US

SIND REVISITED:

WITH NOTICES OF

THE ANGLO-INDIAN ARMY; RAILROADS;

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE,

ETC.

BY

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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SIND REVISITED.

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
> Bellipotentes, magi' quam sapientipotentes,"[1]

all the blunders of their Bœotian heads.

[1] As old Ennius said of the Æacidæ, 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 "politikè" 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 opera-

tion 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 once. 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 Shírázís, 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," *àpropos 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 Bismilláh, "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-feet-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 *Istikbál*, 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?[1]—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

[1] Meaning simply, "Are you in good spirits!"

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 appearanec 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 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:

Whenever my guest looks at and admires anything, I say, "Píshkyash"[1]—"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!"

[1] Not "Peshkash," the horrible Indian pronunciation.

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 exclaim, *Hanía*,[1] 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,"

[1] This is the Arabic word; the Persians say, *Áfiyat báshad*—"May it be health to you!" or *Nûsh-i-ján*, "May it be a drink of life!"

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.

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,[1]" 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

[1] 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."

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.

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. Let a strange man, 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 antipodical 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 Spa-tyranny 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,[1] 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 India, by which I

[1] 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."

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 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 com-

mitted 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 *Kurtí* 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 *Postíns*,[1] 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 circlet of base metal,

[1] 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*l.* to 8*l.*; the coarse imitations made in Sind seldom fetch more than 8*s.* or 10*s.* They are still universal in Slav-land.

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-coloured[1] 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.

[1] 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 *Postíns*, 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 *Párdesi*[1] 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 *Salítahs*,[2] 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

[1] Párdesi, the "foreigner," is a name generally given in these parts of the world to the natives of Hindostan Proper.

[2] The *Salítah* is a canvass-sheet used to contain the articles composing the camel's load. In cold weather it is converted into a blanket.

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 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 Quintius 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.[1] 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 march-

[1] "One Hogg," (*Yek Su'ar*) however, was the original.

ing, 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:

"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."[1] "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,[2] 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.[3] His despatches, somewhat too popularly written, were received at first with credulous admiration: in course of time they came to be considered,

[1] Stray Feathers, etc., 1873, p. 48.

[2] "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 Záhir 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.

[3] 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.

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 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*l.* 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 writer[1] on India remarks: "Our power, which since the days of Lake had remained inactive, like some huge Colossus, heavy with its

[1] The talented author of "Dry Leaves from Young Egypt."

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 pitiably; 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 ejectment 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.

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 year[1] since its conquest, some three quarters of a million annually; whereas the Panjáb 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,

[1] "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.

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 of hard cash, which the country must have to thrive upon,[1] 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:

[1] 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.

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.

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 Panjáb 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 Afghanistán 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? Nádir 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 Nádir 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 Ranjít 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 overwhelmed 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.[1] 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—

[1] 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.

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-canoe 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 *Jihád*, 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 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?[1] 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 circum-

[1] I quote this instance because many remember its taking place in Afghanistán.

stance 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.

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 priesthood; ensued a *Jihád*, 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.[1] 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 Wahhábi 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 cannon, so as to render anything like a decent funeral

[1] 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.

impossible. The brave and sanguinary Ibrahím 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 "Bakhshísh" 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,[1] a 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 fathers[2] 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

[1] Literally, a "minaret of skulls."

[2] 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.

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: 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 Kharíf (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 Adháwá, 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 Rabí'a, 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 *Shikárgáhs*, 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 is 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:[1] 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 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

[1] Matchlocks were generally, English rifles rarely, used.

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 prejudicial 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 Afghanistán, 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 "Panchâyat," 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 shampooing[1] 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 hitter withal. Bhujang,[2] the "dragon" had sent many a brother biped to the soup-pot. Ere the operation of rubbing

[1] 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.

[2] Game-cocks, like chargers, are always called by some big and terrible name.

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 Haydarábád[1] breed, Sáhib, 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?"[2]

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 gentle-

[1] 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.

[2] The usual price of a first-rate cock is, or was, 3*l.* to 4*l.* My friend was indulging his facetiousness when he named 20*l.* or 30*l.*

man'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.

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,[1] 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

[1] 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.

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 *aplomb*, 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 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,[1] the giant king?

[1] 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.

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,[1] 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

[1] Philosophy, science, political cunning, king-craft, etc., a favourite word for head-work in Moslem Asia.

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 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. Sudderan'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 brickbats[1] 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.

[1] Possibly a rite derived from the Moslems; this is the number of stones thrown at the Shaytán in the Valley of Muná, near Meccah.

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*.

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 limestone-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 Ghulám 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 *Kut-tehár*, 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 Dreamland: 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 authors[1] 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 Umarkot, 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

[1] 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 Játakí 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.

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 Kalhóra dynasty, when Sindis composed the aristocracy as well as the commonalty of the country, the Jats, in consequence of their superior 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 then 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.*[1] 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 Tohfat el Kirám,[2] 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 Bráhuis, Afghans, and Persians, all have a bad word to say of them.

[1] In the language of the Jat, a clan.

[2] The author of this well-known Persian History of Sind asserts that the Jats and the Beloch are both sprung from the same ancestor.

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 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 Chandiyo Beloch, the southern of a Changiyo, 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 Jáo, Kárel, and Jhill,[1] 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-

[1] Various wood-like shrubs, which being interpreted by hard Latin words, become as unintelligible after translation as before.

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. 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 Fellah, 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 Bráhuis 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 16lb.: 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 *fac-simile*, 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,[1] 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.

[1] 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 Anúshírawán 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 Sáhib 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 Bokhárá 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 Sáhibs 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 Sáhib 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, Sáhib, 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 Sáhib was Ibráhím Khan, who had the address to oust his nephew from the inheritance, and by plentiful fox-play took all the carcase 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,'[1] 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 Sáhib. 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 Sáhib is a servant of the Kaysar-i-Hind;

[1] The general name, in Sind as in India, for white women.

long be her prosperity! Whose dog is Ibráhímú,[1] that he should dare to treat the "Lords of the Sword and the Pen"[2] in this disgraceful way? that he should send that owl[3] of a nephew to greet them with his hootings, and venture to be absent when they arrived at his grave?[4] Had Smith Sáhib, 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 Sáhib is a —— good easy man, who allows the bandit to do what he pleases. Ah, well said Nizámi,[5]

> "'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 Khu-

[1] A diminutive and decidedly disrespectful form of the proper name.

[2] A high title in Persia, terribly prostituted in Sind and Hind.

[3] The bird of wisdom in Europe, in Asia becomes the symbol of stupidity: *vice versâ*, the European goose is the Asiatic emblem of sageness.

[4] A metaphor, by no means complimentary, for his house and home.

[5] A first-rate Persian poet, equally celebrated and popular for satire, morality, and gross indelicacy.

dábádi Banyan of a fellow (our man, Mr. Bull, is a Sehwáni, 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 Thathá 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: it 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 outgrows 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*,[1] 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

[8] An eater of Afím, opium, from the Greek ὄπιον, and the Romaic, ἀφιόνι; hence the Chinese, ya-fu-yung.

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 latter half of an oft-quoted Arabic proverb: "Afím is the healer of all ills, and itself of all diseases the evilest;" 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 Sáhib?"[1]

"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.

"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?'[2]

"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.[3] 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

[1] The polite address to one of the blood royal—Your Highness.

[2] 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 Mamlúk Beys in Darbár, and convinced them that they were sure of victory.

[3] The Sind artillery was commanded by one Chotá Khán, *alias* Mr. Howell, who was too well-bred to injure his countrymen.

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![1] 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.[2] 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?"

[1] As we should say, "What a bear-garden!" Two Mullás in one Mosque are sure to quarrel.

[2] 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.

This, Mr. Bull, has been our host's great bugbear, 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 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. Double-dyed 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 Sáhib, 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 "fly-suckers," *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 Sáhibs 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 five[1] already; the new

[1] Four wives are allowed by law and religion, but if a man

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 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.'"[1]

"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

marry half-a-dozen or so, it is considered a peccadillo, not a felony.

[1] Which, by-the-by, is borrowed from the Arab saying concerning the city of Wásit.

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.

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-stick[1] 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 the soul of thy father in this thing?" for which gross insult[2] the Hindu mentally fines his lord a thousand

[1] Bits of roast meat with onion between, fastened together with a skewer, and not to be called "Cabobs."

[2] Fowls are considered impure in the extreme by high-caste Hindus.

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,[1] 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."

"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

[1] Wealthy nobles in Sind generally support an establishment called the Mehmán-khánah, in which they receive and entertain poor travellers and strangers.

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;"[1] 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

[1] 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.

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 Álúdo, 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?"[1] 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 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.

[1] 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, "*Kahán Rajah Bhoj; kahán Gangá teli?*" "Where is King Bhoj (the Great), and where is Gangá the oilman?"

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 ecstatized; 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 derive 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 "Hindostanee 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.[1]

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:

[1] 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

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 :
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

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.

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.*[1]

"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

[1] 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."

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 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,[1] the Sindis, venture to show their blackened[2] 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-

[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.

[2] Blackened, *bien entendu*, by certain unquenchable flames.

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 *Firák*, 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.[1] 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.

[1] "Falconry in the Valley of the Indus." London, Van Voorst. 1852.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE MIMOSA BAND; ITS GIANT FAGE—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.[1] 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

[1] Mansúreh is also supposed to have been within a short distance of Brahmanábád.

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.[1] It passes

[1] 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 :—

	Miles.	Furlongs.	
1. Haydarábád to Miyáni ...	7	0	
2. Miyáni to Matiári	9	0	crossing the unbridged 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 unbridged Bheláni hollow.
13. Ránipúr	7	0	
Carried forward	160	0	

close by the field of Miyáni, near the ancient 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 Shahdádpúr 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 Brahmanábád 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."

	Miles.	Furlongs.	
Brought forward	160	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.

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 unartfully 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 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 strewed 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 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 Sibt 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 *Sáringi* 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 forefathers. 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.[1]"

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 Háfiz 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

[1] "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.

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. As 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;* matchlock 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 *Chupáo,* 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 horse, whereas a robber with his saddle on a horse has his saddle on his head.[1] 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

[1] 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.

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 *Shalwârs*, 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."

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 *Tambúr* 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 shroud[1] over his head,
Upon the might of Rabb Ta'álá.[2]
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?"

[1] A *memento mori*, fashionable amongst Eastern devotees. So the Icelanders provide their coffins in middle age.

[2] The Creator.

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.[1]
He comprehended (the question) and thus replied,
Weeping and exclaiming, " Wá wailá ![2]
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 sugar[3] 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,

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[1] Meaning, that his heart in his withered bosom was as the germ of life in the dry seed—a true Pythagorean, Oriental idea.

[2] 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.

[3] 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.

Waters flow from the rugged rock,
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;[1]
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 Marrís,[2]
Were all nought but[3] 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

[1] The songs always conclude with some such formula as this.
[2] Names of Beloch clans.
[3] The Belochki, or rather Persian, word is "durust," which our language cannot render but by a periphrase.

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;[1]
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,
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,[2] 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.

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[1] This word is feminine in all the Indian dialects save one, the Multáni, which admits a Perá, or male fairy.

[2] 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 *Pír-wáh*, or "Saint's-canal."

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,
Gulzár, Sajalo, and Bahrám the brave,[1]
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!"[2] and couched our spears,
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!

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[1] The names of the opposing Sindi warriors.

[2] 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 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.

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.

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 stages * 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 Ámirí, 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

[1] Namely, Gopang, thirteen miles; Májhánd, fourteen; Sann, twelve; and Ámirí, twelve. The last is a flourishing village, backed by the picturesque Séhwan Ridge, and here the rails had been laid down, and the trolly could work, in March, 1876. The stone blasted in the adjoining hills and used for bridges was very poor.

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.

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 ap-

proach 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 ribbéd 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 Climes[1] 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 ;

[1] 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.*

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,
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 *garde-fou* 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 Lakkí 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 un-

ruffled 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.[1]

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 archæologists 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, com-

[1] From Kotri to Séhwan, 90 miles = three days by camel; from Séhwan to Sakhar, 140 miles = four days and a half.

manding 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.

Séhwan, 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,[1] 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

[1] 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.

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 carcase. 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 Hátim![1]—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!"[2]

We leave him speechless with fury.

[1] 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.

[2] 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.

"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 jack-ass 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 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,[1] 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,[2] 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

[1] One of Ali's titles being "The Victorious *Lion* of the Lord."

[2] 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.

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, padlocks, 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 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 atten-

dants 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-khâneh*[1] 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 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

[1] A Persian term for the room in which the kettle-drums are placed and performed upon.

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[1] Camp."

This Séhwan mound has supplied Greek and Bactrian coins, but of course such articles travel far.

[1] The Sikandar Zú'l 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.

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.

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.[1] 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

[1] Fiends, say the Moslems, are made of fire, as man is of earth.

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 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 Áral, and *vice versâ* when the main stream falls.

Two days' journey[1] along the Áral from Séhwan takes us to the lake.

[1] 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.

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.

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 Sáras-stork, 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 *Mohánâ* 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 Mohána 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 fisherman 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 sanitaria, 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.[1] The range of New Red Sandstone, disposed in three distinct and parallel ridges, lying upon a

[1] 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.

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,[1] 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 calcu-

[1] The people pronounce the word "Ládkáno;" and derive it from its old owners, the Lárak tribe. I retain the so-called Arabic form. Our stages are, Chenni, ten miles; Johi, fourteen; Phuláji, fifteen; Ghárá, thirteen; Mehar, eighteen; Násirábád, seventeen; Khayrpúr, thirteen; and Lárkána, eleven.

late, 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 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 "Postín" 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,[1] making altogether a train of nine camels.

[1] 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-petti-

coated 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 ecstacy, 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 Mahtáb'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, scanda-

lous 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 a rhinoceros-skin targe 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 bháí! 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 Párdesi ("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' journey[1] 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 presence, he suspected a trial of wits, and carried in his pocket

[1] Lárkána to Náyá Dera, 13 miles; to Madadji, 14; to Járli, 17; to Sakhar, 15.

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 honeycombed 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;[1] 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

[1] 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.

sand, subtended the shore. Sakhar Reach, where irrigation 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, Sádh 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 Gháts 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 Ádam 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 Nárá 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. Lævigata*, and leaving the harder crystalline masses, which, pudding'd with agates and flints,[1] form the four islands and the hillocks of Sakhar and Rohri.

[1] 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

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 Rohri 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

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.

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 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 Jámi'[1] (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

[1] Jámi' is the correct term for a large or cathedral mosque, which the vulgar call Jam'a Masjid, "assembly-mosque."

Rohri, and we shrewdly suspect that the mythus descended from Budhistic days. However this may be, the Hair[1] 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

[1] 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.

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 unplundered. 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.

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 pic-nics 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 Pír-bakhsh 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 somewhat like a short Persian inkstand; gold studded with rubies and emeralds, the gift of the Bahá-walpúr 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 Mubárak" 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 Dharmsálá, 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.^{2} it produces a beautiful dark blue; the purple is produced by black oxide of manganese, and the yellow by

orpiment.[1] 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.

Presently appear the boatmen, whose contracted

[1] My old friend, Dr. Stocks, admirably described the materials of the tiles and the way of manufacturing them. See the Gazetteer, p. 245.

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*
> (Dargáh 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; *Sabzí* (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.[1] 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 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

[1] There is another at Kotri.

remarking, "It is curious how cunning people outwit 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.[1] 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 Fakír who inhabits the wasp-nests 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,[2] who had made it his Astáneh, or resting-place, and

[1] 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.

[2] 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.

urged him to attack Dáhir,[1] 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

[1] 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.

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 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 Murid 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 tilery; 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 quâ 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 Pirzádehs 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 Pirzádehs 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;[1] they were bled, they were embarked on board native boats, and consequently, before it left Haydarábád for Karáchi, 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, Karáchi, 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

[1] Described in the late Colonel W. K. Stuart's (C.B.) "Reminiscences of a Soldier," 2 vols., Hurst and Blackett, 1874.

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.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SHIKÁRPÚR—ITS BÁZÁR—ITS HINDUS AND ITS FUTURE.

SHIKÁRPÚR, 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) Ghulám 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 *Lust-haus* 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.),[1] are the creaking of the frequent hackery-carts which carry their human

[1] 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.

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 Bigáríwáh, 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 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.[1] Her position, south of the Bolan Pass and eminently favourable to commerce, soon made her the main *entrepôt* of the Khorasan and Central

[1] 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.

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 Lohána and Bhátiyá castes, common in Sind and in the southern provinces of the Panjáb. 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.[1] Here, too, the people reckon five seasons, which we will thus tabulate—

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

[1] The following are the figures of the rainfall—

1864 ...	inches 0·93	cents.		1870 ...	inches 8·7	cents.	
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 ...	,, 7·20	,,		1875 ...	,, 4·14	,,	

The average of nine years is usually laid down at 4·43 inches.

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 Bráhuis, including the only pretty woman in the female ward, with features distinctly Aryan, and showing no trace of the Turanian.[1] 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.

We visited in succession the boys' school and

[1] If I remember right, Dr. Bellew ("From the Indus to the Tigris," 1844) has neglected some of the Bráhui numerals. The first three are Asat (1), Erut (2), and Masat (3); after which they break into Persian.

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, honeycombed, 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.[1] 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

[1] The details are:—For 1873–4: Hindus, 2867; Moslems, 2776. For 1874–5: Hindus, 3457; Moslems, 3212.

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 "Shrí Bhagwantáya Namaha" (I bow before the propitious Giver of Good); and the old cemetery, whose earliest date is 1844. The only symptom of the care-taker 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 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 Lohána 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,[1] 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

[1] 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 mánghí"—he did not call for water.

Mohammed Khan Bárukzái, 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 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:

$1\frac{1}{4}$. True is the deity Shrí![1]

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 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 Vikrámáditya, 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 Vikrámáditya, 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

[1] The invariable initial formula. Shrí is Lakshmi, the Goddess of Prosperity; what may be the mystic meaning of $1\frac{1}{4}$, I cannot even attempt to divine.

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 *pundonor*. 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" (Himálayas), 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 pro-

posed 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-Aughán*—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 frompestilent Jacobábád.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SIBI OR SIWI[1] (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

[1] Strictly speaking, this region contains the tracts about Sakhar and Shikárpúr.

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 persistency 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.

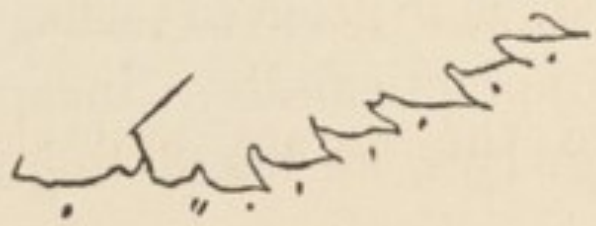
The evil has been greatly increased by the Kasmor, or Kashmor, Band, an embankment which cost five lakhs of rupees, containing the right bank of the Indus, and connecting that village with the Bígárí and Nurwah Canals. This dyke was proposed for the defence of Jacobábád; but even in 1876 a gap of four 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-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 grim-visaged 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 earthern 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;[1]
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!

[1] Jamshíd 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 Nárá 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 Nárá, 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 Nárá 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 Jehangír and the guide-books to Alamgír. 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.[1] 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:

[1] 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°.

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 Khalífehs, it continued to be the chief town of the Arab province, 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 Nárá 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.[1]

[1] 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.

We returned *viâ* 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.[1] About three centuries and a half afterwards, a Hindu prince, known to every Sindi as Dalurá (Dalú Ráhi), 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 Mehrán 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

[1] 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 Dahīr (*sic*) "was slain at the fort of Rāwar," before the capture of Brahmanábád.

same story is told of the same Dalurá at Bambrá, near Ghárá, 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.

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 Nárá 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 Bádin, 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 Nárá, 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.[1] The

[1] In tabular form :—

Indus–Nárá, B.C. 326, to A.D. 680, or till nearly the Arab invasion.

Indus–Aror, A.D. 680–952, or between the days of Dáhir and Dalurá.

Indus in present bed, A.D. 952–1877.

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 meridianal 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 Nárá 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."

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 Haymarket 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,[1] 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 Baghdád, 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,

[1] 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.

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 bull-dogs, 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-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 *énchantillons* 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 Thathá 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,[1] 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 *Postín* 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

[1] 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 Mohánâ, but its flavour may be compared with that of a fattish pork-chop cooked to pulpiness in rancid oil.

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 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 revoirs;* 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 bhí hái, 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 Mohâno, 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 monstrously 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.[1] This is 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.

[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
3.	Baradera to Jamálí	26
4.	Jamálí to SITA	16
	Carried forward	——94

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-

			Miles.
	Brought forward		94
5.	Sita to Rukkan	20	
6.	Rukkan to Dadú	13	
7.	Dadú to Khayraderá	4	
8.	Beháwalpúr to SÉHWAN	14	
		——	51
9.	Séhwan 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	
		——114	
		A total of	259 miles.

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 steamers[1] have peculiar work to 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

[1] 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.

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 *viâ* 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 Mohánā.

You now see the renowned way of fishing the Pallo, or sable-fish, the Hilsa of the Ganges, a Clupea,[1] 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 amphibii 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 Mohāno, 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 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,

[1] According to Dr. Winchester it is one of the Cyprinidæ; Dr. F. Day makes it a Clupea, and this is the received opinion.

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 pro-

jecting 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 undermined. 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 Sep-

tember 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 Jháo (*T. Indica* and *Orientalis*). The Kirwo or Kirrar is a leafless caper (*C.*

Aphylla), too bitter even for the white ants, and its neighbour is the Dhokar (*C. latifolia*). The Khayal or Khabbar[1] (*Salvadora Persica*) bears an edible fruit called "Peru," and its congener, the Pilu or Jál (*Salvadora oleoïdes*) yields a remedy for snake-bites. On the drier grounds rise the Phís, or fan-palm (a *Chamærops*), 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-

[1] The Arab Arák, famed for tooth-sticks; and the "mustard-tree" of Scripture.

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.[1] The worst of the wood stations is said to be Séhwan, where the supply resembles broomsticks.

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 caretakers who inhabit the villages at some distance:

[1] 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 (*Ægle Marmelos*).

Máwá (*Bassia latifolia*), supplying a spirit.

Date (*Phœnix 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 leucophœa*).

Siris (*Acacia speciosa*).

Lasúri (*Cordia myxa*).

Geduri (*Cordia latifolia*).

Kárwo (*Phyllanthes 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 Karáchi.

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.

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 Panjáb 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 Devanágari, was simply Phœnician, 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,[1] 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.

[1] 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 Karáchi 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 Ámiri. 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 Ghárá, 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 capparis, 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 Ghárá. 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 Karáchi. 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 mediæval Dutchmen or modern Egyptians, we should long ago have provided our young Alexandria with a canal taken from some section of the Indus between Thathá and Jarak, a channel equally adapted for navigation, irrigation, and supplying drink. This Sindi *Khedíviyyeh* was proposed even in the days of Sir Charles Napier: it was strongly advo-

cated 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 *concurrence* 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 Thathá 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 outer

shed, 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 Pesháwar to near Karáchi, will be formed into a Frontier Government, or an agentcy purely political, and will be placed directly under the Viceroy; while Cis-Indine Sind, including also Karáchi, is to be transferred from Bombay to the Panjáb, 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 Karáchi 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."

* * * * * *

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*.

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