down a slippery bank, nor the chance of finding a quagmire in the centre of a canal, covered over with a deceitful crust of whitish, hard-looking mud, nor the possibility of being swept off your clambering steed by a thorny branch on the far side. These are problematical; the bridge is a positive personal danger. You are looking at that tiny raft, garnished with extinguished lamps, and self-moored against the side of the broad canal which we are skirting. Yesterday was the sixth of November, on which fell this year's Diwáli, a great Sindi-Hindú festival and merry-making. It is here the fashion to dive into futurity by means of one of the rude barques which you have just seen. The worshipper of the river, after offering up his prayers to Father Indus and to Mother Lakshmi,⁷⁴ the Indian goddess of good fortune; repairs in the evening to the bank of some flowing stream; launches his craft, and sits gazing at it with anxious eye. If, dancing gaily over the inky surface, it preserves its onward career till some bend conceals it from view, he decides that the lamp of his days will burn brightly and steadily through the dark course of the coming year. But, on the contrary, should some angry ripple engulf the offering, he prognosticates with melancholy foreboding that his happiness or his life is fated to meet with many a storm. In some parts of Sind the scene on the Diwali-night is marvellously picturesque: the black river lit up with thousands of glow-worm lights, shedding their fitful raylets upon sombre bank, ruined tomb, and lofty grove.

Our road is the usual style of thing in these regions, a collection of trodden lines stretching over a wide waste. We leave the silt-plain upon which Thathá stands, and ascend a hilly district formed by the ribs of limestone-rock which compose the petral portion of this Unhappy Land's formation. Every now and then we cross some hard, dry flat, covered with fragments of yellowish stone; these places follow one another as steps; the highest may be a hundred and fifty feet above the level of the Indus, and the absence of tamarisk and other shrubs shows at first sight that no water, save an occasional shower of scanty rain, has fallen here for years.

Those tombs crowning the hill by the wayside are of unusual shape: small stone cupolas, supported by four square columns of delicate proportions. They mark the memorable spot where fell certain mighty chiefs, doing immortal deeds in some petty feudal squabble. To relate the heart of the affair would take a Sind minstrel three good hours, and involve the recital of twenty impossibilities and about a thousand proper names, including patronymics. Intensely exciting all this would be to the Lagháris and Lasháris, two great Beloch tribes, the Clans Campbell and Chattan of this part of the world; but I fear, Mr. Bull, that it would be morphine to you. Shift the scene of Waverley to Afghanistán, or let Robert Bruce become Akbar Khan: would it not paralyze the hand of the mightiest magician that ever created worlds with a quill?

⁷⁴ The home-writer will cleave to "Luxmee" (Laksmi), which is much like "srimp" for "shrimp."

"What has halted our camels at this hour of the day?"

I understand. The lazy rascals, our servants, preferred mounting to marching, and dozing upon the soft couch of Quiet, in the shape of a load of boxes, to doing their duty in looking after our property. The consequence was, that the impatient brute that brought up the rear of the line broke its nose-string, shook off its burden, and gently slipped away into the jungle to meet a body of friends and relations.

It is no use storming at the men now; the more you scold, the less they do. We must apply ourselves to recovering the fugitive. Fortunately there is a village not very far off, so we shall find no difficulty in procuring the assistance of a "Paggi," or tracker.

The fellow rises from his slumbers under the wadded cotton-coverlet, and stares wildly at us, as if we were the Interrogating Angels⁷⁵ *in propriâ persona*. We take care not to lose sight of him at first, otherwise he is sure to play camel, and, according to the custom of a wild country, to get out of what he fancies harm's way with all possible speed. The least the poor devil expects is the loss of his half a dozen goats, and a good beating for not being richer. That present of a rupee, however, gives him some confidence: he begins to think that we are fools; and the promise of another, confirming his suspicions, makes him absolutely courageous.

See how artistically my savage addresses him to his task. He ties on his slippers with packthread, winds his sheet tight round his waist, and, squatting upon the ground, scrutinizes the foot-print before he starts, with all the air of a connoisseur, making meanwhile his remarks aloud:

"He is a little, little camel—his feet are scarcely three parts grown—he treads lightly on the off fore leg, and turns this toe in—his sole is scarred—he is not laden—there he goes—*there—there*; he is off to the jungles of Shaykh Rádhan! Now, Sáin,⁷⁶ your slave is ready."

As we are going to pitch our tents just above that identical forest, we may send on the remaining quadrupeds with the servants, and accompany our Paggi to watch his proceedings.

Is it not surprising how he runs along the trail, scarcely appearing to look at it, and yet following its every twist and turn with the sagacity of an old greyhound?

⁷⁵ Munkir and Nakír, two worthies in Moslem divinity, long since introduced by the genius of Byron to the home-reader.

⁷⁶ "Sáin," in Sind, is the "Sáhib" of India, the "Sir" of England; philologists derive it from the Sanskrit "Swámí," a lord or master.

We pass over beds of sheet-rock, almost as smooth as crystal; we pursue roads where your eye and mine can see nothing but a confused mass of fresh and faded foot-prints; we descend slopes of hard silt, upon which you cannot detect the shade of a mark; our tracker never stops for a moment. The faculty is born with him; his forefathers have been trackers for generations, and he tracks as a pointer-pup points, or an hereditary stock-broker buys stock. It has become an instinct; it is no longer a reasoning faculty. Moreover, he has nothing to distract his thoughts; he is "all there." Similarly, a man with one idea makes a fortune, where a man with a dozen sorely fails.

Now he pauses upon the verge of the tangled wood, but only for a brief breathing-time, and in order to secure his shoe.

"There, Sáin, I told you he was going to Shaykh Rádhan."

"Thou didst. Sháhbásh, be a king!" – equivalent to your "Well done!" Mr. Bull. "Art thou to catch him?"

"At once, Sáin; he stopped here to browse, and he has only just left the place. See, the grass has not yet risen from the place where he trod."

The man proves the correctness of his assertion by leading us straight up to a thicket, over whose topmost branches appear the fugitive's long neck, warily outstretched, and the bright black eyes, nervously fixed upon us. The sight of pursuers seems to paralyze all energies; it feels that the right course would be to wheel round and trot off without delay, but somehow or other this is not to be done. The Paggi walks quietly up, seizes the wooden nut, still sticking in the right nostril, and tying a new string to it, secures submission without a struggle.

The Sindi is celebrated for tracking as the Arab of Tehámah or the "Red Man" of North America. He is the only detective the country affords, and he forms an uncommonly efficient force. If a soldier has deserted, a house has been robbed, or a traveller has been cut down, show him a footprint, and he is sure of his man. He will describe the person you seek with unerring accuracy, and he will follow the trail for any distance, no matter what means are taken to baffle him. Shoe your horse the wrong way, wear pads over your feet (thieving slippers, as the natives call them), shift from boot to nudity, and again from nudity to boot; squat, stand, spring like a kangaroo, walk on all fours like a dog; do every thing you can to throw the human bloodhound out, and still, if he be a well-trained specimen of his breed, he will catch you. I never could understand, by-the-by, why your rural police disdain the use of trained dogs. Perhaps the practice would be "un-English?"

These camels are fated to be the plague of us to-day. You see before you the encamping-ground – a gravelly flat, bounded upon one side by a low, irregular line of broken and

craggy hill; on the other, by a rapid descent, leading to the thickly-wooded strip of stiff clay which skirts the right flank of Father Indus. You could scarcely mistake the place, even were I not to point it out. Look at the thousand fragments of black bottles, in these regions the unmistakable tokens of the white man's presence; and you will not wonder at a cut hoof.

We must not pitch here. The wind is howling madly over that platformed hill upon which stands the saint's tomb, but we can make the old walls a screen and, from behind these defences, laugh at the impotent wrath of Boreas, the Shimál. Our servants, I need not tell you, have lost, or sold, all our iron tent-pins, and as for expecting wooden pegs to hold in such a soil with such a strain upon them, it would be the height of "griffinism."

Men relate of a celebrated sportsman in the old country, that when requested by a friend not to indulge him with the excitement of being overturned in a gig or tandem, he at once ran the vehicle up against a bank and sent its contents flying into a neighbouring field.

Now, were I at all disposed to enjoy a similar rare bit of practical wit, I have an excellent opportunity of gratifying myself. To see a single-poled tent blown down in windy weather over a friend's head, is perhaps even more funny than pitching him out of a dog-cart. But I will content myself this time with sketching you an outline of what the spectacle would be, instead of drawing it from life.

You are sitting, we will suppose, quietly at dinner, quaffing lukewarm, muddy ale, and eating curry and dust to the sound of an aerial concert, far more powerfully than pleasantly performed.

All of a sudden, cr-a-ck!-cr'ck!! The mainstay of your canvas-abode has been torn up from beneath the stone placed to keep it firm in the ground. You spring off your chair, overturning the same, and make instinctively for the exit. You are just in time to be caught and rolled over by the hinder Kanát, or fly, whilst the pole, bisecting your table as neatly as the "Saladin feat" was ever performed, descends upon your humped-up shoulders, and instantaneously "floors" you amidst a mass of broken boards and scattered provisions, flanked by the ruins of your washing-stand, cot, and chest of drawers, and covered over with a weight of tent-cloth, which allows you to kick, call, and struggle, but which positively forbids you to escape. Up rushes your gang of domestics, jabbering and gesticulating, in dire dismay, for they are owed a month's wages: you feel a vice-like grasp upon your ankles, you are mercilessly drawn, against the grain, over the hard ground; and you display yourself once more in the face of day, with hair *à la chinoise*, white garments the colour of brown paper, and a face which, in its mask of turmeric-powder, boiled rice, dust, and the proceeds of a cut from the broken beer-bottle, would scarcely be recognized by your own mother. Perhaps, the

tenour of your thoughts harmonizes with the exclamation of the gentleman in the "Felon Sowe:"

"Wist my brethren at this hour,
That I were set in sic a stoure,
Sure they would pray for me!"

Some years ago, a similar event, "ryghte merrie" for one's friends, occurred to the humble individual your guide. Substantial houses in this part of the world are built, you know, of sun-dried brick-walls, supporting rafters of Babúl or Mimosa wood, and over these a thick layer of mud, with perhaps a little gypsum, is spread to form a roof. The material is usually composed of saltish clay, hurriedly pounded and imperfectly mixed; you may observe that wherever it touches the ground your abode is scooped out by the action of humidity as effectually as if a pickaxe had been applied to the foundation. As the building, under such circumstances, is safe to fall as soon as an opportunity presents itself, the natives are careful every year to repair the peccant part.

Now it so happened that my corps was ordered into "country quarters" in a queer old hole called Mohammed Khan's "Tándá," that is to say, a bunch of houses with a wall round them, from afar not unlike a collection of Termite-hills. The "fortified village," which stood on the left bank of the celebrated Phuléli river, was a square inclosure of mud-curtain, raised at least twenty feet high, lest a stray breath of wind should temper the burning summer-heat; and it contained some nine habitations, built much as above described, and separated by narrow lanes at least a cubit deep in dust. The property had been let by some native chief to our Government for public purposes, so the necessary yearly repairs were of course neglected.

Rain had fallen all night. In the morning, where dust had been, mud was; and our clay-houses were literally wet through. Not dreaming of any danger, I was sitting in my "drawing-room" (an apartment comparable to nothing but a gravel-pit roofed and furnished), reading with an old Afghan Munshi his favourite Rahmán's pathetic dole concerning the melancholy uncertainty and the empty vanities

"De dá dunyá."⁷⁷

Plump! Half a ton of wall scattered without the least warning upon the "drawing-room" floor!

Pedagogue and pupil both jumped up from their chairs, and in hottest haste dashed through the "Tattis," a kind of thorn fence, and a well-known Oriental and

⁷⁷ "Of this world; " part of the refrain of a popular ode composed by the great Pakhtú poet, Abd el-Rahmán, familiarly and affectionately called "Rahmán" by his fellow-countrymen.

thermantidotal contrivance. We escaped through the door in time, and only in time, to see the entrance hermetically sealed behind us; the lute used on that occasion being sundry square feet of fallen front-wall. We shall pilgrimage to the place in due time.

Within the twenty-four hours, three out of the nine houses that composed the Tándá lay in ruins. The things melt away after a night's rain like ice in a London ball-room.

There is excellent sport in these three little Jhíls, or ponds, below us: torpid sheets of thick fluid left behind by the last inundation, with the bottom of fetid black mud baking in the sun, where the waters have been drawn off by evaporation. Among the fat sedges, tall grasses, and matted reeds, in every stage of vegetable existence, from germination to decay, we find the glossy ibis (*Falcinellus igneus*), grey crane (*Grus cinerea*), the stork, the spoon-bill, the noble demoiselle (*Anthropoides virgo*), the giant "kullum" (Kulang, or *Grus virgo*), and the flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*), who raises a brilliant shawl over his shoulders, by exposing the upper and under wing-coverts. Of humbler livery, but more useful, are the fawn-coloured pelicans (*Pelicanus crispus*), used as decoys after their eyes are sewn up; the goose (*Anser Indicus*), very tame and stupid; the bar-fronted goose and the lag-goose (*Anser cinereus*), the mallard (*Anas boschas*), excellent eating here as everywhere; the widgeon (*Mareca Penelope*), the gadwall (*Anas strepera*), the coot (*Fulica atra*), and the dunlin (*Tringa cinedus*). The ornithology of Sind has been pronounced by a competent observer to be allied with Asia Minor, North-western Arabia, and North-eastern Africa, rather than with Kachh and Gujrát, the nearest parts of the Indian peninsula. On the high dry shores you remark the sand-grouse (*Pterocles arenaria*) of six species, especially the "painted" (*Pterocles Alchata*); the Francolin partridge (*Francolinus vulgaris*), the quail (*Coturnix communis*), the sand-partridge, Chakkar or Chikore (*Caccabis*), the crested lark (*Alauda cristata*), the stone-chat, (*Saxicola*), the desert-bullfinch, and the Isabelline shrike. You have only to wander into the acacia woods that line the banks, and a herd of half-wild buffaloes will afford you a good chance of larger stuff for the pot; and if you stay long enough with your feet in the water and your head in the sun, although we are getting into the heart of the cold weather, you will most probably be able to pronounce *expertus* upon the pleasures of a Sind ague.

Fevers, I may inform you, in this part of Asia are of two kinds. One is a brisk, bold fellow, who does his work within the day, permitting you to breakfast, but placing his veto upon your dining; the other is a slow, sneaking wretch, who bungles over you for a week or a fortnight.⁷⁸ The former appears as a kind of small shivering, first; then as a

⁷⁸ This may appear to savour of bravado, in which case the appearance is deceitful. At a distance, Yellow Jack, earthquakes, cholera, the plague, the Cuchillo, and similar strange enemies to human life, look terrible, because indistinct; the heart does beat a little quicker when we fix thought upon them. But as soon as you find yourself amongst the dangers, you forget to fear them, you are afraid to be afraid, and a little habit makes them, generally speaking, contemptible: you expected giants, you find pigmies. Besides, I have been fortunate in opportunity of training, being brought up, as it were, in the midst of cholera: one easily learns to think lightly of such things in

sick headache, which, after a few minutes, feels as if a cord were being tightened round your pericranium; your brain burns as if it were on fire; your head throbs as though it would burst; your skin is hot, and hard as a riding-glove. Presently your senses leave you; to delirium succeeds congestion; you pant and puff, all your energies being applied to keeping the breath in your body; you fail therein, and you are buried that evening. The slow fever attacks you much in the same way; only it allows you leisure to send for a doctor, who pours cold water from an altitude upon your shaven poll, administers mercury sufficient to charge an average-sized barometer, and blisters you, generally, with mustard and other plasters, from the nape of your neck to the soles of your feet.

I never saw a patient recover from this mode of treatment without entering into the feelings of the poor decrepit Hindu, who cursed the meddling hand that clawed the holy mud out of his mouth as he was comfortably dying upon the banks of the Ganges, and by means of a draught of "fire-water" sent him back to the world of matter, a far baser bit of humanity than he was before, with the prospect of a few million years in vermin form.

If you wish to see how peculiarly uncharming in this state of *demi-toilette* are the *appas* of a certain romantic old maid called Solitude, whom many a fool admires and courts before he has seen her, you have only to set out with me for an evening's walk. We shall not meet a human being, or descry a vestige of man's work, in the country about Shaykh Rádhan.

"Oh, the howling waste!"

Now let us look at its denizens. High in the blue air, still catching the light of the set sun, the king-vulture wheels in gigantic circles, and the jack-daw-like crows are screeching with their usual noisiness as they skelter towards their dormitory, some distant tree. The matchlock or the rifle must at some time or other have been busy upon this rugged spot, otherwise its inhabitants would not stand in such evident awe of us. See how the lynx, with tapering black-tipped ears always pricked-up, slinks away, covering itself with every little bush or stone, skilfully as the best-drilled Light Bob. The antelope stops for a moment, instinctively feeling that a foe is near; bends her graceful neck, celebrated as her eye in the Arab's poetry,⁷⁹ sights our advancing forms, and then, bounding off, shapes her rapid course towards some region of security. That old grey

youth. And every one who does or can think becomes, by some means or other, a fatalist on a small scale, after a few years in the East. "Kismet" and "Nasíb" are so often, so continually, in your ears, that at last they sound themselves into a kind of reality: an entity east, a nonentity west, of the Cape. Perhaps I should say "rarity" instead of "non- entity." The Spaniard, for instance, despite his Catholicism, is often fatalistic as the Arab. And what is the Calvinist?

⁷⁹ Alluding to the beautiful line of Lebíd that describes the antelope turning her neck towards her newly-yeaned young.

boar, slowly returning from an evening excursion to its home in the neighbouring Belá (forest) or Shikárgáh (preserve), is not quite so timorous as its neighbours; it mends its pace when we approach the line of direction, but a certain look, and a grunt that accompanies the glance, give us to understand that it has at least half a mind to revenge upon us the foul wrongs which its kind has sustained from the hands of ours. We will let Aper pass, if you please; its tusks are long, curved, and sharp as a Persian dagger, and it has a dexterity in the use of weapons which renders its practice of offence and defence sufficiently imposing, especially to a walking-stick. You stand to stare at those two pugnacious animals upon the sheet of rock hard by. It is a pair of shepherd-dogs, apparently bastard Kelat-greyhounds: they have had some "difference" upon some unknown subject, and they are settling the affair of honour with their natural weapons, exactly as if they were British privates fighting it out in a quiet, cosy way. A most ridiculous sight is this apparently causeless and yet most vicious and violent "set to;" they wrangle, worry, bite, roll each other over, and howl with concentrated rage as well as pain: the apparent absence of anything to quarrel about makes the vehemence of the quarrel appear the more remarkable.

Observe in the far distance our long string of camels returning after their day's grazing in the forest. The hazy, misty atmosphere enlarges their bodies to a prodigious size: we can discern no legs, only a shoal of long necks and ostrich—forms, floating and sinking, pitching and swaying, over the successive undulations of the distant ground. Some English Eastern-travellers have opined that that Great Unknown, the literato who baptized the animal "Ship of the Desert," must have derived the idea from seeing it at a time when, under the effects of the mirage, its form appears and disappears on the horizon, as a vessel does upon the surface of a swelling sea. Methinks, however, the conjecture assigns somewhat too much to the power of Comparison, and a trifle too little to the operation of Analogy.

CHAPTER X.

THE SEVEN HEADLESS PROPHETS.

Instead of marching directly upon Hiláyá,⁸⁰ we will turn off, if you please, to the left of the Haydarábád road, and make for a certain fisher-village called Kinjara-ji Miyáni. There lies the lake which gives it a name; a shallow piece of water with reedy banks, embosomed in low hills of the usual uninteresting cut, and of the normal unpicturesque hue. I have nothing to say about the settlement, it being the "or'nary" Sind thing, which you have seen half a dozen times, and which I have described unto the exhaustion of synonymes. But you must allow me to slip in a few words concerning the ancient history of the place, in order to render what follows intelligible.

"In the days of old," thus Asiatic legends always commence, even as European children's tales with "once upon a time," a celebrated city rose at the north end of the Sunahri, or Sonahri, Dandh which during floods forms part of the Kinjar water. It was the capital of the Sámáh dynasty, a Sindi tribe that ruled the land for many years before it fell into the hands of the Moghal; and here, about A.D. 1380, was the seat of empire of Jam Tamáchi, the son of Júnur. That prince, the fourth of his dynasty, was celebrated for his beauty and valour; his open hand, like the warm showers of spring, made the hearts of his subjects expand, and his clenched fist,⁸¹ like the icy breath of the Destroyer, paled the cheeks of his rivals and his foes. He was truly the Shadow of Allah cast upon earth's face. He sat on the cushion of sovereignty, firm as the tall hill that spreads out its giant skirts over the subject plain both the storms of foreign war and the shocks of internal disturbance were equally unavailing to shake the foundations of his prosperity.

In the fifth year of the magnificent Jam Tamáchi's reign, Shaykh Bahá el-Dín,⁸² the majestic saint of Multán, being urgently invited by his disciples at Thathá to grace with his presence the happy land of Sind, was induced to comply with their prayer. To such an extent did he delight men's minds by his spirit-stirring words and deeds, that the said disciples (may their and their father's graves be desert 1) abominably resolved to kill him and eat him; expecting thereby to secure for themselves the perpetual benefit of his presence, and to raise their recreant selves to a high degree in the spiritual world. A strange way, you remark, to propitiate a holy man: a very common one, I assert, in the

⁸⁰ There are no buildings at Hiláyá, but a well affords good water; the camping-ground is on a canal, near several large Babúl trees. "Dandh" means a natural tank.

⁸¹ In Persian metaphorology the open hand is the symbol of generosity; the closed fist, of austerity, avarice, or violence.

⁸² Popularly Baháwalhak, corrupted from Bahá el-Hakk-Light of the Truth, *i.e.*, Allah. His name is invoked by all the Moslem tribes, from Multán southwards, and his biography has been made the subject of many a tedious volume.

wilder parts of Central Asia, as any sceptic may learn by asking the Afghan Hazárehs how they came by the number of saints buried on their mountains. As regards devouring the venerated defunct, it is done with the superstitious popular idea that whoever tastes the flesh or blood of a great Santon, thereby eats himself holy, as Templars dine themselves "learned."

However, the miscreants were defeated in the design. One of the saint's trusty followers discovered the plot, proposed to save his superior by sleeping in his bed that night, and was graciously permitted to enroll himself in the ranks of that distinguished body – the Moslem army of martyrs. The accursed Muríds⁸³ then took the corpse, "bryttled" it, boiled the choice cuts, and were preparing for their holy and cannibal meal, when (O never-failing expedient in the hands of the Eastern romancer!), struck with an unknown fear, they looked loathingly upon

"The poor remains of what was once a saint;"

put them into a pot, and cast it upon the broad bosom of Mehrán. The vessel was presently found by seven hungry men of the Moháná, or fisherman-caste, who devoured its contents in ignorance of their nature, and who at once, by virtue of the same, quitting vulgar piscation, became fishers of humanity and men of Allah, very holy, and, apparently, very fond of meddling, as sometimes happens, with matters that in no way concerned them.

You see that tall, grey old ruin of hewn stone upon the hill overlooking the lake. It was built there by the same Jam Tamáchi, for the purpose of affording his beautiful bride, Núren, the daughter of a fisherman, a view of the humble scenes in which she was born, and which, incredible to relate, she continued to love, even after her elevation to the dizzy height of regal dignity. To that palace the seven Walís, or Santons, repaired, and demanded the right of ingress, rudely as the German missionaries addressed poor King Theodore of Abyssinia. Indeed, so authoritative was their tone and manner, that the very warders, an order of "gentlemen" who in Sind are not a whit more affable than the footmen of Belgravia, dared not turn up their noses at the sight of pedestrians knocking at a great man's door. And when these individuals appeared in the presence, instead of joining their palms, prostrating themselves, trembling, and looking exanimate with fear, Pom! they squatted down upon the rich rugs, and stared in the Jam's face for at least five minutes. Cats, be it observed, are proverbially admitted to this privilege in England; but, in a purely Oriental country, a low fellow venturing to try the experiment would probably leave the hall of audience plus a solid bastinado, and minus half his natural number of toes. No wonder, then, that the Jam, just and generous as he was, could not, for the life of him, prevent his cheek turning livid and his beard curling crisp with very rage.

⁸³ A Murid is a "disciple," opposed to a Murshid, or "spiritual instructor."

"King of kings! we are here by order of Heaven to protect thee and thine against the impious attempts of the Moghal!"

The Jam started.

Unacquainted with Sind history, you must be informed that the high and mighty Alá el-Dín (Aladdin), Emperor of Delhi, had fixed the eye of concupiscence upon the fair valley of Sind; and, like certain modern rulers, by no means contented with a frontier Indus as the "natural boundary of Western India," he had been doing all his possible to fix a quarrel upon the Sammáh chief. The latter, knowing that the weaker always goes to the wall, in Asia as in Europe, had smilingly put up with many an insult and injury. Hence the reason why, when the Moghal was alluded to, the Jam started, whilst an expression of curiosity and encouragement replaced the angry cloud which had settled upon his countenance.

The Seven Fishermen then proceeded to inform him that directly under the walls of the capital was the head of a large land-serpent, whose tail terminated at Delhi, six hundred direct geographical miles, not including an occasional coil. They added, that as long as the animal continued in that position, Sind had nought to fear from the Lords of India, and they concluded by asking and obtaining the Prince's permission to thrust an iron spit into the snake's nose, for the purpose of curbing any erratic vagaries in which it might be disposed to indulge.

Long and loud laughed the cits and wits of Thathá at the senile credulity of the Jam, their ruler. They had no "Charivari," it is true, but the want of that civilized invention was more than compensated by the infinitude of sarcastic odes and sneering epigrams that daily issued from the local pens. Now Jam Tamáchi, like many other very great people, ancient, medieval, and modern, had a nervous horror of the hum, the buzz, and the sting of that spiteful little insect called a satirist. Moreover, although he well knew that his only chance of escaping with a whole skin was to remain dead-quiet till the swarm which had settled upon him thought proper to seek another subject, he could not curb his impatient spirit. The result of his irritability was, that after vainly threatening to impale, roast, or chop in pieces the authors of his annoyance, and after enduring an increase of virulence for a few days, at length, in an evil hour, he ordered the spit to be wrenched out of the ground.

The iron was pulled up reeking with gore, and was shown to the sceptical Thathá-ites. Then the smirk of self-esteem and the sneer of scorn gave way to another kind of look. They fell upon their knees before the Prince and his holy advisers; awe-struck and confounded into belief, they supplicated the Seven Fishermen to intercede with Heaven for them, their children, and their country. But these personages informed them that the thing was impossible, that the snake had

"Turned his head where stood his tail,"

and that Sind had for ever lost her protecting spell.

Jam Tamáchi, as I have said, was renowned for exceeding equity. He acknowledged that the Fishermen were blameless: indeed, he owned that their conduct throughout the affair had been everything it ought to have been. Only he insisted upon the paramount importance of obedience in the subject; and he told them flatly that unless that serpent's cranium returned within the twenty-four hours to where it was before, he should consider it his melancholy duty to make their heads and the rest of their persons part company. Justice, he remarked, was a very fine thing, but —

His arguments are not worth recording. The fact is, he was unconsciously conscience-smitten; angry with himself, a person whom he could not punish, he naturally became anxious to find some one upon whom he could vent his royal rage. The Seven Fishermen asked for nothing better than the Crown of Glory. So Jam Tamáchi obliged them in that little matter by directing their throats to be cut from ear to ear, and their heads to be wrenched, as the custom was, off their bodies.

But conceive the dismay of the king, his courtiers, his counsellors, his captains, and his commonalty, when the last Body, immediately after decapitation, rising slowly from the cordovan, upon which it had knelt during the operation, stood bolt upright, grasping its head in its out-stretched right hand. And furthermore, imagine, if you can, the state of mind in which the terrified throng heard the bloodless lips pronounce this unpoetic rhyme:

"Aror⁸⁴ shall burst its dyke, and flow
Hákro perennial to the main:
And fish shall swim, and lilies grow⁸⁵
Where Sammáhs plough the sultry plain!"

Now the "band" or embankment of Aror was a leaden wall, thrown across the Indus many years before the time of Jam Tamáchi, by the prayers of an honourable husband and father, who, to save spouse and daughter from the tyrant Dalurá's⁸⁶ importunities, diverted the main stream westward into its present rocky bed, and escaped from the

⁸⁴ Aror, the old Rájput-capital of Sind, lies, as we shall see, east of the Indus at Rohri. In 1855 Captain Kirby, who should have known better, thus mistranslated these lines:

"When broken shall be the band of Aror,
And the water shall flow over Hakrah,
Where shall be the fishing of the Samma?"

⁸⁵ Alluding to the "Lorh" the "Beh" and the "Paban" (*Nelumbium speciosum*), which has an edible root, and to the "Kuni" or "Puni" (*Nymphaea pubescens*), whose tubers are eaten raw, roasted, or boiled.

⁸⁶ Chapter XXVIII.

ruthless king's capital, via that new cut, the present Indus. As for Háкро flowing, no one thought it possible that the old, deserted, dried-up bed would ever be restored to its pristine state; and yet there stood a corpse, pertinaciously and positively assuring them, that the Sammáh tribe of Sindis, who for the most part inhabit the sandy and sterile eastern frontier towards Jaysalmír, should dine on such luxuries as Pallah⁸⁷-fish and aquatic roots.

Satisfied, apparently, with the amount of commotion caused by its display of eloquence, the Corpse turned upon its heel and deliberately walked out of the audience-hall, through the crowded streets in the direction of the Eastern Desert.

Then arose the second Trunk, and with the malicious eagerness with which man communicates bad news to man, pronounced these prophetic words:

"Steeds, gaunt and blue,⁸⁸ pour from the North,
And matrons walk the crowded way:
Then, Sind! incline thy stubborn head
Before the strangers⁸⁹ sabre sway."

That martyr left the palace amidst a fresh thrill of horror. Besides the sceptre of Delhi, the natives of Sind feared only the Afghan sabre. Afghanistan, you know, sir, is north of Sind, and the idea of their already too gay dames and too coquettish damsels being allowed to go about the streets and bázárs, without any let or hindrance whatever, was hard for them to stomach. The threat of slavery, the "tail of the storm," fell almost unheeded upon their ears, so stunned were they by the outburst that preceded it.

The third Corpse, probably pitying their mental tortures, changed the subject and became extremely oracular and ambiguous:

"For years and years broad Ár shall flow,
But when it dries by Fate's decree;
Then the Beloch shall sell his bairn
For silver pieces two and three."

Now the Ár, or Bhagár, once the westernmost fork of the Indus, whose embouchure is now called the Piti, Pittri or Pitte Mouth,⁹⁰ was of no particular importance to the

⁸⁷ Chapter XXIX.

⁸⁸ A grey horse, in Persian and Sindi, is called "blue." The term would be applied to the light-coloured Arabs upon which our Cavalry in India is generally mounted. There is nothing more curious than the peculiar colour-blindness which seems to haunt the modern Prakrit tongues.

⁸⁹ In the original "Tájyáni," a word with a plurality of significations, or rather, with none in particular.

⁹⁰ Murray's "Handbook" (p. 475) calls it "Pilti." The Baghár, or "destroyer," has long ago "silted up;" it cannot admit craft drawing two feet, and the main stream has moved off to the Juá (Jooá) mouth, at least thirty miles to the south-east.

people of Thathá: moreover, in those days they knew little, and they cared less, about their future rulers, the Beloch, a tribe of wretched hill-barbarians. Modern Sindis would have recognized in a moment the mystic meaning of the quatrain, which points unerringly to the social position of that people in the present day, when the descendant of a Talpur, or royal Beloch, and the progeny of a low-caste Sindi Machhi are equal as two pennyweights in the well-poised balance which British Equity holds before an admiring world.

But lest the crowd should, we must suppose, think themselves quite out of the scrape, Body number Four, after going through the usual preliminaries, began to predict a direct and direful disaster:

"I hear from Lár the sound of strife,
I see the hosts from Siro haste;
Then, Sind! from 'twixt the South and East
The brand of war thy shores shall waste."

Here was a terrible conglomeration of misfortunes; a war beginning from Lár (Lower Sind); again the prospect of those abominable Afghans attacking Siro (the upper districts), and the certainty that both provinces would be involved in the common calamity. Intensely bitter became the reflections of the Thathá-ites, when the current of their thoughts was diverted by another prediction, which acted upon the mental palate like a sugar-plum after a black-dose, to reverse Tasso's savoury epic image:

"Káro Kabáro's walls shall view
Fierce combat raging half a day;
The Mirmichí shall routed be,
Then, Sind! once more be blithe and gay."

And the doubt as to who or what might be these Mirmichí, a word which has no precise meaning, by exciting the curiosity, aroused the spirit of the auditors in no ordinary degree. They actually experienced a sort of pleasurable excitement—as Mediterraneans do whilst miracles are performed—when the next Headless Trunk, rising from its knees, followed the example of its vaticinating brotherhood:

"The Mirmichí! who may teach ye
The surest token him to know?
His lady fair wears double tails,
And down his neck the ringlets flow."

The Jam and all the crowd, who knew for certain that their own hair was regularly every morning, after being washed with met, or fuller's earth, and perfumed oil, combed out and tied in a knot upon the polls of their heads, and that the locks of their

lovely spouses were plaited into a single queue with scarlet ribbons and strings of seed-pearl, now felt assured that the rough handling predicted for the Mirmichí (common fellows who did not know even how to make their hair look decent!), could not by all the quibbling and quirking, the twisting and torturing, of any mantologist in the land be made to apply to themselves. Had they been an English audience they would most probably have greeted the speaker with a loud "hear, hear!" or a general hurrah. Being Sindis, they gesticulated and jabbered till the last Defunct, determined that, as his brethren had begun to "curry favour" with the ignorant of caviare, he would not be outdone in "pandering to popularity," rapped out these words:

"Come, come, ye men! and sit in peace
Beneath the Nángar's⁹¹ sheltering shade:
Beyond Púrán no roof-tree plant,
Nor let one hearthstone there be laid:"

and, following in the steps of his fraternity, left the Darbar.

When the predicting was all over, crowds, as you may imagine, followed the predictors in order to see what became of them. They must have had the vitality of worms and the legs of horses, those Holy Men, for they walked right on end, with the most important bit of themselves under their arms, to the banks of the Púrán River, at least sixty miles off. At length, reaching a palace called Ámrí they fell to the ground bereft of motion, and were there buried by those who had the curiosity to watch to the last this peculiar display of pedestrianism. Their sepulchres, which are shown to the present day, prove, or ought to prove, I suppose, that what is said to have occurred, occurred.

Some of these rugged rhymes are palpably of modern growth; others are ancient, and have probably been handed down from father to son for generations past.⁹² You would scarcely believe, Mr. John Bull (unless, at least, you heard it from so well-informed a *compagnon de voyage* as myself), the effect they have exercised upon the fortunes of this province. The Lycophronic designation "Mirmichí," after being applied successively to the Indians, Afghans, Jats, and others, descended in due course of time to the next ruling race, the Belochs. *Varia lectiones* began to creep in. The last couplet of the sixth Corpse's quatrain was thus amended:

⁹¹ The name of Thathá: see Chapter VII.

⁹² Who will write a volume on uninspired prophecy?-it ought to be most amusing and interesting. The Eastern world is full of curious predictions; for instance:

The Chinese expected harm from a foreign tribe ruled by a woman.

The Burmese learned from their Merlin that they would be invincible until a ship without oars or sails stemmed the Irawaddy. The Sikh Gurús predicted the conquest of Sind to take place in the Sambat year 1900=A.D. 1844.

The Southern Africans, as the late Mrs. Ward ("Cape and the Caffres") informs us, felt beaten when they saw the long-foretold sea-waggons touch their shores. And, to quote no others, Shah Mahmat' Ullah predicted in verse the Sepoy Rebellion of 1857-8, "one hundred years after the Christians shall have ruled in Hind."

"Their locks are black as jet above,
Their raiment darkly blue below;"

a description applicable to the inhabitants of half Central Asia. When, after many petty squabbles with Bombay (so they interpreted the origin of the storm from between south and east), a force marching from Lower Sind, under Sir John Keane, threatened them with war; and, finally, when Sir Charles Napier hurried down from Sakhar *via* Hálá, to attack Haydarábád, with his men mounted on gaunt "blue" steeds, the self-named "Mirmichí" felt certain that their hour was come. They fought, but with diminished spirit, and thus the prediction, as we so often see in such matters, verified itself. To the present day the Sindis swear by these prophecies: the Bhagár creek has shrunk; the proud Beloch has lost the privileges which the ruling race once enjoyed; matrons and maidens *do* walk the streets much more than they used; and Karachi, "beneath the Nángar's shade" (*i.e.*, not far from it), has ousted Haydarábád from its ancient position as capital of the country. True, the dyke of Aror remains, the Háкро has not yet provided the hungry Sammáhs with fishes or loaves, and there has been no battle at the place called Káro Kabáro. But these are little flaws which must be regarded with the indulgence usually extended by you, sir, to poesy, painting, and the other trades which deal wholesale in imaginative material.

Pray look not so contemptuous and high-minded at what you term the "poor devils' credulity." This is a weed which grows all the world over, in every age and in every clime. Superstition is a constant quantity. Whenever the public mind, civilized or barbarous, becomes excited, it flies directly to the preternatural and the supernatural, even as a gentleman in distress goes to the bottle.

I could support this assertion by many an example, but not having time to dress and deck it in the elaborate garb it deserves to wear, I prefer, with your permission, to leave it in the naked form of a *dictum*. But before parting with the subject, I recollect reading a legend in some old French book which matches so admirably with what I have just been narrating, that for the life of me I cannot help recounting it for your edification in my own way.

As one Dennis, of beatified memory, was trudging in company with a little knot of friends towards a muddy town and camp, then called Lutetia Parisiorum, and garrisoned by a legion of pagan Romans, he came upon one of their outposts on a hill not far from the end of his journey. The spirit moved the holy Areopagite to turn into one of the leathern tents, tenanted by the fighting-men, and to begin a discourse, which presently collected around him half a century of soldiers, and hundreds of the Lixæ, or camp-followers.

The harangue, I take the liberty of presuming, as such is almost invariably the case, began with questions about the soldiers' immortal souls, and passed into an exhortation

anent "mending their ways," figuratively, not literally, and becoming good Christians. From which proper field for excellent advice, and abundant prosing, it slipped insensibly into a dangerous bit of debatable ground, violent abuse of heathenism and heathens, young and old, male and female, priests, laymen, and vestal virgins, pell-mell.

"*Id nimis est bona rei,*" said a frowning old Triarius, or grenadier, six feet and a half high, with a beard like a bear's back, and a face gridironed with scars.

"*Fac teneat maxillam, tunc,*" cried a pert Veles, or light-infantry man.

"*Nil facilius! hic it,*" growled the veteran, walking off to the tent of his centurion.

The *vieille moustache* was right. Captain Caius Flaccus Luscinus *Æmilianus Indicus*, who derived his second cognomen, or agnomen, from having served twenty years in India with the * * * Buffs, disliked nothing more than a Frenchman, save and except only a Christian and a "parson-cove." Military law was not quite so deeply studied, or so well defined, in those days, as it is now. The gallant officer found little difficulty in making out a case of high treason against the holy St. Dennis and his friends, who, by-the-by, had done absolutely nothing but shake over their bare feet at the prospect of appropinquate martyrdom. All were seized, were unmercifully kicked and mauled, lest decapitation might not be a sufficient punishment, and finally were beheaded with extreme brutality, for their clothes formed so ragged a perquisite, and their pockets were so painfully light, that no amount of supplication would induce Calcraftus, the lictor, to do his work like a gentleman.

The saint was the last to suffer. In the fervour of his orisons, he had quite forgotten one thing, namely, that his bones, which might be so useful in healing the bodies and souls of mankind, would be quite lost to the world, if thrown, as they were likely to be, into the nearest ditch, to moulder away in obscure corruption. So, leaving his six friends, whose faith did not enable them to perform such feats, St. Dennis rose from the blood-stained ground, and carrying his head, whose frontal portion frowned like a Saracen's upon the discomfited pagans, he walked directly into the "City of Mud," where, after a short consultation with the Very Reverend the Diocesan of that diocese, he was duly "put to bed with a shovel," in the firm and pious hope of becoming, at some future time, a ton or two of reliques.

I forget whether the hard heart of Captain C. F. L. *Æ. Indicus* was melted by the occurrence; or whether he simply ejaculated in Latin, *Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte*, and died as he lived, a pestilent heathen. But I recollect that there is, near Paris, a place called Montmartre, the Mount of Martyrs, where the *Sacré Coeur*, the ugliest edifice in Christendom, is building, and I consider the name proof-positive that the event above detailed really occurred.

And you cannot need reminding, sir, that during the eventful years, '48, '49, '50, and '51, all kinds of Welsh and German predictions about crowned heads, war, famine, and grave-diggers, were flying about in the mouths of men. None, of course, believed in, though all knew and quoted, them: had they turned out true, which unfortunately they did not, they had as fair a chance of descending to posterity as the rhymes of the Seven Fishermen.

CHAPTER XI.

SUNDAN AND JARAK—BUDHIST REMAINS.

Sundan and Jarak are two places to which I am about to introduce you, rather for the ceremonial and uniformity of the route than with the expectation that you will derive much pleasure from the acquaintance.

I dare say the journey from Kinjar to Sundan, the nearest village on the Haydarábád road, was thus noted in your diary:

"Rose early, mounted old Arab, lost the way three times; cold and comfortless; heavy sand and hard rock, all up and down hill; did not arrive at encampment-ground till 9 a.m.; five hours doing 10 miles. Only birds, stone-chats and wheatears, crested larks and vultures. Place where tent stood, dirty and disagreeable. Breakfasted as usual, slept, awoke at 2 p.m. Splendid afternoon. Dined at 3; at 4, walked 2-3 miles to see some large domed tombs; I am sick of them, but that man B. will insist upon my doing all the sights. All to be seen was a troop of beggars, calling themselves 'Fukyars,' who looked very surly before I gave them a few coppers. Returned to tea; went to bed under quilt first time since leaving dear old England."

And I have no doubt, O unromantic senior! that you chronicled the next day's march in a very similar style.

We started, you may remember, *en route* for Jarak, winding along the skirts of many ridgy heights, now descending into the thickly-wooded plain that lines the margin of the river, then again ascending its western barrier of stony hills, many of them strewn with Moslem tombs.

About half way we passed a long Shikárgáh, which has gained a perdurable ill name: the high-road now runs above it to the right or East. This is supposed to be the hunting forest where those flinty-hearted despots, the Talpur Amirs, "like the first Norman in Bolderwood, razed a populous village to the ground, and transported its inhabitants to a distant district, because the crowing of the cocks and other rural sounds of its human and bestial population disturbed the game in the neighbouring preserve."

When you are in the highly moral and philanthropic mood (you are liable to such complaints by fits and starts, sir), what food for reflection and dissertation does such a fact afford you! The stony bosom of despotism, the "Beautiful Tyrant" and his harp, William the Conqueror, and William surnamed Rufus; "the *caput mortuum* of tyranny distilled down step by step, from its first outbreaks in the insolence of place and the

intoxication of success, till it ends in the destruction of *villages* (the plural), and the expulsion of a *population* (rather an extensive singular!) for the creation of hunting-ground." These, I repeat, are pregnant themes.

Then came to mind that dear old Oliver's rod-taught lines upon the subject of Deserted Villages, teeming with images of lovely ruralities and romantic ideas of purity and happiness, which your boyish fancy was erroneously wont to associate with country-life. And, though grim Reason suggested that these Caligulas of Sind had a perfect right to do what they pleased with their own, how willingly you turned an ear to the small still voice which informed you that the ruin of that ungodly race, and the plunder of their landed property were retributively decreed by "Providence."

However, about all this there is much rank misapprehension, the growth, I conceive, of a hot-bed of "humbug." It is a curious illustration of Sathanas and his Scriptural quotations, that whenever good Madam Britannia is about to break the eighth commandment, she simultaneously bursts into much rhapsodizing about the bright dawn of Christianity, the finger of "Providence," the spread of civilization, and the infinite benefit conferred upon barbarians by her permitting them to become her subjects and pay their rents to her. Examine this Shikárgáh-tyranny-grievance, once quoted by every writer and writerkin who touched the subject. In Sind each component house of a flourishing village would be razed to the ground, carried ten miles off; re-erected and re-inhabited at the probable expense of two and sixpence per domicile. Moreover, I regret to say that the Sindis, like foreigners in general, having no word to explain your "home," attach none of those pretty ideas to the place in question which supply Mr. John Bull, Mrs. B., and the children, with matter for eternal maudlin. Finally these maligned Shikárgáhs did abundant good. They retained the moisture which they produced; they served as dykes to the River, and they prevented Ahriman the Desert, encroaching upon Hormuzd the fertile Valley-plain.

You remarked, as we passed by, the parched grass smouldering under our horses' hoofs. This Shikárgáh appears to have a fatal facility of catching fire: I have passed through it half a dozen times, and always found some part of it burning. Here it was that three young officers of the 2nd Queen's, then marching northward under Sir John Keane, lost their lives. A court of inquest assembled, and recorded a verdict of accidental death. The men of the regiment, of course, were furious, as they had a prospect of fighting the Belochs; and, although there was no evidence to prove that the enemy had been guilty of foul play, they were more than willing, like soldiers generally at such conjunctures, to find some pretext for waxing immensely ferocious and bloodthirsty. Such is the way in this part of the world. You seldom hear of men going into battle without some aggravated personal grievance, such as the loss of an officer, a friend, a dog, a wife, or a box. One old Scotchman, in Afghanistan, never spared a life, it is said, because the women were in the habit of crying out "Amán!" (quarter!) which Sawney, translating into a petition for "a mon," considered a liberty so gross and

immoral as to justify any amount of severity. And yet, how severe we are, upon the Russ!

Probably the poor fellows had set fire to the jungle in order to start the game, and a sudden change of wind had brought the flame down upon themselves. You can scarcely imagine how easy it is to be burned to death in one of these places. Beneath the tall tamarisk, acacia, mimosa, and shári or willow-poplar, the common tree in this part of Sind, is a mass of matted underwood, luxuriant sedge, rank weed, and long grass, all of which, in the dry season, are inflammable as German tinder. Your servants and camels pass through, say, an hour before you, smoking their pipes and dropping fire in all directions. You follow them probably by another and neighbouring cut, jogging slowly along, thinking of breakfast or whistling for want of other occupation. Suddenly a sharp crackling and a loud roaring behind you make you prick up your ears; you look round, and see a huge tongue of flame, playfully attempting to lick your back. In a frantic state of mind you clap spurs to your steed and, if fear do not deprive it of the use of its limbs, or if, on the other hand, fear do not urge it onward so blindly that the bough of a tree sweeps you off its back and stuns you; if the path before you be not bright with red-hot ashes, upon which no horse will tread; and finally, if the fire fail to catch you up behind, or to meet you in front (for one of these five contingencies you must be prepared), escape is possible. *Vice versa*, there will be a Court of Inquest. If on foot you probably climb some tree, an act of infatuation which many, situated as you are, commit; you are asphyxiated by dense rolling clouds of hot black smoke spangled with little bits of burning straw; the flames are roaring for you below; you leap wildly from your ill-selected place of refuge; you —

As, mounting the brow of a hill, we caught sight of a line of water inclosed by jungly banks still purpling in the imperfect morning light, I elevated myself, if you recollect, upon my stirrups; I extended my right arm and, with the impressive expression of countenance with which an effective cicerone standing at the Camaldoli pronounces the apophthegm, *Vedi Napoli e poi muori*, I looked at you and exclaimed —

"There, sir, flows the monarch of Indian rivers, the far-famed, the classic Indus!"

Now, a year or two after your return home you will probably forget *les actualités* of the scene. You find it necessary to suppose facts, you have discovered that the Child-Harold-style "goes down" society's throat much more glibly than that of Mathews or Smollett, the querulous and the blasé, therefore you will become impressionable, romantic, poetical, semi-sublime, *et cetera*.

And one of these days, when my ear detects you describing to a delighted lady audience "the strong, the overpowering emotion with which I contemplated the scene of Alexander's glories:" when you are caught asseverating that "never before did the

worship of water or water-gods appear to me so excusable, as in observing the blessings everywhere diffused by this mighty and beneficent stream," —

Then I shall whisper in your ear, "No, Mr. John Bull, you did nothing of the kind. You looked surlily at me when I attempted, by allusions to the Chrysorrhoës and other life-giving waters, to kindle the fuel of enthusiasm latent in your bosom; and you remarked that the river wasn't broader than the Thames at Black'all. This you corrected to the Thames at Green'ich, and between Greenwich and Blackwall you stuck till we reached the margin of the stream. Whereupon you swore that it was still as a mill-pond; foul as a London sewer; shallow, flat-banked, full of sandy shoals, snags, and sawyers; briefly, an ugly sight: your only admission was something about a "fine river property." Even the lovely Acacias, whose yellow locks drooped gracefully over the wave, as if they were so many Undines gazing fondly into their natal depths, could not force admiration from you.

Jarak is the first town you have seen not built upon the alluvial flat formed by the Indus. It occupies the summit of an irregular height, an eastern buttress of the Kirthár Mountains (Hálá hills), the last of the broken chain along which we have travelled. These flat-topped mounds generally rise about one hundred feet above the plain; and their areas vary from fifty yards square to half a mile or so. The spur of rock, upon which the town is built, forms a headland projecting into the river, and thus checks its excursions towards the west-ward. Burnes praised it highly, and Sir Charles Napier long regretted that he had not chosen it, instead of Haydarábád, for barracking his Europeans.

The hill-cantonment was slightly fortified; now we can trace only the foundation-lines. You see below the town that hard dry flat, composed of sand-stone and covered with a *débris* of iron-ore instead of the vegetable matter one usually expects plains to bear. At one time, when garrisons were cheap, the place was considered a good position for a large depôt; it commands the navigation of the river; it would never want good water and supplies, and it is situated in a healthy climate near a place of some importance, the grand mart to which the wild mountaineers of Belochistan resort for pleasure and profit. Then Jarak became an outpost, the garrison consisting *in toto* of a company of Sepoys detached from a regiment at Haydarábád, and drilled by a solitary lieutenant, "the officer commanding at Jerruck." Some years ago, here also was the head-quarters station of the Camel Baggage Corps, a mixture of men and beasts, very efficient in time of war, but uncommonly expensive in peace, compounded by the conqueror of Sind as a sedative to another complaint in the constitution of the Indian army, namely, the inconceivable quantity of kit and baggage with which we are popularly supposed to be in the habit of marching. What terrible things these pet grievances are!

And now "Ichabod " is written upon Jarak the soldier is gone and a Deputy-Collector has made it his head-quarters: you see his mud bungalow on the top of that mound to the west, standing some 350 feet above the native settlement.

We have not spent an exciting day. We passed an hour or two pleasantly enough in directing our spy-glasses at the lads and little lasses, who were disporting themselves in the muddy waters of the "Classic." After which, we walked through the alleys, were barked at by the pariah dogs, stared at and called Káfirs by the small boys-blessed effects of British liberty!—we were giggled at by certain painted dames with roguish eyes, and we were sedulously avoided by the rest of the population. But we did not remain long in the streets: I know no place where one of your thorough-bred continental-English *flâneurs* would be more out of gear than in a Young Egypt townlet.

Descending the western side of the hill, you remarked an attempt at sculpture, a huge misshaped form which I informed you was Hanuman, the Hindu monkey-god. And I took the opportunity to remark that the worshippers had just decorated his countenance with a coat of vermilion, not solely for the purpose of rouge, but as a compliment to his baboon-deityship, a practice anciently Western as well as Eastern. Then we stood for a few minutes to see a native horseman, exercising his charger on the plain below; teaching it to bound off at full speed when it felt the heel; to stop dead when the rein was drawn, with the best chance of injuring its back sinews; to canter over a figure of 8, gradually contracting its dimensions till the quadruped leant over at an angle of 45°; and to gallop like mad whilst the owner threw himself over the off-side, and, hanging by his left heel to the cantle, picked up a spear from the ground. Then we returned home to dinner, and now here we are; sitting upon the banks of the Indus, and wondering what we are to do next.

I recollect a somewhat curious event which occurred at Jarak, and as it illustrates certain Oriental states of mind and phases of feeling which you, Mr. Bull, have long since forgotten, I will forthwith recount it to you. Before Sind was thoroughly settled by our bayonets, little Jarak was committed to the safety of one Z — Khan, a Persian pretender to the throne, who, having fled his native country in consequence of an attempt at rebellion, turned *condottiere*, and took service, with his troop, under Sir Charles Napier. Receiving orders to garrison the town, the worthy descendant of the ancient Isma'ilíyyah⁹³ at once assumed command, issued proclamations directing the timid inhabitants to board and lodge his men gratis, levied a kind of tribute from all who

⁹³ A sect that had the power of producing the Old Man of the Mountain, of whom Christendom has heard and read so much. His castle "Masyad" may still be seen in the Northern Libanus, near and west of Hamah (Hamath). No one knows anything about the tribe, whose features proclaim it to be Persian. "Tancred" found it worshipping the gods of Olympus; and the "Asian Mystery," by the Reverend S. Lyde, has added but little to our scanty stock of information. I could not find out whether there is any modern locum tenens of Hasan Sabúh, alias Sayyah; or any traces of his Fidawís, or disciples.

could pay it, unmercifully bullied all who could not, and, in short, invested himself with all the outward and visible signs of royal rank and dignity.

Some weeks the Khan spent in his new kingdom, leading a life after Sancho Panza's own heart; perhaps exceeding a little in the drinking and love-making lines. His followers, following his example, "eat, swilled, and played," till Jarak became another Nineveh on a very small scale. The Beloch, having nothing better to do, had threatened to attack it a dozen times or so, but the Khan, a Shi'ah, laughed at their beards. Were they not hogs of Sunnis? Had he not dishonoured all their mothers? And had he not done the strangest possible things to their father's graves? Whose dogs were they, that they should dare to face the death-dealing scimitar of the Iroonee?⁹⁴ — mouth the word well.

A parenthesis! Collect the noted liars and boasters, the Munchausens and Gascons of both hemispheres; I will back the first pure Persian I chance to pick up against the whole field. Also, of all the clever fellows in the East, they are the cleverest was not even the "great Eltchee" outwitted by some second-rate Persian diplomatist?

One evening the Khan had just finished his supper, and was preparing for a game of back-gammon or chess, which he was sure to win, as no man dared to win it from him: the drinking-cups and the bottles were ranged in a line before him; the musicians were twanging and howling in a corner of the room; every thing was prepared for a quiet at home;"

When, all of a sudden, half-mad with fear, rushed in an unfortunate Sindi, bringing the intelligence that a body of at least fifty thousand Beloch (two of the cyphers were as usual *de trop*) had arrived within a mile of Jarak; that he himself had seen them, and that he had hurried on to give warning, lest the Khan and his Rustams should be attacked unawares.

You, sir, or I, under such circumstances, would most probably have tossed to the fellow a handful of rupees, and then would have turned out to inspect the guards, and to make preparations for a set—to; — possibly dispositions for a retreat, should such measure be deemed advisable.

Seize that pup of unmarried parents," roared the Khan in tremendous wrath; "here with the "pole! Where are the rods, Bábá-segs (dog-papas)?"

The attendants, thus designated, indignant as their master at the affront offered to him, were proportionately active in resenting it. In a second the Sindí was on his back; in another his ankles were lashed tight to the stout staff supported upon two fellows'

⁹⁴ Iran, generally pronounced Iroon, Persia; Iroonee, a Persian.

shoulders, and long before the minute was over, four stout ruffians were quilting" the unfortunate's soles and toes, even as upholsterers' boys in Italy beat out the stuffing of old mattresses, whilst their master stood ejaculating, *Wurin! Wurin!*⁹⁵ with all the dignity of a Kajar. The Khan was in no mood to be merciful, and it is a common practice among Persians, when you prescribe a sound flogging, to make any one who spares the sufferer share his fate.

When at length the Sindi had fainted from pain and loss of blood, the Khan was graciously pleased to deliver himself of a wave of the hand, which the executioners understood to signify that a *quantum sufficit* of chastisement had been administered. And what was he beaten for?"

What for? for the abominable crime of showing his belief that child of man could possibly be so audacious as to conceive the project of attacking such a personage as the Khan.

Two hundred years ago you would not have put the question. Let me refer back to the history of your own island for a proof. None will do better than a short extract from old Androwe de Wyntoune's "Orygynale Cronykil" of Scotland (A.D. 1420).

When David II., after nine or ten years' captivity in so-called "Merry England," was ransomed by his nobles, he journeyed northward, and arrived with the slenderest of retinues at Berwick, where

"Upon the morn, when he
Should wend till his counsel privy,
The folk, as they were wont to do,
Pressed right rudely in thereto:
But he right suddenly can arrace
Out of a macer's hand a mace,
And said rudely: 'How do we now?
Stand still, or the proudest of you
Shall on the head have with this mace!"

In the nineteenth century you are disposed to think that the "just Kynge Davy" was guilty of a gross outrage, in threatening to crack the polls of his subjects, who, after doing so much for, were pressing forward to see and greet, their ransomed sovereign; and you cannot but wonder how the priestly bard brings himself to justify his liege's violence by this encomium upon the subject of "radure: "

⁹⁵ "Strike!" The word is Turkish, a language preferred by the present ruling family of Persia, who are Kajar Turks, on account of its severe and dignified sonorosity.

"Radure in Prince is a gude thing:
For, but radure, all governing
Shall all times but despised be."

In Sind still, as whilome in England, if you do not occasionally shake the bit and administer a severe twitch or two to remind the animal that it has a master, it is sorely apt to forget the fact, or to remember it only with the intention of changing places with him at the very first opportunity.

But you have had time to bury such barbarisms in oblivion. When Mohammed Ali Páshá of Egypt was dying, you wondered what could be the use of a proclamation which threatened instant beheading to any man that dared assert the ruler was defunct. We semi-Orientals perfectly understood the object. In many Eastern countries, the moment the throne becomes vacant all the *canaille* and *mauvais sujets* of the different cities, and all the wild tribes in their vicinity, begin to run riot, to rob, ravish, and plunder, like unspeakable Turks, *à tort et à travers*; and the successor to the vacant seat of dignity, after probably a year's hard fighting ending with a dearly-bought victory, which enabled him to blind, and now enables him to poison off, or otherwise "suicide" a few uncles, brothers, cousins, and other kinsmen, has to march an army against his own subjects, with the unpleasant necessity of diminishing their numbers by the axe, the cord, and the stake, and of injuring his revenue by leading a host of human locusts through the land.

However, to conclude my tale of the Khan: Scarcely had the wretched Sind's lacerated stumps been stuck in a neighbouring dunghill, the recognized treatment for the complaint under which he was suffering, when down came the Belochs upon Jarak in the most ferocious and rapacious of moods. Finding no arrangements made to oppose them, they scaled the puddle-parapet, dashed into the town, cut to pieces every beardless man⁹⁶ they met; and although they failed to secure the august person of the Khan, they did not fail to appropriate the contents of his cellar and harem. The potentate lost much valuable property in wines and other liquors. It was not till some weeks afterwards that he recovered his wives; and when he did, he did not, somehow or other, appreciate the value of the goods in question.

Jarak is about ninety-one miles along the road from Karáchi. We have now left behind Lár, or Lower Sind: this is Wicholo,⁹⁷ the "central region." You can feel that we are travelling north-wards; the air becomes sensibly drier, and more biting in the nights and mornings. During the summer-season the mid-day heats are fiercer, as the last breath of the sea-breeze is exhaled upon the plain of Jarak. Many will tell you it reaches

⁹⁶ Young Persia, like the Turkish soldiery, generally shaves the beard.

⁹⁷ Our geographers usually divide the province into two parts, Upper and Lower Sind; the point of demarcation being Hálehkandi, a town situated a few miles north of Haydarábád. The natives, with more topographical correctness, distribute it into three districts.

Haydarábád: I cannot say that I ever felt it, but there may be exceptions, especially when the south-west monsoon blows strong.

You now see the Indus in the depth of the "dries." You can hardly understand the might and majesty of its flow when in flood. The yeasty brown stream seems to double its breadth: it rushes down with a rapidity which turns your head to look at it, and when the storm-wind is abroad, the tall white-crested waves, the dark swirling eddies, and the "pot-holes" that pit the raging surface, impress you with a sense of awful power. The biggest native barges are like straws in its dreadful embrace: they are whirled round and round in the maelstroms, buffeted by the chopping seas, and tossed by some half a dozen gales blowing from as many points of the compass, rudely as were the long ships of the Macedonian: they are lucky to escape being dashed upon a shore or swamped by some vicious "Lahar," or rapid. Jarak Reach, indeed, on account of its breath and its exposure, has a very bad name with navigators.

Before we leave Jarak I must point out to you the place whence came the Buddhist bricks in the Municipal Museum of Karachi. From the river-bank you can see, about three miles down stream, a low, flat-topped hill, overlooking the river, close to the village of Shaykh Tárú. The country people still preserve the tradition that here was a "Káfir fort," the stronghold of King Manjíra in the days before the Moslem invasion. Mr. W. Cole, when Deputy-Collector, found, during a chance visit, a large fine-grained brick which induced him to trench across the mound. Presently he came upon the top of a wall, and, having cleared it down to the level of the hill-surface, he opened a building about 85 ft. square. The material was of brick, each 15½ in. by 9½ and 2¾ in.; the courses were laid without other cement than the fine mud of the Indus, mixed with some fibrous substance. The base showed a bold moulding, and at intervals of six feet appeared square projections, as for pilasters. The potteries were in great variety, some moulded and others cut when the clay was soft: most of the human figures were defaced, but the iconoclast had not taken the trouble to break up the architectural ornaments in terracotta. From the accounts of the Chinese travellers, we should have expected to find a vast number of "Stoupas," or tumuli; such, however, has not yet been the case. The only other ruin at present known is the "Thúl Rukan," in the Naushahro District. It is a cylindrical tower of burnt brick, with pilasters and flower-shaped mouldings, said to resemble certain Buddhist remains in the Panjab. But the people attribute it to Jám Nindo (Nizam El-Dín), of the Sammáh dynasty, in the later XIVth century, and excavation produced no object of interest. And the Párkar or south-eastern district still supports a temple containing an idol of great sanctity, and much frequented by the Jains, or Victors,⁹⁸ the modified Buddhists, whose schism assumed a definite shape about our IXth century.

⁹⁸ Properly Jaina or Jina, and popularly derived from Ji, victorious. They deny the supremacy of the Gods; the inspiration of the Vedas (Scriptures), and the distinction of Caste: their temples are known by the images of their Tirthankúras - *they who have crossed over, viz., from phenomenal life to absolute existence.*

CHAPTER XII.

KOTRI. – THE RUINED INTRENCHED CAMP – THE TWO ROADS TO HAYDARÁBÁD.

A sketch of the history and geography of the country?

No, Mr. John Bull. In the first place, the subjects have been treated by a host of industrious Oriental students-myself included. Secondly, our failures in interesting you, and the per se deadly uninteresting nature of the theme, do imperatively forbid my making another attempt, at present.

Oriental history,⁹⁹ sir, may be distributed into two categories. The ancient is a collection of wildly imaginative and most unartful legends and traditions, preserved or invented by individuals who were, like old Livy's authorities,

"for profound
And solid lying much renowned;"

and from whose mighty mass of dross and rubbish no workman less cunning than Niebuhr, Arnold, or Mommsen, could extract the smallest quantity of ore.

The chronicles of the times that range within authenticity are masses of proper names, connected by a string of adventure spun out with peculiar fineness; impartially told, as the most unimportant events are at least as diffusedly detailed, like Victor Hugo's later novels, as the most important; abounding in digressions so unskilfully managed that you fail to discover when the author starts for, or returns from, his by-trip; prolix where they should be concise, and compendious where minuteness is desirable; full of the valueless facts of history; void of the valuable philosophy of history, and generally deficient in all that highly-educated Europe has determined to be the "duty of a wise and worthy writer of history."

As an instance: "In short, after the capture of Aror, the metropolis of the province, all the dependent States becoming tranquil, the people returned to their usual avocations, and felt grateful to Mohammed bin Kásim. He constituted Hárún the son of Kais, the son of Ráwáh, the Ásidí, governor of Aror, and with the dignity of Kází he invested Músá, the son of Yakrúb, the son of Táí, the son of Nashbán, the son of Usmán, the Sákifi; and he constituted Widáh, the son of Ahmed the Nejdi, commandant of the city of Brahmanabád; and he gave the fort of Ráwar to Naubat, the son of Dáráz, and the

⁹⁹ These remarks are intended as a general character of Oriental historiography. The exceptions are many; suffice it to quote El Tabúri and Ferishtah.

land of Koráh to Bazl, the son of Haláwi. Then he turned towards Multán, and on his way arrived at the stronghold called Báhihéh, whence Kulsur, the son of Chandra, the son of Silabij, a cousin of Rajah Dáhir, and his enemy, came forth and tendered his allegiance. After that, they conquered the fort of Sakhar, and left Attáh, the son of Jumáhi, to hold it. Then, seizing Multán and all its dependencies, forts, strongholds, and other places, Kázimah, the son of Abd-el-Malik, the son of Tamím, was left at Mahpúr; and Dá'úd, the son of Músá, the son of Walíd the Hammámi, being a trustworthy man, was appointed governor of Multán."

Now Brahmanábád—a fancy name by-the-by, because the word is half Sanskrit, half Persian, consequently wholly un-Sindian—was one of the principal cities in Sind, and the fortress of Multán has ever been the "key of Western India." Yet the author dismisses them summarily as he does unknown Mahpúr or obscure Báhihéh.

The rhyming annalists (as amongst us in ancient times, there are poetic historians in the East) may be characterized as a body of court-flatterers, who select for their uninteresting effusions some theme which sounds musical enough in the prince's ears to provoke his liberality. Both, poetic and prosaic, are full of such vehement, iterated, and unblushing falsehoods, that the perusal of their pages presently becomes a painful task. And, finally, there is a fatiguing monotony in the very stuff of Oriental history. Invariably some humble hero or small statesman, as in the Argentine Republic, raises himself in the world by his good sword, pen, or tongue. Either he or his son dethrones an effete dynasty and, with the full consent of the people, constitutes himself their rightful despot. In the course of three generations the new family grows old, imitates its predecessors, and, produces nothing but a swarm of villains, cowards, and debauchees, the last of whom is, with rigid retributive justice, in due time dethroned by some other small statesman or humble hero. And so on.

The history and geography of Sind in the olden time are equally and exceedingly unsatisfactory.

A mighty contrast with Old Egypt, Young Egypt contains few memorials of by-gone ages, and no monuments of antiquity to occupy whole generations of modern students. Hindu writers are all but silent upon the subject, infinitely as it interests their race, for whose glories they do not care a "brass farthing," as Mrs. Bull says. The Moslem accounts of it commence in the first century of the Hijrah. Concerning the mighty torrent of palæo-Sanskrit-speaking peoples which, many generations before our æra, poured from the bleak hills and blooming valleys of Central Asia to deluge the plains of Upper Hindostan, nothing but the bare fact has descended to us. Perhaps the most important result is that the river gave rise to the term "Indian," properly meaning a riverine of the Indus. But wonderful is the history of words. When your daughter recites, "Lo, the poor Indian," *et seq.*, she little recks that she is applying to the savages of

the New World the ancient and honourable racial name derived from the river you see before you. Ask her how the confusion arose.

Briefly, between the trips which the Macedonians made down the Sindhu (Indus), in B.C. 326, and the march of the Moslem up its banks (A.D. 711), there is a hopeless blank of ten centuries. Though passed and repassed by the countless hordes that hurried eastward to enrich and enjoy themselves in

"The land of fatal wealth and charms,"

not an inscription nor even a stone remains in the country to mark a single station. The province is a sloping surface of silt and sand, through which the Indus cuts its varying way with a facility that passes description. A few feet of brickwork built up in the bed might diverge the stream into another channel; cause the decline and downfall of a metropolis and twenty towns; convert a region of gardens into a silt desert, and transfer plenty and population to what a month before was a glaring waste.

As regards the ancient course of the Lower Indus, infinite has been the speculation, the theorization, the dissertation, the argument, and the contradiction upon this much vexed, and now most vexatious subject. But listen to the voice of reason, as proceeding from one Dr. Lord ("Memoir on the Plain of the Indus"):

"The river discharges 300 cubic feet of mud in every second of time; or a quantity which in seven months would suffice to form an island 42 miles long, 27 miles broad, and 40 feet deep; which (the mean depth of the sea on the coast being five fathoms) would consequently be elevated 10 feet above the surface of the water. Any person who chooses to run out this calculation to hundreds and thousands of years will be able to satisfy himself that much may be done by causes at present in action towards manufacturing Deltas."¹⁰⁰

This morning we pass over the long flat which occupies the right bank. The country looks less barren and desolate; there are fewer heaps of drifted sand, and there is verdure besides that of Euphorbia, Asclepias, Parkinsonia, Capparis, Tamarisk, and wild Indigo. We acknowledge the presence of fields: little square plots, in lines of raised clay, to contain and distribute the fertilizing fluid drawn up by the Persian wheels from the canals and cuts that branch off from the main stream. At this season only the stumps and stubbles of maize and millet, wheat and barley, stud the hard, dry ground. But large scattered villages dot the plain, and the inhabitants look healthy and well-doing, compared with the pallid, squalid, meagre wretches in the Delta, who after every sentence complain of "Ghano Tap" (much fever).

¹⁰⁰ The solid matter transported by the Nile is computed at 240 millions of cubic yards per annum, or an area of 2 square miles 50 feet thick.

To-day's encamping ground is execrable, close to an expanse of ribbed sand and slimy pools whence the waters of the inundation have just retired, and far enough from any village to prevent our procuring what man need never want in this corner of the East – milk. We must endure the discomfort as we best can.

There, Mr. John Bull, lies our destination, Kotri, the "fortlet." Formerly it was a thick tope (grove) of date-trees, clothing the right bank of Father Indus. It had a small *mud-enceinte* for the defence and the protection of stores, one of those straight-curtained, round-towered, glacis-less things, under whose walls was dead-ground enough for a couple of regiments to dine in perfect safety. It had a habit of falling, too; the saltpetre, in the sun-dried brick, ruins buildings as quickly as those Lilliputian miners the white ants, or the *teredo navalis* in the Lower Indus. This was the chief station of the old Indus Naval Flotilla, a branch of the Indian Navy, or Bombay Marine, appropriated to the navigation of the river whose name it bears. Consequently, a few scattered bungalows were run up by the officers, and a foul bázár of mud-huts, thatched with foul palm-leaves and crowded with foul natives, supplied the wants of the small flat-bottomed steamer-fleet anchored to the bank. There was no Travellers' Bungalow, as usual in those days, where these refuges for the destitute were most wanted; and the necessity of pitching tents added to the discomfort of arrival at so-called civilized places. There were *compatriotes* within hail; there was a library, a billiard-room, a mess, an acquaintance or two; there were petticoats as opposed to Ghagrís" (native skirts); but how were we to leave our canvas-homes? The place was somewhat advanced; consequently, it was literally full of plunderers. Even the housebreaker was not unknown, and a whipping-scene generally opened the day.

Now mark the *differentia*, and note how the Railway, the Steamer, and the Telegraph have overshadowed everything in these places. The northern bank has been fronted with a masonry quay, along which the rails run, with a dwarf wooden pier, and with Ghats, or flights of landing-steps. The most noteworthy buildings are the station, which is to be enlarged, the goods-sheds, and the tall tower of the water-tank. The two huge telegraph-masts for the aërial line are our landmarks from afar: their elevation, 150 feet, was expected, but fails, to keep the wires clear of "country"-yard-arms. The Indus Flotilla, now entitled the "Sind, Panjáb, and Delhi Railway Steamers," proudly bear their own flag, a red cross upon a white ground, and are provided with an excellent floating dock worked by hydraulic pressure – you see that huge ruddy hull, contrasting with the white paddle-boats? The few bungalows have been multiplied or enlarged for offices. The dirty bázár is a tolerably cleanly affair, away from the river, and lining Miyáni Road; it contains the usual trio of requisites: the *pakka* market (brick and mortar), the Kárdár, or petty judge, and the Faujdár, a native chief of police. There is a neat Travellers' Bungalow, where, they say, you are served by the Goanese messman with a decent dinner. Mr. Edulji keeps a boarding-house and billiard-room but, unfortunately, it is also a liquor-shop, much frequented by railway-guards, engine-drivers, and so

forth. There is a band-stand under the trees on the river-bank, and there are two fine spacious gardens which yield excellent fruit, flowers, and vegetables — here we speak of the "mango crop." One belongs to Mr. A. Wilkins, Superintending Indus Flotilla; the other to certain Banyans, who resent intrusion by demanding "bakhshish;" the latter, of course, prefer something that pays — onions and greens, for instance — to the vanity of flowers.

The old British fort has been provided with a front-verandah, and converted into a civil hospital: the towers of the back-part are level with the ground, and the new part of the building contains the stores of the Indus Flotilla. We will visit it, despite the absence of Dr. Keelan, to inspect a spirit-specimen of the famous Biscobra, the Chandangú of Gujrát, generally called the poisonous lizard; the Sindi "Khann" opposed to the harmless "Gohíro," or Monitor, and to the "Gíloi," or common lizard of the sand-hills, the latter eaten by some castes. This lacerta varies from 8 to 10 inches in length; the head is distinctly ophine, and its triangular flatness, combined with the thinness of the neck, mimics the Thanatophidia: the succedaneum for a tail is a knobby knot much like a small gherkin. The young are patched white and purple; after maturity they become a muddy-green and buff. The Biscobra is so rare that many old Anglo-Sindis have never seen one: it usually haunts rubbish-heaps, old stables, and deserted godowns. Lately three were found in the Kotrí-fort. There is a curious coincidence in the statements that its bite is certain death. Captain Hutchinson, commanding the I. F. S. S. *Frere*, assured me that a boy had lately died four hours after the wound, and Colonel Beville also believed in a similar event in Gujrát. The specimen examined in the Civil Hospital showed what seemed to be fangs; but they were very small, and apparently unadapted to drain a large poison-bag.

Kotri, having its two Churches, Catholic and Protestant; Government School, Library and Mechanics' Institute; Travellers' Bungalow and Municipal Garden; Civil Hospital and "lock up," now politely termed "subordinate jail;" Dharamsálá, or lodging for native travellers, and Dhák, or cattle-pound, a civilized institution found in every part of our Province, at length aspires to reach a Sanitarium. The rough road to the North is swept by an almost constant gale, objectionable for descending steamers; and at Galiun, on the left bank, the village at the head of the new Phuléli, some four and a half miles upstream, a floating-hospital might offer a certain change of air. During the south-western monsoon the sea-breeze there is strong and regular, whilst it fails at Haydarábád. Indeed, there seems to be no reason, save medical crochets about fever and freshets, why the whole camp should not have been built upon this charmingly picturesque reach, some 1800 feet wide, formed by the left bank of Father Indus. No one feared agues at the old Residency; and the stone-pitched river-wall has been found sufficient to keep out the floods, which are far more redoubtable at Kotri. Popular report declares, that next to Dísá, Haydarábád is the least sickly station in Western India; but the latter now never numbers 300 white faces, and, if not fatal on paper, its glaring, glittering,

glowing site upon a yellow ridge of arid, barren, naked rock, swept by a furnace blast, that threatens heat-apoplexy, renders it one of the most uncomfortable in the Province.

There is little improvement in the morality of Kotri. The Sindi has preserved all his hereditary taste for petty larceny; and when he or some impudent Hindi breaks into your house, the Deputy-Collector, far from daring to flog him, will "give him seven days" – whereat he inwardly chuckles. On the other hand, the steam-ferry is a great change for the better. Formerly there was a boat, which, after poling up-stream and being carried far down by the current, landed you at the "Entrenched Camp." The scene of embarkation gave rise to many a comedy of riding and baggage beasts. Some of the horses hopped into the conveyance readily as Icelanders; many required a rope to the foreleg, and a long pole applied by two boatmen to the hind-quarters of the recusant, till it had nothing to do but to fall upon its nose or spring into the boat. The camels were embarked from an inclined earth-plane leading to the water's edge; they fought hard till four men hauled away at the rope tied round the fetlock of the near arm, whilst a dozen pushed and hammered at the rear. With ten beasts this part of the play usually wasted four hours.

The old ferry lasted till 1854. Now there is a steam-barge, annually leased out on contract and commanded by a Parsi captain, and at the civilized wooden and matted bridge, even a wild camel would hardly boggle. Instead of landing you opposite the ex-Agency, whence a dusty, ruddy slip of plain, called a road, led to Haydarábád, you are disembarked straight opposite Kotri; and here you find the conveniences of two ferry-stages, a rest-house, and a carriage-shed. The clump of mud-booths and hovels is the old Gídú jo Tándo, now raised to the rank of Gídú Bandar; and hence the favourite evening ride and drive, a fine *pakka* road, with abundant mile-stones, and a treble avenue of trees, mostly Ním, deposits you, after three miles and a half, in camp. Barouches-and-pairs by the dozen await the arrival of steamers: the main objection to them is the unrighteous use of the whip; the Jarvey genus is bad enough at Bombay; here it is pernicious bad. You find some incoherence in the curious contrast of civilization and semi-barbarism: a London carriage degraded into a hackney, and filled with Banyans in the uncleanest cottons, who pay a few coppers for the privilege of mimicking the ruling race. But, as you say, Aden was worse.

For the sake of auld lang syne we must visit the Agency and old road. I last saw the former in 1849 it was then a humble building, somewhat in the form of a six-dozen claret-chest, magnified and white-washed; with a barren court-yard on the east, and a garden, grove, and sundry small bungalows to the south. Now it is a dismal ruin, with nothing standing but a shell of inner hall; the spectacle takes away my breath. The outer wall, which, loop-holed and banquette'd, had driven off the host of Beloch swordsmen headed by Mír Sháhádád, is level with the onion-growing ground, and the whole compound has become a neglected grove of sombre Babúls. Who would fancy that the defence of that wall by the Light Company of H.M.'s. 22nd Regiment, under Captain

Conway, directed by Major Outram, had ever given rise to a treatise on the defence of field-fortifications? Surely it would be well, even at the expense of a few rupees, to keep up a place to which so many and such mighty memories cling! Our utter want of sentiment in this matter is not honourable to us, Mr. John Bull, and, as far as Sind is concerned, our main work has hitherto been that of adding modern to ancient ruins.

Behind the Agency stands, or rather leans, the large bungalow built by the late Captain Stack, one of the worthies of the Province, who, after long years of hard labour, published the first Anglo-Sindian Dictionaries, one of them containing some 12,000 words.¹⁰¹ The Agency-bázár has changed its name to Mír Khan Lori jo Tándo, as if to show how speedily Sind can recover from the stranger's transient rule. The late Hasan Ali, one of the Talpur Amírs, had established himself, with garden, villa, and dispensary, close to the scene of conflict which began the ruin of his race. And the only building in a fair state of preservation is the small whitewashed block of masonry which covers the descent of the underground-wires-this, also, is typical of the times.

The old road forms by far the more picturesque approach to Haydarábád. It begins with a pair of glorious fig-trees, surrounded by broken-down stone benches I was not wrong, you see, sir, in forecasting (1850) that "the trees, if watered, and not eaten by goats, will shadow the next generation;" they have now grown to a thin forest of tamarind and mimosa. The approach to the ex-capital is highly characteristic. Emerging from the grove, and the network of canals and watercourses which thread straggling crops of thorns and "fire-plants," we see on the left a spur of the ridge crowned by a round-towered and rain-streaked fort, the work of the Kalhóras; inside it a long flight of admirably stucco'd steps leads to the gaudy shrine of Sháh Mekkái, with its lattice-work of blue tiles. He was a native of Meccah, as his name denotes;¹⁰² he came, about A.D. 1260, from Herat to Sind, during the days when a Káfir Prince ruled Nerunkot, or Haydarábád, and he has left a large progeny of Sayyids upon Indus' banks. I am rejoiced to see that the good old saint has not yet been "improved off." The tiger has left an empty cage; but the cluster of houses at the foot still turns out loud clamourers for *Cherímeri*, the local "Bakhshish." Further on to the right you pass the burial-ground, which contains so many of the 78th Highlanders and the 86th Royal Irish: after the fashion of the country, it is divided into Catholic (East) and Protestant (West): moreover, it is in a most disreputable state; many of the tombs, tilted up by weather and the jackal, are utter ruins, and the *enceinte* shows as much gap as wall. The general aspect of indecent neglect will, we hope, make some one take up arms in its defence. The contrast of this unseemly state of things with the English cemetery at Goa, kept in excellent order by the Portuguese, is not flattering to national pride. Here the fort looks its best, and here we used to enter by a sally-port which is now closed.

¹⁰¹ "A Sindhi and English Dictionary," by Captain George Stack. Bombay American Mission Press, 1849. One vol., 240 pages. Also "English and Sindhi Dictionary," 1851.

¹⁰² Mr. E. B. Eastwick is clearly in error when he asserts (Murray's Handbook, p. 484) that "Sháh Makkái was so called from his having made several pilgrimages to Makkah."

The modern "Bellasis Road," so called after a meritorious officer lately deceased, runs from Gídú, and has also its novelties. The first which strikes us is the aqueduct, raised upon a long line of arches, a "survival of the unfittest," an obsolete system which we once believed had not extended beyond the classical and the medieval ages. Mr. Robert Brunton, C. E., must surely know his business best; but has he never heard of a Karíz? We can hardly conceive why the water was not taken from a higher horizon up-stream. The cost would have been increased; on the other hand, three pumping engines are a serious and permanent drawback. Still, a bad aqueduct is better than none, and the ex-capital of Sind will be supplied with pure drink long before the actual capital. On the right of the road is a huge compound, the Insane Asylum, built by, and called after, Mr. (now Sir) Kowasji Jehangir Readymoney, opened in July, 1871, with eight wards for natives and one for Europeans, besides officers' quarters, hospital, and work-sheds. Scandalized by its size, we are somewhat consoled on hearing that this madhouse, formerly at Larkána, is intended for all the cracked brains of Sind, not for a city-cum-camp numbering only 35,000 head. Where the road forks into three, we turn to the left, ascend a sharp pitch, and find ourselves upon a ridge, once a waste, where the straggling lines for the troops, and the bungalow of the Collector, my old friend Colonel Rathborne, once stood; now it is a large and regularly laid out cantonment. The markedly new features are the stiff church of St. Thomas, turned askew to front east and west; the huge Kacheri (court-house), with the short walls facing north and south; the white-washed Travellers' Bungalow; the large Telegraph-compound; the substantial lines of the 1st Beloch Regiment, and the "Munsiff's" office, two Gothic pent-houses – what Fury has extended this horror to long-suffering Sind? – looking exactly like the porter's lodge of some pretentious suburban villa. You are now at Haydarábád – the habitation of Haydar, the Lion.

CHAPTER XIII.

HAYDARÁBÁD – FORT – TOMBS AND TOWN.

Haydarábád, the ex-capital of Sind, occupies the central length of a Doab, or riverine islet, formed by the Indus, flowing three and a half miles to the west, and by one of its multitudinous branches, the Phuléli, a mile and a quarter eastward. The site of the city is a knobby ridge of limestone, a "Mukattam," called the Ganjá hills, some thirteen miles long, and trending parallel with the river, north and south; they rise a few feet above the silty alluvial plain, and here and there they break into dwarf cliffs; you see the middle length at the Parsi Dakhmeh ("Tower of Silence") and the northern end at the tombs of the Kalhóra kings. The fancied advantage to be derived from commanding ground probably pointed it out in ancient times as a proper place for a stronghold; its pagan name was Nerun-Kot¹⁰³ or Nerun's Fort; the city was built by Ghulám Shah Kalhóra in A.D. 1768, and it fell into our power immediately after the battle of Miyáni, February 17, 1843.

The Kila'ah, or fort, stands upon a spur of the long narrow ridge which carries the city. Its form is an irregular oval, about three quarters of a mile round, and containing some thirty-six acres. The *enceinte* is composed of tall crumbling revetments of ill-baked brick, thick at the base, thin at the crest, and resting internally against earth piled upon the natural rock. No angles, no outworks save engaged round-towers, and few embrasures for large guns. The spear-headed battlement of Persia runs along the crest to shelter matchlockmen, and these *ramparts coquets* are rendered useless by the surface being broken into half a dozen spiky projections. Down the height of the wall are long apertures which our Iranian neighbours call Damágheh (nostrils); they act as drains and loopholes combined, and their peculiarities are the crossbars of whitewashed masonry, generally numbering five. The defences appear as if a few rounds of grape would level them with the plain: an appearance the reverse of deceitful, this boasted stronghold of the boastful Talpur being one of the weakest of the strong-looking fortresses in our corner of Asia. On the north side the citadel was separated from the city by a moat forty feet broad—not forty yards as Dr. Heddle made it and the bridge led to one of those perversely-intricate main-gateways whose bastions and semicircular curtains have always yielded to a *coup de main*. This part is well preserved, and the pavilion capping the inner tower is a favourite point with photographers.

The Fort formed at once the place of defence, the treasury, and the residence of the native rulers. The interior was a *haute-ville*, with a promenade round the ramparts; a densely crowded town of wynds, cul de sacs, and narrow, crooked lanes; squarelets and guards; Darbárs and mosques, lines and barracks, Palaces and dwelling-houses, harem

¹⁰³ Murray is in error (p. 483) when he makes it Nírankot, or "Water-fort."

and stables. Many of the tenements, whilome the abodes of royalty, were spacious, and were made comfortable enough by the conquerors, especially after glass windows, here required for the cold season, were added to the wooden shutters.

The ground-plan of Haydarábád Palace was laid out as follows. You entered by a dwarf door, more generally by a doorway without a door, opening from a narrow *impasse* into a quadrangular courtyard; on your right was the private *Musallá*, or chapel, a low wall subtended by a stucco'd floor: opposite stood the stables; on the left rose the kitchen, the servants' huts, and the offices, while the body of the house monopolized the fourth side. The dwelling-place consisted of a deep verandah, resting on wooden pillars and fronted by a chunam'd parapet: the men's, or public and state rooms, met you as you entered; those of the Zenánah, the Harem, as you call it, were under arrest behind them low doors connected the several items, and the interior was purposely made as dark as possible, to temper glare and to secure privacy. Some apartments were lined with gypsum and elaborately decorated with coloured arabesques, somewhat in the style of our stencilling; the "painted chamber" in Mir Shahdad's house still shows the meeting of Ranjit Singh with Lord Lake; and Major Outram yet sits drinking with his wife. The tinting gave a pseudo-Moorish look to the interior, and in the richest houses, the ceilings, with their large rafters, were lacquered, painted, and heavily gilt. Some of the rooms were revetted, like dairies, with painted tiles from Hálá and Multán. The inner walls held a number of Ták, or niches, the cup-boards and safes of the East, and when I first saw them, in 1845, they were not a little dilapidated. The Amírs and their courtiers, taken by surprise at the results of Miyáni and Dabbá, hastily box'd and buried, *more Asiatico*, their gold ingots and jewels under the thresholds, in the house-walls, and in other places which a western would seldom visit with the hope of finding treasure. This secret, becoming generally known, caused abundant harmless excitement among the conquerors: Europeans as well as natives did little, for the first six months, but diligently rap with staves every foot of stucco, to judge by the sound whether the spot was hollow, and consequently worth the trouble of breaking into. There were, I believe, a few finds which did not reach the hands of the prize-agents.

Let us now ascend, by one of its two winding staircases, the central Burj, or Thúl, that tall round watch-tower which first announces the Fort. You are struck by the resemblance of the view with the well-known panorama of the Cairene citadel. We stand upon the limestone range, a counterpart of Jebel Mukattam, and look westward over a river flowing upon a meridian. Beyond the mud-built city, the new town representing the Ezbekiyyeh, and the port-village, here Gidú, there Bulák, the tawny Indus, no unworthy brother of Father Nile, runs through its valley of glorious fertility, a dense line of the darkest verdure. Westward beyond the ribbon of greenery crouches the Registán, the "sand-land," the Desert; of leonine hue flushing rosy in the rising sun-rays, and absolutely recalling the wild, waste Libyan shore. Here and there it is spotted with a conelet and a rock-buttress, keeping the bed from wandering westward, and realizing the Koranic idea — *Eljibálu autád* — the hills are tent-pegs, *viz.*, to pin down

Earth. Even the minutiae correspond after a fashion. The big round tower, the "native" enceinte, and the arched aqueduct are features common to both, while the ruinous mausolea of the Kálhóra princes remind you of the desolate tombs of the Mamluk Kings. Even though Pyramids are wanting, the battle-fields of Miyáni and Dabbá, visible on clear mornings, remind you of the far-famed Napoleonic victory. You have seen, and you will see, many points of resemblance between the valleys of the Indus and the Nile, but none, perhaps, so striking as this. Yet national pride again has a fall; Nature is the same in both, but, alas for our works of art! Egypt is governed by her own people, Sind by the careless stranger.

The windmill-like bastion of huge proportions, on which we stand, was erroneously supposed to have been the treasury of the Amírs; now it bears a flag-mast and four guns, and around it are the ruins, dating from 1857, when the interior was cleared. Within the northern entrance, the "painted chamber" has become a State prison, containing Sayyid Sálím of Maskat, and opposite it, another *antiqua domus* is condemned to a similar destiny. Near them are a quarter-guard, turned into a library and faced by two guns, and a tank, of *pakka* masonry, still building. The whole of the western extremity is occupied by a huge arsenal of brick and tile, a circle broken into sixteen angles, and showing an interior of magnificent distances. It still contains some of those marvellous Jacob's rifles, four-grooved, and provided with a kind of rapier-bayonet; and Captain Burgess, R.A., who is in charge, will show us a curious blade, probably French, made at Haydarábád in the Dekhan, whose trade-mark somewhat resembles that of famed Andrea di Ferrara.

With the exception of a guard-house at the gate and a few trifling remnants, the rest of the *terre pleine* is a desolate broken surface, a field of grisly ruins, showing where we have pulled down and not rebuilt. I could hear nothing of the large pit, or pits, sunk in the solid rock, like Joseph's Well in the Cairene citadel. There was a something remarkable in their semblance, and the Sindís, as is the wont of barbarians when anything natural or artificial strikes the eye, assigned to them a highly fanciful origin. These are the works of demon hands, shafts sunk in the rock at a time when an idol-worshipper was Lord of Nerun-kot, for the fell purpose of incarcerating Shah Mekkái,¹⁰⁴ *alias* Mall Mahmúd, Mohammed the Brave, that holy personage whose mortal remains rest in yonder south-western shrine.

We now issue by the Northern Gate, and follow the Táhir-Bázár-Road, which skirts the native town. This thoroughfare has on the left a masonry drain, and to the right the naked limestone foundation of the citadel, especially conspicuous about the old wicket. Ancient Haydarábád contains nothing worth describing. It is a mass of terraced mud-houses, with here and there a dome, a minaret, a bit of bázár, or a heap of ruins. The principal habitations are double or many-storeyed structures, extensive as to area, with

¹⁰⁴ My first edition furnished what Murray calls (p. 484) "a ludicrous and apochryphal legend about this worthy."

naked, glassless windows, placed jealously high, and with dependent courtyards carefully invested, like Somersetshire fields, by stiff-looking walls of puddle. The improvements are the disappearance of many pent-roofed hovels, and the exchange of dark, narrow, dusty or muddy alleys for broad streets, which, however, catch the sun, and harbour the wind.

Amongst the things of the past are the tall flag-staves: when a brother officer forwarded home certain sketches for publication, the artist kindly provided them with yards and sails. Almost all the tenements boast of verandahs, and here we are deep in the region of Bád-gírs, or wind-catchers. You see, on every roof, these diminutive screens of wattle and dab, forming acute angles with the hatches over which they project. Some are movable, so as to be turned to the south-west between March and the end of July, when the monsoon sets in from that quarter. The wind, rushing down a passage in the wall, enters the room by a slit on a level with the floor: in England you are still studying "Tobinization," that is, how not to let in the cold heavy draught just under the ceiling, where it presses down and thickens the impure stratum. We have learned much from barbarians, Mr. John Bull: the suspension bridge is nothing but the swinging cradle of Peru and the Himalayan Jhúla, or twig-bridge. Yet there is one great drawback in these breeze-catchers": during boisterous weather they make your domicile a dust-hole. Haydarábád is not far north enough to know the luxury of Tah-khánás, or underground-rooms, where you may pass the awful length of a summer day dozing as coolly and comfortably as if you were on the Rhine or in the Pyrenees. You will see them first at Shikárpúr.

Except in the main thoroughfares, old Haydarábád will show us little or no bustle; and as we ride through it, the people, long accustomed to the presence of Europeans, scarcely glance at the "Balá," or endemic calamity, to whose horrors habit has hardened them. Anonyma knows that it is vanity to beckon us; the Fakírs have learned the fallacy of begging from us; the curs have forgotten to bark at us, and even the juvenile population does not taunt us with Infidelity. Every here and there we see a Beloch soldier chaffering at a stall, and an officer's servant sauntering about in the luxury of indolence; but the numbers have sadly fallen off, and I suspect that the Haydarábádís would willingly see more of us.

We resume our drive along the Tahir-Bázár- Road: I am bound for my old home, and, if you will accompany me, you shall not, sir, be over-troubled with reminiscences. Here novelties meet my eyes at every turn. The foul old Kangan-Khádi tank, the "crow-eaten," a favourite name in Sind, generally known as the "town tank," was a rough, unartificial pool; an energetic municipality has made it a pretty piece of water, 60 yards broad and 400 long, crossed by a pair of bridges, flanked by two Ghats (flights of steps), and evidently a favourite place for gardens and country-houses. A little beyond it lies the Phuléli, half-river, half-canal, the latter, in Sind, having been originally constructed to resemble, as much as possible, the natural watercourse. From the bridge we look

northward at the fork where the newest cutting joins the oldest: as the water and boats show, it now flows all the year round; yet the people have had the sense to conserve the grand "Tamáshá," or jollification, which greeted the first appearance of the flood in the merry month of May. On the right side also, a fine Ghat has been built, and the trees are thick and shady as of yore.

The avened road now leaves the prim police-station to the right; we turn off left, and after a few yards, or a total of a mile and a half from the fort, we enter old Mohammed Khan's Tándá,¹⁰⁵ or walled-village, which has now taken the name of Karam Ali Sáin. It still boasts of two gateways, the inner divided from the outer by a turn to the left and another to the right, but half the external door lies on the ground, and Time, besides defacing the stencilling, and carrying off the painted tiles, has pierced a dozen gateways in the walls. At the second door we rattle the huge cylindrical padlock of iron to warn away the women; and the old man who guards the place objects to our entering: he is easily satisfied by an explanation and a rupee.

What a change within! Some twenty-five natives, mostly negresses, haunt the houses which lodged our corps. The mess-house, to which so many recollections attach, still stands, thanks to its foundation of baked brick; but the front is converted into an open stable for human beings. Here lived the actors in the famous "Phuléli Regatta;" there W – hatched all the troubles which prevented us feeling too happy. Yonder is the house which fell down, nearly crushing its inmate and his Munshi; the fireplaces are still half filled up, and the floor is grown with Yawási, or camel-thorn. How small and mean are the dimensions which loom so large in the pictures stored within the brain. Here T – played Peeping Tom upon his father and mother-in-law; there B – temporarily buried the "young person" when the police-master gave orders to search the house. How strange are the tricks of Memory, which, often hazy as a dream about the most important events of man's life, religiously preserves the merest trifles! And how very unpleasant to meet one's Self, one's "Dead Self," thirty years younger!

Adieu, old home! I shall not perhaps see you again, but it is not in my power ever to forget you.

* * * * *

We will change the scene, and drive to those distant domes of glittering white which you saw from the fort-ramparts. On the way, remark that hollow in the ground where the bricklayers are at work; it will fill during the inundation, and the contents will fester slowly under a torrid sun, whilst the north-eastern winds will convey the aroma to city and camp. In my day Haydarábád was literally girt by these sheets of water, the

¹⁰⁵ Not to be confounded with the better known "Mohammed Khan-ká Tándá," twenty-one miles south-east of Haydarábád.

remnants of the last summer-flood; beautifully verdant above, thick as horse-ponds below, resting on beds of slimy mire, and walled by banks of dark purple mud. They are mostly abolished, and the dangerous pool to the north-west of the fort is now being lined with masonry. No wonder that the churchyards of Sind were so fearfully full, considering the short time that populated them. At Karáchi the corpses of camels were allowed to poison the air, as if a little more death were really wanted. Thatha was a mass of filth; and Haydarábád, Sakhar, and Shikárpúr had their miasma-breeding pools as close to the walls as any subaltern, sighing for "a bloody war or a sickly season," could desire. Something has been done in the paramount matters of drainage and cleanliness; still there is much to do. Witness Haydarábád and her brick-pits, and Karachi with her fetid Chíni backwater, and without her canal from the Indus.

We pass over familiar ground made unfamiliar by change. I recognize the old artillery lines and the billiard-room, but not that fishmarket, nor the slaughter-house, built far more strongly than the Haydarábád fort. That is John Jacob's house, upon which he spent Rs. 20,000, and which he sold for a song; who but he would have fronted it east and west, thrown out those round towers, and have chosen a graveyard as the site of his home? Again the huge *enceinte* of mud-wall, the deep well, and the long aqueduct which Mr. Gillespie expected to carry water up-hill; all these features of the enormous jail are utterly new.

And now we are at the tombs of the kings, Kalhóra and Talpur. They lie upon the furthest extremity of the Ganjá ridge, and one glance tells you that those to the north are fine old works, whilst the southern are modern and miserable imitations. We will begin with the best of the series, that dating from A.D. 1768, and covering the saintly founder of Haydarábád, Ghulám Shah Kalhóra. Like the Makkái tomb, this is girt by a mud-fort, the work of the Talpurs; you enter and find a large *enceinte* covered with the *detritus* of ruined graves. A platform of white marble, surrounded by balustrades of carved sandstone, supports the quadrangular edifice, which has a raised façade to the east: it supports a central main-dome, resting upon a polygonal drum, and there is a domelet at each corner. All the exterior was covered with the finest Kási or porcelain'd tiles; but nothing has been repaired for the last forty years, and now, perhaps, it is too late the casing bulges from the walls, and in places strews the pavement. The dark interior is remarkable chiefly for the tomb of Jaypúr marble, which the Rájput artists seem to handle like wax; the flutings of the open work are delicate in the extreme, and the general effect is a lacery of stone. The walls bear many inscriptions, amongst which we read:

"Ghulam Shah-i-Dín, Khusrav-i-Daurán."¹⁰⁶

And we see on the archway, amongst other verses:

¹⁰⁶ Ghulám (the Slave), King of the Faith, and Chosroes of the age.

"The King of the World, Ghulam Shah,
Before him the firmament kissed the earth."

The platform on the roof is even more interesting. To the east we trace the course of the old and new Phulélis, winding through the well-foliaged ground; in clear weather we can distinguish the battle-field of Dabbá, some four miles to the east, and a denser clump of trees shows, at about the same direct distance to the north-east, the mean and ugly obelisk which commemorates the glories of Miyáni. Many villages, sparkling like carnelians amid the emerald-green of the Ním-tree, speak well for the fertility of the plain. To the south-west lies new Haydarábád, with its school tower, like that of a village church, its big jail, and other new-fangled accessories, whilst the old city is a dense heap of dark houses, here sinking into suburbs that fine off into gardens, there prolonged by the ridge on which Camp stands. In this direction the Fort looks well, bounding and guarding the ex-capital with its curtains, its towers, and its tall donjon-keep.

The Mujáwir, or guardian of the tomb, informs us that the similar mausoleum immediately to the south, a polygon instead of a parallelogram, and provided with domelets ridged perpendicularly like a musk-melon, is that of Ghulam Nabi, a brother of Ghulam Shah,¹⁰⁷ dating from A.D. 1785. We condole with him upon the state of the beautiful tombs, and promise to make interest with the Collector, who, in turn, kindly promises to do all he can; but what is that with an eighteenpenny rupee? Our guide's chief anxiety, however, is to preserve his blue-rocks.¹⁰⁸ The English soldier, who dares not venture within the enclosure, flushes the half-tame and half-sacred birds by stone-throwing, and shoots them when out of bounds – this is Tommy Atkins all over!

The southern or Talpur group is, I have said, a base imitation, a mere forgery, hardly worth a visit, except to study the decline of art. Here stencilling takes the place of porcelain tiles, and the curry-dish dome, with double finials, becomes a favourite form. The lines are stiff and ungraceful; the work is cheap and mean, always excepting the actual tomb, which is of Jaypúr marble, sometimes inscribed, and often inlaid with black patches, much in the shape of hearts and diamonds. The head-stones of the chief tenantry are adorned with real turbans of portentous size, and with long strings of mock-pearls.

We will return home through New Haydarábád, which has risen since 1850. Beyond the jail begins the outbreak of schools. The battlemented clock-tower denotes the Engineering (public). Near it lodges the Protestant missionary, whose chapel, a pillar'd bungalow, is on the other side of the road: he presides at the Church Mission School

¹⁰⁷ The Gazetteer assigns it to Sarfaraz Khan Kalhóra, son of Ghulám Shah.

¹⁰⁸ The *Columba intermedia*, or common blue pigeon of Hind and Sind.

(private). Beyond him is the Roman Catholic missionary, who is building himself a house: he presides at the Catholic Mission School (private). Besides which there are the High School, which prepares for matriculation at Bombay; the Normal; the Anglo-Vernacular; the Vernacular of two species, Moslem-Sindi and Hindu-Sindi, and, for aught we know, half a dozen others. I should not wonder, sir, if the new Revelation, the Endowment of Research, should first be proclaimed in Sind.

"The age and body of the Time, his form and presence" are also shown by the ubiquity of the police. Here we have the Town-police, dressed in dark green with blue turbans; the Armed-police in Kháki (dust-colour), and drilled to use Brown Bess, besides the Secret-police, half a dozen detectives, periodically changed. Tappál Road shows us the post-office, and the large civil hospital, officers' quarters, and perfect "sick-bays" in their day. And, lastly, New Haydarábád ends with a dozen blocks of European barracks, and with the Beloch lines to the south.

The Sepoys are drilling, so we have an opportunity of inspecting them. The Beloch element has been pretty well "eliminated;" and the Pathán or Afghan is taking its place. Truth compels me to own that the men are no longer what they were: for this decline the military authorities have only to thank their own folly. As Irregulars, the privates enlisted only for five years; when the good conduct of the corps, in Abyssinia and elsewhere, promoted them to the rank of Regulars (Nos. 27 and 29, Bombay Native Infantry), the shorter term was changed to life-enlistment. This bane of the service may save money, although I doubt even that; after fifteen years, when a man can be invalided under a pension of Rs. 4 per mensem, he often becomes desperately homesick; he malingers, and, with characteristic Eastern tenacity of purpose, he ruins his constitution for life. The good form of Highlander who once enlisted is now becoming unknown: he will not be bribed by a full pension of seven monthly rupees for which he must serve forty years, whilst there is none between that and fifteen years' service.

My gallant friend, Colonel Beville, C.B., Commanding No. 1, Beloch Regiment, has obliged me with his views upon "The improvement of the pension rules of the native army-discharge of native soldiers and abolition of annual invaliding committees;" and the opinions of so old and distinguished a soldier, published in 1873, should not be withheld from you, Mr. John Bull.

"The above subject is worthy of all our consideration; indeed, it is one which I have long felt imperatively demands attention, as being connected so deeply with the contentment and efficiency of the native army; *my experience of many years leads me to regard the present pension rules as a failure.* The discharge of native soldiers, and the present regulations for annual invaliding committees, are equally so. I am very certain that to a great extent they tend to encourage malingering; they cause great dissatisfaction throughout all ranks, and they seriously affect the efficiency of a regiment by men incapacitated from

age and debility being retained; and I am also very sure that they keep the most soldierlike race from enlisting.

"In my own regiment, when originally raised, a man enlisted for five years, at the end of which time, if he elected for discharge he received it. If he wished to remain for a further period of five years, it entirely depended on his character and efficiency as to whether his Commanding Officer accepted his services. There was no pension, no gratuity, and never was a service more popular, as proved by the number of 'Oomedwars' (cadets) always ready for any vacancy; such a thing as a recruiting party in those days was unknown.

"Let me, however, fairly record that the above system, though so popular with the men, had its disadvantages; inasmuch as by the time a Sepoy had become an efficient and thoroughly drilled soldier, he had little more than half his service to run, and the number of recruits at drill, and men hardly fit to take the field, was unusually large.

"But a change came o'er the scene, and good and faithful service in the field, when a regiment true to its colours and the Government it served was the exception in those days, induced the Government, ever ready to recognize meritorious service, to reward the regiment I refer to with all the privileges of the pension rules, transferring it at the same time to the line. Even at that period, knowing the class of men it was intended to reward, and to draw, if possible, into a more binding contract with the State, I urged the advantage of admitting the regiment to the benefit of the pension rules, but earnestly deprecated forcing on the men the *enlistment for life* system. I opined it would prove distasteful to them, and prejudicial to the efficiency of the corps.

"To introduce in those days a healthier system was no easy matter, and according to regulations was the change carried out: the option, however, being given to all men to take their discharge on the expiration of the term for which they had enlisted, or, in accepting the pension rules, take the oath for life service. The very cream of the regiment, upwards of 400, accepted the former offer; all entreaties and argument pointing out the advantage of the pension in their old age being so much waste of breath, the State losing as fine a body of soldiers as it has ever been my fortune to see. The utmost persuasion of myself and officers alone retained the remaining portion. Could more ample proof have been desired to show the correctness of the opinion I had formed? I had obeyed the order, though it well nigh broke my heart.

"Though a comparatively young soldier in those days, the responsibility of command had early devolved on me, and it could not but induce me to ponder over what appeared such an extraordinary antipathy on the part of the men to the pension regulations, which ensured a provision for old age; but the rapid diminution of 'Oomedwars,' and the necessity of sending out recruiting parties, all tended to show that, at all events, those 'most deeply interested' did not regard them in the same

beneficial light. Ten or twelve years' additional experience in the working of these rules, and the system of annual invaliding, have shown to me beyond a doubt how ill adapted they are to carry out the intentions of a beneficent Government. Six years ago I officially recorded that 'enlistment for life' was the ruin of my regiment, and, I believed, the bane of the Native Army. I am more than ever confirmed in that opinion, and am impressed with the necessity for reform.

"I would now submit for consideration a remedy which would be merely a combination of the original limited enlistment system, but with gratuity or pension regulations, under some such arrangement as follows:

"Let all men be enlisted for a period of ten years; at the expiration of that time let the option, to good and efficient men only, be given of a further period of five years, those who elect for discharge, those whom it may not be considered desirable to retain, to be discharged with a gratuity of six months' pay. After completion of fifteen years' service, the same arrangement as above, but with twelve months' pay as gratuity. Any man, however, in the opinion of the commandant and his medical officer physically unfit, to be pensioned on three-fifths of the present rates. After twenty years' service precisely the same course, but with eighteen months' pay as gratuity, and four-fifths of the present rate of pension if physically unfit.

"After twenty-five years the full pension as at present laid down, 'fit' or 'unfit,' if asked for.

"All annual invaliding committees I would abolish; they are destructive to the efficiency of a corps, while the principle of the system I propose will make the commandant and his medical officer wholly and solely responsible that their regiment is fit to march at a moment's notice, which I can unhesitatingly say is not the case at present.

"It would, in cases, be found that from six to ten per cent. of the men would be unequal to the hardships of an Abyssinian or indeed any campaign. I may be wrong in the ratio I have fixed, that is a question which I have not sufficiently studied, as not being in my line. I am only desirous of endeavouring to the best of my abilities to point out what experience has shown me to be a faulty system, giving the principles of what I feel convinced would be an improvement, and trusting that more able writers than I am may be induced to take up their pen on a subject so deeply interesting to the native army. "If I am not mistaken, there are many who have served in that noble service, the old Panjáb Irregular Force, who can give much valuable information on the working of the limited service *versus* enlistment for life system, and I hope those who can do so will not be backward in coming forward.

"The contentment and efficiency of the native army is a vital subject to the Government we serve; for, depend upon it, as the education of India progresses, expensive armaments must

decrease, the enormous expenditure of our European Forces must be reduced, rendering it more necessary than ever that our native army, by increased efficiency *in all respects*, may be equal to the duties which I am assured must ultimately devolve on it.

"Fidelis et constans' must be its motto, and any lover of the old service (and I trust there are still many) who can aid the Government in bringing about that happy consummation should cheerfully give the subject his thoughtful consideration.

"The United Service Institution of India has happily been a great success, and the organizers of it have earned the gratitude of the army. It freely invites all to co-operate, I may say, in the instruction of the army; let that invitation be freely accepted, it will tend much to rouse the zeal and the *esprit de corps* which formerly existed, and which has so sadly waned of late. The Native army has a brilliant future; make it a contented service — disciplined, efficient, above all things, *well armed and properly officered* — and it will yet be a glorious service."

Observe, sir, that my friend has hit the happy medium between over-long and over-short service, the latter now becoming the rule of Continental Europe, where national armies are taking the place of standing armies. A term of three years may make a soldier of the intelligent and well-educated Prussian; but the system becomes a caricature, not a copy, when adopted by other nations. Before 1848 the Austrian Army was one of the finest, if not the finest, in Europe. See what the three-year service has now done for it!

CHAPTER XIV.

THE HINDUS OF SIND – THEIR RASCALITY AND THEIR PHILOPROGENITIVENESS.

We pass a week or so at Haydarábád, sir, to prepare your mind and body for the trips which I have in store for you. And now for a few words upon the subject of the native races. The population of Sind, "the extreme western limit to which Hinduism in these days extends," is composed of Moslems and Polytheists. The former, being nearly four times the more numerous, represent the great mass of the community; whereas the latter are, with few exceptions, the trading members of the social body.

As I told you before, Sind, at the time of the Arab invasion (A.D. 711-12), like Afghanistan, Multán, and the regions that lie to its north, was one of the strongholds of Hinduism. It is probable that many of the ancient Rájput families, who survived the capture of their country, escaped the persecution of their deistical conquerors by flying eastwards to Jaysalmír, and the adjacent provinces, where their faith was, and still is, the State-religion. The present Hindu population consists principally of the castes that have immigrated from the Panjab, Kachh, and Káthiawár; this their language, dress, manners, and appearance amply testify, though now, naturalized in the country, all save their learned Pandits have forgotten the story of their origin.

Late as the eighteenth century, the Hindus of Sind, we are informed by a traveller, were ten times more numerous than the rival sect. Hinduism, however, like Judaism, has ever been an eyesore to the Moslem, and the means which he adopts to remove it, although violent and unjust, are not the less efficacious. In Persia, for instance, the Jew is popularly supposed to sacrifice a Moslem child on certain occasions. Whenever a boy disappears, a hue and cry is raised; requiring an object, it directs itself against the persecuted body: their houses are attacked and plundered; they are dragged before the least impartial of judges; their oaths and their testimony are regarded as the whisperings of the wind, and the scene ends either with the "question," or with an order to admit the accused into the ranks of the Faithful. And when once the proselyte's foot has crossed the threshold of the Mosque, all hope of retreat is permanently cut off, the punishment of apostacy from El-Islam being as certain as it is tremendous.

In Sind the same cause, bigotry, modified for its purpose, worked the downfall of heathenism, which, had we not taken the country, would probably not have outlived this century.

The Talpurs, the last reigning family, came from the hills of Belochistan, and settled upon the sultry plains below, first as the disciples, then as the feudal followers, of the

saintly ruling race which they at last dethroned. Years spent in the enervating climate of the Valley dulled the bravery and hardihood of the mountaineer, but left him all his ignorance and fanaticism, covetousness and cruelty. A Talpur chief of the last generation refused even to place a watch for repair in the hands of an accursed "Butparast," or idol-worshipper.

In the West there are many, in the East few, exceptions to the Arabs' political axiom,

"The prince is the religious pattern of his people;"

and here the subjects, seeing the sovereign's propensity for persecution, copied the model as closely as they could.

No Hindu ventured to pronounce the name of the village Alláhyára jo Tándo,¹⁰⁹ because of the holy syllables that begin it; he could not touch a paper written in the Arabic language, because that character was the character of the Koran; or rather, I should say, supposed to have been the character by Oriental ignoramuses in palæography. No one dared to open a Moslem book in his mother tongue, the Sindi, for fear of being seen to peruse the inceptive formula, "In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate." It was always in the power of two Moslems to effect the conversion of a Pagan by swearing they saw him at a cockfight on Friday; that he pronounced, in their presence, the word Mohammed; or even that he had used some such ambiguous phrase as "I will go with thee." The Moslem Sindis in the present day deny these assertions; the Hindus exaggerate them; the truth lies between the two, and I believe them both.

Sometimes circumcision was made the penalty of crime: when a Hindu Banyan, or shopkeeper, falsely charged a Sepoy of Dr. Burnes' guard with theft, the Amír, at once ordered the Kázi to do his work upon the offender. Nothing easier than to make a Moslem in those days. The patient was taken before the judge, where, after being stripped of his old clothes, the ceremonial ablution was duly performed, and he was invested in the garments that denote the Faithful. A crowd of jubilants then chaired him to the Mosque; prayers were recited over him, he was directed thrice to repeat Mohammed's creed, and if he did it fluently, a minor miracle was proclaimed to the world. Next came circumcision, the eating a bit of beef, a change of name, a feast, and, lastly, a very concise course of instruction in the ceremonial part of the new "True Faith."

But the consequences of becoming a proselyte extended far enough. El-Islam, like many other beliefs, professing to respect the convert, despises and distrusts him. In Sind he was compelled to enter a certain caste, one of no high degree; to marry in it, and to

¹⁰⁹ The Village of "Allah's-friend" - the latter words being the proper name of some Moslem.

identify himself with the mongrel mass it contained. He rarely rose to fortune or distinction; and he seldom could command the respect of his co-religionists, who suspected the reality of his attachment to the strange creed, and his hankering after the idolatry of his fore-fathers. If, on the other hand, conscience or discontent drove the proselyte into a land where he might recant without danger; or if an opportunity, such as our seizure of the country, presented itself, the return to Hinduism, when practicable, was accompanied with many a disagreeable. In some towns, where Polytheists were few and could not afford to reject a wealthy and influential applicant, large presents to Brahmans, rigid expiatory penances, and a Tirtha or water-pilgrimage, were the price of re-admission to the religion of their ancestry. But this was not always possible. There were many places where the recanter was not received; he had eaten the flesh of the cow, and he had drunk impure water; for the rest of his life, therefore, he must dwell in the house of his family, an outcast, a defiled man, whose touch, like the leper's of yore, was pollution; separated from his wife, powerless over his children, with nothing but the dreary prospect, held out by his gloomy faith, to console him under a life of uncommon trials.

With the vulgar, the excitement of making one convert bred a desire to make another and yet another. When opportunities were rare, they were obliged to content themselves with mobbing the Pagans: Friday, the Moslem Sunday, being generally selected as the time for these small St. Bartholomew displays. There were few towns in which a Hindu could safely leave his house between Thursday evening and Saturday morning.

All this the persecuted race endured doggedly in the *spes finis*. Sulking under the sabre-sway of their rulers, they revenged themselves indirectly; upon the lower orders by grinding the faces of the Moslem poor; upon the upper classes by acquiring power to be abused, by fomenting intestine and family feuds, by corrupting the principal officers of the State, and by sadly confusing all ideas of *entente cordiale* with neighbouring and allied kingdoms. Thus, despicable and despised as they were, they failed not to prove themselves essentially dangerous. And the same were the position and the conduct of the Jews in Syria, before a kind of constitutionalism made all faiths *theoretically* equal.

Superiority of intellect was on their side. The Hindu has a mathematical and arithmetical mind; the Moslem is, generally speaking, notably deficient in the power of mastering the exact sciences, the exceptions being the Egyptians, and some rare individuals amongst the Turks, Persians, Arabs, and Moors. This I believe to be the first cause of a phenomenon which attracts every observing eye in India; namely, that when the Polytheist and the Monotheist meet on equal terms, the former either ruins or subjects to himself the latter. Other qualities accompany this form or constitution of the brain in the worshipper of Brahma. The "mild Hindu," as we miscall him, is one of the most bloodthirsty of men. He is a dark and deep-seeing plotter, an admirable eventualist where anything villainous is the event: what land but India could have kept

up Thaggi for centuries?—what was the Fehmgericht (Vehme) of Germany, or the Fidawiyat of Hasan Sabáh,¹¹⁰ in organization, combination, or duration, compared with it? He is remarkable for passive courage, in suffering braver than any woman: he will inflict injuries upon himself with the *sang froid* of a Leana, provided you hold out to him the one inducement, wealth. With the money for his rent or his debt concealed about his person, to be produced when things are going too far, he will allow himself to be suspended by his thumbs or his heels till he faints; he will shriek under the lash, swearing that he has not a pice, and he will inhale finely-powdered cayenne with all the endurance, but very little of the stoicism, of a North American Indian. His constancy requires nothing but a cause to dignify it. Such is his passive courage. At the same time, place a weapon in his hand and point to the bristling breach; desire him to charge up to a gun like an Afghan or a Turkoman, he will look at you, remonstrate, hang back, turn tail. This is not his pluck. Remember, I am speaking of the Sind Hindu, not of the Sikh, the Rájput, the Nayr, and other races which are educated to active courage, if I may use the expression. Finally, he is a "fly-sucker," as the people say, a lean, parsimonious, half-naked wretch, living, with lakhs at his command, on coarse bread and sugar-arack; when the Moslem with a few thousand rupees would be faring sumptuously, and emptying his purse upon silks and satins, horses and dancers. Nor is this thriftiness by any means a despicable quality it goes hand in hand with indefatigable industry.

At last Hindu arts prevailed, as might be expected, over the strong arm. The younger Talpur Amírs, the sons and nephews of the original Chár-Yár, or the four friends and brothers who expelled the Kalhóra dynasty, acknowledged their utter inability to dispense with heathens in managing their miserable territory: a score of them could not govern a country about the extent of England and Wales. Nor could they collect their paltry revenue, though the total produce of the province was not greater than the income of a British *richard* of the second or third class. The Princes had degenerated from the hardy savage virtues of temperance, sobriety, and morality affected by their progenitors; they devoted to pleasure the time demanded by business, and they willingly entrusted to the hands of Banyans, most unjust stewards, the management of their estates, and in some cases of their subjects. Hence, even in the days of the Amírs, the Hindus and the Moslems were divided into two classes, creditor and debtor, the money-lender and the money-borrower.

The worshipper of Brahma eminently possesses the peculiarity usually attributed to the middle-class and the lower orders of Scotchmen; the habit of carrying out in practice what all people admit in theory, the truth that "blood is thicker than water." The Hindu no sooner establishes himself upon a firm footing than he extends a helping hand to his family generally, even to his cousins twenty degrees removed. Nor does he stop here. Relations may be expended: the "caste-brother," as he is called, cannot. Thus the rulers

¹¹⁰ Or Sayyáh—about his name annalists still differ the Grand Master of the Assassins, and organizer of that remarkable order. See Chapter XI.

of Sind were soon surrounded by a host of civil officers, revenue-collectors, secretaries, and scribes, all of the same persuasion, all playing into one another's hands, and all equally determined to aggrandize themselves, their family, and their race, no matter by what means. The result of this almost unopposed combination was that the Princes, notwithstanding their powers of life and death, the "tabby-cat" and circumcision, were never safe from frauds so barefaced that it moves our wonder to hear them told. The Billí, or "she-cat," I must tell you, was an indigenous instrument of torture, furnished with claws to tear the flesh of the questioned.

Of Menu's four great divisions we here find only three: the Brahman, the Waishya (trader), and the Shudra, or servile man. The second caste, royal and military, in Sind, as elsewhere, is of doubtful origin: every follower of Nának Shah,¹¹¹ even were he the son of a sweeper, assumes to himself the style and title of Kshatriya. The social position of the race prevents its putting forth that multitude of outcaste-branches which, like the Mángs and Mhárs, the Pásís, and Chandálas of India, spring up from the transgression, voluntary or involuntary, of a single arbitrary religious ordinance.

The Sind Brahman is by no means an orthodox specimen of his far-famed class. His diet is most inaccurate. Although he avoids beef and fowls, he will eat fish; also the flesh of wild birds and certain meats, such as venison, kid, and mutton; he shrinks not from the type of creation, an onion, and he enjoys the forbidden luxury of strong waters. Instead of confining himself, as he should do, to the study of grammar and the Scriptures, to his prayers or to his "pastoral duties," he may be seen bending over the ledger, squatting on a counter, and even exercising the command of a kitchen. When we first took the country, Brahmans owned to me that their fellow caste-men sometimes actually married widows; but of late years, after being soundly rated by the Hindostani Sepoys, whom they respect, they seldom contract these irregular and impure unions.

There are two principal families of priests in Sind, the Pokarno and the Sársat. The former, supposed to have immigrated from Upper India, worship Vishnu, the second person of the Hindu Triad; support themselves by judicial astrology and ceremonial law; marry in their own caste, and claim from their ecclesiastical brethren a superiority which the others admit by receiving the "water of their hands." The Sársat, or Sársudh, properly Sáraswátiya, from the Saraswati river, are worshippers of Shiva, the Destroyer, and of Deví, his Saktí, wife or active form: in education, appearance, and manners, they exactly resemble the votaries of Vishnu.

Knowledge amongst Sind Brahmans means a slight acquaintance with the simpler parts of Sanskrit grammar, and sufficient of the classical language to understand oft-read

¹¹¹ A Kshatriya of the Dedi tribe, born A.D. 1469, at Talwandi, near Rajahpúr, in the Lahor Parganá; early converted to Nagornai, or Theism; travelled in Arabia, Persia and Hindustan; denied that he could work miracles; founded the Sikh faith; died A.D. 1540, and was buried at Kirtipúr on the banks of the Ravi river. His disciples and successors were the "Gurús."

works upon astrology and magical formula, and the volumes that contain the intricate practice of their faith. Some few have perused the Shri Bhagawat, fifth of the eighteen Puránas or religious and quasi-inspired poems; and here and there an individual has had the industry to form a superficial acquaintance with the Sanhita or Summary of the Yajur, the White Veda. The increased facility for travelling to distant lands with a possibility of return, has of late years induced several Brahmans to venture far from the banks of the Indus, to wander amidst the classic shades of Kási (Benares), and to sit in the colleges of Calcutta: the extent of their acquirements proves that the race is by no means deficient in power and intellect. Few of the priestly order, except when engaged in commerce, know anything of the Persian language: they consider it a profane study of erotic verses, "light literature," and tales ill-suited to the gravity of a churchman and a scholar. But they have little objection to the compositions or even the tenets of that mild heretic, Nának Shah, the apostle of the Sikhs, principally, I presume, because the mass of his followers praise and honour, revere and fee, the Brahmans.

The Brahman in Sind shaves his head, leaving a single lock upon the poll; he removes the beard, and induces the mustachios to droop heavily over his mouth, in order to distinguish them from the closely-clipped honours of the Moslem's upper lip. Upon his forehead he places a horizontal or a perpendicular mark indifferently, whereas in India the perpendicular "Tilak," as it is called, distinguishes the adorer of the Preserver from the worshipper of the Destroyer. His dress is generally that of a common Sáhukár, or trader, a white or red turban, the Pokarno preferring the red, the Sársat the white; an Angarkhá, or cotton coat with a very short body, tight sleeves, and long flowing skirts; a Dhotar, or waist-cloth, generally salmon-coloured with an ornamental edge, bound round the middle; a shawl or a Chádar (sheet) thrown loosely over the shoulders, and the peculiar Sind slippers of anything but of leather. In his hand is a sandal-wood rosary of twenty-seven grains; and constant habit has gifted him with the power of muttering and telling his beads mechanically; and rings of gold, set with pearls, adorn the lobes and shells of his ears. few Sársat Brahmans dress in the style affected by the Ámils, or Revenue officers: the Pokarno, however, consider the costume unclerical, and eschew it accordingly.

Of the Wáni, Banyan, or trader-caste, there are five great families in this country, the Loháná, the Bhátíá, the Sehtá, the Panjabi, and those called Waishya: the latter word, properly meaning the third or trading class of Hindús generally, is here used in a limited sense to signify operatives and mechanics, opposed to merchants and shopkeepers. According to the wont of Hinduism, each division is split into a number of insignificant bodies, who have their proper names: these are derived from their place of residence, or from peculiarities of dress and appearance, and are perpetuated by their furious *esprit de corps*, and by their violent jealousies of one another, when the absence of a common foe allows them to indulge in the luxury of envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. Most significant, too, are some of their taunts. For instance, the Loháná, in general, say of the Khudá-wádi, one of their sub-divisions:

"*Khudáwádi Khudá* khe ghere wanjan:"

The *Khudáwádi* deceive the *Khudá* (Self-existent One; God).

A dull pun, but a sharp cut at the excessive cunning of that race. The Hindus are litigious as the Moslems, only they prefer the civil courts, whilst their rivals resort as readily to the criminal tribunals. There is no Sindi, however wild, that cannot now understand *Rasíd* (receipt) and "*Apíl*" (appeal).

Divided according to their occupations, the Sind Banyans are of two classes. The multitude employs itself in commerce, sometimes in cultivation; the select few become officers under Government, and take the title of *Ámil*.

The Sind trader has lived so long amidst, and in subjection to, the stranger, that he has unconsciously, but palpably, emancipated himself from much of the galling bondage of a faith, which fears progress as much as destruction. Tempted by the hope of wealth, he has wandered far and wide from his native shores, to sojourn for years in lands where nothing but a popular prejudice, expressed by the proverb:

"It is ill-omened to slay a Hindu, a Jew, a woman, and a dog,"

preserves him from destruction. And when he returns from the lands of the *Mlenchha*, the mixed, impure, and non-Hindu races, he is honoured instead of being excommunicated by his fellows. As he is accustomed to long voyages, he sits down on board ship, and boldly "cooks bread," instead of crunching parched grain, like the Indian. The diet prescribed by his religion being unsuited to cold countries, it is quietly laid aside for one more generous and cosmopolitan. He eats flesh without the animal being killed by a single sword-cut in the name of the Sikh "*Gurú*." He uses leather-slippers, with the points flattened upon the vamp. He shaves only the back of the head, leaving, like the Jew, long love-locks on either side; and for a turban he substitutes a red embroidered cap with a fork behind. So also he has diminished his *ablutions; he has extended his potations to "*Jagrí*," a kind of rum distilled from molasses, and in many other little ways he has so dressed and trimmed his original rigid Hinduism that it has become as presentable a thing as its natural awkwardness and want of adaptability permit it to be.

The Banyan receives but a scanty education. After learning a few religious notions and ceremonies, quackeries and nostrums, he goes to a schoolmaster, who teaches him to read and write the alphabet, and to explain the mysteries of the character which enters into his father's books; to add and multiply only, subtraction and division being considered *de trop*, and to indite a formal letter of business. Nothing can be ruder than the symbols which denote his complicated accounts: it is a system of stenography which admits none but initial vowels, and which confounds the appearance of nearly a dozen

distinct consonants. These conclude his course of study: he then takes his place in the shop, where, if you please, we will leave him to cheat and haggle, to spoil and adulterate, and to become as speedily rich by the practice of as much conventional and commercial rascality, barely within the limits of actual felony, as he can pass off upon the world. His books have never yet been admitted as evidence in a court of law, as was the case with the Hindus of India, till, under our rule, they lost even that sense of honour.

The Amils, or Government officers, the class created by the ignorance and inability of the Moslem rulers, are the most influential and, conventionally speaking, the most "respectable," body of Hindus in Sind. They are distinguished from their fellow-religionists by their attire. The bigotry of the court forbade them to shave their beards or to wear turbans: they lost the right of placing the "Tilak," or sectarian mark, on the forehead; and they were compelled to trim the long drooping moustachios which the Hindú loves. Under the present *régime*, although sumptuary and costume regulations are utterly out of date, they still affect the Siráiki-topi, the peculiar Sindi cap, the English chimney-pot inverted, that is, with the brim upwards, and made of brilliant and often parti-coloured stuffs. They use the loose shirt under the cotton coat, and the wide drawers gathered in at the ankle, as in wear amongst the Moslems. They are a light-complexioned, regular-featured, fine-looking race, athletic compared with their brethren, from the liberal use of a meat diet; somewhat corpulent in consequence of their predilection for sweets and clarified butter; uncommonly proud of their personal appearance, and not a little fond of rich dress. They are easily distinguished from the True Believers by their features, which are fatter and less aquiline. Moreover, they now often affect the "Tilak," and their shirts and coats button on the left side.

The literary attainments of an Ámil are not extensive. In his boyhood he is sent to a Moslem Akhund, or pedagogue, and learns to speak, read, and write the Persian language, or rather the kind of Lingua Franca which passes for Persian among the educated classes in India and Sind. His pronunciation is, *mutatis mutandis*, that of an Englishman speaking French with a purely British accent, and with a vocabulary like French of the school of Stratford-atte-Bowe. His style is equally solecistic, as he learns grammar by rote, without ever dreaming of the difference betwixt noun and verb. In choosing words, he jumbles together the learned and unlearned, obsolete and neological, slang and pure provincialisms: not unfrequently, when run hard for terminology, he introduces a Sindi term, with or without the benefit of a foreign termination. The effect may be compared to a contractor's "lady" in the Brazil, "Here, Vossé, bring *águar* and *limper* the floor," or to a sporting friend's, "Moi drinkerai with vous," addressed to a Gallic *homo unius lingua*. His ignorance of the difficult arbitrary idiom of the beautiful, sonorous, expressive Persian is complete and striking. He translates the phraseology of his uncouth mother-tongue literally into the literary language; and thus his speech is always ridiculous, and not unfrequently it becomes

offensive, by producing some unintended, but unmistakable, *double entendre*. Imagine the effect of rendering, How do you do? by *Comment faites-vous?*

After laying in a moderate stock of words and sentences, the Amil proceeds to the perusal of certain works upon the subject of petitions, addresses, and epistolary correspondence, not inferior in manner and matter to our "Complete Letter Writers." He learns by heart the directions, the beginnings, and the endings, the "Sir-I-have-the-honours;" and the "I-have-the-honour-to-remain-Sirs;" and by much diligence he masters the important distinction between "Sir-of-high-degree," and "Sir-of-exalted-station;" Ali-shán, the former, being applied to nobles, gentlemen, and equals generally; Ali-jáh, the latter, to "respectable" persons and inferiors. He then peruses a poet, and a romance or two, with the view of "getting up" common-places, and of cramming" quotations, which may be produced as a proof of a liberal education. His preparatory studies conclude with a few simple arithmetical rules.

Our Amil now, by the assistance of a kinsman or a caste-fellow, obtains permission to squat upon the floor of some Daftar or Government office, amongst a crowd of scribes, clerks, and cadets. The aspirant, thus upon the point of entering "life," devotes the energies of his mind to mastering the complicated tricks and devices in which his craft deals; and his juvenile efforts are carefully seconded by the precepts and practice of his seniors. He learns to read out a paper to his employers, altering sentences and paragraphs to suit the sense he wants, and, when acting secretary, to jot down, without hesitation, exactly as much or as little of what is dictated to him as may suit his purpose. This is a system which nothing can check but an actual perusal of all letters, or the plan adopted by Típú Sultán. The ruler of the Mysore could neither read nor write: so, to obviate danger of deception, after dictating his orders to one secretary, he sent him into a closet, and put the paper into the hands of a second. If word had not been set down for word, the head of the writer at once paid the penalty: old Mohammed Ali Páshá of Egypt also hit upon a similar precaution. Our Amil acquires the arts of writing a good feigned hand, and of copying documents with deceptive skill; he becomes dexterous at making a fresh paper look old and worn, as a London Jew at manufacturing a Guido; and he practises till perfect, with laborious industry, the many ways of forging a seal. The "Khatm" in Sind, as in many parts of the Eastern world, is what the signature is in the West: Europe once knew the practice, especially in the days when many a "Dominus Episcopus" was compelled to confess, "Scribere non possum." This prelude to his career concludes with the acquirement of considerable knowledge concerning the best and safest way of receiving and administering a bribe. He is now a Munshí (secretary),¹¹² prepared to do his duty to his master by deceiving him whenever deception is profitable; and to the Government, that employs both, by plundering it to the utmost extent which his means and opportunities permit him.

¹¹² In Persia the title is given only to men of learning in India every fellow who can read a page of Hindostani, or scrawl a wretched note, arrogates to himself the name, which is derived from Inshá, belles lettres, especially correspondence.

The Sindi is our scribe's mother tongue; but as he never peruses the works which it contains, he is ignorant of all beyond a mere colloquial knowledge. His private studies are mostly religious. If he incline to the faith of Nának Shah, he learns to read and write certain excerpts of the Granth, or Sikh scripture. He prepares for himself a Pothi, or prayer-book, but, too idle to learn the Gurumukhi modification of the Devanagari, or modern Sanskrit alphabet, used in the Holy Writ of the Panjáb, he copies in the Nasta'alík, or common Persian character, the select passages of some friend's breviary. These are hymns to the Creator, to the Great Incarnations, to the Saints, and to Jendá Pír and Udhhero Lál, the Indus and his minister; astrological tables, the "Book of Fate," formulas for calculating lucky and unlucky days, magical charms, and medicinal prescriptions.

Contrary to the usual practice of Hindus, the Ámil class marries late in life, in consequence, I believe, of the expense attendant upon their nuptial ceremonies. Some few live and die bachelors, a rare and exceptional state throughout the nearer East. Most of them are grossly immoral, addicted to gambling, and to the abuse of spirituous liquors. From mixing much with the members of another faith, and possessing a little more knowledge than their neighbours, many become Dahri, or materialists, owning the existence of a Deity, but dissociating the idea from all revelation, and associating it with the eternity – "Azal" the past, and "Abad" the future of matter in its myriad modifications. A few are Atheists in the literal sense of the word, but they rarely trust their secret to a stranger. All these freethinkers are formidable. Infidelity, by which I understand the rejection of any local system of religion, is less common in the enlightened East than it is in the civilized West: but the European seldom thinks proper, or takes the trouble, to make converts to his disbelief; the Oriental does and, aided by his superiority in learning over the herd, he practises perversion frequently with great success. To judge from the progress of the Súfi, or mystic tenets, in Persia, and the Vedantic philosophy in India, especially that bastard form of Hinduism, the Brahm-Samáj, which in England you term – "Heaven knows why!" "Brahmo-somaj," a mixture of theoretical Pantheism with pure and practical Theism will presently become the faith of the learned and polite in both countries.

In Sind there are not many castes of Shudra, or servile Hindus; and the few that exist have adopted the thread of the twice-born, the sectarian mark, and the diet, dress, and manners of Banyans. The same is the case with the Nayrs of Malabar, and other similar castes in India, who, together with the functions and employment, have taken to themselves the rights, of a higher family. The principal trades are the Wáhun, who lives by toasting different kinds of grain;¹¹³ the Khatti, or dyer; the Hajjám, who combines the

¹¹³ Many cereals, such as rice, wheat, Bengal-"gram," holcus, and others, are boiled, dried, and toasted upon iron plates, to be eaten on journeys, and at different religious epochs.

employment of cupping and shaving; and the Sochi, who makes cloth-slippers, but leaves leather-slippers to the impure Mochi, the outcaste that dresses and works leather.

In Haydarábád and the other large towns there are several families of the eclectic religionists called Sikhs.¹¹⁴ The wild tracts of country in the east of Sind contain some curious tribes of outcastes; and in several parts of the province a variety of mendicant orders, as numerous as the begging-friars of Southern Europe, exercise their offensive profession. This, the fluctuating population, not actually belonging to the region, I have already described.¹¹⁵

The Hindu's religion has, like the Moslem's, been contaminated by contact with strangers, especially the Sikh; the latter is a heretic Hindu, and therefore a more dangerous antagonist than the Musulman, who attacks Polytheism with all the ignorant violence of a Monotheist. Still there is no lack of bigotry among them. The votary of Vishnu or Shiva will often, for a consideration or with an object, represent himself as inclining to Christianity; but not even once, as yet, has he taken the irrevocable step: the beefsteak or the baptism. If he has nothing to gain by apparent attachment to "master's creed," he opposes, strenuously enough, everything that offends his conviction and his prejudices. A friend, then vaccinator in Sind, found serious difficulties to contend with when he attempted to spread the blessing amongst the Hindús of Karachi. The pragmatists believe small-pox to be a manifestation of atrocious Devi herself: they therefore bury instead of burning her victims; and they look upon all precautionary measures as direct acts of hostile aggression upon their deity. Yet, as is the case with all men, they abound in contradictions: when a babe falls sick, the father runs for a doctor as well as a priest; and when it dies, he laments not the less because his progeny has died of a goddess.

The Hindu women in Sind, like the Jewesses in Europe, are superior in personal appearance to their lords. Many are beautiful, with correct features, magnificent hair, classical figures, though not free from high shoulders the prevalent defect of India, and clear olive skins, sometimes lighted up, on the cheeks and palms of the hands, with the faintest possible pink. The eyes are perfect; as amongst these races generally they are *the* feature: hence, possibly, the habit of hiding all the rest of the face in the "nose-bag." Their charms are, however, ephemeral; and all who have enough to eat, and who are not worked too hard, become, quadruped — like, fleshy and corpulent. A simple diet, a life spent almost in the open air, and an unartificial toilet, consisting, *in toto*, of a white or quasi-white veil thrown over the head, a loose bodice to support the bosom, a long and wide petticoat of red-spotted stuff, and sometimes a pair of slippers, preserve them from the hundred nervous and hysterical ailments of dyspeptic civilization.

¹¹⁴ They were pleased to admit me into their order, but the ceremonies of initiation are under the seal of secrecy.

¹¹⁵ "Sindh, and the Races that inhabit the Valley of the Indus." London, Allen, 1851.

The Hindu women are less educated, but also less fond of pleasure (which here means, feasting, hard drinking, and flirtation, to use a very mild term), than the Moslemahs. I must make an exception of Shikárpúr, where, when we first took the country, liberty had transgressed the limits of license. Their vanity, the ruling passion of the sex, finds a safety-valve in an extensive display of grotesque ornaments; of metal rings in the ear, the nostril, the cartilage of the nose, on the wrists and fingers, ankles and toes; of necklaces, and of large ivory circles, white or stained, covering all the fore-arm. Being under strict surveillance, and hourly liable to bodily chastisement, administered with no sparing hand, they are good, hard-working, and affectionate wives. Their love for their off-spring, the great feminine virtue of the East, is an all-absorbing passion, beautiful despite its excess. To the Hindu mother, her child, especially her son, is everything. From the hour of birth she never leaves him day or night. If poor, she works, walking about with him on her hip: if rich, she spends life with him on her lap. When he is in health, she passes her time in kneading and straightening his limbs. If he is sick, she fasts and watches, and endures every self-imposed penance she can devise. She never speaks to or of him, without imploring the blessing of Heaven upon his head; and this strong love loses naught when the child ceases to be a toy; it is the mainspring of her conduct throughout life. No wonder that in the East an unaffectionate son is a phenomenon; and no wonder that this people, when rage makes them offensive, always begin by foully abusing one another's mothers.

Own to me, Mr. John Bull, if you have candour enough, that in this point at least civilization gains nothing by contrast with barbarism. With us the parents are engrossed during the infancy of their offspring by other cares, the search for riches, or the pursuit of pleasure. During the troublesome days of childhood the boy is consigned to a nursery, or is let loose to pass the time with his fellows as he best can; then comes youth, accompanied by an exile to school and college; then the career or profession, and lastly, the marriage and the "young family" — a *coup de grâce*.

In civilization, too, there is between parent and child little community of interests and opinions: the absence of it is the want of a great tie. Often the former has authority over the latter, and abuses it; or the latter, being independent of the former, presumes upon it. The one may be a Roman Catholic and a Conservative; the other, a Methodist and a Manchesterian: both are equally ready to fall out "on principle" about their "principles." The contrary rules in these lands. Opinions are heir-looms; religious tenets cannot differ; politics are confined to politicians; "principles" there are none, and every household instinctively feels, and moreover acts upon the feeling, that its only safeguard against the host of enemies without, is perfect unanimity within doors: *every* household, I say, excepting, of course, the great, all whose members are rivals, and who hate each other with the vivacious family-hatreds of Honourables or Hibernians.

I will end this subject with relating to you why the Hindu sect called *Darya já Shewak*, disciples of the Sea, that is, the Indus, adore Udhhéro Lál. Ahú, the bigoted Kází of a

fanatical Moslem King of Thatha, ordered all the heathen to adopt the True Faith, under pain of losing their heads unless the step were taken within ten days. The unfortunate Pagans thereupon repaired to the River and prepared for it a "Deg," or dish, containing cooked rice, sugar, and clarified butter. These delicacies were effectual, and presently a spears-man on a white steed emerged from the flood. He went straightway to the Kází's Mahkameh, or court, and dared him to sit upon the water without other boat but his shawl. The reverend gallantly accepted the challenge, and did not cry for aid till he was nearly drowned; thereupon the rider, placing his five finger-tips upon the cloth, left on the corner five marks—a custom long perpetuated by the Moslems¹¹⁶ — and kindly saved his adversary. He disappeared, assuring the people that within ten months he would be born under the name Udhhéro Lál, of a Banyan woman at Nasrpúr, on the Phitto river, some fourteen miles east of Haydarábád. The promise was kept, and the young Incarnation became a blessing to his tribe by confounding the Moslems in many religious controversies. He kept up this practice during a long life, and finally died at Cheráo, north of the old capital. His memory is still green: the River-worshippers visit him once a month, and on the 1st of Chaitya (March-April) there is a crowded Yátrá, or pilgrimage, to the place.

¹¹⁶ This, of course, is the Hindu version. The Moslems certainly affect five white spots upon the indigo-dyed sheets, thrown over the shoulder, but they would hardly thus perpetuate the memory of a defeat inflicted by rival Religionists.

CHAPTER XV.

THE SINDI MAN – HIS CHARACTER, AND ESPECIALLY WHAT HE DRINKS.

The Sindi, by which I understand the mass of the population, is the lineal descendant of the ancient Hindu race that possessed the country, with a slight admixture of Persian, Arab, Beloch, Bráhui, and Afghan blood – you shall hear something of these races at a fitting time. Hence, doubtless, his more muscular frame and robust general appearance: the connection with the superior sub-family has, however, possibly from local causes, failed to produce a strictly speaking improved development. His complexion varies from a deep muddy chocolate colour, the sign of the lower orders, to the darkest olive of Southern Europe: his features are frequently high and thin, regular and well cut; the forehead, unlike the feeble brow of India, is tall and arched: the head is, comparatively speaking, well rounded, and nothing can be finer than the eyes, the hair, and the beard, especially the two latter.

The social position of the Sindi in his own country has, for a long term of years, been similar to that of the Saxon in England during the age immediately following the invasion of the Northmen. Hence it is that, contrary to what might be expected from his physical superiority, his *morale* has sunk below the average of Western India. His is emphatically a conquered race. Inhabiting a valley with a hot-damp climate, the most unfavourable, as opposed to a cold-dry, the most favourable, to manliness; exposed to the incursions of the hardy natives of the frigid and arid mountains that look down upon it, he had, perhaps, the bodily strength, but he lacked the firm will, and certainly the vigour of mind, to resist invasion, or to shake off the invader. As we see him now, a Chinese compared with a Tartar, the contempt to which he has subjected himself by his self-conviction of inferiority, and the absence of any object which might infuse energy into his actions, have formed and fixed him a very slave.

The principal occupations of the settled Sindis are feeding flocks and herds, agriculture, and manual labour. They own the worst land in the province, the tracts lying near the tails of canals, where the inundation seldom extends, because the feoffees, whose estates lie about the head, will not take the trouble, or go to the expense, of excavating the beds. The only remedy for this evil would be to confiscate the whole or part of the said estates. He also holds the grounds cut off from land and water transit; whilst the Beloch feudal lords and their throng of vassals secured for themselves most of the fertile and productive tracts. Generally speaking, they are miserably poor: theirs is a bald and squalid wretchedness which must be witnessed to be understood. I have seen whole families picking up off the roads and highways the grains of barley they might chance to find there. And under our rule the Moslem is even more wretched than he was under the native Princes.

Throughout Sind, the Hindu element preponderates in the cities and towns, the Moslem in the country: the former everywhere represents capital, the latter labour. There are few districts in this part of Asia where the cultivators are not bankrupts, only prevented from failing, as it were, by its being the interest of the creditor not to ruin his debtor beyond a certain point. The way by which this comes to pass in Sind is as follows. The peasant paid one-third and one-half the produce of his fields to the ruler, Amír, governor, or collector: we will suppose that he paid it in kind, to make the hard condition as favourable as possible to him. Upon the other moiety, or two-thirds, he and his family had not only to subsist till the next harvest, but also out of it he was required to economize the wherewithal to sow his fields when the season came round. Here lay the difficulty. The peasant could not save; and if he could, he would not save: so when seed was required, he went to the Hindu, the usurer and attorney of the little parish; and, after immense trouble, he borrowed, at the rate of about cent. per cent., mortgaging at the same time the coming harvest, the smallest quantity of grain deemed necessary. He was then a ruined man.

Besides receiving an enormous rate of interest, the creditor, who can read, write, and compute, turns the ignorance of his debtor to profit by keeping his accounts in a state of confusion most advantageous to the only one that understands them, himself. The wretched Moslem "Ryot,"¹¹⁷ after paying off his liabilities half a dozen times or more, is still as deeply indebted as ever. Under the native rule it was, and under any system it would be, the same. As for discharging the debts of the Great Peninsula, and starting the community "clear" in the world, as the phrase is, I doubt whether the revenues of Great Britain would suffice. Only, where natives govern, they keep up larger establishments, markets for produce, than we do; and they will more easily remit the rate demandable from the agriculturist. The frequent wars, tumults, and invasions, too, have one good effect, allowing the ground to lie fallow for awhile. Our rule is, and must ever be, by the very nature of our tenure, a few Englishmen amongst millions of Hindus and Hindis, a cut-and-dry, mechanical, and unelastic system, equally distasteful and disadvantageous to the Princes and to the people.

The Hindu's reed-pen is a rod of iron, and abjectly the unhappy Sindi trembles before it. I was forcibly struck by an example of its power on one occasion when travelling down the Eastern River-valley. My tent was pitched near a little village; and the natives, who in those days considered every European a petty sovereign, were careful to come out *en masse* and pay their respects to the hat and shooting-jacket. Amongst the last visitors was a fair specimen of the race that has been most unjustly designated as mild and lowly;" a dirty, cringing Hindu, with Shylock writ large in every line of his lean, cold, greedy, hungry countenance. With his long legs depending from the saddle-less

¹¹⁷ In the Europeo-Asiatic jargon, "Rayah" is the Turkish, "Ryot" the Indian, peasant: both, you would scarcely believe the feat of Cacography, being one and the same Arabic word, Ra'iyat.

crupper of his diminutive ass, whose nostrils were split to improve its wind, he suggested nothing but an ourang-outang bestriding a Newfoundland.¹¹⁸ Dismounting and standing up, he began humbly to detail his grievances, insisting particularly upon the bad conduct of some unhappy Musulman Ryot who would not pay his debts legally contracted.

Hast thou seized his corn?" I asked.

"Of course, great Rajah: but it is not enough!"

Hast thou sold his cattle?" – without them the poor wretch could not plough a square foot of field.

"Certainly. Long may your Rajahship flourish but he still owes me rupees."

"Hast thou taken his wife's jewels, their clothes, the ornaments of their children, their furniture, and so forth?"

"Yes, but he was so poor: what were the things worth?"

"And thou hast not turned him out of house and home?"

"He sits in the jungle, great Prince."

"Then, man of dense brains, what wouldst thou have me do? What wouldst thou do thy – self?"

My friend was evidently of opinion that, by science and vigour, blood might be extracted from a turnip; and he hinted not obscurely at a mode of torture which, he assured me, under the native Princes, was never known to fail. From his account of it I should agree with him, the alternative being literally pay or die. In vain I attempted to illustrate the homely proverb above quoted; vainly I represented that we civilized Europeans allow no corporal punishment for debt, only a compulsory residence in certain Government bungalows. My Hindu affected to believe what I was saying he left me, not daring to grumble, but looking his profound dissatisfaction at having come across so thick-headed, and at the same time so imaginative, a conqueror.

In the East, Mr. Bull, such a scene is impressive, and perhaps matters were never worse than in 1876. It is, indeed, my firm conviction that, unless the Moslem Sindi be

¹¹⁸ The pure Hindu holds donkey-riding a disgrace. The intolerance of the Moslem ruler compelled these Banyans to adopt the lowly *monture*; the force of habit continued the practice, and only now they are beginning to exchange it for the horse and for the carriage.

protected by the strong arm of the law against his Hindu oppressor; in fact, by some form of the Encumbered Estates Bill, the whole body will be irretrievably ruined.

During the last quarter-century a few Sindis, women as well as men, have studied the manners and customs of their conquerors sufficiently to become domestic servants in European establishments. They are preferred to those of the Panjáb and of India generally my short experience of the Sindi in this form is all in his favour, and the Indus Flotilla can speak well of his honesty and fidelity.

The nomadic Sindis who inhabit the hills in the western, and the oases in the deserts of the eastern, frontier, are taller, stouter, and hardier men than those settled upon the Indus plains. In appearance many are scarcely to be distinguished from their Beloch neighbours; and the latter, in some cases, have learned to respect their bodily strength and their fitful valour. They live by fishing and hunting; by breeding horses, camels, goats, and sheep; by resorting to the low country for employment, when agriculture is at a standstill, and by cultivating patches of ground to provide them and their families with bread.

The dress of the common Sindi is a cotton shirt of problematical whiteness, and distinguished by its shortness from that of the Beloch: his overalls (Kánc̄h) also are tight at the ankle, not wide as the hill-man's, and the favourite colour is indigo-blue. His turban (Patká) is loosely wound: at times he wears the inverted broad-brim (Siráiki-topi) and, if well-to-do, a Lungi, or waist-scarf.

His daily bread is a thick, flabby cake of Bájri-flour, a kind of grain, intelligibly described in dictionaries as "*Penicillaria vulgaris*." It is mixed with water, well kneaded, flavoured with salt, and baked without leaven on a clay-plate: reeking with rancid butter, and greenish in colour, it has a particularly uninviting taste. This food is considered very heating, so the people almost live upon it during the cold weather. For the rich there are about fifteen kinds of "Rot," as the stuff is most appropriately called, bread made of different grains, or cooked in particular ways; some of them, the sweet varieties, rather resembling buttered-toast coated with coarse brown-sugar. The national drinks are milk and water, not mixed. The luxurious eat Pulláus, your "Piláffs" borrowed from corrupted Turkish: the dishes are dressed in a pseudo-Persian style, and the contents are meat, chiefly mutton, fresh and dried fish, vegetables, fruits, game, and other delicacies. All smoke the water-pipe, which in these regions is a peculiar-looking affair, composed of a large, roundish vessel of clay, baked red, with a long, thin neck: into this is inserted the stem, supporting the monstrous "Chilam," or bowl, which may contain three or four ounces. The smoke, passing through the water, is inhaled by a reed-pipe that projects from the side of the reservoir. There are several varieties of tobacco: the best, called Shikárpúri, would, I believe, if properly cured, form a valuable article of commerce. It is now terribly sweated by being stacked in cocks, covered with matting so as to exclude the air: hence its inferiority of flavour. Formerly it was used

only for smoking: now the people have learned to like snuff, a fine powder somewhat like that of the Bombay Parsís.

One of the great causes of the Sindi's degeneracy is the prevalence of drunkenness throughout the Province. All ranks and creeds, sexes and ages, drink hard; the exceptions being a few religious men and dames of godly lives. Oriental-like, they sit down to their cups with the firm intention of disqualifying themselves for arising from them. There is no wine made in the country, the grape being rare, and generally used for eating. The alcohols are distilled from raw-sugar or dates, with the addition of a little mimosa-bark, and other ingredients. When pure, they are fiery as æther or sal volatile, and the novice hesitates which to loath the most, the taste or the smell of the potion. Sometimes it is perfumed with musk, citron-peel, saffron or rose-leaves, and the spirit is blunted by a plentiful admixture of molasses or sugar-candy. The nobles prefer European preparations, especially the strong and sweet, as curaçoa and noyau. Some of the Parsís who traded in these articles when we first took the province made considerable sums of money.

The alcohols, however, like the wines and opium, are confined to the higher orders, and those who can afford such luxuries. The common people content themselves with the many preparations of the deleterious Bhang, in England called "Indian hemp":¹¹⁹ and so habituated have they become to it, that, like drinkers of laudanum, they can scarcely exist without it. Near all the large towns there are particular places, called "Dáirá," where regular toppers assemble to debauch in public. Our Government has wisely taxed the hemp, which under the native Princes almost every peasant grew for himself: the "Dáirás" should also be licensed or limited in number by some means or other, as they are most prejudicial to the well-being of the people. The building contains a single large, open room, generally in a garden planted with basil and other odoriferous plants; there must be a lofty wall to exclude the gaze of passers-by; but spreading trees and a bubbling stream, the scene in which the Persian loves to wrestle with Bacchus, are rare luxuries in this land. About sunset, when the work of the day is happily over, the "Bhangís," as the *habitués* are termed, the name being considered light and slighting even by those who indulge in the forbidden pleasure, begin to congregate, each bringing with him his hemp, his pipkin, his Asa,¹²⁰ or staff, and other necessities. Ensues a happy half-hour of anticipation. All employ themselves in washing out the leaves with "three waters;" in pressing the mass between the palms, blessing it lustily the while, in rubbing it down with the pestle, in filling the brass-pot with water or milk, and in sweetening the nauseous draught, with irrepressible glee at the nearing prospect of the favourite enjoyment. After drinking or smoking the drug, the revellers fasten on the water-pipes placed ready upon the floor, and between the long puffs they either eat

¹¹⁹ Bhang (in Persian, Bang), is the name of the herb, *Cannabis sativa* or *Indica*, and also of the favourite preparation of it presently to be described.

¹²⁰ The dwarf club with which the drinkers triturate the small leaves, husks, and seeds of the plant, and mix with milk or water.

little squares of sweetmeat, to increase the intoxication, or they chew parched grain and crunch cucumbers to moderate its effects. After about half an hour the potion acts, and each man is affected by it in a different way. One squats, stupid and torpid, with his arms wound round his knees, and his long beard shaking, like a browsing goat's, with every nod of his falling head. His neighbour may prefer a display of musical skill, in which he perseveres solely for his own benefit. Another, delighting in privacy, throws a sheet over his head, and sits in a corner of the room, meditating intensely upon the subject of nothing. A third talks bald, disjointed nonsense; a fourth, becoming excited, begins to perform a *pas seul*: if of choleric complexion, he will, Irishman-like, do all he can to break some dear friend's head. And the multitude, the "old hands," sit quietly looking on, occasionally chatting, and now and then entertaining one another with lies, the most improbable, incoherent, and grotesque, that ever shifted from mortal lips to mortal ears. There is one peculiarity in the assembly. If a single individual happen to cough, to sneeze, or to laugh, all the rest, no matter how many, are sure to follow his example. And the effects of the continuous and causeless convulsions of the lungs and cachinnatory muscles upon a bystander, not in "Bhang," are striking.

The social meeting usually breaks up about 8 p.m., at which hour the members, with melancholy countenances, retire, like strayed revellers, to their suppers and their beds.

You have read, I suppose, Mr. Bull, some execrable translation of a certain spirit-stirring tale, "Monte Christo." Perhaps you remember that truly Gallican part of it, in which the hero administers to his friend "Hashish," the Arabic name for prepared Indian hemp, and the romantic description of what "Hashish" did to that friend.

You must know that these are the effects of Cannabis, not in the deserts of actuality, but in the fair fields of imagination, in the fairy world of authorism, where men are generous, women constant, the young wise, the old benevolent. I have often taken the drug, rather for curiosity to discover what its attractions might be, than for aught of pleasure ever experienced. The taste of the potion is exactly what a mixture of milk, sugar, pounded black pepper, and a few spices would produce. The first result is a contraction of the nerves of the throat which is anything but agreeable. Presently the brain becomes affected; you feel an extraordinary lightness of head; your sight settles upon one object, obstinately refusing to abandon it; your other senses become unusually acute, uncomfortably sensitive, and you feel a tingling which shoots like an electric shock down your limbs, till it voids itself through the extremities. You may stand in the burning sunshine without being conscious of heat, and every sharp pain is instantly dulled: I have heard of a Sindi stoker drinking Bhang before entering a newly drawn furnace to plug the tubes in the after-part of a boiler at work. Your cautiousness and your reflective organs are painfully stimulated; you fear every thing and every body, even the man who shared the cup with you, and the servant who prepared it; you suspect treachery everywhere, and in the simplest action you detect objects the most complexedly villainous. Hence Bhang has the name of a "cowardly drink," and we are

probably wrong to speak of fighting-men being 'Bhang'd up.'" Your thoughts become wild and incoherent, your fancy runs frantic; if you are a poet, you will acknowledge an admirable frame of mind for writing such "nonsense verses" as the following:

"The teeth of the mountains were set on edge by the eating of betel,
Which caused the sea to grin at the beard of the sky."¹²¹

If you happen to exceed a little, the confusion of your ideas and the disorder of your imagination become intense. I recollect on one occasion being persuaded that my leg was revolving upon its knee as an axis, and I could distinctly feel as well as hear it strike against, and pass through, the opposite shoulder during each revolution. Any one may make you suffer agony by simply remarking that a particular limb must be in great pain: you catch at every hint thrown out to you, nurse it and cherish it with a fixed and morbid eagerness that savours strongly of insanity. This state is dangerous, especially to a novice; delirium-tremens and catalepsy being by no means uncommon terminations to it. The generally-used restoratives are a wine-glassful of pure lemon-juice, a dozen young cucumbers eaten raw, and followed by a few puffs of the Shishah (water-pipe). You may conceive the state of your unhappy stomach after the reception of these remedies. Even without them you generally suffer from severe indigestion, for the unnatural hunger of Bhang-intoxication excites you to eat a supper sufficient for two days under ordinary circumstances.

These are the effects popularly associated by the Orientals with drinking Bhang, and those which I myself experienced. Almost every "Banghi," however, feels something that differs from the sensations of his neighbour. Hence you will read half a dozen descriptions and not understand how the writers can be describing the same thing. Like æther and chloroform, the drug acts differently upon all organizations; a hint to such authors as Professor Johnston, the "Chemist of Common Life," who, without personal experience, borrow from one source and expect that it will apply to all. And, of course, the more habituated a man becomes to the use of the drug, the more pleasurable the excitement it produces. It has two consequences which appear to vary only in degree, "the horrors" during the fit, and indigestion after it.

The extensive use made of the preparation by the mystics of the East, and the multitudinous visions and presences with which their maudlin moments have been enlivened, have caused the drinking of Sabzeh, or "verdure," as the Persians call it, to be held by ignorant free-thinkers a kind of semi-religious exercise. A Súfi bard thus

¹²¹ Dr. Herklots ("Qanoon-e-Islam," p. 76, Madras Edition, 1863) quotes these lines as an "enigma," and gravely explains the signification which he supposes them to bear. They form part of a poem consisting of "nonsense verses," a favourite mode of trifling in the East, and composed, men say, under the influence of Bhang. Despite this small mistake, I know no work upon the subject of the South Indian Hindis that better deserves a reprint, with notes and corrections, than "The Customs of the Musulmans of India." The first edition dates from 1832, and it has lived over one generation before its value was discovered.

addresses his *poculum*, allegorizing its spirit as well as its matter, its inner contents and its outward form.

I.

O of heroic deed and thought sublime
And words of fire, mysterious fosterer,
Imagination's font¹²²
And Inspiration's nurse!

II.

To the dull Past thou lend'st a rosier tinge,
Brighter bright Hope emerges from thy stream,
And, dipped in thee, young Love
Glows with a holier flame.

III.

Gaunt Poverty, grim Misery, love to find
In thee their best, their sole mediciner.
Thy potent spell alone
Can smooth Pain's horrent brow.

IV.

And, Siren bowl, in thee the Sage beholding
Types not obscure of Matter's shifting scene.
Of deepest thought derives Sad salutary stores.

V.

Above, Eternity without beginning,
Below thee lies Eternity unending:¹²³
Thy narrow walls pourtray
The puny bounds of Time.

VI.

Within whose circlet lies the World, a speck
Upon th' immense of being, like the mote
That momentary beams
In Day's all-seeing Eye.

VII.

And on thy brim the drops so passing sweet,

¹²² In the original, "Sabgh" -an allusion to Christian baptism.

¹²³ The Moslems have cut eternity into two halves: *Azalíyyat*, "beginninglessness," and *Abadiyyat*, "endlessness."

Withal so bitter in their consequence;
In them, Friend, mind'st thou not
Life's clogging pleasancess?

VIII.

Man is the heedless fly that comes and goes,
Flutt'ring away his little span of Time,
Till, passing to his doom,
He flutters never more.

IX.

The annals of the world one tale repeat,
"At such a moment such a one expired."
Of this all mindful live —
Mirza,¹²⁴ prepared to die.

The almost universal abuse of Bhang throughout the province has doubtless much to do with the Sindi's natural vices, inertness and cowardice, lying and gasconading. *Lente*, without the *festina*, has now become his motto for the management of life. The herdsman passes his day under a bush, alternately smoking, drinking hemp, dozing, and playing upon the reed. The "navvy" on the canals, a large class in these regions, scratches up the mud with a diminutive hoe, deposits it in a dwarf-basket, toils up the bank at the rate of a hundred yards an hour, and after concluding each laborious trip sits down, groaning heavily, to recreate himself with a pipe, and to meditate upon approaching happiness in the form of Bhang. Your boatman on the river will, if you permit him, moor his craft regularly at noon, to enjoy his cups, and not to get through his work too quickly. So it is with the peasant at his plough, the huntsman, the fisher, the workman, the shopman; in a word, with everybody.

The Moghals, in ancient times, used to blunt the intellects of state-prisoners by giving them every day before breakfast a cupful of what is called "Post." A dried poppy-head or two was infused in warm water, allowed to stand the whole night, and in the morning squeezed till none of the juice remained in it. The draught was cooled with ice or snow in the hot weather—admire the exquisite delicacy of Indian politeness!—and it was sweetened, and perfumed, before being administered to the patient. After a few months his frame became emaciated, his brain torpid and inert; and these symptoms did not cease developing themselves till death was the result of the slow-poison too long continued. On the other hand, if wanted for the throne, the "Posti" was deprived of the potion for some weeks; and his head was supposed not to have suffered material

¹²⁴ The name of the bard, who addresses himself, more Persico, at the end of his ode. His poetry might be improved as regards the working out his metaphor; I leave it intact as a specimen.

and organic injury. Surely this admirable engine of state-machinery might find its uses in Europe!

The Sindi, by drinking his Bhang after dinner, instead of before breakfast, allows himself some chance against the destroyer; but his health, bodily and mental, cannot but suffer from its effects. Unlike Bhang, opium is considered a "brave drink." It is usually taken in the form of "Kusumbá." A *quant. suff.* is levigated with a wooden pestle in a metal-pot, and strained through cloth into the palm of the hand. "Kusumbá" is extensively used to produce what we unjustly call "Dutch courage," and the valour of the Beloch swordsmen at Miyání, where they made two of our Sepoy-regiments run, was, it is said, highly indebted to it.

The Sindis, like the unhappy Italians of the last generation, have long felt the weight of foreign fetters inherited from their forefathers; unlike the ancient Anglo-Scandinavians and Anglo-Saxons, they have none of the sturdiness and glorious phlegm with which the Northerner bore, without succumbing to, the execrable onus of a master's arm. A race of slaves is not necessarily cowardly: witness the Nubian and other African bondsmen, than whom the world does not contain a more determined, dogged, and desperate set of ruffians. But the Sindi is constitutionally a poltroon: his timidity is the double one of mind and body. This remark, I repeat, by no means applies to the wilder tribes; and superior climate and the habit of danger have made many of the clans, the Jakhrás, for instance, almost as brave as the Beloch. An exception to the general rules of Oriental resignation and Moslem fortitude, the Lowlander cannot talk or think of death without betraying an abject, grovelling fear, and even his Bhang will not give him courage to face the bayonet with common manliness.

Their preponderating development of cautiousness may account for the falsehood and the vaunting propensities of the people. They deceive because they fear to trust; they lie because truth is not to be told with impunity or without an object; they boast because they have a hope of effecting by "sayings" what there are no "doings" to do. The habit soon becomes confirmed, especially amongst these. Easterns, who exaggerate and overdraw everything in pure hate of nature and things natural. Shahbásh Pahlawán, ("Go it, my heroes!") cries the Tindal, or skipper, of your Dhundi,¹²⁵ at every stroke of the sweep handled by his trembling "braves." If a score of half-naked boors congregate in a dirty village, they will call it a "Shehr," a city. The chief of a petty tribe must prefix the title of Malik, "king, to his ignoble and cacophonous name. Your escort, half a dozen ragged matchlock men, dubs itself a "Lashkar," an army; and when you ride over to some great man's palace, accompanied by a single domestic, your horse-keeper is gravely termed your "Sawári," or retinue. The noble boasts that his clan musters 50,000

¹²⁵ See chap. XXIX.

men, all perfect Rustams,¹²⁶ or Camelfords, for fighting: every individual of that 50,000 will, if you believe him, convince you that:

"His joy is the foray, the fray his delight."

Take up a horsewhip, and "Rustam" will infallibly decamp as fast as the portable armoury of weapons about his person allows him to do. And so on with every rank and condition of Sindi Southron.

Yet so curiously contradictory is human nature in this part of the world, that Sindis as well as Beloch have been found to act "Badlí" for a few rupees. The word means a "substitute," that is, a man who hires himself to confess and be hanged for a murder which he never committed. Before this custom was suspected by the conquerors — and Sir Charles Napier would never thoroughly believe in it — many an innocent man doomed himself to death. I once asked a "Badlí" what had induced him to become one, and he replied as follows:

"Sain! I have been a pauper all my life. My belly is empty. My wife and children are half-starved. This is Fate, but it is beyond my patience. I get two hundred and fifty rupees. With fifty I will buy rich food and fill myself before going out of the world. The rest I will leave to my family. What better can I do, Sáin?"

¹²⁶ The Persian hero: a kind of Hercules, Sampson, and Solomon combined: although a Pagan, he will, say the Shi'ahs, escape eternal punishment by reason of his valour.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SINDI WOMAN – ESPECIALLY HER PERSON AND DRESS.

In treating of the fair sex, we ought, I suppose, Mr. Bull, to commence by a sketch of superficialities, of personalities.

The first thing remarked by the Eastern traveller home-returned to the streets of his native or neighbouring town, is that scarcely any two individuals resemble each other. In the most civilized European countries there has been such a mixture of blood and breed, that an almost infinite variety of features and complexions, shapes and forms, has long been grafted upon the original stock which each region grew. He thus explains to himself how it was that during his earlier months of wandering he thought all the men he met brothers, all the women sisters; and he remembers that, till his eye became familiar with its task, he could trace no more distinction between individuals than a Cockney would discover in two white sheep of a size.

Caste,¹²⁷ in this part of the Eastern world, groups the population of a country into so many distinct bodies, each bearing a peculiar likeness to the other, and all a general relation to the characteristic face and form of the tribe. Rank makes some difference of colour: the higher it is the fairer the skin;¹²⁸ and wealth gives a delicacy of feature and figure not to be found amongst the ill-fed, ill-clad, and hard-worked poor. But not the less they fail to destroy the family resemblance which naturally exists between individuals of the same country, age, and creed.

I must request you to be present at the unpacking of a Sindi gentlewoman of high degree; during which operation I shall lecture upon the points most likely to interest you, sir.

Observe, she stands before you in her Burka', ungraceful prototype of the most graceful mantilla, which has frequently, and not inaptly, been compared with a shroud. Its breadth at the shoulders, narrowing off towards the feet, makes it look uncommonly

¹²⁷ This corrupted Portuguese word (*casta*) may venially be applied to the half-Hindu Musulman of Sind and India; though, properly speaking, no such distinction prevails in the world of El-Islam.

¹²⁸ So much so that a Hadís, or traditional saying of Mohammed, declares that none of his descendants shall be dark-coloured men. Even amongst the negroes of Central Africa, we find the chief lighter-tinted than his subjects. The fact results, doubtless, from a selection of species; the fair skin being generally sought after. This is almost the only point on which I dare to differ with the learned Dr. Darwin's theory of development. According to that most candid and honest of authors, one of the glories of our age, the blackest of a black race, and the flattest-nosed amongst flat-noses, should be the model of beauty. My experience is distinctly the reverse: wherever in the four quarters of the world, I saw a pretty woman, she was generally admired. This is a question of fact versus theory, and I will not obscure it by supposing any ideal type of beauty universally recognized by the human brain.

like a coffin covered with canvas: the romantically inclined detect a "solemn and nunlike appearance in the costume," and the superstitious opine that the figure thus arrayed "looks like a ghost." The best material is thick home-made cotton-cloth, which ought to be white, but, like a Suliote's frock, it is too often "*d'une blancheur problématique*:" a strip of coarse net, worked lattice-wise, with the small *ails de bœuf* opposite the eyes, covers and conceals the face. This article is a test of "respectability," and is worn in token of much modesty and virtue: satirical Sindis, however, are in the habit of declaring that it is a bit of rank prudery, and that the wearer of the Burka', so far from being better, is generally a little worse, than her neighbours. Our dame is very strict, you may see, in "keeping up appearances:" in addition to the mantilla, she wears out of doors a long wide cotton "Páro," or petticoat, for fear that chance should expose the tips of her orange-coloured toe-nails to a strange man's ardent gaze.

She is now in her indoor-costume. Over her head, extending down to the waist behind, is a veil of Thatha-silk, with a rich edging, the whole of red colour, to denote that the wearer is a "Subhágan," or happy wife; widows and old women generally dress in white. The next garment is a long wide shift, opening in front, somewhat after the fashion of a Frenchman's *blouse*; the hanging sleeves are enormous, and a richly-worked band or gorget confines it round the throat. At this, the cold season, it is made of expensive brocade; in summer, Multán—muslin would be the fashionable stuff. There are no stays to spoil the shape: their *locum tenens* is a harmless "Gaj," spencer, or bodice of red velvet, in shape and duty like the Roman "strophium;" it fits the form as tightly as possible, concealing the bosom, and fastening behind. The "terminations," of blue silk or satin, are huge bags, very wide at the back, to act as *polisson* or *crinoline*, and narrowing towards the extremities sufficiently to prevent their falling over the foot. These are gathered in at the ankles; and correct taste requires this part to be so tight, that our dame never takes less than twenty minutes to invest her lower limbs in the "Sutthan," or pantaloons. I must call upon you to admire the "Náro" (trowser-string): it is a cord of silk and gold, plaited together, with a circlet of pearls at both ends, surrounding a ruby or some such stone set in wire, and concealed by the coils of the pendant extremities. A peculiar importance attaches to this article; and *susti dar band-i-izár*, or "laxity about the trowser-string," conveys a very insulting innuendo. Concludes the toilette with slippers, a leathern sole, destitute of hindquarters, whose tiny vamp hardly covers the toe-tips: its ornaments are large tufts of floss-silk, various-coloured foils, wings of green beetles embroidered, or seed-pearls sewed, upon a ground of bright cloth. To see the wearer tripping and stumbling at every second step, you would imagine that the Sindi man had, like the Celestial, knowingly put a limit to his wife's powers of locomotion. But no, sir, it is only "the fashion;" licensed ridiculousness. If you ask the gentlewoman what she thinks of her European sister's toilet, she will sneer, and tell you that it is a collection of "little rags."

A red silk veil (Chúni or Rawa), a frock of white muslin, through which peeps the crimson bodice, and blue pantaloons, own that the lady's costume, though utterly at

variance with *Le Follet*, and calculated to drive *Le Petit Courrier* into a state of demency, is by no means wanting in a certain wild and picturesque attractiveness. It is decent, too: amongst Orientals generally, the result of seclusion is a costume utterly unfitted for male society.

And now for the dame's *personale*. Her long, fine jetty locks, perfumed with jessamine and other strong oils, are plastered over a well-arched forehead, in two broad flat bands, by means of a mixture of gum and water. The "back hair" is collected into one large tail, which frequently hangs down below the waist and, chief of many charms, never belonged to any other person: it is plaited with lines of red silk, resembling the trowser-string, and when the head, as frequently happens, is well shaped, no coiffure can be prettier. Her eyes are large and full of fire, black and white as an onyx-stone, of almond shape, with long drooping lashes, undeniably beautiful. do not know exactly whether to approve of that setting of Kajjal, the *fuligo* of the Roman fair, which encircles the gems; it heightens the colour and defines the form, but also it exaggerates the eyes into becoming *the* feature of the face, which is not advisable. This cosmetic is lampblack, collected by holding a knife over the flame of a lamp, and applied, with a glass, leaden, or wooden needle, called a "Míl," to the edges of the eyelids. Men prefer Kohl, or raw antimony finely triturated; this gives a bluish colour. Upon the brow and cheek-bones a little powdered tale is applied with a pledget of cotton, to imitate perspiration, a horrible idea, borrowed from Persian poetry, and to communicate, as the natives say, "salt" to the skin. The hair is washed with argillaceous "Met," or fuller's earth, called in Hebrew and Arabic "Tafl," and by the Persian " Gil-i-Sarshui," or head-washing clay; it is quarried at Haydarábád and other places, and used as soap. The poor mix it with rancid oil of mustard; the rich with rose-leaves and various perfumes. The cheeks are slightly tinged with lac-rouge, a vegetable compound which I strongly recommend, by means of you, sir, to the artificial complexion-makers of the West.

The nose is straight, and the thin nostrils are delicately turned. You, perhaps, do not, I do, admire their burden, a gold flower, formed like a buttercup, and encrusted with pearls. There are several kinds of nasal ornaments: the usual wear is a large metal ring fixed in either wing, or a smaller circle depending from the central cartilage. When removed, a clove, or a stud of silver of similar shape, is inserted into the hole to prevent its closing. The bit of black ribbon which connects it with the front hair is strictly according to the canons of contrast. The somewhat sensual mouth is well formed; the teeth are like two rows of jessamine-buds, the dentist and the dentifrice being things unknown; and moles, imitated with a needle dipped in antimony, give a *tricolor* effect to the oral region. The lips and gums are stained with a bark called Muság, which communicates to them an unnatural yellowish tinge; it is not, however, so offensive to the eye as the Missi¹²⁹ of India. As a large ear is much admired, that member is flattened

¹²⁹ A powder of vitriol, steel filings, and other ingredients. It is rubbed into the roots of the teeth as an antiseptic, and a preservative against the effects of the quicklime chewed with betel-nut; the colour ranges between rust and verdigris; the appearance is unnatural and offensive.

out so as to present as extensive an exterior as possible; and as pale palms and soles are considered hideous, those parts, the nails included, are stained blood-red with henna. This Eastern privet has two effects upon the skin; it is an astringent as well as a dye unlike the noxious metallic compounds of Europe, it improves the hair; the smell is fragrant as hay, nor is the trouble of applying it great. Orientals suppose that it spoils by keeping, but they are in error; when leaving India, I took several bottles of it, carefully corked and waxed, round the Cape, and a five months' voyage did not in any way injure their contents. To prepare it, the dried leaves must be pounded in warm water or rice-gruel, ten or twelve hours before use; it should then be placed for a while in the sun, or exposed to gentle heat. The paste, which stains the nails and every part of the skin except the scalp, is applied with a brush, from the roots to the points of the hair, after being well cleaned with soap or pearl-ash: five or six hours suffice to produce a deep brick-dust hue, which a paste of indigo-leaves, called at Damascus "black henna," speedily converts into a bottle-green, and, lastly, into a jetty, lustrous, crow's-wing colour.

Finally, hair on the arms being held an unequivocal mark of low breeding, it is carefully removed by means of a certain depilatory called "Núreh." This stuff is composed of orpiment or yellow arsenic (1 oz.), pounded and mixed with quicklime (4 oz.), till the compound assumes a uniform yellowish tinge. It is applied to the skin in a paste made with warm water, and must be washed off after a minute or two, as it burns as well as stains. The invention is ascribed by Western authors to the fastidious Sulayman (Solomon), who could not endure to see the hirsute state of H. M. Bilkís of Sheba's bare legs. A depilatory is still wanting to civilization: even Bond Street perfumers have none which they can recommend to their customers; but I will not puff this rude receipt. Our beauty, you see, wears no stockings; but callosities, and other complaints which call for the chiropodist and *Papier Favart*, are not likely to offend our eyes.

But, though we have pronounced the costume on the whole picturesque, there is, I must confess, something grotesque in the decoration of the person: both savage and semi-barbarous peoples can never rest content with the noblest handiwork of Creation. They *must* gild refined gold; tattoo or tan, paint or patch, a beautiful skin; dye or chip pearly teeth, and frizzle or powder "hyacinthine locks." Deadly sins against good taste are all these adulteries of Art, which should copy, and not attempt to improve upon, Nature. But polished Europe, so far from being free from them, is the very worst of offenders: witness the crinoline, the chignon, the tall heel, and the Grecian-bend, not to speak of those abominable pendula called earrings.

In point of ornaments, the Sindi charmer's taste is execrable. We now own that a Sevigné adds nought to the charms of a fine forehead, nor takes aught from the uncomeliness of an ugly brow; and that a simple black velvet band is at least as becoming as circles of massive metal or gaudy stones. Unhappily, however, for polite Europe, although the daughter condemns as out of date what the mother delighted to

wear, her daughter will certainly revert to it because her mother did not, and her grandmother did, wear it. In the East there is none of this feeling. The comparative scantiness of the toilet calls for a number of ornaments which, like other things Oriental, are neither changed nor renewed: handed down as heirlooms in the family, they form a considerable portion of its wealth, and they are constantly accumulating; the interest upon the outlay of capital being the intense gratification which the proprietors experience in displaying them.

The popular frontal jewel is a ponderous concern of gold, set with crystals or stones of any or of no value. It is generally divided into three parts, a centre-piece occupying the middle of the forehead, and flanked by smaller side-pieces that rest upon the temples. There is a lighter form of the same triptychal article, but both are too expensive to come within the means of the poor. The whole ear, lobe, helix, and little ear, is so covered with weighty ornaments in the shape of gold-rings, studs, jewelled or enamelled stars, and bell-like pendants, that it and its appendages require to be supported with tiny chains. Varieties of the necklace are as disagreeably abundant. One kind, worn tight round the neck, is formed by simple or double strings of small or large beads of gold, silver, or glass threaded on silk: another is a similar ornament of embossed metal: a third is a solid torpue, looking more like an instrument of punishment than a personal decoration; and very little better than the English dog-chain of latest fashion. The finger-rings are generally plain, broad or narrow circles of metal: the rich ornament them with precious stones, and the very fashionable wear upon the thumb a little looking-glass, in which they are perpetually viewing their charms. They never use the Indian "bangles," thin rings of stained glass or sealing-wax, of which well-dressed women carry a dozen to each wrist. On the arms, besides a number of wristlets, bracelets, and armllets of gold, silver, or ivory, in the shape of rings, studs, flowers, and chains, solid, hollow, or filled up with melted rosin, the dame suspends a talisman or two, called a Ta'awíz:¹³⁰ it is carefully preserved, and justly considered the most valuable part of her trinkets. This Grigri, as Guinea calls it, is usually a slip of paper with a quotation from the Moslem's Holy Writ; some curious spell to avert the Evil Eye, or a song to some dead Saint, enclosed in a small silver case and fastened on by black silk threads, very old, and use-browned. A friend of mine who had earned local celebrity for writing them, showed me an ancient gentlewoman who for two years had borne the mystic words

"C — — d Me,"

of course in our vernacular, curiously and confusedly dispersed, letter by letter, throughout the squares, circles, and lozenges, in which the precious document abounded. And although my friend had on one occasion explained to the old widow, in

¹³⁰ These are the "characts" of ancient days, commonly used in different parts of Europe; and by no means unknown to the modern, as holy medals, scapulars, and *hoc genus omne*, prove.

excellent Sindi, the purport of her "preservative," she, insisting wrong-headedly, as seniors at times will, upon the fact that she had worn the article in question during a very prosperous period of her life, decidedly refused to discard it.

The anklets, as you see, resemble the armllets in all points, except that they contain a greater mass of metal. Perhaps the prettiest is a silver ring supporting a fringe of small circular bells which tinkle at every motion of the owner's feet. The rings on the toes have not an unpleasant effect, and the common circlets of enamelled silver suit the colour of the henna remarkably well.

Now the Sindi lady stands before you in her veil, frock ("chemisette" would sound prettier, but be decidedly incorrect), bodice, pantaloons, and slippers; painted, patched, and dyed; be-ringed, be-necklaced and be-charmed literally from head to toe, both parts included. Her attitude is not ungraceful: she carries herself well, she never stoops and, observe, she has high but not round shoulders. She holds a silken string attached to a tassel that contains a bit of musk, and to the nice conduct of this scent-bottle she devotes much of her attention. In reply to our salutations she raises to her forehead the right hand, never the left, and briefly ejaculates "Salám." If we ask her to sit down she will take a chair, but, being in the habit of squatting, she will certainly place at least one foot upon the seat, to assume, as nearly as possible, the position most familiar to her. If she drops her pocket-handker-chief, an article of toilet used to be looked at, not to use, she is more likely to pick it up with her toes than with her fingers: Easterns are all more or less quadrumanous. In her continual adjustment of her veil, I see a little *ennui* as well as coquetting; she is tired of conversation; she is not prepared for aught savouring of facetiousness, being "upon her dignity," and she longs for a water-pipe. Now, while she is puffing it with immense satisfaction, inhaling every atom into her lungs, and sedulously displaying, at the same time that she pretends to conceal, her arm and waist, I will oblige you with a hasty sketch of her life, as true to nature as I can draw it.

Our visitor spent her early years in the Harem," where she was frequently chastised by her mama, and where she scolded and romped with, pinched and scratched, the slave girls, and conducted herself generally in a way which would have horrified the correct Mistress Chapone. Long before her teens she was a miniature of her parent in dress and ornament, and she was painfully wide-awake, knowing much that she ought not to have known. At the early age of six she was mistress of the art of abuse and the rudiments of play, here synonymous with cheating the games generally preferred are dice, cards, and several kinds of backgammon played with kauris, or Indian shells (*Cypræa moneta*). Then began her "serious" education: she was taught to cut out and sew dresses; to knit and embroider; to repeat a few prayers and, as no expense was spared to make her perfect, a matronly pedagogue attended to teach her the reading of her mother tongue, and the letters rather than the words of the Koran. Of course, she was not allowed to write, on account of the dangerous practices to which that attainment leads. But she wasted almost as much time as our maidens do upon music; the only

difference being that, instead of eliciting dismal sounds from the pianoforte, she drummed upon the timbrel, and she sedulously exercised her voice. From that somnific thing the drawing-master, and from the torments of the professor of dancing she was spared; the former being yet to be, the latter a purely professional, and by no means a respectable, "party" in this part of the world. *En revanche*, she learned in the Gynæceum a style of saltation which is best described by the French lady's exclamation, at a Bombay "Nách," "*Mais, mon Dieu! c'est un cancan!*"

Her tenth year found her prepared, in body as in mind, to become a matron, and eagerly enough she looked forward to the change, because she shrewdly suspected that, in the holy state, her liberty would not be so sadly curtailed. She was early debarred the enjoyment of accompanying her mother's slave-girls to the well, the place of *réunions* and of *conversazioni*; the "scandal-point" and the "pump-room of each little coterie." To her, life became dull and drear as that of an English country house. One of her father's neighbours determined to obtain her for his lad; not because either father or son had seen, admired, or loved the child, but the connection appeared good, and the youngster was old enough for a wife. So a she—Mercury was despatched to the mother of the future bride, with many compliments, and with most stringent orders to remark the furniture of the house, the conduct of its inmates, and particularly the age, countenance, complexion, demeanour, gait, manners, and accomplishments of the daughter. The latter, on the other hand, was warned by her parent to conduct herself with the nicest decorum; to squat with her veil almost covering her head; never to reply till addressed two or three times, and by no means to spit as her vivacity appeared likely to get the better of prudence, she was soundly slapped, to induce a grave and reflective turn of mind.

The visit passed off well, without, however, any thing being concluded. The "Wakíleh"¹³¹ hinted at the object of the call, but her hosts, being people of fashion, merely replied, with the falsehood of *convenance*, that they "had no present intention of marrying their daughter." This, as the artistic ambassadress, who had grown old in the art of making every one's business her own, knew perfectly well, meant that they intended doing so at the first possible opportunity. Thereupon she returned to her employer and reported success.

As a second visit of the kind must not take place before the month has elapsed, the parents of the *damoiseau* and the *demoiselle* spent their time in collecting all manner of information about the future couple from friends and neighbours, and the latter systematically withheld objectionables, because they expected a feast when the affair came off. The next *ambassade* was decisive, and a lucky day was fixed upon, at a decent distance, for the preliminary rite of betrothal.

¹³¹ The "go-between," or "Mrs. Gad-about," as this class is called by an English lady, who wrote an amusing and, curious to say, an accurate book about India (Mrs. Mir Hassan Ali's *Observations on the Mussulmans of India*, 1832).

On the appointed evening the groom's relations of both sexes assembled, and repaired with music and fireworks to the bride's house, carrying a present of bijouterie and dresses. They found everything prepared for their reception; the men's rooms were strewn with pipes; the "Zenánah," or Gynæceum, was spread with the best carpets, and hung with huge nosegays of strong-scented flowers. The intended was publicly dressed in new clothes of the most expensive description, and ornamented with the garlands, and the jewels sent by the *prétendu*; henna was then placed upon her hands, and she was seated in a conspicuous part of the room, the centre of all attraction. There she continued for a while, modestly confused, with eyes fixed on the ground. Her mother, then summoning the barber's wife, or rather the female-barber, an important personage on these occasions, desired her to carry a pot of milk and a tray of sweetmeats into the gentlemen's apartments. This the old wife did, and, with much jesting and raillery, made the party eat, drink, and be merry. She stayed with them till they all recited, with raised hands, the Fátihah, or opening chapter of the Koran. The father of the bride, who was concealing his intense delight at getting rid of the "household calamity," namely, a daughter, under a mingled expression of grief and shame, appointed a day for the nuptial ceremony. Next took place a great *fête*, beginning with a feast, and ending with music and dancing; the festivities continued for about a week, and with them concluded the preliminary rite, betrothal.

After this stage of the proceeding it is considered somewhat dishonourable to break off a match. At the same time, there is no such vulgarity in El-Islam as a suit for breach of promise, a demand for coin wherewith to salve wounded feelings and broken heart. Nor is there any religious impediment to a dissolution of the engagement. After the ceremony, as before it, the bridegroom is never, strictly speaking, allowed to see his intended; but as, all the world over, that formidable person, the mother-in-law, is disposed at this stage of the proceedings to regard her new son with favour, such events are by no means so rare as they should be.

The maiden was married about a year after her betrothal, a delay politely long, as hurry towards matrimony is considered a suspicious sign. No sum of money that the family could afford was spared: the feasting and merry-makings began a month or six weeks before the ceremony. All that Sindian art could do was put into requisition to make the bride look as pretty as possible. Cosmetics, oils, unguents, dyes, perfumes, depilatories, the paint-brush, and the tweezers, were pressed into the service; each matron and every attendant abigail of the hundred visitors having some infallible recipe for

"Enhancing charms-concealing ugliness,"

and, with truly feminine pertinacity, insisting upon trying it. The wonder was that, what with their vellications and shampooings; eternal bathings, and stuffings with

Chúro;¹³² frictions with sandal-wood and pitiless scourings with Pithi,¹³³ they left the poor girl any beauty at all. Most of the torment was exhausted upon the bride: the Hajjám, or barber, contented himself with "cleaning" the male patient; and the friends of the family exercised their active minds in dressing him up, so as to give him as much as possible the appearance of a "gentlemanly-looking young man."

To describe at full length all the meaningless puerilities and the succession of feasts that constituted the "marriage in high life" would be a task as tedious as profitless. Briefly to sketch them, both families kept open house and invited the whole body of their relations morning and evening; drinking, smoking, and chatting all the day, and filling up the night with dances, in which professional performers displayed their charms; whilst singers and bands of unmusical instruments screamed, jingled, and rattled outside the doors for the edification of the excluded vulgar. A number of presents passed between the bride and the bride-groom; a series of visits kept their relations, to use a native phrase, in the state of "washerman's hound 'twixt house and pond."¹³⁴ Dresses and jewels were canvassed, prepared, tried on, and scrutinized with religious care; the bridal paraphernalia,¹³⁵ consisting of clothes, toilette-cases, trinkets, garlands, and a number of articles of furniture, especially mirrors, were sent by the future husband to the wife, and, finally, expiatory ceremonies were performed so as to defeat all the malevolent intentions of the Fiend and the Evil Eye.

Next came the Church's part of the solemnity. On the appointed evening, the Kázi, or the Mullá, was invited to the house of the bridegroom's father, where he found a gathering of both families, the sex, however, being strictly excluded. Then the man of learning, in set phrase, thrice asked the maiden's parent, who had constituted himself her trustee, whether he agreed to marry his daughter to such and such a person. He replied solemnly in the affirmative. Thereupon the marriage-settlements were made; and, as the father of the bride wished to give as little and to receive as much as possible—moreover, as, passing strange to relate, the father of the bridegroom seemed possessed by a spirit of direct opposition—the scene that ensued was generally animated, but by no means always decorous. It ended in the old way when a thing must be done, by both giving up a little to each other. Then the Kázi, rising from his seat, began to recite Arabic prayers, benedictions, the formula nuptial-contract, and certain chapters of the Koran, setting forth the beauties of matrimony, and the lovely lives of sundry hen-pecked Patriarchs and Prophets. Concluded this affecting part of the rite

¹³² An unleavened cake of wheaten flour made into dough with clarified butter, and mixed with brown sugar-a bilious mess, popularly supposed to increase the delicacy of the skin.

¹³³ A succedaneum for soap, composed of sweet oil and the flour of "Másh," a kind of phaseolus.

¹³⁴ "Dhobi ká kuttá, na ghar ká, na ghát ká;" literally, "belonging neither to house nor ghát," or landing-place, upon whose steps the men of suds are wont to ply their vocation.

¹³⁵ This is the "Jahez," or dowry: it is the wife's property; it descends to her children and, in case of her dying without issue, it belongs to her nearest of kin. The settlement made by the bridegroom is called the "Mahr:" it is a religious and Koranic obligation, without which no marriage is lawful: as, however, the bride is allowed to remit an indefinite portion of it, it is more generally owed than paid.

with a general congratulation and a heavy pull upon the father of the bridegroom's purse by the man of Allah, and by all those who could find the least pretext to assist him in the operation. The Koran does not permit Kázis to take fees for marrying, reading prayers or preaching to, and burying the Faithful. Revelation having been unaccommodating in this little matter, the reverends are obliged to content themselves with daily pay, occasional benevolences, and grants of land. Presents of camels, horses, gold-hilted swords, dresses of honour, ornaments, and jewellery, were showered about in such profusion that even to the present day poor Paterfamilias feels the effects of a liberality, which nothing could have provoked but the absolute certainty that upon it depended his own good name, and the respect of all his fellows.

At last the nocturnal procession took place. The bridegroom was bathed, dressed, garland'd, and adorned with all the attention due to so important an occasion. Mounted on a white horse magnificently caparisoned, and surrounded by a crowd of relations, friends, and spectators, with flags and fireworks, musicians, gymnasts, and dancing girls, he paraded the streets, visited the mosque if he had time, and at last reached the bride's house. He then dismounted, and was led or carried into the courtyard, where the women of the family received him he entered the male assembly, and was almost immediately removed to the "Zenánah," where the bride awaited his coming. A number of uninteresting ceremonies followed, and, finally, the "happy two" were left together with the pleasant certainty that at dawn they must rise to bathe, dress, say their prayers, and receive the congratulations of their friends.

Our Sindi gentlewoman (she signifies that she wants another pipe) then entered upon life in real earnest. She was permitted by her Faith to call upon her parents once a week before the birth of the first child; but all the terrors of religion, stripes included, are directed against the wife who dares to visit her home without her husband's order – what, then, can the poor woman do but duly and openly disobey them? She did so once a day, sometimes twice, and her husband, as might be expected, felt the results. Availing herself of the privilege of ripe womanhood, she added smoking and the chewing of betel-nut to her other accomplishments. She spent hours in decorating herself, not to fascinate, as she ought to have done, the eye of her spouse, but with the strictly feminine object of exciting, by a display of dresses, the envy, spite, and rage of her family, friends, and "society" in general. She punctually attended all feastings and junketings, nor did she neglect the fairs at the tombs of Saints, and other religious assemblies, where religion is usually the thing least thought of. She had promised, by proxy, not directly as our better-halves do, to "love, honour, and obey" her goodman: she did neither this, that, nor the other. Old Sa'adi, the Oriental moralist (about as moral a writer, by-the-by, as Pietro Aretino, or Pigault Lebrun), makes it the sign of respectability in a house, that woman's voice should never be heard beyond its walls. The fair Sindi knows nought of Sa'adi, and cares about as much for the old foggy's tests and opinions: she scolded her husband with womanly vigour, loudly and unrespectably, at all hours.

After the birth of the first child the *petites misères de la vie conjugale* began to gather. The wife had been indulging a little too freely in the pleasures of brandy. Her spouse discovered the circumstance, and chastised her corporally for the same. He should have begun that discipline earlier. Instead of bowing her head, she swore, with a howl, that his face was a "black Creation of Allah's." He, highly indignant at the truth of the observation, retorted by many a curse in query-form, to which she replied categorically. A furious quarrel was the result. Fortunately for our visitor, Sind belongs to a civilized people, who systematically hang every man that kills his "rib." The Koranic law concerning adultery is utterly inadequate for the moral wants of any community; hence the use of the sack or the scimitar in El-Islam. Where we rule, we should remember that, when taking away a man's only means to secure his honour, it is our duty to provide him with some other preservative; and this, generally speaking, we have not done. The frantic outburst of debauchery which followed our occupation of Afghanistan and Sind was a caution not to upset, at a moment's notice, the "Rasm," or country-customs, which are esteemed by Moslems second only to "Farz," or express Koranic injunction.

When the couple retired to rest that night, the husband, reflecting for the first time upon the many blessings of polygamy, half-determined to take to himself a second wife, and the wife, indignantly running over the list of her grievances, firmly resolved to provide herself with a *cicisbeo*. She would have demanded divorce from "that man" but for two reasons; in the first place, by such step, she would have forfeited all her claims to the "Mahr," or settlement; and secondly, she did not anticipate much happiness in returning home to be scolded by her mother, lectured by her father, snubbed by her brothers, and be sedulously watched and guarded by all. But she did not fail, knowing how much it would annoy her husband, to call upon "dear ma" as often as possible; to detail all her miseries; and to throw "dear ma's" words in his face at every opportunity. Finally, she threatened him with her *pa*; and she complained to her big brothers with such assiduity, that the spouse, quite *excédé*, presently provided her with a lawful rival, she him with an unlawful one.

In Moslem countries polygamy is the exception, not the rule. It is confined to the upper and the wealthy middle classes, who can afford themselves the luxury; and a first wife, who is always the wife, is seldom superseded unless issue be wanting, or incompatibility of temper render the measure advisable. The equitable law of the Koran concerning the marriage-settlement effectually prevents the abuse of divorce on an extensive scale: the rich few may, the many poor cannot, afford to pay every woman whom they wish to put out of doors. Wives are limited to four, the number fixed by the Koran and approved of by experience. One quarrels with you; two are sure to involve you in their squabbles, which end only to recommence, because they are equally matched; and, when you have three, a faction is always formed against her you love best, so as to make her hours bitter. But four find society and occupation for themselves;

of course they divide into two parties, but you, oh husband, are comparatively comfortable.

You must not run away with the opinion, Mr. John Bull, that all four occupy the same apartments. Were that the case, there would soon be murder in the house. Each has her own suite of rooms, her attendants, and her private establishment. In their intercourse there is much ceremony; no one calls upon her "sister," or rival-wife, without sending a previous message, and the relatives, friends, and acquaintances of the one are not expected to show any attention to the other. A certain amount of discipline is maintained by the wife, No. 1, who commands the brigade, and the law of the Koran condemns the Moslem that allows himself to show, although he may feel, undue partiality for any one of the four. Fortunately for Sind, the fair sex is not so skilful in toxicology, as are the dark dames of India, nor have they the stout hearts and sturdy arms which often render the burly beauties of Afghanistan truly formidable to their husbands.

After what I have told you about our visitor, you will readily believe that she is not so good a mother as the Hindu woman. She considers every child a disadvantage, as it robs her charms of their freshness; she quotes the Sindi equivalent of *le premier embellit, le second détruit, et le troisième gâte tout*; she becomes impatient under repetition as the belle of New York or Boston. She has to make the most of her time, expecting to be an old woman at thirty, and maternal duties are apt sadly to interfere with the pursuit of excitement, and the enjoyment of pleasure. But she also feels that her position in society (and what will not a woman do for position?) mainly depends, for existence and continuance, upon her offspring. If she has not a son, she will be cast aside as soon as wrinkles appear, like an antiquated piece of furniture doomed to the lumber-room till it falls to dust. Her rivals, against whom she has fought through life—all for hate, of course, not for love—with the spirit of a heroine, and the zeal of a Jesuit, will gloriously win the day: her husband will despise her till he forgets her; her family will neglect her as an unprofitable person; briefly, there is no knowing how dark her future fate may be. So she does not utterly neglect her children; in their infancy she sees that they are fed and bathed, and, as they grow older, she takes more care of them: they now become the weapons with which she hopes, by Allah's aid, to drive the "sister-wife" out of the well-fought field.

Soon our Sindi dame, after prolonging the evil day as much as possible, will turn her back upon pleasure; and apply herself either to unremitting intrigue for the benefit of her offspring, or become very devout and disagreeable, inveighing bitterly against the vanities of the world, for the usual reason, because she can no longer enjoy them; and censuring the "young people of the present day," because she belongs to a past generation. Her sons and daughters will grow up; in her turn she will become a mother-in-law and a grandmother. Then her husband will pass away; she removes her ornaments, refrains from perfumes and scented oils, dresses herself in unwashed white

garments and, exactly as if she had been a British matron, traditionizes about, and anticipates reunion in "another and a better world" with, her "poor dear Ján Mohammed." And so on: the lights wane; the stage darkens; the curtain falls.

CHAPTER XVII.

LECTURES AND PREACHMENTS.

"Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man," – is a time-honoured maxim to which we now discount credence at sight.

Certainly it is a serious thing to oppose one's opinion to that of Bacon, the Paragon of Utilitarianism, the Apostle of Common Sense. But, eminent doctors of the mind differ on this subject at least as widely as they do upon others; as they do upon all, in fact, whenever an opportunity for "differing in opinion" presents itself.

Regarding the fulness produced by reading, you, sir, can oppose to him of Verulam an adequate rival, the sage of Malmesbury, who opines that "if he had read as much as other men, he should have been as ignorant as they." I may back you with a pithy Arabic proverb, which assures the world that those who dabble deep in manuscript are like asses laden with many books.

One of the first things the Eastern traveller remarks, is how palpably inferior we are, and we ever have been, with all our boasted science and knowledge, in general astuteness, private intrigue, and public diplomacy, to the semi-barbarous peoples with whom we have to deal. History shows us that we have been outwitted by the Hindus; that we have been cosened by the Afghans; that the Persians, to use their own phrase, have "made us asses," and that even the by no means subtle Sindi has more than once proved himself the better man in contests where the wits alone were allowed to work. Had we, be sure, contended against the Orientals with their own weapons, our cunning of fence would never have won us a foot of ground in the Region of Spices. Fortunately, our strong Northern instinct carried us through all difficulties. When fairly entangled in the net of deceit and treachery, which the political Retiarius knows so well to cast, our ancestors, Alexander-like, out with their sturdy sabres, and, not having time, nor patience, nor skill to unravel the complications, settled the knottiest of questions in a moment, infinitely to their own convenience, and as much to the discomfort of their opponents. They undid by power of arm and will, by bull-dog heart, that

"Stolidum genus
Bellipotentis, magi' quam sapientipotentis,"¹³⁶

all the blunders of their Boeotian heads.

¹³⁶ As old Ennius said of the acidæ, little thinking how remarkably applicable it was to the Ennian tribe, his own compatriots.

Having noticed a phenomenon, it remains to us to ferret out the cause. Our inferiority of "politike" to the Oriental, is certainly not owing to want of knowledge of the people among whom we live, nor to ignorance of their manners, customs, and languages. The Macnaghtens, the Burneses, and generally those who devoted their time and energies, and who prided themselves most upon their conversancy with native dialects and with native character, are precisely the persons who have been the most egregiously outwitted, the most fatally deceived. This is a trite remark, but it cannot be too often repeated, too forcibly dwelt upon.

Does it not strike you that the uncommon acuteness of Oriental wits may be simply the result of their unlearnedness? Instead of dulling their brains with reading and writing; arithmetic and the classics; logic, philosophy and metaphysics; history, divinity, and mathematics, they apply themselves, Yankee-like, to concentrating their thoughts upon one point; upon the business of life, its advancement, its struggles, and the terminus which it proposes to reach. Must not this sharpen the intellect—sharpen it to an almost preternatural sharpness? Instead of collecting a mass of heterogeneous and uselessly valuable book-matter, in the shape of second-hand lessons and scraps of knowledge, "Orient pearls," when grains of wheat are wanted, they read the Life-volume from its hard realities, endured, pondered over, and thoroughly digested, till each lesson and its corollaries come to be part of their mental organization. Actual experience, you know, is, to most men, "like the stern-light of a ship, which illuminates only the track it has passed;" by taking thought it may be made to throw a long ray before and around, as well as behind. When mentally discussing a subject, they view it in all its lights, even in the most improbable and impossible; when debating upon it, they leave no phase nor issue neglected. Instead of pinning their faith upon a chapter of Thucydides, or a leader in the Times, they, having no Thucydides, and no Times to do their thinking, are forced to think for themselves, to form their own opinions about passing events. They learn no wisdom from the Sir Oracles of county or coterie. They trouble not their mental digestion with those modern sciences which may be fitly represented by a grain of common sense deep hid in the normal peck of chaff; for instance, Political Economy. And, instead of distracting themselves with the pros and cons of a dozen differing pamphlets, they work out each problem as it presents itself, by the power of inference with which knowledge of the world has provided them. Must not all this hard work acuate the mind? At any rate, the observable result of it is, that each man becomes as worldly-wise a Son of Mammon as his capacity permits him to be.

So, parenthetically to return to our starting-point; reading (by which I understand our modern civilized European way of reading) may make a full man, more often makes an empty man by the operation of a mental lientery, and as frequently it makes, for practical purposes, a foolish man.

Nature, however, has set a bar, and a peculiar one too, to the progress of worldly wisdom amongst Orientals; the obstacle being their inability to conceive what "honest"

means, to enter into even the lowest sense of the apophthegm, "honesty is the best policy." Nothing poses, puzzles, oppresses, and perplexes our Eastern fellow-creature, reasonable and reasoning being as he is, half so much as absolute fair dealing. For instance, you tell him a truth; he mechanically sets down your assertion a falsehood; presently he finds that you have not attempted to deceive him; he turns the matter over in his mind, hitting upon every solution to the difficulty but the right one. He then assigns another and a deeper motive to your conduct; again he discovers that he is in error. Finally, losing himself in doubt, he settles down into a distressing state of confusion. You may now manage him as you like, *bien entendu* that you do not always employ the same means. Truly said Lady Hester Stanhope, a shrewd woman, although a prophetess, that "amongst the English," she might have said amongst Europeans, "there is no man so attractive to the Orientals, no man who can negotiate with them so effectively, as a good, honest, open-hearted, and positive naval officer of the old school."

On the other hand, if you attempt any finesse upon the Asiatic, to *volpeggiare colla volpe*—to fox the fox—he makes himself at home with you at—He has gauged your character. His mind, masterly in Reynardism, knows what your dull dishonesty will be doing, probably before you know it yourself. He now has you on his own ground; he is sure of victory.

Thus you see how it is that many of our eminent politicals, men great at Sanskrit and Arabic, who spoke Persian like Shírázis, and who had the circle of Oriental science at their fingers' ends; clever at ceremony as Hindus; dignified in discourse as Turks, whose "Reports" were admirable in point of diction, and whose "Travels" threatened to become standard works, turned out to be diplomatic little children, in the end which tries all things. They had read too much; they had written too much; they were a trifle too clever, and much too confident. Their vanity tempted them to shift their nationality; from Briton to become Greek, in order to meet Greek; and lamentably they always failed. So much for active dealings with natives.

When passively opposed to them, that is to say, when they are dealing with me, I would act as follows. If they assert a fact quietly, I should content myself with believing it to be a falsehood; were they to asseverate, I should suspect it to be a falsehood with an object; and if they swore to its truth, I should feel and act upon the conviction that the falsehood is accompanied by malice prepense, dark and dangerous. But I should content myself with standing *en garde*; I would rarely attempt feinting at them; and finally, I would never try to penetrate into their secret motives, well knowing that there I should be overmatched. And after long dealing with new races, I should learn when to trust them, to detect the one pearl of truth in the foul heap of untruths.

All this may be unpalatable to many; particularly to those who have lived long enough in the West after a return from the East, to remember only what they wish to remember.

Some have gone so far as publicly to express their opinion that the word of a Hindu is generally as good as that of a European. What a pungent, pregnant little satire upon progress and education, civilization and Christianity! The unprejudiced author of it, who was, by-the-by, a Scotchman and a Bombay banker, certainly deserved to be avatar'd at Benares, or to be shrined in effigy over the gateway of Jagannath!

The distinction one may safely draw between Westerns and Easterns in matters of morale, is this: among the former there are exceptions, many in the North, in the South a few, to the general rule, that "all men are liars:" there are who would not deceive, even with the certainty of self-aggrandizement, and in security that the world would never know the fraud. Amongst Orientals, though it would be unjust and unwise to assert that such a type exists, you may, I can assure you, live for years, and associate familiarly with all ranks and all classes, and both sexes, too, without meeting anything but a brilliant exception or two.

Charity, good sir, charity."

It is a great virtue, Mr. John Bull, but a very cumbrous and expensive one for a traveller or a politician.

Before we start from Haydarábád, I must prepare you, by a short lecture upon the manners of the natives, for mixing with them a little more familiarly than we have hitherto done.

As every thing in the world has not yet been written about, printed, and published, in the East, we have nothing like "Hints on Etiquette, by a Lady of Fashion," or *Manuel de la Politesse*, to learn from. You must not, however, conclude that ceremony in the East is an unimportant study. Very much the contrary.

The first thing Oriental peoples, who regard the person, not his accidents, ask about you, whatever you may be, soldier, sailor, or civilian, is, "Does he speak our words?" If the answer be "No," then you are a *Haywan*, a brute beast, or a *Jangali*, a sylvan. If it be a qualified "Yes, he can, but he won't," then, by the rule of *Omne ignotum, etc.*, you are a real magnifico. To shuffle over this difficulty, in your case, as you will not have time to learn Sindi, I must represent you, when we enter the wildest parts of the Province, to be a Turk or Tartar, or some such outlandish animal, and declare that you are very learned in Ottoman literature, for which, by-the-by, may I be pardoned! Whenever any thing is said to you, you will be pleased gravely to stroke your beard with the right hand, for goodness' sake! to frown a little, wag your head slowly with a heavy consequential roll, and to ejaculate, syllable by syllable, *Alhamdu 'l-illáhi*, "Praise be to Allah," *apropos de rien*. When a man shows you any thing admirable, such as his horse or his son, you will perform the same pantomime, and change your words to *Máshálláh*, or "What Allah pleases," (*sabaudi*, "be done.") Mind, if you do not, and if any accident happen to the

thing praised, your commendation will be considered the cause of evil. Whatever action you undertake, such as rising from your seat or sitting down; calling for your pipe or dismissing its bearer; beginning or ending dinner; in fact, on all occasions, over which Janus or Ganesha presides, you must not forget to pronounce Bismillah, "In the name of Allah," with as much pomposity as you can infuse into your utterance. By this means you will be considered a grave and reverend personage; *au reste*, by the Burleigh nod, by looking dully wise, seldom smiling, and above all things by strictly following the Bishop of Bristol's "First Rule of Conversation," you will, for a stranger, do remarkably well.

The next question our Oriental puts concerning you is, "Does he know *Adab*, or politeness?" here equivalent to ceremonial, and *nishast o barkhást*, literally (the art of) sitting and rising. You would scarcely believe how much these few words involve.

It is, I believe, almost always in the power of a European diplomatist sent on a mission to an Eastern court, by mere manner to succeed or to fail in the object which his Government desires. Manners, literally speaking, still make the man here. Sir John Malcolm well understood this when as Elchí, or ambassador, to Teherán, he drilled his *corps diplomatique* to their saláms as carefully and regularly as a manager his *corps de ballet*. Orientals do not dislike our English brusquerie, our roughness, if it may be called so; but to please them, indeed not to offend them in deadly guise, it must be gentlemanly brusquerie, native and genuine, *sans malice et sans arrière pensée*; it must be "well-placed," not the result of ignorance, and not "antipathetic." Otherwise, it is a dead failure, and the consequences of such failures extend far in the diplomatic field. For instance, we once sent a brave, patriotic, and high-principled officer, but ignorant, violent, and strong-headed, to settle certain nice points with the most savage, revengeful old chieftain that ever sewed up subject in a raw cow's hide. What was the consequence? Before he had spent a week at the court he seated himself in full Darbár with the soles of his feet diametrically opposite Majesty's face, a position as appropriate to the occasion as if he had presented his back, at a levée, to his own sovereign: he engaged publicly in a furious polemical discussion, and he capped the whole by grossly insulting and abusing, in the presence of the prince and his nobles, a minister who, although decidedly the "most accomplished scoundrel in Central Asia," was nevertheless a prime favourite with his monarch. That envoy never returned to England.

Even in our humble capacity of travellers, sir, we must, if we wish to be comfortable, attend a little to what we ought to do, and what we ought not to do, in society. If we would not be thought "peculiar" (Orientals hate that almost as much as Englishmen), we must not "walk the quarter-deck," and set every one around us ejaculating —

"Wonderful are the works of Allah! Behold! That Frank is trudging about when he can, if he pleases, sit still!" So the Italians say, or said, "It is better to walk than to run, to sit than to walk, to lie than to sit, to sleep than to lie, to die than to sleep."

We must not gesticulate when conversing, otherwise we shall see a look of apprehension on every countenance, and hear each man asking his neighbour whether we be low fellows, or labouring under a temporary aberration of intellect, or drunk. The French lose all respect by this habit.

Standing up, we must not cross our arms over our chest; in Europe this is *à la Napoléon*, in the East it is the slave's posture. When walking, never swing the arms; it is advisable to place one hand, not both, upon the hip; or we may carry a five-foot-long ebony staff shod with ivory: this patriarchal affair provokes respect; a switch or a horsewhip would induce the query:

"Are they keepers of dogs?"

Sitting down, Turkish or tailor fashion, the most easy and enduring of Oriental attitudes, we must be careful to remain quiet for a decent space of time; if we move about uneasily every ten minutes, we shall not fail to hear the observation,

"Wallah! They have no dignity!"

And if musically inclined, we may hum a little in a low voice, and with a solemn manner. We must, however, avoid whistling; the main error of a great explorer, Burckhardt. Our native friends have no name in their dialect for the offensive practice, which the Arabs call "El-sifr," but the greater part of them, being superstitious, would probably consider it the peculiar modulation of the voice in which a white-faced man is in the habit of conversing with Sathanas.

Above all things, I say it emphatically, never let the word woman escape your lips. It is vulgarity, it is grossness, it is indecency.

Now briefly to describe the way of receiving visitors premising that I divide them into three orders, my superiors in position, my equals, and my inferiors, for each of which there is an own and special formula.

Here comes Fath Khan Talpur, a grandee and a very polite old gentleman, with a silver beard, a sweet voice, a soft look, and a graceful bow. He sent, half an hour ago, a confidential servant, to inform me that he would "do himself the pleasure of calling." Had the bearer of the message been a man of no importance in his master's household, I should have resented the slight with no little asperity; this is unpleasant, but it is absolutely necessary. All, however, was *en règle*, and, after ascertaining from my

Munshi the good Khan's fortune and rank, I prepared everything for his reception. To have been "not at home," you must remark, would have been an insult; nothing offends Orientals more profoundly than denying one's self. When the halting of horses warns me of the guest's arrival, I perform *Istikbal*, in other words, advance a few paces towards the door, to meet him as he dismounts. I then lead him into the sitting-room, allowing him time to shuffle off his slippers—to enter a room with them on would be like wearing one's hat in a London saloon—all the while repeating—

"Peace be to you, Mr. Khan!—you are welcome! are you in health?—is your brain all right?¹³⁷—quite in health? *perfectly* in health?—And your family?—All your people?—All well?—praise be to Allah! Really I am joyful! But are you *sure* you are in health?"

To which he replies by smiling lustily, by looking violently amiable, and by putting exactly the same questions, interspersing them with such ejaculations as,

"By your goodness!—thanks be to Allah!—May you be preserved—I pray for you!—May you ever be well!"

I seat my visitor upon a *Díwán*, or sofa, spread at what is called the *Sadr* of the room, namely, the side opposite the entrance, and place myself by his side. Then both of us, again seizing each other's two hands in our own, and looking lovingly, recommence the same queries, and reply with the same ejaculations. And be it observed, during the whole length of the visit, which, O horrible thing! seldom lasts less than an hour and a half, whenever conversation flags, I approach my face to his, or he—his to mine, and inquire anxiously,

"Are you *certain* that your brain is all right?" So also, whenever the guest's eye wanders over the assembly of our united domestics, who are squatting upon the ground in semicircles, each on the side of the room where the master sits, exchanging politenesses, and at times slipping a few words into our dialogue, the individual looked at joins his palms, cants his head over one shoulder, and puts the same question with every appearance of Sindi *bonhommie*.

Presently occurs a long hiatus in the discourse. I make a sign to a servant, who disappears bowing and noiselessly, then immediately returns preceded by my visitor's pipe-bearer, a part and parcel of the grandee's dignity. When only one pipe comes in, it causes a most tiresome Mandarin-like luxuriance of ceremoniousness; probably five minutes will elapse before the guest can be induced to do what must be done at last, take precedence of the host. We begin inhaling at the same time, when there are two, with polite bendings of the body, and we eschew the vulgarity of converting ourselves, as the Persians say, into Hammáms-men who pour forth volumes of smoke are

¹³⁷ Meaning simply, "Are you in good spirits!"

compared to the chimneys of hot baths. After a few puffs I wipe the mouth-piece with the right hand, the servant raises the Chillam, or top, in which the tobacco is, blows down the tube so as to expel any of the smoke that may linger about the water, and then carries it round to the members of the assembly that occupy the floor. The pipes appear every ten minutes.

During the process of inhaling, guest and host have been collecting materials for more conversation. The language is Persian, Sindi not being "fashionable," consequently, half the listeners do not understand a word we say. Moreover, Fath Khan, though a well-educated senior, is not quite at home in the foreign dialect, which cramps his imagination, and limits his ideas to the one circle in which they are wont on such occasions to rotate. And this is an effectual barrier to the "flow of soul."

Observe a few small formalities:

1

Whenever my guest looks at and admires anything, I say, "Pishkyash"¹³⁸ — "It is a gift to you!" This is a polite act; to offer an Oriental anything, even a flower, is deemed not only a particular compliment, but an earnest of friendship. However, he never accepts anything of value, simply because it is customary to send in return a present of much higher value.

Whenever the visitor sneezes, you remark, he says aloud, "Praise be to Allah, the Preserver of the Worlds!" To this I respond, also in gurgling Arabic, "May the Lord have mercy on thee!" an expression of benevolence which he acknowledges by a "May your kindness never be less!"

Another uncomfortable pause. This time I send for a little fruit, although I know that my guest's notions of propriety are too strict to admit of his eating it. However, he condescends to chew a few cardamoms, and perhaps he drinks a drop of sherbet. "There are no three ideas which we associate more strongly with the two great portions of the East, than tea with the Chinese, and coffee and smoking with the Turks and Persians." So Leigh Hunt. I would amend the associations thus: tea with the Chinese and Moroccans, coffee with the Arabs, Egyptians, and Turks, and sherbet with the Persians and the Sindis. Many Persians will not touch coffee on common occasions, because it is drunk at funerals, and thus they learn to dislike it.

I am careful, you observe, to help myself first: poison probably made this practice a rule of Eastern courtesy, from which deviation is impossible. You must never ask your friend to eat anything without setting him the example, nor show him into a strange place without preceding him. So also, when he puts the cup down, I do not forget to

¹³⁸ Not "Peshkash," the horrible Indian pronunciation.

exclaim, *Haníá*,¹³⁹ or "May it be good to you!" He bows and returns, "May Allah be your preserver!"

Presently, stifled yawns and vacant looks become the order of the day, conversation appearing in fits and, as Barry Cornwall hath it,

"The voice of Silence, sounding from her throne,"

with imperative accents. Then my friend thinks it time to conclude his visitation. The first sign of our deliverance is one final sally of—

"Are you convinced that your brain is all right?"

He shuffles off the sofa, seizes my hand in his, and begins a series of compliments which must be answered by a repetition of the same. All his suite in the mean time start up from their squatting position, and follow as I lead him to the door. The camels or horses are brought up to be mounted, my head-servant holding the guest's stirrup. And I, after a final *congé*, retire into solitude for the purpose of recruiting spirits after so uncommonly severe a draw upon them. But I have my reward; I have won the old Khan's heart. At this moment he is confidentially informing his confidant, who ere long will as confidentially inform mine, that I am an *Adami*, a descendant of Adam;" in a word, a "man," in contradistinction to every Frank yet spawned; they being *Jánwars*, *Haywánát*, "beasts," and sons of beasts.

Politeness, as explained by "benevolence in small things," is all but unknown in the comparatively civilized parts of the East; as signifying mere courtliness of manner, it is simply perfect. No Sicilian marquis of the *ancien régime* could bend a more graceful bow, or turn a more insinuating compliment, than a common Indian Munshi at Rs. 20 per mensem: there is something so exquisitely soft, polished, and refined in the fellow's voice, gestures, and words, that he forces admiration upon you. No Italian ex-Prince, with his well-assumed chivalrous bearing, surpasses a Persian noble in dignified deportment and transcendental ease. These two, Persia and India, possessing Imperial courts, have ever been the head-quarters of ceremony. At the same time, there is much to admire in the manly simplicity of the Arab's manner, and even the martial roughness of the Afghan is not without a certain charm. Of all, perhaps the Sindi's demeanour is the least agreeable. He wears a flimsy garb of courtliness, a second-hand thing too, and a poor copy of the original Iranian manufacture: his natural coarseness is eternally peeping through the disguise; he is uneasy in it at all times, and not rarely he is ridiculous.

¹³⁹ This is the Arabic word; the Persians say, *Áfiyat báshad*—"May it be health to you!" or *Núsh-i-ján*, "May it be a drink of life!"

There is an essential difference between the modes of receiving a superior and an equal. In the case of the latter you advance towards, not *to*, the door; you address him in the second person plural instead of alluding to him as "he," the more polite and ceremonious address, and you carefully exact a full-weight return for every compliment you address to him. Odious is the necessity of being, from Calcutta to Teherán, perpetually upon your dignity." Your visitor, despite his graceful saláms, his charming phrases, and his imperturbable *apblomb*, is ever striving to exalt himself and to debase you by some nice and guarded slight. The insolence of a Persian and the impertinence of an Indian, if you once give them the rein, know no bounds. As for coercing them European fashion, it is quite impossible. After a tirade of insults you send a "hostile message;" what is the other party's reply?

"Wallah! they are miracles, these Franks! The foal of an ass (*Kurreh-khar*) tells me to come and be killed O his mother! Could he not have cut me down at once without any danger to himself?" And the whole town will deride your outlandish ways in many odes.

If, guided by a silly old saw, you do in Persia as the Persians do, when you have been grossly affronted, you maintain a bland and pleasing demeanour, affect not to comprehend what has been done, and show your friend a little more than usual civility when taking leave of him: a wink at your bravo does the rest. Not many years ago an English officer nearly lost his life, in consequence of wittingly or unwittingly insulting his entertainer, a Moslem of high rank and nice sense of honour, by stepping over his hukkah-snake. When not desirous of proceeding to these extremes, you summon a stout "horsekeeper," and direct him to insult your insulter in the way you deem most advisable. Should temper fail you, there is no objection, Orientally speaking, to your starting up and seizing your visitor's beard, when, having him at your mercy, you may pummel him to your heart's content. This proceeding, impossible in European, is held venial, nay, commendable, under certain circumstances, in Persian, Afghan, or Sindi society. The world will say nothing about it beyond commending you, and perhaps advising you to look out for a matchlock-ball when you take your evening's ride.

By proper management these unseemly and ferocious scenes may always be avoided. If the people know or suspect you to be deep read in their language and manners, they will be chary of offending you, because they expect a return in kind. Whenever anything like a liberty is attempted, you check it *in exordio*: as old Sa'adi says,

"One may stop the fountain's mouth with a spade,
If allowed to run, it will bear away an elephant."

The best way to close your friend's lips is to reply by some ultra-satirical remark, or to look at him as if you would bite him, or, if other things fail, to bring a forbidden subject upon the tapis.

In these countries the only social pleasure man really enjoys is in "low society." You have no trouble in receiving your inferiors; you only arise from your seat or half-rise, or move as if to rise, or simply bow your head as they enter. You may air your hair, unslipper your feet, stretch your legs, yawn before them; in a word, do what you please. You may drink with them in the presence of a superior or an equal, such proceedings would subject you to a loss of reputation, and to the probability of disagreeable consequences. If your inferior happen to lose self-respect, or to fail in deference towards you, you take down your horsewhip; his mind at once recovers its equilibrium, he bows his head, owns that he has eaten dust, and forgets all about it, except that he had better not do it again. If you leave him unchecked, his next step will be to play at leap-frog with you, or to break in waggishness a long-necked decanter upon your head.

"Low society" in the East has few or no disadvantages. Your Munshi may be the son of a sea-cook, still he is quite as polite and well educated as the heir of a Prince. He bathes, he mangles no aitches, he has no radical opinions, and if he spits you kick him. The fellow may be, and ten to one is, a spy: he repeats to you all the scandal he can collect, with the zest of a Parisian perruquier, and he displays considerable powers of invention in supplying you with tales which would keep a mess in a constant roar. He is in all men's secrets, according to his own account; everything, court intrigue, political events, and private "gap,"¹⁴⁰ he knows. Listen to him and laugh only recollect that he makes scant distinction between the *dicenda* and the *tacenda*, and that as he does to you, so he will assuredly do of you.

It is amusing enough to watch the laboriousness of the common Sindi's politeness. When he meets a friend he embraces and kisses him like an Italian of the old school. Then succeed a long shaking of hands and a profuse shower of inquiries concerning health and property; the cattle and the camels generally coming in for a reminiscence before the children and the family. To see and hear that pair before our windows, you would think they were friends of ten years' standing at least. Ask one who the other is, as soon as his back is turned: the reply will probably be "Bacho Tháin," or some other such name, a "great eater of forbidden things" (*i.e.*, rascal).

After this short study you understand, sir, the insolence of a Turkish Pasha who sits alone, Sultan-like, upon the central sofa, whilst he places the Representative, or Mis-Representative, of a first-class European Power upon a chair, like a servant, by his side. Own that when you looked at the 'Illustrateds,' you did not detect this little-great matter.

¹⁴⁰ An expressive Indian word, long ago naturalized in the Anglo-Indian vocabulary, meaning chit-chat, tittle-tattle, small news or flying reports; concerning which the "Madam" puts her first question in the morning to her Ayah, the "Sahib" to his barber or pet bearer. Don't write "gup," or some will pronounce it "goop."

CHAPTER XVIII.

WE PREPARE TO QUIT HAYDARÁBÁD.

The cold weather is now fairly set in. To-morrow, Mr. John Bull, we start for a trip towards the south-east, down the Phuléli river. We were comparative strangers when we first passed the grim portals of the Fort: now we say "How d'ye do?" to, and shake hands with, every soul stationed in and around it: this circumstance seems to call for a little prosing.

You England – English do still, in one sense of the word, deserve the gibe

"Britannos hospitibus feros"

with which the polished pagan branded you. strange man, Let a a married one will be the best subject, betake himself to a little town in the old country, some Spa or watering-place in which "highly respectable people" congregate, and where there is no regiment to keep the minds of the community in active order. The social atmosphere around him seems torpid, frozen, dead. The families, to whom he has letters of introduction, number a hundred names a head on their visiting lists; consequently they are not anxious to "extend their acquaintance." Those to whom he has not been formally recommended require a score of questions to be put, and satisfactorily answered, before they open their doors to him, even though he be a bachelor. Is he a member of the club? Does he live in a fashionable street? What kind of looking person is he? How many horses does he keep? To what county does he belong? Is he related to the Smythes of Smythe Hall, or is he the son of the opulent button-maker? and so on.

The residents, for reasons best known to themselves, have determined to consort with residents only, and imperatively demand, from all candidates for admission to their "circle," a term of three seasons' stationary-solitude at the Spa. The visitors, after enlisting a sufficient number of companions in misfortune, bewail their exclusion and rail at the exclusives; but they will be by no means hasty to extend the hand of fellowship to others in the same predicament as themselves.

The only chance the stranger has is to keep a dozen hunters, to sing Italian bravura songs, or to dance a dozen or so consecutive rounds and squares at each of the *soirées dansantes* to which he has "had the honour" of being invited. Then things may change; dowagers may become polite, daughters agreeable: the father may invite him to dinner, and the brother favour him by "dropping in to smoke a weed." But if his purse, his lungs, or his legs be not capable of such exertions, he will probably find the provincial Britons very fierce indeed. Every bow will be equivalent to a bite, every look present a

mild form of outrage: an affectation of fashionable superciliousness and a *guindé* attempt at exclusiveness are so painfully apparent that nothing but an ultra-lymphatic or phlegmatic constitution could support them for the continuance of the *trois saisons de rigueur*.

In India how antipodal the change! Who would believe that we are the same race? Quite in the style,

"Come to my arms, my slight acquaintance,"

we seem to revel in our emancipation from Spatyranny and Watering-place-oppression. Englishman or foreigner, in the Service or not, with 200 or 2000 rupees monthly income, a sub-lieutenant or a major-general, here you have nothing to do but to pay your round of visits when you arrive at a place, and you know every one at once. If you stumble upon an old acquaintance, he puts his house at your disposal; you become an honorary member of his mess; you join the club and the hunt, or not, as you please; briefly, you are as much at home in a week as if you had been a year there.

But Hospitality is, you know, pre-eminently the barbarian virtue. Not that she exists everywhere, very much the contrary; but civilized spots certainly know her not, and care not to know her. Hotels and clubs,¹⁴¹ the circle and the position, have ousted her from the places where the polite herd gathers, have driven her to rusticate in country seats, and to hold her courts in the semi-barbarous districts of the Emerald Isle, and the wild parts about Greenland. In India the poor thing is now relegated to the "out-stations." At the Presidencies you will meet her about as often as at New York, at an English Spa, or an Italian metropolis. Only, Young India *does* remember the day when the family had a wide-spread reputation for keeping open house, and for other similar displays of semi-civilized magnificence. More polished by furloughs and propinquity to home than the rough and ready senior, his sire, he has no longer the will, perhaps he does not quite see the way, to keep up the honourable and honoured customs of the last century. Still he feels, and still he shows, a little shame at the contrast between the flourishing young gallant, himself, and a certain "old worshipful gentleman." That is to say, he does not desire you to make his house your home, but he generally has the grace to apologize for not doing so, and to show excellent reasons which prevent his indulging what you will please to believe the bent of his inclinations.

A few years ago we might have travelled dressed partly as natives; now Young Indiá, by which I mean young Anglo-India, would certainly wax very violent if he saw us, and disclaim grandiloquently against our morbid propensities" and our contemptible sacrifice of nationality in aping Asiatics." At the same time he knows by tradition that

¹⁴¹ Mrs. Maria Graham, writing in 1809, says, "There is but one tavern in Bombay, and as that is by no means fit for the reception of ladies, the hospitality of the British inhabitants is always exercised towards new comers, till they can provide a place of residence for themselves."

his grandfather, who, to say the least, was quite as good a man as himself, thought the thing no disgrace. I have learned by experience how largely one gains in point of comfort and convenience by widening the pantaloons, and by exchanging the beaver for a tarbúsh. Peasants did not run away when I rode through the fields, nor did the village-girls shrink into their huts as I drew near them: the dogs forgot to deafen me with their barkings, and the cattle to fly in terror at my approach. Finally, when halted, I escaped the plague of being invested by a host of howling beggars and pertinacious petitioners, who insisted upon the fact that such dresses as the European's can belong to none but a Plutus or a Grand Justiciary.

You will, however, remove that strip of stunted hair which garnishes each cheek; where did civilization go to find such ridiculous disfigurement? Your beard is neither black, nor long, nor glossy, but as it is, so you must wear it. If you carry only moustachios, every one will be singing of you,

"The boy of fifty scrapeth his chin;"

equivalent to remarking that you are a *ci-devant jeune homme, and bien coquet*. Fortunately, it is not the withered, sickly-looking affair that concludes many of the European faces which we see about camp: henna and indigo, oil and comb—you must not use a brush of pig's bristles here—will soon make this important part of you presentable.

And now, a few words concerning the beard, which even in Frank attire must be respected. You should not wear it too long; the people have a proverb about long beards and short wits. The *Sunnat*, or Custom of the Apostle, directs it to be cut after two hands and two fingers' growth. Moreover, a brush reaching the waist is a more troublesome companion of travel than a sick wife, a ladies' maid, or a daughter in her teens, requiring black silk bags to protect it from the dust and sun, oils of all kinds to prevent its thinning, dye every three days, and so on. You must not clip it too short, on peril of being a "fast" man. You must not dye it red, like the brick-dust coloured beard,

"In cut and hue, so like a tile,"

of our old Sindi Munshi: he is a quiet old gentleman, with a leaning to clerical pursuits, and his chin shows it. And only the natives of Kachh (Cutch) wear blue, sky-blue, beards.

In conversation you must caress your beard with your right hand. If you wish to be emphatic, swear by it. Be careful in what sentence you allude to it; if you speak of anything offensive and your beard in the same breath, you will have committed a *ridicule* which men will not soon forget. And when you promise by your beard, recollect that you have pledged your honour.

In society mind to maintain the social status of your beard as jealously as you would defend your "principles" or your political opinions in England. If a man speak of it broadly, impudently, without circumlocution, or in connection with entities which nature did not connect with it; tamely endure these things and you lose caste for ever. If a man seize your beard in anger, you are justified, paganly speaking, of course, in clutching your dagger and sending your insulter to "kingdom come without benefit of clergy. In Persia it is an offence punishable by law; even in the lowest ranks a man would be fined for plucking another by the beard. The canaille in large cities seldom grow the appendage long for fear of rough handling.

If, on the contrary, a woman, or even a man, in all the humility of supplication, apply the tips of trembling fingers to the "antennæ of your compassionate feelings," grant, if possible, the request for the "name" of your beard.

Never apply the word *Kúseh* (scant-bearded) to yourself, or to others, unless hankering for a quarrel, and avoid calling anyone *Bí-rísh* (beardless), as nothing can be more offensive than the insinuation. When a foreign substance, a straw or a grain of rice for instance, sticks in your friend's beard, do not tell him of it bluntly, or pull it out, but look meaningly at him, stroking your own the while; so will he take the hint. Always exact a like ceremoniousness from him.

As regards the mustachios; if you would live in friendship with the Sunnis, or (self-named) orthodox Moslems, trim the centre level with the highest part of the upper lip, and allow the tips to grow long on both sides beyond the mouth. Should you desire an appearance of piety, clip and thin these ornaments till they are about the size of your eyebrows. If you would be intimate with the Shi'ahs or schismatics (so-called by their enemies), allow your mustachios to rival the girth of a broom-stick, in token of your intense abhorrence of the false sect that so vilely curtails them. If you wish to appear a fighting-man, turn the ends up to your eyes, like a Kurd or a Spaniard of the old school, and be sure to twist them as you engage in combat. That is the wagging of the lion's tail. If you would pass quietly through life, let the ends meekly depend.

I make no apology for the length of this lecture on beards. The man who travels in the East with the object of mixing with Orientals without knowing its use and abuse, is rushing rashly into many a rare trouble.

Even in these Philister days we are permitted by "Public Opinion" to exchange the black tile, the "father of a cooking-pot," as the little boy said to old J. Silk Buckingham, for the fez or tarbúsh. We may also stow away our hateful collars; let me assure that, personally, there is nothing in wild travel which comforts me more than to get rid of "gills" and ties; and I believe that diphtheria and sore throats would almost disappear if we never used these poultices except in the coldest weather. In winter we may wear

over our shooting jackets a *Kurti* or a *Nim-tano* (a vest made of any stuff, from cloth of gold to cloth of frieze), padded with cotton, and sleeved to the elbows. Or we may prefer the Afghan Chogheh, a robe of fine camel-hair, somewhat resembling a Carmelite's frock. In very chilly weather we can don *Postins*,¹⁴² body coats lined with sheep's skin or Astracan wool. Handsome furs are very much admired, even by Europeans, in these regions; the expense confines them to the upper classes. Your cloak may cost you £40 or £45 however, as

"You have a Mrs. Bull at home, and many little Bulls,"

it is sure to be useful for the second generation when it ceases to be used by the first. For riding, I can find you a pair of top-boots-not exactly the dainty things that accompany "leathers" in England, but far more useful a *chaussure* of soft yellow cordovan covering the overalls, and extending to the knee.

Pray remove that useless cirelet of base metal, called jewellers' gold, from your third finger, and supply its place with this ring of pure ore, upon whose silver slab appears

جان بول
JÁN BÚL,

the Orientalization of your respectable name. Now, your left hand upon the ivory hilt of your scimitar slung to its belt, a little forwards, please, by way of hint; your right caressing the puce-coloured¹⁴³ honours of your chin. So, Mr. John Bull, you might now travel even through Wahhábi-land as comfortably and as safely as Colonel Pelly did.

¹⁴² These articles are made throughout Afghanistán; the largest may weigh from twenty to twenty-five lbs., and the lightest two lbs. The leather worn outside is tanned to a state of wonderful softness, and then intricately stitched and embroidered. The best cost from 6£ to 8£; the coarse imitations made in Sind seldom fetch more than 8s. or 10s. They are still universal in Slav-land.

¹⁴³ It often happens, when the henna and indigo are not properly mixed and applied, or when they are used for the first time, they communicate a fine brilliant cimex-colour to the hair, more remarkable than ornamental.

CHAPTER XIX.

REFLECTIONS ON THE FIELD OF MIYÁNI.

Next to the arrival at, nothing more uncomfortable than departure from, a "station."

We ordered our camels to be here yesterday evening. They arrived this morning, and in what a state! One is sick; your dromedary has hurt its leg; two have torn their noses, and all have lost or injured their furniture. The Sarwáns, or drivers, are as surly as "bargees;" they look, and doubtless they feel, as if they could murder us.

Not one of our Portuguese yet sober! They were invited to dinner by the messman of the "Travellers' Bungalow," a *compatriote*; the result is that none can walk, one can waddle. The Moslems have, with all possible difficulty, torn themselves away from the bázár-sirens. And the Hindus are in a terrible state of indigestion, the consequence of a farewell feast of curry and rice given in honour of them by their fellow caste-men.

It is a chilly morning. All our people, except the Afghans and the Hill-men, look collapsed with cold. The miserables have encased their bodies in *Postins*, become Macintoshes by dint of wear; they have doubled their head-gear, and have folded the ends of their turbans round their jaws, but their legs are almost naked, their feet quite so. Such is the custom throughout the East. Our *Pardesi*¹⁴⁴ horse-keepers crouch upon their heels in a wretched state, or glide about like unhappy Shades o'er the mournful fields by Acheron, wrapped up in their dripping blankets, half-paralyzed, and wretched beyond power of description. It will never do to leave them by themselves, or they will work hard to die of torpor. The only way to cure them is compulsory labour; make them saddle the camels, hoist the boxes, tie the *Salitahs*,¹⁴⁵ and trudge along the road as fast as their legs will carry them.

The first rainy day we have had in Sind. But a year ago, sir, how you would have grumbled at the prospect of this inky sky, at the depressing effect of the slow drizzle which descends with indefatigable perseverance, and at the damp, "shiver" – gendering blast which scours the gloomy earth! See the wonderful Might of Contrast. You now think the weather delightful: you relish the rain as much as a Persian, particularly the southern Persian, who enjoys nothing so much as a ride or a stroll during a shower which would clear the streets of an Italian town in five minutes. The murky prospect, so reminiscent of the old country, here raises your spirits; even the chill and gloom have

¹⁴⁴ *Pardesi*, the "foreigner," is a name generally given in these parts of the world to the natives of Hindostan Proper.

¹⁴⁵ The *Salitah* is a canvass-sheet used to contain the articles composing the camel's load. In cold weather it is converted into a blanket.

their delights, after six or eight wearisome months of eternal azure and gold sky, and an atmosphere which feels as if lukewarm water were being continually poured over you.

Talking of cold and climate, I may hazard a few remarks about the strictures passed upon Quintus Curtius, an ancient who wrote a history of Alexander's reign, by "one Rooke:" excuse the style of designation; it emanated from the Conqueror of Sind, and it presently became classical in the province.¹⁴⁶ Curtius had indulged himself in describing the heat of Mekrán, on the shore of the Persian Gulf, as very hot: whereupon the learned gentleman who translated Arrian remarked *tout bonnement*, "that the sun should scorch so much in a country so distant from the tropics, where its rays fall so obliquely, is incredible."

I can show you by an experiment what the glow is hereabouts, even in the wintry month of November. Stand in the open air, with your shirt-sleeves tucked up for only half an hour; after a day or two the skin will peel off, as if it had been scalded or burnt. During the hot season you may broil a steak, or roast an egg upon the desert-sand in a few minutes. Listen to an account of the sufferings endured by a party of Sepoys marching, in the heat of the day, through Upper Sind, by the pen of a well-known traveller:

"A detachment of the regiment of N. I., escorting treasure from Shikarpore, were passing the desert in the night, when they mistook the way, and wandered the greater part of the next day in search of the track without meeting with any water to moisten their parched throats. One after one they dropped, until two officers and twenty-one Sepoys were lost. The remainder, many of them delirious, found the track and a stream of water in the evening."

Afghanistan lies many degrees north of Mekrán, yet the sun kills you there. Southern Persia and Maskat are situate within the same parallels as the country about Kech, the capital of the "Ichthyophagi:" about Bushehr (Bushire), you find a burning wind fatal as the Simúm of Arabia; and the inhabitants are obliged to fly from Maskat to Matharah during the summer seasons. Thus much for the heat of "countries so distant from the tropics."

Again, the Rooke falls foul of poor Curtius for his account of the cold in the land of the Arachotoi. "What reader, by such a description, would not imagine them to have been under the North Pole indeed? I can assure mine they were very far from it, being then in a country which lies between the 34th and 40th degrees of latitude; and, of consequence, it could not be much colder than Greece or Italy." That consequence is a decided *non sequitur*. Hear Dr. Burnes about the winter, as it sometimes is, in Central Sind:

¹⁴⁶ "One Hogg," (Yek Su'ar) however, was the original.

"While I was at Hyderabad, in January, 1828, rain fell in torrents for many days, attended with a sensation of more piercing cold than I had ever experienced, even in Europe." The Rev. Mr. Allen, in Upper Sind, found the day "so bitterly cold, that he appeared at dinner in his *Postin*." And our soldiers were frost-bitten and frozen to death in the Afghan passes, whilst the Russians perished in numbers about Khiva; both countries being "about the latitude of Greece and Italy;" but not, *consequently*, so genial in point of climate.

The ornithologist "A. O. H." says of Sind: "The contrasts presented by this small province are most striking. Stick to the central inundation-subject tracts, where broads of cultivation divide with canals and irrigation-channels the length and breadth of the land, and—at any rate, if your trip be made in the cold season—you will be ready, specially if either ornithologist or sportsman, to aver that Sindh is the pleasantest of all our Indian possessions; a climate that is simply perfection: cool, dry to a degree, bracing; waving fields, picturesque-looking villages, beautiful lakes or lakelets in every march; the sun always bright, the sky ever blue and cloudless, lovely purple hills closing every landscape in the far distance, and such wild fowl and snipe (and in places black partridge) shooting! But stray outside the limits of the tracts, above all, wander a little amongst the 'lovely purple hills,' to which 'distance,' and only a very considerable distance, can lend enchantment,' and you must either be a geologist or more than mortal if you do not, after a week or so, conclude that Sindh is the most 'god-forgotten-hole' on the face of the globe.¹⁴⁷ "A. O. H." does not love the Desert.

The field of Miyáni. There it lies before us, a broad plain, through whose silty surface withered stumps and leafless shrubs, rare and scattered, protrude their desolate forms. It is divided by the broad, deep bed of the old Phuléli, and it is bounded on the right by the high wall of the Shikárgáh, or hunting preserve, still loopholed as it was by the Beloch, and on the left by Miyáni, the wretched fishing village,¹⁴⁸ to which capricious Fate hath given a lasting name in the annals of the East.

Sundry attempts were made to detract as much as possible from the brilliancy of Sir Charles Napier's victory.¹⁴⁹ His despatches, somewhat too popularly written, were received at first with credulous admiration in course of time they came to be considered, to be compared with other public and private accounts, to be questioned, to be disputed. It is true that the few present at the action confirmed their General's

¹⁴⁷ *Stray Feathers*, etc., 1873, p. 48.

¹⁴⁸ "Miyáni," in Sind, is the general name for the little settlements populated chiefly by the fisherman caste. Murray's *Handbook* says (p. 488): "The battle ought to have been named from the Got, or village, of Záhír Báhirchi, rather than from Miyáni, which is the name of the whole district between the Phuléli and the Indus, and not of any village or place in particular." I believe this to be an error.

¹⁴⁹ Especially by the late General Waddington, C.B., whose plan and "only correct account" will be found in Mr. Eastwick's "Dry Leaves from Young Egypt" (p. 346). The secret history of this Report will, I hope, soon be published in the memoirs of Mírzá Ali Akbar, K.B.

assertions; but, *en revanche*, the many who had not that fortune found out all kinds of disenchanting details. The Princes were compelled to fight against their will; bribery and clannish feuds made our opponents more hostile to one another than to the common foe; the enemy was a "vast mob;" his infantry was half-armed; his cavalry ("riders without the slightest discipline or knowledge of military movements, mounted on wretched ponies!") was commanded by a scoundrel in our pay, and his artillery was worse than useless, "wretched 6-pounders," with most of the wheels secured by cords. Then the editor, the late Dr. Buist, dashed into the arena. He told the world: "One square—one charge—and the whole business was settled." He remembered that, at the time of the news reaching England, the late Adjutant-General remarked, "the struggle could not have been very fierce, seeing that our loss was so very trifling." He concluded the flourish by informing mankind, that he "had no idea of the way in which the business was managed," and made his exit exclaiming that Sir Charles Napier had "earned 27,000£ of prize-money with wonderful facility."

What delighted every military man who did not allow himself to be black-hearted with envy, was the way in which the brisk little affair was fought. Sir Charles Napier dressed his line at 11 a.m., unlimbered his guns, and began, not with charging cavalry at masked batteries, nor with pushing a column of "murdered men over a level plain, swept and scoured by hundreds of cannon, but by silencing, as a common-sense man would, the enemy's guns. An advance *en échelon* of regiments; a fierce *mêlée*, no quarter asked or given, on the river's banks when line was formed; a dash or two of horsemen, and at 1.30 p.m. the battle ended. It showed once and for all time how to fight an Indian battle: to shake the enemy's line with a hot fire of artillery; to charge home with infantry and, when slight symptoms of hesitation begin, to throw all your cavalry at the opposing flanks. True, the General's loss was only—killed 62 (6 officers), and wounded 194 (13 officers), out of 2800 odd: decidedly not severe; discipline and tactics prevented its being so. But, in other hands (it would be invidious to specify them), the affair would probably *not* have presented the suspicious appearance which at once caught the Adjutant-General's critical eye.

The epoch at which the battle was fought set it off in surpassing lustre. It was, to use a hackneyed phrase, the "tail of the Afghan storm," and most disastrous had been that storm to the lives and property of our countrymen, to the Revenues of India, and, most of all, to the confidence of our conquests. The commanders of our armies seemed determined to demoralize the mass of them, the Sepoys, by giving every work of danger and difficulty to the European regiments; at Ghazni, for one instance of many, four European regiments composed the storming party. The Sepoys, on the other hand, convinced of the little trust reposed in their courage and loyalty, and worsted, not wholly through their own fault, in many a badly-fought battle, had lost all that prestige of victory which makes the soldier victorious. Discouraged by their chiefs, they apparently resolved to merit discouragement.

Then came the battle of Miyáni, bursting upon the Indian world like the glories of Plassey, the brilliant achievements of Sir Eyre Coote, and other dashing deeds which distinguished past from present generations. Once more 2800 thrashed 22,000 men, as they ought to do, greatly to the disappointment of certain old field-officers, lauders of days gone-by, grim predictors, who "prayed to Heaven that India might not be lost to us": much to the delight of those who felt, as most soldiers did, that our fighting fortunes had been under a cloud, that the cloud was at length dispersed, and that the sun of victory was once more glancing gaily and gladly upon our bayonets.

The battle of Miyáni, and Dabbá, another no less brilliant affair which followed it, threw Sind into our hands. It is the only one of the Transindine Provinces that now remains to us.

A modern writer¹⁵⁰ on India remarks: "Our power, which since the days of Lake had remained inactive, like some huge Colossus, heavy with its own bulk, had suddenly made a stride which planted us in Central Asia." But the unhappy Colossus in question soon found Central Asia, metaphorically as well as literally speaking, too hot for him. He remained there for a while, blind as Polyphemus, and blundering as pitifully; at length, finding that the new position had neither pleasure nor profit in store for him, he made the movement retrograde, blustering loudly enough as he went, but failing to conceal from his brother Brobdignagians, and even from the Lilliputians who had worked him such sad annoy, that he knew the retreat to be by no means the thing one boasts of. We should have held Afghanistán for at least a year before abandoning it, and even lately we made the same mistake in African Ashanti.

Then followed the conquest of Sind which, being an unpalatable measure to Anglo-Indians and Indians generally – for who likes to live in a *mélange* of the desert, the oven, and the dust-hole? – was attacked on all sides. Every man with a tongue or a pen had his hit at it.

The principal objections to the victor's policy numbered two. Firstly, it was urged that the act itself was an "atrocious one," that a quarrel had been forced upon the Native Princes, and that their ejection and imprisonment were utterly unjustifiable, even when measured by the elastic rules of political morality. Secondly, it was asserted that the act was unwise, and consequently that it should be remedied by being undone; in other words, by restoring the plundered property to the lawful owners of the estate.

With the first question I have nothing to do, being ignorant of the law of nations, little read in political morality, and detesting nothing more than political discussion, of all things, next to polemics, the most unprofitable and impossible branch of the science Eristiké. The second point is more in my line.

¹⁵⁰ The talented author of "Dry Leaves from Young Egypt."

The old warrior who conquered Sind was never a popular man in India. He made himself hateful to the Civil Service, then a powerful body because connected with the Court of Directors. He spoke of politicals as "sharp young men who know Persian. He accused both civilians and politicals of unutterable things; he nicknamed them Cutcherry Hussars," and only the prestige of his name and the terror of his illustrious brother, Sir William Napier, prevented his being recalled like Lord Ellenborough. He held up Sind as a pattern before the eyes of jealous India; he insisted upon a huge garrison, and he made it a costly acquisition, without counting his own £7000 per annum. To the Indian press, his peculiar style of personalities rendered his name distasteful in the extreme. So editors, especially the "blatant beast of the *Bombay Times*," as his brother—Scot called him; and party-writers, many of them knowing little or nothing about what they were discussing, but all cunning in the art of appearing to do so; attacked the Conqueror in his tenderest point, his maiden conquest. Every blow aimed at it they felt would come home to him, consequently they entered the arena determined to plant as many "stingers" as possible, and careless of fair play, provided they could make any play whatever against him. The favourite hits here again were two.

In the first place, "Sind continues to cost, as it has cost us every year¹⁵¹ since its conquest, some three quarters of a million annually; whereas the Panjab promises henceforth to yield from a quarter to half a million a year of free return." So much for the contrast between a conquest made, in the former case, without pretence of justification, and one, in the latter, which was forced on us. The beauty of ad *captandum* arguments, as they are termed, is that, somehow or other, they do win the herd's heart. Secondly, that instead of preserving the Indus, "the natural boundary of Western India," as our frontier, we have deliberately tossed away all its advantages, and have placed ourselves, our Sepoys, and our stores, in a false and dangerous position.

Sind is an Unhappy Valley, a compound of stone, sand, and silt. The Desert cannot, the alluvial plains which it contains can, be fertilized. The country came into our possession battered by foreign invasion, torn by intestine dissensions, each of its two dozen Princes being the head of a faction, and almost depopulated by bad government. It is therefore an exception to the general rule of our Eastern conquests. Experience in the Indian peninsula has taught us not to expect the full amount of revenue raised by the native Princes, our predecessors; here we may hope, if I mistake not, eventually to double it. True, our wants are not trifling immigration on an extensive scale is hardly the work of a day; irrigation requires time and expenditure of ready money; and, finally, the influx

¹⁵¹ "This (1851) is the first year since 1841 in which the income of British India has exceeded its expenditure; the balance of from half a million to a million and a half, which for ten years past has annually stood against us, is now transformed into one of a quarter of a million in our favour." Such was the assertion after the Conqueror left.

of hard cash, which the country must have to thrive upon,¹⁵² is an outlay of capital which rulers are apt to make grudgingly. Something has been done; more remains to be done; and much, I am confident, will be done.

The regenerator of Sind is the Indus. As yet it has been the fate of that politically hapless stream to suffer equally from friend and foe. Lieutenant Burnes, its discoverer in modern days, magnified the splendour of its advantages to an extent which raised expectation high enough to secure disappointment. He made light of the "snags," easily remedied the "sawyers," and found that the disadvantage of having no ports for shelter, nor harbours accessible to vessels of burden, was "more imaginary than real." An "Indus Steam Navigation Company" was formed in England, and an agent was despatched to Bombay for the purpose of settling preliminaries: there operations ceased. The public felt the reaction from enthusiasm and speculation to total apathy. The disappointed, and they were not few, depreciated the value of the "noble river" with all their might and main, as a vent to their ill-humour.

But apathy and ill-humour both had their day. Presently it was suggested that the little steam-tugs employed on the Indus were incapable of developing its resources, and it was proposed to substitute for them the large river-boats after those which had been adopted on the Ganges. And, lest the march of improvement should halt at the river, it was resolved to improve the ports, to lay out lines of road, and to erect caravanserais for the benefit of travellers. The "Indus Steam Flotilla" was a long step in advance, and the railroad, when finished, as it soon must be, will be a longer — we shall see them both on our down-march. Such measures lead to prosperity, especially when undertaken, not with a Conqueror's fitful energy, but with the steady resolve of an Indian administration; even the deadly climate must eventually yield to the effects of drainage and to the proper management of the inundation. The Unhappy Valley will, I venture to predict, in the course of years lose its character; and in the evening of its days become the "Happy Valley."

As regards our position being weakened by passing beyond the Indus: Sind is, in the opinion of every sensible man, exactly the frontier we require. What can be more favourable than an open plain for the evolutions of a disciplined army?—what more imaginary than the existence of "natural boundaries?"—more fanciful than the advantages to be derived from a deep river, a line of mountains, or any of Nature's works as frontiers?

The occupation of this Province should act beneficially upon our Eastern rule, in two ways, actively and passively.

¹⁵² That the agriculturists may not pay their rents in kind—a system of raising revenue the most unsatisfactory of all, on account of its being open to certain embezzlement.

Lower Sind forms an excellent base for warlike operations, should they be required, against the turbulent people to the west and north-west. Considering the question commercially, Karáchi, like Aden, has long eclipsed all the petty harbours which, studding the neighbouring coast, once formed so many inlets for our commodities into Central Asia. Should we, in future years, imitating the wise and politic conduct of the early Portuguese, establish detachments in forts and strongholds, acquired by purchase or conquest, along the southern shores of Mekrán and the Persian Gulf, where the Euphrates Valley Railway *must* run, it will be in our power to regulate the stream of trade in whatever way best suits our convenience; meanwhile, we content ourselves with diverting it into our own channel. Karáchi lies on the direct route from England to the Panjab and the North-Western Provinces of British India. It has not yet been made a depôt for the reception of military stores destined for that part of the country, but the measure has long been proposed, and will doubtless eventually be carried into execution.

The passive advantage we secure by the possession of Sind, is simply that we have crushed and ousted a hostile power, which might have been, although it never was, dangerous to us, its neighbours. The fierce, hardy, and martial barbarians of the Beloch mountains and Eastern Persia can no longer consider Sind their general *point de réunion*: unsupplied with the sinews of war by the lords of the low country, and scattered by the want of a leader to head them, a single regiment of irregular cavalry and the British name have already sufficed to check their predatory propensities.

Another good which Sind did us. Every few years, Mr. Bull, you and your household suffer from a kind of disease, an intermittent fever called Russophobia and, during the attack, you become a haunted man. A skeleton sits before your roast-beef, robbing it of all its zest; direful visions, partly the spawn of distempered fancy, partly the deformed exaggerations of a real danger, abstract from your usually heavy slumbers half their normal quiet. At times you start up, dreaming of bankruptcy: you rush to the window expecting to see, strange portent a wolf at your very door. Such is the nature of the fit: when it passes off it is succeeded by the usual revulsion; you laugh at your fears, you make light of the ghost, and you prose out many sound and sober reasons, all proving the phantasm to have been an "airy nothing."

But Russophobia was not based upon nothing, Russia then contained the elements of the power if not the actual and present capability, to do all that Napoleon predicted she would do. She intended also to do it. It was not without reason that she directed the whole of her influence against the self-sufficient semi-savages and barbarians of Central Asia, that she toiled to supplant us in Persia, that she overran Afghanistan with spies, and that she lavished blood and gold upon the pathless steppes that stretch eastward from the Caspian Sea. Russophobia, I repeat, was in those days no dream: it was a distorted vision of possibilities.

You open the map, Rawlinson's or Gordon's. You produce and fix on your spectacles. You bend over the page, and pass your finger slowly, very slowly, along the ten, once twenty-five, degrees which still separate the nearest limits of the two Empires. You pause here and there, especially when a streaky, caterpillar-like line, which means a mountain, a huge white space dotted with atoms to denote sand, or the frequent words, "Great Salt Desert," attract your eye.

True, sir, mountain and salt-plain, river and desert, lie in the way, but what earthly obstacle is impassible to genius? Nádír Shah, an uneducated barbarian, with a few thousands of undrilled Persians, marched from his capital; forced the terrible passes of the Afghan; subdued all the ferocious tribes that met him, and reached Delhi, the core of India, how triumphantly, his loss, some hundred men, may tell you. What Nádír could do, others can. The possession of Sind did much to calm your fears, and to prevent their reacting upon the people of India. You recognized the value of an outpost which would close to the enemy all but one route, that through Afghanistán and the Panjáb. There he would have been compelled to meet us upon a plain country, where his savage auxiliaries could avail him little, and where your men are, to say the least, as good as his. You feel that every year, as artillery and projectiles become more ponderous, the value of the Indus, at once a moat 650 direct miles long, and a line of transport which can carry 100-ton guns as easily as the enemy his 12-pounders, greatly increases. Your invader can no longer occupy the lower Valley of the Indus; he can create no division by a flank movement on Kachh, and your war-steamers secure you against danger from the Persian Gulf. Briefly, we have blocked up all but the most trying and perilous entrance to India, and we have placed ourselves in the most likely position to debar our assailant, should he enter India, of all chance to return.

And now, a third of a century after the conquest of Sind, I marvel, and, moreover, I am ashamed, to hear of India being threatened by the Muscovite. Afghanistán has lost all power; the Panjáb is in our hands; Kashmír and Nepál are mere dependencies. The one line, open in the days of Ranjit Singh, is cut off. And the course of Russian conquest since the Crimean War is wholly against her troubling India. With the necessity of growth which belongs to young communities, as well as to individuals, she has grown eastwards when she could not grow southwards. She has committed the fatal but inevitable error of forcing her dominion upon the most fanatical tribes of the Moslem world. She is ever advancing her frontier to meet that of China, and when the rival-cousins do meet, war will never cease. Truly we have no reason, for half a century at least, to feel fear of Russia. The Russophobists are, for the present, men of the past, except that Europe seems suddenly to have discovered that half of her area is held by the Slav race, and to be much startled by her own discovery.

The short and bloody page which our ill-judged invasion of Afghanistán has inserted into the annals of India under the English, reads a lesson as to the peril of "territorial aggrandizement" in that direction. It is now an old, old story; but its enduring interest is

that, as the thing happened once, so it may happen again. Would it irk you, sir, were I to waste a few words upon the dangers into which we heedlessly rushed, and which over-whelmed us, because we were unprepared for them? "So don't do it again, dear," as the maternal parent is wont to conclude a domestic lecture, will be, *bien entendu*, the gist of my garrulity.

In ruling peoples like the Afghans, the Persians, or the Arabs, we have three great difficulties to contend against: the action of their national faith, the social position of their women, and the nature of their penal code.

Except in history, or in a few scattered tribes, there is no such thing as patriotism in Central Asia; its *locum tenens*, as a bond of union, is religion or bigotry. The Persian will openly tell you that he cares not one iota whether Kajar or Frank walk the streets of Teheran, provided that, firstly, his Mullá, secondly, his wives, be respected. Popular writers on Eastern subjects are prone to err in this particular.¹⁵³ With much poetical feeling they institute a comparison between El-Islam and the Dead Knight of the medieval legend who, when slain by a bolt, was carried by his charger over the field, causing as much confusion to the foe as if the rider's arm were still doing, as wont, the work of death. This is strength of simile, deficiency of sense. They universalize from the individual instance which particularly comes within the range of general European observation, the un-Sublime Porte, and they blunder grossly, as observers who adopt such style of deduction do, and must ever do. El-Islam is still in all its vigour, fervent and deep-rooted in the hearts of men—I am speaking of the mass in Central Asia, not of corruptions in Syria and elsewhere—as it was when it first sprang, Minerva-like, in panoply from Mohammed's brain: that it retains the ardent activity of youth, together with the settled strength of mature manhood, its systematic propaganda in Africa may prove. During the early part of the present century the Wahhábís of Eastern Arabia made a movement which would not have disgraced the days of Umar. They arose with the same intention of spreading their Faith over a plundered world; they failed, not for want of energy or will, but because they lacked the means of success. Nations are now better guarded against these human typhoons: the war-canoë and the bow are not likely to do much against the Iron-clad and the Woolwich-infant. But there is nothing easier than to preach a *Jihad*, or Holy War, in Central Asia.

The position of strangers and infidels in lands teeming with bigotry and fanaticism must be fraught with danger; the countless prejudices of the Moslems are so many rocks upon which the current of events could not fail to dash us. In the presence of

¹⁵³ See Mr. W. C. Taylor's "The History of Mahommedanism"—published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. That author's simile, and many of his subsequent assertions, as that "the spirit and vitality of the Mahommedan's faith have departed," "the very Mussulmans themselves confess that their faith is in a rapid process of decay," etc., etc., are intended to show off by contrast, "the recuperative energies" of Christianity, and its "principles of restoration within itself." This is injuring the cause of Christianity. False, partial, and specious pleading fails in the closet, though it may succeed in a court of law.

British equity the Mussulmán Sayyid and the Hindu sweeper stand on the same footing; but let the latter strike or insult the former at Candahar, and what is the result?¹⁵⁴ The Moslem returns home, tears his beard, dashes his turban to the ground, assembles his friends, threatens, cabals, and agitates, till he raises a tumult which, if circumstance favour it, may end in rebellion and massacre. Most of these Levites might, it is true, be conciliated, bribed, and converted into spies upon their flocks. But what a degrading position for the first Asiatic nation in Christendom to place itself in, to rule by sufferance and by purchased obedience! Many of them, moreover, like the Irish priest, are out of the reach of *douceurs*, because money is no object, and the rank which they hold amongst their countrymen would be lowered rather than raised by the favour and countenance of their anti-religionists. These men are the most influential, therefore the most dangerous, part of the sacred community. Offend one of them and, if events favour it, there will be a "Holy War."

To meet the occasions for which Koranic revelation, in this matter like many others, forgot to provide, *Rasm*, or the established "country-custom," is virtually admitted throughout the world of El-Islam to an equality with Holy Writ. The inspired ordinance upon the subject of adultery, for instance, has been found by experience worse than useless: but it is inspired; it cannot therefore be altered, although it may be transgressed. So, in all purely Moslem nations, men are allowed to take the law into their own hands, and summarily to wash out with blood an affront offered to their honour.

A few months after Sir Charles Napier had conquered Sind, he issued an order promising to hang any one who committed this species of legal murder. Abstractly just, it was uncommonly tyrannical. It was as if the Allied Army at Paris had denounced duelling and, in spite of all the prejudices in its favour, which made the proceeding become a practice, had systematically shot every man convicted of an "affair of honour." The sanguinary custom of the Moslem world overwhelms with ignominy the husband or son of an adulteress who survives the discovery of her sin; he is taboo'd by society; he becomes a laughing-stock to the vulgar, and a disgrace to his family and friends. Even the timid Sindis every now and then were driven to despair by their dishonour; a few cases might be quoted in which, with the rope round their necks, they avenged their outraged "shame," and died, rather than drag on a scandalous existence. The greater part of the community amused themselves with shrugging up their shoulders at the Frank's outlandish ways, and, discontented with our new punishment of blacking the offender's face, shaving her head, and leading her, seated *à l'envers* on an ass, through the bázár, to be pelted and hooted by boys and beggars, made prevention their motto, the bolt taking the place of the sword.

¹⁵⁴ I quote this instance because many remember its taking place in Afghanistán.

Such could not be done in many parts of Central Asia. The nature of the subject, Mr. Bull, forbids its being *approfondi*: suffice it to say that, for many reasons, were the fear of the scimitar removed, the scandalous scenes certain to occur would pass description. Then the *finale*, "the Shame of the Moslem is broken," and "Allah will aid in the good Fight against these Accursed." The murder of M. Griboëdoff, the Russian Envoy to the Court of Teheran, resulted from the misconduct of his suite: the *teterrima causa* being, as usual, at the bottom of the affair. And in Afghanistán, next to the dissatisfaction produced by our diminishing the salaries of the chieftains who held the passes; and the intrigues of the worthless despot Shujá', who, with an eye to finings and confiscations, incited his nobles to rebellion; ranks high, among the causes of our disasters, the universal discontent excited in the breasts of the people by the conduct of their women under the new rule. The grievance was taken up by the class which in El-Islam represents the priest-hood; ensued a *Jihad*, whose objects were plunder and revenge; and then, as the Moslems say, "what happened, happened."

Our punishments, too: how contemptible they must appear to the ferocious barbarians that incur them! The Afghan is detected stealing; he looks to have his right hand chopped off: we lodge him in what he considers a luxurious retreat, where he can eat, drink, doze, smoke, and abuse the Frank in plenary animal satisfaction. He appropriates his friend's spouse: instead of perilling life or limb, he knows that these benevolent fools, his rulers, will hang the husband who harms him. Overheard blaspheming, a crime for which he would be stoned to death amidst the ferocious exultation of his fellows, he now can laugh: under our rule sacrilege is not a capital offence. He commits murder, and is detected; he expects nothing but a horrible death, to be suspended by the ankles, and chopped in two like a sheep hung up in your butcher's shop, or to be flayed alive, one of the most excruciating tortures that human ingenuity ever devised.¹⁵⁵ He smiles when he is told that he is only to dangle for an hour at the gallows, without the prospect of being left there to feed the crows; or that he is simply to be shot without the preliminary of being bastinado'd till sensation by slow degrees is expelled his form. And, finally, the mere fact of a True Believer being put to death by Infidels, always suggests the Palm of Martyrdom.

The natives of Central Asia *are* to be controlled by strange and terrible punishments. In the early part of the present century, that mighty soldier of fortune, Mohammed, or as you learned to call him, Mahomet Ali, of Egypt, defeated the Wahhabi Crusaders, and made himself master of El-Hejaz, the Arabian Holy Land. Immediately after the decisive victory at Bissel he began the work of intimidation by slaughtering three hundred prisoners who endured the disgrace of surrender with the hope of saving life. But he was careful not to put them to death in a common way; he cut some to pieces literally by inches; many he impaled, and he blew others from the mouths of his

¹⁵⁵ They begin by separating, with a kind of scraper, the skin at the soles of the feet, and then tear it upwards by strips till the sufferer expires with agony and the shock to the nervous system.

cannon, so as to render anything like a decent funeral impossible. The brave and sanguinary Ibrahim Pasha succeeded to the office of Executioner-General, and in 1833 the Sublime Porte added to the family, with other investitures, the command of the Red Sea ports, and the privilege of conducting the Hajj, or Pilgrim-caravans. The Egyptians, however, found difficulty in holding the newly-conquered country: they were abominated by the wild inhabitants because they shaved their beards, spoke a strange tongue, and freely indulged in military license. Assassinations became of daily occurrence, massacres of small outposts was the next step in advance, and the victors were beginning to fear that a rise *en masse* would conclude the scene.

A bright thought struck the old man. He knew that it was conferring a favour rather than otherwise upon a Bedawi murderer to behead him; to hand the carcass over to its friends, and to allow every little villain to be embalmed in memory as a martyred saint on earth, and to become a blessed spirit in heaven, carried about in the crop of a green bird. He had tried impaling upon a small scale: he resolved to extend his operations and to see the effects of the novel and horrible punishment.

Perfect success attended the attempt. Even Ishmael's spirit quailed at the sight of the stake. The wild Arab could endure the death; he could not the idea of its consequences. The body of every malefactor was doomed to the hungry dogs and vultures; no holy rite could be performed over it; a last resting-place in this world was denied to it, and what might not happen to it in the next? The stake triumphed.

I believe, Mr. Bull, it would be in the power of any military commander to reduce an Afghan, Persian, or Turkoman province to perfect submission, to "turn as their phrase is, the "tiger into a little goat." Thus: A village, I will suppose, refuses to pay its tax, and the headman sends you a polite message inviting you, dog of a Frank, to come and take it. You bluster a little, to give your part *vraisemblance*, at the messenger with the bold broad face; you make a few preparations for attacking the rebel, ostentatiously as you can; presently something happens; you allow the project to die in embryo. You keep your secret to yourself and you smile alone at the altered manner of those around you. When the arrogant headman has determined that you are a *Ná-mard*, "a no man," a coward, one fine night, as the moon is rising, you find yourself with a few hundred horsemen quietly jogging on towards the village of Shaykh Mohammed. You reach it in due time, you post a reserve for fear of fugitives, and you carefully set fire to half-a-dozen huts in as many different directions. The wretches try to run away, you kill all the men; the women, who would pick out your eyes with their collyrium-needles, and the children you make "Bakhshish" to your soldiers. You conclude by levelling the place with the ground, and by walking your pet charger with the high-sounding name over and across it, that the world may say, "Verily, he rode Ghurrawn over the homes of the Sons of Yúsuf!" And, finally, you erect, in memory of the exploit, a Kalleh-munár,¹⁵⁶ a

¹⁵⁶ Literally, a "minaret of skulls."

round-tower of stone with regular lines of heads, perhaps with live bodies of prisoners, cemented by lime into the outer courses of the masonry: the Shaykh, I need hardly say, occupying a position more elevated than his clients. After which, believe me, you will be pronounced every inch a Mard (man), soldiers will swear by you, subjects will be proud to obey you, not a *walad* but will consider you a hero! "Did he not kill one hundred men in one night and burn their fathers¹⁵⁷ in quicklime?"

It is needless to say that no British officer could be found to commit such enormities, and that, were one found, a worse than the fate of Haynau would await him at your hands. But, hating cruelty, your taste verges towards the other extreme—an unwise clemency, far more cruel than wise severity. Some claptrapping journalist never fails to catch and dress up for your taste a sorry tale about the horrors of the last siege, or the acts of violence which soldiers will commit during and after the excitement of battle. You read and believe it: it is re-told and re-read till the General, if he be weak enough to regard "Public Opinion," in the form of press-cant, or an ignorant public's credence of it, is deterred from doing his duty, from acting as he knows he should act. This has happened so often, that the very Asiatics have learned to shape their conduct by its probability. When a refractory feoffee gives up his sons as hostages to an Indian rajah, he feels that the matter is earnest, for he is not capable of such Roman virtue as to sacrifice his children for the good of his people. To us, on the contrary, he sends them with a light heart. The boys will be fed and cared for; possibly they may be educated to make useful spies: in the meantime the father takes the field against us, as soon as he finds it convenient to do so.

Mind, sir, I do not want permission to erect minarets of skulls, or to hang my hostages. But I think we may claim, and that you should concede to us, some slight relaxations of prejudice; for instance, free leave to modify and proportion punishment to the wants of a newly conquered people, as long as we avoid such barbarities as torture and general massacre. Where you imprison I would always flog the poor and fine the rich. I would never hang a Moslem without burning his corpse with some solemnity and, when sounded about the probability of my taking a hostage, I would reply by a gesture, mutely eloquent, which questions the possibility of discovering a certain tint in my organs of sight. And in military executions I should always prefer blowing from a gun; it is far more humane than hanging or shooting, and now you know its use.

Allons, let us retire to our tent and indulge in the natural somniferous consequences of reflections, preachments, lectures, and all sermons. You see where it is pitched: the weeds are of a brighter green, and the shrubs are a little taller than their neighbours:

¹⁵⁷ This expressive phrase literally means that the progenitor is in the place of Eternal Punishment. If a man's corpse has been cremated instead of inhumed, the opprobrious term "sons of burnt fathers" would descend and adhere to the third generation with admirable confusion of the literal and metaphorical. When you say, "I will burn thy father," you threaten to make the individual addressed laugh the wrong side of his face; and so on. The phrase is not only expressive, it is also various in its expressiveness.

some hundreds of our fellow-creatures are thus doing their last duty by the Old Parent. We will not mention this fact to our servants, if you please, otherwise the fellows will be seeing ghosts! – O that I could catch sight and have speech of one! – and hearing goblins the livelong night.

How the jackals astonish you after a month's escape from their serenade. The moon shines bright and the air is pure and cool, a state of things apparently much to the satisfaction of the *Canis Aureus*. If you peep out of the tent-door you will see the graceful scavengers now scampering over the plain, then stopping for a moment to bay, then again bounding off, springing playfully as kittens over one another's backs. Yon greyish senior has taken up a position close to our canvas-home, the better, I suppose, to oblige us with a "Charivari." The cry resembles, according to some, the screaming of a human being in agony; others liken it to the loud wailing of grief; in fact, there is no end to the unlovely similes which it has provoked from the sleepless and justly irritated traveller. The French, if I recollect right, produced a series of mono – and dis-syllables which, strung together, were supposed to give an idea of the nightingale's note. Take these words:

Wah! wah!! wha-a!!!
I smell the body of a dead Hindu;
Where? wha-re?? wh-a-a-re???
Here! hee-re!! he-e-re!!!

Pronounce the first and second lines as rapidly as your lips and tongue can move, Mr. Bull, emphaticize the "where" and the "here" by aspirating the "h" as an Irishman does when he threatens to *whip* you, dwell dolefully upon the medial vowel, and after a little practice you will pass for a jackal before Billy, your son. And at last you will enjoy the jackal's serenade, which connects itself with the memory of moonlit nights, of cool crisp air, and of the illimitable freedom of the glorious Desert.

CHAPTER XX.

DOWN THE PHULÉLI RIVER TO SUDDERAN'S COLUMN. THE STEPMOTHER.

We must start betimes this morning; sixteen miles before we reach breakfast, and fourteen more ere we come to Sudderan's Column, dinner, and bed. Our road lies along the channel of the Phuléli: I must call your attention to this watercourse; it is interesting in more points than one. There are two of the name, the old and the new; both part from the left bank of the Indus, between Miyáni and Unnarpúr; the former, now scanty of water, beginning north of the latter. The length is some forty miles; the mean breadth is about 350 feet, here widening to nearly double, there shrinking to half that size, while the winding reaches seldom exceed a mile in length. The turns are sharp, and sometimes close together, acting as natural locks to impede the progress of a volume which, flowing uninterruptedly, would draw off half the water of the Indus; possibly, despite all precautions, some day it may become the Great River. The stream impinges upon a wall of stiff, thick clay; the opposite bank is as shelving as the other is abrupt, and the bottom, of hard, caked silt, was once covered, where the channel broadens, with long and large holms of light sand drifted by the eternal winds. Deep pools of stagnant water, some of them a mile round and more, then studded the bed; and during the season for the Kharíf, or autumnal crop, there was scarcely a puddle within convenient distance of the bank which was not made subservient to the purposes of agriculture.

Sind, like India, has two crops. The Rabí'a, or vernal (sown in autumn and reaped in spring), comprises wheat, barley, and gram (*Dolichos biflorus*), sugar and tobacco, vetches and vegetables. The Kharif (sown in spring and reaped in autumn) produces rice, holcus, and the various panicums or millets; the chickling vetch, cotton, indigo, and other dye-plants, as safflower and madder; condiments, as fennel, mint, coriander, red pepper, and cummin-seed; inebriatives, as hemp and opium; medicines, especially senna; greens, onions and garlic, carrots and turnips, egg-plants and sweet potatoes; spinach and fenugreek; country-sorrel and oil seeds, with the exception of the *ricinus* which is perennial. It is hardly necessary to note such minute divisions as the Pishrás, or first-fruits, in June to February, for cotton and sugar, or the Adhává, in April to August, for Juwár (*Sorghum vulgare*), here the staff of life, and for Mung (*Phaseolus mungo*). As in other Moslem countries, the peasant's year is divided into Rabía, lasting from October to April, and Kharíf, the "balance" of the year: thus they escape the inconveniences of the lunar computation, which goes round the solar seasons.

In some places, where the fertilizing fluid lies far beneath the surface of the country, sets of two, three, and even four Persian-wheels, garnished with coarse pots, have been erected to raise and distribute it over the thirsty soil.

This part of Sind is Old Egypt in person. The river banks, even at this dry time of the year, are everywhere comely. The fields are for the most part parched like those of the Dekhan (Deccan), and cultivation is not extensive, but the number of *Shikúrgahs*, or hunting preserves, gives the scene an appearance of fertility; whilst the frequent villages and cultivators' huts enliven it to eyes full of the desolate loneliness which haunted us on the Karáchi-Kotri march. About the middle of May the inundation extends to the very tail. The first rise sweeps a body of water through the head, a signal for the peasant to wake up and be stirring. In a week the bed becomes a deep and rapid river which in Europe would claim the first rank, and on both banks the cultivators begin eagerly to make the best use of the time allowed for irrigating their lands. At the height of the flood the wonderful capability of the soil becomes apparent; the crops seem to grow under your eyes, and the plants rise to a gigantic size. The country is covered, even where cultivation extends not, with a coat of emerald verdure, and the river-gardens, so celebrated for their fruit, bloom with double beauty. The green fig (the purple variety is rare) would repay care; the tamarind is found wild and cultivated, as is the dwarf-palm, which thrives amazingly; the mulberry grows well, and might be tried along the canals and other places where water is close at hand; the Phulsa (*Grewia Asiatica*, L.) is almost eatable; the plantain, generally inferior to that of India, still makes nourishing and wholesome food; the apple poor and tasteless, resembling the "summer apple" of England; and the grape cannot be compared with the produce of the cold hill-countries to the North. There are sour limes and sweet limes, but no oranges; the custard-apple and the shaddock (pompelmoose, or pummelow), are found only in the gardens planted by the Haydarábád princes, and the guava and rose-apple are almost equally rare. The cocoa-palm has lately been introduced; it might, perhaps, be profitably cultivated on the salt soils near Karáchi. The fruit of the wood-apple (*Feronia*) is eaten, and the rind is made into snuff-boxes. The list concludes with pomegranates (bad and stony), varieties of the Sepistan or Cordia, and the jujube (*Zizyphus vulgaris*). Of these, the mango, good but requiring more care, is the only important item which enters into the diet of the people.

Everywhere you hear the monotonous creaking of the Persian-wheels, a sound pleasantly associated with visions of peace and plenty; and the shouts of the peasants goading their cattle, or hooting away, and slinging clay-pellets at, hungry flocks of impudent birds. Again the Nile! Near the towns and villages, the banks of these streams during the inundation are remarkably picturesque. From every eminence rise lofty, domed, and glittering tombs, shrined in little emerald casings of mimosa, acacia, and jujube. Here and there idle groups, dressed in the gayest colours, are sitting upon the bank and watching the crowds of male and female bathers that people the waters; busy throngs are to be seen at every ferry, and morning and evening long herds of cattle wade the fords.

The Phuléli is the main artery of Wicholo, or Middle Sind. It has been asserted, principally, I believe, on the authority of natives, that it was one of the provisional beds of the Indus during the migration of that stream from East to West. But the history of these shiftings has not yet been investigated, and, *en passant*, I may remark that if every broad and deep channel in this part of the country be allowed to claim the honour of having once contained the "Classic," we shall see ample reasons for supposing that our river must some time or other have flowed through almost every league of Sind. Perhaps it did.

You see yon long forest fenced round with mud-walls and strong thorn-hedges, over which appear the tufted tops of many trees, tamarisk, mimosa, and poplar being the chief varieties. There is no limit between it and the River; and every flood encroaches upon it, as you may perceive by the large trunks which, loosened from the banks, have sunk into the bed, and now lie like scattered fragments of cyclopean *chevaux de frise*.

These *Shikárgáhs*, literally meaning in Persian "hunting places," or preserves, the Belá of the popular tongue, form a peculiar feature. They generally line the margin of the river or of some wide branch, whose waters are dispersed through them by a network of drains, cuts, and ditches; thus they engross the most fertile and valuable soil in the province. The Amírs calculated that every head of deer killed cost them £80, and our authorities consider this no exaggeration, duly estimating the loss of revenue occasioned by foresting valuable land. All the *Shikárgáhs* were and are government property. The rulers' absorbing passion for field-sports, a taste with which you should sympathize, induced them to lavish large sums upon them, and to preserve them with peculiar care. "We value them," said one of the lords, "as much as our wives and children," a blunt truth which has been recorded by every writer that hath written upon the subject of Sind, as proof-positive of the desperate state in which those lords' minds, morals, and domestic affections must have been. Stripping the dictum of its Oriental exaggeration, you will come to the conclusion that the good Beloch, like English country gentlemen, attached, peradventure, a trifle too much importance to the inviolability of their covers, and that, not unlike an angry duke in the North-country, they were disposed actively to resent trespassing. True, they were sometimes barbarous in their endeavours to deter Robin Hoods and Little Johns from playing pranks beneath the greenwood tree. If you blame them, sir, you have only to turn over a page or two of your family records. Probably you have not forgotten, for it is within your memory, that a "learned" judge, a Christian and a civilized man, hanged an unhappy poacher, because he happened to cut a keeper's hand with a knife drawn in a sudden fray.

Unfortunately for the Princes of Sind, these preserves were as odious to us as they were dear to them. We found that "snags" came not from the mountains, but out of the *Shikárgáhs*. We required a clear belt of twelve yards wide between forest and river," to form a pathway for trackers. We determined that our steamers must be supplied with fuel, and that fuel was to be procured only from the hunting-forests. The owners

refused, objected, and wrangled, declaring that we were about to ruin their covers. We pointed out to them the Finger of Providence tracing the course of events, whereby was meant that we *must* have what we wanted; moreover, that this was the punishment for taking *Shikárgáhs* to their bosoms instead of wives, laying waste villages to make *Shikárgáhs*, and so forth. The men in possession again refused, objected, and wrangled, and yielded; your steady resolve, as usual, carried the day.

You never admired *battues*, sir, and what is more, you never will admire them. You—I particularize the word, for your Cornish and Cymbrian kinsfolk will occasionally fall, like Frenchmen or Italians, in bodies of twelve upon one, and your Hibernian neighbours show a little too much gusto in "potting" an enemy from behind a hedge—are the only human being in whom the principle and practice of Fair Play seem to be innate. You limit it not to affairs between man and man, you extend it even to feathered bipeds and to quadrupeds; consequently, you look upon the *battue*, fashionable, foreign, and even German though the diversion be, with no favouring eye.

For the same reason you will not admire the Sind Amírs' sportmanship. The animals were driven out of the thick covers which concealed them, by a gradually narrowing circle of yelling beaters and yelping dogs, into a square or parallelogram, carefully staked round and hedged with wattles to prevent escape; this inclosed space was divided into irregular triangles, by narrow alleys cut through the bushes and copses in every direction, all converging to the grass-hut under which sat the Prince, habited in a green gown and mounted on a low platform. There, in complete safety, he awaited the droves of wild boar and hog-deer (*Pára*), black-buck, and antelope, thronging down the open lanes, and jostling one another in their terror. The sport was mere slaughter, firing into a mob of beasts ten or twenty yards off. The only chance of a miss was when some frightened brute, bounding high in the air, required a snap-shot to bring it down before it dived out of sight into the cover. Often, before a grand hunt, the supply of water was cut off for a few days and, after the guns had been stationed in positions commanding the courses, these were opened to herds that rushed down to slake their thirst and be butchered.

The Amír enjoyed all the pleasures of the field: his followers had all the disadvantages and the dangers. His son or nephew was expected to stand by him, not shooting, but exclaiming "Bravo!" at every shot the senior made. When told to fire, a rare honour, he never dared ascribe success to his own matchlock:¹⁵⁸ it was his father's or his uncle's bullet, still in its barrel, that had killed the animal. On the rare occasion when a tiger was started, the Beloch huntsman, instead of leaving it to be dealt with by his Prince, pressed forward with his trusty hound, and armed with only a sword and shield, or possibly a bamboo-spear, never hesitated to attack the beast, and, if he slew it, to accord to his liege the honour of the deed. Often the poor fellows lost their lives in these

¹⁵⁸ Matchlocks were generally, English rifles rarely, used.

gallant, unequal encounters; torn and gnawed, they dragged themselves to die at their master's feet, expending their last breath to praise his prowess. A paltry shawl thrown over their necks was their sole, at the same time their sufficient, reward. When an accident happened it was sure to be followed by another: one fool makes many, and the people only loved the Prince the more for thus permitting his subjects to die for him almost gratis. Yet the Amírs were not all Cockney-sportsmen. Some of them would have been considered first-rate shots, even in England. Ali Murád, of Khayrpúr, on one occasion gallantly killed with his Persian blade, single-handed and from horseback, a full-sized tiger. These beasts, rare in Central and Lower Sind, were common in the North, where they strayed down from the jungly forests that line the banks of the Upper Indus.

The *battues* were the reverse of blessings to the country. The Amír would sometimes spend weeks at the rural palace adjoining a favourite preserve; and, as in the royal progresses of our early kings, his retinue, which resembled a small army, quartered itself upon the villages around, of course never paying a pice for board and lodging. The peasant who ventured to complain was very likely to lose his ears even had he deserted his home, the *ultima ratio pauperum* in these regions, the step would have been considered high treason. So the wretches stuck to their hearths, and looked calmly at desolation gathering about them. Like a Persian soldier, the Beloch or Sindi retainer would never hesitate to pull down a house if he wanted a stick, to kill a cow for a steak, or to slaughter with his horsewhip all the inmates of a hencoop till he found a fat chicken. The "Ryots" were made to act beaters in hundreds, no matter how urgently their presence might be required elsewhere. The Hindu was forced from his shop, the Moslem from his plough: they received no remuneration, and when their legs were ripped up by a boar, or their backs gored by a buck, a trifling present was expected to pay for all damage. These "progresses" also acted as active diffusers of debauchery. After hunting, the Amír would amuse himself with listening to story-tellers, bards, musicians, and Nách-women, and the scenes enacted by his dissolute followers were most pre-judicial to the simple peasantry, their spectators, and often their imitators.

Seven miles to Husri, a large straggling village on the left bank of the Phuléli, interesting to us for no other reason than that we break our fast there: Sindís value it for its mine of Met, or washing clay. We find an attempt at a Traveller's Bungalow, a mud-house in the usual style, two loose boxes for rooms, and a verandah, the whole so securely walled round that you feel yourself in a long home uncomfortably large. Most Englishmen in the East delight thus to isolate themselves from the sable and tawny members of their species,

"Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow."

I prefer to be where one can be giggled at by the young, and scowled at by the old, as they pass to and from the well; where one can throw sugar-plums to, and watch the

passions thereby called into being from, innocent and artless childhood; where we can excite the men by sketching them and showing the caricature; startle the greybeard by disputing his dogmas; and wrangle about theology with the angry beggars. In these countries all mendicants, Moslems as well as Hindus, may be looked upon in the light of "holy limitoures," for they invariably have a smattering of divinity, they belong to some religious order, and they idle away their time in the name of Allah. Consequently they are professionally bigoted, and impatient of contradiction.

Our Tarbúshes preserve us from the dignified uneasiness that besets the hatted head. The people easily perceive by our tents, hog-skin saddles, English bridles, the chairs upon which we sit at meals, and our using such ridiculous implements as forks, when Nature supplied us with fingers, that we are strange men. Still, we do not startle them. They are beginning to feel easy in the presence of European-aping natives from Bombay; of dark officers, who wear white kid gloves when promenading, and shake hands with the ladies; of Munshis in *Pagris* (turbans) and *Angarkhás*, or white cotton coats, above, British pantaloons and patent-leathers below; and of half-castes who hopelessly imitate the ruling race by a bellowing voice, short hair, and a free use of milk of roses. To these hybrid offsprings of civilization and barbarism they are, I repeat, so accustomed, that they look upon us only as some hitherto unseen variety of the species; and in their curiosity they press forward eagerly, as you have done, sir, to find yourself face to face with the first hippo., or with an ourang-outang marvellous for hideousness. As we pass out of the stifling bungalow towards the Ráuti, the servants' tent-shed, pitched by order under the shady jujube-trees, remark, if you please, the want of windows and doors in the "hostelry" — how typical of the state of a country, which has been, if it is not now, governed by a ready and vigorous hand.

When will you be able to live at home and dispense with lock and chain? When do you think we shall again enjoy that luxury in districts which, like Bengal Proper and other places, you have disordered with your Civil Codes and High Courts?

About the advent time of the Greek Kalends!

Listen, whilst I must repeat to you a very old truth. A military government is the only form of legislature precisely adapted to these countries.

Well, sir, I know it! You hate a rule of Soldiers. You would be upon the verge of insanity were a Red-coat to arrest you: you only grumble at the arbitrary bullying of a "Blue-bottle." You are to be managed by the Chob (stick), which you call a "staff;" a sabre would drive you mad. If a Field-Marshal shoot a man by mistake, you cry, "murder: " if a Judge hang the wrong individual, you call it a mistake. You are furiously prejudiced on this point, and you have a right to your prejudices you can administer your own household affairs according to any whim, called system, which obtains for a while over its fellows. But when you thrust your "enlightened institutions," the growth of slowly

rolling centuries, upon the semi-barbarians of the Ionian Isles, and the rugged ruffians of Afghanistan, then you pass the fine limit of things proper. Then you act like a professed philanthropist, very benevolently, and, in my humble opinion, very unwisely, very mischievously.

But of what use all this iteration? It has been said to you a hundred times over, and in vain. You are of a ticklish age just now, Mr. Bull, like a "frisky matron" on the verge of forty-five. You will extend the principle, amongst other wild fancies, of laying down a railroad where the neighbourhood requires a footpath; you are determined to carry out in politics, as in topical improvements, this system of end-without-beginning. If India were placed under Soldiers, what is to become of the Civil Service?—what of the Briton's pet boast that, all the world over, his Law is one and the same?

These puzzles I cannot solve: still I venture to believe that one of these days, as the nursery phrase is, India will be ruled by military government. The Russians, who hate to be called semi-Orientals, and yet who owe to the mixture of the East with the West their highest national qualities, and notably their power of dealing with Easterns, have long ago discovered the use, I will not say the blessing, of soldier-rule. Confine your Civil Codes and your High Courts within a few miles of your great Capitals in India; place soldier-collectors and magistrates in your Provinces. Revive the "Pancháyat," or native jury of five, which dated in the Peninsula long before the days of Alfred the Great, and regulate it by placing a military man as President. In fact, labour to bring out the capabilities of your subject races, not to Anglicise them. And, above all things, economy without cheese-paring, and honesty which does not lavish public money on a pet caste, called "Civilian."

Now, as you are beginning to look intensely surly, we will, as ancient matrons say when they have succeeded in making a conversation thoroughly distasteful,— "change the subject."

Some years ago, when surveying the country about this Husri, I had an opportunity of reading a lecture to a gentleman about your age, sir: hear how politely he received it, without ever using the word "dogmatical," or making the slightest allusion to "forwardness."

I was superintending the shampooing¹⁵⁹ of a fighting-cock, about as dunghill and "low-caste" a bird as ever used a spur, but a strong spiteful thing, a sharp riser, and a clean

¹⁵⁹ As Orientals generally fight their birds without spurs, they pay extraordinary attention to feeding, training, and exercising them. They are sweated and scoured with anxious care, dosed, in my poor opinion, a great deal too much, with Masálá (spices and drugs), and made to pass hours in running, flying, and leaping. The shampooing is intended to harden their frames; it is done regularly every day, morning and evening. A fair course of training lasts from three weeks to a month, and the birds are generally brought out in excellent condition.

hitter withal. Bhujang,¹⁶⁰ the "dragon" had sent many a brother biped to the soup-pot. Ere the operation of rubbing him down ended, in walked an old Moslem gentleman, who had called in a friendly, unceremonious way to look at and chat with the stranger.

Cocking, you must know, was not then the "low" diversion you have been pleased to make it, and, for the life of me, I never could understand why you hate the good old classical sport and yet cleave to Hurlingham pigeon-shooting.

There was a humorous twinkle in my visitor's sly eye as it fell upon the ungainly form of Bhujang, and the look gained intensity when, turning towards me, he salam'd and courteously ejaculated, "Máshálláh—that is a bird!—the Haydarábád¹⁶¹ breed, Sahib, or the Afghan?"

I shuffled off the necessity of romancing about my dunghill's origin, and merely replied that, struck by its many beauties, I had bought it of some unknown person; I did not add for eightpence.

"What Allah pleases!—it is a miraculous animal! You must have paid his weight in silver! Two hundred rupees or three hundred?"¹⁶²

Many people are apt to show impatience or irritability when being "made fools of," whereby, methinks, they lose much fun, and show more folly than they imagine. My answer to the old gentleman's remark was calculated to persuade that most impertinently polite personage that the Frank, with all his Persian and Arabic, was a "jolly green." Thereupon, with the utmost suavity, he proceeded to inform me that he also was a fighter of cocks, and that he had some birds, of course immeasurably inferior to that splendid animal *there*, which perhaps might satisfy even my fastidious taste. He concluded with offering to fight one under the certainty of losing it—the usual wager is the body of the bird killed or wounded—but anything for a little sport. Again he gauged me with his cunning glance, salam'd, and took his leave.

In the evening, before prayers, Ahmed Khan, slowly sauntered in, accompanied by his friends and domestics; a privileged servant carrying in his arms a magnificent bird, tall, thin, gaunt, and active, with the clear, full, fierce eye, the Chashm-i-Murwárid, the "eye of pearl," as the Persians call it; short, thin, taper head; long neck, stout crooked back; round, compact body; bony, strong, and well-hung wings; muscular thighs, skanks yellow as purest gold, and huge splay claws—in fact, a love of a cock.

¹⁶⁰ Game-cocks, like chargers, are always called by some big and terrible name.

¹⁶¹ The game-cocks of Haydarábád, in the Dekhan, are celebrated throughout India for their excellence and rarity. So difficult is it to purchase birds of purest blood, that I have heard of a rich Moslem visiting the Nizam's capital for the purpose of buying eggs, and succeeding in buying them boiled.

¹⁶² The usual price of a first-rate cock is, or was, 3£ to 4£. My friend was indulging his facetiousness when he named 20£ or 30£.

I thought of Bhujang for a moment despairingly.

After a short and ceremonious dialogue, in which the old gentleman "trotted" me out very much to his own satisfaction, and to the amusement of the company, terms were settled, and Bhujang was brought in struggling upon his bearer's bosom, kicking his stomach, stretching his neck, and crowing with an air as if he were the *Sans-peur* of all the cocks. There's the animal for you! I exclaimed, as he entered. It was a treat to see the *goguenard* glances around.

Countenances, however, presently changed, when, sending for a dozen Indian cockspurs,¹⁶³ like little scimitars, I lashed a pair to my bird's toes, and then politely proceeded to perform the same operations to that of my friend. Ahmed Khan looked on curiously. He was too much of a sportsman, that is to say, a gentleman, to hang back; although he began to suspect that all was not so right as he could have wished it to be. His thoroughbred's natural weapon was sound, thin, and sharp as a needle, low down upon the shank, at least an inch and a quarter long, and bent at the correctest angle; mine had short, ragged, and blunt bits of horn, the most inoffensive weapon imaginable. But the steel levelled all distinctions.

We took up the champions, stood a few yards apart, the usual distance, placed them on the ground, and when the "*laissez aller*" was given, let go.

For some reason, by me unexplainable, the game cock, especially in this country, when fighting with a dunghill, seldom begins the battle with the spirit and activity of its plebeian antagonist. Possibly the noble animal's blood boiling in its veins at the degrading necessity of entering the lists against "that snob," for a moment confuses it. However that may be, one thing is sure, namely, that it generally receives the first few blows.

On this occasion Bhujang the vulgarian, who appeared not only to be destitute of respect for ancient lineage and gentle blood, nay, more, like an English cad, to be ineffably delighted at the prospect of soundly "thrashing" a gentleman, began to spring and kick with such happy violence and *uplomb*, that before the minute elapsed one of the long steels was dyed with the enemy's heart's-blood.

Politeness forbade, otherwise I could have laughed aloud at the expression assumed by the faces that witnessed this especial "sell." Ahmed Khan, at the imminent peril of a wound from the triumphant dunghill, which excited cowardice now made vicious as a

¹⁶³ The Indian weapon differs essentially from ours. It is a straight bit of steel varying from two to three and a half inches in length, with a blunt flat shaft, sabre-like blade, and a handle, as it were, by which it is lashed to the bird's middle toe and shank. Every cockfighter has scores of these tools, made in every variety of size and angle to suit the cocks.

fiend, raised his cock from the ground, looked piteously for an instant at its glazing eye and drooping head, bowed, and handed it over to me with a sigh.

Then, like the parasite of Peñaflor after dinner, I thus addressed him:

"Ahmed Khan, great is the power of Allah! Did not a gnat annihilate Namrúd,¹⁶⁴ the giant king? Could Rustam, the son of Zál, stand against a pistol bullet? or 'Antar against an ounce of aquafortis? Have you not heard of the Hikmat,¹⁶⁵ of the Frank, that he is a perfect Aflátún (Plato) in wisdom and contrivance? Another time, old sir, don't conclude that, because our skins are white, we are the sons of asses; and if you will take my advice, don't pit your valuable cocks against the obscure produce of a peasant's poultry yard."

Wallah!" replied my visitor, all the cunning twinkle out of his eye, "I will follow your counsel! your words are sharp: they are the words of wisdom. But," here obstinacy and conventionalism obscured Ahmed Khan's brighter qualities, "your bird is a wonderful bird. Máshálláh may he win many a fight, even as he has done this one!"

At last Nurái, near Sudderan's Column.

A great grievance to the weary wayfarer, in this part of Sind, is the ever-increasing length of the standard measure. Accustomed to consider a mile a mile, one does, especially when tired or hungry, feel that the term "German mile" is a kind of insult to one's understanding. So with the Sindian kos. In India it is, when *pakká*, about two miles long here the measure varies greatly; short in the north, in the south and south-east it becomes about double the common distance. Moreover, this people appears to possess either a strangely inaccurate eye for determining distance, or an unexact tongue for declaring it. If you ask a wayfarer how far the next village is, he probably replies, *uthe*, "there," i.e., close by, which means, scarcely within rifle-reach; or it is *Sadda-pandh*, a shout's length, by which you must understand that you have nothing less than four good miles before you.

We pass the night on a plain close to the spot where the Phuléli falls into the Guni River, or rather where its lower course, after the Gajah fork, takes the name of Guni. This, to judge from the large area covered with broken bricks, and with the ruined foundations of large buildings, was once the site of a flourishing city, doomed, like many of its fellows, to display "the havoc of the East." As usual in Sind, a few domed tombs, converted into pigeon-houses, are the only melancholy survivors of former magnificence; a modern mud-mosque, humbly built to accommodate the sparse population of the neighbouring villages, contrasts strongly with the thought of the

¹⁶⁴ Nimrod, represented to be a cruel tyrant, who, attempting to martyr Hazrat Ibráhím (Abraham), was slain by a mosquito, sent to eat into his brain, probably for the especial purpose of pointing many a somnific Oriental moral.

¹⁶⁵ Philosophy, science, political cunning, king-craft, etc., a favourite word for head-work in Moslem Asia.

things that were. This line of country was the route of the celebrated Madad Khan, a ruthless and successful soldier, who boasted that where he found a rose-garden he left salt earth. About the close of the last century, the last invader of Sind was despatched by Shah Taymúr, the Afghan monarch, with an overwhelming force, to restore Miyán Abd el Nabi, the Kalhóra tyrant, to a throne from which he had been driven by his military vassals, the Talpur Beloch. The general's conduct during the expedition was shamefully cruel, and therefore effective in the highest degree.

The *locale* is not without its interest. ran's column, which does not remind you of Trajan's, Pompey's, or Nelson's, is the resort of Hindu pilgrims, who flock here every year in the dark half of the month Waisákh (April-May). The devotees, after shaving their heads, first perform *Pradakhshina*, or circumambulation, with the right side always presented, in honour, to the object circumambulated, thrice round the column; after which each casts seven clods or brickbats¹⁶⁶ at the neighbouring tomb, accompanying the action with remarks the reverse of complimentary to its tenant.

When darkness falls upon us, and we return to take our ease in our closed tent, enjoying ourselves over our homely fireside, a hole dug in the ground and filled with burning braise, I will recount the tale to the music of the village dogs' monotonous bayings, the bubblings of our water-pipes, and the spiteful lamentations which the jackals vent upon the subject of our pertinacious vitality.

Before the time of the Rasúl (Apostle), a Hindu date, popular on account of the latitude it affords, this plain was covered by a noble city which extended its limits over the distant fork of limestone-hills. And Rajah Rám, the ruler of that city, was a prince renowned (as many Eastern monarchs are in story-books) for valour, justice, and generosity; moreover, he had a fine large family, for which it appears he had to thank the practice of polygamy.

It so happened, that when Sudderan, the eldest of Rajah Rám's cohort of sons, arrived at the age of puberty, his mother, the favourite wife, died; and the afflicted widower, his father, speedily filled up the void which her demise had created in his heart and home, by taking to his bosom another of the fairest damsels in his dominions.

All the world over stepmothers are, it is said, ever in extremes, either running into over-regard for their step-sons, or, what is far more common, busying themselves in embittering the hours of their husbands' children during his life, and in appropriating their goods and chattels after his death. The young Ráni conceived a passionate affection for the Prince, whose noble qualities, moral and physical, were, the original relator affirms, not I, Mr. Bull, such as almost to excuse the *écart*.

¹⁶⁶ Possibly a rite derived from the Moslems; this is the number of stones thrown at the Shaytán in the Valley of Muná, near Meccah.

One day, as Sudderan was practising archery in the palace garden, he missed his mark, and shot an arrow into his stepdame's drawing-room. The young man thoughtlessly ran upstairs to recover the missile, when, Oriental ladies are *naïve* in their declarations, to his horror and astonishment, the queen began to be very bold and forward. This Hindu Joseph, briefly remarking that he considered her in the light of a mother, left the room as speedily as he was allowed to do.

Rajah Rám was out hunting during the acting of this dreadful scene. No sooner did he return than, as you or any other man could guess, his wife, determining that her hate, if not her love – the sentiments are sisters should be gratified, denounced Sudderan, upon the false charge usual on such occasions, and insisted that his wickedness deserved the severest chastisement.

Like red-hot steel, as also might be expected, burned the uxorious old Rajah's wrath, which nothing but blood could extinguish. Hastily calling together a few trusty followers, he left his wife's apartment, determined, with utter disregard to the best and most hackneyed bit of advice that ever issued from old Justice's prosy lips, *audi alteram partem*, upon the instant destruction of his son.

Meanwhile Sudderan, who was still amusing himself in the garden, saw his father and the slaves hurrying towards him with armed hands, and with countenances upon which malice prepense was legibly written. When it was too late, he attempted to fly. Rage winged the old Rajah's steps; already, sword in hand, he was close to his victim, when the good Sudderan, to save his sire from the sin of filicide, prayed for immediate death.

He disappeared, and a pillar of earth rose from the spot, so near Rajah Rám that he ran against it, whilst a *Beth-Kol*, a loud and terrible voice, not the produce of human lungs, declared that Heaven had listened to the prayer of the innocent.

The old king's mind was enlightened by the miracle. He returned home with a listless air; gave careless directions for the decapitation of his would-be Parisina; died shortly afterwards of want of appetite and that general derangement of the digestive organs popularly called a "broken heart," and was buried in yonder tomb, to be pelted and abused by many a generation of pilgrims.

The Thúl, or pillar, unconnected with the romance, is a puzzle. It is a truncated cone of the mud used in Sindi buildings, about sixteen feet high, and seventy-one in circumference round the base. It stands upon a mound of the same material, and the whole covers a natural platform of lime-stone-rock.

Easily climbing to the top by one of the wide clefts which rain has dug in the side of the tumulus, I found a shaft sunk to the foundation. Below the base was a tunnel, into which I penetrated, despite the fiends and dragons, the cobras and scorpions, with which my native friends peopled it: it was about seven or eight feet in length, and it led nowhere. These diggings, I afterwards heard, were the work of Ghulam Ali Talpur, one of the late Princes, who, suspecting, as an Oriental always does, that treasure was to be found in, under, or somewhere about the mysterious erection, took the most energetic and useless steps to discover it.

Sudderan's pillar cannot be ancient, unless, at least, it is indebted for preservation to the active hands of the devotee; the very dew would melt it away in the course of a century. Similar remains are not uncommon in this part of Sind; they are the Round Towers of the land, but not belfries; all of them are pegs for tradition, and possibly, at some future time, will be material for archæological discussion. On the Gánjah hills, about three miles from Sudderan's Thúl, there is another tower, similar in all things to this, except that it is now in a ruinous state. The people have named it *Kuttehár*, after a dog whose superior sagacity discovered the spot in which thieves had buried his owner's property. Like Sudderan's fate, the poor animal's runs in the established groove; it lost its life by the master's hasty choler, and, in due time, that is to say when too late, the master discovered his mistake, repented his conduct, and erected this monument to the memory of his *Kutto*. When steaming down the Indus I shall tell you another tale of a Sindi "Gêlert."

CHAPTER XXI.

A RIDE TO MIR IBRÁHÍM KHAN TALPUR'S VILLAGE. CHRISTMAS DAY!

Without intending to string together a series of sentences which aim at the sentimental and which hit the mawkish, I must draw your attention, sir, to what, perhaps, you are feeling, without being willing to clothe the sensation in words, namely, that of all the melancholy, suicidal times, none so bad as a birthday, an old festival, or any other time connected with the memory of the past, coming round upon the sojourner amid the sadness of a strange land.

To-day, for instance. It is eleven o'clock. Part of you is riding in semi-heathen garb, spear in hand, over a scorched plain, or down a sandy canal, chilled by the sharp cold of morning, burned by the nooning sun, and with breakfast *in posse not in esse*. You jog along, *cupo concentrato*, as the Italian hath it. Suddenly you draw rein; your eyes fixed; your mind is in your ears. That joyous carolling of distant church-bells, whence can it come? Whence? whence? you puzzle over the question. How wonderfully true it is! now full and sonorous, as if the breeze brought every pulsation of sound directly to your senses: then soft and mellowed by distance, till scarcely heard in the hum of the day. You can scarcely persuade yourself that, like the light-chaos which appears in the dark, a false creation, proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain, deludes you; that it is the twanging of some over-excited nerve-fibre or filament, a mere revival of an obsolete and long-forgotten impression.

Again; the sun sets: darkness drops upon you like a shroud, instead of delicately encircling you with the several shades and graduations of twilight. You return from your absent and disconsolate evening's stroll to your lonely, ill-lit tent; you prepare for your dinner, a boiled barn-door, with a *bifteck* of goat. What visions are causing your black valet to wonder at your moodiness, while you discuss the unpalatable morsel?

Finally you retire: you turn your face towards the tent wall and—weep? No! or sleep? No! The frown of night and the silence of solitude deepen the gloom about your heart. For hours you lie awake, rolling restlessly from side to side, as if each new thought left a sting in you. You *think*. Your eyes have another sight; your ears a hearing which scarcely belongs to them; even your material nose becomes spiritually affected. In a moment you are severed from yourself, miraculously, I should almost say, by such lands and such seas! You annihilate time as you do space: you are Jack, Johnny, Master John, and Mister John Bull, all in the twinkling of an eye. The scenes of by-gone days are rehearsed with a vividness which startles you. Again you hear the dear familiar voices of family and friends ringing upon the tympanum of your soul; again there are

smiles and frowns for you, and words of greeting and words of rebuke. The very roast-beef and plum-pudding of former days appear to you with all their accidents.

Then you start up with an impatient yearning, a longing to be where you cannot be. Where you cannot be, you repeat, and yet you feel that had you wings they would be too slow for you. The truth weighs you down; you sink back, mournfully acknowledging that you are and must be where you are. At last you fall asleep; you are in Dream-land your mind leaves your body, that is, your brain loses its balance, and for a moment or two you enjoy your desire.

We have all heard and read of preternatural appearances of persons to persons, of shadowy forms. meeting, it is believed, the eye of sense. Are these spectres mere delusions? Or, is there some yet unexplained law in the world of nerve which permits Will under certain conditions to perform a feat savouring of the supernatural; that is, the natural misunderstood, or not understood at all. May we not reasonably believe that when the whole force of man's thought has been concentrated upon some object, however distant, his cerebral action may assume the subjective guise of a "real presence"? I must presume that something of the kind can and does take place; without such explanation we travellers cannot understand how belief in the phenomenon has become so natural to all nations, instinctive to the universal world.

Enough of metaphysics. At all times they are a labyrinth of words; an intricate way leading roundabouts to nowhere; a Chinese puzzle, admirably calculated unprofitably to perplex one. The moralist must be slipped at you, sir. Anent these repinings, he will assure you solemnly that you are bound to consider what is happy, not what is unhappy, in your lot; for instance, that on this Christmas Day you are not reduced to dining on white ants, and to quenching your thirst by masticating a musket bullet; that you are not "floored by a fever, or that some tiger-like Beloch is not sawing away at your windpipe with his long knife; and severely sententious does he become when you ironically laugh out something about gratitude and small mercies. The religionist, with reverend countenance, after entering into the general history of Christmas Day, will admonish you —

What? a snore!

It is time to be stirring, sir. Mount your horse; turn its head in a south-east direction towards the Guni River; and use your spurs, or we shall be well-nigh famished ere we reach the village of Mir Ibráhím Khan Talpur.

In that preserve, the Haran Shikárgáh, as it is called, occurred to me one of those small adventures, generally comical to all but the actual actor, and comical even to him after that it has become an Occurrence. A friend and brother-officer in the Sind Canal Survey, Lieut. Blagrave, and I, attended by a host of "beaters," with loud lungs, long poles, and

all the appurtenances of that Eastern species of the pointer-cum-retriever, had been passing a happy day in firing round after round at the wild fowl that tenant the ponds and pools. Never before did I witness such a monster-meeting of feathery bipeds; they darkened the surface of the waters, and when they arose the noise of their wings was, without exaggeration, like the growling of a distant thunder-cloud. Col. Hawker himself could not have desired better sport; only he would probably have remembered a duck gun (No. 8 bore, carrying 2 oz. A.A., fatal at fifty yards), and he would have knocked up for himself some kind of punt, both which *desiderata* we neglected.

Towards the conclusion of the day, as we were preparing to beat a retreat, we came in sight of a little Jhíl (lake), upon which thousands of the prey were cackling, feeding, swimming, fluttering, and otherwise disporting themselves. It was agreed, *nem. con.*, that, as an afterpiece to the tragical work, we should settle as many of them as six or eight barrels could.

"Creep over to the other side of the Jhíl," whispered my friend, "blaze into 'em sitting, and send 'em over this way – I'll drive them back to you."

"Very well, old fellow; keep the beaters here."

My solitary path lay across a kind of ditch that connected two ponds. Thinking to wade it easily, I never thought of leaping it, and in a surprisingly short time I found myself head over ears in mud and water intimately mixed, the latter ingredient, however, preponderating.

Sir, with large jack-boots and wide Turkish trowsers, with oil-cloth hare-pockets, and a double-barrelled gun in hand, it is, I may observe, by no means an easy matter to swim. Generally, the harder you strike out, and the more vigorously you would spring upward, the deeper and the more rapidly you descend. Unwilling to lose my "Westley-Richards," I still kept firm hold of it, hoping with the disengaged fingers to scramble upon the side. It was catching at a straw; the soft slimy bank, instead of affording any purchase to my clawings, yielded as if it had been butter in the dog-days. Things were beginning to look serious; it was impossible to shout, as my mouth would not keep above water; down fell the gun totally forgotten, and a gulp or two of thick beverage was an earnest, as it were, that Kismet, after conveying me safely half round the globe, had set her heart upon drowning me in a ditch. With one last frantic effort I dug my nails deep into the greasy bank, and hung on grimly as did Quasimodo's victim to the roof's edge; when suddenly, with a crash and a splash, I went deep under the water once more. My friend had caught sight of my predicament and, eager to save me, he had rushed up to the rescue. In the ardour of his anxiety, somewhat overrating his saltatory powers, he had charged the brook, fallen short in his spring, and had taken the only means of saving himself a ducking" similar to mine, by alighting upon my shoulders and by vigorously scrambling up the back of my head.

However we were not drowned, Mr. Bull: I take notice of your looks. Here the adventure ended. The beaters rushed up shrieking with terror; they expected to be hanged, at least, if either of us had lost our lives. I was pulled out by the collar, a mass of mud and water-bags; the gun was recovered by diving; and half-an-hour afterwards two individuals in shirts and terminations, regular Anglo-Indian *wilde Jäger* and spectre huntsmen, were gazed at, shuddered at, and exorcised, by the startled peasantry as they dashed at full gallop through the twilight in fearful anticipation of a bad cold.

We are now in the provinces inhabited by the Jats. Your eye has scarcely grown critical enough in this short time to discern the tweedle-dum-and-tweedle-dee-like difference between their personal appearance and that of their kinsman, the Sindis; nor can I expect you yet to distinguish a Jat *Wandh* (village) from a Sind *Goth* (village). You are certain to take some interest in a race which appears to be the progenitor of the old witch in a red cloak, whose hand, in return for the cunning nonsense to which her tongue gave birth, you once crossed with silver; and of the wiry young light-weight, whose game and sharp hitting you have, in happier days, more than once condescended to admire.

Our authors¹⁶⁷ are probably right when they suppose the Jat to be the aboriginal Hindu of Sind converted to El-Islam. Native historians and their own traditions, however, concur in assigning to them a strange origin; their language, to this day a congener of that spoken throughout the Indine provinces of the Panjáb, gives support and value to the otherwise doubtful testimony. But they do not speak one tongue, even in Sind: the tribes about Umarmot, for instance, are not intelligible to their brethren in Lár. It is probable that, compelled to emigrate from their own lands by one of the two main causes that bring about such movements in the East, war or famine, some of the Jat tribes of Sind travelled southward from the Panjáb about the beginning of the eighteenth century of our era. Popularly they are supposed to have appeared in Europe early in the fifteenth century, when the Amír Taymúr and his Tartars had caused a stampede in Hind and Sind; but there are reasons for believing that either the Jats or congener-races were settled in the West many centuries before that date, and that, possibly, the true Gipsy is only the latest wave of emigration.

Under the quasi-ecclesiastical Kálhóra dynasty, when Sindis composed the aristocracy as well as the commonalty of the country, the Jats, in consequence of their superior

¹⁶⁷ See Captain Postans' "Personal Observations on Sind," Chapter III. I have already referred to the Jat, a word to be pronounced Dyatu, in my "Sindh and the Races," etc. (Allen, London, 1851). Since the publication of the Grammar of the Játaki or Jat tongue, begun in 1844, and printed in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Bombay (January, 1849), the identification has excited some attention. The learned Professor Pott, author of the "Zigeuner in Europe und Asien," 2 vols., vet. Halle, 1844-45, had partially adopted the identification; and the Italian linguist, Professor Ascoli, of Milan, inclines towards this dialect of Sindi, whilst M. Paul Bataillard has done battle with me upon the priority of discovery.

strength, their courage, and their clannish coalescence, rose to distinction. The chiefs of tribes became nobles, officials, and ministers at court: they provided for their families by obtaining grants of land, feofs subject to certain military services; and for their followers by settling them as tenants on their broad lands. But the prosperity of the race did not last long. They fell from their high estate when the Beloch, better men than they, entered the country, and began to appropriate its profits by degrees, slow yet sure, they lost all claims to rank, wealth, and office. They are now found scattered throughout Sind, generally preferring the south-eastern provinces, where they earn a scanty subsistence by agriculture; or they roam over the barren plains feeding their flocks upon the rare oases; or they occupy themselves in breeding, training, tending, and physicking the camel. With the latter craft their name has become identified, a Jat and a Sarwán (camel-man) sounding synonymous in Sindi ears.

The Jats, in appearance, are a swarthy and uncomely race, dirty in the extreme; long, gaunt, bony, and rarely, if ever, in good condition. Their beards are thin, and there is a curious Gipsy-like expression in their eyes. They dress like Sindis, preferring blue to white clothes; but they are taller, larger, and in appearance more un-Indian. Some few, but very few, of their women are, in early youth, remarkable for soft and regular features; this charm, however, soon yields to the complicated ugliness brought on by exposure to the sun, by scanty living, and by the labour of baggage-cattle. In Sind the Jats of both sexes are possessed of the virtues especially belonging to the oppressed and inoffensive Eastern cultivator; they are necessarily frugal and laborious, peaceful, and remarkable for morality in the limited sense of aversion to intrigue with members of a strange *Kaum*.¹⁶⁸ I say, in Sind; this is by no means the reputation of the race in the other parts of Central Asia, where they have extended, or whence possibly they first came. The term "Jat" is now popularly applied to a low and servile creature, or to an impudent villain; and despite the *Tohfát el Kirám*,¹⁶⁹ a Beloch would consider himself mortally affronted were you to confound his origin with the caste which his ancestors deposed, and which he despises for having allowed itself to be deposed. The Bráhuís, Afghans, and Persians, all have a bad word to say of them.

Fourteen or fifteen miles from Sudderan's column to Ibráhím Khan's village. At this time of the year sand-storms begin about ten o'clock a.m. One's only chance of escaping them is to rise early in spite of the dry, searching, uncomfortable cold, and to reach the halting-place before their hour.

The country hereabouts, you see, is irrigated by a number of water-courses, large and small, derived from the big branches filled with water by the main trunk during the inundation. What affects one with surprise is the great and useless number of these works. In some places, three deep trenches, perhaps twenty feet broad, run parallel

¹⁶⁸ In the language of the Jat, a clan.

¹⁶⁹ The author of this well-known Persian History of Sind asserts that the Jats and the Beloch are both sprung from the same ancestor.

with and close by one another, for miles and miles through the land. You will not, however, be astonished by, when you hear the obvious reasons for, the peculiarity. Each canal was dug by and belonged to some native chief, whose estate lay upon the bank; and an attempt to borrow water without leave would have excited a storm of wrath. So, where we are now riding, for instance, the northern channel is the property of a Chandiyó Beloch, the southern of a Changiyó, whilst the central bed conveyed nourishment to private and to Government lands lying beyond reach of the other two.

You may also remark that the heads of these canals were usually so placed that the drift of sand carried down the main stream choked them up as quickly as possible. The rise and fall of ground were calculated by the practised eye, spirit-levels being things unknown: consequently the line of direction was, in one case out of ten, chosen for the best. The banks, instead of being disposed at a convenient angle, were made either perpendicular or projecting, so as to be readily undermined by the current, and to occasion as much work and loss of time to the excavators as even the latter, gainers by the loss, could desire. The prodigious tortuousness of the bed may appear to you the result of calculation, an attempt to make natural locks: this is partly so, but also the abrupt and expensive windings were, in many cases, intended to get over the difficulty of some trifling rise.

This is the dead season in Sind. The fields, small and rare amongst the luxuriant masses of Nature's plantations, in form of Jáó, Kárel, and Jhill,¹⁷⁰ are covered over with a stratum of white, shiny clay, with isolated stubbles projecting from it, like the stray hairs on a certain unperuked scalp. The water which remains in the river-beds below the banks is even more offensive than that of Father Thames; the trees are withered and scraggy; the straggling villages are surrounded by heaps of dried-up thorn and brushwood. Nothing but the sunshine seems to flourish: nothing abounds but dust and glare.

The labourers, or rather the lucky part of the labouring population, are at work, if that English term be allowed, on the canals. In winter they will do anything to save themselves from semi-starvation; yet observe their characteristic apathy. The head-man, who receives from Government £2 per hand, in consideration of his gang of 150 head, lies dozing-drunk under a sheet stretched between two giant bushes. Although the work is done by contract, and for every rupee a cubit in depth by one in breadth and eighteen in length must be excavated, at least half the diggers are squatting torpidly on their hams, looking at the different pits, which at this stage of their labours are dug in the clayey deposit of the inundation. The few who are not sitting or standing lazily scrape up the cake with dwarf hoes, and, *à plusieurs reprises*, transfer it to the shallow baskets of wicker-work, little bigger than soup-plates, with which they load their heads.

¹⁷⁰ Various wood-like shrubs, which being interpreted by hard Latin words, become as unintelligible after translation as before.

Then, groaning under the weight of five pounds, they slowly toil up the steps cut out in the canal-side, and throw down their burdens to save trouble, upon its edge, thereby annually adding a few cubic feet to the spoil-banks that encumber it. Such toil requiring reflection, they sit down for a minute or two under the mimosas which spring where mulberries ought to grow, gazing listlessly upon the scene and the society of their toils; then, rising again, with the usual half-grunt, half-groan, they crawl down the steps, slowly and unwillingly as schoolboys wending their way to the "seminary." Another favourite occupation is to stand by the bars, or bench-marks left in the canal-bed for convenience of measuring the work, and to whittle the short parapets of silt into mathematically accurate right-angles. Every half hour all smoke, and at a certain time each man applies himself to the Bhang," of which he has been dreaming all the morning. This is the way during the cold season. As the year advances, the navvies will refuse to work between the hours of 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., because labouring in the heat of the sun does not suit the fragility of their constitutions; and when the inundation approaches all will run away, if not allowed to depart in peace, for the purpose of preparing their fields. And yet the Sindí peasant, like the Fellaah, is a born navvy.

A European officer, it is true, superintended each district. But he had probably 300 canals to look after, and by the condition of his nature he could not be ubiquitous. The evil result of the natives' indolence was, that a bed thirty feet broad would in the course of a few years, contract to half its original dimensions, till at last a deep cunette, measurable by inches, was all that remained of the canal, the rest of it becoming a footpath for travellers human and bestial. The tail of the channel, of course, shrank miserably in length, because the trunk had not been sufficiently excavated, probably an inch per annum having been deposited upon the sole. When there was water, some noble feoffee would take the liberty of throwing embankments across the bed, and monopolize it for his Persian-wheels. By abundant activity and attention, the European overseer often discovered a flagrant abuse; such as a canal reported cleared out, but never touched at the same time, the amount of undiscovered rascality, small, but by degrees becoming uncomfortably great, was amply sufficient to hinder the improvement of the country.

Sind, Mr. John Bull, was an Eastern Ireland on a large scale. The idlers, her male children, would not work; they almost preferred starving; the women and infants declared they could not work; all chose rather want with ease than wealth with industry. Had you relieved their necessities, Hibernian-like, they would but have cursed the niggard hand that only feeds and clothes them. The sole chance of reclaiming the country, apparently, was to provide peculiar facilities for immigration, or to raise the dull mass of natives by a leaven of the manly races that tenant the neighbouring mountains. The latter experiment might, even in these days, be easily and profitably tried. The eight or ten shillings a month which an able-bodied man can earn at this work, would induce thousands of Bráhuís and Belochs from the Kelat Hills to spend the cold season on the plains, with the express proviso of being allowed to return for the

summer to their families and homes. A single little Highlander would do the work of three Southrons.

But note also that a quarter of a century has modified matters. The "Sind Canal Department," under Colonel Le Messurier, is efficiently organized: Major Smith, R.E., for instance, superintends the Eastern and Western Nárá. Superfluous lines are left to Nature; the main branches are provided with sluices and gauges. Order, in fact, has replaced disorder, and in this matter Sind is fast approaching the condition of Egypt.

We are near the village, our halting-place, as sundry signs and symptoms show. An unfortunate tracksman meets us and, these people are powerful at hoping, warmed by the sight of our uncoloured countenances, comes out with a long grievance concerning a lost camel, whose foot-prints he swears by all the saints in his calendar lead directly to Ibráhím Khan's gate. The cultivators stand at the doors of their huts, howling that they have not had a drop of water over their fields for the last two years; and the Hindu Banyans, quitting their shops to catch hold of our stirrups, offer us all the blessings of Heaven if we will only induce their lord to pay his lawful debts. For this case I have very little pity; it is rascal *versus* rascal. When we left Haydarábád, the price of wheaten flour was one shilling for 161b.: here we can get only 10lb. for the money, and our servants, who require at least a sír (2lbs.) a day, find it difficult to exist upon their eight or ten rupees per mensem. I rather envy Ibráhím Khan's facilities for fleecing these withholders of corn from the poor. The traders are now all occupied in buying grain, and plastering it up in large conical heaps: they are causing a factitious famine in order to raise the value of the article as the inundation approaches, and the material for sowing is required by the peasant. The poor tracksman and the Ryots we must privately pity and publicly reprove for presuming to appeal to us against the "sacred rights of property."

A *Sawári*, or retinue, comes forth to meet and greet the distinguished strangers. The leader, our host's nephew, a lean, ill-visaged, beetle-browed, thin-lipped Beloch, habited in a cap of green and gold cloth; in a long, quilted, gaudy-coloured chintz coat and blood-red *Sutt'han*; apologizes at uncomfortable length, with the usual toilsome politeness, for his uncle's apparent rudeness in not being "present in our service:" the *Sardár*, or head of the house, I gather from his hints, is engaged in his favourite pastime, hawking. More will be said of this neglect anon; at present you may remark that a native *cortège* is anything but a pleasant honour. Our friends are mounted on fat, fidgety, high-fed Nizámáni mares, that wince and prance, curvet and dance, like so many Florence hacks when meeting a party of ladies. The pace, a confused amble, half-trot half-canter, though good in its proper place, is quite the reverse of agreeable in these processions; if the weather be cold, you freeze for want of exercise; if hot, you pant and fret yourself and your horse into a foam from over-exertion. Every now and then, as our fellows exchange the friendliest greetings with perfect strangers, and almost throw themselves from their saddles to shake hands, a neigh, a scream, a

whisking of the tail, and a kick succeeded by a shower of the same, occur to vary the excitement of the scene. It is useless to beg for a little room, or to glance helplessly at our legs; honour is done to us by crowding around us: the more we decline it, the more sedulously it is thrust upon us. The only chance of escaping it is to explain that we Franks, as a nation, never ride at any pace but a full gallop. We may thus get rid of our troublesome friends; most of them will be run away with by their restive nags, and the rest will be left far behind, drumming, with vicious but harmless heels, the ragged sides of their galloways.

There lies the village, a collection of huts and gardens clustering round a tolerable-sized house, the *facsimile*, in outward semblance, of a quondam-royal abode at Haydarábád. The *cortège*, I gather, expected that we should at once enter the "palace," where, in all probability, we should find the *Sardár*, who is out hawking, sitting in State to receive us. We must do no such thing; to-morrow will convince you that a Sind visit is too soporific an affair to be ushered in by a long weary ride. Besides, as the Khan did not put himself out to come and meet us, we shall display useful "dignity" by not showing too much haste to meet him. This *à part* of the greater consideration that he would insist upon our becoming his guests; whereas our tents, pitched under a clump of sweet evergreens, will be far more comfortable than a flea-ridden Sindi *palazzo*. We have also a little travelling business to transact at this our first halt. The camel-courier, who fetches our papers and pickles, hams and beer, from Haydarábád, has levanted, beast, cargo, and all, a fact which calls loudly for a report to the police-office. Our nags are footsore with the heat of the sand, and more than half-blinded by the glare of the sun: we must blister their eyes with garlic,¹⁷¹ and cold-water-bandage their legs.

Also, before we meet the Talpur chief, Mir Ibráhím Khan, we must elicit from our Munshi all the scan-mag current about him and his family; and we must number congees, weigh out compliments, and measure the distance we should advance towards the door.

¹⁷¹ This operation is generally performed by drawing a circle of garlic juice or the milk of the fire-plant (*Euphorbia*) round the eye; it is a desperate remedy, as it marks the skin indelibly. The people also boil the leaves of the *Ním* tree, and bathe the injured organ with the hot water every hour or so during the day, and every half-hour about sunset.

CHAPTER XXII.

MIR IBRÁHÍM KHAN TALPUR.

Whilst I am conversing with the Munshi, sir, it might be as well if you would take up a book and be engrossed with its contents: there is nothing that a native dislikes more than the open eye, unless it be the attentive ear of a third "party."

Enter Mr. Hari Chand, a portly, pulpy Hindu, the very type of his unamiable, ungenial race, with a cat-like gait, a bow of exquisite finish; a habit of sweetly smiling under every emotion, whether evoked by a bribe or a cuff; a softly murmuring voice, with a tendency to sinking; and a glance which seldom meets yours, and when it does, seems not quite to enjoy the meeting. How timidly he stands at the doorway! How deferentially he slides in, salams, looks deprecating, and is at last induced to sit down! Above all things, how well he listens! Might he not be mistaken for a novel kind of automaton, into which you can transfer your mind and thoughts, a curious piece of human mechanism in the shape of a creature endowed with all things but a self. You would start could you read his thoughts at the very moment that you are forming such opinions of him.

"Well, Hari Chand (after the usual salutations), and pray what manner of man may be this Mir Ibráhím Khan—Talpur, is he not?"

"Wah wah!! What a chieftain!—what a very Anúshíráwán for all—shading equity!—a Hátim for overflowing generosity!—a Rustam—That is to say, always considering that he is a Beloch," smiles Hari Chand, perceiving by the expression of my face that his opinion requires considerable modification. "For a Beloch! The Sáhib's exalted intelligence has of course comprehended the exact fact, that they are all dolts, fools, asses. But this Ibráhím Khan, saving the Sáhib's presence, is not one of them. Quite the contrary."

"You mean he is a rogue!"

"The Sahib has the penetration of an arrow—a rogue of the first water!"—

Remark, Mr. Bull, that the native of India and the adjacent parts of Central Asia parcels out his brethren into two great bodies, knaves and fools; and, what is wiser still, he acts upon this conviction. The division, you must own, is remarkable for its pregnant simplicity, and its eminent adaptation for practical purposes. With that little talisman ever hanging round his neck, to be consulted on all occasions where he has dealings with another, the Oriental manages to "get on" as if he carried a decoy-dollar in his

hand or an old woman's blessing upon his head. Of course, in hot youth, he makes mistakes. Sometimes he is deceived by the foolish look of a knave, or by the knavish look of a fool. Occasionally he is puzzled by one of the cross-breeds, to which the blending of the psychologic extremes gives birth. But he begins early in life the business of life; he works at the "gospel of getting on" with admirable singleness of purpose, and, by that malignant labour which conquers all things, he seldom fails to become master of the subject, as far as it goes, before one hair of his beard turns grey.

—"A rogue of the first water! He won the wealth of Bokhára and Samarkand by the sunshine of the countenance of the Honourable Company, to whom he sold camels at six pounds a-head, after compelling his subjects to receive two pounds for them. Ah! well said the poet—

"I would rather be a companion of devils,
Than the Ryot of an unjust king.'

"He almost doubled the size and resources of his Jágír (feof), by the friendship of certain Sáhíbs who—(here we must stop Hari Chand's tongue with a look); and when the Valiant Company allowed him twenty-thousand rupees to excavate his canals and improve his land, he—Allah bless him!—expended half, and lay by the other moiety in his coffers."

"But," pursues Hari Chand, delighted that we allow him a reasonably free use of his subject, "has not the Sahib seen with his own eyes what a prodigious thief he is? Did not the poor Sindi complain yesterday that his camel had been stolen from him? and the peasants that they are starving? and the Hindus that they are ruined? Every man, to be sure, may cut off his own dog's tail! It were well, however, if nothing worse could be said about this Ibráhím."

Now Mr. Hari Chand's countenance assumes that deep mysterious expression which courts the operation of "pumping." After which, chuckling internally at having secured for himself the acute gratification of being able to tear a man's reputation to shreds, he resumes, in a low, soft tone of voice, as if the tent-walls had ears:

"He murdered his elder brother! Yes, Sáhíb, before the battle of Miyáni, Ibráhím was a sorry fellow, a poor cadet who was not even allowed to sit in the presence of the great. But

"The world is a water-wheel, and men are the pots on it,
Now their heads are beneath the stones, now they are raised high to heaven.' "

The "scorpion," as your London mothers with daughters to sell used to call the pauper member of a rich family, flourishes in the East as in the West. . But with us, probably by

reason of the frigid climate and the artificial existence of the animal, his sting, though sometimes troublesome, is rarely dangerous. Here it is often fatal.

—"At the battle of Miyán ia matchlock ball pierced the occiput of Ibráhím's elder brother, and the clan, seeing their chief bite the dust, ran away like sheep, headed by this Khan, the bell-wether of the flock, who ran a little faster than the rest. When the fort of Haydarábád surrendered, one of the first persons that gave up his dangerous sword to the General Sáhíb was Ibráhím Khan, who had the address to oust his nephew from the inheritance, and by plentiful fox-play took all the carcass from the tiger."

"And now," continues Hari Chand, anxious to improve each fleeting minute, "Ibráhím, who some years ago was not allowed to show his mouth at court, sits on a chair before the collector and pays visits to the "Madams,"¹⁷² the 'harems' of the English. He has ventured to boast that one of them is desperately enamoured of him (this, says Hari Chand to himself, will irritate the fools, ourselves, sir, beyond all measure). He drinks curaçoa and brandy like a Sahib. He has become proud. Yesterday, for instance, instead of coming out for miles and miles to meet the Sawári" —

I knew we should end here. Envy, hatred, and malice are the seeds which the Oriental loves to scatter about as he passes over life's path, not for sheer diabolicality, but with the slavish instinct of cunning weakness. "When thieves fall out, honest men slip in," says our trite proverb. "When two thieves contend over a bone, a third finds an opportunity of carrying it off," thinks the Eastern philosopher. Now observe how carefully Hari Chand applies the lucifer to a certain fuel which he supposes every heart to contain:

"The Sahib is a servant of the Kaysar-i-Hind;

long be her prosperity! Whose dog is Ibráhímú,¹⁷³ that he should dare to treat the "Lords of the Sword and the Pen"¹⁷⁴ in this disgraceful way? that he should send that owl¹⁷⁵ of a nephew to greet them with his hootings, and venture to be absent when they arrived at his grave?¹⁷⁶ Had Smith Sahib, the collector (now I have that red-coated infidel on the hip, thinks Hari Chand), been coming with his writers, and his scribes, and his secretaries, and his guards, and all his retinue, Ibráhím would have been present to kiss his feet. And why? Because Smith Sahib is a—good easy man, who allows the bandit to do what he pleases. Ah, well said Nizámi,¹⁷⁷

¹⁷² The general name, in Sind as in India, for white women.

¹⁷³ A diminutive and decidedly disrespectful form of the proper name.

¹⁷⁴ A high title in Persia, terribly prostituted in Sind and Hind.

¹⁷⁵ The bird of wisdom in Europe, in Asia becomes the symbol of stupidity: vice versâ, the European goose is the Asiatic emblem of sagesness.

¹⁷⁶ A metaphor, by no means complimentary, for his house and home.

¹⁷⁷ A first-rate Persian poet, equally celebrated and popular for satire, morality, and gross indelicacy.

"The joys of this world! — Ah! asses have engrossed them,
Would to Allah, Nizámi had been an ass!"

"But, perhaps," pursues Hari Chand after a short pause, during which his mind had been almost preternaturally active, "it is not so much Ibráhím's crime as that of Kákú Mall."

"And who may Kákú Mall be?"

'Kákú Mall? The Sáhib does not know who Kákú Mall is? Ibráhím's head Munshi, a Khudábádi Banyan of a fellow (our man, Mr. Bull, is a Sehváni, a Green instead of a Brown), and one of the most unscrupulous ruffians that ever carried inkstand in belt."

Thereupon a fierce worrying of Kákú Mall's character. In common charity I would draw our man off, only that most probably Kákú Mall is about this time abusing us and Hari Chand to Ibráhím Khan, just as violently as Hari Chand abuses Ibráhím and Kákú Mall to us.

"He will, I would swear, do his best that your honours may not be treated with the courtesy due to your rank, and that I, your servant, may be insulted."

"Very well, Munshi, we will look after him. You may go. At eleven we start for our visit. Be ready to accompany us; and don't be afraid of Kákú Mall."

"Under the shadow of your eagle wings," replies Hari Chand, with a lovely bow, "what have I to fear from the puny talons of these carrion crows?"

We mount our horses, still in half-European dress, and cross the village, our Munshi ambling by our side, and a few ferocious Afghan servants, whom we have just engaged, bringing up the rear, much to the astonishment and quite to the alarm of its inhabitants. We reach the court-yard gate of the Talpur's dwelling. Three ragged rascals, with sheathed swords in their hands and daggers in their belts, headed by another nephew, rush up to us as if their intention were to begin by cutting our throats. The young chief, seizing our hands, chatters forth a thousand congratulations, salutations, and messages, nearly drags us from our saddles, and enquires about our happiness in tones which rise high above the whooping and yelling of his followers. One fellow rushes away to pass the word "they come." And out pours a whole rout to witness the event, and, by their presence, to communicate to it all possible importance.

After jostling and being jostled through half-a-dozen narrow gateways, we arrive opposite the verandah, under which stands Mir Ibráhím Khan Talpur. I see this reception is to be a poor attempt at court ceremonial.

We dismount, twenty men pressing forward at the same time to hold our stirrups, and the whole party shouting "Bismillah!" as our feet touch the ground. Then Ibráhím Khan, pressing forward, seizes our hands, wrings our arms as if trying to tear them from their sockets, and, oh compliment with which we might have dispensed! clasps us to a glorious" corporation," and applies a rough-bearded chin consecutively to the upper portions of both our shoulder-blades.

We are led in with our boots on our host has not removed his slippers. Another volley of inquiries, and another series of huggings, as we are led up to the silken Díván, upon which he, the chief, and his eldest nephew are to sit, whilst a motley crowd of relations, friends, acquaintances, dependents, and any one who happened to be passing the house at the time, presses in, looking curiously at us and fearfully at our retainers. All arrange themselves with the noise of a troop of jackdaws upon the floor.

Observe, sir, in the corner of the room, how Hari Chand and Kákú Mall, almost weeping with joy, throw themselves upon each other's bosoms, and murmur *mezza voce* thanks to that Heaven which hath thus permitted the tree of Hope to put forth green leaves and to bear sweet fruit. Charming, this choice blossom of true civilization amid the desert of barbarism around it! Had a violet or a forget-me-not appeared to us in the centre of Ibráhím Khan's unclean court-yard, the sight would scarcely have been more suggestive. What memories it revives!

Now for a survey of our host and the State apartment in which he has been pleased to receive us.

Instead of bare stuccoed walls, a floor but partially carpeted with a Persian rug or two, and a single settee at the upper part of the room, here we have an Oriental imitation of an English saloon; the tables, chairs, framed prints, panel'd doors, and glass windows, forming salient points of resemblance. As usual, there is an intense grotesqueness in the general appearance. Liqueur-bottles and a large pipe lie upon rosewood dressing-cases; a French clock, with its erect Bayard, stands in silent majesty upon a shelf hollowed in the wall; several landscapes are hung upside down, a thermantidote is placed in a corner carefully beyond reach of the wind; a feminine glove, treasured as a great curiosity, peeps from the folds of another great curiosity, a pair of "leathers;" and a noble goshawk perches upon the back of a well-wadded, crimson-velvetted bergère, *et cetera*.

Had we called early in the morning, we might have found our noble entertainer sitting in a coloured cotton waistcloth, pour toute toilette, his hair plastered over with clay, and his palms full of *Kusumbá*. I have described *Kusumbá*, and have only to add that it is the name here given in good society to the solution of opium which the natives extensively use. Now, however, he is in grand costume. A cylindrical cap of gold

brocade covers his curly black locks, which are gathered into a knot upon the poll of his head, and flattened out upon his temples, as if the "bands" had been ironed beautifully accurate is his beard, and of his mustachio not one hair passes another, nor wanders from its proper place. His vest is of the crimsonest satin, richly embroidered with startling silks in intricate patterns; around his waist a fine Thatha shawl supports his ivory-hilted poniard: a pair of loose trousers, azure-blue, the favourite Beloch colour, falling over yellow-cordovan slippers, concludes a costume which, with the exception of the cap and the "gingerbread work" on the coat, is at once manly and magnificent. He has no gems about him except the large emerald which glitters upon the hilt of his "dangerous sword," and no ornament but a gold hoop with a silver slab on his fore-finger: is like yours, a signet-ring for use, not for show. He will inform you, if you ask him, that he does not write himself, but that he keeps a Munshi who is celebrated for calligraphy. Ibráhím Pasha in London was loath to confess that he could not scrawl his name in the Royal album: Ibráhím Khan in Sind manifestly takes pride in parading his ignorance of the unchivalrous art.

Remark his portliness, or rather obesity of person. In this, as well as in other parts of the East, beauty, male and female, goes by the hundred-weight. Nasír Khan, the late ruler of Haydarábád, was considered one of the handsomest men in the country, chiefly because he could hardly walk, and had great trouble in finding a horse to carry him. When doomed to a foreign jail, he was succeeded in part of his functions by a gentleman whose person rather resembled his; and the public of Sind remarked with gratefulness that their pet Prince was but half lost to them, since the Company had sent so ample and portly a ruler to succeed him. Thinness, you must know, is considered not only a personal defect, but also a sign of poverty; and the Sind Jackal, like the British Lion, instinctively snarls at the appearance of one who wants. The natives of the nearer East are like dogs in this particular: feed them, and invariably you fatten them. "Haven't you enough to eat, that you are so lean?" is the natural question put to a sub-lieutenant who in these hot latitudes out-grows his strength.

"Haw! haw!! haw!!!" How pleasant are these loud, plethoric, healthy laughs, after the villainous sounding cachinnations in which the Hindu and Hindi family indulges. Our fat host's jolly face (judging by it you would swear that he is the warmest-hearted fellow in the world) beams with broad smiles; and at the end of every sentence, no matter the subject, he puts in a hearty haw! haw!! What irresistibly tickles his fancy is our semi-Oriental dress: he has told me twenty times already, that it becomes us beautifully, and wonders lustily why all Franks do not throw away their scarecrow habiliments as we have done.

"Will you drink opium, since you look so like us? haw! haw!" cries the host, with a voice which can do nothing but shout, the normal Sind and Beloch organ, and infinitely amused by the facetiousness of his own question.

I will accept, sir, and save you from what would be an infliction, by the ready excuse that you, being a man of peculiar temperance and strictness of conversation, allow no intoxicating preparations to pass your lips—in public. Our host thinks, like a *commissaire de police*, that there must be a screw loose in an Englishman *qui ne se grise pas*. So my friend, the Brazilian magistrate, when receiving a report concerning a newly-made prisoner, whom the constable called *un Inglez bebado*, a drunken Englishman, could not help exclaiming "What a pleonasm!" However, the Beloch has delicacy enough to ponder and wonder in the depths of his own head.

The opium, country grown and by no means a despicable article, is brought in by the head-servant of the pipes, who places it before us with a wine-glass, and a Lota, or pipkin, full of coldish water. Ibráhím Khan, as master of the house, dispenses it, after cutting up the mass into little square bits, about the size of a large pill: he will take at least four of these to himself: I, not being so habituated an *Afimi*,¹⁷⁸ content myself with one. By the good aid of our fingers, we dissolve our portions in the palm of the hand which holds exactly enough fluid for a dose. We strain it through any cloth that comes to hand, in order to get rid of the adulterating matter, some of it none of the cleanest; and then each man, holding his wine-glass, says something polite to somebody, and swallows its contents with an air jocular from fashion, not for a reason. The "old hands" may be known by the lover-like looks which they bestow upon the sherry-coloured draught. A few mouthfuls of sweetmeat, or bits of *Misri* (sugar-candy), are swallowed, to bring out the effects of the drug, and the pipes are pensively smoked, to while away the tedious interval that precedes inebriation.

Opium, in Sind, is never inhaled, and is rarely eaten. Drunk, as you have seen it, the drug is a favourite with the rich and the great, or rather, with all who have money to spend upon it. It is the best stimulant these countries afford. Many an exaggerated tale about its terrible consequences has, I know, been poured into your ears, Mr. Bull. The Celestials, who, in horror of losing their Sycee silver in smoke, systematically denigrated the object of the foreign traffic, can claim the honour of having planted the prejudice in your stubborn mind. Even in the year of grace 1876, a deputation waited upon the Secretary of State for India, and requested him to sacrifice to its ignorance and prejudice a trifling matter of eight millions sterling per annum. And the last piece of pretentious folly has been to establish an "Anglo-Oriental Society for Suppressing the Trade in Opium."

Of late years, men who have passed their lives in opium-eating lands, as Gujrát and Málwa, have raised their voices, striving to modify the romantic exaggeration of your opinions upon this subject. They own that to some constitutions it is a poison, like fermented and spirituous liquors; moreover, that it is impossible to predict from its effect upon one person how it will affect another. They admit the truth contained in the

¹⁷⁸ An eater of *Afim*, opium, from the Greek *ὄπιον*, , and the Romaic, *ἀφίονι*; hence the Chinese, ya-fu-yung.

latter half of an oft-quoted Arabic proverb: "*Afím* is the healer of all ills, and itself of all diseases the vilest;" meaning that the drug is dangerous, because the dose requires to be increased. At the same time I assert that this may be said, with equal truth, of all stimulants falsely called intoxicants, and that opium taken in moderation is not a whit more injurious than wine and spirits. But with the "Confessions as a warning, and with De Quincy and Coleridge as examples, neither of them, by-the-by, cases in point, when will you listen to me?

Opium taken even in large, but not increasing, quantities, acts beneficially upon some constitutions. I recollect an old Persian Munshi, who used regularly every day to swallow three big boluses, and yet I never saw in the East a more hale or hearty veteran of sixty. There is, I have told you, a popular idea in Sind, as in other Oriental countries, that opium is a "brave drink." It certainly quiets the irritable nerves, and produces a peculiar stubbornness of purpose and sullenness of temper, moods invaluable to the Eastern soldier, whose battles are a succession of single combats. "Bhang," on the contrary, for reasons already detailed, is the poet's, the philosopher's, and the mystic's favourite.

Such are the reflections which naturally occur during the silent quarter of an hour devoted by our society to smoking themselves "screwed." At the end of the time the host motions away his pipe, and prepares himself to converse and haw! haw! with renewed vigour.

"Were you at Nasír Khan's fight?"—so the battle of Miyáni is called by the Sindis, as opposed to Sher Mohammed's fight, the battle of Dabbá.

We reply in the negative, and suspect that we are in for one of our noble host's stock-stories.

"Haw haw! that was an affair. O Allah! Allahu Akbar! was ever the like of it before?"

"Then you were present, Mir Sáhíb?"¹⁷⁹

"I—yes, indeed I was. I went out with all the vassals of my poor brother (a broad grin), whom you killed. Look at his son, my nephew, there (pointing to the lean scowler sitting by his side). Well, you killed his poor father. And haw! haw! you would have killed me," pursues Ibráhím, highly amused by the idea, "but I was a little too sharp even for the Frank."

We stimulate him by an inquiry.

¹⁷⁹ The polite address to one of the blood royal—Your Highness.

"How?" he vociferates, "why, when we went out to attack you, we started to hunt the deer. Some carried swords, others spears, and many sticks, because we wanted to thrash you soundly for your impudence, not to kill you, poor things! My brother (now Allah illumine his grave!) was a simple-minded man, who said, 'What can the iron of the Angríz do against the steel of the Beloch?'"¹⁸⁰

"We drew up in a heap, eager for the onslaught. Presently some guns of yours appeared; they unlimbered; they began to fire. So did ours; but somehow or other we shot over you, you shot into us.¹⁸¹ I was on the other part of the field, so of course I didn't care much for that. But, a few minutes afterwards, what did we see? a long red line, with flashing spikes, come sweeping over the plain towards us, like a Simúm.

" 'Allah, Allah, what are these dogs doing? They are not running away?' All my poor brother's men put the same question.

"Then *bang* went the great guns; *phit* the little guns; the Franks prayed aloud with a horrible voice to the Shaytán, we to Allah. What a Mosque full of Mullás it was, to be sure!¹⁸² Who could fight? We howled defiance against them. Still they came on. We stood and looked at them. Still they came on. We rushed and slashed at them, like Rustams. Still they came on, the White fiends.¹⁸³ And, by Allah! when we ran away, still they came after us. It was useless to encounter this kind of magic; the head-magician sitting all the time on the back of a little bay horse, waving his hat in circles, and using words which those that heard them said sounded like the language of devils. I waited till my poor brother fell dead. Then I cried to the vassals—'Ye base-born, will you see your chieftain perish unavenged?' and, having done my best to fight like a soldier, I thought I had a right to run like one—haw! haw!

"But now tell me you are Englishman—is there any chance—of the Amírs ever returning to rule over Sind?"

This, Mr. Bull, has been our host's great bug-bear, the fear lest his kinsmen should come to their own again. In truth, it is an intelligible subject of apprehension; Ibráhím Khan's head and shoulders would assuredly part company the day after our departure. The disastrous consequences of siding with the British in Afghanistán, the tortures and death awaiting the traitors who, after we left, remained in their native country, and all

¹⁸⁰ An allusion to the boasted superiority of what is erroneously called Damascus steel over our Sheffield cutlery. So, before the battle of the Pyramids, the saddle and accoutrements of a French dragoon were laid before the Mamluk Beys in Darbár, and convinced them that they were sure of victory.

¹⁸¹ The Sind artillery was commanded by one Chotá Khán, alias Mr. Howell, who was too well-bred to injure his countrymen.

¹⁸² As we should say, "What a bear-garden!" Two Mullás in one Mosque are sure to quarrel.

¹⁸³ One of Rustam's great exploits was slaughtering the Dív-í-Sapíd, or White Demon, a personage, say the Persians, clearly typical of the modern Russian.

the miseries of exile, poverty, and neglect, pressing heavily upon those that followed our steps; these things, I fear, did much in their day to disperse throughout India a pernicious suspicion that the English are not staunch friends; that they will use a man when they want him, and are then ready to cast him off, heedless as to what becomes of him. Ibráhím Khan cannot conceal his fear of such fate being in store for him. Doubledyed murderer though he may be, I am glad, for the sake of our "name," that he has escaped the revengeful sabres of his kinsman.

The assembly, after being convulsed with laughter during the chief's account of his prowess at the battle of Miyáni, for there are "toadies" in Sind as elsewhere, was breathless, whilst he awaited our answer to his question.

"No, Mir Sahib, there is none. The morning of prosperity has at length dawned upon Sind. It leads to a day that knows no return of night!"

"Allah Tuhár—the Lord be thy Preserver!" There was no laugh as Ibráhím Khan uttered this short prayer.

And now, having "produced an impression," we will prudently withdraw before the opium takes full effect. I see a little horseplay commencing in different parts of the room; and our fat friend's pleasantries are beginning to verge upon the boisterous. Besides, the act of leaving at this moment will produce a beneficial result. Ibráhím Khan has quietly but decidedly assumed the great, the very great man. He expects that we should, according to custom, await his signal for ending the visit. Therefore we will do nothing of the kind, and he will respect us so much the more.

"Mir Ibráhím Khan Talpur will be happy to have the company of Mr. John Bull and his companion at dinner to-day, about four o'clock."

You must not confound this *gentilezza* with one of your Western invitations. Our host intends to dine at our tents, only he will send the number of fat pillaws, hot Kabábs, messy curries, greasy dishes of vegetables, and cakes of unleavened bread, which he himself intends to consume. We will not refuse: a Beloch dinner party may be new to you.

We rise; so does every man in the room. Vehemently are we pressed to stay. Vehemently do we apologize for departing. Then there is a rushing to the doors, a whooping for horses, a jostle of the animals, madly kicking and plunging, because ten hands are holding each bridle: the chief accompanies us as far as the main gate of his palazzo, shaking hands, laughing violently, and catechising us about our healths and brains: he repeats his delight at having made friendship with us, and, as a conclusion, he again clasps us to that development which would not disgrace the fat fame of a Falstaff.

I wish, Mr. John Bull, that you would not look so sheepish when being kissed. Positively, you blushed this time as deeply as your boy Billy could have done. Can you not accommodate yourself a little more readily to these habits and customs of "foreign parts?"

CHAPTER XXIII.

A BELOCH DINNER AND TEA PARTY.

"A Tea-Party."—What horrible goblins of the past are conjured up by these short syllables!

The first object that meets our glance, as we near the tents, is a line of Beloch drawn up behind a row of earthen pots, in shape and hue by no means unlike monstrous turnips. These, the turnips, contain a present of choice confectionary, coarse sugar, rice, flour, spices, and clarified butter, always sent in token of friendship or favour. There are *ten* pots full for you, the "great gentleman," *eight* for me, the thinner man, one for our Munshi, who looks a profound disgust at not having received two, and the rest for the servants. The latter will get, although they cannot claim, possession of the whole, and the result will be a general indigestion, which nothing but a certain preparation of Tartar can remove: half a pound of the mixture would place our lives in imminent peril. Another uncomfortable effect of the ceremony is that in this case, as on all occasions when an Oriental sends you a present, a return is expected, and the amount is supposed exactly to show the rate at which you value yourself. We must give vails to all the fellows, otherwise we shall be called "flysuckers," *i.e.*, skin-flints—a reputation which you, in your own country, and in these days, seem rather to court than to avoid, sir; but the East is not sufficiently enlightened to appreciate your new "fad." We must also despatch a "token" to the noble giver of the sweetmeats; if we withhold it, he will not be too shamefaced to apply for it in person. I remarked that, during the visit, he repeatedly admired your English ring, a bloodstone, with the family crest, a lion rampant, upon it. Send it to him, with an epigrammatic compliment, which I will impromptu for you, and you will earn, as the natives say, a "great name."

"Well, Hari Chand, how progresses the Amír?" "The Amír? Your exalted intelligence will understand most prosperously, only he has robbed his Ryots of all their camels, and now he is quarrelling with the neighbouring Jágírdárs (country gentlemen), in order to get theirs to cheat the Government with; he has depopulated the land of small birds to feed his twenty hawks; he has been to Haydarábád, and has returned stark-staring mad, swearing that he drank two Sáhíbs under the table, and made love to every 'Madam' in the place (Hari Chand is determined to excite our *ghayrat*, or jealousy, on that point, by perpetually hammering at it); he has married another wife, although people say he has five¹⁸⁴ already; the new one, being a Shaytánah (devil), fights with all the old ones, who try to poison her; and his eldest daughter, when on a visit to the

¹⁸⁴ Four wives are allowed by law and religion, but if a man marry half-a-dozen or so, it is considered a peccadillo, not a felony.

capital, ran away with a mounted policeman. Wah wah! Verily, it is a noble family, as the poet said of the people of Kábul:

"Of a truth a distinguished race are they,
The men can't say yes, nor the women nay."¹⁸⁵

And Kákú Mall?"

"Oh, Kákú Mall! He is making a fortune by sedulously practising all kinds of iniquities. Praised be Allah! what a scoundrel he is! It would take hours to sketch his villainies, even for the high intellects of your honours to comprehend them. But one of these days Kákú must and will come to a bad end, a very bad end, which may be a warning to all mankind."

This prediction is simply the result of envy on the part of Hari Chand, who would give one of his eyes for the unlimited power of doing evil, that good (to himself) might come of it, which he represents Kákú Mall to enjoy. Of course, he alludes piously to the vengeance of the gods; but the reference is habitual; the heart knows nothing about what the tongue speaks, and, after all,

"Ut sit magna, tamen certe lenta ira deorum est,"

a sentiment familiar to the Eastern as well as to the Western would-be criminal. These people theoretically own the idea of certain retribution in this life; practically, they act as if sure to evade it. An unseen, an uncertain punishment has so little effect when threatened from afar! Offended Heaven may so easily be propitiated by vain oblations, and by equally vain repentance. And, after all, celestial vengeance so often comes too late, a man may enjoy himself so many years before the blow descends! Thus they never neglect to threaten one another with the *ira deorum*, and they always sin in the teeth of it themselves.

Here is the Sawári, the retinue. Mir Ibráhím Khan, all crimson and gold, alights from his steed, a handsome Beloch mare, whose bridle and head-gear are covered with grotesque silver ornaments, and stands a moment patting her, to show off her points and equipments. The saddle is richly mounted, though far inferior to those used by some of the petty Indian princes, whose led horses are decked in harness plated with precious metals studded with diamonds; and there is no deficiency, at the same time there is no particular attraction, in the abundance of girth, housing, martingale and crupper, with which a gentleman's animal in this part of the world must be lumbered.

¹⁸⁵ Which, by-the-by, is borrowed from the Arab saying concerning the city of Wásit.

Ibráhím Khan prepares for dinner by dismissing all his attendants but one, Kákú Mall, who remains to "toady" his highness; to swear the truth of every falsehood the great man tells, to supply him with an idea or a word whenever conversation does not flow glibly; and to be chaffed, bullied, and insulted, *tour à tour*, as the ill-humour or joviality of his chief prevails. The Amír's quick glance has detected that we have nought but ale and cognac to offer him; that point settled, he recreates his mind by feeling the smooth insides of our wine-glasses; by taking up the spoons, avoiding their handles; by producing brown *fac-similes* of his thumbs upon the white surface of the salt; by converting the mustard-pot into a scent-bottle, and by correcting any little irritation of the epidermis with our only corkscrew.

"Will you take a glass of the water of life, Mir Sáhib?"

Perhaps, Mr. Bull, you expect our visitor to drink a few drops of brandy, as the French take *un petit verre d'absinthe pour ouvrir l'appétit*. If so, a quarter of an hour will convince you of your mistake.

Ibráhím Khan hands his gold-hilted sabre to the Afghan servant, who receives it at a distance, as if it bit, with a sneering smile for which he shall presently receive well-merited correction; sees it deposited in the corner of the tent, and then, seating himself heavily upon the edge of the cot of honour opposite the dinner-table, he clutches a tumbler, blows warmly into it, polishes the damped interior with his pocket-handkerchief, and prepares to attack the liquid part of his meal.

We must join him, if you please. In Sind men drink before, in England after, dinner. At home, the object, we say, is to pass an hour pleasantly over a glass of wine; here, they honestly avow that they drink to get drunk. The Eastern practice is admirable for securing the object proposed; every one knows that half-a-bottle upon an empty stomach does the duty of two under converse circumstances. Moreover, the Sindis declare that alcohol before meals whets the appetite, enlivens the spirits, and facilitates digestion. Habit is, however, everything. I should advise you, sir, to follow the Mir's example at an humble distance.

The dinner passes off rapidly. Ibráhím Khan eats quite as much as he drinks. Not contented with scooping up in his palm masses of boiled rice, hard eggs, and unctuous stews, now and then stripping a Kabáb-stick¹⁸⁶ with his fingers, and holding up a large bone to his mouth with both fists, he proposes, after our example, to practise the knife and fork. With these articles, the former in the left, the latter in the right hand, he attempts to dissect a roast fowl, which flies from him, as if it had vitality, far over the damask, to the tune of loud haw! haws! Again he tries: again he fails, although he prefaced the second attempt by a Bismillah. "Heathen dog!" he cries to Kákú Mall, "is

¹⁸⁶ Bits of roast meat with onion between, fastened together with a skewer, and not to be called "Cabobs."

the soul of thy father in this thing?" for which gross insult¹⁸⁷ the Hindu mentally fines his lord a thousand rupees, to be cheated at the first opportunity. Finally, desperate by the failure of many efforts, he throws away the fork, transfers the knife to his right hand, and grasping the bird's drum-stick with his left, he tears it piecemeal with a facility which calls for another loud explosion of mirth.

I never yet saw an Oriental laugh at himself so readily. Generally speaking, these people are, child-like, nervously and uncomfortably sensitive to ridicule of all kinds. Nothing offends them more lastingly than a caricature, be it the most good-natured. A writer of satire in Persia rarely dies an easy death; and the present race must be numbered amongst things that were, before a man could edit, at Kábul, a number of "Vanity Fair," and live through the day.

Sindi cookery is, like the country and its natives, a link between the Iranian and the Indian. Central Asia is pre-eminently the land of good living and of masterly *artistes*, men as truly great in their exquisite craft as Paris or Naples ever produced it teems with enjoyment to the philosophic *bon vivant*, who will apply his mind to naturalizing his palate. Amongst the Hindus, like the Jews, the *matériel* of the *cuisine* is too limited; consequently, there is monotony in the succession of rice-dishes and vegetables: moreover, the bilious Ghi, or melted and clarified butter, enters into almost every preparation; the sweets are cloying, and the profuse spices annoy the tasteful palate. In Sind there are dawnings of culinary light, which would in a happier moral clime usher in a brilliant day. You have seldom eaten anything better, I will answer for the fact, than a *salmi* of black partridge, with a garnishing of stewed *bengans* or egg-plants.

The repast ends more abruptly than it began. The Sindi, like the boa-constrictor, is always torpid after his ample meal, and he holds to the apothegm of the Salernitan school,

"Post prandium est dormiendum."

You may observe our guest's fat heavy eyelids winking and drooping with progressive somnolency as the time for his *siesta* draws nigh. He calls for a cup of lukewarm milk, here the invariable and offensive conclusion to dinner, he apologizes for leaving us, he must go to his prayers and attend to his guest-house,¹⁸⁸ promises a return to "tea" in the evening, calls for his horse, mounts it, and retires.

Now that he is gone, perhaps you also, sir, may have "letters to write."

¹⁸⁷ Fowls are considered impure in the extreme by high-caste Hindus.

¹⁸⁸ Wealthy nobles in Sind generally support an establishment called the Mehmán-khánah, in which they receive and entertain poor travellers and strangers.

"Ibráhímú was so full of wine," remarks Hari Chand, "that with these eyes I saw him almost tumble over his animal. He go to pray! he went to prepare for the evening's drink. As for his guest-house, it is called by all the poor around, 'Home of Hunger.' Your honours, I hear, gave him only beer and brandy. You will see him presently return with a camel's load of bottles. And I am told that he is going to bring his eldest boy; ah, your honours must button up your pouches now!"

Here, after a three hours' sleep, comes the Amír, with some additions to his former escort, a little brown boy five or six years old, a minstrel, and a servant carrying many a magnum.

In few parts of the world do you see prettier children than those of the higher class in Sind. Their features are delicate and harmonious, the forehead is beautifully *bombé*, the full rounded cheek shows a light olive-tint by the side of the silky black curls, and there is an intelligence and a vivacity which you scarcely expect to see in their large, long, lustrous black eyes. Their forms equal their faces for symmetry and finish they might serve as models to the well-provided Murillo or Correggio. And the simplicity of the dress, a skull-cap, a little silk frock like a nightgown, confined with a waist-shawl in which sticks the tiniest of daggers, and a pair of loose slippers, contrasts advantageously with the dancing-dog costumes with which Mrs. John Bull invests her younger offspring, or with the unsightly jackets and waistcoats conferred upon Billy when breeched. If you like their dress, you will also admire their behaviour: the constant habit of older society makes them companionable at an age when your progeny is fit for nothing but confinement in a loose box called a nursery. The boy here stands before his father, or sits with him when ordered, more staidly than one of your adults: he listens with uncommon gravity to the conversation of his seniors, answers pithily and respectfully when addressed, and never requires to be lectured upon the text, "Little children are made to be seen and not heard." At eight years of age he is master of the *usages*, he will receive you at the door in the absence of his progenitor; hand you to your proper seat in the room; converse with you; compliment you; call for pipes; offer you sweetmeats; invite you to dinner, and dismiss you, without failing in a single point. As a boy he is a little man, and his sister in the harem is a little woman. To this you may object on the score of taste; say that it robs childhood of its chief charm, the natural, the innocent, and all that kind of thing. At any rate, you must own that it also preserves us from the very troublesome displays of the said charm in the form of pertness, selfishness, turbulence, and all the unlovely details comprehended in your "naughtiness," the Irish "bouldness."

Our admiration of their children is reciprocated by the Orientals. I have heard of a Hindu chief travelling many miles to see the fair face and flaxen hair of a "Europe baby;" and "beautiful as a white child" is almost a proverb amongst the dark-skinned Maráthás.

We treat Master Ibráhím, I beg his pardon, Mir Ján Mohammed Khan Talpur, as he sententiously names himself, with especial attention, a mark of politeness to his father; we insist upon his sitting down, upon the highest seat, too; inquire with interest after his horse and his hawk; look at his dagger, and slip in a hope that he may be as brave a soldier as his father. But we must not tell him that he is a pretty boy, nor ask him his age, nor say anything about his brothers and sisters, otherwise we offend against the convenances. And when we wish him to be sent home, for that venerable maxim,

"Maxima debetur puero reverentia,"

is still venerated in the East, we give him a trifling Tohfeh, or present, a pocket pistol, or a coloured print, and he will feel that the object of his mission has been fulfilled. In Central Asia, a child's visit is mostly a mere present-trap.

You admire the row of our fat friend's bottles displayed upon the table, two dozen at least of champagne and sherry, curaçoa and noyau, brandy and gin, soda-water and seltzer. You will wonder still more when you see Ibráhím Khan disposing of their contents recklessly, mixing them, after consumption, by tumblers-full; intoxicating himself with each draught, and, after twenty minutes' interval, becoming, by dint of pushing his cap off his brow, scratching his head, abusing his Munshi, and concentrating all the energies of mind and body upon his pipe, sober as judges are said to be.

A faint "twang-twang," draws your attention to the corner of the tent. As in the ages preceding Darius, so since his time the *soirée* of Oriental Kaysar or chief never ended without sweet music.

Remark the appearance of the performer. He is a dark chocolate-coloured man with a ragged beard, an opium-look, sharp, thin features, and a skin that appears never to have known ablution. A dirty, torn cloth wrapped round his temples acts as turban; the rest of the attire, a long shirt of green cotton, and blue drawers, is in a state which may be designated disreputable. In his hand is his *Surando*, the instrument of his craft, a rude form of the violin, with four or five sheep-gut strings, which are made to discourse eloquent music by a short crooked bow that contains half the tail of a horse. He is preparing to perform, not in the attitude of a Paganini, but as we see in old Raphaels, and still occasionally in the byways of Italy; the instrument resting upon his lap instead of his collar bone. Before the preliminary scraping ends, a word or two, *sotto voce*, about the fellow and his race.

The Lángho is politely and accurately termed *Manganhár*, or "asker";¹⁸⁹ and his particular caste is the most peremptory and persevering of mendicants in Sind. Anciently, all the great clans had their own minstrels, whose duty was to preserve their traditions for recital on festive occasions and, like the Highland piper, to attend the chief in battle, where they noted everything with an eagle's eye, praising those that fought, and raining showers of curses, taunts, and invectives upon all who fled. This part of their occupation is now gone they subsist principally by the charity of the people, and by attending at the houses in which their professional services, at marriages and other ceremonies, are required. They are idle as well as fond of pleasure, dirty, immoral, and notoriously dishonest. Largesse to a Bard being a gentlemanly way of wasting one's substance in Sind, those that employ the "asker," are provoked to liberality till either the will or the way fail. In the meantime, the Lángho spends every rupee, with all the recklessness of a Western *artiste*, in drinking, gambling, and the silliest ostentation. He is not expected to live long, and none knows what becomes of him in his lost old age.

Our friend the Amír has, I am told by Hari Chand, suffered so much from these men's sneering encomiums upon his valour and conduct in the Conquest-war, that he once tried the experiment of paying them liberally to avoid his palace. Finding that the revenues of Persia would be inadequate to carry out the scheme, he has altered his tactics, and now he supports half a dozen, on the express condition that they never allude, in his presence, to the battles of Miyáni or Dabbá.

And now, as Ibráhím Khan looks tired of attempting to converse with our surly Afghans, and of outraging the feelings of his Munshi, we will lend an ear to Music, as the heavenly maid springs upon us in grimly guise from the head of Alúdo, the minstrel.

The singing will commence with a favourite rhapsod-theme, the murder of the great Lord Bahrám, the ancestor of the Talpur Princes, by order of Sarfaráz, the recreant Kalhóra; and with the deadliest accuracy will it detail how an individual of lowly birth but brave, Shah Báháro, a Sindi, when ordered by the despot to do the deed, refused, saying, "I will fight the Beloch like a man." How Sarfaráz made light of Shah Báháro's chivalry, asking, "Where is Mohammed the Prophet of Allah, and where is Musaylimah the liar?"¹⁹⁰ How Shah Báháro responded with great temper and a prodigious quantity of good advice, the major part of which was *à propos* of everything; how Sarfaráz cosened and flattered till he found a willing bravo in Ismá'il Mombiyáni the Sindi; how the said Ismá'il, being a left-handed man, cut down the valiant Bahrám from behind

¹⁸⁹ To call a man "beggar" may not sound polite in English, but it does in Sind ears. An Oriental would generally prefer being under any kind of obligation to his superiors, than lack connection with them.

¹⁹⁰ A false, *i.e.* an unsuccessful, prophet, contemporary with Mohammed. The phrase is classical amongst the Moslems; it is much used when drawing odious comparisons. The Hindus say, "*Kahan Rajah Bhoj; kahán Gangá telí?*" "Where is King Bhoj (the Great), and where is Gangá the oilman?"

with a sword which he held a little higher than usual, and drew it along the murdered chief's shoulder; how Ismá'il, after the assassination, cut off the noble Bahrám's head; and, finally, how Sarfaráz looked at it, and gave utterance to un-Christian-like sentiments.

All the terrible minuteness of a French novel of "character" or of an Italian historical romance! The sounds that accompany are more remarkable than the words of the song. Each fresh verse is ushered in by a loud howl, so strikingly discordant that every nerve starts at it, and so prolonged that anticipation wearies of looking forward to its close. Then follows the *aria*, a collection of sharp chatterings and screams, in a key strained at least two notes above the *voce di petto*, which, nevertheless, must be forced up to the mark, *falsetto* being unknown: and, lastly, comes the conclusion of the phrase, a descent into the regions of the *basso* till the voice, vaguely growling, dies away lost, as it were, and unable to emerge from the depths into which it sunk. Then the howl, the chatterings, the *soprano*-scream, and the *basso*-growl over again. Half an hour of this work goes to the formation of a Sindi melody.

Melody!

Well, yes, melody! You see, sir, all around you are ecstasized; consequently there must be something in the performance to attract admiration. Of all the arts, music is the most conventional. What do you think Orpheus would have thought of Wagner: Wagner, of Orpheus? The traditions of all ancient people, Egyptians, Phœnicians, Assyrians, Hindus, Persians, Greeks and Romans, tell of minstrels who worked miracles by the voice, the lute, and the lyre. The music of the Greeks and Romans is almost beyond our reach; that of the Hindu and the Persian is still, in its old age, much the same, I suppose, as it was when first born. Accustomed to his own system, the Eastern cannot dérive the least pleasure from ours: the noisiness of the major clef confuses him, his ear cannot detect a phrase, and he is ignorant of its harmony as he would be insensible to discord: he wonders greatly how it is that the European, so superior to him in arms and arts, can be so far behind in this one science, and he turns with eagerness to the strain familiar to his ear; not to the "Hindustanee melodies," which are composed in London, as are the "nigger melodies" in New York, but to an honest, genuine, downright bit of barbarism, like that we have just now heard.

After my description, you will be astonished to hear that I ever did anything but suffer during the endurance of the minstrel's song. At first all was pure torture. Presently, the ear, in its despair, began to make friends with the least harsh sounds, as prisoners do with rats or spiders. Then, as a note or two became familiar, the utter strangeness wore off, and a sensation of grotesque enjoyment, novel and unexplainable, struggled into existence. At last, when a few years had thoroughly broken my taste to bear what you have just heard, I could listen to it, not only without the horror you now experience, but also with something like gratification. Possibly I liked it better for the disgust it

provoked at first. So the Highlander learns to love his screaming, wheezing bag-pipe; the German his putrescent *Sauerkraut*; the Englishman *haut-goût* in game; the Frenchman his *caporal*; the Greek his garlic; the Italian his rancid olives, and all the world their snuff and cigars, things which at first they must, as they were human, have hated.

The songs generally sung by these Eastern jongleurs are legends, ballads, certain erotic verses which are very much admired by every class, and mystical effusions which the learned enjoy, and to which the unlearned, being utterly unable to comprehend them, listen with the acutest sensations of pleasure. The Homer of Sind is one Sayyid Abd el-Latif, a saintly bard, whose *Risálo*, or collection of distichs upon traditional themes of the two passions, Love and War, has been set to different musical modes, and is, by the consenting voice of society, admitted to be a *chef d'œuvre*, the pink of perfection.

I will translate one of the songs which Álúdo sings, a short satirical effusion, directed against the descendants of the poetical Sayyid, by some Sindi poet, who appears fond of the figure irony.

AN ODE TO THE HOLY MEN OF BHIT.¹⁹¹

I.

Ye monks of Bhit! whose only cares
Are fast and penance, wakes and prayers,
Your lips and eyes bespeak a love
From low earth weaned to Heaven above:
Your hearts have rent all carnal ties,
Abjured all pomps and vanities:
Not mean will be your meed I ken
In Heaven's bright realms, ye reverend men!

II.

And yet, they say, those tuneful throats,
With prayers' stern chaunt, mix softer notes;
Those mouths will sometimes deign to sip
The honey-dew from maiden's lip:
And other juice than salt tear dyes
With purpling hues those heavy eyes:

¹⁹¹ Bhit, literally meaning a sand-heap, is a small town lying four miles east of Hálá and north of Haydarábád. The word is applied to the place because the holy Abd el-Latif ordered his followers to throw up a mound of earth as a foundation for the habitations of men. The reverend subjects of the Ode, although his descendants, lost reputation amongst the Bards, because they ungenerously appropriated the hoards entrusted to their charge by the wife of the dethroned Kalhóra Prince. Perhaps, being very wealthy, they are become, as might be expected, very niggardly, and that would be the last and direst cause of offence.

Ah! ah! twice blest your lot, I ken,
Here, and hereafter, reverend men!

You have a small musical snuff-box, sir; wind it up, put it in your pocket, and try the effects of a polka or a waltz.

All are silent in a moment. They start, stare, peer about the room, and look much scared by the strange sounds. In another minute they will run away from us adepts in the black art. You see how many miracles could be got out of a few such simple contrivances as a grind-organ, an electrical machine, or a magic lantern. Now produce the cause of astonishment, whilst I attempt to explain the mechanism of the invention. The sight of something soothes them; their minds become comparatively speaking quiet: still they handle the box with constraint, as if it had the power of stinging as well as singing. All are vociferous in praise of the music, probably on account of the curiosity of the thing, as a civilized audience applauds a sonata upon one string, at which it would yawn if performed upon four. Even the minstrel declares with humble looks that the charm has fled his *Surando*; that his voice is become like unto the crow's. This, however, is his politeness, not his belief. In what part of the habitable globe, or at what epoch of the creation, did a painter, a musician, or a poet, ever own to himself that he is a dauber, a mar-music, or a poetaster?

Ibráhím Khan will by no means refuse a dish of tea," especially when offered to him during a short account of the Chinese Empire; the beardless state of the Celestials and the poor old Porcelain Tower being topics which will at once rivet his attention. Orientals in their cups become inquisitive, scientific, theological, and metaphysical. But he qualifies the thin potation with an equal quantity of brandy, as in his heart of hearts he has compared the first sip to an infusion of senna disguised by sugar and milk. The Beloch, unlike their neighbours the Persians and Afghans, are not accustomed to the use of *Cháhi*.¹⁹²

"Mir Ibráhím Khan Talpur, listen! The meetings of this world are in the street of separation. And truly said the poet that the sweet draught of friendly union is ever followed by the bitter waters of parting. To-morrow we wander forth from these pleasant abodes, to return to Haydarábád. My friend Ján Búl Sáhib is determined to feast his eyes upon the Adens of Larkána and to dare the Jehannums of Shikárpúr."

The chief rises steadily, though in liquor.

"You are the kings of the Franks: you are the best of the Nazarenes, and, by the blessed Mohammed, you almost deserve to be Moslems! Swear to me that you will presently

¹⁹² In the Fo-Kien province *T* takes the place of *Ch*: hence the English of Amoy (Hea-Mun) called the beverage "Tea," and the Portuguese of Macao "Cha," like the Persian "Cháhi."

return and gladden the glance of friendship. What is life without the faces of those we love? Wah! Wah! I have received you badly. There are no dancing-women in my villages: I would have seized a dozen of the Ryots' wives, but Kákú Mall said – didn't you, you scoundrel?"

"Certainly, great chief!"

"How can the Haywans,¹⁹³ the Sindis, venture to show their blackened¹⁹⁴ faces in the presence of those exalted lords? If I have failed in anything, forgive me."

The tears stand in Ibráhím's eyes. No wonder. He has finished nearly six bottles. He grasps our hand at every comma; at every full stop he vigorously embraces us. Yet he is not wholly maudlin. To water the tree of friendship, as he phrases it, he stuffs my cheroot-case into one pocket, and a wine-glass into the other. I must give him your musical box as well as your ring, and as equivalent (I don't wish him to go home and laugh at our beards), you gently extract his handsome hunting-knife from his waistband and transfer it to your own, declaring that with that identical weapon you will cut the throat of a poetic image called *Firá́k*, or Separation.

Now the adieux become general. The minstrel raises his voice in fervent prayer: he has received five rupees and a bottle of fiery gin. All the followers thrust their heads into the tent to bless us, and to see if we have anything to give them. The Amír, convinced that there are no more presents, prepares to depart, accompanied by his secretary, when Hari Chand, determined upon a final scene, raises the tent-fly and precipitates himself into Kákú Mall's arms.

Ibráhím Khan pressed us to accompany him on his next trip with the falcons and hawks: unfortunately you care little about the noble sport, even about the use to be made of round-winged birds; and I have already said my say upon the subject.¹⁹⁵ There is nothing in the south-east of Haydarábád which we have not seen before; a silt flat, sometimes sand, overgrown with desert shrubs, and here and there cultivated; huge heaps of ruins, long lines of water-courses, and channels which become rivers during the inundation, and which widen into estuaries as they approach the Arabian Sea.

¹⁹³ 1 In Arabic, "anything that hath life:" popularly used to signify a beast as opposed to a human being, or a human being that resembles a beast.

¹⁹⁴ Blackened, *bien entendu*, by certain unquenchable flames.

¹⁹⁵ "Falconry in the Valley of the Indus." London, Van Voorst. 1852.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE MIMOSA BAND; ITS GIANT FACE SINDIA PETRÆA – THE BELOCH MUSE.

Another month has passed away in grateful ease – doing nothing.

I would willingly lead you off to the quondam University of Matiári, and there lecture you on the present state of science and education in the Moslem world generally, and the Sindi in particular. I should like to accompany you to Nasarpúr and point out why some believe it to be the Mansúreh of the Arabs, and why some believe as blindly that it is not Mansúreh.¹⁹⁶ I might even, had I my own way, start off with you to the eastern desert and, amidst the mud-walls. of Umarkot, expatiate upon the romantic events, such as the birth of Akbar the Great, its celebrity as a treasury, and its surrender without a shot to the British army, which have, or ought to have, given it a name in Universal History. Only I fear the habits of yawning, of setting down your neighbour a monomaniac, and of complaining that your expectations have been unwarrantably raised to be dropped-all which, dear sir, allow me to say, are now become highly natural to you. I must, however, as your guide, insist upon your accompanying me across the river westward to a certain spot called the Babbur Band or Mimosa Dyke, in order to show you the prospect of the baldest desolation which our Unhappy Valley affords.

Two routes lead from Haydarábád northward. The Dák (post) and riding line, the shorter, is on the east of the river, and the marching line for troops lies to the west. The former has its interest.¹⁹⁷ It passes close by the field of Miyáni, near the ancient

¹⁹⁶ Mansúreh is also supposed to have been within a short distance of Brahmanábád.

¹⁹⁷ You will find the stations described in Murray's Handbook, pp. 490-492. The following is a list of the sixteen places given by the Gazetteer (pp. 874-876) between Haydarábád and Rohri:-

University of Matiári, and through Hálá town, famed for Persian tiles and Sind lacquer-work. You can diverge a few miles to the east of Shahdarpúr and visit the Bambre-jo Thúl (Tower of Bambrá), generally known to history as Brahmanábád. The latter is evidently the title given to the capital of Central Sind because it was founded by the Brahman dynasty of Aror, somewhat before A.D. 622. The old Hindu name is utterly forgotten; Bambrá is only a modern generic term for ruined cities, and Brahmanabád is half Persian. The *enceinte* of this Indine Pompeii, traced by curtains and towers or bastions, measures four miles, and it is said to have contained 1600 minarets. There are also remains of the Wazír's city, "Depur."

We have been ferried over the Indus, and we are travelling by easy stages northwards, along the right bank of the great stream. Our two marches are, 1. Badhá, nine miles from Kotri; 2. Unarpúr, 12 miles from Badhá-Sindi villages and "that's all."

We now strike off nearly due west, through a wild country, into one of the rugged little ranges of hills that extend like spiders' legs from the main body of our Alp, the Beloch mountains, the Kohistán and Kirthár, miscalled, you remember, the "Hálá" by older writers. Our two halting-places are:—1. Lakrá, twelve miles from Unarpúr; 2. Sibt, eight miles from Lakrá-wells in the desert.

The rough and precipitous path zigzags un-artfully up, over, and down the nakedest of stony ridges. The rocky face of the country suggests the idea that it is suffering under a complex attack of cutaneous disease. Here, a gigantic blotch, black leprosy, stretches many square miles without a shrub, much less a tree, for the bird of the wild to perch upon. There, we come, after a long canter, upon a port-wine mark, a bit of ferruginous plain, most unlovely in its rustiness to all but the mineralogist's eye. There, again, signs of white leprosy appear in flakes of glittering gypsum and selenite, washed down by the torrents from the declivities of the hills. The gangrenous hue of copper then attracts

	Miles	Furlongs.	
1. Haydarábád to Miyáni	7	0	
2. Miyáni to Matiári	9	0	crossing the un-bridged Phuléli.
3. To Hálá	19	0	deputy-collectorate.
4. Sayyida-jo Goth (Sayyidábád)	11	0	
5. Sakarand or Sakrand	14	2	in Naushahro deputy-collectorate.
6. Kájia - (Kázi-) jo Goth	16	1	
7. Daulatpúr	16	6	opposite the Lakki Hills.
8. Moro	11	6	road bad and dusty.
9. Naushahro	15	4	once a place of importance.
10. Lakha	12	0	
11. Bheláni (others Háláni)	9	5	
12. Hingorjo (in Khayrpúr)	11	0	crossing the un-bridged Bheláni hollow.
13. Ránípúr	7	0	
14. Masti Khána-jo Tando	14	0	
15. Khayrpúr City	9	0	formerly camped at Lukmána-jo Tando, one mile from Khayrpúr.
16. Rohri (English)	15	0	
Total	198	0	

In 1843 Sir Charles Napier led his army from Rohri to Haydarábád in seventeen marches. There are now Travellers' Bungalows at all the stations except in the Khayrpúr territory.

the eye. And lastly, though anxious to avoid any more of these unsavoury comparisons, you cannot but see an eternal jaundice in the rood after rood scattered over with ton upon ton of dirty yellow sulphur.

À propos of this sulphur. Some years ago an enthusiastic seeker of mineral and other wealth, who penetrated into these savage hills, gathered promising specimens of it, and forwarded them to the officer commanding at Karáchi, as a hint that the mines might be worked to advantage. But, unfortunately, that high authority was a Scotchman and colonel of the 78th Highlanders: he resented the offer with a viciousness which strangled the project at its birth. How many schemes for benefiting mankind have been rendered abortive by a similar little accident of unskilfulness on the part of the operator! As we advance, we enter a long, wide, winding valley, bounded by a sandstone-wall, whose crest Time has cut into peaks and clefts of singular irregularity. The gently-sloping sole and the general appearance of the ravine suggest that the waters of some deluge must have forced a passage through this pass, from the plateau above to the plains lying below the hills. A *Fiumara* threads with frequent bends the deepest part of the declivity: you can see its character in its aspect. A few wild plants of the liveliest green spring from the margin of the bed; the course is strewn with blocks and boulders, immovable except by tremendous violence, and down its centre (there has been a shower amongst the highlands) already gushes an angry, brawling stream. On both sides of the channel, where its waters extend not, the furious summer-heats have gashed the ground with many a gaping earth-crack: and, except a straggling line of stunted mimosas, rough and wild-looking as the land that bears them, there is nothing but the "shadow of the great rock," as the Hebrew has it, to protect the traveller's throbbing head from a sun which even at this season glows like a globe of living fire.

You will not be astonished to hear that this is a haunted spot. The legends of the country inform us that it is tenanted by a Giant Face, the remains of some pagan magician whose head was spared, whilst his form was consigned to the flames below. Its terrible eyes, they say, are ever fixed upon those of the wayfarer; they are eternally before him, whether he advance or retire, turn to the right or to the left, lie supine or lie prone; vainly he strives to escape them.

We Unbelievers are not likely to see it; yet, uncouth as the fancy is, we own it, not in our comfortable well-lit studies, but when wending our way through the dim starlight of the scene, to be a strong superstition, not strange, but rather based upon a known foundation.

Did you ever when abandoned by your nurse to the horrors of a big bed-room, see a grinning face advance towards you from the distant apex of the huge cone of darkness, visible and palpable, which lay before your closed eyes; advance gradually, but unavoidably, till, despite your struggles, its monstrous features were so close to yours that you could feel them; then, almost suddenly, start back from you, flit away,

diminish till nothing but the back eyeballs remain in sight, and disappear, presently to return with all its terrors? If you did, you understand what I mean by calling this a strong superstition.

We will say nothing, if you please, about the Giant Face before our servants. It is sufficient to frighten the boldest Afghan half out of his wits.

There *are* men and women, you would hardly believe it, on these stones: the heaps of natural slabs, piled up against the hill-sides, are their graves. And although your unpractised eye cannot detect them, I can here and there catch sight of the tall limber spear of some herdsman, sheltering himself under a ledge of rock, or concealed behind a line of rising ground. The people are partly Sindi, partly Beloch both are equally savage and ferocious. We now travel, however, under the formidable escort of a name, the Devil's Brother, as H. E. the first Governor was dutifully called by his subjects, being still our protector. A generation ago we should have required twenty or thirty horsemen to force this pass; and then we should not have succeeded without a little "sniping" at every spot favourable to the unpleasant sport. As it is, our men, most of them born plunderers forcibly reclaimed, are talking about a fortalice of camels. This barbarous manner of field-works is formed by seating the animals in a circle, with their heads inside, their quarters placed to stop the balls, and their knees tied and tethered, to obviate the danger of a breach being made in the curtain or parapet, by part of it leaping frantically from the ground; while the defenders are ensconced behind the inner round of loads and packsaddles which forms the ballium. Such precaution, however, thanks to the memory of our old General, is quite unnecessary.

Two miles beyond Sibit is the Mimosa Dyke, or rather the place where it used to be. It was a line of earth and stones thrown across the narrow neck of the valley, causing the rains and torrents to inundate the plateau instead of flowing down the *Nái*, or *Fiumara*, directly to the Indus. The rent which last spring made in its side is nearly two hundred feet long, the foundation is so narrow, and the thrust so great, that there is little chance of repairing it with permanent success.

You see, Mr. John Bull, a Beloch family of the noble house of Rind: quite a different people, as their looks tell, from the half-Sindi porpoises, like Ibráhím Khan, settled on and about the Indus. Their features, though comely in youth, are strongly marked and unpleasant in mature manhood and age; their figures are unexceptionable, straight, muscular, and symmetrical; as for their dress, it is the same as that worn amongst the wild Arabs before the days of Noah, a long wide robe of unbleached canvas, buttoned at the throat; they twist a fold of cotton round the temples to guard them from the sun, and to confine the long grisly bushes of black hair which cloak their shoulders with wild curls; under-garments they have none, and the only protection afforded to their feet against the flints of the hill and the thorns of the vale are slippers made with the leaves of a dwarf palm.

The men show little fear, the women less shame, in our presence; they have heard that we are not likely to harry their goats, asses, and ponies, and they have nothing to lose besides these and themselves. Had they been Sindis, they would have fled from their own well in terror. But, as they will tell us, they are sons of the "Beloch," that is to say, of thieves and soldiers: so, with a fellow-feeling which we cannot reject, even though we might object to it, they will sit with us under the thicket in the *Fiumara* bed; admire us whilst we eat breakfast; tempt us to knock over a butcher-bird or two flying; consider us a low order of demi-god, and assist in pitching our tent with the honourable regard for the distinctions of "mine" and "thine" said to flourish amongst members of the good old profession. A glass of gin will bribe them to return in the evening and help us to pass it by means of a *Saringi* and a song. Look at their homes, a clump of little low awnings of black felt upon a dwarf gallows of three poles. Travellers are wont to chronicle their lusting to see, and their heart-jumpings when first seeing, these "black tents." You remark that it is very like a gipsy's encampment: Mr. Bull! I feel almost inclined to leave you *planté*.

The Beloch, according to his own account, is an emigrant from Halab (Aleppo) and the adjacent provinces of Northern Syria. Asiatic ethnologists derive him from the Arabs of El-Hejaz; but his language is of the Indo-Persian family, although some linguists suspect in it a "substratum of original tongue," and his appearance bears little resemblance to that of Ismá'il's descendants. The eye is the full, black, expressive Persian, not the small, restless, fiery Arab organ; the other features are peculiarly high, regular, and Iranian; and the beard, unerring indicator of high physical development, is long and lustrous, thick and flowing. The race occupies a large portion of these mountains and the contiguous provinces to the West, as Mekran, Kermán, Sístán and others; it has spread far and wide over the different parts of Central Asia, even as far south and south-west as Maskat, not Zanzibar; while the reputation of being brave and faithful soldiers seldom leaves these Switzers of the Indian East destitute of honourable employment.

As regards character, the hill Beloch has all the nomadic virtues of morality, hospitality, simplicity, strong affections, fidelity, stubborn courage, and a bigoted attachment to the faith of his fore-fathers. At the same time, he has, in equal proportion, the usual nomadic vices; sanguinary ferocity, barbarous ignorance, the wildest passions; an insane spirit of revengefulness, and a love of plundering which knows no bounds. The *vendetta* was as actively at work in these mountains when we took them as in the wilds of Arabia: even Sir Charles Napier found difficulty in persuading a chief to forgive him an indefinite man owed by the head of a rival tribe. A turban knocked off would cause a blood-feud which lasted for generations. Such is their inborn lust of robbery, that, in the good old times, the wealthiest Sardár would sometimes take to the highway in disguise, merely for the sake of adventure. Their women are their *fac-similes* only, as usual, a little more instinctive and a little less reasonable, more prone to excess and less capable of

comprehending what "golden mean" signifies. The Beloch has learned better than to follow the traditionary precept attributed to his Apostle,

"Sháviruhunna wa khálifuhunna."¹⁹⁸

He treats his wife in every way as his equal, and he readily owns that much more villainy can be perpetrated with, than without, the able assistance of feminine wits. Whereas his brother on the plains, who has picked up a few sentiments from Háfíz and Sa'adi, in his unaffected contempt for, his perfect atheism in, the "rights of woman" and the "purity of the sex," matches any Hindu Pandit that ever sat down to overwhelm the daughters of Eve with the weight of defamatory Sanskrit verse and prose.

The Beloch emigrated to the low-country about the middle of the last century, in consequence of an invitation from the Kalhóra Prince of Sind, who, like an aged husband, chose the very intimate he should have avoided. He has had time to degenerate. To many of his old defects, ignorance, violence, and brutishness of manner, he has added new and worse. He has learned to lead a life of utter indolence, and to consider all the animals around him, wife, children, and fellow-creatures, created to serve him. He has lost the merriment and appreciation of "wut," of a joke, which his mountain-kinsman has none of his contempt for any art higher than the training of a horse, or the flying of a falcon. Stupid and apathetic to the last degree he delights in inebriating preparations, and he wallows in the mire of debauchery, which accompanies the free use of stimulants in the East. a soldier, he will boast invincibly, fight pretty well under the influence of opium, and run away as readily as do those whom shame and not "game drives to fight. He is without skill in the use of arms as a matchlockman inferior to the Afghan, as a swordsman to the Arab, as a spearman to the Hindu; and of the Persian and Syrian Jeríd (javelin-play) he knows nothing. Yet it would be hard to find a match for the swaggering ferociousness of his gait, heightened and set off by the small armoury of weapons, sabre and *miséricorde*; match-lock and pistol, spear and shield, belt and ball-pouch, powder-flask and primer, with which Bobadil purposes, single-handed, to do the work of a host.

Here they come, ladies and gentlemen; the former bestriding lean, ragged Yábús, like Shelties or Icelanders, the favourite chargers. Mares are preferred to horses, on account of their superior endurance, their docility, and their not being in the habit of neighing. Formerly, when the *Chupao*, or raid into the Low-country, formed the business of a Highlander's life, the quality of silence was not less valued than that of tractability. It is a favourite Beloch proverb, that a robber with his saddle on a mare has his saddle on a

¹⁹⁸ "Take counsel of them (feminines), and then do exactly the contrary of what they advise you to do." Certainly, the son of Abdullah had a habit of saying strange and sometimes very sharp things.

horse, whereas a robber with his saddle on a horse has his saddle on his head.¹⁹⁹ The beasts are lean, ragged, poor, and ill-favoured, especially when in training; but, in spite of their weedy-looking limbs, the eye and the nostrils, the silky coat and bunching muscles, show that good and pure blood flows in their veins. They are as tame as dogs to their owners, and they possess, to a considerable extent, the courage and presence of mind, if I may use the expression, which the Arab holds to be the true test of the noble quadruped. In perseverance they are indomitable. Nothing can be meaner or more miserable than their equipments, a bridle of cord with a jagged bit of iron used for a snaffle, and a bare wooden saddle whose seat reminds you of an obsolete instrument of military punishment. Few Europeans would reach the end of a short stage, on a Beloch mare, without feeling the effects of it for a week; the owner, however, will travel sixty, seventy, or eighty miles on her back, under a burning sun, without a halt or a drop of water, and consider the feat a mere morning's ride. The pace preferred is the amble, occasionally varied by a long, loose "loping" canter: the beasts are accustomed to keep it up over the most dangerous paths, and as for slopes and hills, they ascend and descend them more like goats than horses. There has been Arab blood in Sind, despite the desperately curling ears, and the Beloch pride themselves upon their mares, which generally belong to more than one owner, like those of the Ruwálá Bedawín.

I cannot say that I admire the *Duchesse de Berri* style of equitation in that somewhat too simple feminine attire. At the same time, Mr. Bull, I must observe that, with all its faults, it is less unsightly, in my humble opinion, and certainly less dangerous, than the habit of hanging half off the animal's side, suspended on a peg, with a train ready to catch everything that comes in its way. Now, however, your wife and daughters have associated their peculiar seat, and their over-grown petticoats, with their modesty," so that a word against them will be a personal reflection, to be met with counter-personalities. But perhaps your grand-daughter, when she sees how truly becoming are a pair of large rich *Shalwars*, or petticoat-trowsers, and when she feels how safe the man's seat is, will,

– "all for new – fangledness of gear,"

discard her ridiculous habit, and once more ride as nature intended her to do. Lady H. Stanhope tried the experiment with success: I was told by an eye-witness that nothing could be more correct than her appearance-astride. It is strange, when one reflects about it, that the European on horseback must preserve the only troublesome, unsightly, and dangerous part of her dress, when she exchanges her bonnet for a hat, wears a cravat, and encloses her bust in what much resembles a shell-jacket, still more the upper garment of a "buttons."

¹⁹⁹ Meaning, that he will probably have to carry the saddle home. In order to plunder a village you must dismount, and nine or ten animals must be entrusted to a single pair of hands; if they are stallions they are sure to fight, and to break away from the holder; not so when mares.

The matrons and maidens will retire to their romantic, uncomfortable abode, the black tents: they are not afraid of us, but "etiquette," odious word! forbids them to sit with the men. Our only chance of amusement is from the *Bhát* or bard, that individual with fierce features, and eyes rolling in a fine frenzy, produced, I fear, by sundry draughts of gin, with which our Afgan servants have been privately plying him. His instrument is a dried gourd, with a handle to form notes, and three strings of brass wire, which emit sounds that twang like the whizzing of an angry hornet's wings. Such is the *Tambur* of the hills.

The language of these mountaineers is the Belochki, an unpolished cognate dialect of that venerable and most beautiful tongue, the Persian. It is easily learned, as the vocabulary is meagre, being confined to the names of things; and the grammar is even less complicated than that of our own tongue. But it contains little or no literature; and the days are not come when "sharp young men" who aspire to become "politicals" turn their attention to it: so that, with the exception of two or three enthusiastic linguists, we have heard it spoken and recited for the last forty years without attempting to grammar and dictionary it. The effusions of our bard may not be uninteresting to you: only you will excuse my not attempting to fringe them with rhyme, or in any way to clothe them in a poetical dress, for the best of reasons, namely, that they are essentially prosaic.

The first specimen is of a devotional nature, a *véridique histoire, usually impromptu'd à loisir*, containing, as Oriental poetry is so fond of doing, a moral or religious lesson, which at first sight appears no lesson at all. The apparent truism of the following is, that the Almighty is almighty: its inner sense I could explain in a Sermon by an ex-Subaltern, if you would listen to it:

THE TALE OF BÁRI AND ISA.

Give ear, O ye sons of the Beloch,
Whilst I recount to you a true tale!
As Isá, the Prophet of Allah,
Was travelling, Fakír-like, over the earth,
Seeing its wonders and its wastes,
He came into a desert land
Where no river nor Káríz was,
Nor green fields, nor waving crops.
Dreadful mountains rose on all four sides
Round a plain of sand and flint,
On which stood a stump (of tree) one cubit high,
And propped against it sat Bári, the hermit,
Meditating with his shroud²⁰⁰ over his head,
Upon the might of Rabb Ta'álá.²⁰¹

²⁰⁰ A memento mori, fashionable amongst Eastern devotees. So the Icelanders provide their coffins in middle age.

Isá considered him awhile,
 Then, advancing, he touched his shoulder,
 Saying, "Tell me truly, how dost thou live?
 What eatest thou in this grainless place,
 And what drinkest thou where no water is?"
 Bári raised his head from his breast,
 He was old and stone-blind,
 His knees were sore by continued kneeling,
 And his bones, through fasting, pierced his skin:
 Yet his heart was as the life of the seed
 That dwells in a withered home.²⁰²
 He comprehended (the question) and thus replied,
 Weeping and exclaiming, "Wá wailá!"²⁰³
 How can man doubt the Creator's might?
 Sit down by me for awhile,
 I show thee the power of Allah."
 Then the stump shot up till it became
 A noble towering tree;
 At morning prayers it began to grow,
 And (presently) shadowed the ground beneath;
 At mid-day berries appeared upon it,
 Hanging in festoons like the young brab's fruit.
 In the afternoon they became brightly red,
 As the date when it falls from the tree:
 Before the sun set they were ripe.
 From each bough the bunches hung
 Cool as water in a cavern,
 Sweet as the sugar²⁰⁴ in paradise,
 Fit for Prophets and Martyrs to eat.
 Then said Bári, "Thou seest Allah's might,
 How He can feed His children in the waste!
 Fruits grew upon the (withered) stump,
 The Beloch Legend.
 Waters flow from the rugged rock,

²⁰¹ The Creator.

²⁰² Meaning, that his heart in his withered bosom was as the germ of life in the dry seed—a true Pythagorean, Oriental idea.

²⁰³ Wa Wailá; "alas! and alas!" The Arabic exclamation is put into Bári's mouth on account of the sacredness of his character. Saints, prophets, and sages, are always made to speak as Semitically as possible.

²⁰⁴ In the days when sugar of any kind was a rarity, and consequently a delicacy, our English poets used the word with a certain appetite in their comparisons. Now the metaphor is apt to offend the sensitive ear, long accustomed to associate the word with nursery discussions, or tiresome colonial grievances. But in Persian, Shakkar (sugar) still holds its ground as a fit simile for choice things; for instance, a "sugar-candy-chewing parrot" is a compliment which may be offered to the daintiest damsel in the land.

All things obey the Lord of all,
It is (only) man that doubts and disbelieves."
As it happened unto him,
So, by my head! may it happen to me.
Such is the tale of the Dervish;²⁰⁵
Gentles, my song is done!

Nothing can better illustrate the intensity of clannish feeling amongst the mountaineers than the few following lines, which represent *the* Rind to be lord and master of all the other septs, who, moreover, are described to be so low and worthless, that the Rind's brother-in-law absolutely refused to take them as his bride's dowry. Were we philosophical (Scotch) Highlanders, Mr. Bull, some of these people's ideas would be highly interesting to us:

The Kidds, the Gabols, the Gadhis, and the Pacholos,
The Talpurs, and the lawless Marris,²⁰⁶
Were all nought but²⁰⁷ slaves to Chakar (the Rind).
He gave them to his sister Banádi
As her dowry, when she married Hádhiya;
But the latter refused to take them,
The slaves were so vile, etc., etc.

To conclude with a "tale of true love," *à l'Irlandaise* so far, that the hero carries off the heroine by main force, knocking, at the same time, every one he can on the head; *à la Beloch* in that, amidst all the transports of clasping to his bosom a charming bride, he by no means neglects to secure all the transportable goods and chattels belonging to her paternal progenitor. By the effect which the song will produce upon the audience, you will decide that the bard has rightly chosen, and has skilfully handled, his subject:

Endue my tongue, O Allah, with truth!
My love is a pigeon, a pea-hen in gait,
A mist-cloud in lightness, in form a Perí;²⁰⁸
And her locks are like the tendrils of the creeping shrub.
Burned for her my heart with secret longing,
As the camel-colt, torn from his dam's side.
At length, when the taste of life was bitter on my palate,
Came the old minstrel carrying his guitar;
In his hand was a token from that lovely maid;
Then my withered heart bloomed as the tree in spring,

²⁰⁵ The songs always conclude with some such formula as this.

²⁰⁶ Names of Beloch clans

²⁰⁷ The Belochki, or rather Persian, word is "durust," which our language cannot render but by a periphrase.

²⁰⁸ This word is feminine in all the Indian dialects save one, the Multáni, which admits a Perá, or male fairy.

And smiles of joy like the dawn lighted my brow.
 "Come, come, my companions, ye lawless Beloch,
 Whose fame for theft is great!
 Bind on your high-priced swords!
 Seize your pliant spears!
 Loose your mares from their pickets and heel-ropes,
 Let them prance while you bind on their head-gear,
 And girth their saddles with the worked stirrup-irons!
 Now ride we like ravening wolves
 Towards the sheep-house, the Low-country!"
 I mount my steed, whose ears are like reeds,
 And push on bravely through the night,
 Till, without halting, we arrive before dawn
 At the flourishing Raj,²⁰⁹ on the Pír-wáh,
 Where lives my fairest of maidens,
 Amongst lovely dames in the reed-huts.
 I opened the curtains of her abode,
 And crept in disguised in a beggar's blanket:
 As the tree joys at the prospect of the blossom,
 So expanded my heart with delight,
 The torments of months left my heart.
 Said my love, "How can I part from my mother,
 For my father to heap curses upon her head?"
 I wept raining showers of tears,
 But her will was hard as the hills of the Beloch.
 Then I seized her pliant form in my arms,
 And with the end of my turban I stopped her mouth:
 She struggled like the kid in the tiger's jaw,
 But soon she rested her head on my shoulder.
 Then came out the players of the sword-fight,
 Gulzar, Sajalo, and Bahrá'm the brave,²¹⁰
 With two hundred doughty men at arms,
 Spearmen and bowmen, many a one.
 We were sixty in all, thieves of renown,
 Whose names were terrible in the Low-country.
 Quickly we mounted and wheeled our steeds,
 And shouted "Allah!"²¹¹ and couched our spears,

²⁰⁹ The generic name for a Sindian village in the wild parts of the country, situated, we are told, on one of the one hundred water- courses bearing the name of *Pir-wáh*, or "Saint's-canal."

²¹⁰ The names of the opposing Sindi warriors.

²¹¹ The war-cry; these pious thieves never rob, save in the name of Allah. Moreover, they casuistically justify theft by making it a compulsory act of charity, demanding, for instance, your coat, and reproaching you with hard heart for seeing unmoved a fellow- creature's semi-nudity. Observe that when fighting is on the tapis, the bard forgets

And fell upon them smiting with our swords
The faces and jaws of the shielded foe,
Till many had fallen, and the rest fled
From the sight of our bay-coloured snorting mares.
Then pushed we our beasts to speed,
And drove off all the camels and goats we could find.
That night the clouds refrained to rain,
The stars twinkled bright as maidens' eyes,
And the moon shone upon the stony path.
We came back unharmed to our resting-place,
Where drums beat gladly to see us again.
We cast lots with arrows and straws for the plunder.
My bride was pleased with none but me,
She has forgotten her mother, her playmates, and her companions,
And walks with a dainty boy on her hip.
Such is the tale of the bard;
Gentles, my song is done!

We will hang a red cotton shawl round the bard's neck, in token of full approval, and dismiss our friends to their affectionate wives, children, and mares, with a few presents of cheap finery. So shall the memory of our visit to these mountains endure for many a long year.

You need not hesitate to slumber in peace, sir. The fellows have eaten our salt, and they are as true to that condiment as any Arab.

all about the maiden, who, poor thing, has probably been thrown like a sack of corn across a Yábú (pony), and driven off to a temporary place of safety by some fellow that cannot fight.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE LAKKÍ PASS, AND ITS EVIL SPIRIT – SÉHWAN, ITS BEGGARS AND ITS "ALEXANDER'S CAMP."

You may not be sorry to hear, Mr. Bull, that you have now seen the worst of our Unhappy Valley; all that remains is the pretty and the picturesque – in fact, Sindia Felix.

Three stages²¹² from Unarpúr, along the right or. western bank of the river, stages so utterly uninteresting that they hardly deserve a place in your diary, lead us to Amirí, a large settlement with wattle pent-roofs as well as flat terraces. Here, after a broad reach, the river forms a gut about 400 yards wide. North of the village, on the right bank, is a mound of white silt, supposed to conceal classical ruins to which, of course, no one has yet applied the spade; and the narrow is supposed, very foolishly, to be the crossing place of Alexander and his Macedonians. Thence we make the little Lakkí village near the Pass and the Ridge of that name.

The Range appears to be almost within stone-throw of our tent, but the clearness of the atmosphere takes from the distance: it is at least three miles off. The dead alluvial flat of white silt and dirty-green tamarisk, the creation of the Indus, sweeping up to the southern and the eastern base, adds the majesty of height to their stature: they are scarcely twelve hundred feet above the level of the lowland, they seem to be three thousand. At a distance nothing can be more beautiful than the bluish-green tint, a mixture of air and Jawásí (the camel-thorn), which envelops them: nothing grander than the forms of their knobby outline, the knobbiest I ever saw; of their fantastic peaks and pinnacles, heads and caps; the horizontal bands or steps of darker hue; the sombre ravines streaking their huge flanks; their precipitous slides and broad slopes, here shelving into the plain, there buttressing the mighty wall against the encroachments of the violent, river. As we approach the foot, and the colours fade into a dull and sunburnt isabelline tint, we remark a disposition of the strata striking the least geological eye. Huge layers of pebbles appear pitched upon their edges, and dovetailed into one another, here in acute, there in obtuse, angles, as if a terrible convulsion of nature of yore had heaved the original crust of earth high up in the air, and then breaking it into massy fragments, had left it exposed to view, the memento of her mighty sport. Hence, viewed from the River southwards, where the Ridge appears to dam the stream at right-angles, the peculiar wavy lines of stratification. The general appearance reminds us of the driest and wildest parts of the Anti-Libanus.

²¹² Namely, Gopang, thirteen miles; Májhánd, fourteen; Sann, twelve; and Amirí, twelve. The last is a flourishing village, backed by the picturesque Séhwan Ridge, and here the rails had been laid down, and the trolley could work, in March, 1876. The stone blasted in the adjoining hills and used for bridges was very poor.

We must visit the chief point of attraction in Lakkí Jebel, despite the trouble it will give us. Our path leads towards a fissure, a split in the heart of the mountain, visible from afar, and conspicuous from the River as a kind of covered-way running obliquely up the southern flank. The rocks on both sides of the ravine raise their corresponding forms, at this distance bleak and bare looking, against the unbroken milk-blue of the firmament beyond. As we near the gloomy place, our admiration of its desolation increases. We exchange the road for a goat-path, dismount and toil slowly up, threading our way through blocks and boulders, which the action of the water has parted from their parent-cliffs, and under impending masses, that frown as if the least pretext would make them fall and crush us. The dell narrows rapidly from two hundred to fifty feet, and the tall sides become perpendicular enough almost to exclude the soft light of the setting sun, whose last smile is reflected by the upper peaks with a lovely blush. Through the bottom of this black gash runs a hot and dingy rivulet, filling the air with closeness and fetid steam, as it swirls down its white chalky bed, coated with yellowish sulphureous deposit. We approach its source, and the bubbling sound changes to a roar, heightened by the echoes that surround it, while the spray lights sensibly upon our toiling forms. Here the sick wash and become whole, a form of miraculous cure which we have seen elsewhere.

This, you may discern by the many emblems of its worship scattered about, is a place of Hindu pilgrimage, Dhára Tirtha, as they call it. The Moslems also hold it a holy spot, the abode of that reverend man Dháran Pír. The "Gentoos" have a goodly superstition connected with the scene: in the old time of Brahma's superiority, it was a favourite *locale* for those acts of religious suicide with which Pagan ascetics loved to conclude the present form of existence. Whenever one of the order wished to ascertain from the Deity whether his time for emancipation had come, he ascended to the source, and after ablution, prayer, and meditation, he prepared to pass the night upon that little platform of black rock. If terror deprived him of sleep, it was a sign from Heaven that the mortal coil was not to be shuffled off so suddenly if he slept composedly, the next dawn was destined to witness his liberation from the world of Matter, and the absorption of his soul into the Self-existent whence it was parted. One severe trial of the devotee's faith was a feminine apparition haunting the black cave, or rather hole, in the rock-side opposite the platform. The ascetic who, seduced by her beautiful form and harmonious accents, accepted her invitation to a *tête-à-tête*, was fated to die, like the lovers of preternatural persons in general, unpleasantly. On the other hand, when Fate willed mercy, an unseen arm of irresistible power arose to check him, as his body was toppling down headlong into the deep and rocky bed of the sulphur-stream.

Stop, Mr. Bull, I am thinking of Vaucluse—Nero's Baths—all manner of classicalities. And, *entre nous*, I am rapidly growing poetical; so I should advise you, no amateur of such things, to leave me for a *petit quart d'heure* while the paroxysm expends itself.

In awful majesty they stand,

Yon ancients of an earlier earth,
High towering o'er the lowly land
That in their memories had birth;
And spurning from their stony feet
The rebel tides, that rush to beat
And break where rock and water meet.
Hoar their heads and black their brows,
And scarred their ribbed sides, where ploughs
Old Age his own peculiar mark
Of uneffaceable decay;
And high and haughty, stern and stark,
As monarchs to whose mighty sway,
A hundred nations bow-stand they.

Within the deep dark cleft of rock dividing,
Two giants taller than their kin,
Whence the sharp blade of piercing torrent gliding,
Here flashes sudden on the sight, there hiding
'Mid stones all voice with crashing din;
Where earth-born shade with skylight blends,
A grot of grisly gloom impends
The fountain whence the wave descends.
Upon its horrid mouth, I ween,
The foot of man hath never been:
The foulest bird of prey would shrink
To nestle on that noisome brink.
Now the warm cauldron's sulphury cloud upseething,
As fumes that Stygian pit exhales,
The cavern's pitchy entrance veils,
Then in the wind's cold breath the vapours wreathing,
Dissolve – again the eye defines
The dripping portals' jagged lines.

A glorious vision from that cave,
Glittered before my gazing eye,
A seraph-face, like one that beams
Upon his sight, when blissful dreams
Round holy hermit's pillow fly.
A form of light, as souls that cleave
The darksome dungeon of the grave,
When awful Judgment Hour is nigh.
And O, that voice! Can words express
The fulness of its loveliness,

Its rare and wondrous melody?
Ah, no! no mortal tongue may be
So powerful in poesy!
Might I but gaze upon that brow,
Might I but hear that witching strain,
The joys that all the Seven Climes²¹³ know,
The charms that all the Heavens show,
Were mine – but mine in vain.

A moment pass'd the sound away,
Faded the vision from my sight;
And all was as it was before,
Vapour and gloom and deaf'ning roar.
Then soft arose that sound again –
Again appeared that form of light
Athwart the blue mist, purely white;
As from the main, at break of day,
Springs high to heaven the silvery spray.
She beckoneth to me,
And in that smile there is
Promise of love and bliss,
Enduring endlessly.

Whirled my brain, my heedless foot
Already left the verge,
Where the water-spirit pours
His bolts of feathery surge.
Where iron rocks, around, beneath,
Stand quick to do the work of death.
When, swift as thought, an icy arm
Against my falling bosom prest;
Its mighty touch dissolved the charm,
As suns disperse the mists that rest
On heathery mountains' dewy crest.
I heard the angry waters rave,
I saw the horrors of the grave
That yawned to gulf its prey;
And started back in such dismay,
As wretch that, waked from midnight sleep,
Descries through shadows, glooming deep,

²¹³ Moslems, I have said, count seven heavens; they also reckon, after the fashion of the Greeks and classical geographers, seven climates on earth; their "Haft-Iklím," therefore, means this sublunary world. This is blending together two superstitions, Hindu and Mussulman, but, *n'importe*.

The ghost of murdered victim glide,
In gory robes, his couch beside.
I looked towards the darkling cave,
No more the vision glittered there,
No music charmed the echoing air,—
That strain so sweet! That face so fair!—
And, but for one shrilly shriek,
Of fiendish rage that smote mine ear,
And, but for one horrent thrill
That seemed with ice my veins to fill,
Well, had I deem'd 'twas Fancy's freak,
That scene, whose vivid features lie
On Memory's page typed durably.

It's all over, Mr. Bull.

Our morning's ride from Lakkí to Séhwan is about thirteen miles. The first third of the old road lies across a plain, whose dimensions narrow rapidly as we advance. Then commences a straight *corniche* of some length, with the crumbling precipitous bank of the rapid river on one side, on the other a perpendicular rock rising abruptly seven or eight hundred feet above our heads. A few years ago, when Sir John Keane's force marched up by this road, there was a long flat of alluvial formation covered with old and stately trees; now the river even attempts to undermine the rocky wall which opposes it. In some places the ledge was so narrow that our camels, marching in Indian file, looked dangerously situated: it has been widened to eighteen feet, and has its *gardefou* on the outer edge. Reaching the tip of this tongue of land which, seen from the River, seems to fall into it, the old road strikes abruptly leftwards, winding through a steep and rugged cleft in the last spur of the Lakki mountains. Unless we wish to break our horses' knees, we had better again dismount and lead them. There is also a view to look at; and you may be curious to see the miseries which our unhappy beasts of burden endure, when compelled to place the soft cushions of their feet upon the rolling stones of the ascent.

Standing close to the police-station which, with due allowance for latitude and longitude, reminds me of many a little guard-house in that barbarous region the Apennines, we command a prospect of the plain below. The serpentine form of the shrunken Indus, lying in its sandy bed, and unruffled by the least breath of wind, here glows crimson with the light of the rising sun; there, screened from his horizontal rays, flows like a line of quicksilver, pale as the face of the morning sky. Near, the dull green of the young tamarisks, which overgrow the plain, breaks through the veil of thin vapour still floating over the dewy earth in the distance lies a mass of bold hill, azure and gold. above and darkly purple below, where it unites with the level ground.

Comical enough is the demeanour of those sagacious animals, our camels. They measure the steep and scan the path with a mingled expression of curiosity and apprehension. The foremost halts, roars, curls its ugly little tail, and wheels round so abruptly as almost to cast the load: the rest of the line is thrown into confusion; box grating loudly against box, and bag violently flattened by bag. Ensues the usual scene. Nose-strings are spitefully clutched and jerked; quarters are unmercifully poked and belaboured; and a hundred curses are chattered in half the time it would take you to produce a dozen. As usual, the human brute wins the day. The unruly Ships of the Desert, conquered and dejected, with a *s'il faut il faut* expression on every feature, come slowly clambering, slipping, and tottering up the path; roaring pitiably at the hard necessity, and chewing the cud between whiles, like hungry old matrons dining heartily in a state of grievous affliction. I have elsewhere attempted to show how inapplicable is the term "patient" applied to the camel.

And now, after descending, we pass over a hillocky, sandy, rocky plain, about three miles in length; we descry a mass of houses clustered at the base of a huge flat-topped mound; and, in due course of time, we find ourselves sitting in expectation of our tents, under the hospitable jujube-trees of a Séhwan garden.²¹⁴

Séhwan, or, as the place is more grandiloquently called, Sewistán, is, we must own, a city of some antiquity, disposed as our minds are by the exaggerations of the archeologists to deny everything deniable. It is mentioned by the native annalists as one of the six forts which the Hindu rulers of Sind were careful to garrison and repair. After the thirteenth century of our era it rose to distinction by the favour of a certain saint, to whose tomb we shall presently perform the traveller's pilgrimage. When our rule began the place declined in the scale of prosperity. The river played it tricks: far from being a "permanent water-way," it ran close to the town in 1844; in 1870 it had edged off seven or eight miles, and now it is returning within four or five. Nothing could be more miserable and dilapidated than the appearance of the town: its alleys and its bázár were filthy amongst the filthy, and not even Coleridge himself could define and generalize the genera and species of its nauseous odours. Formerly, also, it was a place of some military as well as religious importance, commanding the passage of the Indus: now, as you see, the river, its great stand-by, has gradually deserted it. The climate was celebrated as the most deleterious and deadly of this miasmatic land: in the hot season it was a furnace; one glance at the hapless population was proof palpable of its effects upon the body and mind of man. And, as is the case, I believe, in all sacred places and holy cities, from Rome to Meccah, the inhabitants are a very disreputable race. During the last quarter of a century, however, it has risen, and as a railway station it will regain its old prosperity.

²¹⁴ From Kotri to Sehwan, 90 miles = three days by camel; from Sehwan to Sakhar, 140 miles = four days and a half.

Séhwān, when first occupied by us conquerors, was not a pleasant place to visit, as you may judge from the following account of a trip to the tomb.

We were surrounded, as soon as sighted, by a host of pauper cripples, the young and old of both sexes at every turn a knot of beggars, obstructing our way, added a few units to the throng; every one was a mendicant; the very babies looked impatient to be old enough for begging. This gentleman deserves your special notice. He is a Kalandar,²¹⁵ or Calendar, as those dear old Frenchified Arabian Nights do so delightfully confuse the word, and an excellent specimen of his class, the vagrant saint, is he. His long, matted, filthy locks are crumpled up under a calotte of greasy felt, formed like a western fool's-cap; his neck, arms, and legs are bare; and a woollen cloth, of pepper and salt hue, purposely fashioned like a shroud to show how dead the scoundrel is to the pomps, vanities, et cetera, covers his gaunt, angular carcass. In one hand he carries a rosary, whose every bead is the size of a boy's "taw;" in the other the dried gourd from which he pours forth libations to Bacchus, and in which he receives the alms of the charitable under his arm is a huge black-wood bludgeon, not a bad instrument for furnishing the long wide *gabrí*, or wallet, which loads his broad back. If the costume be remarkable, the wearer is a real curiosity in point of countenance and demeanour. I never beheld, even amongst the horrid-looking devotees of India, a face in which the man, the baboon, and the fiend, so fearfully and so wonderfully blend. As for the ugly individual's manners, you will soon see enough of them.

He is aware that we are approaching: though he neither moves from his seat, nor opens his half-closed eyes, he shows consciousness by stringing his rosary over his wrist, and by drawing forth the horn of a wild goat, through which he begins to too-too with lugubrious perseverance. He then stretches out his cup, expecting alms.

"Give to me, men, give to me, d'ye hear me?" I will make him show off his politeness.

"Take this bounty, O Fakir!—a rupee—and let us have the benefit of thy prayers in return for it!"

The fellow receives the coin in his gourd, rises slowly from the ground, and retreats a step or two, keeping his fiery red eyes shifting between the present and our countenances. He is direly offended.

"Bounty—May Allah preserve you (with desperate irony). Bounty! it is my right—my due—my daily bread—my God's gift, not yours! One rupee; O, ye brothers of

²¹⁵ This Arabic word is properly applied only to a Súfi, or Mystic, who works out his own salvation without the guidance of a spiritual master the effect of such independence of spirit is generally to produce a reprobate of some distinction.

Hátim!²¹⁶—one rupee! Time was when men gave me a thousand. You wear the Moslem cloak—ye crows dressed in parrot's feathers!—Corpses and eaters of corpses!—whose faces are blacker than yours? There, go your ways. A bad road and a curse to you."

When visiting Holy Places, Mr. Bull, I always make up my mind to eat some "dust." We might order our Afghan servants, who, in spite of the sanctity of Kalandarhood, look eagerly for the job, to instruct the fellow in the *bienséances*. But he would certainly use his staff; the dagger might then appear, and the consequence would be serious. Besides, he is a reverend whom the cloth protects. It will be better to leave him a Roland for his Oliver, and to get through our pilgrimage as quickly as possible.

"Abubekr, Umar, and Usman be-confounded! Go thy ways, O follower of an infamous patron saint!"²¹⁷

We leave him speechless with fury.

"Are báp!—O, my father!" cries a person of flaunting dress and jaunty demeanour, standing and staring at us as if she had been a snarer and netter of Regent Street. "What men are these? Are ye going to pass through Séhwan, fellows, without engaging me for a Nách? Infidel Franks! Blights upon the land! *You* ruling instead of Amírs—locusts that you are!"

"That mouth it will be impossible to close: we find it more bitter than death;" our only way to save our ears from the "cudgel of her tongue," is to get beyond its range as speedily as we can. I will not, however, neglect to leave behind a few such "counter-checks quarrelsome" as "Thy locks be shaved!—dame of all the dogs!"—"May thy nose drop off, eater of the pig!"—"May the jackass that carries thee (*i.e.* in procession through the bázár) be a big ass!"—"May sweepers deposit their burden upon thy corpse, O widow woman!"—"O thy mother, O thy sister, female fiend!"

We leave the person blowing off her wrath in a long howl, varied and modulated by patting the palm of her hand against the circular orifice formed by her lips. This is the Indian and Sindian way of doing what Mrs. Bull would effect by springing a rattle, or shrieks of "Murder!"—raising the neighbourhood.

Everything in this place seemed to hate us. Even the pet tiger, as he catches sight of our white faces, shakes off the purring little cats that amuse themselves with walking over his broad flanks; springs up, glaring at us with bloodthirsty eyes, and ears viciously flattened upon his back, and walks round his cage as fast as his feet, lamed by the

²¹⁶ Hátim, the most generous of the Arabs, had a brother, who, attempting and failing to imitate him, has succeeded in becoming eternally celebrated for avarice and illiberality.

²¹⁷ It is a deadly insult to abuse a man's "Pír" (spiritual guide). So even the Maltese Christian says, "Yakrik Kaddísak man rabb-ak" - burn the Patron Saint who brought thee up.

retractile claws growing into the flesh, allow him. The ferocious beast obtains almost religious honours from the superstitious populace, who, by some curious zoological process, connect him with Hazrat Ali,²¹⁸ their favourite hero. His cage door is scarcely fastened, and his refectory is most bountifully supplied. When he amuses himself with tearing off the arm that offers him food, all predict to the maimed one good luck and high honour in this world and the next. He has lately been playing this trick. If you wish to irritate the crowd around his box, you have only to propose, with a serious face, what you think the savage brute most deserves-shooting.

This quadrangle with dome and lantern is the honoured tomb of Usmán-i-Merwandi, popularly called *the Kalandar (honoris causâ) Lál Shahbáz*, or the Red Falcon of Merwand, his natal province. He owes his curious ecclesiastical titles solely to his own exertions. Having once sat for a whole year in an iron pot placed upon a broiling fire, to imitate Ibráhím,²¹⁹ his skin, when he issued from the place of trial, had, as might be expected, exchanged the pallor of sanctity for a deep rubicund hue. On another occasion he assumed a winged form to rescue a brother in Allah from the stake upon which an infidel king had exalted his venerable form. Hence he is called Lál Shahbáz, a name that at once embodies the heads of his exploits, and distinguishes him from his fellows, scarlet hawks being novelties in the animal creation. Heedless of this nonsense, you will probably judge him kindly when you hear that according to history he was a quiet, harmless old gentleman, who, very like many a Fellow of Christ Church and Trinity College, preferred single blessedness; became highly moral as he advanced in years, and died, leaving behind him a high reputation as a grammarian, a logician, a philologist, and a divine. There are points of difference in the comparison: the Kalandar, I fear, was "Low Church," and probably never drank crusty old port. Among the Hindus he is Rajah Bhartari.

The Mausoleum, one of the Seven Wonders of the Sindian World, for magnitude as well as magnificence, would be a third-rate building in any semi-civilized part of India. In order to view the shrine, we must deposit our slippers at the threshold: then, perhaps, the jingling of a few rupees in our pockets may induce the surly, scowling crowd to open a ready way. *En passant*, remark if you please the remains of splendour on the doors: anciently they were plates of massive silver, with gold locks, pad-locks, and hinges; now wood is more extensively used. The interior is dark, dingy, and insufferably close, filled in equal proportions with animal caloric, the fumes of rancid incense, and the heavy smoke of long-wick'd oil-lamps. Under the dome is the holy place, covered with a large satin pall, and hung over with a variety of silken, velvet, brocade and tinsel articles, shaped like your grandmother's pet pincushion or the little hearts which you may see in Southern Europe. The walls, dimly illumined by a ray of light from door or lamp, are garnished with votive offerings of every description: the

²¹⁸ One of Ali's titles being "The Victorious Lion of the Lord."

²¹⁹ Abraham, being unjustly accused of impiety by his father, Ázar the idol-maker, was thrown by the wicked Nimrod into a fiery furnace, which forthwith became a bed of roses. So writes Moslem Holy Writ.

darkness and the dirt with which antiquity has overspread them almost conceal them from our eyes profane.

The tomb is surrounded by crowding devotees of all sexes and ages. Many people will travel from Haydarábád, a hundred miles or so, and even from more distant places, for the mundane and post-mundane benefits secured by the pilgrimage. Some are sitting here supplicating His Saintship to intercede for them with Allah, bribing him with promised dainties and rich clothes which, though he wants not, his successors do. That hopeless cripple wishes to take up his bed and walk; the blind beggar is determined to have his eyes opened; the pensive old "party" with the long beard is praying for the ruin of a favourite enemy, and the wrinkled middle-aged matron for a son and heir. A few grateful hearts are only thanking the good corpse for past benefits, and many in whom the old Adam is, I fear, very strong, are savouring in anticipation the sweets of *indulgenza plenaria*, license to *sin ad libitum*. The men in the large turbans, with stolid faces, are the Mullás, or priests; the half-clad attendants are the Mujáwirs, whose duty it is to sweep the floor and trim the lamps; the stout ruffian with the shaven head, beard, eyebrows, and moustachios, is a promising young mendicant, who has just been affiliated to the order; and the two fellows sitting at the doors in the airy costume now familiar to your eye, and wrangling with every one, male or female, about the nature of his or her offering, are Murshids, or Masters in the mystic brotherhood of beggary. The latter, however, despite their dignity of free and accepted, do not always have their own way. Sometimes a swaggering Beloch, or a formidable-tongued Sindí dame, will press in with no other present but a promise, and take place amongst the throng, seated, bowing and prostrating, groaning, mumbling, ejaculating, blessing and cursing one another round the sepulchre. Should we stay here half an hour we are sure to see a kind of fight, if, at least, grabbing of garments and hauling of hair deserves that honoured name, between the collectors of church-money and the votaries of a cheap religion, an unpaid worship.

You smile at these ridiculous altercations, Mr. Bull. So do I, with *dolce memoria* of having been similarly situated years ago, when opposed on the threshold of an English chapel, at the ignoble colony of Pisa, by an Italian servant who, having scant faith in credit, and possibly recollecting his own proverb, *passato il pericolo, gabbato il santo*, resisted my attempts to take a seat as sturdily as yon Fakir does, and, triumphant, sent me home to fetch the forgotten *pavolo* for the *Signor Padre*.

It is the time of evening prayers, as we learn by the discordant clamours of half a dozen large brass kettle-drums in the *Naubat-khaneh*²²⁰ hard by: this Oriental Ave Maria only tells me that 'tis the hour for a greater crowd to assemble, bringing with it more noise, more anger, more perspiration. So, if you please, we will leave our offering and a few civil words with the old Khalífeh, the worthy upon whom the prophetic or saintly

²²⁰ A Persian term for the room in which the kettle-drums are placed and performed upon.

mantle fell, – in compliment to our colour, he has attended personally to do the honours of his raree-show, and go our ways. To furious bigotry has now succeeded a manner of philosophic indifference. The Mujáwirs will insist upon our unshoeing, and expect a rupee or two; that is all.

The centre of Séhwan attraction lies within a few minutes' walk to the north-west of the town. It is a large flat tumulus, evidently artificial, measuring 440 by 200 yards, based upon a natural eminence, rising abruptly some 60 feet from the plain, supported by the cohesiveness of its clay, and in some places flanked by the remnants of good old brick-walls, bastions, and circular towers, round which gnarled Pipals (*Ficus Religiosa*) and knotty shrubs of huge growth have coiled their snake-like roots.

Mounting the side of this Káfir Kila' (Infidel Fort) by a natural breach, and striking into one of the many footpaths that ramify over the mound, we find the surface, like a similar feature at Syrian Hums (Emesa), cut up by wind and rain, rent by yawning sun-cracks, and occasionally mined by the seekers of gold, silver, and ready-made building-material. The level has evidently been raised by the repeated falling and burning of houses. A glimpse from the brink of one of these cavities shows that the brickwork runs down almost to the level of the road that girds the clay hill, and the excavators will inform us that, when they first opened the ground, they discovered and destroyed large arches of brick.

This is one of the many remains of what are ridiculously termed by the Anglo-Sindian antiquary "Alexander's Camp." Macedonia's great man, observe, is still celebrated in Young as in Old Egypt, but in the former by Europeans, in the latter by Egyptians. Amongst our local *savans* he holds the architectural office, assigned by you and your brethren in the West, to the Devil or to Julius Cæsar. That is to say, whenever a tourist of inquiring mind is shown a ruin about which that venerable humbug, the "oldest inhabitant," knows nothing, or will not know anything, he considers himself justified in at once deciding it to be an "Alexander's"²²¹ Camp."

This Séhwan mound has supplied Greek and Bactrian coins, but of course such articles travel far. It cannot, I humbly opine, be of Grecian origin, for two reasons: the arches are Asiatic, and the broken bits of man's handiwork scattered about in its entrails are purely Oriental. If we are to believe the chronicles, it was a Hindu castle, built to command a favourite ford of the Indus: in the lapse of years, as it was ruined and ruined over again, the site rose above the level of the plain, till at last it became conspicuous and, catching the archæologist's eye, it received from his ever-ready hand the honours of an illustrious origin.

²²¹ The Sikandar Zúl Karnayn (Lord of the two-horns, or the East and the West), in Koranic and poetical literature, is evidently a caricature of the great Greek. I see no reason to make him, as some Orientalists have done, a different personage.

The natives of Sind, excepting only the few readers of Persian poetry and history, had never heard of "Sikandar Shah" (King Alexander) when we first entered the country. Now they bid fair to become almost as minute and clever in pointing out the different stages of the Macedonian's progress through the land as our *savans* have proved themselves. So the Afghans, after one short year's study of the British *gobemouche*, taught themselves to imitate the rare Bactrian coins with a skill which, considering all their deficiencies of means, entitles them, I opine, to rank high in the scale of ingenious rascality. When Lady Macnaghten showed a peculiarly rare coin to one of these forgers, and asked him how long it would be before he could supply her with a similar article, he boldly answered, "To-morrow morning." Her suspicions were aroused, and she asked him why he named the next day. "Allah! Allah!" he rejoined, "you can't expect me to make it in less than twelve hours!"

There are no traditions of consequence connected with this old fort. The people, as usual, believe the gloomy deserted place to be haunted, especially by night, and it was some time before the deputy-collector, who erected a bungalow, with *naïve* nationality, upon the summit, could persuade his Sindí servants that they might sleep in it without imminent peril of being eaten. Him they knew to be safe. Franks are all magicians: any real Oriental will inform you, that the reason why we never see their legions of goblins is simply that we are the "fathers of devils"—that is to say, fiercer fiends than the general run of fiery creatures.²²² When a Moslemah in Persia, or a Christian woman in Syria, wishes to cast abomination between her husband and a pretty little rival wife, or quasi-wife, she secretly rubs a bit of pork upon, or sews a bristle into, the latter's dress; and the good man forthwith conceives a violent loathing for the object of his love. What think you must be expected from a people who eat grilled bacon for breakfast, and at times dine off sucking-pig?

Before we leave Séhwan, Mr. Bull, I must "make a clean breast of it." Many years ago, in my hot youth, a credulous antiquary was digging here and finding all manner of proof that it was the head-quarters of Alexander's host. In those days we affected a now obsolete article called the "Athenæum Sauce;" and it came to us in a manner of pot rudely imitated from a painted Etruscan vase. How thoughtless and reckless is man before the age of twenty-five! To smash that pot, to treat it with fire and acid, and to bury it in the ground on the line taken by the excavator, was the work of an idle day. And it was duly unearthed, washed, carried home, and presently shown to a number of wondering friends as proof positive that the Rasenna had their original homes in Sind. But before the find was described in print, I owned my offence and I was never forgiven.

Again, when the ninth decade after A.D. 1800 was so busily employed in recovering the "Lost Tribes," a subject still not wholly devoid of attraction, I was travelling on the edge

²²² Fiends, say the Moslems, are made of fire, as man is of earth.

of Bráhuistán, the land of the Turanian Bráhuis, and my unhappy sense of humour suggested another ugly practical joke. To draw up a grammar and vocabulary, stolen from Parkhurst, and provided with barbaric terminations, was the work of an idle week, and the Presidency rang for nine days with the wondrous discovery. That "little game" also was, as you may imagine, not to be condoned.

But I now repent in sackcloth and ashes, and my trembling hand indites, *Mea culpa! mea maxima culpa!*

CHAPTER XXVI.

LAKE MANCHAR – SANITARIA – LÁRKÁNA THE PRETTY, AND MAHTÁB, THE DONNA OF LÁRKÁNA.

Open the map of Sind, sir, and listen to me.

A little north of Lárkána, on the right bank of the Indus, you see a streaky line marked Nárá R.; that is to say, the Snake Stream, a Sind Serpentine, evidently, at some age, the westernmost course of the Indian Nile. It falls into a long oval which stands for Lake Manchar, flows through it, and issues from the southern extremity under a fresh name, the Áral. These—the Nárá and the Áral—form a loop of about a hundred miles from point to point, and they have been excavated and cleared till their tortuous courses present the appearance of man's rather than of Nature's doings. The country is so level that, when the Indus rises, the water flows up the Aral, and *vice versa* when the main stream falls.

Two days' journey²²³ along the Áral from Séhwan takes us to the lake.

At this season of the year you will admire Máhá Manchar, "Great Manchar," as the people are fond of calling it; especially after the arid scenes of the Mimosa Dyke and the Beloch Hills. It is formed by the western Nárá, which I must again warn you not to confound with the eastern feature of the same name, the "old original" Indus. You will hear more about the latter at Sakhar. Its "broad," or reservoir, formed, in all probability, by a migration of the main stream, and disposed with the major axis from north-east to south-east, is a sheet of crystalline blue, waved with the tiniest ripple that zephyr ever ruffled up: broken by little flat capes and green headlands, and pigmy brown cliffs, it spreads far towards the setting sun, indistinctly limited by a long curtain of yellow ridge. Down the centre of its length, whose maximum is 20 miles with an area of 180, runs a line of deep channel, amethyst-coloured, except where the fisher's canoe glides, whitening the surface of the wave: all around, the lovely lotus (one understands them that gave her for gods and goddesses to handle) raises her pearly head, and veils with her emerald cloak the pellucid nakedness of the shallower streams. The banks are forested with sedge and rushes, thick and shaggy as old Proteus' drying locks; and high above the rank thicket towers the knotted Káno-reed, with its tall columnar stalk and light feathery top, some twenty feet high, gracefully bending and bowing to the breeze.

²²³ From Séhwan to Bázár, ten; from Bázár to Drábrí, a fishing, village on Lake Máhá Manchar, eleven miles. These places, like many others here mentioned, will not be found in the Gazetteer map; such settlements are essentially ephemeral.

Nor is the prospect wanting in "figures"—a *sine quâ non*, methinks, in any but an Arctic or Saharán view. In some parts the water is almost concealed from sight by the multitude of wild birds, feeding and floating, swimming and preening their plumage upon the crystal flood. There is the Brahmani duck (*Anas Casarca*), with its brilliant hues; the grey curlew and the king curlew, in black coat and scarlet cap; the flamingo, rosy and snowy white; the pelican, little smaller than an ostrich; the bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*), yellow as to ruff; and, queen amongst these nobles, the tall and graceful Sárastork, clad in delicate blue, whose head of brilliant crimson shades off, with the sweetest gradations of red and pink, down her long taper neck. Mingling with the patriarchs of the air, are the commonalty of different descriptions, mallards and cormorants, snipes and snippets, dabchicks and ducks, all "chortling in their joy." Above us, the pert and pretty black-bellied tern wheels in butterfly-like flight; and the kingfisher, now poised aloft, twittering his sharp clear note with his beak resting on his breast, then flashing through the sunbeam like a handful of falling gems, as he tries his fortune in the depths below, claims our greeting as an old acquaintance.

The human is almost as abundant as the lower animal population of Máhá Manchar. In some spots the scene viewed from afar reminds you of voyages and travels in China. At this moment we see at least a hundred little black boats, moored against the reedy banks, or entangled in the lacustrine vegetation, or pushing out into the *thalweg*, where the fisherman may use net and lance, fearless of tough stalk and tangled root. The favourite style of driving is to form a circle with a dozen or two of canoes, and with cries and a *Charivari* of pots and pans to force the fish into the circular net-inclosure, which may measure thirty feet. The spear is used chiefly by women to catch the shark-like siluroids.

The *Moháná* or Sindí fishermen are, we know from their history, as well as from their swarthy skins and Indian features, directly descended from the aboriginal Hindus converted to El-Islam. The change has not hitherto raised them high above heathenism they still pay a kind of religious respect to their nurse, the element: they never enter the water without begging it, by a *Salám*, not to be their grave just yet; and their rice-offerings and hymns addressed to the River-god savour rankly of old idolatry. They are an athletic, laborious, pleasure-loving, merry-hearted, and thoroughly demoralized set of semi-savages. Women as well as men all seem to be in a state of perpetual motion; whether this be the result of a fish diet or not, I leave you, Mr. John Bull, to determine: certainly, the contrast their activity offers to the general torpidity of Sindism, deserves a little philosophico-physiological consideration. Sturdy fishwives are seen tugging at the oar or paddling at the stern, whilst the spouse busily plies the net: the elder children, in Nature's garb, dabble about like water-fowl, and the Benjamin of the family lies consoling himself, sucking his thumb, in a cot of network, that dangles high in the air between the mast and rigging of the little craft. They eat, drink, smoke, and sleep on board their vessels, these amphibious animals; and never quit them except to cure their prey, to dry it upon the banks, and to sell it at the nearest market village, or to exchange

it for the necessaries of life. They are equally celebrated for depravity and devotion; they seldom marry till, Orientally speaking, old; and they scrupulously spend every pice they can secrete from the Mullá in bhang, opium, and spirituous liquors. Their families are remarkably large: in addition to the general activity of their bodies, their tongues, especially the feminine, seem gifted with uncommon nimbleness, and the proceeds, translated into our vernacular, would be a novel and valuable addition to the vocabulary of "Gate slang." Perhaps these also are the effects of a fish diet. Withal, the Moháná are a laughter-loving, light-hearted race, except when cold, or when recovering from *Katzen-jammer* (nausea): they enjoy a rude jest, only it must be very rude, almost as much as a glass of liquor, and they never seem to quarrel with Fate, except when an embryo fisher-man slips overboard and exchanges its cradle for a watery grave. Little can be said in favour of their appearance; their skins are burned to a reddish-black by searing winds and scorching suns; their features fearfully resemble the *Homo Darwiniensis*, the developist's First Father; and their dress consists of two unwashed cloths, one wound round the head, and the other tightly wrapped about the loins, and both blue-dyed, to hide impurity. Some of the youngest damsels are pretty; occasionally one sees a face which may be pronounced handsome; but a hard life, in both senses of the word, induces middle age at twenty; and Macbeth never saw such hags, even at the Lyceum, as you see in the old Mohání.

We view Manchar at its very best time. During the summer it is the most execrable place in Sind; and popular indignation has expressed itself in a proverb, the purport of which is, that while this exists, no other Pandemonium is necessary. Even at Séhwan the heat is fearful, and tradition records the remark of a corporal who found his sentinel resting his elbows upon the butt of his musket with the bayonet in the ground: "Don't you do that, Bill, or you will let the fire out!" As the caloric increases, the almost stagnant water, and the fat weeds, which spring from the black slime-bottom, send forth swarms of mosquitos and sand-flies, gnats and dragon-flies, midges and common flies, whilst Tertiana, Quartana, and all the unholy sisterhood, hover like harpies over the devoted shore. At times, too, the lake, now so placid, chafes itself into all the fury of Geneva or the Mediterranean. A blast of wind comes howling over and stirring up the waters, which rise to the summons of the Storm-fiend, as if some kindred devil were immured in them. Then woe to you, voyager! There are no waves to ride over, nothing but a broken surface of short chopping sea, black below, foaming above, every billow unconnected with its neighbour, and each roller capable of swamping your little craft. If caught in one of these hurricanes you have only to be prepared for the worst drowning in lukewarm water. Mooring, from the nature of the banks, is impossible. You must give your boat her head; allow her to run away with you wherever she pleases; and congratulate yourself, indeed, upon your good luck, if, when "spilt" into a field of hedge-like sedges, you do not sink into the mud deeper than the neck, before the storm subsides and some fisher's canoe comes off to your rescue.

About half-way between Séhwan and Lárkána we could turn westwards from Mehar and visit the Kirthár mountains with their two sanitaría, the Chár Yaru and the Danna Towers; unfortunately, the road has been marked out only for about three miles, and the rest, numbering forty-seven, is described as much like riding in Kesrawán of the Libanus. Few if any wild animals affect the country, save a kind of badger known to the natives as Gorpat.²²⁴ The range of New Red Sandstone, disposed in three distinct and parallel ridges, lying upon a meridian, was probably, during geological times, the right or western bank of the Indus. Khara Takha has been laid down as "6000 feet high at least," and the Dog's Tomb, on the apex of Kirthár, at 7200. In the pretty little valley of Herar are certain Káfir Kots, curious memorials of an age and a race long since passed away: they are regular and artificial ranges, like river-terraces, probably levelled for tents and huts. The popular belief is that the huge boulders around have been lifted into position by the giants that were in those days. Dr. Lalor here made the interesting remark that his "observations on solar radiation show a different result from what might have been expected, and utterly opposed to the modern theory which makes the calorific effects of the sun increase as we ascend—a theory doubtless favoured by the greater clearness of the atmosphere and the general absence of clouds. But the table of Mr. Wright, apothecary in charge of the Mehar hospital, plainly shows the statical effect of the sun's rays on the thermometer to be much greater in the plains."

To Lárkána, on an eastern influent of the Indus,²²⁵ eight stages.

We have now quitted Wicholo, and are within the bounds of Siro-Northern Sind. The Egyptian fertility of the soil commences: here you may calculate, Mr. Bull, what our Unhappy Valley is capable of becoming. The bed of the river is higher and nearer the surface of the country than in the Lower Provinces; the canals are better excavated, and the result is that water is more easily procurable. Instead of the dirty, ragged clumps of huts to which you were accustomed, neat and comfortable little hamlets, surrounded by groves of date, jujube, and Ním trees, meet the eye in all directions. The grazing-land is black and white with buffaloes, cows, asses, sheep, and goats; crops begin to gladden the fields: we hear the music of the Persian wheels from the shafts and tunnels dug in the river and canal banks; while the loud shouts of the corn-keepers, slinging away, like Mr. Fred. Leighton's Syrian, at the hungry birds from their little *Maychán*, or raised platforms, sound human, busy, energetic. The cultivators are no longer lean with hunger, pallid with enlarged spleen, half-clad, reckless, and slothful with poverty. Every man walks as if he had an object: he has a burly Britisher waist, and he looks at us almost benignantly. As we ride through the hamlets, peering curiously and like Englishmen over the walls of the courtyard, and into the doors of the houses, comely

²²⁴ Both places have been excellently described by Dr. Lalor, of the Bo. Service; and he is copiously quoted in the Gazetteer, pp. 451, 495. The Danna Towers were begun by the Amírs of Sind as a safe retreat in case of invasion.

²²⁵ The people pronounce the word "Ládkáno;" and derive it from its old owners, the Larak tribe. I retain the so-called Arabic form. Our stages are, Chenni, ten miles; Johi, fourteen; Phuláji, fifteen; Ghará, thirteen; Mehar, eighteen; Násirábád, seventeen; Khayrpúr, thirteen; and Lárkána, eleven.

feminine ovals, with immense black eyes and the whitest possible teeth, set off by the clear, olive-coloured skin, are protruded to catch sight of the strangers, and the same, instead of being withdrawn with a half-convulsive jerk are, agreeable to relate, allowed to remain for the pleasure of mutual inspection. Here and there, where the settlement is very flourishing, we may indulge ourselves in an amiable Salám, made by drawing the right hand across the brow; and the effect will be an amused smile instead of an angry mutter at the "brass" of the European face under the Asiatic Tarbúsh.

Lárkána is in the centre of Sindia Felix—the summer-house of the surrounding garden, the Eden of the farther Nile. The mud-town is pleasantly situated upon the banks of a large canal, some nine miles (four and a half Kos) west of the main stream. Girt by groves of spreading trees, which checker with shade the holcus and wheat fields, it contains the usual stuff of a Sindian town, but *tout en beau*. The Mosques are larger; the tanks are better built; the big houses are more numerous, and the small houses are less squalid than our old familiar friends. There is an extensive bázár, containing several hundred shops, which strikes us with a sense of splendour; and at one end of the town rises a kind of citadel, called Fort Fitzgerald, from the gallant officer who superintended its erection, impressing us with ideas of security. "Fighting Fitz," for whose exploits see Sir William Napier's "Conquest of Scinde," was a man not readily found in these days (1876). The owner of a fair property at home; exceptionally handsome, and strong enough to draw a field-gun and to cut a Beloch in halves with his huge blade, he gave up all the pleasures of civilization and home-life for the duty of being a father to his irregular Camel-corps. He built a high-pressure steam-engine almost with own hands, and applied it to a native yacht, which was blown up with some regularity. This accident happened once too often; a severe scalding sent him home on sick certificate, and he sank within sight of the "White Cliffs." Methinks I now see his tall and stalwart figure, draped in his long "Postin" of Astrachan fur. He died too early for his fame: there was in him something that leads to Westminster Abbey.

Lárkána is a place of some commerce. It is known for its manufactures of coarse cloth and, being upon the high-road between Karáchi and Shikárpúr, it is the favourite station with caravans and travelling merchants. This is probably the reason why it is celebrated for anything but morality. The inhabitants are a dissolute race, fond of intoxication, dancing, and other debauchery, and idle, because the necessaries of life are so cheap that there is no need of working hard to live. The number of fair Corinthians in the place has given it a proverbial bad name amongst moral-minded Sindians.

I promised you a Nách, Mr. Bull, and Hari Chand has secured the services of a celebrated dancer with a pretty name, Mahtáb, the "Moonbeam:" here she comes with her sisters, each sitting in her own Kajáwah,²²⁶ making altogether a train of nine camels.

²²⁶ A kind of camel-litter; a pair of gigantic ladle-shaped panniers, in which Sindian dames stow themselves away.

Mahtáb, the Donna of Lárkána, is quietly beautiful as her namesake. The exact setting of every feature in that perfect oval gives her as many lovely faces as its position varies. The gloss of youth is on her hair and marble-like transparent skin; mouth, eyebrows, eyelashes, all look new, unused, fresh as the day they were finished by the hand of Nature. The expression is strange in a countenance so admirable and so admired: it is a settled sadness, as if the owner had been a victim to some *grande passion* – which, by the by, is emphatically not the case. You cannot help now and then wishing that a smile, or a frown, or a sneer would rumple those finished lips, that tall calm brow; that she would appear somewhat more human, less like a statue in a moonlit walk.

Your eyes, weary with the beauties of her face, shift to her figure, where, if perfection ever was, there you discover it. Your glance slowly takes in a throat to which "tower of ivory," "gazelle's neck," and all that kind of thing, would be studied insults: thence it shifts lingeringly to a line of shoulder, where, if it could, it would stay; but on it must go, to understand what a bust is, and to see what a woman's waist might be; not, as you shudderingly recollect, what it is so often made to be. Thence –

But stop, Mr. Bull. At this rate you will be falling in love with the Moonbeam: I tremble to think of the spirit in which your lapse would be received by the bonneted, straight-laced, be–petticoated partner of your bosom. I would almost engage you to say nothing of the scene when you return home: it would grieve me even to dream of "hussy" and "savage" in connection with yonder masterpiece, with that physical,

"Queen-rose of the rose-bud garden of girls."

We will give a signal for the start.

The musicians, one pipe, one guitar, and two kettledrums, sit down heavily upon rugs in a corner of the tent: opposite them are the dancing-girls, who, with the exception of Mahtáb—bless her instinct—have hung gold in every bit of attainable cartilage, and have converted themselves into bales of brocade and satin elaborately mixed. Their toilette, I need scarcely remark, is the acme of *la mode*: they can scarcely stand on their slippers, the tightness of the Shalwárs (pantalettes) round their ankles impedes the lower circulation, and their hair is strained off their foreheads so tightly as almost to draw their features out of place. There are swords, daggers, and shields in the party; and, more dangerous still, sundry flasks and phials containing a colourless liquid, which I am told is water, which I believe to be something stronger.

The Nách commences with a *pas seul*: the Moonbeam is about to engross every eye. You perhaps expect one of those grievous and laborious displays of agility to which Europe has limited professional dancing. Oh, no! An *entrechat* in these regions would shave a girl's head, a *pas de Zephyre* bleed her, and half-a-dozen *petits battements* consign her to an inner room, without windows and with bare walls. Mahtáb floats forward so lightly

that trace of exertion is imperceptible softly and slowly waving her white arms and pink palms, she unexpectedly stands close to you, then, turning with a *pirouette*—it has no other name, but its nature is widely different from the whirligig rotations of a Taglioni—she sinks back, retires, and stands motionless as wax-work, and then again all *da capo*, with the beautiful sameness which becomes her face and figure. The guitar is in the seventh heaven of ecstasy, the pipe is dying away with delight, and the kettle-drums threaten to annihilate their instruments. The lady's sisters, or rather sisterhood, are too completely under the spell even to feel envious, and you, Mr. John Bull, are inclined to vociferate, as is your wont, *Bray-vo!*

There is nothing particularly interesting or exciting in the *pas de deux*, and the other trifles, in which Mahtab's companions display themselves, whilst the beauty sits motionlessly reposing. You feel that there is something in her look which spurns rather than courts ardent eyes, and you are disposed to yawn after a minute's inspection of the troop, and to contort your countenance when you fix your ear upon the Chinese melody of the music. The bandsmen may amuse you for a moment. They are all *en train* towards that happy state aptly described by the merry, scandalous monarch as levelling all artificial distinctions between sovereign and subject. They drink well but not wisely: those tossings of the head, intended to beat time; those merciless rubbings of stubbly beard and wild mustachio, purporting excitement; and those bendings of the body that remind you of the coxswain in a rowing match, directly tend towards "under the table," were there such an article of furniture in the tent.

Now for the ballet, or melodrama, the favourite piece of the evening. The Nách-girls all equip themselves in manly and martial dresses—all except the "Donna," whom dignity forbids.

En passant, I may remark that this way of confusing the sexes, though adverse to high histrionic effect, is by no means so utterly disenchanting as that for which our amateur Anglo-Indian theatres are remarkable. A pretty girl's face under a man's helmet, and a delicate arm supporting rhinoceros-skintarge are, to say the least, endurable. Not so soft Juliet, when "done" by a huge horse-artilleryman, six feet three, with the broadest shoulders, fiery whiskers, and gruff accents; or dear Desdemona, represented by a pale, weasen-faced, cock-nosed, intensely ugly, and crack-noted little lad, in the first state of change from school-boy to "officer and gentleman;" or a Portia in the shape of some monstrous "private," who shakes his fist in the face of Shylock, and, with a voice like the bellow of a bull, roars at him, —

"The quality of mercy is not strained."

The piece is a species of comedy, in which a very young, beautiful, and coquettish wife, a very old, jealous, and irate husband, and an ardent lover in his prime, all dancing more or less, represent sundry scenes of possible or probable occurrence in domestic

life, Eastern or Western. Either in consequence of the plot's engrossing interest, or the contents of those flasks, there is much palpable exaggeration in the development of "character: " never was old husband so thoroughly hateful as this, never was lover so loving, never was young and pretty wife such an *outrée* coquette. And, alas for the poetical justice and the morality of the Muse in Sind! The rightful owner of the coveted goods at length falls to the ground, pierced by twenty deadly wounds; whilst the breaker of ever so many commandments, after carefully securing his fallen foe's sword, best dagger, and new turban, walks off with the bone of contention" as quietly as if it had been his own rightful "rib." And, again, alas for the degradation of our professionals in the Valley of the Indus! one of the kettle-drums has been removed, with considerable difficulty, by two of our Afghan servants; the pipe is going fast, and extraneous aid is necessary to the drooping form of Núr Ján, the Moonbeam's youngest and prettiest sister. We ought not to have admitted those flasks.

Lárkána is celebrated for another kind of Nách, of a type familiar to the veteran dweller on the banks of the Nile: I would willingly show you the sight, were it not haunting as a good ghost story or a bad novel.

Conceive, if you can, the unholy spectacle of two reverend-looking grey-beards, with stern, severe, classical features, large limbs, and serene, majestic deportment, dancing opposite each other dressed in women's attire, the flimsiest too, with light veils on their heads, and little bells jingling from their ankles, ogling, smirking, and displaying the juvenile playfulness of

"limmer lads and little lasses!"

This man-Nách reminds me of what has often been seen upon the Abyssinian coast behind Masawwah, in the early days of Mr. Consul Plowden and his merry men. Entering a village, you were met by a deputation of elders, grand-looking men, with goodly beards, and tall forms wrapped in what most resembles the Roman toga. Then the chief of the party majestically stepped forward, bent low, and, with right hand upon his heart, gravely ejaculated what he had been taught to consider the Englishman's official greeting: "Go to the devil and shake yourself" or something much worse.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE PICTURESQUE SAKHAR, BAKAR, ROHRI.

THIS trio of words soon won what Mr. Barnum modestly called "notoriety." When the Sepoy from Hindostan wished to address his comrade with a jocose, friendly, and polite curse, he cried,

"Are bhái! Sakhar, Bakar, Rohri-ko jáo!"

Which "Go to Sakhar, Bakar, Rohri, O my brother!" was the equivalent for an expression immensely popular amongst our soldiers and sailors. And of the same Masti Pardesi ("pruff" man from the country beyond) it is recorded that, warned for service in the Unhappy Valley, he would naïvely say to his commanding officer, "Yes, Sahib, we are Balamtír (volunteers), it is true, but to Sakhar, Bakar, Rohri, go we won't!"

At this season, early February, Sakhar will surprise you by its delightful climate. The mornings and evenings are cool and clear as they would be in Tuscany; there is a tonic draught in the pure light air; the north-eastern breeze is bracing in the extreme, and even at mid-day you can enjoy a walk out of the sun. Yet the doctors assure you that the cold is the unhealthy period, "chills" and fevers being generated by the raw nights and warm days. This weather will last till the end of March. From early April to mid June is the hot dry season, followed by the hot damp (August and September), when the Indus floods bring boils and urtica or "prickly-heat:" this is the only disagreeable part of the year, yet it is better here than at Shikárpúr, and far better than at Jacobábád. About Karáchi, I have told you, there is a break in the hot season; August to September being comparatively cool and cloudy; the respite is sometimes, but not regularly, in July, granted to Siro, or Upper Sind.

Here, Mr. John Bull, after a four days' journey²²⁷ from Lárkána, you may rest and be thankful, and quote your Ovid:—

"Contigimus portum quo mihi cursus erat."

We will straightway begin our sight-seeing by climbing the nearest Belvedere, yonder minaret. It is called after Mir Mohammed Ma'asúm, Sayyid and Fakír, who lived in the reign of Akbar the Great, and who, being annoyed by that monarch, threw, say the people, his "Páras," or alchemist's stone, into the Indus. According to the learned he was an *homme d'esprit*, and he proved it as follows. When summoned to the Emperor's

²²⁷ Lárkána to Náýá Dera, 13 miles; to Madadji, 14; to Járli, 17; to Sakhar, 15.

presence, he suspected a trial of wits, and carried in his pocket a shawl, which became useful when ushered into an artificially-cooled room.

"Ajab!" ("Marvellous!" *i.e.*, such wit in a Sindi) exclaimed the monarch, when the reply was, "Gáhi na khordam (I never ate it, *viz.*, fish, which here, contrary to the Agassizian theory, is supposed not to feed the brain). Whereat Akbar the Great, whose thoughts were thus divined, marvelled still more.

The Ma'asúm minaret, built in 1607, is a substantial Linga of fine red brick, somewhat crooked outside, and ascended by a winding staircase of slippery marmorine limestone, which, however, did not deter Lady Franklin from the climb. Either the municipality or the Ma'asúm Sayyids should rough the surface. Hard by it are the tombs of the holy man, his family, and his acolytes, under, and outside of, a heavy stone canopy resting on light fantastic pillars; and an adjoining octagon, whose honey-combed ceiling, lined with Persian tiles, shelters prayer-meetings. I cannot trace the source of a tale told. by Mr. Allan O. Hume in "Stray Feathers " (1873), namely, that the minaret was erected by a Banyan at the instance of his lady love, who refused her fair self until the swain had raised, upon the highest point of Sakhar, a tower 200 gaz (cubits) high. By the incitements of Kámadeva (Cupid) he reported it finished in a week; but, firstly, it is not upon the highest point, and secondly, it is nearly 100 feet, not 100 yards, high. The obdurate one, astonished at this untradesman-like persistence, thereupon advised her victim to throw himself down from his own tower: he did so, and there is every reason to suppose that the operation effected a perfect cure. Two or three of his fellow castemen having lately followed his example, the local authorities surrounded the terminal domelet and its four arches with a stout cage. Something of the kind was found necessary for the Kutb-Minar of Delhi, the top being removed to prevent suicides.

I have not erred, you see, when characterizing Sakhar as "the Picturesque." Before us in the distance the tranquil spreading Indus, flowing majestically from north-east to south-west, sweeps suddenly round with a mighty loop to the north-west and, dashing through two beds, mere cuts in the hard and crystalline limestone, descends, with swirls and eddies like the preliminary of a cataract, in the direction where we stand. The total breadth, including the island, is not more than 870 yards;²²⁸ and the northern arm, not used by steamers, has been increased to 600 feet. On the left bank rises the tall, irregular mass of mud-walls that compose Rohri; built upon an eminence of limestone; and, in older days, various islets, some mere blocks of white calcaire, which are now surrounded by a little sea of sand, subtended the shore. Sakhar Reach, where irrigation

²²⁸ More exactly, the Sakhar fork measures, since it was widened to relieve the flood, 600 feet; the Island of Bakar 1150 feet across; and the Rohri fork, the line preferred by steamers, 850 feet, forming a total of 2600, or at the utmost 2650 feet, not 1200 yards, as in the Handbook. These figures were given to me by Mr. E. Wallis, superintendent of the four sub-divisions of the Sind Telegraphic Division: he also tells me that four wires are now proposed, two for the railway, and the rest for the telegraph office.

is easy, boasts of beautiful date and garden grounds, with the various items of Jamún (*Eugenia Jambos*), Ber (*Z. Zyziphus*), Pipal (*Ficus Religiosa*), Ním, tamarinds and tamarisks, poplars, red-flowered capers, and the pomegranate, all flame and green. Fronting Rohri rise the crumbling walls of Bakar, now chiefly conspicuous for its tall telegraph-pier, a brick tower of prodigious ugliness, perpendicular on all sides but one, which is stepped and railed for the purpose of ascending. This Rock of Gibraltar, the principal item of a small archipelago, hides from below stream the domes of Khwájeh Khizr in a holm which we must presently visit; immediately to the west rises another islet, Sádih Belá, and again, down stream, but connected in the dry season by a sand-bank, is the Dín Belá. The former, "Pure Forest," was seized by the Banyans since our tenure of the country, and converted into the habitation of a holy man, Bábáji Vanakhandi; it is now occupied by his favourite Chelá, or disciple, Hari Prashád. A white dome and two verandah'd mud-pavilions, shaded by figs, jujubes, and palms, suffice to cover the scanty surface; and a new house is being built for his reverence, who now holds levées under the finest tree in the Reach. The Ghats are step-flights of cut stone; and chains and rings in the wall enable the boatmen to work up during the flood. The saint speaks excellent Hindostani, and he is especially civil to us, presenting roses and cardamoms. Some fifty followers in turbans of their own hair, ochre-coloured cottons, and coats of ashes, are here fed every day. I commend the care of them to the Superintendent of Police; mostly they are spies used by the Hindu Máhárajahs and Rajahs to carry confidential messages-treasonable, of course.

Dín Belá, or "Faith Forest," is bare as your hand; the single stepped dome of its forgotten saint is crumbling, despite the whitewash; and the heaps of steamer-fuel which invest it explain the modern and Frankish name "(Navy) Wood Island." I could learn nothing of the curious fact mentioned by Mr. E. B. Eastwick (*Murray's Handbook for 1859*, p. 492), that a building is still visible in the centre of the stream, a little below this Dín Belá. Far away on the right bank rise the cupolas of Old Sakhar, a place of minor importance, girt by the normal tombs: at our feet lies the Cantonment, once a burial-ground and now a kind of deserted city; and behind us, amongst the date-orchards of the banks, forming tall colonnades and tufted tops, appears the large and populous bázár which has won the name of New Sakhar.

Particularly attractive is this view when seen at the morning hour. The sun slowly tops "Fort Victoria on the Indus," the new and all but unknown name for Bakar, and washes with crimson the opposite part of the brown stream; the airy depths sparkle with blue; light mists cling to the wooded lowlands, giving a charm of indistinctness to the distant prospect, and the foreground is tawny as the Arabian Desert. The first smile of day lights up the little archipelago of islets and holms, crowned with forts and ruins, and lends a glory not their own to the mausoleum of Adam Shah Kalhóra; to the various Íd-gáhs which crown the heights, and to the adobe-built dead-walls of Rohri, based upon its plateau of shining-white nummulitic limestone. The general contrast between the

features that stand out in the horizontal beams, and those about which the purple shades of dawn still linger, is as striking as any modern lover of landscape can desire.

With one glance you perceive, Mr. John Bull, how this section of the river, popularly known as Sakhar Reach, came to be so thickly built over. In ancient days, when the Indus occupied the Eastern Nára bed, some twelve miles to the east of Rohri, it was, you may be sure, bleak and barren enough. Presently the stream shifted its course to the present line, by cutting away the loose and fossiliferous strata of the nummulitic ridge, full of the *N. Lavigata*, and leaving the harder crystalline masses, which, pudding'd with agates and flints,²²⁹ form the four islands and the hillocks of Sakhar and Rohri. Bakar thus moated, was easily fortified, and in the days when howitzers, mines, and torpedoes were unknown, it became the key of Sind. Insulated and at times cut off from communication with the land, this stronghold was doubtless more important than comfortable or convenient; for which reason the towns of Sakhar and Robri presently sprang up on either bank.

Allow me to be your cicerone, sir, and to begin with holy Rohri.

"Rohri," which the people still call Lohri, is derived from the name of some fisherman; we find the word in other parts of Sind, notably in Ibn Batuta's Lahari" (A.D. 1333), and in Captain Hamilton's "Larribundar," afterwards called "Lowry Bunder." According to the oldest authorities, its ancient name was Loharkot. It stands upon a broken cliff of limestone, some forty-five feet high, and hence the commanding aspect from the stream; and it was founded in A.H. 698 (A.D. 1297) by (the Sayyid) Rukn el-Dín Shah, who failed to bequeath his name to it. It is a quasi-sacred spot, and the country-traditions romance its origin as follows. A shepherd observed every night a dazzling luminous appearance, which at first he supposed to be some caravan's watch-fire; presently its persistence caused him to send his wife to reconnoitre. The good woman reported that she could not reach the flame, which danced away from her and vanished in a preternatural manner, and the subsequent experience of the husband confirmed that of his spouse. What remained for him but to conclude that the appearance was miraculous, and that it was sent as a "solemn warning," to use the words of my Scotch major? Sindís favoured with visions from the dark world are apt to throw away the pomps and vanities of the present life, wife and children included; and, accordingly, the shepherd, erecting a Takiyah, or Fakír's seat, became a beggar and a man of Allah. Thus

²²⁹ About Rohri an immense quantity of flakes and cones has been lately found (since 1867), by Lieutenant Twemlow, by Mr. John Tate, C.E., District Executive Engineer, and by my friend Mr. W. T. Blanford, of the Geological Survey, who kindly sent me specimens. The locality was the ridgy line running north-south between Rohri and Aror, and almost equi-distant from both places; south of the Aror channel none have yet occurred, but further investigation may prove successful. Evidently the site was a place of manufacture; with few exceptions the implements are broken, and they are the failures and castaways. Mr. Blanford has described his find in pp. 134-6, Proceedings, Asiatic Society of Bengal, for July, 1875. There the reader will learn that Sind has now supplied a far finer collection of silex-implements than the Bulák Museum near Cairo can show.

Rohri, in all probability, owes its origin to a will-o'-the-wisp; quite as good an ancestor, methinks, as a bull's hide or a dozen vultures.

In the sixteenth century of our era, the far-famed mystic, Abd el-Kádir el-Jiláni, born in the Caucasio-Persian province of Ghilán; or, according to others, one Makhdúm Abd el-Báki, a pious citizen of Stambul, emigrated, for what reason we are not told, to Upper Sind. Finding Rohri rich in temporalities as well as in spiritual gifts, he deposited in the Jámí'²³⁰ (town cathedral) the Mú-i-Mubárik, or Holy Hair, an item from the Apostle of Allah's venerated beard. Others declare that the relic, originally preserved by Umm Salmá, was in the possession of a widow body who, though intending it for Bokhárá, consented to deposit it at Rohri, and we shrewdly suspect that the mythus descended from Budhistic days. However this may be, the Hair²³¹ stood its normal miracle-trials triumphantly as any chip of the True Cross, vial of the Virgin's milk, or cuttings of St. Peter's toe-nails, and performed such incontestable supernaturalities, that Scepticism, strange to say, was at a nonplus, whilst Faith flocked, from the four quarters of the Moslem world, to perform Ziyárat (visitation) and to merit well of Heaven. Pious Mujáwirs, or keepers, took charge of the hair, and also throve. So did the mosque, built, as an inscription tells us, in A.H. 992(=A.D. 1564), by the Emperor Akbar, and so, consequently, throve universal Rohri. Thus, you see, the town owed its existence to a *feu follet*, and its fortunes to a hair, or rather half a hair; phenomena at which the learned archæo-historiographer will by no means turn up his nose.

But Holiness—how obedient in this respect to the Laws of Change which govern things profane!—hath her day, and heedless Time kicks over with equal foot the Mosque, the Palace, and the Ryot's hut. About a quarter of a century ago Rohri was still a sacred place, but its sanctity was decrepit; the town was almost in ruins, and I likened it, in worldly matters, to an aged bankrupt who, having passed through the court, lives obscurely secure and permanently ruined. The two chief scourges of the East, the Priest and the Prince, had sapped the very foundations of its prosperity. The former insisted not only upon devouring the fat of the land; he also demanded and obtained the largest and the most expensive establishments, colleges, and houses devoted to supplying him with successors. The latter, who had his seat at the neighbouring town of Khayrpúr, plundered all that the Church left un plundered. And the last change is, perhaps, the saddest. Rohri now flourishes, but the Banyan is the lord of all he surveys; and the future destinies of the Holy Place are dependent upon the Infidel Railway—an innovation which is palpably due to the busy brain of the Foul Fiend.

²³⁰ Jámí' is the correct term for a large or cathedral mosque, which the vulgar call Jam'a Masjid, "assembly-mosque."

²³¹ The "Qanoon-i-Islam" (p. 154, Madras Edition) says: "Some (Moslems) keep by them an *asar-e-shurreef* (i.e., the sacred emblem), alias, *asar-e-moobarik* (the blessed token), which, they say, is a hair either of the Prophet's beard or moustachios. This is preserved in a silver tube, imbedded in *ubeer* (powder of various perfumed woods), and its dignity is supposed to be even greater than that of the sacred foot." Thus India must contain several hundredweights of Mohammed's beard.

We embark upon the little steam-ferry, a Government affair, let to a Parsi farmer, which for one anna (three halfpence) carries us in eleven minutes over the mile up-stream. There are two of these articles, stern-wheelers both, the "Sukkur" and the "Roree," which ply during alternate months, when that off duty is let for picnics at Rs. 40 per diem. Note the curious contrasts with the civilized vehicle, that Banyan's ass, generally an *iniquæ mentis asellus*, with split nostrils; and the Fakír in ragged robes and bard-like meteoric hair, which waves with the wind, as he whisks and jerks his head from side to side, pumping out the monosyllable *Hakk*, *i.e.*, Truth, *i.e.*, Allah.

Landing at a bit of mud-pier, we pass over the dusty modern causeway which has banked out the stream and converted into dry ground the quondam islets, the Takiyah of Mewaldás and its neighbour; both Hindu fanes, surrounded by jujubes, figs, and palms, and protected by swish-walls. The tall houses of Rohir are made taller by the rock foundation, and by the lofty window-holes, whilst the flat roofs bear fences of reeds like what you may see at Tiberias; most of them have been rebuilt and repaired. The Id-gáh, or place for the Festival-prayers three domes upon angular drums, and connected by masonry curtains—is in good repair, and every hillock bears one or more sanctified ruins which look down upon the unholy Railway. A few new bungalows crown the heights and command charming views; they belong to the Deputy Collector and to the railway, now the provisional tramway, officials.

Mounting a new flight of steps, we follow the narrow alley leading to the house of the Mujáwir, Halím Ullah. A stern long-bearded senior, he conducts us across the way, spreads a carpet upon a *Chárpái*, or four-footed cot, and brings out a bundle to be throned upon a small cane stool. Then, sitting opposite and below it, he begins, with many nasal prayers, to unfold eleven covers, handsome cloths presented by rich votaries; and he ends by displaying the Dastár, or cap and tight turban; the Kabá (robe), and the drinking-pot and rosary of the great Abd el-Kádir. A rupee being well spent, we repair to the Shrine of the Holy Hair, which is committed to the green-robed Pírbakhsh Abd el-Sattár. Opposite the little room sit, in awestruck reverence, a dozen Burka' wearers, with latticed faces, and long dirty-white robes hiding their charms from head to heel. The same ceremony of peeling off some fourteen cloths, and at last we reach an *étui*, shaped some-what like a short Persian inkstand; gold studded with rubies and emeralds, the gift of the Baháwalpúr chief, as well as the silver-legged cot which supports it. Inside, a leaf-shaped cover, also of gold, conceals the tube, formed like the segment of a small candle, and studded with fourteen rows of rubies from its top projects the Holy Hair. The appearance of this "Wár Mubáarak" is greeted with a murmur of profoundest reverence, especially by the women to our Western eyes, it is mightily like a light-coloured bristle. When I first saw it, sir, the colour was certainly darker and the length was greater; a sceptic suggested that the change is due to the insolvency and the general ruin of the no longer "Sublime Porte," and of the anything but "Grand Turk." We know that the beard of the Apostle of Allah was black, and we

have, I have told you, a distinct tradition concerning its maximum length. But we refrain from these captious objections; we pay the fee, and we go our ways.

Even the bázár of Rohri is now in a thriving state; it is a mild imitation of Shikárpúr, and the Banyans eye us with friendly glances. We have not been long enough in Sind, we have been in Hind, for men to forget what native rule was, and to dissemble from themselves what it would be if restored. The new quarter beyond it is the Cowperganj, so called after a favourite magistrate; and here the Dharmśálá, or Travellers' Bungalow, with its adjoining mosque, is kept in decent order. At the squares and open places there are also masonry-pillars for lamps, and the Tháná, or police-station, you may be sure, is not forgotten; in fact, there are two.

Returning to the shore for a native boat, we enter Akbar's mosque, a Jámi', or cathedral, which, built by Fath Khan, has a façade of three arched divisions and no minarets. The Persian tiles, chiefly blue, with white inscriptions and ornaments, are evidently old: they look like ancient painted glass by the side of the modern manufacture, the work of Multán, Hálá, and of Píra jo Got'h. This style of decoration seems to have become fashionable amongst Moslems about the thirteenth century, and to have declined about A.D. 1750. The colours are mostly blues and purples of various shades; white, green, and rarely yellow as in Syria, the relative depth of the glaze is the test of antiquity and excellence. The chemical analysis for 1874-5 (§ 64) gives Fe. O. alumina, silica, and a little antimony in the sand which forms the black glaze; when heated in a crucible with Na. O. C. O. it produces a beautiful dark blue; the purple is produced by black oxide of manganese, and the yellow by orpiment.²³² Specimens were sent to the Vienna Weltausstellung by Sir William L. Merewether, the present Commissioner of Sind, and at Sakhar I shall make a small collection of select fragments for the benefit of an artistic friend.

Waiting for the boat, we remark that the river-face of Rohri is, or rather has been, fortified with curtains and bastions. The material is the hard crystalline limestone which forms the shore, and the cement has apparently been scratched over. Our guide, a police Havildár obligingly detached on this duty by the civil Faujdár, Ghulám Dastgír, assures me that when washed it becomes like a mirror, and that its excessive hardness and polish are due to some *Masálá* ("medicine,") mixed up in the lime; oil is the general idea. The several waterlines are distinct; the maximum here marking between fifteen and sixteen feet, to the fourteen at Kotri. We are also shown the broad deserted bed of a stream which, of course, in days of yore, was the Indus; it runs almost at right-angles with the Nárá Supply Canal, finished in 1859, at an expenditure of seven lakhs. Opposite, on the Sakhar side, appear the six arches of the Sakhar Canal, whose expensive sluices are said to have cost three lakhs. The sum is certainly well laid out.

²³² My old friend, Dr. Stocks, admirably described the materials of the tiles and the way of manufacturing them. See the Gazetteer, p. 245.

Presently appear the boatmen, whose contracted eyes and maudlin faces assure us that they have swallowed their daily dose of bhang; the only sober one of the party is the sturdy matron who takes the rudder-oar. Our passengers are all Hindu women, bound for the island of Khwájeh Khizr, fronting Rohri, from whose grove and domes proceeds a distant thunder of kettle-drums. This popular Moslem Saint was a rival of Moses, a great prophet, Phineas and Elijah in one, and a Wandering Jew who drank the Waters of Immortality, and who becomes all kinds of people. The Hindus here worship Jendá Pír, who is nothing but the River Indus, whilst the Sikhs have a little fane, founded, they say, by some Guru (saint-teacher). Nowhere is the Sindi's confusion of faiths, elsewhere so antagonistic, better illustrated.

We alight upon the half-acre of barren sand and enter the blue gateway, distorted by its loose and yielding foundation. Here the Mujáwirs meet us, and offer to show the sights, provided we unshoe. A pair of silver doors leads to the central building, whose date is given by the Persian inscription as follows:

"When this court was raised, be it known
That the waters of Khizr surrounded it;
Khizr wrote this in pleasing verse,
The date is found from *the Court of the High One*
(Dargah i Áli)."

The chronogram thus gives A.H. 341 (=A.D. 952), or about two centuries and a half after the Moslem conquest. The building was begun by Shah Husayn, the merchant whose prayers to Khwájeh Khizr diverted the course of the Indus from Aror. We then walk round, noticing the number of "Gentoo" worshippers; to the east there are three domes, and a cave dedicated to the Chár Yár, or Four Friends of Mohammed, whilst a small mean mosque fills the south-western corner. The reverend men, you see, are all in liquor; *Sabzi* (bhang) is being openly prepared within the holy precincts, and the whole affair wears a pronounced look of debauchery.

We then drop down stream to Bakar, and land, a little above the mild maelstrom known as the *Deg*, or Kettle: here the Zenánah-baths of the Amírs have been converted into an Indometer, now showing seven feet and three-quarters of rise. It is a pole in a hole, a sadly prosaic, modern, and Frankish copy of the venerable Nilometer at Cairene Raudah.²³³ The islet "Bakar" (the dawn), so called because it was the earliest settlement of El-Islam, is a rock, originally a hillock on the plain, some thirty feet above the level of the Indus, and well commanded by both banks. It came into our hands by a peculiar exercise of diplomatic headwork. In a separate treaty, concluded December 24, 1838, with the Talpur Amírs of Khayrpúr, a significant clause had been introduced by those

²³³ There is another at Kotri.

crafty barbarians, stipulating that the gentlemen with white faces should not appropriate to themselves *any of the forts on either side the Indus*. Thereupon the British Talleyrand, conscientiously remarking, "It is curious how cunning people out-wit themselves," laid violent hands on Bakar, considering it neutral ground in, not on, the River. Thus, in due time, "the British Ensign was," as we are officially informed, "planted on this important fortress." It received a Christian name on the occasion, and it was at first highly prized by the new possessors, probably on the principle that makes us always think stolen fruit the sweetest. It has now palled upon the palate and we have deserted it.

Bakar, in 1876, consists of a wall of baked brick, and of a coronet of curtains, bastions, and towers, evidently new and old. The former, repaired, at an expense of Rs. 30,000, as a refuge for the destitute in the days of the Mutiny, is poor work; the latter may be known by its "dished" *crenelles*, which bend forward, a peculiar shape, and by its Damághah (nostrils) or long *meurtrières*, which carry the loop-hole almost to the ground. On the southern side there is a little vegetation, an admirable breeding ground for mosquitoes; whilst a clump of dates to the north-west shelters the last resting-place of another Pír. Eastward the ground outlying the wall has been washed for saltpetre; this deleterious material, whose galvanic action injures even the iron telegraph-posts, has gnawed with invisible tooth the lower surface of the fine brickwork, making it assume a mangy red. We pass the dilapidated tomb-dome of the old Governor, at which, in happier days, many a prayer has been breathed, and enter the northern gate, the only one of the four still left open. The interior is a bare and tumbled *terre pleine*, partly covered with ruins and stumps of masonry. The grave of Shaykh Bakrú, who, according to some authorities, named the islet, is still covered with the cloth of honour. We peep into the open tenement of the Pír Nau-gazá, the "nine-cubit Santon" and, by removing the shroud, we ascertain that this Sindi Chang had a brain-pan somewhat smaller than our own. The popular belief is that the grave will insist upon opening, however strongly you repair it; and that the cerements and bones refuse to decay. A melancholy care-taker, an old native officer of Sepoys, shows us the now deserted jail which caused the other gates to be blocked up; and assures us that the tiled pent-house, representing the powder-magazine of the Ordnance Department, cost a lakh.

We have now, Mr. John Bull, "done" our Bakar, a place once so holy that the Pallo never would turn tail upon it: the intelligent and reverential fishes always retired with the rigid court ceremonies adopted when approaching it. They are, it is true, comparatively rare in the upper waters, and the scoffers, who have come even to Sind in these latter days, declare that the stream is too strong for them. But the labours of ichthyologists, especially upon the River Amazonas, have proved that the distribution of the genera and species is distinctly limited, and that the boundaries are somewhat arbitrary. The last hope for Bakar is, alas the Káfir railway-bridge, whose tall arches, raised high enough to prevent its fouling the huge antennæ of the native craft, will here find a

central pier.²³⁴ We are surprised that any other was ever dreamt of by the engineers, and yet two preliminary sites were prospected.

Remains only to visit the ragged and picturesque spine of limestone a little below Bakar: its strata, like those of the adjoining lumps, dip slightly to the north-east, and thus suggest that a sinking in the ridge, possibly caused by an earthquake, enabled Father Indus to make for himself a new bed. Converted into an island during the annual flood, it is known as Satina jo Thán, the seat of the Sati, or celibate women, not of the burnt widows, a custom apparently unknown to Hindu Sind. The Frankish foreigners, evidently confusing the first word with "Sata-bain or "Sata-dhí " (*septem sorores*), have christened it the Seven Daughters or Virgins. From the club-footed Fakir who inhabits the waspnests of mud plastered against the south-eastern angle of the fine brick-building, we learn that the Satis here appeared in a dream to the young Moslem Conqueror, Mohammed bin Kásim,²³⁵ who had made it his Astáneh, or resting-place, and urged him to attack Dáhir,²³⁶ the Rájput ruler of Aror. Hence its sanctity in the good old times now gone by.

We take boat from the Rohri shore, and a few strokes of the oar land us at the southern bank of the Satis' islet, where the grove of dates and trees might be quadrupled by a little industry and activity. Here, after mounting a rickety flight of steps, brick repaired with crumbling mud, we find ourselves in a small domed hall with two *chabútarahs*, or masonry bench-seats. One side is the Fakír's godown, the other (north-east) shows the door, jealously locked to men, of the cell honoured by the gracious presence of the Satis: we peep between the planks, and see-nothing. Another short staircase, in better repair, places us upon the terrace of a long narrow building, based upon the normal block of limestone, and rising sheer from the stream. The pantiled flat serves as foundation for a host of holy tombs, whose presiding Santon is the Mír (Sayyid) Abd el-Kásim of Rohri. They may be distributed into four several blocks; easternmost is a group demarked by a set of four minarets, sham affairs, pretty enough, but never meant to be ascended; they are pillars of solid brickwork, faced with Persian tiles. Scattered and ruined sepulchres throng the terrace between it and No. 2 group, where the Sayyid and his company repose: here the ninepins are of larger size; and the tombs are either sandstones, flat-topped and inscribed, or glazed tiles with waggon-tilt roofs. Finally, to the west of all is a neat little mosque, and below, near the river shore, is another of smaller dimensions, both, of course, in ruins. From the east end of the islet we see a similar rock-lump, crowned with the crumbling Mausoleum of Pír Abú Sumad, popularly called Háji Motú, dwarfed by its background, two hideous telegraph-piers ten stories high, whose

²³⁴ The bridge over the St. Lawrence is, I believe, proposed as the model. The Indus was here boat-bridged for Lord Keane's army in 1838 by Major George Thomson.

²³⁵ The Gazetteer (p. 655) tells us that the building is "more correctly called the Thán Kásim Sháh," from one of the Sabzawári Sayyids, supposed to have died here about A.D. 1608.

²³⁶ This chief, who is known to have been killed by the Arab invader, is often confounded in legends with a much more modern personage, Dalurá, for whom see Chapter III.

terminal mast is about to be raised seventy-five feet above the Indus in flood. Finally, to the south, and beyond the causeway, lie the desolate ruins of another holy man's long and once gaudy home.

We again take boat, and land on the right bank under old Sakhar, which occupies the dangerous angle projecting into the great bend of the Indus. The strip of soil along the stream is of exceeding fertility; half a mile away from it, nothing appears but the usual South Sind aspect of glitter and sun-glare, barrenness and desolation. Hence, probably, the city's name, derived from "Sukh" (ease and enjoyment); the Sayyid Muríd Ali, the cadet of a race now respectable, but once receivers of stolen goods, assures us, however, that the original term is "Shukr!" (thanks!) the grateful ejaculation of Mohammed bin Kásim. Sakhar shows the normal enormous suburb of ruins, chiefly graveyards, and a nucleus of mud-town, including a mean bázár. There is a whitewashed dome capping the usual parallelogram of variegated tiler; and an adjoining cage contains a tiger whose tempest of temper is allayed by semi-starvation. A second white dome, the tomb of Shah Khayr el-Dín (1758) has been utilized, first as Colonel Wallace's court, and now as a branch Vernacular School.

New Sakhar, in 1848, the camp and bázár, is separated from its old parent by the open space and the dusty road, which are apparently *sine qua nons* in Sind as well as in Hind. It was formerly, I told you, a burial-ground. All the buttons of rock and the crests of the little stony ridges, cropping here and there out of the river-silt and dust which form the plain, bore the brick mausolea of dead venerables, each chief family having its own. The tombs were appropriated, pierced for windows, furnished with mud-verandahs, and converted into bungalows by the first military settlers, who had their dwellings among the tombs: even Ma'asúm's minaret, the Monument of Sakhar, ran imminent risk of becoming a "Griffin Hall." Vainly the people claimed the right of way to their ancestral graves: it was ruled that the ownership had passed into other hands. Presently the Pírs and Pirzadehs revenged themselves. Two Misses G—the daughters of an officer, died consumptive: a young Lieutenant N—was found dying on the ground below Clibborn's Point: he had been playing cards in the bungalow, and he could only mutter "Not fair, not fair!" The actors in that ugly affair also died miserably: Mac—in Austria, and Phil—in the civil hospital at Goa. Finally, Lieutenant C—, weak with fever, attempting to climb a pile of tents in yonder "Accordion Bungalow," brought it down upon himself, died, and was not found till the second or third day. Such was the penalty of sacrilege: apparently, however, the Pírs and Pirzadehs have now, like the eels, grown accustomed to it; we hear, at least, of no more such deaths.

Sakhar, when we occupied it, had almost lost vitality; 4,000 inhabitants (Burnes, 1834) were all that remained in the ancient city, and tales are told of its citizens being carried off by tigers and leopards in 1876 it may number 12,000 souls. The first restorative administered to it was the military cantonment. Barracks and prison-cells were built upon the northern ridge for the one European regiment, and the single company of

Artillery lines for the Sepoy corps occupied the lower ground, upon which parades were held. The Indus Flotilla was ordered to fix its head-quarters at Sakhar. Then arose a huge native bázár to the west, with shops in multitudes, and Parsi stores of ham, pickles, pale ale, fine wines, curaçoa, soda-water (then imported, now made), and a long list of similar notions and necessaries. Sakhar became a flourishing place, but its prosperity was not permanent. Ignorance of the climate and want of common precautions made it a play-ground for tertians and dysentery. At last, in 1846, the 78th Highlanders, after over-fatigue and exposure, were attacked by a fulminating fever which in a few days floored half the corps;²³⁷ they were bled, they were embarked on board native boats, and consequently, before it left Haydarábád for Karachi, the unfortunate corps numbered some 500 casualties.

Sakhar New Town is redeemed from the aspect of utter desolation only by the presence of a few civilians, and the railway and telegraph officials. There is not a soldier nor a sepoy in the camp; their duty is done entirely by the policemen of this district, which is separate from the other three, Karachi, Haydarábád, and Tharr-cum-Párkar to the south-east. The only noticeable improvement is in the matter of roads, especially Wallace's Cutting; in the bit of tramway to the store-depôts, which forks eastward; in the Residency, a new feature, whose Doric pillars of mud at once attract the eye; in the handsome market-hall which, one quarter built, decorates the new bázár; and finally, in the library, another novelty, with church-tower, sham battlements, and a clock which persistently refuses to go. The latter contains the High, or English, school, showing a list of 92 boys; the other sex studies at Gharibábád in the new bázár; here also assemblies are held, and here is the temporary church whilst a special building, which does not get on "like a pair of old boots," is in progress. Among the improvements I must include the stone-pitched Ghát, useful to the washerman, the women's bathing-compound, the machinery-yard of the veteran Mr. Boyce, and lastly the steam ferry. We cannot, sir, speak favourably of the Travellers' Bungalow, whose rascally messman charges us about 1000 per cent. on washing and soda-water.

But dull, desolate, decayed, miserable-looking Sakhar has a future. Bad as the climate is, men live longer in it than at Shikárpúr or Jacobábád. The railway, which the engineers seem trying their hardest not to make, must some day be finished: it will not only connect Sind with India, but it must also attract to itself all the outlying settlements. Common sense, again, will presently withdraw the Sind Horse from wretched malarious Jacobábád, a prison with the chance of being drowned. The occupation of Kelat will give poor old Sakhar an excellent sanitarium, and the annexation of the Unhappy Valley to the broad and fertile plains of the Panjáb will make it, I venture to predict, one of the principal stations upon the highway of commerce.

²³⁷ Described in the late Colonel W. K. Stuart's (C.B.) "Reminiscences of a Soldier," 2 vols., Hurst and Blackett, 1874.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SHIKÁRPUR – ITS BÁZÁR – ITS HINDUS AND ITS FUTURE.

Shikárpur, distant twenty-three miles, will be an interesting place to you, Mr. John Bull, veteran admirer of commercial enterprise!

Formerly we should have mounted our horses and crossed the silty plain at a hand-gallop: now we engage a "Shigram," a roomy coffin on wheels, drawn by a pair of bullocks, paying Mr. Anderson Rs. 5 for the trip, and half price for return: we shall set out at 9 p.m., doze on the road, smoke a pipe at Mográni, the half-way house, and finish the march by 7 a.m. The highway is as good as it can be, and the natives have invented what I shall call "Sind Macadam," a thick layer of the Jawári (holcus)–stalk or the substantial Káno," which prevents the silt being pounded to dust. The reed is much like "Pampa-grass," so called because it never grows upon the Pampas. This vegetable metalling begins about Lárkána.

We pass out of Sakhar from the Travellers' Bungalow inclining to the north-west, leaving a large clump of tombs on the right. The chief items front the river. They are the tile-clad mausoleum of Mír (Sayyid) Ghulam Ali and its surroundings: his northern neighbour, Mir Abd el-Báki, shows inferior work, and lastly the tomb of Shah Mohammed Mekkai adjoins the Catholic Chapel. Upon the hill to the north lies the desecrated fane of the Chár Yár, and that tall adobe-ruin to the East was used in happier days as a Belvedere and *Lusthaus* by the Zenánah of the Amírs: it still retains signs of bungalow-hood. Off the road, and the other side of the bázár, is a stone-revetted tomb, containing an angular bastion, garnished with trees and flower-pots: in India it would be surrounded with gardens and pleasure-grounds. Crossing the ridge, which still shows the old barracks, by "Trevor's Folly," a prodigious descent now made easy, we leave on the left the neglected gardens of the municipality, and to the right the deserted race-course. We then turn off westward towards the knob of corniced rock which bears the mausoleum of Adam Shah Kalhóra, the most saintly of that ecclesiastical race; it is conspicuous from the river as you approach Sakhar. The large burial-ground below the hill shows the Ramázán straw-horse and the tattered Tábúts, or biers, which are expected to do duty next year. We climb Adam Shah's overhanging rock by steps cut in the side and furnished above with a dwarf parapet. Here are nine large external tombs and four flattened domes, two of which form a single block: the grave under the smaller detached cupola shows yellow-varnished tiles which we would willingly appropriate. All open southwards; the domes are polygonal, and the interiors are in the honeycomb-style familiar to the Moslem world.

The journey now begins in real earnest. We enter a broad tract of productive, not producing, country; an expanse of low scattered bush, like hair-tufts on an African scalp, with occasional breaks of wheat, holcus, sugar-cane, and the tall trees that generally denote a village. This is our desert; not a sea of sand, the desert of your imagination before you left England, nor a rocky barren waste, the desert of your observation from the Suez Canal: here the wilderness is a dead flat, a horizon-girt circle of dull, dry, drab clay, resembling the tamped floor of a mud-house, in the atmosphere of a brick-kiln. It bears little beyond the bones of horses and camels, with waifs and strays of broken bottles at far intervals; there is no more grass on it than in the streets of Belgravia or the Chaussée d'Antin, but a little water would soon render it verdurous as the by-ways of Pisa, Warwick, or Arras.

Our only diversions during the *cold* night, which shows in early April 66° (F.),²³⁸ are the creaking of the frequent hackery-carts which carry their human loads to Shikárpúr, the grunting of grain-laden camels, an occasional lighting to read the inscriptions on the tall white mile-posts, and the ascents and descents of the brick-bridges which span the various canals, the Sakharwáh, and the Chotí Bigáriwáh, and the Raiswáh. At the Great Sind Canal, distant some two miles from our destination, we are shown the mud-bungalow where the Banyans meet to enjoy one of their multitudinous Mela, or fairs. Then begins a long avenue of figs and 'gold Mohrs" (*Poincianas*), through whose feathery plume we descry the Lál Banglá (red bungalow), now the Kacheri, or court of the town magistrate, Walidád Khan Talpur.

The gardens of this suburb are some of the prettiest in camp, and an abundance of water makes them ever green. Even the bifurcations of the roads form dwarf flower-plots bearing white and red oleanders, the latter the reddest "Nosegays of St. Joseph" you ever saw, whilst the green parroquets and the painted jays are brilliant as the vegetation. We pass the civil hospital, the jail with its adjoining Mosque, and the deserted Travellers' Bungalow, where there is never a messman, and where you must sleep upon the bedless bedstead; the old camp bázár, half ruins, half habitations; the Roman Catholic Chapel, which ignores the priest; and a number of once comfortable homes, all busy falling to pieces at the pace chosen by themselves. In one of them we particularly remark the Tah-Kháneh, or vaulted room where the inmates fled the noontide heat, but the ceiling has fallen in and only a hole remains. Finally, we are fortunate enough to meet Dr. S. H. Salaman, Civil-Surgeon, who leads us at once to his bungalow, supplies us with tea and tobacco, and promises us much sight-seeing before breakfast. The only other officer now in the place is Mr. Fulton, Bombay C.S., Judge and Educational Inspector, with whom we shall dine before departure. All the rest are in the districts or at Jacobábád, where a force is assembling for field-service. Much mystery overhangs its destination. Some declare that it is intended to assist the Khan of Kelat

²³⁸ At Shikárpúr, in early March, 1876, the shade max. was 95° (F.), and the min. 56° (F.) From March 8 to 15 the figures were 100° (F.), and 60° (F.), with the mean of 81°. The max. shade-temperature recorded of late years is 109° (F.); the min. 30°. In England 62° (F.) is held the best room-temperature.

against his rebel chiefs: others opine that the Supreme Government would not have transferred the command of the frontier from Sir William L. Merewether to Colonel Munro and Major Sandeman if it had intended to follow out the Commissioner's policy. I have ventured, sir, to point out the unwisdom of interposing when native rulers and their vassals quarrel. We have nothing to gain, much to lose, in a matter where gratitude cannot be expected; and I only hope that the objective of this movement will be to provide Sind with a glorious sanitarium.

Shikárpúr, the city, dates, as she is now, from A.D. 1617.²³⁹ Her position, south of the Bolan Pass and eminently favourable to commerce, soon made her the main *entrepôt* of the Khorasan and Central Asian caravan-trade with Sind and Western India. The country around has been rich and productive; traces of this prosperity still remain in the large and numerous canals which intersect it. In A.D. 1786, Taymúr Shah, the Afghan, when he permitted the Talpúr house to replace the Kalhóras, raised Shikárpúr high above all the marts on the Indus, simply by privileging Hindús to settle in it, and to trade without dread of indefinite extortions. These people are principally of the Loháná and Bhátiyá castes, common in Sind and in the southern provinces of the Panjab. Their spirit of enterprise, developed by such simple means, showed itself in a way which deserves mention; and, at one time, the wealthy city numbered some 40,000 souls.

Camp, bounded north by the Raiswáh, south by the Choti Begári is, as usual, separated from town, which lies about a mile to the north-east: the intervening tract of bushy ground, flooded during the inundation, breeds a plague of mosquitoes, and, curious to say, white ants which are not found in the "native" settlement. The interval is intersected with broad and reed-metalled roads, and there are some 130 wells and large tanks—for instance, the Hazáriwáh and the Gillespiewáh—which, though partly disinfected by their carpet of water-lilies, must, during the heats, become nursery-beds of malaria. Here, and we may say throughout Sind, the sickly season is the autumn, the drying up of the waters. The same is the case in Syria it is much less so on the banks of Nilus, where the "fall" forms one of the delights of the year. The rain-gauge greatly varies, from a minimum of inches 0.93 cents. to a maximum of 10:44; and this irregularity attacks the popular and general idea that showers are attracted by planting trees. Throughout Upper and Central Sind rain is universally held injurious, and the Hindus declare that Megha-Rajah, the Cloud King, was bound over to keep the peace with them. The belief is supported by the fact that 1874, the most rainy of eleven years, was also the most unhealthy of the score which preceded it.²⁴⁰ Here, too, the people reckon five seasons, which we will thus tabulate—

²³⁹ Major-General Sir F. J. Goldsmid tells the popular tale how Pír, alias Sultan, Ibráhím Shah, chief of the Dá'údputra weavers, after letting drop a nail, laid the foundations of the town in 1541.

²⁴⁰ The following are the figures of the rainfall—

1

Chayt, Spring, in March and April.

2, 3

(Summer and south winds)

Arúr, hot-wind time, in May and June.

Sáwan, hot-damp time, in July and August.

4, 5

(Winter and north winds)

Siro, Autumn, in September and October.

Siyáro, Winter, from November to February.

Our hospitable host and guide, than whom we cannot have a better, harnesses his horse and drives us before breakfast to see the poor old Camp. The first visit is to the jail, a quondam Afghan fort; the usual square, with domed sentinel-boxes rising from the angles, and a gangway round the walls commanding the interior. The enceinte appears secure enough, yet one man contrived to make his escape. The guards are "Kawáid," that is, armed and drilled as infantry, and dressed in drab, like Jacob's Rifles (30th Regt. N. I.) The total of prisoners numbers about 600; and no pains have been omitted to make the establishment self-supporting. The men, women, and boys are kept in separate enclosures; and the first remark you make, sir, is the utter absence of the criminal face, so conspicuous in all your home-jails. The principal items are Beloch; many of the tribes, especially the Jekráni and Dhomki, formerly so turbulent, have been tamed by enlisting them into the guide-corps or police of Jacobábád. There are several Jats; unfortunately they speak a corrupted dialect, half Sindi: Professor Ascoli of Milan is anxious for considerable additions to my Grammar and Vocabulary of the Gipsy Tongue; but these men are useless. A few are Bráhuís, including the only pretty woman in the female ward, with features distinctly Aryan, and showing no trace of the Turanian.²⁴¹ The great mass of the prison population is of course Sindi; and cattle-lifting is the favourite crime, much preferred to rape, robbery, and murder.

	inches/ cents		inches/ cents
1864	0.93	1870	8.7
1865	4.65	1871	1.67
1866	4.93	1872	3.34
1867	3.35	1873	6.17
1868	3.27	1874	10.44
1869	7.2	1875	4.14

The average of nine years is usually laid down at 4:43 inches.

²⁴¹ If I remember right, Dr. Bellew ("From the Indus to the Tigris," 1844) has neglected some of the Bráhuí numerals. The first three are Asat (1), Erut (2), and Masat (3); after which they break into Persian.

We visited in succession the boys' school and the neat and tidy workshops, where carpenters, chairmakers, masons, smiths, potters, and weavers of cloth and carpets were all unbusily at work, and we ended with the jail dispensary and hospital. The diseases are principally fevers and the Sind sore: the latter is very like that of Multán, coloured a dark copper; the base is flat, and at first, honey-combed, whilst the edges are raised and everted. We then drove to the new Library, a mud-building without books; past the well-tank, Hazáriwáh, with its old spring-board for bathers, and to the Charitable Dispensary, which contains newspapers. The reports of the latter establishment are interesting: the total of Moslems—who here, as usual in the cities of Sind, number only one-third of the Hindus—shows 5988 cases treated during two years, to 6324 of their rivals.²⁴² Crossing the lesser Bigári Canal, to the south of the town, we inspected the "Sháhi Bágh," or public gardens, well kept up by municipal funds, and we called, at the little "Zoo," upon the tiger, the monkeys, the parah or hog-deer (*Cervus Porcinus*), that outlandish, Malacca-like form, and the Gorkhar, or wild ass, whose graceful back disdains to bear the cross. The vegetation flourished, the roses were perfumed as those of Syria; but the "Merewether Pavilion," built by Captain Phelps, with its metal-revetted spirelet, might have chosen a better model. Altogether, the establishment was a remarkable contrast with the miserable and neglected state of Public Gardens in Sind, especially those of the capital and the ex-capital, Karáchi and Haydarábád.

The mile between the Red Bungalow and Dr. Salaman's quarters shows a melancholy scatter of ruins, which prolong themselves even beyond the Gillespiewáh. Equally deserted are the various cemeteries; the Jewish, which has been pillaged of its inscriptions; the burial-ground of the Maráthá Mhárs, with its piles of masonry, said to have been built by a charitable widow, and still bearing to the east an inscription beginning with "Shri Bhagwantáya Namaha" (I bow before the propitious Giver of Good); and the old cemetery, whose earliest date is 1844. The only symptom of the caretaker appears in the new cemetery: here lies my friend, poor Georgy Major, who gave a name, "Majorábád," to the crumbling "lines" beyond it. Equally well preserved is the grave of a native officer shot by a Sepoy: the last resting-place of the latter is a kiln of adobe, where all manner of rubbish and impurities are still burnt over the body. The Afghan fort on the Jacobábád road has also been lately repaired for a Káfilah Serai, or Caravan Bungalow. A square four-towered building like the jail, it is mostly occupied by horse-dealers: the last yearly sale was only 377 head, a falling off from that, numbering 900, which preceded it.

And now, sir, to the native town. This capital of merchants, bankers, and money-changers is built upon a low alluvial plain abounding, as usual, in fine dust and glittering warp. Anciently, a mud-wall, some 3800 yards of which Time broke into white mouldering fragments, and eight big shady gates of Oriental type, formed, with the two forts, its rude defences. The streets are narrow, crowded, and unclean; there are

²⁴² The details are:-For 1873-4: Hindus, 2867; Moslems, 2776. For 1874-5: Hindus, 3457; Moslems, 3212.

no public buildings of any age save a few mosques: the houses are for the most part composed of sun-dried brick and wood work; with low verandahs, "wooden panes of glass" to close the little peepholes that serve for windows, and the other accessories of the normal Sindi domicile. The large and straggling suburbs are lined and dotted with the ubiquitous tombs. They are interspersed amongst and surrounded by plantations, which give a tinge of freshness to the view; but unfortunately for the local health, water is struck at twelve to thirteen feet below the surface, and the number of wells, each with its dependent stagnant pool, is evidently in excess.

The *bonne bouche* of Shikárpúr is the Great Bázár—the main street, almost bisecting the city—about 800 yards long, and ramifying on either side. It is a long narrow passage, darkened and guarded against the sun by mats resting upon chevron-shaped beams, which spring from the house-tops on either side though there is a flying ventilator-roof, the inmates and *habitués* look sickly and etiolated. The shops, or rather booths, are the usual open boxes fronted with Chabútarahs, or mud-seats. Here, moreover, we find none of the Long Acre specialty which, throughout the East, prevents the trades mixing. The hour at which the Sindi *gros bonnet* appears on 'Change is 4 p.m.; will you accompany me?

We have specimens of at least a dozen nations, not including ourselves. The little Bráhui, with his flat face, broad limbs, and stalwart shoulders clothed in a robe of camel's hair, stands gazing like an Epicurean at the tempting store of the Halwái, or confectioner. Knots of Afghans are chaffering noisily about the value of their horses, ponies, and dromedaries. You may see what these men are by their tall large forms, eager utterance, fiery eyes, and energetic gestures. Though not allowed to carry arms, their hands are deep in their waistbands, as if feeling for the wonted *Charay*, the long single-edged dagger which they use with such effect: it is about the size of the old Roman sword, and it speaks volumes for the stout-heartedness of the wielders. The wild sun-blackened Beloch, whose grizzled locks and scarred cheek tell mutely eloquent tales of the freebooter's exciting life, measures the scene with a gaze that means "What a waste of *loot!*" or turns, with the action of a cat-o'-mountain, upon the running footman preceding that pulpy Sindi rider in the brocaded cap and dress of padded chintz: the "flunky" has taken the liberty of pushing the Knight of the Road out of the way. The huge and brawny Mullá from Swat, an Eastern Friar of Copmanhurst, all turban and Kammerband (waistshawl), the clerical calotte and cassock of El-Islam, looks down with infinite depreciation upon the puny Sindis amongst whom he has come to live and thrive. Fierce, bullying Patháns, the Afghan "half-castes" of the plain, dispute with smooth-tongued Persian traders; Kandahár meets Multán, intent only upon capping cheating by cheating; the tall turban of Jaysalmír nods to the skull-cap of Peshín, and the white calico sleeve of Kachh and Gujrát is grasped by the hairy claw of Kelat. Now, a grimy Moslem cook pours a ladleful of thick oil upon a fizzing mass of Kabábs, whose greasy steams, floating down the Bázár, attract a crowd of half-famished Ryot navvies and ditchers to enjoy, in imagination, the "pleasures of the table." Then a

smooth-faced Loháná asks you Rs. 40 for a goat-tog Chogheh, or cloak, whose worn condition reduces its value to 12 or less. Here, a Bhátiya vendor of dried fruits, sugar, spices, opium, and hemp—the *tout ensemble* fragrant as a druggist's shop in the dog-days—dispenses his wares to a knot of Jat matrons and maidens, with a pair of scales and a set of weights which would make Justice look her sternest. And there, grim Indine Chalybes—blacksmiths, tin-men, braziers, and others—are plying their ringing, clanging, clattering, clashing trade in a factitious temperature of 150° (F.), and in close proximity of a fire that would roast a lamb.

Yet heard through all this din is the higher din of the human voice undivine. Every man deems it his duty on 'Change to roar, rather than to speak; none may be silent: even the eaters of pistachios, and the smokers of tobacco, must periodically open their throats to swell the clamour floating around them. Except when the crafty Hindus transact business with fingers hidden under a sheet, not a copper pice changes hands without a dozen offers and refusals, an amount of bad language, and a display of chapmanship highly curious to the Western observer, as showing the comparative value of time and labour with bullion. Curious but by no means pleasant. The eye revolts at every object that meets it, especially the diabolically contorted countenances of the men on 'Change; the ear is sickened by the tremendous doses of sound perpetually administered; and other delicate organs suffer from the atmosphere, which, to use no stronger epithet, is stiflingly close. The mats are by no means so efficient against sun and reflected heat as are the stone vaultings of an Afghan Bázár; and the clouds of dust raised by the many trampling feet alternate with the muggy damp after the passage of the Bihishtí,²⁴³ whom a modern traveller calls a "beastie."

We now pass into the open Stewartganj, a broad at the end of the Great Bázár; it is decorated with a central lamp-post of masonry, an article which begins in Bombay, and which will probably end in Northern Tartary. We are joined by Mohammed Khan Bárúckzái, the Faujdár, or Inspector of Town Police, whose men wear blue and nut-brown holland (Kháki), and use swords instead of muskets. Our *cortège* is strengthened by the Deputy-Collector, Wádhú Mall; and we visit successively the Municipal Hall, whose secretary, Náná Mír, of Arab descent, is absent; the Vernacular School for boys, and the "Anglo-Vernacular," alias the High School, which is empty, although 10 a.m. has struck. What most strikes me, sir, is the exceeding civility of all who meet us. Perhaps the less they see of us the better they like us.

We will again walk through the Bázár: this time I must draw your especial attention to the Shikárpúri Hindus proper, who still own some 900 establishments in this poor ex-station. The typical man is a small, lean, miserable-looking wretch, upon whose

²⁴³ Bihisht, in Persian, is heaven, paradise, and Bihishtí is one belonging to that region. The complimentary title shows his importance in a tropical region: to express sudden death the Hindustani uses the phrase, "Páni na mángní"—he did not call for water.

wrinkled brow and drawn features, piercing black eye, hook-nose, thin lips, stubbly chin and half-shaven cheeks of crumpled parchment, Avarice has so impressed her signet that every one who sees may read. His dress is a tight little turban, once, but not lately, white, and a waistcloth in a similar predicament; his left shoulder bears the thread of the twice-born, and a coat of white paint, the caste-mark, decorates his forehead; behind his ear sticks a long reed pen, and his hand swings a huge rosary-token of piety, forsooth! That man is every inch a Hindu trader. He may own, for aught we know, lakhs of rupees; you see that he never loses an opportunity of adding a farthing to them. He could, perhaps, buy a hill principality with a nation of serfs; yet he cringes to every Highlander who approaches his cloth-shelves, or his little heaps of silver and copper, as though he expected a blow from the freeman's hand. Scarcely a Moslem passes without a muttered execration upon his half-shaven pate, adown whose sides depend long love-locks, and upon the drooping and ragged mustachios covering the orifice which he uses as a mouth. There is a villainous expression in Shylock's eyes as the fierce fanatics void their loathing upon him; but nothing in the world would make him resent or return slight for slight-nothing but an attempt to steal one of his coppers, or to carry off a pennyworth of cloth.

This Shikárpúri, having few or no home-manufactures, began long ago to devote his energies to banking, and in less than half a century he overspread the greater part of inner Asia. From Turkey to China, from Astrachan to Cape Comorin, there was hardly a considerable commercial town that had not its Shikárpúri or the Shikárpúri's agent. His head-quarters will still sell you bills of exchange to be discounted, without question or demur, in places distant a six months' march; and possibly you may owe to the interested good offices of the discounter the whole state of your neck or your throat.

The Hundí, that rude instrument with which the Shikárpúri Rothschild works, is a short document, in the usual execrable stenography, laboriously scribbled upon a square scrap of flimsy bank-note paper, and couched in the following form:

1¼. True is the deity Shrí!²⁴⁴

1. To the worthy in every respect. May you ever be in good health! May you always be fortunate! our Brother Jesumal.

2. From Shikárpúr, written by Kisordás; read his compliments!

3. And further, sir, this Hundi of one thousand

²⁴⁴ The invariable initial formula. Shrí is Lakshmi, the Goddess of Prosperity; what may be the mystic meaning of 1¼, I cannot even attempt to divine.

rupees I have written on you in numerals and in letters, Rs. 1000, and the half, which is five hundred, of which the double is one thousand complete: dated this * * * of the month in * * * * the Era of Vikramáditya, to be paid after a term of days to the bearer at Kábul; the money to be of the currency of the place. In the year of Vikramáditya, etc., etc., etc. The document contains marks which effectually prevent forgery; they are known only to the writer and to his correspondents. You may imagine, Mr. John Bull, how useful are a few bits of such paper, when you are riding through a region where to produce a single gold coin would be the best way of ensuring sudden death.

The Shikárpúri Hindu, after receiving a sound commercial education and studying the practice of trade at home, marries with much solemnity and ceremony. The birth of the first child is the signal for leaving home; the *jeune père* takes leave of his family with tears and sobs; and he forthwith sets out alone for some distant land, with the probable intention of spending in exile half his life. This has become with him a kind of pun-donor. He goes wherever lucre calls him, among the fiery Bedawin of Southern Arabia, the fanatic kidnappers of Northern Tartary, the extortionate Persians, the wild Wásawáhíli, the inhospitable regions which lie far beyond the "House of Snow" (Himalayas), and the ruffian-tenanted Sulaymáni, or Hindu-Slaying (*Hindu-Kush*) hills. If favoured by Shrí, he may attain affluence and considerable political influence, which he will use with an iron hand. His stores of cloth and jewellery, and his command of capital, aided by the rare gift of calculation, may raise him to become farmer of the revenue, in which position his sharp wits, and his comparatively-honest conventional dishonesty, may endear him, despite his creed, to King or Governor. Otherwise he must content himself with picking the pockets of the fair sex; with cajoling small coins from the barbarians among whom he lives, and with scraping together by slow degrees a little fortune, the produce of bargains and barterings by which he is invariably the gainer. And thus pass away the prime years of his poor three-score. He is easily expatriated as is your family, Mr. Bull, and, also like yours, he invariably and persistently, through all the vicissitudes of his career, looks forward to a return home; consoling himself with the hope, not of laying his bones, but of becoming ashes, as a good Hindu should, in his fatherland. However, it sometimes happens that the home to which he returns is, like the old Crusader's, hardly recognizable, the single child having been doubled and trebled; and a Sterner Will than his often forbids the gratification of his poor wish about the ashes.

The fair sex at Shikárpúr, both Moslem and Hindu, has earned for itself an unenviable reputation; perhaps we can hardly be surprised by the fact. The women are far-famed for beauty, the result of mixing with higher blood; for freedom of manners amounting to absolute "fastness;" and for the grace with which they toss the *Kheno*, or ball. These attractions have often proved irresistible to the wild Highlanders that flock to the low country bringing for sale their horses, woollens, and dried fruits you will see more than one half-naked, half-crazy beggar who, formerly a thriving trader, has lost his all for the love of some Shikárpúri siren. By these exploits the fair dames have more than once

involved their lords in difficult and dangerous scrapes. Moreover, when the young husband that was, returns home old and gray, to find a ready-made family thronging the house, scandals *will* ensue; there are complaints and scoldings; perhaps there is a beating or two before matrimonial peace and quiet are restored. The Hindus of the other Indine cities have often proposed to place their northern brethren under a ban till they teach their better halves better morals. But then what would become of the banking?

The population hereabouts is well-leavened with Afghan blood, probably by intermarriage with, if not descent from, the warriors who settled in the country after the invasions which so rapidly succeeded one another in the days of yore. Many are landed proprietors, the feudal grants of the native princes having been continued to them by our Government. It is impossible to mistake their appearance. The men are beyond comparison the handsomest race we have yet seen: they retain the fine Highland physique, while their mountain skins and "rocky faces" have been softened and made delicate by the warmth and the creature-comforts of the plains.

Look at this superb animal, with features of the purest Grecian type: tall broad brow, large black eyes, straight thin nose, short and "castey" lip, oval cheeks and chiselled chin; a clear brown complexion, lighted up by a colour one might mistake for rouge; raven curls falling in masses upon his stalwart shoulders; and a beard soft, glossy, and black as floss-silk. He stands at least six feet without his slippers, and yet his hands, wrists, and ankles have not a trace of overgrowth; his form is straight as an arrow, and his muscular limbs are commanded by nerves of steel. Can the human figure anywhere show a more perfect combination of strength and symmetry and absolute grace?

I never saw their wives and daughters, but those who have had that good fortune assure me they are, after their kind, as comely as the ruder, but the better favoured, of the two sexes. Both are said to outstrip, in intellectual as in physical development, the other inhabitants of the plains. Many of the men read, write, and speak three if not four languages, Persian, Pakhtú, Sindí, and, perhaps, Hindostani; they yield to none in bravery, astuteness, and villany; they enjoy the respect of all as being Bachheh-Aughan-Sons of the Aughán, as the Afghan calls himself—and, by direct consequence, they are as haughty, high-spirited, and vindictive as any superior race could wish to be.

We must now shake hands with our good host, Dr. Salaman, and exchange hearty hopes of meeting again. We leave him with a good word about the future of Shikárpúr. Once the cantonment contained two regiments; in 1876 it looks as if it had suffered from siege, pestilence, or famine. But the railway will retrieve its fortunes. The banking business now sadly fallen from its high estate, will be revived by increased facilities for transit and traffic: once more it will bring wealth to the Great Bázár; and the position of the town will ensure its being one of the chief feeders of the Iron Road. Finally,

Shikárpúr will recover its garrison as soon as Common Sense takes courage to withdraw the troops from pestilent Jacobábád.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SIBI OR SIWI²⁴⁵ (NORTHERN SIND) – DURRÁNI HEROISM – THE DYKE OF AROR – SENTIMENT.

These few pages will contain an account of what you did *not* see, Mr. John Bull. We have well-nigh exhausted the deformities and the beauties of Young Egypt nothing remains but second-rate copies of what you have already condemned and admired. Besides, this is April, essentially a feverish month, a mixture, like that ferocious Trieste climate, of winter and summer. Spring never smiled upon these regions, and though the year 1876 has hitherto been exceptionally fine and cool, we must hourly expect, at the change of wind to the south, tepid, muggy mornings and evenings; torrid, sunburnt noons, Khamsíns or Simúms, and grand displays of Sind "devils" and dust-storms. To these circumstances, sir, you owe your escape from many a long uninteresting ride.

We shall not go to Kángarh, which is now called Jacobábád, distant twenty-six miles north-north-west of Shikárpúr. It lies a little north of old Janidéra, a wretched village with a ruinous fort, a prodigious cemetery, and a solitary tree which harboured all the birds in the neighbourhood. In those days a body of Beloch Gasperonis, half-pioneers, half-pensioners, inhabited the delectable spot under charge of a British officer, whose throat they did not cut. Kángarh, the hamlet of four or five huts, which has become the head-quarters of the Sind Horse, three corps, so called because they contain no Sindís, would be very uninteresting to you. When the choice of a frontier-post rested upon General John Jacob, he pitched upon the best he could: now it has become the very worst. The cantonment, whose centre-piece is the Residency, once the *palazzo* of its founder and christener, has been well laid out with parallel roads and fine avenues of trees, and the soil is famed for producing the finest flowers. But the site of this "oasis in the desert," containing some two square miles, is essentially unwholesome. It is the hottest place in India, and the popular name for the place is "Little Jehannum." During the inundation Jacobábád becomes an island, a swamp, where officers and men must at times use pick and shovel to prevent their being swept away by the furious floods. In 1874 the houses fell, and the "madams" were put into boats ready for exportation, while their husbands laboured bodily at the embankments. Communication with Shikárpúr is utterly cut off, and, even in the most favourable seasons, the vile road is rendered almost impracticable by the water, which must be crossed in boats. Between March and July the unfortunate tenants suffer from the blasting, fiery *Súk* (Simúm), the gift of the Patt, or Little Desert, thirty miles wide, stretching towards the Bolan Pass. In 1841 it is said to have killed 1300 camels, and during most years it kills the ravens. The curious

²⁴⁵ Strictly speaking, this region contains the tracts about Sakhar and Shikárpúr.

persistence of stationing three corps permanently in one place has not only caused an exceptionally high death-rate; it has also proved the means of degenerating the members—they are far from being the good men they were. Briefly, the sooner we convert Jacobábád into an outpost; connect it by a decent road with Shikárpúr, and station the troops at Sakhar, the better. No man in his sane senses would station his whole force upon the skirts of a province, where a troop or two suffices, without a single soldier, for support or reserve, nearer than some three hundred miles.

The evil has been greatly increased by the Kasmor, or Kashmor, Band, an embankment which cost five lakhs of rupees, containing the right bank of the Indus, and connecting that village with the Bígárí and Nurwah Canals. This dyke was proposed for the defence of Jacobábád; but even in 1876 a gap of four miles must be left open. It has depopulated a fine tract of country; it threatens Old Sakhar; and it may even cause a complete shifting of the irrepressible river. Any exceptional freshet may burst the "Band" and insulate Sakhar Camp, below which the inundation used to discharge; and seriously damage the working of the railway, upon which all the prosperity of the Upper Province now depends.

The present antiquated arrangements date from the days of General and Acting-Commissioner John Jacob, who, after eighteen years' service in Sind, died on October 5, 1858; and they endure, I have told you, whilst all the conditions that favoured them have changed. They were originally intended for the benefit of the Jekránis, the Domkís, and the Bugtís; but these robber-tribes have long ago become peaceful cultivators. They are perpetuated by the old school of Sind soldier, that sat at the feet of his Gamaliel, John Jacob, and that ever held and still hold him a manner of Minor Prophet. He was, I have told you, a remarkable man, and so you may judge by the entire devotion of his followers and successors. He used to base the most decided views upon the shallowest study of the "Eternal Laws of Nature," of "Principles," and so forth.

General Jacob could not play whist; *ergo*, whist was banished from the mess of the Sind Horse, and even now, nearly a score of years after his death, it is still, I believe, under interdict. A "practical mechanic," that is to say, a mere amateur, he tried to force upon the army a rapier-bayonet and a double-barrelled, four-grooved rifle, which reached the climax of impracticability. Incapable of mastering native languages, he hated linguists, and never lost an opportunity of ridiculing and reviling them. Moreover, he dignified his deficiency by erecting it into a principle—namely, that all English subjects should learn English; and here, for once, his prejudices ran in the right line. He knew nothing of the sword beyond handling it like a broomstick; therefore he would not allow it to be taught to his men, many of whose lives were thus sacrificed to his fatal obstinacy. He utterly condemned the use of the point, which is invaluable throughout India, because the natives neither make it nor learn to guard it. His only reason for this dogmatism was the danger of the thrust by his own experienced hand. In a few single combats, after running his man through the body, he had risked being disarmed or dragged from

his horse. He probably never knew, and, with characteristic tenacity, he would not have changed his opinion had he known, that Lamoricière proposed to take away the edge from the French trooper's blade; that the French heavies still use the straight sword, best fitted for the point; and that the superiority of the latter to the cut is a settled question throughout the civilized world. His prejudices were inveterate, and they were most easily roused. He hated through life a native of Persia, who, not understanding his stutter, a defect imitated by his admirers, wrote his name J-J-J-J-Jacob, thus:-

At last his obstinacy killed him. When advised by the surgeon not to ride his final ride home, he asked, with a sneer, if the young man knew his constitution better than he did himself, and he died examining a new rifle.

Should we turn to the north-east, and journey still along the right bank of the river towards that same Kasmor, distant some one hundred miles of winding road, our ephemeridis would chronicle a deadly uninteresting series of seven marches, ending at the "port of considerable trade," where commerce is almost *nil*. For Kasmor, our northernmost village, has now drawn eight miles away from its wood-station on the Indus, which here flows under the tallest of its banks. In bygone days the land deserved for blazon, "Snaffle, Spur, and Spear," and for motto, *Vivitur ex Rapto*," as ever did the Border between Ouse and Berwick. Every little settlement had its "peel," whence, generation after generation, the need-fire glowed and the slogan sounded. Here Macfarlane's lantern tempted many a wight to the foray, the fray, and the "kind gallows;" and as for "Hairibee," every tall tree upon a clear spot has, sometime or other, acted in that capacity. The men, armed to the teeth, in spite of all proclamations, were modern survivals of stark moss-troopers, riding out to harry their neighbours' flocks and herds; and the women were

"Of silver brooch and bracelet proud,"

as ever were the dames and daughters of the "Limitanei." An unpleasant feature in the human part of the picture was the vast amount of mutilation, the religious penalty invariably inflicted upon theft, which the Borderers considered march-treason. This gentleman had no ears, that lady no nose; one fine youth had lost an eye, and many a grimvisaged senior bore unimanous, unmistakable signs that all had been engaged, and, what is worse, that they had been detected, in certain lively little indulgences against which the Decalogue enters a special protest. An outpost of the Sind Horse, Kasmor has now learned to behave decently, and the same may be said of once barbarous Mithankot, Fazalpúr, and Miranpúr.

The villages throughout this robber-land are miserable heaps of mud-huts, straggling about the tall walls of swish-forts, which acted cattle-pens in times of peace, and at others, strongholds for the thieves. The work is generally a square or an oblong, with ramps ascending the round towers at each angle; with lancet-shaped crenelles or

battlements to shelter the matchlocks manning the parapet, and with well-defended gateways, which in the hour of need are built up with *adobes*. The inside contains accommodation for man and beast, a well or two, shady trees, rooms under the walls, by no means bomb-proof, stacks of forage, and granaries—the latter are earthen cylinders eight or nine feet high, covered and luted at the top, and pierced below with a hole through which the contents are drawn off. They may be seen everywhere between the banks of the Indus and the Euphrates, the Orontes and the Nile.

You may like to hear, Mr. Bull, the proper way to demolish these hornets' nests, which have caused sore loss to many a Brigadier Dunderhed. The "old hand," after ascertaining that the gateway is blocked up with only sun-dried brick, opens a false attack of, say, 200 men, carrying ladders, firing their muskets, and making a noise, which certainly causes every defender to leave his post, and to make for the supposed point of assault. This is the time when a man may steal unobserved to the gate, bearing a bag of powder with a lighted slow-match; hang it up by the hook to any convenient part of the beams, and "make himself scarce as soon as he can. Immediately after the explosion, 300 or 400 bayonets tumble in over the shattered planks and blown-to-bits brick, whilst the demonstrating party, hurrying round towards the entrance, curtails the number of fugitives. This, Mr. John Bull, is a remarkably neat way, because whatever is in the fort-cattle, grain, and other matters — falls into your hands.

"But why not breach the gate with guns?"

Because, firstly, the entrance is often so well defended by a quincunx of round towers that you must batter these down by way of preliminary. Secondly, I suppose you to be deficient in *matériel*, as on small occasions you generally are in India. Had you a few mortars, you could shell the place inside out within half a day; and a battery of breaching guns would, in twenty-four hours, cut through the curtain a square hole capable of admitting a pair of camels abreast.

But if your scout inform you that the gate must not be attacked because some twenty-five feet of *pakká* brickwork have been thrown up behind it, you may readily open the curtain by planting strong posts and beams, pent-house fashion, against it, and by supplying the miners with pickaxes, and water to wet the clay. Your rifles must protect them against the matchlock-balls and arrows, the spears and stones, and the hot water or boiling oil of the defenders, till they have dug about eight feet into the wall; then they lodge their powder, tamp the hole outside with bags of the excavated earth, bolt out of their burrow, and trust, as good soldiers must often do, to their heels and their good luck.

The Northern Sindís are far more warlike than their Southern brethren; still, there is the taint of timidity in their composition. Although they have brought themselves to bandy blows with the Beloch and to beard the Bráhúi, they would generally rather flee than

fight, and huddle into their forts instead of defending themselves in the field. Perhaps the Afghans are the only people in this part of the world who ever dared to prefer the wall of men to the wall of mud, and they, I suppose, mostly did it on paper.

History makes affidavit that when Ahmed Khan, the Durráni, proposed encircling Kandahár, his capital, with moat and rampart, the Sardars (chiefs) objected to such precaution, propounding the theory that their little swords and good arms were the monarch's properest defence. On this occasion, I suppose, we must believe Clio; the tale is still current amongst the Afghans, and a popular poet chose it as the subject of a Ghazal, or Ode, which has been translated, Mr. Bull, for your fuller comprehension of Oriental Chauvinism and Gasconade.

Put not thy trust,
Great King! in rampart, fosse, or height of tower,
Which are as dust
In the fierce whirlwind's grasp, before the might
Of Man's strong mind!
The monarch throned upon the loving heart
Of human kind,
The prince whose sceptre and whose sword command
Man's love and fear;²⁴⁶
May he not spurn the cunning craven arts
To despots dear?

Indeed, sir, a cut at the fortifications of Louis Philippe and of M. Thiers, which afterwards did such good work! But allow me to conclude:

Thy rampart be the steely line whose crests
Are sword and spear;
Thy fosse this plain; a Vale of Death to those
That dare assail
The patriot king; thy tower of strength, a name
At which turn pale
Thy foes, the bad; and as a sign from heaven
Good subjects hail!
Such forts are thine, and long as these endure,
Fear thou no fall;
No guarded adit wants the lion's lair-
Kand'hár no wall!

²⁴⁶ Jamshid the Great, King of Persia, "ruled his kind by love and fear, always leading the good to hope and the bad to despair." Hence he has long ago been made a demi-god.

Returning to Sakhar, one thing remains to be seen: I must not drop down stream without again visiting the ruins of Aror. You will certainly not care for so antiquarian an excursion as this; I shall therefore inspect it in company with Mr. W. T. Blandford, of the Geologic Survey of India, and submit to you my diary.

Issuing from Rohri by the Baháwalpúr or Multán Road, we passed on the left the Aroráwáh, and east of it the new Nára Supply Canal. You have seen this fine work, with six-inch stone-pitching, which measures 150 feet of breadth at the bottom. To the right rises the decayed village, once a strong fort, built in the days of the Delhi Emperors by a Subahdár of Sind, Mir Ya'akúb Ali Shah. On the north of it lies flooded ground, the remnant of a tank; the lower levels are curtained by a *band*, a wall some six feet broad, built of nummulitic lime and the finest mortar. The surface scratches show the date to be the same as the foundations of the old Rohri fort facing the Indus, and the material is less easily quarried than uncut rock. The new route to Multán has been driven through it, and the westerly prolongation may be seen on the further bank of the Aroráwáh. Leaving the Canal-sluice upon which a telegraphic young gentleman is angling for *khago*, or catfish, so called because it screeches when withdrawn from the native element—and the railway bridge to the left, we take the rough "Frere road," practicable only for carts, which leads to Aror. After some four miles from Rohri (1 hour 25 min.), passing under scattered avenues of scrubby trees, and through clouds of pungent dust, we turn off to the right at the bungalow occupied by the Deputy-Collector, and in his absence by travellers. From this point the course of the old River, which is supposed to be the Mehrán, the Sindi Indus, appears thoroughly well marked, and looks like the bed of a mighty stream. The general direction is north-east to south-west; the breadth is about a quarter of a mile, and the sole, warped up and overgrown with bushes, suggests that the change took place centuries ago. The right bank is low and rolling, compared with the left, but both show, in the distance, distinct river cliffs; in fact, a kind of gorge or natural cutting in the high ground forming our horizon. It contrasts strongly with its eastern neighbour, the Nára, distant some eight miles from Aror; the latter is deep sunk in the plain, like a canal, and now that the Supply Canal has filled it, a steamer proposes to ply up and down the old bed. Its course of 300 miles is a string or chaplet of "Sind hollows," Gháros (creeks, especially Indus branches), Dhands, Dhoras, Kolábs, Kars, Kumbhs, Wáhurs, and the multiform varieties of "broads," lakelets, and flooded depressions. They number some 400, and several of them are three miles long by one broad. Progress, however, is being made towards embanking the *lets*, or overflows, which are chiefly on the left or eastern bank. The natives have a tradition that in 1828 the Nára was filled to three miles of breadth in some places, and flowed to the ocean; during the same year, they say, part of Umarkot was washed away.

On the right bank stand two domed parallelograms like Moslem tombs. Various legends are told about these *Gumbaz*; some declare that they were built as guard-houses for treasure; others that they were founded by a certain Lajjani Má, concerning whom

no other information is forthcoming. The higher ground on the left bank also shows signs of ruins, Moslem and modern.

We then crossed the dry old bed to a clump of thick trees lying under the modern village of Aror. Here is a ruined mosque with painted tiles, a mere shell; the guides attribute it to Jehangir and the guide-books to Alamgir. This is also the Makám, or station, of a local Pír, Shah Bokhárá.

Thence ascending the left bank, and turning to the right, or away from the modern village, we front what appears to have been an acropolis, built to command the stream. The *enceinte* is irregular-oval, with a long diameter of, perhaps, 150 yards. On the eastern crest two piles of good brick-work, one tall and the other much eaten away by time, appear to denote the main gate. The surface of the mound is cut and tumbled as if the treasure-seeker had been busy; and the base of adobe and tamped clay bears baked bricks, some scorched to blackness, and heaps of sandstone and unworked limestone flints. Here, after rain, the people still pick up coins, which are said to be mere bits of metal: I could not hear of any Hindu finds dating before the days of the Moslem Conquest.

From the river front of the mound we had an excellent view of the surrounding country.²⁴⁷ Aror lies on the north of a limestone ridge running upon a meridian and much resembling the Ganjá hills, the site of Haydarábád; between the upper end and the great river is low ground, over which the Indus may easily have shifted its bed. The left bank behind us wore a peculiar appearance; the high water-marked buttresses looked as if they belonged to some important influent: it proved, however, a mere dry bight, and another inlet of the same form lay between the river and the village. On the bay-floor stood two ruined domes, known as Sohágan, or the "Woman Loved" (by her husband), and the Dohágan, or "Hated Woman;" but no villager could tell us which was which. Close to them lay the plain tomb of the Sayyid Shakarganj Shah, to which pilgrimages are still made. On the slope of the near bank, also, a dark and falling mosque fronted, as usual here, east and west. In this vicinity there was a third Pír, Kutb el-Dín, locally shortened to Kutb Shah; and perverted by some Europeans, to Khitáb and Khatab el-Dín.

We then passed into the adjoining little village of Aror, which appears to command the acropolis: possibly the site has been raised by repeated destructions. On the other hand, it might have formed a separate residence, bearing the same relation as Depur to Brahmanábád. Aror or, as the Sindis call it, Alor" was, before the Moslem Conquest, the capital of a Hindu kingdom. Even after the Indus Valley was reduced to a mere item of the vast empire of the Khalífes, it continued to be the chief town of the Arab province,

²⁴⁷ The ruined mosque bears from the acropolis (?) -mound 15° (Mag.); the Gumbaz, or dome, on the right bank, 248°, and the Sohágan, on the left, 200°.

El-Mansúrah, which extended south to the sea; whilst its neighbour, Multán, formed the northern and conterminous division. Its ruin was evidently determined by the shifting of the stream, probably the effect of some earthquake, which gave birth to Sakhar, Bakar, and Rohri. The modern settlement consists of Moslems and Hindus, and amongst the latter a venerable elder, "Subágá" hight, explained to us the meaning of the old rhyme:

"Aror shall burst its dyke and flow,
Hákro perennial to the main," etc., etc.

Hákro, or Hákrá, is a village on the right bank of this bed, about two miles and a half from Rohri, where Captain Kirby, in 1855, whilst digging the Nára Supply Canal, came upon the foundations of houses some ten feet below ground. All insisted that the "Band" of Aror, though repaired with bricks from Hákro, had been *burst* by the English building a bridge over it.²⁴⁸

We returned *via* the dyke, a rough wall of good limestone, almost covered with earth, and looking like an embankment made to retain the water. The bridge is of *pakká* brick and stone, thrown over the Aroráwáh.

I have been particular in describing this now insignificant place, on account of its connection with old Sindi history. The Chachnámah, a Persian chronicle of the Brahman dynasty, as opposed to the Rájput kings of Sind, and originally composed in Arabic about A.H. 613 (=A.D. 1216), expressly tells us that Mohammed Bin Kásim el Sákifi, in A.H. 93 (=A.D. 711), took Aror, then the capital of the country, from its sovereign, Rajah Dáhir.²⁴⁹ About three centuries and a half afterwards, a Hindu prince, known to every Sindi as Dalurá (Dalú Rahi), determined, say the legends, to appropriate the harem of a Delhi merchant, Shah Husayn, who was descending the Indus on his way to Meccah. Before matters had proceeded to extremes, the Moslem prayed for deliverance to Khwájeh Khizr who, appearing in a vision, directed him to unmoor his boat. Thereupon the Mchrán changed its course for the present bed. Evidently an earthquake would do this as well as Khwájeh Khizr; but the people point to his island-shrine and declare it was founded by the pious merchant. The same story is told of the same Dalurá at Bambrá, near Ghára, and at Brahmanábád, near Haydarábád, where at last he met the deserved death. I have suggested that the Rajput ruler was only insisting upon a feudal privilege which, though admitted by the Hindús, would be very offensive to Moslem ideas; and thus we can explain the legend being applied to three different cities.

²⁴⁸ The Gazetteer (p. 655) quotes Captain Kirby: "The band of Aror is not yet broken, nor is there much chance of its being so." The dyke of Sind "History" is supposed to have been made of lead.

²⁴⁹ There is some confusion in the Gazetteer: p. 117 tells us, from Mír Ma'asúm, that Dáhir was killed at Aror by the Moslems, about A.D. 711 (H. 93); whilst in p. 24 we read that Dahir (*sic*) "was slain at the fort of Rawar," before the capture of Brahmanabád.

Here, then, we have the legendary account of the last move of the Mehrán. In the days of Alexander and the Chinese travellers it flowed down the eastern Nára or Snake-river, close to the modern Umarkot, and thence past Lakpat Bandar into the Kori mouth. The classical river-valley, which appears to have been in those days far broader than it is now, is still girt by ruins; the principal being, in the Naushahro and Moro Parganás, on the middle course, Brahmanábád, *alias* Bambre jo Thúl (the Tower of the Ruin); and old Bádín, sixty-two miles south-south-east of Haydarábád, on the borders of the Ran of Kachh. At some time after A.D. 680, about thirty years before the Moslem Conquest, the Indus shifted eight miles westward from the Nára, and flowed past Aror, then the capital of Sind; and here it ran when Rajah Dáhir of the Hindu dynasty perished. Finally, before A.D. 953 it again moved four miles westward, and occupied its present bed.²⁵⁰ The actual owners of the land had better take care how they play tricks with this most ticklish stream, especially above the Sakhar Rapids. The river lies upon a meridional line, and therefore tends to deflect eastwards; at this place it bends almost to a right-angle, and any serious obstruction up-stream, like the Kasmor "Band," may drive it down Colonel Fife's "New Nára Supply Canal" into the old bed of Alexander's day.

By this time, sir, you must feel qualmish upon the subject of desert-districts and tamarisk-jungles; dusty roads and silty plains; lean Hindus and stout Sindis; mosques and mausolea; bázárs, mud-towns and mud-villages. At any rate, if you are not, I am, for

"Behold, I see the haven now at hand,
To which I mean my wearie course to bend."

²⁵⁰ In tabular form:-

Indus-Nára, B.C. 326, to A.D. 680, or till nearly the Arab invasion. Indus - Aror, A.D. 680-952, or between the days of Dahir and Dalurá.

Indus in present bed, A. D. 952-1877.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE RETURN – DOWN THE INDUS TO KOTRI.

APRIL 1, 1876.

Here we are, Mr. John Bull, still sitting in a friend's box, built of sun-dried brick, upon high-backed reed *fauteuils*, much like those of Madeira, but garnished about the seat with "country," as opposed to "Europe," leather. Our feet are upon the table, *more Indico*; although the salutary practice, both here and in the United States, is being laughed out of the land. In former days we should have discussed what the French call *Le Pel'el*; now the *mos Sindicum* is the "peg," in the Hay-market region called B. – and – S. That the hot season is coming on we recognize by some such well-marked stages as the following: –

The shifting of the wind to the south.
The fitful swelling of the Indus.
The visitation of the "Devils."
The budding of the trees.
The invasion of the vermin; and (climax)
The veiling of the world by "Smokes" (dust).

Already we are in the "Cháliho, or 40-days' heat, extending from May-day till June 10, and corresponding with the Khamsín, or 50-days, of Old Egypt. At this season Young Egypt supplies an opportunity for studying and understanding the exact measure of obstinate King Pharaoh's obstinacy. As for the flies, and other varieties of ugly hopping and crawling things with trivial names, you remarked that no sooner did the cool wind cease than out came a swarm of "insect youth," whose sweet infantine ways were more hateful than those of an Anglo-Indian child; while their numbers were such that

"To us the goodly light and air
Are banned and barred, forbidden fare."

We pass the day in a perpetual gloaming, the last chance of keeping the innocent little creatures out of our noses, ears, and mouths. The Sind fly is impudent as "Af," his brother' of Old Egypt, the type of Paul Pry, whose only hope is to intrude as often as possible. Then wasps build in the doorways; and, if we destroy their nests, cut for themselves caves in the wall, whence they issue to sting us, as they have nothing better to do. A centipede crept into your bed, another was dislodged from your bath; a scorpion dropped from my boot luckily I learned from an Oriental Sir John Suckling never to draw it on without a preliminary shake, and I remembered that the capital of the Amírs was known as the "Fort of Scorpions." The ophine plague, so much

complained of by early residents at Haydarábád,²⁵¹ where the snake-season lasts from May-day till Guy Fawkes'-day, is somewhat diminished at Sakhar. The Municipality once offered a reward for every head killed, and in a single month had to pay for between 400 and 500. The boys fished them out of the river like eels. By day gigantic hornets buzz about the verandah at night angry mosquitoes hum their grievance at being unjustly deprived of supper; and silent sandflies (*anthrax*) sneak through the muslin-bar—even in Western Africa this minute nuisance disappears during the dark hours. We have, as you justly observe, other bedfellows, concerning which the less said the better; and that, too, in spite of Keating and of scalding our cot-frames every week. The boils and blains, like those of Aleppo and Baghdad, Aden and Baroch (Broach), are not boils, but veritable ulcers; malignant, too, if they happen to settle upon your cheek or nose. Finally, an incipient attack of prickly heat makes you hate yourself as much as you do your neighbour, as much as you do everything an inch high and a day old.

Here no hail injures the crops, but we have, in lieu, locusts and termites. This execrable animal seems intended to provide Mother Earth with finely ground dust, at the expense of our books, our boots, and our valuables generally; it has even driven its tunnels up the iron telegraph-posts, and devoured the wood on the top; and there is an old Joe Miller about a man who thus accounted for the disappearance of many rupees belonging to John Company. The grateful ground seems to breed them; in some places every step destroys a score. Some Central African tribes, you know, boil and eat them, as "kitchen" for their porridges—could we not get up a "White Ant Supply Association?"—what a field for philanthropy! Conceive how famous would become our names in Sind, were we to teach her starving children to fatten upon such easy cheer. What more did Ceres or immortal Triptolemus?

Besides termites, there are small black ants and big black ants: insect pinchers, or bulldogs, which allow themselves to be cut in two rather than relax the stubborn hold of their pincers. If you wish to test the Sindi sun in the Canicule, empty a score of them out of your sugar-basin upon the sand, and you will see them frizzle away as if tossed upon hot embers. Finally, there are small red ants and large red ants, social animalcules that delight in walking over the human face, nestling in the human hair, and hanging from the human mustachio.

Increased comforts, decreased exposure, and less of the doctor, have made Young Egypt comparatively safe. But I remember the day when, what with cholera, dysentery, and congestion of the brain; dropsy, ophthalmia, and enlarged spleen, that household was happy where only the first-born died. The cattle escaped pretty well. But as regards the Plague of Darkness, I ask you whether yesterday's Simúm, composed of furnace-

²⁵¹ The wife of a soldier in the 78th Highlanders died two hours after being bitten. According to Dr. Imlach, the fatal cases average 20.5 per cent. The most dangerous are Káro-Nang (black cobra); the Khappúr (*Scytala Bizonata*); the Munír, and the Lundi.

blast and black dust in equal proportions, did not diffuse throughout our bungalow a gloom which, literally speaking, could be felt.

Have you all your curios, your treasures, safe and sound? your specimens of sugar and sugar-cane, which the people chew on all possible occasions; your hemp and opium, of which you have now learned the use; your tobacco and sulphur, or rather pure brimstone, which we are now bringing from Ultima Thule; your indigo leaves, your unknown dyes, your *enchantillons* of cotton in every stage of growth and manipulation, and lastly, your ingenious but not original essay upon the "technology," the industry and productions of the country, without which, woe to the traveller home returned! your Thatha shawl to be exhibited on Mrs. Bull's shoulders as a decoy for heedless listeners to stock stories; your grotesque Thathá (lacquer)-work made at Hálá; your "Persian tiles," prigged from some old mosque or tomb; your poisonous lizard from Kotri, embalmed in spirits of wine; your isinglass prepared from the air-vessel of an Indus-fish; your sketches of the native weaver, potter, and other mechanics; your spiteful little pet otter, taught by the Moháno to supply him with his dinner of fish, and to drive, like a dog, the Bulan or river porpoise,²⁵² into the net; the reed *fauteuil*—it will make a capital chair for your tabagie, or the garden of your suburban villa, and another famous tale-trap; your Sind-made "Bombay chair," whose elongated arms have well-nigh superseded the dinner-table as a basis for heels in the air; the grass-sandals worn by the Hill people; your dagger and signet-ring, inscribed Ján Búl; your handsome *Postin* of Astrachan wool; your embroidered leather-coat; your Chogheh, or Afghan dressing-gown of *Pashm*, fine goat-tog? Yes! Then, sir, you are in light marching order and ready to move.

And the time has come. This climate is one of fierce extremes, a mild Miltonic hell, where, as some one has remarked, you may be frost-bitten and sun-stricken on the same day. When it is cold, the raw wind cuts. It rarely rains, but when it does, Jupiter Ombrious empties buckets upon us. Usually the hazy quivering horizon shows an utter absence of draught: then we have a Typhoon that mixes up all the elements. The heat is that of a well-constructed and carefully supplied Arnott's stove. The pitiless sky is all ablaze, the vision of a cloud is simply impossible. The huge red-hot sun pierces, like a sword blade, every mortal thing exposed to it.

The world shines and glistens, reeks and swelters, till the face of earth peels and flakes, cracks and blisters. The buffaloes take shelter in the tank, raising their noses to protest against the state of the thermometer. The very crows, with beaks agape, grumble at being obliged to lead so very hot a life. The little stunted, misbegotten plants seem, like the Nasamones, to curse each rising orb of day. Young Egypt aches, as the poet says, in the sun's eye; and the fierce roaring gale of yesterday would have astonished the clever

²⁵² The otter (*Lutra*) is here called "Ludra." The river-porpoise is the *Dolphinus Gangeticus*: the Emperor Baber (*Memoirs*) calls this bottle-nosed animal a "water-hog." It is eaten by the Moháná, but its flavour may be compared with that of a fattish pork-chop cooked to pulpiness in rancid oil.

chronicler of "Dustypore." You talk at home of a peck of March dust! It is sand and silt in heaven and on earth; silt and sand in the air we breathe, in the water that pretends to quench our thirst, in the food that offers to support our burthened lives; it is sand and silt upon and within our poor brains, and mine, I can answer for the fact, sadly want dredging.

The steamer will hardly leave before 7.15 a.m.; on other days she is more matutinal, running her daily course of duty with the sun at 5 a.m. We exchange last *adieux* and *au revoir*s; the chain and coir-ropes are cast off; the gangway-planks are withdrawn from the mud-bank, and the lumbering *Frere* (Captain Hutchinson), towing, as usual, a pair of flats attached by direct cables and cross cables to the bollards, moves slowly up stream, and then, catching the current, dashes down with a speed to which we are little accustomed, leaving a double line of water-waves very like big heaps of mud seen in perspective.

And now your last look at the picturesque Sakhar Reach. That double set of well-towers is the work of engineers, who fondly dreamt of placing a railway bridge where the indomitable river refuses a base: as I showed you, the Island of Bakar is the only possible site. Note the limestone-revetment of the quay, which cost Rs.16,000. It is threatened by every flood; only last year all available hands, even the convicts, were compelled to "band up" the bank; and some day Sakhar Bázár may find itself an island, and Old Sakhar may become the Indus. The stream is here some 2400 feet, nearly four stadia, broad; it is rising and falling fitfully, but in a fortnight the inundation will begin regularly, and then it will justify Onesicritus, and thoroughly dislocate all your ideas of a river. That long low wall, pierced *à jour*, is the "Zenánah Ghát," supposed to be made for privacy, for sensitive feminine modesty; but the Sindi Anonyma is irrepressible; she will defy the police, and bathe how, when, and where she can. And to make matters worse, here the native fleet lies.

We gradually lose sight of the striking features: the Library with church-tower and sham-battlements; Sind Horse House; Clibborn Point and its big fig; the Secretariat of the Municipality; Ma'asúm's minaret and its acolytes, big dome, trio of small white domes, and duo of small dark domes. The Great Bázár of square mud-houses, some two-storied, shaded by the palm-grove, fines and straggles off into a suburb of mat-hovels, and after a quarter of an hour, Sakhar-Bakar-Rohri fade from sight: the picturesque reach with its two avenues of dark vegetation bends from south-west to north-west; and the low right bank becomes a cornfield. Here, before the dangerous Kasmor Band was invented, the River used to relieve the narrows by discharging its superfluities; and here, unless the engineers look sharp, it may cut and carve for itself a new main passage.

"In the days of old and the times now gone by," as the Arabs say, we should have hired a Beri, the larger kind of Indine craft; it is still sometimes used by European voyagers

during the flood, and floating down night and day, they make Kotri on the third afternoon. We should have laid in the requisite quantity of live-stock, including the largest and fiercest mouser that ever interfered with the high jinks of impudent rat-colony. To guard against the vile designs of the sun, we should have knocked up a matwork hovel on deck, after converting into a kitchen the cabin, which looked like a large cupboard thrown on its beam ends. And being by no means desirous of finding a watery grave in the waves, half-playful, half-pettish, of this classic stream, we should have embarked our horses and horsekeepers on another boat, where they might amuse themselves with kicking and stamping holes through the bottom as soon as they pleased. Our progress would have numbered six to seven uniform miles per hour during the low season; one third more in inundation time; partly effected by the current, and partly by the pair of huge sweeps, shafts, or rather beams like small tree-trunks, pierced and lashed to scimitar-shaped blades, and each worked by four or five men at the bow. Regularly once a watch we should have grounded upon a treacherous sandbank; but thanks to the curvilinear construction of our keel, we only pirouetted and scraped slowly off into deep water. Had we not been on board, the "Sailors spelt with a T," our crew, would have slung the rudder, and slept till Time and Tide had done *their* work. The best pilot must make a trip or two before he learns the changes of the bed caused by every freshet, and we do not always find the *Ankhpáni-wálá*, or waterman who distinguishes the *Thalweg* by the eye. He seems mostly to judge by the bights or re-entering angles. The peculiarity of this gentry is the impossibility of obtaining a direct answer; e.g.:

"How's the wind?"

"*Narm bhi hai, garm bhí hái*" ("Perhaps it's soft, perhaps it's not)."

Occasionally, sir, we should have varied the diversion by bumping against the bank with an impetus which made each one of the six hundred and seventy-five scraps of teak, mimosa, fir, jujube, and acacia woods that composed our craft creak and grind against its neighbour as if threatening to dissolve partnership. Finally, we should have voyaged under the conviction that these Beris, being fastened together by nothing stronger than rope-yarns and bamboo-pegs, are in the habit of melting in the yeasty flood; and that none, save a Moháno, ever dived beneath the surface of the Indus, and re-appeared with the breath of life.

Briefly to describe the several kinds of craft used upon the River—where, curious to say, the canoe and the dug-out are utterly unknown. The "Jamptís," or state-barges used by the Amírs, were strong teak-built, decked and double-masted vessels, whose standing-pavilions were hung with red awnings at stem and stern: they either sailed or were propelled by sweeps, instead of being towed by the top-mast, as was the wont of humbler vehicles. These have clean disappeared, and now Mr. Commissioner travels in his steam-yacht, the *Jhelum*. The "Zorak" is the common cargo-boat of the Panjáb and the Upper Indus: it is a monstrous trough-like affair, rising high fore and aft, with lofty

curved poops and square bows, which are sometimes pierced for windows. It has a single mast, like all the Indine craft, but raking, unlike the Beri, somewhat backwards. The huge oblong sail is always abaft the mast, so as to be used only when running before the wind, and to catch every item of that necessary it has a supplementary yardarm below as well as above. The old tub is apparently well adapted to carry enormous cargoes of grain in bulk or in bags: one of moderate size claims as damages, when sunk, from 100 to 150 Rupees. The steerage gear is a huge caudal fin projecting from the stern and worked with a tiller, and a complicated system of ropes and poles, one of which is grasped by the steersman's hands in any, one would suppose, but a convenient way.

The "Beri" is essentially an Indine craft, and its shape and form are almost as primitive and well adapted to work as the French fishing-boat and the Italian felucca: you see its prototype in the Baris of Old Egypt, and its brother in the Chinese junk. It is a large flat-bottomed affair with a monstrosly high stern and, in the place of bows, it has a low spoonbill prow, good for landing, for getting off sand-bars, and for parrying the thrust of heavy bumps upon the bank. From afar, in the gloaming, the Beri looks like a monster shark with tail half out of water. It is provided with a spar deck of split bamboos, strong and light: its single mast is made fast by stiff beams resting upon the gunwales, and the yard, of enormous length, with a peak rising yards above the mast, is admirably adapted for injuring telegraph-wires. The sail, of canvas, often in holes, is either triangular, lateen, or leg of mutton: it is carried in various ways, but always before the mast: it can be made square by guys, but on the Indus you never see the butterfly-wings of the Nile "Dahabíyyah." The Beri is steered by a peculiar contrivance, a square skeleton of strong timber placed from six to ten feet clear of the heel of the keel, far removed from the little Charybdis that swirls under the high angular stern, and strengthened by two or more ties from the counter. The perpendicular bears the rudder, shaped somewhat like our own, a frame of scantling, planked over and playing easily upon the cords which attach it. The "Dundi" is a smaller variety of the Beri: it is often steered by a large rudder-oar attached to the port-counter, and this is apparently woman's work. The "Kotal" is a broad-beamed affair used as a ferry: the stern generally supports a seat composed of two uprights and a cross-bar; a similar simple contrivance is affected by the Jangáda or catamaran of Pernambuco. Other kinds of craft may be found in parts of the Indus, where rocky banks, dangerous rapids, or some such local cause, require a particular build.

Happily for us there are now steamers which, though wasting, at this season, eight or nine days on the up-voyage between Kotri and Sakhar, easily return in three.²⁵³ This is

²⁵³ 1 The following is the list of wooding-stations between Sakhar and Kotri, which, curious to say, do not all appear upon the map of the Sind Gazetteer. Those in capitals show the usual nighting-places.

	Miles.
1. Sakhar to Salyání	26
2. Sabyání to Baradera	26

the old original Indus Flotilla, which now, under the name of Sind, Panjáb and Delhi Railway Company, belongs to a private association, guaranteed, as usual, 5 per cent. The merit of the new organization belongs mainly to the late Captain John Wood of the Indian Navy, who, indeed, may be said to have lost his valuable life in the service.

The fleet numbers thirteen keel, including the four tugs respectively called A, C, D, and E. With the exception of the large four-funnel'd Bessemer-steel "Maddock" (Captain Hulstein), all may be said to be of the same type. They are flat-bottomed iron paddle-wheelers; broad in the beam, strong in horse-power, and drawing between three and four feet; built in England, sent to Sind in pieces, and here put up at a monstrous and useless expense. Travellers complain that this draught is too great, and quote the "floating palaces" of the United States, which swim in eight inches. The Superintendent, Mr. Wilkins, replies with "the results of twenty-five years' experience": five of the American type were tried and failed, because the engine-rooms were too hot, and the general unwieldiness prevented them steering. The stern-wheeler was not more successful: it grounded too easily in twelve feet water, it would back itself but not its flats: even an attempt was made to naturalize Bourne's "steam-train," a system of tug and barges fitting into one another like the vertebræ of a snake, and steered by the last item. It could hardly, however, reach Séhwan: when this was stated at a public meeting, by Captain Wood, the enraged proprietors bonnet'd him and tore his coat; he used to tell the tale with exceeding merriment. These Indus steamers²⁵⁴ have peculiar work to

3. Baradera to Jamáli	26
4. Jamáli to Sita	16
5. Sita to Rukkan	20
6. Rukkan to Dadú	13
7. Dadú to Khayraderá	4
8. Beháwalpur to Sehwan	14
9. Sehwan to More Luck (Bhagátorá) Pass	4
10. More Luck to Bhagátorá Village	4
11. Bhagátorá to Amri or Amiri	17
12. Amri to Sann	12
13. Sann to Bambrá	12
14. Bambrá to Májhánd	9
15. Májhánd to Gopang	10
16. Gopang to Unarpúr	22
17. Unarpúr to Kotri	24

A total of 259 miles

²⁵⁴ There are five first-class: (Sir Herbert) Maddock (registered tonnage 364, and horse-power 280), De Grey (260, 140), Cranbourne (229, 150), John Jacob (do.), and McLeod (223, 150); four seconds: Frere (194, 110), Lawrence (do), Outram (do), Havelock (do.), and Indus (149, 90). The thirds are, Pára (243, 65), Tug C (67,40), and Tug D (67, 40). A is used as a ferry-boat at Kotri; B was sold, and E is a small special of three tons and horse-power 40. There are twelve first-class barges, thirteen seconds (both iron), three thirds (wooden), and one of the fourth, fifth, and sixth classes (corrugated iron): these vary from 35 to 670 registered tons. The report of Major Le Messurier, Consulting Engineer for Railways in Sind, gives a bird's-eye view of the whole fleet.

do; no wonder that they "groan and grunt like a legion of devil-possessed swine." They carry not only themselves, but a flat on either side, well laden with merchandize and covered with fuel; and the Indus, as you now know, is at no time a river to trifle with.

Yet we must have our grumble. The aspect of the Flotilla is essentially antiquated and archaic. The main cabins are not unfrequently below decks, insufferably hot; and in all cases they occupy the stern instead of the fore, so as to catch as much smoke and wood-dust as possible. They have no bridges, an essential requisite for keeping a good look-out. The up-passage is not expensive, Rs. 93 for eight or nine days; but this cannot be said of the down trip, Rs. 62 for a distance often covered in two days. Hence they have not been able to run off the native craft, which contend with them successfully as the mule against the São Paulo Railway in the Brazil; and when the Iron Road shall reach Sakhar, there must be a considerable reduction of fares and freights. On the other hand, the vessels are clean and comfortable; the table is good; Mr. T. G. Newnham, the Deputy Agent for Sind, is most obliging in his arrangements, and the captains follow his example.

To divert your thoughts from this dry subject, let me direct your attention, sir, to that Saracen's head which bobs up and down; frowning at the little waves, half-playful, half-pettish, that etch the glassy, oily surface; sputtering out monstrous sounds, and grinning at us with its white teeth set in brown lips, like the friendly sea-beasts of which Arabian fablers tell. The creature, however, is no "Adami el-Bahr," or merman, but a courier, who, finding progress less fatiguing *via* the stream than by running along its banks, packs his despatches, together with his toilette, in his turban, and commits himself to the safeguard of the Wandering Jew, Khwájeh Khizr, the type of this wonderful, indomitable river. The gross material contrivance that keeps his head above water is a gourd or an inflated hide, rude forerunner of the "Schonrock"—floater, connected by two loops to his thighs, and lying like a cushion under his chest. This form is also sometimes adopted by the Moháná.

You now see the renowned way of fishing the Pallo, or sable-fish, the Hilsa of the Ganges, a Clupea,²⁵⁵ popularly called the Indus-salmon. As a traveller justly remarked, this "piscatory pursuit" more nearly reduces the human form divine into an aquatic beast of prey than any disciple of the gentle craft ever contemplated. Near populous places, where the market is warm, you may see a dozen amphibia on the water at one time. The style, however, extends only as far as Sita, between Séhwan and Sakhar; higher up-stream the Pallo-nets hang from the stems of many little Beris.

The Moháno, who wears only a large turban and a small *Languti*, or T-bandage, first launches his craft, a vessel of well-baked clay, which will not expose him to danger by

²⁵⁵ According to Dr. Winchester it is one of the Cyprinidæ; Dr. F. Day makes it a Clupea, and this is the received opinion.

breaking. Mostly made at Haydarábád, it is a jar three or four feet in diameter by about two in height; flattened, open-mouthed, and shaped somewhat like a gigantic turnip. Salaming to the river, and mumbling an Arabic sentence in which the name of Allah occurs, he so disposes himself that the pit of his stomach covers the aperture, and battens down, as it were, his hatches: he then strikes out with the stream, paddling behind, like a frog sitting upon a chip, till he reaches some likely pool, or the wake of a steamer, where the fish are supposed to follow. One of the "Illustrateds" lately gave a sketch of a Moháno so employed, but, unfortunately for "local colouring," it showed the object of pursuit, which is always hidden by the liquid mud. He now drops deep into the water a pouch-net attached to the terminal fork of a long pole of light Bhán, or poplar-wood, generally three pieces lashed together at the bevels. There is also a check-string to secure the prey when entangled. Feeling the fish, he slowly heaves up his net, draws a knife from his girdle, settles the struggler's business, and deposits the body in the jar.

To see the ease with which the Moháno performs this operation, you would suppose it, sir, to be a matter of little difficulty. Try it one of these days in some shallow place: you and your pot will part company, as sharply and suddenly as your back ever met the Serpentine's icy floor. The difficulty is to prevent the jar slipping from under you, like a horse's hoofs upon a wet wooden pavement or a dry platform of sheet-rock. I made sundry experiments at imminent risk of drowning, till at last no fisherman would accompany me, and the end of the study found me not a whit cleverer than at the beginning. There is, of course, no difficulty in floating with the gourds, but then one is sure never to catch. Early practice and life-long habit preserve the Moháno from accidents: although he passes half his days in the uncertain, dangerous river, he rarely suffers from anything but rheumatism. As the fish is always expected to swim against stream, the fisherman, reaching a certain point, paddles ashore, and walks some miles up the bank, jar on head, to recommence operations till he has caught enough for food or sale.

The Pallo varies in weight from two to three pounds, and the length is about twenty inches; and the finest are supposed to be those nearest Bakar: the season is between March, when they are rare, and June, when they are most abundant. The first Pallo of the year always claimed a handsome present from the Amírs. The fish seldom pass above Bakar, but once every two or three summers they have been caught even at Multán. I cannot allow you a feast of grilled Pallo, cooked with spices after the native fashion: such indulgence might bring on the retributive indigestion; moreover, the flavour is so undeniably good that if you once begin you will not end till repletion cry stop. But you may eat a first course of boiled Pallo, when the oil disappears; it is safe at this time, early April, during which the fish is fresh from the sea, and lean; and if you trust your guide, it will be seasoned with fennel sauce. Some travellers compare it with potted lobster; others with salmon; others again with fresh herrings; and I, profanely, with mackerel. All agree, however, that despite all its bones, which are said to have

been placed there by way of preventing over-perfection, they highly relish the rich firm *morceau*, and all have suffered for their gourmandise accordingly. The natives can eat and digest any quantities, for the same reason that they can catch it and not drown. It is Young Egypt's Roast-beef and Plum-pudding; Bouillon and Bouilli; Macaroni and Polpette; Olla Podrida and Asado Kuskusu and "Fúl Mudammas," the boiled beans of Old Egypt. Ask a Sindí what he would eat for breakfast, and he replies "Pallo" for dinner, "Pallo!" for supper, "Pallo!" what his stomach loves most upon earth, "Pallo!" and what it mainly looks forward to in Paradise, "unlimited Pallo, without the trouble of catching it!"

We must now cast a critical eye upon the Classic Indus, which will be interesting to you, Mr. Bull, after your late experience of the Nile. Its average width in this section is laid down at 680 yards, which in places stretches to three miles, and in others shrinks to a quarter; hence the different figures which occur in the Greek geographers. You at once note its chief peculiarity; with the exception of the five buttresses, of which four are on the right or western bank, at Sakhar, Séhwan, Kotri, Jarak, and Thathá, it is loosely confined by crumbling banks of its own construction, which allow it to wander whither it wills. The falling bank deserves your attention. You are creeping slowly up when, from the re-entering angle behind you, where the stream and the wake-waves set upon the silt-wall, inhabited by the little martins (*Cotyle sinensis*), a crack appears in a projecting headland: it widens rapidly, and, after a few minutes, down comes a slice of ground, some 50 feet long by 20 high and 15 deep. Tremendous is the lapse of the mighty fragment, veiled by its own cloud of dust and silt. The river's flank, heaving and roaring, bursts to and closes over this material for future shoals, and presently a tall mimosa, half-detached from its parent soil, then tearing away by its weight the tough roots that belay it to the ground, bends, sinks, and tumbles headlong, with the crack of musketry, into the boiling brown wave, to become snags and sawyers. In some places we see a dozen of these earthslips at a time, smoking down the far perspective. Many a Beri has had its bottom separated from its sides, and even the steamer is never safe except where the warp-cliff is too stiff and clayey to be readily under-mined. It is often sandy below and compact silt above, a condition highly favourable for the slips.

Hence the uniform colour of the Indus, which, as a rule, contrasts strongly with the vivid reds and greens of Father Nile. During the height of the dries the water is tolerably clear and, in the floods, the depths sleeping under some bank show patches of azure and light green. Ruddy streaks may also be noticed in places, especially when southerly winds prevail: the brown water on either side of the red then denotes the channel, and it is deep if white underlie the coloured water. But at this season, when the rise begins, the hue is that of a gutter washing a muddy town. In September the sediment will average fifty-one grains per quart, and in October twenty-one and a half.

Again we observe that the bed, trending from north to south, shows a right bank higher than its *vis à vis*, except only where the stream, deflected by some spit, sets strongly

upon the latter. This, the acknowledged law of rivers lying on a meridian, was first noticed, I believe, in Russia. The result of the earthslips, and the inclination with the earth's motion from west to east, is a perpetual shifting of shoals and channel. At night we can sometimes distinguish the *Thalweg* by the darkly-etched surface; during the day we know it only when we have passed it by the ripples and wavelets that play upon the smooth and oily face. Hence, too, the tremendous bends, the coils of monstrous serpents, like those above Séhwan and about Sakhar; the long-narrow islands, and the loops and network of smaller branches, which flank and break the mighty bed. The sand-bank and the silt-holm are eternally film'd over, like the Arabian Desert, with a mist of impalpable white powder, which fills the air after the fashion of fog-particles; and at times half a dozen "devils " may be seen whirling through the lift, with shafts perpendicular in still weather, or bent in the direction of the howling wind.

The country on both sides is mainly scrub, bush, and gigantic graminaceæ, tiger-grasses, with flowering stems twenty feet tall. The tamarisk is of two kinds: Laí or Jháó (*T. Indica and Orientalis*). The Kirwo or Kerrar is a leafless caper (*C. Aphylla*), too bitter even for the white ants, and its neighbour is the Dhokar (*C. latifolia*). The Khayal or Khabbar²⁵⁶ (*Salvadora Persica*) bears an edible fruit called "Peru," and its congener, the Pilu or Jál (*Salvadora oleoides*) yields a remedy for snake-bites. On the drier grounds rise the Phís, or fan-palm (a *Chamaerops*), and the tall euphorbiaceous Ak or Hak (*Calotropis Hamiltonii* or *gigantea*). Here and there are fields of wheat, barley, gram (*Zolichos biflorus*) and vetches; mustard and safflower. The third and fairest division is the Belá or the Shikárgáh, the forest-clumps lining the banks, and seen in perfection between Haydarábád and Amiri. The Conservator, assisted by his fifteen Tappádárs, or divisional inspectors, and they by their Bil-dárs or Rakhás (foresters), make the eighty-seven patches pay something like three lakhs per annum. Our little steamer burns about twenty-two tons of fuel in twelve hours; and we might fancy that replanting is necessary: all assure us, however, that the brush-wood attains sufficient size within three years. The best is the black-hearted Babúl (not Bábul), the common tree of Lower Sind this quick-growing mimosa, which rots, they say, unless cut at the proper season, is rated at 100 to 125 of any other kind. The next are the red-hearted manna-tamarisks, and the least prized is the Báhn, or willow-poplar (*P. Euphratica*), whose soft wood, you know, is used for the lacquer-work boxes; it is the most common in Upper Sind. The Tálí (*Dalbergia Sissu* or *latifolia*), abundant in the Shikárgáhs, is chiefly used for building native craft.²⁵⁷ The worst of the wood stations is said to be Séhwan, where the supply resembles broomsticks.

²⁵⁶ The Arab Arák, famed for tooth-sticks; and the "mustard-tree" of Scripture.

²⁵⁷ According to my late friend Dr. Stocks, the indigenous vegetation of Sind is "one-third extra-tropical (120° F.), Arabian and Egyptian, and two-thirds Indian." This, of course, does not include the many Australian wattles, which have lately been introduced. The other common trees are:-

Ber (*Zizyphus jujuba* or *vulgaris*), with two varieties, Sundi and Cháperi, both bearing edible berries.
 Carob-tree (*Ceratonia siliqua*).
 Bil (*Egle Marmelos*).
 Máwá (*Bassia latifolia*), supplying a spirit.

Our three days' prospect from the steamer shows us but little variety. The wood-stations are denoted by fuel stacked in maunds; by a tall signal staff, and by a few low hovels of matting for the care-takers who inhabit the villages at some distance: these "Khari," or Bandars, much resemble the "Portos" of Brazilian rivers. Here and there, camels, horses and asses, cows and buffaloes, dun and white sheep and black-haired goats, are driven down to drink by angry dogs, apparently bastard Kelat greyhounds. Men and women, children and quadrupeds, all bathe together; mud-larking with that amiable *abandon* which distinguishes us in the Valley of the Nile. A common feature at this season is the Melo, or fair, chiefly frequented by the Banyans, and showing from 1000 to 3000 souls. It is another sight which you generally see from a railway-carriage between Cairo and Alexandria; this shifting scene of crowded ferryboats, little Páls (ridge-tents) and merry-go-rounds, dromedaries with Kajáwas (litters), and small donkeys carrying huge pads and sometimes a pair of pulpy traders. The Moslems are distinguished by loose turbans, white shirts and blue Pájámmas; whilst the poorest are dressed *cap-à-pie* in indigo-dyed stuffs. Hindus affect the small tight turban or worked skull-cap split behind; the Dhotar (waist-cloth), and the Angarkhá, a cotton coat with close-fitting crumpled sleeves, and waisted about the breast. The women, who herd together, light up the scene with yellow, brick-coloured, and red garments of different tints; and the small boys, *in naturalibus*, race the steamer along the banks. The settlements improve as we advance southwards: some of them much remind us of the Nizam's territory and the Dakhan (Deccan) villages; and the fleets of boats standing up stream, with sails at various angles, and apparently walking the land, are very effective items in the scene. Regularly, as the sun sinks, leaving layers of fierce light in the neighbourhood of the hidden orb, we anchor to the bank; and our native passengers hurry ashore to secure cooking-places, fowls, and milk. We pass the night in a cool and pleasant atmosphere, which notably changes after the second day, listening at times to the laughter and screams of the jackals, and to the frequent earthslips which fall with the sound of a distant cannonade. The villages are silent, like the graveyards by their sides, and the living are lying well-nigh as still as the dead.

Date (*Phoenix dactylifera*): it is not stunted and distorted by being tapped, like the Indian.

The common apple begins, though not as a wild tree, to ripen on the banks of the Malír River, where the fruit is the size of a crab.

Jhand (*Acacia leucophaea*).

Siris (*Acacia speciosa*).

Lasúri (*Cordia myxa*).

Geduri (*Cordia latifolia*).

Kárwo (*Phyllanthus multifloris*).

Pippal (*Ficus Religiosa*): the Bo tree of Budha.

Bhar (*Ficus Indica*): the "Banyan tree."

Lohini, or Iron-wood (*Tecoma undulata*).

Khan the *Olea cuspidata*, as well as the *Tecoma undulata*, or iron-wood,

Kándí (*Prosopis Spicigera*): harder and burning better than Babúl.

Specimens of all these woods may be seen in the Municipal Museum of Karachi.

The pastoral scene suddenly changes at Séhwan Ridge. Here the jagged crest of the Kirthár Mountains, which run north and south, like the ancient geological bank of a mighty river-valley, throws out eastwards, by way of buttress, a lump of rock 1200 feet high, striking the Indus at right-angles. The consequence of this impediment is perpetual motion in the stream: in 1844 we used to anchor close to the houses of the old city; presently the channel edged off seven or eight miles, and now it has returned to within nearly half that distance. Below Séhwan, again, we can no longer land, except in the smallest Dundi, at the large village of Bhagátorá. These bald and knobby hills, over which you travelled when going north, are a surprise to the stranger voyaging up stream: they vary in shape and form at every angle, and the steamer does her very best to escape nighting in their dreadful reflected heat. The Pass opposite the Ridge is called in the time-tables "More Luck:" here, in May, furious gusts and *raffales*, the precursor of the south-west monsoon, often make the lumbering boats bolt with their owners; transfer the thatched awning into the water, whirl away half the luggage to keep it company, and utterly distract the crew. You remember how Admiral Nearchus complained of these horrid adverse gales, which dashed his triremes and galleys against one another, and caused repeated halts for repairing. In our modern day, naval men have declared that Father Indus in flood is more dangerous than the most violent of Transatlantic rivers, and, from what you have witnessed of its prowess, even at the beginning of the rough season, you cannot refuse it credit for extensive powers of mischief-making whenever conditions are favourable.

The Séhwan, or, as the natives call it, the Bhagátorá, ridge begins up stream with a long bent dorsum, at whose base flows the lively blue Aral River, the drain of Lake Máhá Manchar, and the tail of the western Nárá. From the deck we see the buildings which rise above the old town: the clumps of mounds bearing the minaretted Id-gáh, and the dome of the Chár Yár, or Four Friends of the patron Saint. Upon the sky-line of the ridge stand out the Bungalows built by the engineers and contractors of that exceedingly "slow coach," the Indus Valley State Railway. Their labourers' lines and their embankment, here a regular *Mal Paso*, may be traced winding round the point, where it is stopped by a big ravine; the latter, dividing a huge reticulated mass of flat rock from the hillside, is apparently the work of an earthquake. The flanks, both of this and of the ridge behind, are seamed with gashes which in a rainy country might be the work of water: here we cannot accept the Wernerian explanation.

Capping the wall-crest that faces the stream, and known as Daryálo, stands a stone upon a cairn: this "Dog's Tomb" bears a tradition common to the Aryan world. A hill-man, being in debt as usual, borrowed a small sum from a Sáhukár, or merchant, and gave, by way of security, a dog which he represented as a miracle of fidelity and honour. The trader's house was broken into and robbed of much valuable property, but it was all recovered by the sagacity of the "pawn." Thereupon the creditor dismissed his four-footed friend and bound to its neck the receipt for its master's debt. The hill-man, who had found means to scrape the money together, suddenly met the pledge trotting

gaily homewards, and, without taking thought, cried out 'Phit! (a curse!) thou hast put me to shame by this flight." Whereupon the dog fell dead, doubtless from the shock to the nervous system; and the master, learning the truth too late, showed his sorrow by expending a hundred rupees upon the grave. The tale is told with variants: Mr. A. O. Hume, for instance, makes the hill-man slay his dog with an axe; but the death by a broken heart is much more Sindi, and, methinks, more effective. That the dog was honoured in these regions we learn by the fact of the Jat tribe beyond the Aral river being compelled, under the Arab rule, to bring a hound as a gift every time they presented themselves before the ruler.

At Amiri or Amri, the twelfth station on the right bank, about twenty-five miles below Séhwan, we see white domelets peeping over the pent-houses of wattle: here a long mud-bank, apparently some ruined settlement, subtends the river which, after an exceptional broad, narrows to about 450 yards. These are the inducements, I suppose, which have called the heap "Alexander's Fort:" you have already seen one at Séhwan, and you know what to think of them.

Beyond this point, Mr. Bull, I have literally nothing to show you.

And now that you have inspected and studied Sind and its River as much as your guide, do you not marvel at the complete physical resemblance, combined with the absolute intellectual difference, between Old Egypt and Young Egypt? There Meroe, Philæ, Thebes, the Pyramids. Here nothing. And yet this is one of the nurseries of the Indo-Aryan race, whose occupation of the Panjab learned Pandits—H. H. Wilson and others—place before the sixth century B.C. This is one of the homes of the Vedas and the scene of many of the Puránas: the traditions of Ráma and Sitá's travel in Lower Sind are still in every Hindu's mouth.

Can you explain the cause of this mighty contrast in the works of Art where the gifts of Nature are so similar? No? Then perhaps you will lend a ready ear to my humble theory.

I cannot accept the revival of the Rev. Barham Zincke, who again proposed to colonize the banks of the Nile with immigrants from India. The earliest cave-characters in the great Peninsula declare without a doubt that the raw alphabet, which afterwards ripened into the perfect Devanagari, was simply Phoenician, showing that Aryavarta, the Land of Man—as opposed to us "links"—derived her civilization (*pace* all the Sanskritists!) from, instead of exporting it to, the West. 'Ex Oriente lux' is our, not her, motto. But Old Egypt, like Syria her sister, has ever been the great meeting-place of nations, the common ground upon which the Orient and the Occident stood front to front; where Eastern man compared himself with Western man, where mind struck mind, and where the Promethean spark resulted from the impact of Northern upon Southern thought. Young Egypt stood in a corner; isolated, materially and morally,

from the outer worlds of the North and the Far West: her great watery highway, beginning in uninhabitable mountains, ended in the Arabian Sea: in fact, she was a natural thoroughfare leading from nothing to nothing, and she was of scant service to racial development. The Hindu, Brahman or Rajput, with his seven castes,²⁵⁸ was ever essentially uncommunicative, unprogressive; society was fossilized as soon as formed, and in point of civilization, "thus far and no further" became its law. Hence Indus-land was compelled to work out her own destinies, which she did in a mean and humble way; while the monuments of Nile-land still instruct and astonish humanity.

²⁵⁸ All the classical authorities, Strabo and Arrian, Quintus Curtius and Pliny, mention seven, not the four, castes of Menu. Needless to say I far prefer the account of the Greeks, essentially a critical and inquisitive race, to the wild lies of Hindu Pandits. It would appear that the quadruple division, still known by name, although No. 2 item has disappeared and No. 4 is hardly recognizable, is a comparatively modern revival of some local and peculiar institution.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE RAILWAY RETURN TO KARÁCHI—FINAL REFLECTIONS—SIND MARRIED TO THE PANJÁB SHORT ADIEUX.

At last, Mr. Bull, here is the Bandar or landing-place of Haydarábád. The sun nears the horizon. We have been tossed about that Kotri Reach, like the Trojan of pious and immortal memory; and, like him, we touch solid ground with reeling heads and thankful hearts. To-morrow morning we return to Karachi by the single down-train, which starts at 7.30, or one hour later than the up-train. We might, perhaps, by making interest, and by paying for our servants first-class fares instead of third, be allowed a carriage attached to a baggage-train. But I want to show you, in full daylight, and in all its deformity, the very worst-chosen line in the British dominions. The journey and its description will be painfully dull—one cannot jig the whole way between Dan and Beersheba: before, however, we set out, let us piece together in mosaic the bits of information concerning the rail which we picked up on the road.

On our way northwards we followed the old rather than the new line, that deep band of warp which runs, more or less, along the embankment of the 'Indus Valley State Railway.' For the State, let us now say the Empire, has interposed itself between the two scraps of Sind, Panjáb, and Delhi Railway intended to connect Karáchi-Kotri and Sakhar-Multan and the policy of the Anglo-Indian Government now tends to take all the great trunks into its especial charge. The result has not been tried, and we will give the experiment all the benefit of uncertainty; still, we have no warrant for believing that it will result in anything but failure, something, in fact, more exemplary than even the mismanagement of those private companies which have so "messed" and muddled the transit and the traffic of the great Indian Peninsula. Hitherto, proceedings upon the I.V.S.R. have not, I have told you, been satisfactory. In fact, as yet it has done nothing useful, save and except to start Edwin Arnold's admirable song, beginning—

"Now is the devil-horse come to Sind,
Wah! Wah! Gooroo, that is true;
His belly is stuffed with fire and wind,
But as good a horse had Rajah Dehu."

The works began in 1872, the total distance is only 270 miles, but the officials have taken their time with a witness. The expenditure, say the growlers of the Press, is enormous; the *personnel* shifts when and where it pleases: there is the usual fatality attending "Government work," the same disorder and *inconséquence* which left the British Army barefooted at Balaclava whilst ships full of boots lay in port. The fish-plates were forgotten when the guards' watches and the buttons for the electric wires had long been lying ready in the stores—this may serve you for a specimen. There is nothing more

mysterious to me, sir, than the contrast between your admirably conducted manufacture, store, or private place of business, and the utter want of organization in your public arrangements, during a campaign for instance. At times you must be almost tempted to engage a Frenchman by way of acting-manager.

Now, at last, Somebody is ashamed of himself. This year the round sum of one million sterling has been granted towards completing the missing link, and there is a modicum of life upon the line. Report declares that in next June (1876) the section connecting Kotri with Sann, a few miles south of Séhwan, will be opened. This I can hardly believe. We saw all the smaller bridges unfinished, and we know that the big bridge has hardly been begun. Again, we found the embankment in places running over low ground flaked and cracked by flood or rain; and we are tolerably certain that, despite the immense length of the slopes facing the stream, every yard will have to be repaired and renewed, till nothing but the nucleus of the present line remains. Finally, the obstacles of doubling the Lakkí or Séhwan Point have dubbed the place, as you have seen, "More Luck Pass," which can hardly have less luck than Fate has hitherto vouchsafed to it so were the Furies called Eumenides. However, the energetic contractor, Mr. Dawvid Mackenzie, who built the Napier Barracks, Karáchi, is hard at work upon this Bhagátorá Pass, and, if man can do it, he will. The Séhwan-Sakhar section (120 miles) will consume at least another year, and the country is a copy of that between Kotri and Sann: the southern approach to Sakhar, you know, has been flooded ground, and probably will be so again, whilst that pestilent Kasmor Band actually threatens the existence of the old city. We are not therefore sanguine as to any immediate and brilliant success; but we have a conviction that the normal Anglo-Indian, and perhaps British, bungling old rule of thumb will make all right in the end.

The line west of the Indus was chosen, after abundant dispute and delay, because, they say, it passes through two first-class towns, Séhwan and Larkána; because Sakhar-Bakar-Rohri gives the best and, indeed, the only thoroughly suitable emplacement for a bridge; and because it was judged advisable to avoid Mir Ali Murad Talpur's independent territory, Khayrpúr. But the eastern bank is both shorter and safer, and it would soon raise Hálá and Naushahro to the level of the western towns; while the difficulty or the disadvantages of passing through the Amir's feof are purely fanciful. Lastly, there are other places than Kotri for bridging the Indus; for example, the narrows at Amiri. However, the choice has now been made.

Let us return to the I. V. S. R., or rather the S. P. and D. Railway, whose chairman is Mr. W. P. Andrew, the strenuous advocate of the Euphrates Valley short-cut. It deserves our regard as the first public work of any importance projected (April 29, 1858) in Sind since the latter was the gift of the Indus. On the other hand, it is a model of bad selection and of worse execution. The former is generally explained away upon the principle of "Hobson's Choice;" but this is by no means applicable to the case. It had two "competition-wallas." Common Sense said, Follow the line of the old road to the east or

near the river: give transit and vitality to Ghára, Thathá, and Jarak, the only places deserving mention in the Trans-Indine Valley; what made "Debal Bunder," in the olden day, a city of some 300,000 souls will make the miserable, squalid village great once more. "Economy," so often the bane of our Eastern Empire, said, Run along the base of the Kohistán, the Malír, and other scatters of hill or high ground to the left or west, and you will not waste your rupees in bridging. But this saving a few thousands of pounds sterling is a matter of the smallest importance, whereas situation for an Indian railway is all in all: the difference between a good and a bad line of country is essential.

Accordingly, the normal compromise, *more Britannico*, was agreed upon, and this measure is one of the many omissions and commissions attributed to the builder of Frere Towns, Frere Halls, and Frere Roads. It succeeded admirably in avoiding the merits, and in combining the defects, of both projects. This iron-road runs through a howling wilderness, which, for one "spell" of twenty miles, cannot supply even a drop of water. The eye roams disconsolate over scattered bushes of cactus and capparís, euphorbia and camel-thorn, powdered, even in deepest winter, with summer dust; over bare incipient sandstone, and over horse-bone lime, excellent compost, with nothing to compose. There is no hope for this desert: the Cairo-Suez line has restored prosperity to ancient "Goshen," but there the rail runs along a sweet-water canal.

The execution is, if possible, still worse. The Malír bridge, spanning the dangerous Fiumara of the same name, has been swept away at least twice: the same result of providing civilized English articles for such wild and savage torrents has also astonished the Brazil. Again, upon a plain almost as flat as your hand, the engineers have managed to effect sundry cuttings: two between now deserted Bolari and Meting. All the stations are what they should *not* have been; small "*pakka*" buildings of stone and lime, with appendages of dirty hovels labelled "Post-office," and so forth; when light and airy sheds, giving draught and shade, are the things wanted. They cannot attract population, because there is no population to attract: hitherto immigration has been confined to a colony of crows scattered up and down the line; and if human colonists offered themselves, man will not and cannot settle upon unirrigated ground. Consequently, we see nothing of Sindi life from the cars except a few vagrants who can keep themselves alive in miserable "shanties" of bush and wattle.

The daily down-train starts later and travels longer than the up-train: this, and the absence of night-carriages, are hardly intelligible except upon the principle of (do) nothing (to oblige), for nothing. On the other hand, the Government will continue to march its troops between Karáchi and Kotri, in ten days, including a single halt, rather than take the rail for four or five hours; if such be their economy it is in the usual expensive style: the baggage-camels cost more than a few additional cars. As we see, the Sepoys of the mountain-battery, under Captain H. G. Young, of course sent their women and children by the rail.

We will now examine the line a trifle more minutely. The gauge is the normal intermediate Indian, which suits the celebrated but still disputed dictum of Mr. Crashaw. After leaving Kotri, and a desolate clump of domed tombs outside it, we begin a slight ascent, which will last, with intervals, to the mid-day station, the apex of the shallow prism. The first important Fiumara, crossed by a solid stone bridge, is the Bárán: at present (April) it is bone-dry; in mid-August it will dash its tree-trunks and drift-wood clean across, and pile them up on the further bank of, the mighty Indus. See that ridiculous strip of *Band*, as if floods so rapid and so sudden could be controlled by any but the strongest work! Chím Pír, or, according to Tommy Atkins, "Jem Pier," is the usual white dome in a tuft of green trees, kept evergreen by the large *Dand*, or water-sink, which drains the land around. There are various buttresses attached and detached to the right of the road: we are assured that the plateaux on the summits, which may be 250 feet high, are sea-sand and water-rolled pebbles; and we remember our classics;

"Et vetus inventa est in montibus anchora summis."

Here also a waiting-room is much wanted. At Jungsháhi, the half-way house, we have a halt of fifteen minutes, and the passengers from Haydarábád now expect the cool sea-breeze to replace the Simúm sweeping over their rocky ridge. Near this half-way house is the deposit of laterite which yielded a specimen to the Municipal Museum. Unfortunately, Jungsháhi is distant three hours by riding-camel from the old emporium of Southern Sind, and now a tramway is proposed—"that's the way the money goes." Dubáji station, No. 5 of the Travellers' Guide, is distant seven miles from its village, and wholly lacks a waiting-room: this section should have ended at Ghára. Malír, or Lándi (No. 7), lies two miles off its settlement, and away from the gardens which would have recommended it.

At this last station of any importance we see the Malír river: it is one of the three streams that drain the Kohistán, or hill-country north of Karachi. We have passed its neighbour, the Bárán, and we sight from afar the valley of the Habb, the only perennial stream in the province besides the Indus. Water may generally be obtained by sinking a pit in the Malír bed: after rains a large head rushes down for a short time, and now we find a mere thread of fluid, which sinks in the broad expanse of sand. Here, at a distance of eighteen miles, it is proposed to build tanks, and to lay on the element for Karáchi in pipings of stone or iron. The modern capital of the Province still pines for the pure element: those who can afford the expense, drink of the Indus, brought in tanks from Kotri, 104 miles, while others import it from Bombay, 507 miles. That used for washing is hard enough to chap the hands. The *Gazetteer* (p. 363) shows you that ten different projects have been started, with the proverbial effect of too many cooks; and, after a quarter of a century, that proposed by Colonel Fife, following Captains Baker, J. Hill, De Lisle, and Merriman, has been finally adopted. The only fault seems to be capital: the supply of water does not suffice. Had we been medieval Dutchmen or modern Egyptians, we should long ago have provided our young Alexandria with a

canal taken from some section of the Indus between Thatha and Jarak, a channel equally adapted for navigation, irrigation, and supplying drink. This Sindi *Khediviyyeh* was proposed even in the days of Sir Charles Napier: it was strongly advocated by the late Lieutenant Chapman and by Mr. T. G. Newnham, and the only objection was its expense—Rs. 48,50,773. It would have benefited the harbour by increasing the scour, and it would have converted the desert into a garden of cabbages: now its day has passed: the *concurrency* would injure the railway. Surely a colony with common sense would have drained the Bombay Flats before building Frere Town, and would have dug the Thatha Canal instead of wasting money upon Frere Halls in this City of the Sterile Plain.

The only part of the Railway which we can praise with conscience is the telegraphic. After the careful experience of many experiments, the Department has decided upon making all the posts of metal, whilst the railway still adheres to wood planted in metal sockets. Now that the white ant has been excluded, various plans have been proposed for preventing the corrosion caused by the galvanic action of the saltpetre-laden soil: the posts, which are simple tubes, appear to suffer from the climate of Sind as much as the human frame, a complexity of tubes. At last the prophylactic has been hit upon; the hollow bases are stopped so as to keep out the air, and the exterior is coated with a black mixture of tallow and tar.

We finish our 104 miles in four hours and a half; six more would lead us round the north-east of camp, past McLeod Station to Kiyámári, at the water edge. We have little to say in favour of Frere Station, except that there is an outershed, and that hired "barouches" are sufficiently numerous.

* * * * *

And now, Mr. John Bull, you have a right to quote, as regards Sind:

"Here is my journey's end, here is my butt
And very sea-mark of my utmost sail"

upon the Sindhu, the Sea of Young Egypt. Bear with me yet a few minutes, whilst I state the conclusions at which we have both arrived.

Either the climate of the Unhappy Valley has improved, or, what is more likely, we have learned to subdue its wildness by the increased comforts of a more civilized style of life. The canal abuses of the olden time have disappeared. Formerly it was a feat to live five years in Indus-land; now you find men who have weathered their two decades. We have little fear of seeing such pestilences as those which killed off half the 78th Highlanders and the "Irish Giants" (86th).

The Sindi, the mass of the population, has on the whole benefited by our rule. We have not imitated the Teutons, who, instead of developing the finer qualities of various races—Slavs and Italians, Roumenians and Magyars—vainly attempt a silly "Germanization." Schools and educational establishments have at last been thrown open to them; and the embryo Municipalities act as well as can be expected. We have secured some confidence by giving it; and we have not too severely "tried on" the so-called "paternal government." At present the principal want is legal and official protection for the Moslem Ryot against the Hindu Sáhukár, who, in South African phrase, threatens to eat him up.

Young Egypt, like Old Egypt, imperatively demands a sanitarium, and the nearest and best would be Kelat. This capital also requires protection, and it will be an admirable outpost in case of hostile movements from Merv upon Herat. Thus an occupation, contemplated by the Treaty of 1854 (Art. 4), might suit all parties.

Abolish that abominable Jacobábád, for which a couple of troops would amply suffice; a single corps of Sind Horse should support them from Shikárpúr; and the reserves, that is to say, the body of the force, should occupy Sakhar, where the climate is supportable, and whence locomotion is easy.

Sind is virtually unconnected with north-western India, whose prolongation she is. From Kotri-Haydarábád to Multán (570 miles), is a long steamer-voyage of twenty days by the antiquated barges of the dilatory and precarious "Indus Flotilla," when the distance would be covered by twenty-four hours of rail-travelling. The connection should be completed as soon as possible.

The Military-political has had his day, and Sind, after a fair trial of a third of a century, has shown herself impotent to hold the position of an independent Province. Her "manifest destiny" is annexation to the Panjáb, and thus once more, as in the ancient days of the Hindu Rajahs, her frontiers will extend to Kashmír. Already the papers tell us that the Trans-Indine districts, from Peshawar to near Karáchi, will be formed into a Frontier Government, or an agency purely political, and will be placed directly under the Viceroy; while Cis-Indine Sind, including also Karachi, is to be transferred from Bombay to the Panjab, in exchange for the Central Provinces. These sensible measures will be, to use a popular phrase, the making of Young Egypt. She will become the export-line of the rich Upper Indine Valley and the broad plains of the Land of the Five Rivers; and increased wealth will enable her to supply many a local want, for instance, water and gas to Karáchi, a branch-railway to Thathá, and so forth. Finally, when Karachi becomes the terminus of the Euphrates or Overland Railway, so much wanted at this moment (Feb., 1877), then "The Unhappy" will change her name, and in the evening of her days shall become "The Happy Valley."

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Separations, Mr. John Bull, are no longer the heart-breaking affairs of thirty years ago. In these days we part with a fair average chance of meeting again. I venture to hope that you will remember the trip with pleasure; and now let us shake hands and exchange, if you please, not an adieu, but an au revoir.