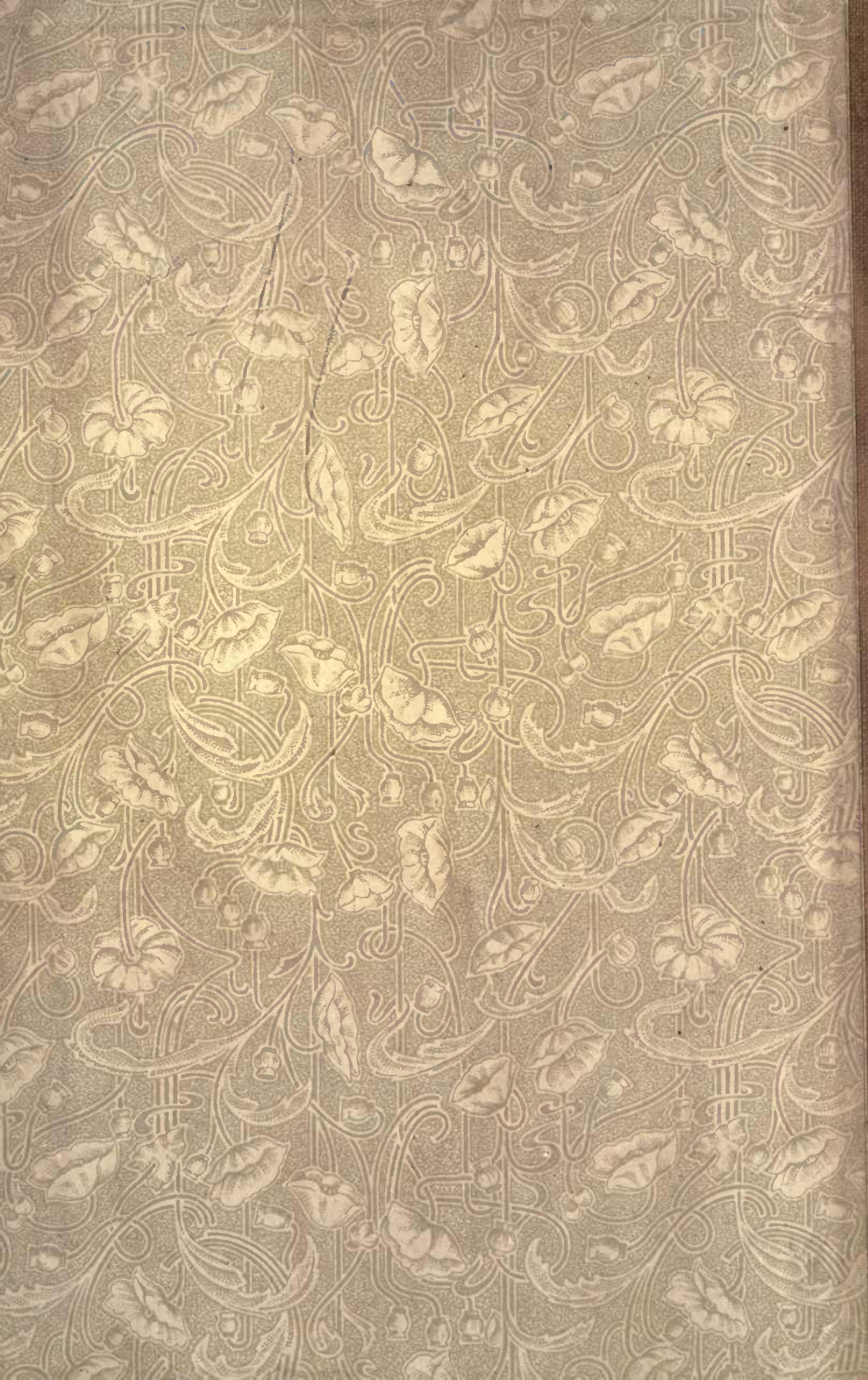


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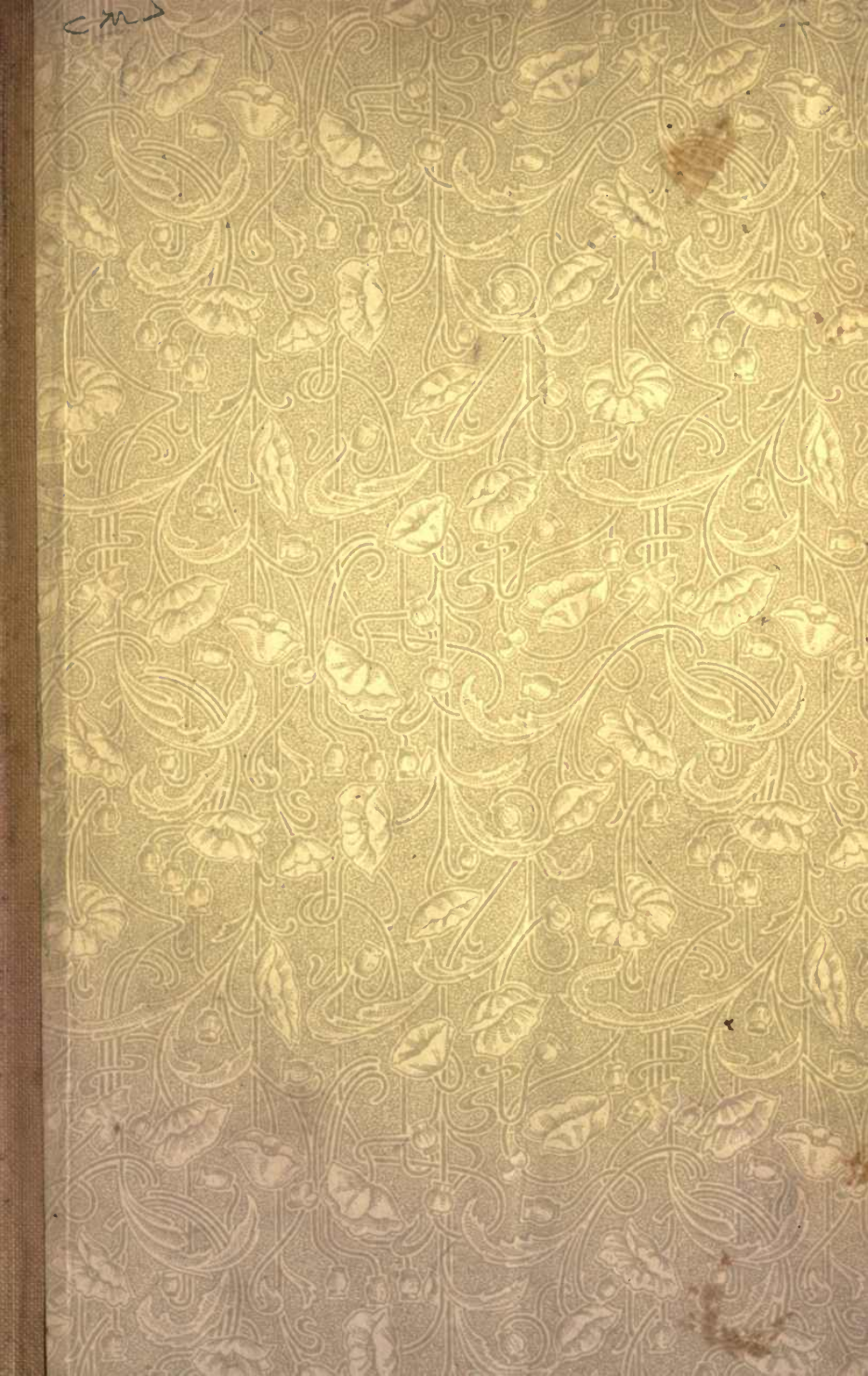


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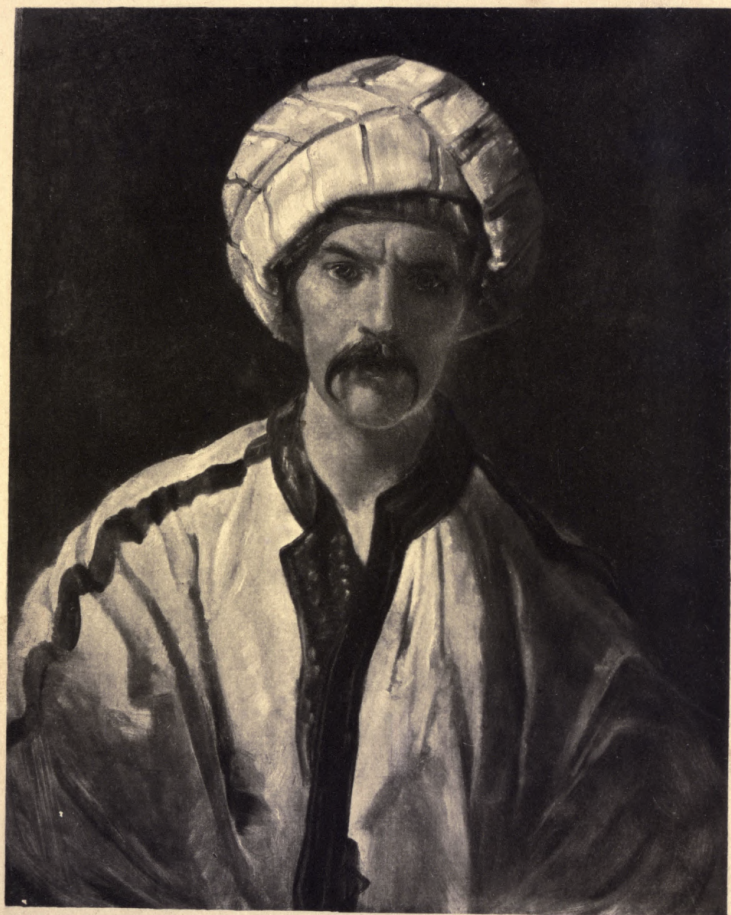


WANDERINGS IN . .  
THREE CONTINENTS









Allen & Co. Photo

Richard F. Burton

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# WANDERINGS IN THREE CONTINENTS

BY THE LATE

CAPTAIN SIR RICHARD F. BURTON, K.C.M.G.

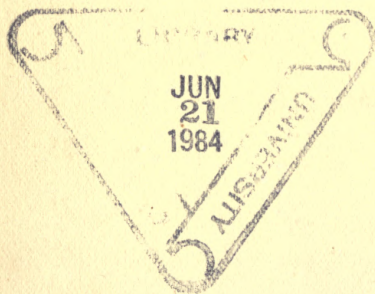
EDITED, WITH A PREFACE, BY  
W. H. WILKINS, M.A., F.S.A.  
EDITOR OF THE BURTON MSS.  
AND AUTHOR OF "THE RO-  
MANCE OF ISABEL LADY  
. . BURTON," ETC. .

WITH A PHOTOGRAVURE PORTRAIT AND  
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY A. D. MCCORMICK



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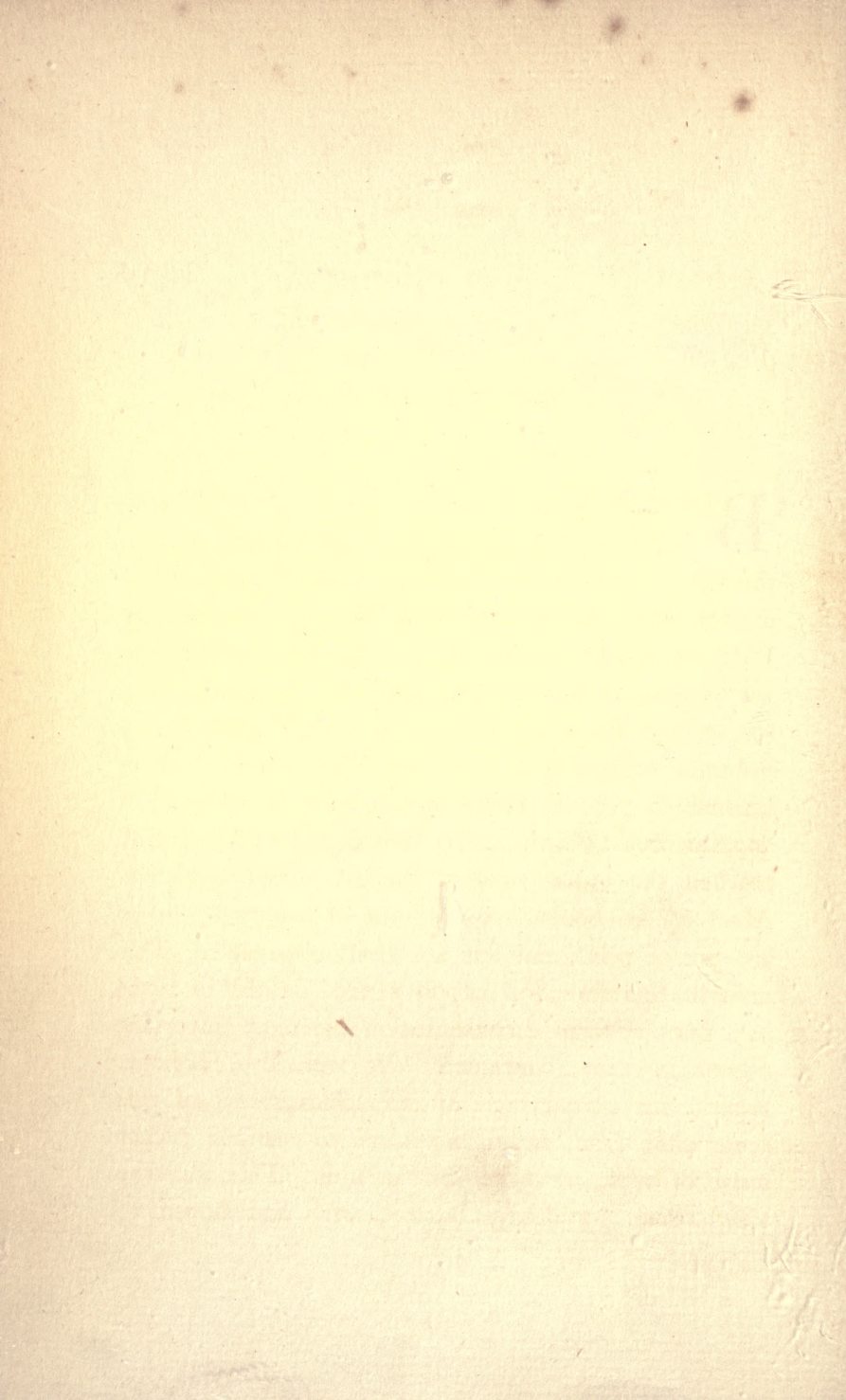




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## PREFACE

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BURTON was a many-sided man. The following volume of posthumous essays reveals him in the aspect in which he was best known to the world—as a traveller and explorer. It will add comparatively little to the knowledge of the Burton student; to the general reader it will contain much that is new, for though Burton wrote and published many bulky volumes of travel in years gone by, none of them assumed a popular form, and it may be doubted if any, save his “Pilgrimage to Meccah and El Medinah,” reached the outer circle of the great reading public. Most of his books are now out of copyright, many are out of print, and few are easily obtainable. This volume, therefore, will supply a need, in that it gives in a popular form a consensus of his most important travels in three continents. It will also, I hope, remind his countrymen of the achievements of this remarkable man, and bring home to many a deeper sense of what we have lost in him. This was the view taken by Lady Burton, who had hoped to

incorporate these essays in her memorial edition of "The Labours and Wisdom of Sir Richard Burton," a work cut short by her death. Upon me, therefore, has devolved the task of editing them and preparing them for publication. They form the second volume of the Burton MSS. which have been published since Lady Burton's death, and I am the more encouraged to give them to the world by the success which attended the previous volume, "The Jew, the Gypsy, and El Islam." The reception of this book, though published under obvious difficulties, and eight years after the author's death, showed that the interest in the great traveller's work was in no degree abated.

The essays that follow were all prepared by Burton himself, and most of them were read by him in the form of lectures before sundry geographical and scientific societies at different times. For instance, the description of his expeditions to El Medinah, Meccah, Harar, and Dahomé were delivered by him as a course of four lectures before the Emperor and Empress of Brazil at Rio in 1866. The account of his Central African expedition was read, I believe, at Bath, the one on Damascus and Palmyra at Edinburgh, the one on the Mormons in London. I have deleted the local and topical allusions, which arose from the circumstances under which they were delivered; I have filled in a word or two where the notes were too sketchy; but that is all.



Otherwise, the manuscript is reproduced exactly as it left the author's hands. In his own words, simply and unaffectedly, Burton here gives an epitome of his principal travels in three continents.

In this condensed form the essays necessarily lose something. On the other hand, they gain much. Careful and accurate as all Burton's books of travel were, his passion for detail sometimes led him into tediousness. He crammed his notebooks so full that he had occasionally a difficulty in digesting the large mass of information he had acquired. He was addicted to excessive annotation. For instance, in his book on the Mormons, the large text occupied on some pages only three lines, the rest of the page being broken up by closely printed notes, extracts from Mormon books and sermons, which can only be considered as superfluous. Extraneous matter of this kind has been omitted here, and the result is a clear gain to the narrative.

The book covers the period from 1853 to 1870, the most active years of Burton's active life. It opens most fitly with an account of his pilgrimage to El Medinah and Meccah. This famous expedition was the turning-point of Burton's career ; in a sense it may be said to have been the beginning of it. Though he had already shown much promise and some performance, and was known to many in India as a linguist, soldier, writer, and man of unusual

ability, he was yet unknown to the greater world outside. But after his pilgrimage to Meccah his fame became world-wide and enduring. I say this in no spirit of exaggeration. When all that Burton wrote and wrought has passed away into that limbo of forgetfulness which awaits the labours of even the most distinguished among us, this at least will be remembered to his honour, that he was the first Englishman to penetrate to the Holy of Holies at Meccah. I write the first Englishman advisedly. Burckhardt, a Swiss explorer, had gone part of the way before him, and since his day one or two have made the pilgrimage, but, though it was a sufficiently difficult task when they performed it, it was much more difficult when Burton did it in 1853. He was not a man to do things by halves. He made the pilgrimage thoroughly, living absolutely the life of the Moslems, wearing their clothes, eating their food, joining in their prayers, sacrifices, and ritual, and speaking their language; he did all this, carrying his life in his hand, for one false step, one prayer unsaid, one trifling item of the shibboleth omitted, and the dog of an infidel who had dared to profane the sanctuary of the Prophet would have been found out, and his bones would have whitened the desert sand. Not that Burton went to profane the tomb of the Prophet. Far from it. From his early manhood he had been a sympathetic student

of the higher aspects of El Islam. He had come to see that in it, above and beyond all the corruptions and abuses which clung around the Saving Faith, there existed an occult force which had made it a power among men. Not only in his achievement, but in the way he did it, Burton manifested those great qualities which have made the English race what it is ; he showed tenacity, pluck, and strength of purpose, and, withal, he accomplished his purpose unobtrusively. None knew until he came back how great a task he had achieved.

It was the same with all that Burton undertook. He did his work thoroughly, and he did it without any beating of drums or blaring of trumpets. "Deeds, not words," was his rule ; "Honour, not honours," his motto. His expedition to Harar the following year was almost as arduous as his pilgrimage to Meccah. No European had ever before passed the gates of the city in Somaliland. But Burton passed them, and stayed in Harar some days. Again, his long and dangerous expedition into Central Africa, which occupied nearly three years, showed in a marvellous manner his resource, his courage, and his powers of endurance. On the unfortunate controversy which afterwards arose between himself and Speke it is not necessary to enter here ; but this much, at least, may be said. In the discovery of Lake Tanganyika Burton was the pioneer ; his was the



brain which planned and commanded the expedition, and carried it through to a successful issue. It was he who first achieved with inadequate means and insufficient escort what Livingstone, Cameron, Speke, Grant, Baker, and Stanley achieved later.

Of the remaining essays there is little to be said. Burton's description of the Mormons in Great Salt Lake City printed here is, I think, very much better than his bulky book on the same subject, "The City of the Saints." In the larger work Burton ventured on prophecy, always unsafe, and predicted a great future for Mormondom and polygamy, a prediction which has not so far been verified by events. On the other hand, this account of his mission to Dahomé certainly loses by excessive condensation. "The Trip up the Congo" and "The Interior of Brazil" are lightning sketches of expeditions which involved much preparation and trouble to carry them through. "Palmyra" is a formal survey rather than an account of an expedition. It is interesting, as it marks an epoch in (one had almost written, the end of) Burton's active life. In 1870 he was suddenly recalled from Damascus by Lord Granville, and his career was broken.

After his appointment to the post of Consul at Trieste he went on some expeditions, notably to Midian, but they were tame indeed compared with those to Meccah, Harar, and Central Africa. At

Trieste the eagle's wings were clipped, and the man who had great energy and ability, a knowledge of more than a score of languages, and an unrivalled experience of Eastern life and literature, was suffered to drag out eighteen years in the obscurity of a second-rate seaport town. True, it was not all lost time, for ample leisure was given him at Trieste for his literary labours. If he had been thrown in a more active sphere, his great masterpiece, "Alf Laylah Wa Laylah" ("The Arabian Nights") might never have seen the light.

But when all is said and done, the most fruitful years of Burton's career, the richest in promise and performance, were those that began with the pilgrimage to Meccah and ended with his recall from Damascus. They were the very heart of his life: they are the years covered by this book.

W. H. WILKINS.

*October 1901.*





*EL MEDINAH AND MECCAH*

1853



# I

## *THE VISITATION OF EL MEDINAH*

THE Moslem's pilgrimage is a familiar word to the Christian's ear, yet how few are acquainted with the nature or the signification of the rite! Unto the present day, learned men—even those who make a pretence to some knowledge of the East—still confound Meccah, the birthplace, with El Medinah, the burial-place, of Mohammed, the Arab law-giver. "The Prophet's tomb at Meccah" is a mistake which even the best-informed of our journals do not disdain to make.

Before, however, entering upon the journey which procured for me the title "haji," it is necessary for me to dispose of a few preliminaries which must savour of the personal. The first question that suggests itself is, "What course of study enabled an Englishman to pass unsuspected through the Moslem's exclusive and jealously guarded Holy Land?"

I must premise that in the matter of assuming an Oriental nationality, Nature was somewhat propitious to me. Golden locks and blue eyes, however *per se* desirable, would have been sad obstacles to progress



in swarthy Arabia. And to what Nature had begun, art contributed by long years of laborious occupation.

Finding Oxford, with its Greek and Latin, its mysteries of  $\delta\epsilon$  and  $\gamma\alpha\rho$ , and its theology and mathematics, exceedingly monotonous, I shipped myself for India and entered life in the 18th Sepoy Regiment of the Bombay Presidency. With sundry intervals of travel, my career between 1843 and 1849 was spent in Scinde. This newly conquered province was very Mohammedan, and the conquerors were compelled, during the work of organisation, to see more of the conquered than is usual in England's East Indian possession. Sir Charles Napier, of gallant memory, our Governor and Commander-in-Chief, honoured me with a staff appointment, and humoured my whim by allowing me to wander about the new land as a canal engineer employed upon its intricate canal system. My days and nights were thus spent among the people, and within five years I was enabled to pass examinations in six Eastern languages.

In 1849 (March 30th—September 5th) an obstinate rheumatic ophthalmia, the result of overwork, sent me back to Europe, where nearly three years were passed before I was pronounced cured. Then, thoroughly tired of civilisation and living "dully sluggardised at home," and pining for the breath of the desert and the music of the date-palm, I volunteered in the autumn of 1852 to explore the great waste of Eastern and Central Arabia—that huge white blot which still disgraces our best maps. But the

Court of Directors of the then Honourable East India Company, with their mild and amiable chairman, after deliberation, stoutly refused. They saw in me only another victim, like Stoddard Connolly and the brave brothers Wyburd, rushing on his own destruction and leaving behind him friends and family to trouble with their requisitions the peace and quiet of the India House.

What remained to me but to prove that what might imperil others was to me safe? Supplied with the sinews of travel by the Royal Geographical Society, curious to see what men are mostly content to hear of only—namely, Moslem inner life in a purely Mohammedan land—and longing to set foot within the mysterious Meccah which no vacation tourist had ever yet measured, sketched, photographed, and described, I resolved, *coûte qu'il coûte*, to make the attempt in my old character of a dervish. The safest as well as the most interesting time would be during the pilgrimage season.

The Moslem's hajj, or pilgrimage, means, I must premise, "aspiration," and expresses man's conviction that he is but a wayfarer on earth wending towards a nobler world. This explains the general belief of the men in sandaled shoon that the greater their hardships, the sorer to travel the road to Jordan, the higher will be their reward in heaven. The pilgrim is urged by the voice of his soul—"O thou, toiling so fiercely for worldly pleasure and for transitory profit, wilt thou endure nothing to win a more lasting boon?"

Hence it is that pilgrimage is common to all ancient faiths. - The Sabæans, or old Arabians, visited the Pyramids as the sepulchres of Seth and his son Sabi, the founder of their sect. The classical philosophers wandered through the Valley of the Nile. The Jews annually went up to Jerusalem. The Tartar Buddhists still journey to distant Lamaserais, and the Hindus to Egypt, to Tibet, to Gaya, on the Ganges, and to the inhospitable Caucasus. The spirit of pilgrimage animated mediæval Europe, and a learned Jesuit traveller considers the processions of the Roman Catholic Church modern vestiges of the olden rite.

El Islam—meaning the covenant in virtue of which men earn eternal life by good works in this world—requires of all its votaries daily ablution and prayer, almsgiving on certain occasions, one month's yearly fast, and at least one pilgrimage to the House of Allah at Meccah and the mountain of Ararat. This first, and often the single, visit is called Hajjat el Islam, or pilgrimage of being a Moslem, and all those subsequently performed are regarded as works of supererogation. The rite, however, is incumbent only upon those who possess a sufficiency of health or wealth. El Islam is a creed remarkable for common sense.

The journey to El Medinah is not called hajj, but ziyarât, meaning a ceremonial visitation. Thus the difference between worship due to the Creator and homage rendered to the creature is steadily placed



and kept before the Moslem's eyes. Some sects—the Wahhabi, or Arabian Puritans, for instance—even condemn as impious all intercessions between man and his Maker, especially the prayers at the Prophet's grave. The mass, however, of the Mohammedan Church, if such expression be applicable to a system which repudiates an ecclesiastical body, considers this visitation a “practice of the faith, and the most effectual way of drawing near to Allah through the Prophet Mohammed.”

The Moslem's literature has many a thick volume upon the minutiae of pilgrimage and visitation. All four Sumni, or orthodox schools—viz., Hunafi, Shaffi, Maliki, and Hanbali—differ in unimportant points one with the other. Usually pilgrims, especially those performing the rite for the first time, begin with Meccah and end with El Medinah. But there is no positive command on the subject. In these days pilgrims from the north countries—Egypt and Syria, Damascus and Bagdad—pass through the Prophet's burial-place going to and coming from Meccah, making a visitation each time. Voyagers from the south—as East Africa, India, and Java—must often deny themselves, on account of danger and expense, the spiritual advantages of prayer at Mohammed's tomb.

I have often been asked if the pilgrim receives any written proof that he has performed his pilgrimage. Formerly the Sherif (descendant of Hasan), or Prince, of Meccah gave a certificate to those who could afford it, and early in the present century the names

of all who paid the fee were registered by a scribe. All that has passed. But the ceremonies are so complicated and the localities so peculiar that no book can thoroughly teach them. The pretended pilgrim would readily be detected after a short cross-questioning of the real Simon Pure. As facilities of travel increase, and the rite becomes more popular, no pilgrim, unless he comes from the edge of the Moslem world, cares to bind on the green turban which his grandfather affected. Few also style themselves haji, unless for an especial reason—as an evidence of reformed life, for instance, or a sign of being a serious person.

Some also have inquired if I was not the first “Christian” who ever visited the Moslem’s Holy Land. The learned Gibbon asserted—“Our notions of Meccah must be drawn from the Arabians. As no unbeliever is permitted to enter the city, our travellers are silent.”<sup>1</sup> But Haji Yunus (Ludovico di Bartema) performed the pilgrimage in A.D. 1503; Joseph Pitts, of Exeter, in 1680, Ali Bey el Abbasi (the Catalanian Badia) in 1807, Haji Mohammed (Giovanni Finati, of Ferrara) in 1811, and the excellent Swiss traveller Burckhardt in 1814, all passed safely through the Hejaz, or Holy Land. I mention those only who have written upon the subject. Those who have not must be far more numerous. In fact, any man may become a haji by prefacing his pilgrimage with a solemn and public profession of faith before the Kazi in

<sup>1</sup> “Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,” chap. i.



Cairo or Damascus ; or, simpler still, by applying through his Consulate to be put under the protection of the Amir el Haji, or Commander of the Pilgrim Caravan.

If I did anything new, it was this—my pilgrimage was performed as by one of the people. El Islam theoretically encourages, but practically despises and distrusts, the burma, or renegade. Such a convert is allowed to see as little as possible, and is ever suspected of being a spy. He is carefully watched night and day, and in troublous times he finds it difficult to travel between Meccah and El Medinah. Far be it from me to disparage the labours of my predecessors. But Bartema travelled as a Mameluke in the days when Mamelukes were Christian slaves, Pitts was a captive carried to the pilgrimage by his Algerine master, Badia's political position was known to all the authorities, Finati was an Albanian soldier, and Burckhardt revealed himself to the old Pacha Mohammed Ali.

As regards the danger of pilgrimage in the case of the non-Moslem, little beyond the somewhat extensive chapter of accidents is to be apprehended by one conversant with Moslem prayers and formulæ, manners and customs, and who possesses a sufficient guarantee of orthodoxy. It is, however, absolutely indispensable to be a Mohammedan in externals. Neither the Koran nor the Sultan enjoins the killing of Hebrew or Christian intruders ; nevertheless, in 1860, a Jew, who refused to repeat the Creed, was crucified by the Meccan populace, and in the event



of a pilgrim declaring himself to be an infidel the authorities would be powerless to protect him.

The question of *Cui bono?*—of what good I did to others or to myself by the adventure—is not so easily answered. My account of El Medinah is somewhat fuller than that of Burckhardt, whose health was breaking when he visited it. And our caravan's route between the Holy Cities was not the beaten track along the Red Sea, but the little-known eastern or desert road. Some critics certainly twitted me with having "turned Turk"; one might turn worse things. For the rest, man is ever most tempted by the useless and the impossible.

To appear in character upon the scene of action many precautions were necessary. Egypt in those days was a land of passports and policemen; the *haute-police* was not inferior to that of any European country. By the advice of a brother-officer, Captain Grindley, I assumed the Eastern dress at my lodgings in London, and my friend accompanied me as interpreter to Southampton. On April 4th, 1853, a certain Shaykh Abdullah (to wit, myself) left home in the P. & O. Company's steamer *Bengal*, and before the end of the fortnight landed at Alexandria. It was not exactly pleasant for the said personage to speak broken English the whole way, and rigorously to refuse himself the pleasure of addressing the other sex; but under the circumstances it was necessary.

Fortunately, on board the *Bengal* was John Larking, a well-known Alexandrian. He was in my secret,

and I was received in his house, where he gave me a little detached pavilion and treated me as a munshi, or language-master. My profession among the people was that of a doctor. The Egyptians are a medico-ridden race ; all are more or less unhealthy, and they could not look upon my phials and pill-boxes without yearning for their contents. An Indian doctor was a novelty to them ; Franks they despised ; but how resist a man who had come so far, from east and west ? Men, women, and children besieged my door, by which means I could see the people face to face, especially that portion of which Europeans as a rule know only the worst. Even learned Alexandrians, after witnessing some of my experiments in mesmerism and the magic mirror, opined that the stranger was a manner of holy man gifted with preternatural powers. An old man sent to offer me his daughter in marriage—my sanctity compelled me to decline the honour—and a middle-aged lady offered me a hundred piastres (nearly one pound sterling) to stay at Alexandria and superintend the restoration of her blind left eye.

After a month pleasantly spent in the little garden of roses, jasmine, and oleanders, I made in early June a move towards Cairo. The first thing was to procure a passport ; I had neglected, through ignorance, to bring one from England. It was not without difficulty, involving much unclean dressing and expenditure of horrible English, that I obtained from H.B.M.'s Consul at Alexandria a certificate declaring me to be an Indo-British subject named Abdullah, by profession

a doctor, and, to judge from frequent blanks in the document, not distinguished by any remarkable conformation of eyes, nose, or cheek. This paper, duly countersigned by the zabit, or police magistrate, would carry me anywhere within the Egyptian frontier.

At Alexandria also I provided a few necessities for the pilgrimage: item—a change or two of clothing; a substantial leather money belt to carry my gold in; a little cotton bag for silver and small change, kept ready for use in the breast pocket; a zemzimiyah, or water-bag of goatskin; a huge cotton umbrella of Cairene make, brightly yellow, like an overgrown marigold; a coarse Persian rug, which acted as bed, table, chair, and oratory; a pea-green box, with red and yellow flowers, capable of standing falls from a camel twice a day, and therefore well fitted for a medicine chest; and, lastly, the only peculiar article—viz., the shroud, without which no one sets out *en route* to Meccah. This *memento mori* is a piece of cotton six feet long by five broad. It is useful, for instance, when a man is dangerously sick or wounded; the caravan, of course, cannot wait, and to loiter behind is destruction. The patient, therefore, is ceremonially washed, wrapped up in his kafan, partly covered with sand, and left to his fate. It is hard to think of such an end without horror; the torturing thirst of a wound, the sun heating the brain to madness, and, worst of all—for they do not wait for death—the attacks of the jackal, the vulture, and the ravens of the wilds. This shroud was duly sprinkled, as is the custom, with the holy water



of the Zemzem well at Meccah. It later came to a bad end amongst the villainous Somal in Eastern Africa.

Equipped in a dervish's frock, I took leave of my kind host and set out, a third-class passenger, upon a steamer facetiously known as the *Little Asthmatic*. In those days the rail had not invaded Egypt. We had an unpleasant journey up the Mahmadiyah Canal and the Nile, which is connected by it with Alexandria. The usual time was thirty hours. We took three mortal days and nights. We were nearly wrecked at the then unfinished Barage, we saw nothing of the Pyramids but their tops, and it was with a real feeling of satisfaction that we moored alongside of the old tumble-down suburb, Bulak.

My dervishhood was perfectly successful. I happened by chance to touch the elbow of an Anglo-Indian officer, and he publicly and forcibly condemned my organs of vision. And I made an acquaintance and a friend on board. The former was a shawl and cotton merchant, Meyan Khudabaksh Namdar, of Lahore, who, as the caravanserais were full of pilgrims, lodged me at his house for a fortnight. The conversations that passed between us were published two years later in 1855.<sup>1</sup> They clearly pointed to the mutiny which occurred two years afterwards, and this, together with my frankness about the Suez Canal,<sup>2</sup> did not tend to make me a favourite with the then effete Government of India.

My friend was a Turkish trader, named Haji

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Burton's "Pilgrimage to El Medinah and Meccah," chap. iii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. vi.

Wali-el-din. He was then a man about forty-five, of middle stature, with a large round head closely shaven, a bull neck, limbs sturdy as a Saxon's, a thin red beard, and handsome features beaming benevolence. A curious dry humour he had, delighting in "quizzing," but in so quiet, quaint, and solemn a way that before you knew him you could scarce divine his drift. He presently found for me rooms next his own at the wakalah, or caravanserai, called Jemeliyah, in the Greek quarter, and I tried to repay his kindness by counselling him in an unpleasant Consular suit.

When we lived under the same roof, the haji and I became inseparable. We walked together and dined together, and spent the evening at a mosque or other place of public pastime. Sometimes we sat among the dervishes; but they are a dangerous race, travelled and inquisitive. Meanwhile I continued to practise my profession—the medical—and devoted myself several hours a day to study in the Azhar Mosque, sitting under the learned Shaykh Mohammed Ali Attar. The better to study the "humours," I also became a grocer and druggist, and my little shop, a mere hole in the wall, was a perfect gem of Nilotic groceries. But although I sold my wares under cost price to fair customers, my chief clients were small boys and girls, who came, halfpence in hand, to buy sugar and pepper; so one day, determining to sink the thirty shillings which my stock in trade had stood me, I locked the wooden shutter that defended my establishment and made it over to my shaykh.



The haji and I fasted together during the month of Ramazan. That year it fell in the torrid June, and it always makes the Moslem unhealthy and unamiable. At the end preparations were to be made for departure Meccah-wards, and the event was hastened by a convivial *séance* with a bacchanalian captain of Albanians, which made the gossips of the quarter wonder what manner of an Indian doctor had got amongst them.

I was fortunate enough, however, to hire the services of Shaykh Nur, a quiet East Indian, whose black skin made society suppose him to be my slave. Never suspecting my nationality till after my return from Meccah, he behaved honestly enough; but when absolved by pilgrimage from his past sins, Haji Nur began to rob me so boldly that we were compelled to part. I also made acquaintance with certain sons of the Holy Cities—seven men from El Medinah and Meccah—who, after a begging-trip to Constantinople, were returning to their homes. Having doctored them and lent them some trifling sums, I was invited by Shaykh Hamid El Shamman to stay with him at El Medinah, and by the boy Mohammed El Basyuni to lodge at his mother's house in Meccah.

They enabled me to collect proper stores for the journey. These consisted of tea, coffee, loaf sugar, biscuits, oil, vinegar, tobacco, lanterns, cooking-pots, and a small bell-shaped tent costing twelve shillings. The provisions were placed in a kafas, or hamper, of palm sticks, my drugs and dress in a sahharah,



or wooden box measuring some three and a half feet each way, covered with cowskin, and the lid fitting into the top. And finally, not wishing to travel by the vans then allotted to the overland passengers, I hired two dromedaries and their attendant Bedouins, who for the sum of ten shillings each agreed to carry me across the desert between Cairo and Suez.

At last, after abundant trouble, all was ready. At 3 p.m., July 1st, 1853, my friend Haji Wali embraced me heartily, and so did my poor old shaykh, who, despite his decrepitude and my objections, insisted upon accompanying me to the city gate. I will not deny having felt a tightening of the heart as their honest faces and forms faded in the distance. All the bystanders ejaculated, "Allah bless thee, Y'all Hajj (O pilgrim!), and restore thee to thy family and thy friends."

We rode hard over the stretch of rock and hard clay which has since yielded to that monumental work, the Suez Canal. There was no *ennui* upon the road: to the traveller there was an interest in the wilderness—

Where love is liberty and Nature law—

unknown to Cape seas and Alpine glaciers and even the boundless prairie. I felt as if looking once more upon the face of a friend, and my two Bedouins—though the old traveller described their forefathers as "folke full of all evylle condiciouns"—were excellent company. At midnight we halted for a little

rest near the Central Station, and after dark on the next evening I passed through the tumble-down gateway of Suez and found a shelter in the Wakalah Tirjis—the George Inn. My Meccan and Medinah friends were already installed there, and the boy Mohammed El Basyuni had joined me on the road.

It was not so easy to embark at Suez. In those days the greater body of pilgrims marched round the head of the Red Sea. Steamers were rare, and in the spirit of protection the Bey, or Governor, had orders to obstruct us till near the end of the season. Most Egyptian high officials sent their boats laden with pious passengers up the Nile, whence they returned freighted with corn. They naturally did their best to force upon us the delays and discomforts of what is called the Kussayr (Cosseir) line. And as those who travelled by the land route spent their money fifteen days longer in Egyptian territory than they would have done if allowed to embark at Suez, the Bey assisted them in the former and obstructed them in the latter case.

We were delayed in the George Inn four mortal days and nights amidst all the plagues of Egypt. At last we found a sambuk, or small-decked vessel, about to start, and for seven dollars each we took places upon the poop, the only possible part in the dreadful summer months. The *Silk El Zahab*, or *Golden Thread*, was probably a lineal descendant from the ships of Solomon harboured in Ezion Geber. It was about fifty tons burden, and we found ninety-seven, instead

of sixty, the proper number of passengers. The farce of a quarter-deck ten feet by eight accommodated eighteen of us, and our companions were Magribis, men from North-Western Africa—the most quarrelsome and vicious of pilgrims.

We sailed on July 6th, and, as in an Irish packet of the olden time, the first preliminary to “shaking down” was a general fight. The rais (captain) naturally landed and left us to settle the matter, which ended in many a head being broken. I played my poor part in the *mêlée* by pushing down a heavy jar of water upon the swarm of assailants. At last the Magribis, failing to dislodge us from the poop, made peace, and finding we were sons of the Holy Cities, became as civil as their unkindly natures permitted. We spent twelve days, instead of the normal five, in beating down the five hundred and fifty direct miles between Suez and Yambu.

Every second day we managed to land and stretch our limbs. The mornings and evenings were mild and balmy, whilst the days were terrible. We felt as if a few more degrees of heat would be fatal to us. The celebrated coral reefs of the Red Sea, whence some authors derive its name, appeared like meadows of brilliant flowers resembling those of earth, only far brighter and more beautiful. The sunsets were magnificent; the zodiacal light, or after-glow, was a study; and the cold rays of the moon, falling upon a wilderness of white clay and pinnacle, suggested a wintry day in England.





THE FIGHT ON THE *SILK EL ZAHAB*.

[See Page 18.



At last, after slowly working up a narrow creek leading to the Yambu harbour, on July 17th we sprang into a shore-boat, and felt new life when bidding eternal adieu and "sweet bad luck" to the *Golden Thread*, which seemed determined to wreck itself about once per diem.

Yambu, the port of El Medinah, lies S.S.W. of, and a little over a hundred and thirty miles from, its city. The road was infamous—rocky, often waterless, alternately fiery and freezing, and infested with the Beni Harb, a villainous tribe of hill Bedouins. Their chief was one Saad, a brigand of the first water. He was described as a little brown man, contemptible in appearance but remarkable for courage and for a ready wit, which saved him from the poison and pistol of his enemies. Some called him the friend of the poor, and all knew him to be the foe of the rich.

There was nothing to see at Yambu, where, however, we enjoyed the hammam and the drinking-water, which appeared deliciously sweet after the briny supplies of Suez. By dint of abundant bargaining we hired camels at the moderate rate of three dollars each—half in ready money, the rest to be paid after arrival. I also bought a shugduf, or rude litter carrying two, and I chose the boy Mohammed as my companion. The journey is usually done in five days. We took eight, and we considered ourselves lucky fellows.

On the evening of the next day (July 18th) we set out with all the gravity of men putting our heads



into the lion's jaws. The moon rose fair and clear as we emerged from the shadowy streets. When we launched into the desert, the sweet, crisp air delightfully contrasted with the close, offensive atmosphere of the town.

My companions all, as Arabs will do on such occasions, forgot to think of their precious boxes full of the plunder of Constantinople, and began to sing. We travelled till three o'clock in the morning (these people insist upon setting out in the afternoon and passing the night in travelling). And the Prophet informs us that the "calamities of earth," meaning scorpions, serpents, and wild beasts, are least dangerous during the dark hours.

After a pleasant sleep in the wilderness, we joined for the next day's march a caravan of grain carriers, about two hundred camels escorted by seven Turkish Bashi Buzuk, or Irregular Cavalry. They confirmed the report that the Bedouins were "out," and declared that Saad, the Old Man of the Mountain, had threatened to cut every throat venturing into his passes. That night the robbers gave us a mild taste of their quality, but soon ran away. The third march lay over an iron land and under a sky of brass to a long straggling village called, from its ruddy look, El Hamra (the Red); it is the middle station between Yambu and El Medinah. The fourth stage placed us on the Sultan's high-road leading from Meccah to the Prophet's burial-place, and we joined a company of pious persons bound on visitation.

The Bedouins, hearing that we had an escort of two hundred troopers, manned a gorge and would not let us advance till the armed men retired. The fifth and sixth days were forced halts at a vile place called Bir Abbas, where we could hear the distant dropping of the musketry, a sign that the troops and the hill-men were settling some little dispute. Again my companions were in cold perspirations about their treasures, and passed the most of their time in sulking and quarrelling.

About sunset on July 23rd, three or four caravans assembled at Bir Abbas, forming one large body for better defence against the dreaded Bedouins. We set out at 11 p.m., travelling without halting through the night, and at early dawn we found ourselves in an ill-famed narrow known as Shuab El Haji, or the Pilgrim's Pass. The boldest looked apprehensive as we approached it. Presently, from the precipitous cliff on our left, thin puffs of blue smoke rose in the sultry morning air, and afterwards the sharp cracks of the hill-men's matchlocks were echoed by the rocks on the right. A number of Bedouins could be seen swarming like hornets up the steeper slopes, carrying huge weapons and "spoiling for a fight." They took up comfortable positions on the cut-throat en- and began practising upon us from behind their breastworks of piled stones with perfect convenience to themselves. We had nothing to do but to blaze away as much powder and to veil ourselves in as dense a smoke as possible. The result was that we lost

twelve men, besides camels and other beasts of burden. My companions seemed to consider this questionable affair a most gallant exploit.

The next night (July 24th) was severe. The path lay up rocky hill and down stony vale. A tripping and stumbling dromedary had been substituted for my better animal, and the consequences may be imagined.

The sun had nearly risen before I shook off the lethargic effects of such a march. All around me were hurrying their beasts, regardless of rough ground, and not a soul spoke a word to his neighbour. "Are there robbers in sight?" was the natural question. "No," responded the boy Mohammed. "They are walking with their eyes; they will presently sight their homes."

Half an hour afterwards we came to a huge mudarrij, or flight of steps, roughly cut in a line of black scoriaceous basalt. Arrived at the top, we passed through a lane of dark lava with steep banks on both sides, and in a few minutes a full view of the Holy City suddenly opened upon us. It was like a vision in "The Arabian Nights." We halted our camels as if by word of command. All dismounted, in imitation of the pious of old, and sat down, jaded and hungry as we were, to feast our eyes on the "country of date-trees" which looked so passing fair after the "salt stony land." As we looked eastward the sun rose out of the horizon of blue and pink hill, the frontier of Nejd staining the spacious plains with



gold and purple. The site of El Medinah is in the western edge of the highlands which form the plateau of Central Arabia. On the left side, or north, was a tall grim pile of porphyritic rock, the celebrated Mount Ohod, with a clump of verdure and a dome or two nestling at its base. Round a whitewashed fortalice founded upon a rock clustered a walled city, irregularly oval, with tall minarets enclosing a conspicuous green dome. To the west and south lay a large suburb and long lines of brilliant vegetation piercing the tawny levels. I now understood the full value of a phrase in the Moslem ritual—"And when the pilgrim's eyes shall fall upon the trees of El Medinah, let him raise his voice and bless the Prophet with the choicest blessings."

In all the panorama before us nothing was more striking, after the desolation through which we had passed, than the gardens and orchards about the town. My companions obeyed the command with the most poetical exclamations, bidding the Prophet "live for ever whilst the west wind bloweth gently over the hills of Nejd and the lightning flasheth bright in the firmament of El Hejaz."

We then remounted and hurried through the Bab El Ambari, the gate of the western suburb. Crowded by relatives and friends, we passed down a broad, dusty street, pretty well supplied with ruins, into an open space called Barr El Manakhah, or "place where camels are made to kneel." Straight forward a line leads directly into the Bab El Misri, the Egyptian gate of

the city. But we turned off to the right, and after advancing a few yards we found ourselves at the entrance of our friend Shaykh Hamid's house. He had preceded us to prepare for our reception.

No delay is allowed in the ziyarat, or visitation of the haram, or holy place, which received the mortal remains of the Arab Prophet. We were barely allowed to breakfast, to perform the religious ablution, and to change our travel-soiled garments. We then mounted asses, passed through the Egyptian, or western, gate, and suddenly came upon the mosque. It is choked up with ignoble buildings, and as we entered the "Dove of Mercy" I was not impressed by the spectacle.

The site of the Prophet's mosque—Masjid el Nabashi, as it is called—was originally a graveyard shaded by date-trees. The first walls were of adobe, or unbaked brick, and the recently felled palm-trunks were made into pillars for the leaf-thatched roof. The present building, which is almost four centuries old, is of cut stone, forming an oblong of four hundred and twenty feet by three hundred and forty feet. In the centre is a spacious uncovered area containing the Garden of Our Lady Fatimah—a railed plot of ground bearing a lote-tree and a dozen palms. At the south-east angle of this enclosure, under a wooden roof with columns, is the Prophet's Well, whose water is hard and brackish. Near it meets the City Academy, where in the cool mornings and evenings



the young idea is taught to shout rather than to shoot.

Around the court are four riwaks, or porches, not unlike the cloisters of a monastery; they are arched to the front, backed by the wall and supported inside by pillars of different shape and material varying from dirty plaster to fine porphyry. When I made my visitation, the northern porch was being rebuilt; it was to be called after Abd El Majid, the then reigning Sultan, and it promised to be the most splendid. The main colonnade, however, the sanctum containing all that is venerable in the building, embraces the whole length of the southern short wall, and is deeper than the other three by nearly treble the number of columns. It is also paved with handsome slabs of white marble and marquetry work, here and there covered with coarse matting and above this by unclean carpets, well worn by faithful feet.

To understand the tomb a few preliminary remarks are necessary. Mohammed, it must be remembered, died in the eleventh year of his mission and the sixty-third of his age, corresponding with A.D. 623. He was accustomed to say, "In whatsoever spot a prophet departs this life, there also should he be buried." Accordingly his successor ordered the grave to be dug in the house of the young widow Ayisha, who lived close to the original mosque. After her husband's burial she occupied an adjoining room partitioned off from the tomb at which men were accustomed to pray. Another saying of the Prophet's



forbade tombs to be erected in mosques ; it therefore became necessary so to contrive that the revered spot should be in, and yet not in, the place of worship.

Accordingly they built a detached tower in the south-eastern corner of the mosque, and called it the hujrah, or chamber. It is from fifty to fifty-five feet square, with a passage all round, and it extends from floor to roof, where it is capped by the green dome which strikes the eyes on approaching the city. The external material of the closet, which also serves to protect the remains from infidels and schismatics, is metal filagree painted a vivid grey green, relieved by the brightly gilt or burnished brass-work forming the long and graceful Arabic characters. On the south side, for greater honour, the railing is plated over in parts with silver, and letters of the same metal are interlaced with it.

Entering by the western Door of Safety, we paced slowly towards the tomb down a line of wall about the height of a man, and called the "illustrious fronting." The barrier is painted with arabesques and pierced with small doors. There are two niches richly worked with various coloured marble, and near them is a pulpit, a graceful collection of slender columns, elegant tracery, and inscriptions admirably carved. Arrived at the western small door in the dwarf wall, we entered the famous spot called El Ranzah (the "Garden"), after a saying of Mohammed : "Between my grave and my pulpit is a garden of the gardens of Paradise." On the north and west sides it is

not divided from the rest of the porch, to the south rises the dwarf wall, and eastward it is bounded by the west end of the filagree tower containing the tomb.

The "Garden" is the most elaborate part of the mosque. It is a space of about eighty feet in length tawdrily decorated to resemble vegetation : the carpets are flowered, and the pediments of columns are cased with bright green tiles, and the shafts are adorned with gaudy and unnatural growths in arabesques. It is further disfigured by handsome branched candelabra of cut crystal, the work, I believe, of an English house. Its peculiar background, the filagree tower, looks more picturesque near than at a distance, where it suggests the idea of a gigantic birdcage. The one really fine feature of the scene is the light cast by the window of stained glass in the southern wall. Thus little can be said in praise of the "Garden" by day. But at night the eye, dazzled by oil lamps suspended from the roof, by huge wax candles, and by minor illuminations, whilst crowds of visitors in the brightest attire, with the richest and noblest of the citizens, sit in congregation to hear services, becomes far less critical.

Entering the "Garden" we fronted towards Meccah, prayed, recited two chapters of the Koran, and gave alms to the poor in gratitude to Allah for making it our fate to visit so holy a spot. Then we repaired to the southern front of the chamber, where there are three dwarf windows, apertures half a foot square, and placed at eye's height from the ground. The westernmost is supposed to be opposite to the face

of Mohammed, who lies on the right side, facing, as is still the Moslem custom, the House of Allah at Meccah. The central hill is that of Abubaki, the first Caliph, whose head is just behind the Prophet's shoulder. The easternmost window is that of Omar, the second Caliph, who holds the same position with respect to Abubaki. In the same chamber, but decorously divided by a wall from the male tenants, reposes the Lady Fatimah, Mohammed's favourite daughter. Osman, the fourth Caliph, was not buried after his assassination near his predecessors, but there is a vacant space for Isa bin Maryam when he shall return.

We stood opposite these three windows, successively, beginning with that of the Prophet, recited the blessings, which we were directed to pronounce "with awe and fear and love." The ritual is very complicated, and the stranger must engage a guide technically called a muzawwir, or visitation-maker. He is always a son of the Holy City, and Shaykh Hamid was mine. Many a piercing eye was upon me: the people probably supposed that I was an Ajemi or Persian, and these heretics have often attempted to defile the tombs of the two Caliphs.

When the prayers were at an end, I was allowed to look through the Prophet's window. After straining my eyes for a time, the oil lamps shedding but a dim light, I saw a narrow passage leading round the chamber. The inner wall is variously represented to be made of stone planking or unbaked bricks. One



sees nothing but thin coverings, a curtain of handsome silk and cotton brocade, green, with long white letters worked into it. Upon the hangings were three inscriptions in characters of gold, informing readers that behind there lie Allah's Prophet and the two first Caliphs. The exact place of Mohammed's tomb is, moreover, distinguished by a large pearl rosary and a peculiar ornament, the celebrated Kankab el Durri, or constellation of pearls ; it is suspended breast high to the curtain. This is described to be a "brilliant star set in diamonds and pearls" placed in the dark that man's eye may be able to endure its splendours ; the vulgar believe it to be a "jewel of the jewels of Paradise." To me it suggested the round glassy stoppers used for the humbler sort of decanters, but then I think the same of the Koh-i-Nur.

I must allude to the vulgar story of Mohammed's steel coffin suspended in mid-air between two magnets. The myth has won a world-wide reputation, yet Arabia has never heard of it. Travellers explain it in two ways. Niebuhr supposes it to have risen from the rude ground-plan drawings sold to strangers, and mistaken by them for elevations. William Banks believes that the work popularly described as hanging unsupported in the mosque of Omar at Jerusalem was confounded with the Prophet's tomb at El Medinah by Christians, who until very lately could not have seen either of these Moslem shrines.

A book which I published upon the subject of my pilgrimage gives in detail my reason for believing

that the site of Mohammed's sepulture is doubtful as that of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup> They are, briefly, these four: From the earliest days the shape of the Prophet's tomb has never been generally known in El Islam. The accounts of the grave given by the learned are discrepant. The guardianship of the spot was long in the hands of schismatics (the Beni Husayu). And lastly, I cannot but look upon the tale of the blinding light which surrounds the Prophet's tomb, current for ages past, and still universally believed upon the authority of attendant eunuchs who must know its falsehood as a priestly glory intended to conceal a defect.

To that book also I must refer my readers for a full description of the minor holy places at El Medinah. They are about fifty in number, and of these about a dozen are generally visited. The principal of these are, first, El Bakia (the Country of the Saints), to the east of the city; on the last day some seventy thousand, others say a hundred thousand, holy men with faces like moons shall arise from it; the second is the Apostle's mosque at Kubas, the first temple built in El Islam; and the third is a visitation to the tomb of Mohammed's paternal uncle, Hamzeh, the "Lord of Martyrs," who was slain fighting for the faith in A.D. 625.

A few observations concerning the little-known capital of the Northern Hejaz may not be unacceptable.

Medinah El Nahi (the City of the Prophet) is usually

<sup>1</sup> "Pilgrimage to El Medinah and Meccah," by Richard F. Burton.



called by Moslems, for brevity, El Medinah, or the City by Excellence. It lies between the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth degrees of north latitude, corresponding therefore with Central Mexico ; and being high raised above the sea, it may be called a *tierra temprada*. My predecessor, Burckhardt, found the water detestable. I thought it good. The winter is long and rigorous, hence partly the fair complexion of its inhabitants, who rival in turbulence and fanaticism their brethren of Meccah.

El Medinah consists of three parts—a town, a castle, and a large suburb. The population, when I visited it, ranged from sixteen thousand to eighteen thousand souls, whereas Meccah numbered forty-five thousand, and the garrison consisted of a half-battalion, or four hundred men. Mohammed's last resting-place has some fifteen hundred hearths enclosed by a wall of granite and basalt in irregular layers cemented with lime. It is pierced with four gates : the Syrian, the Gate of Hospitality, the Friday, and the Egyptian. The two latter are fine massive buildings, with double towers like the old Norman portals, but painted with broad bands of red pillars and other flaring colours. Except the Prophet's mosque, there are few public buildings. There are only four caravanserais, and the markets are long lines of sheds, thatched with scorched and blackened palm-leaves. The streets are what they should always be in torrid lands, dark, deep, narrow, and rarely paved ; they are generally of black earth, well watered



and trodden to harden. The houses appear well built for the East, of square stone, flat roofed, double storied, and enclosing spacious courtyards and small gardens, where water basins and trees and sheds "cool the eye," as Arabs say. Latticed balconies are here universal, and the windows are mere holes in the walls provided with broad shutters. The castle has stronger defences than the town, and inside it a tall donjon tower bears, proudly enough, the banner of the Crescent and the Star. Its whitewashed lines of wall render this fortalice a conspicuous object, and guns pointing in all directions, especially upon the town, make it appear a kind of Gibraltar to the Bedouins.

For many reasons strangers become very much attached to El Medinah and there end their lives. My servant, Shaykh Nur, opined it to be a very "heavenly city." Therefore the mass of the population is of foreign extraction.

On August 28th arrived the great Damascus caravan, which sets out from Constantinople bringing the presents of the Sublime Porte. It is the main stream which absorbs all the small currents flowing at this season of general movement from Central Asia towards the great centre of the Islamitic world, and in 1853 it numbered about seven thousand souls. It was anxiously expected at El Medinah for several reasons. In the first place, it brought with it a new curtain for the Prophet's chamber, the old one being in a tattered condition; secondly, it had charge of the annual stipends and pensions for the citizens; and thirdly,

many families had members returning under its escort to their homes. The popular anxiety was greatly increased by the disordered state of the country round about, and moreover the great caravan was a day late. The Russian war had extended its excitement even into the bowels of Arabia, and to travel eastward according to my original intention was impossible.

For a day or two we were doubtful about which road the caravan would take—the easy coast line or the difficult and dangerous eastern, or desert, route. Presently Saad the robber shut his doors against us, and we were driven perforce to choose the worse. The distance between El Medinah and Meccah by the frontier way would be in round numbers two hundred and fifty (two hundred and forty-eight) miles, and in the month of September water promised to be exceedingly scarce and bad.

I lost no time in patching up my water-skins, in laying in a store of provisions, and in hiring camels. Masad El Harbi, an old Bedouin, agreed to let me have two animals for the sum of twenty dollars. My host warned me against the treachery of the wild men, with whom it is necessary to eat salt once a day. Otherwise they may rob the traveller and plead that the salt is not in their stomachs.

Towards evening time on August 30th, El Medinah became a scene of exceeding confusion in consequence of the departure of the pilgrims. About an hour after sunset all our preparations were concluded. The



evening was sultry ; we therefore dined outside the house. I was told to repair to the shrine for the ziyarat el widoa, or the farewell visitation. My decided objection to this step was that we were all to part, and where to meet again we knew not. I therefore prayed a two-prostration prayer, and facing towards the haram recited the usual supplication. We sat up till 2 p.m. when, having heard no signal gun, we lay down to sleep through the hot remnant of the hours of darkness. Thus was spent my last night at the City of the Prophet.



## II

### *THE PILGRIMAGE TO MECCAH*

ON Wednesday, August 31st, 1853, I embraced my good host, Shaykh Hamid, who had taken great trouble to see me perfectly provided for the journey. Shortly after leaving El Medinah we all halted and turned to take a last farewell. All the pilgrims dismounted and gazed long and wistfully at the venerable minarets and the Prophet's green dome—spots upon which their memories would ever dwell with a fond and yearning interest.

We hurried after the Damascus caravan, and presently fell into its wake. Our line was called the Darb el Sharki, or eastern road. It owes its existence to the piety of Zubaydah Khatun, wife of the well-known Harun el Rashid. That esteemed princess dug wells, built tanks, and raised, we are told, a wall with occasional towers between Bagdad and Meccah, to guide pilgrims over the shifting sands. Few vestiges of all this labour remained in the year of grace 1853.

Striking is the appearance of the caravan as it draggles its slow length along

The golden desert glittering through  
The subtle veil of beams,

as the poet of "Palm-leaves" has it. The sky is terrible in its pitiless splendours and blinding beauty, while the simoon, or wind of the wild, caresses the cheek with the flaming breath of a lion. The filmy spray of sand and the upseething of the atmosphere, the heat-reek and the dancing of the air upon the baked surface of the bright yellow soil, blending with the dazzling blue above, invests the horizon with a broad band of deep dark green, and blurs the gaunt figures of the camels, which, at a distance, appear strings of gigantic birds.

There are evidently eight degrees of pilgrims. The lowest walk, propped on heavy staves; these are the itinerant coffee-makers, sherbet sellers, and tobacconists, country folks driving flocks of sheep and goats with infinite clamour and gesticulation, negroes from distant Africa, and crowds of paupers, some approaching the supreme hour, but therefore yearning the more to breathe their last in the Holy City. Then come the humble riders of laden camels, mules, and asses, which the Bedouin, who clings baboon-like to the hairy back of his animal, despises, saying :—

Honourable to the rider is the riding of the horse ;  
But the mule is a dishonour, and a donkey a disgrace.

Respectable men mount dromedaries, or blood-camels, known by their small size, their fine limbs, and their large deer-like eyes: their saddles show crimson sheep-skins between tall metal pommels, and these are girthed over fine saddle-bags, whose long tassels of bright worsted hang almost to the ground.



Irregular soldiers have picturesquely equipped steeds. Here and there rides some old Arab shaykh, preceded by his varlets performing a war-dance, compared with which the bear's performance is graceful, firing their duck-guns in the air, or blowing powder into the naked legs of those before them, brandishing their bared swords, leaping frantically with parti-coloured rags floating in the wind, and tossing high their long spears. Women, children, and invalids of the poorer classes sit upon rugs or carpets spread over the large boxes that form the camel's load. Those a little better off use a shibriyah, or short coat, fastened crosswise. The richer prefer shugduf panniers with an awning like a miniature tent. Grandees have led horses and gorgeously painted takhtrawan—litters like the bangué of Brazil—borne between camels or mules with scarlet and brass trappings. The vehicle mainly regulates the pilgrim's expenses, which may vary from five pounds to as many thousands.

I will not describe the marches in detail : they much resemble those between Yambu and El Medinah. We nighted at two small villages, El Suwayrkiyah and El Suyayna, which supplied a few provisions to a caravan of seven thousand to eight thousand souls. For the most part it is a haggard land, a country of wild beasts and wilder men, a region whose very fountains murmur the warning words, "Drink and away," instead of "Rest and be thankful." In other places it is a desert peopled only with echoes, an



abode of death for what little there is to die in it, a waste where, to use an Arab phrase, "La Siwa Hu"—"There is none but HE." Gigantic sand columns whirl over the plains, the horizon is a sea of mirage, and everywhere Nature, flayed and scalped, discovers her skeleton to the gazer's eye.

We passed over many ridges of rough black basalt, low plains, and basins white with nitrous salt, acacia barrens where litters were torn off the camels' backs by the strong thorns, and domes and streets of polished rock. Now we travelled down dry torrent-beds of extreme irregularity, then we wended our way along cliffs castellated as if by men's hand, and boulders and pillars of coarse-grained granite, sometimes thirty feet high. Quartz abounded, and the country may have contained gold, but here the superficial formation has long since been exhausted. In Arabia, as in the East Indies, the precious metal still lingers. At Cairo in 1854 I obtained good results by washing sand brought from the coast of the Red Sea north of Wijk. My plan for working was rendered abortive by a certain dictum, since become a favourite with the governing powers in England—namely, "Gold is getting too plentiful."

Few animals except vultures and ravens meet the eye. Once, however, we enjoyed a grand spectacle. It was a large yellow lion, somewhat white about the points—a sign of age—seated in a statuesque pose upon a pedestal of precipitous rock by the wayside, and gazing upon the passing spectacle as if monarch

of all he surveyed. The caravan respected the wild beast, and no one molested it. The Bedouin of Arabia has a curious custom when he happens to fall in with a lion : he makes a profound salaam, says many complimentary things, and begs his majesty not to harm a poor man with a large family. If the brute be not hungry, the wayfarer is allowed to pass on ; the latter, however, is careful when returning to follow another path. "The father of roaring," he remarks, "has repented of having missed a meal."

On Friday, September 9th, we encamped at Zaribah, two marches, or forty-seven miles, from Meccah. This being the north-eastern limit of the sanctuary, we exchanged our everyday dress for the pilgrim garb, which is known as *el ihrâm*, or mortification. Between the noontide and the afternoon prayers our heads were shaved, our beards and nails trimmed, and we were made to bathe. We then put on the attire which seems to be the obsolete costume of the ancient Arabs. It consists of two cotton cloths, each six feet long by three or four feet wide, white, with narrow red stripes and fringes—in fact, that adopted in the Turkish baths of London. One of these sheets is thrown over the back and is gathered at the right side, the arm being left exposed. The waistcloth extends like a belt to the knee, and, being tucked in at the waist, supports itself. The head is bared to the rabid sun, and the insteps, which must also be left naked, suffer severely.

Thus equipped, we performed a prayer of two

prostrations, and recited aloud the peculiar formula of pilgrimage called Talbiyat. In Arabic it is:

*Labbayk, 'Allahumma, Labbayk !*

*La Sharika laka. Labbayk !*

*Jun 'al Hamda wa' n' Niamata laka w' al Mulh !*

*La Sharika laka. Labbayk !*

which I would translate thus :

*Here I am, O Allah, here am I !*

*No partner hast thou. Here am I !*

*Verily the praise and the grace are thine, and the kingdom !*

*No partner hast thou. Here am I.*

The director of our consciences now bade us be good pilgrims, avoiding quarrels, abusive language, light conversation, and all immorality. We must religiously respect the sanctuary of Meccah by sparing the trees and avoiding to destroy animal life, excepting, however, the "five instances,"—a crow, a kite, a rat, a scorpion, and a biting dog. We must abstain from washes and perfumes, oils, dyes, and cosmetics ; we must not pare the nails nor shave, pluck or cut the hair, nor must we tie knots in our garments. We were forbidden to cover our heads with turban or umbrella, although allowed to take advantage of the shade, and ward off the sun with our hands. And for each infraction of these ordinances we were commanded to sacrifice a sheep.

The women followed our example. This alone would disprove the baseless but wide-world calumny which declares that El Islam recognises no soul in, and consequently no future for, the opposite sex.



The Early Fathers of the Christian Church may have held such tenet, the Mohammedans never. Pilgrimesses exchange the *lisam*—that coquettish fold of thin white muslin which veils, but does not hide, the mouth—for a hideous mask of split, dried, and plaited palm-leaves pierced with bull's-eyes to admit the light. This ugly mask is worn because the veil must not touch the features. The rest of the outer garment is a long sheet of white cotton, covering the head and falling to the heels. We could hardly help laughing when these queer ghostly figures first met our sight, and, to judge from the shaking of their shoulders, they were as much amused as we were.

In mid-afternoon we left Zaribah, and presently it became apparent that although *we* were forbidden to take lives of others, others were not prevented from taking *ours*. At 5 p.m. we came upon a wide, dry torrent-bed, down which we were to travel all night. It was a cut-throat place, with a stony, precipitous buttress on the right, faced by a grim and barren slope. Opposite us the way seemed to be barred by piles of hills, crest rising above crest in the far blue distance. Day still smiled upon the upper peaks, but the lower grounds and the road were already hung with sombre shade.

A damp fell upon our spirits as we neared this "Valley Perilous." The voices of the women and children sank into deep silence, and the loud "Labbayk!" which the male pilgrims are

ordered to shout whenever possible, was gradually stilled.

The cause soon became apparent. A small curl of blue smoke on the summit of the right-hand precipice suddenly caught my eye, and, simultaneously with the echoing crack of the matchlock, a dromedary in front of me, shot through the heart, rolled on the sands. The Utajbah, bravest and most lawless of the brigand tribes of the Moslem's Holy Land, were determined to boast that on such and such a night they stopped the Sultan's caravan one whole hour in the pass.

There ensued a scene of terrible confusion. Women screamed, children cried, and men vociferated, each one striving with might and main to urge his animal beyond the place of death. But the road was narrow and half-choked with rocks and thorny shrubs ; the vehicles and animals were soon jammed into a solid and immovable mass, whilst at every shot a cold shudder ran through the huge body. Our guard, the irregular horsemen, about one thousand in number, pushed up and down perfectly useless, shouting to and ordering one another. The Pacha of the soldiers had his carpet spread near the precipice, and over his pipe debated with the officers about what should be done. No one seemed to whisper, "Crown the heights."

Presently two or three hundred Wahhabis—mountaineers of Tebel Shammar in North-Eastern Arabia—sprang from their barebacked camels, with their elf-locks tossing in the wind, and the flaming matches

of their guns casting a lurid light over their wild features. Led by the Sherif Zayd, a brave Meccan noble, who, happily for us, was present, they swarmed up the steep, and the robbers, after receiving a few shots, retired to fire upon our rear.

Our forced halt was now exchanged for a flight, and it required much tact to guide our camels clear of danger. Whoever and whatever fell, remained on the ground ; that many were lost became evident from the boxes and baggage which strewed the shingles. I had no means of ascertaining our exact number of killed and wounded ; reports were contradictory, and exaggeration was unanimous. The robbers were said to be one hundred and fifty in number. Besides honour and glory, they looked forward to the loot, and to a feast of dead camel.

We then hurried down the valley in the blackness of night, between ribbed precipices, dark and angry. The torch smoke and the night fires formed a canopy sable above and livid below, with lightning-flashes from the burning shrubs and grim crowds hurrying as if pursued by the Angel of Death. The scene would have suited the theatrical canvas of Doré.

At dawn we issued from the Perilous Pass into the Wady Laymun, or Valley of Limes. A wondrous contrast ! Nothing can be more soothing to the brain than the rich green foliage of its pomegranates and other fruit-trees, and from the base of the southern hills bursts a babbling stream whose

*Chiare fresche e dolci acque*



flow through the garden, cooling the pure air, and filling the ear with the most delicious of melodies, the gladdest sound which nature in these regions knows.

At noon we bade adieu to the charming valley, which, since remote times, has been a favourite resort of the Meccan citizens.

At sunset we recited the prayers suited to the occasion, straining our eyes, but all in vain, to catch sight of Meccah. About 1 a.m. I was aroused by a general excitement around me.

"Meccah! Meccah!" cried some voices. "The sanctuary, oh, the sanctuary!" exclaimed others, and all burst into loud "Labbayk!" not infrequently broken by sobs. With a heartfelt "Alhamdu lillah," I looked from my litter and saw under the chandelier of the Southern Cross the dim outlines of a large city, a shade darker than the surrounding plain.

A cool east wind met us, showing that it was raining in the Taif hills, and at times sheet lightning played around the Prophet's birthplace—a common phenomenon, which Moslems regard as the testimony of Heaven to the sanctity of the spot.

Passing through a deep cutting, we entered the northern suburb of our destination. Then I made to the Shamiyah, or Syrian quarter, and finally, at 2 a.m., I found myself at the boy Mohammed's house. We arrived on the morning of Sunday, September 11th, 1853, corresponding with Zu'l Hijjah 6th, 1269. Thus we had the whole day

to spend in visiting the haram, and a quiet night before the opening of the true pilgrim season, which would begin on the morrow.

The morrow dawned. After a few hours of sleep and a ceremonial ablution, we donned the pilgrim garb, and with loud and long "Labbayk!" we hastened to the Bayt Ullah, or House of Allah, as the great temple of Meccah is called.

At the bottom of our street was the outer Bab El Salam, or Gate of Security, looking towards the east, and held to be, of all the thirty-nine, the most auspicious entrance for a first visit.

Here we descended several steps, for the level of the temple has been preserved, whilst the foundations of the city have been raised by the decay of ages. We then passed through a shady colonnade divided into aisles, here four, and in the other sides three, pillars deep. These cloisters are a forest of columns upwards of five hundred and fifty in number, and in shape and material they are as irregular as trees. The outer arches of the colonnade are ogives, and every four support a small dome like half an orange, and white with plaster: some reckon one hundred and twenty, others one hundred and fifty, and Meccan superstition declares they cannot be counted. The rear of the cloisters rests upon an outer wall of cut stone, finished with pinnacles, or Arab battlements, and at different points in it rise seven minarets. These are tall towers much less bulky than ours, partly in facets, circular, and partly cylindrical, built

at distinct epochs, and somewhat tawdrily banded with gaudy colours.

This vast colonnade surrounds a large unroofed and slightly irregular oblong, which may be compared with an exaggeration of the Palais Royal, Paris. This sanded area is six hundred and fifty feet long by five hundred and twenty-five broad, dotted with small buildings grouped round a common centre, and is crossed by eight narrow lines of flagged pavement. Towards the middle of it, one hundred and fifteen paces from the northern colonnade and eighty-eight from the southern, and based upon an irregularly oval pavement of fine close grey gneiss, or granite, rises the far-famed Kaabah, or inner temple, its funereal pall contrasting vividly with the sunlit walls and the yellow precipices of the city.

Behold it at last, the bourn of long and weary travel, realising the plans and hopes of many and many a year! This, then, is the kibbal, or direction, towards which every Moslem has turned in prayer since the days of Mohammed, and which for long ages before the birth of Christianity was revered by the patriarchs of the East.

No wonder that the scene is one of the wildest excitement! Here are worshippers clinging to the curtain and sobbing as though their hearts would break; here some poor wretch with arms thrown high, so that his beating breast may touch the stone of the house, appears ready to faint, and there men prostrate themselves on the pavement, rubbing their



foreheads against the stones, shedding floods of tears, and pouring forth frenzied ejaculations. The most careless, indeed, never contemplate it for the first time without fear and awe. There is a popular jest against new-comers that in the presence of the Kaabah they generally inquire the direction of prayer, although they have all their lives been praying towards it as the early Christian fronted Jerusalem.

But we must look more critically at the celebrated shrine.

The word Kaabah means a cube, a square, a *maison carrée*. It is called Bayt Ullah (House of God) because according to the Koran it is "certainly the first temple erected for mankind." It is also known as the "Bride of Meccah," probably from the old custom of typifying the Church Visible by a young married woman—hence probably its face-veil, its covering, and its guard of eunuchs. Externally it is a low tower of fine grey granite laid in horizontal courses of irregular depth; the stones are tolerably fitted, and are not cemented. It shows no signs of decay, and indeed, in its present form, it dates only from 1627. The shape is rather a trapezoid than a square, being forty feet long by thirty-five broad and forty-five high, the flat roof having a cubit of depression from south-west to north-east, where a gold or gilt spout discharges the drainage. The foundation is a marble base two feet high, and presents a sharp inclined plane.

All the Kaabah except the roof is covered with

a kiswatu garment. It is a pall-like hanging, the work of a certain family at Cairo, and annually renewed. The ground is dully black, and Koranic verses interwoven into it are shining black. There is a door curtain of gold thread upon red silk, and a bright band of similar material, called the face-veil of the house, two feet broad, runs horizontally round the Kaabah at two-thirds of its height. This covering when new is tucked up by ropes from the roof; when old it is fastened to large metal rings welded into the basement of the building. When this peculiar adjunct to the shrine is swollen and moved by the breeze, pious Moslems believe that angels are waving their wings over it.

The only entrance to the Kaabah is a narrow door of aloe wood, in the eastern side. It is now raised seven feet, and one enters it hoisted up in men's arms. In A.D. 686, when the whole building took its present shape, it was level with the external ground. The Kaabah opens gratis ten or twelve times a year, when crowds rush in and men lose their lives. Wealthy pilgrims obtain the favour by paying for it. Scrupulous Moslems do not willingly enter it, as they may never afterwards walk about barefooted, take up fire with their fingers, or tell lies. It is not every one who can afford such luxuries as slippers, tongs, and truth. Nothing is simpler than the interior of the building. The walls are covered with handsome red damask, flowered over with gold, tucked up beyond the pilgrim's reach. The flat roof apparently



rests upon three posts of carved and ornamented aloe wood.

Between the three pillars, and about nine feet from the ground, run metal bars, to which hang lamps, said to be gold. At the northern corner there is a dwarf door ; it leads into a narrow passage and to the dwarf staircase by which the servants ascend to the roof. In the south-eastern corner is a quadrant-shaped sofa, also of aloe wood, and on it sits the guardian of the shrine.

The Hajar el Aswad, or black stone, of which all the world talks, is fixed in the south-eastern angle outside the house, between four and five feet from the ground, the more conveniently to be kissed. It shows a black and slaggy surface, glossy and pitch-like, worn and polished by myriads of lips ; its diameter is about seven inches, and it appears only in the central aperture of a gilt or gold dish. The depth to which it extends into the wall is unknown : most people say two cubits.

Believers declare, with poetry, if not with reason, that in the day of Atast, when Allah made covenant concerning the souls that animate the sons of Adam, the instrument was placed in a fragment of the lower heaven, then white as snow, now black by reason of men's sins. The rationalistic infidel opines this sacred corner-stone to be a common aerolite, a remnant of the stone-worship which considered it the symbol of power presiding over universal reproduction, and inserted by Mohammed into the edifice of El Islam.



This relic has fared ill; it has been stolen and broken, and has suffered other accidents.

Another remarkable part of the Kaabah is that between the door and the black stone. It is called the multazem, or "attached to," because here the pilgrim should apply his bosom, weep bitterly, and beg pardon for his sins. In ancient times, according to some authors, it was the place for contracting solemn engagements.

The pavement which surrounds the Kaabah is about eight inches high, and the inside is marked by an oval balustrade of some score and a half of slender gilt metal pillars. Between every two of these cross rods support oil lamps, with globes of white and green glasses. Gas is much wanted at Meccah! At the north end, and separated by a space of about five feet from the building, is El Hatrim, or the "broken," a dwarf semi-circular wall, whose extremities are on a line with the sides of the Kaabah. In its concavity are two slabs of a finer stone, which cover the remains of Ishmael, and of his mother Hagar. The former, I may be allowed to remark, is regarded by Moslems as the eldest son and legitimate successor of Abraham, in opposition to the Jews, who prefer Isaac, the child of Sarai the free woman. It is an old dispute and not likely to be soon settled.

Besides the Kaabah, ten minor structures dot the vast quadrangle. The most important is the massive covering of the well Zemzem. The word means "the murmuring," and here the water gushed from

the ground where the child Ishmael was shuffling his feet in the agonies of thirst. The supply is abundant, but I found it nauseously bitter ; its external application, however, when dashed like a douche over the pilgrim, causes sins to fall from his soul like dust.

On the south-east, and near the well, are the Kubbatayn, two domes crowning heavy ugly buildings, vulgarly painted with red, green, and yellow bands ; one of these domes is used as a library. Directly opposite the Kaabah door is a short ladder or staircase of carved wood, which is wheeled up to the entrance door on the rare occasions when it is opened. North of it is the inner Bab El Salam, or Gate of Security, under which the pilgrims pass in their first visit to the shrine. It is a slightly built and detached arch of stone, about fifteen feet of space in width and eighteen in height, somewhat like our meaningless triumphal arches, which come from no place and go nowhere. Between this and the Kaabah stands the Makam Ibrahim, or Station of Abraham, a small building containing the stone which supported the Friend of Allah when he was building the house. It served for a scaffold, rising and falling of itself as required, and it preserved the impressions of Abraham's feet, especially of the two big toes. Devout and wealthy pilgrims fill the cavities with water, which they rub over their eyes and faces with physical as well as spiritual refreshment. To the north of it is a fine white marble pulpit with narrow steps leading to the preacher's post, which is supported by a gilt and

sharply tapering steeple. Lastly, opposite the northern, the western, and the south-eastern sides of the Kaabah, stand three ornamental pavilions, with light sloping roofs resting on slender pillars. From these the representatives of the three orthodox schools direct the prayers of their congregations. The Shaffi, or fourth branch, collect between the corner of the well Zemzem and the Station of Abraham, whilst the heretical sects lay claim to certain mysterious and invisible places of reunion.

I must now describe what the pilgrims do.

Entering with the boy Mohammed, who acted as my mutawwif, or circuit guide, we passed through the inner Gate of Security, uttering various religious formulas, and we recited the usual two-prostration prayer in honour of the mosque at the Shaffi place of worship. We then proceeded to the angle of the house, in which the black stone is set, and there recited other prayers before beginning tawaf, or circumambulation. The place was crowded with pilgrims, all males—women rarely appear during the hours of light. Bareheaded and barefooted they passed the giant pavement, which, smooth as glass and hot as sun can make it, surrounds the Kaabah, suggesting the idea of perpetual motion. Meccans declare that at no time of the day or night is the place ever wholly deserted.

Circumambulation consists of seven shafts, or rounds, of the house, to which the left shoulder is turned, and each noted spot has its peculiar prayers.



The three first courses are performed at a brisk trot, like the French *pas gymnastique*. The four latter are leisurely passed. The origin of this custom is variously accounted for. The general idea is that Mohammed directed his followers thus to show themselves strong and active to the infidels, who had declared them to have been weakened by the air of El Medinah.

When I had performed my seven courses I fought my way through the thin-legged host of Bedouins, and kissed the black stone, rubbing my hands and forehead upon it. There were some other unimportant devotions, which concluded with a douche at the well Zemzem, and with a general almsgiving. The circumambulation ceremony is performed several times in the day, despite the heat. It is positive torture.

The visit to the Kaabah, however, does not entitle a man to be called haji. The essence of pilgrimage is to be present at the sermon pronounced by the preacher on the Holy Hill of Arafat, distant about twelve miles from, and to the east of, Meccah. This performed even in a state of insensibility is valid, and to die by the roadside is martyrdom, saving all the pains and penalties of the tomb.

The visit, however, must be paid on the 8th, 9th, and the 10th of the month Zu'l Hijjah (the Lord of Pilgrimage), the last month of the Arab year. At this time there is a great throb through the framework of Moslem society from Gibraltar to Japan, and those who cannot visit the Holy City content themselves

with prayers and sacrifices at home. As the Moslem computation is lunar, the epoch retrocedes through the seasons in thirty-three years. When I visited Meccah, the rites began on September 12th and ended on September 14th, 1853. In 1863 the opening day was June 8th ; the closing, June 10th.

My readers will observe that the modern pilgrimage ceremonies of the Moslem are evidently a commemoration of Abraham and his descendants. The practices of the Father of the Faithful when he issued from the land of Chaldea seem to have formed a religious standard in the mind of the Arab law-giver, who preferred Abraham before all the other prophets, himself alone excepted.

The day after our arrival at Meccah was the Yaum El Tarwiyah (the Day of Carrying Water), the first of the three which compose the pilgrimage season proper. From the earliest dawn the road was densely thronged with white-robed votaries, some walking, others mounted, and all shouting "Labbayk !" with all their might. As usual the scene was one of strange contrasts. Turkish dignitaries on fine horses, Bedouins bestriding swift dromedaries, the most uninteresting soldiery, and the most conspicuous beggars. Before nightfall I saw no less than five exhausted and emaciated devotees give up the ghost and become "martyrs."

The first object of interest lies on the right-hand side of the road. This was a high conical hill, known in books as Tebel Hora, but now called Tebel Nur,



or Mountain of Light, because there Mohammed's mind was first illuminated. The Cave of Revelation is still shown. It looks upon a wild scene. Eastward and southward the vision is limited by abrupt hills. In the other directions there is a dreary landscape, with here and there a stunted acacia or a clump of brushwood growing on rough ground, where stony glens and valleys of white sand, most of them water-courses after the rare rains, separate black, grey, and yellow rocks.

Passing over El Akabah (the Steeps), an important spot in classical Arab history, we entered Muna, a hot hollow three or four miles from the barren valley of Meccah. It is a long, narrow, straggling village of mud and stone houses, single storied and double storied, built in the common Arab style. We were fated to see it again. At noon we passed Mugdalifah, or the Approacher, known to El Islam as the Minaret without the Mosque, and thus distinguished from a neighbouring building, the Mosque without the Minaret. There is something peculiarly impressive in the tall, solitary, tower springing from the desolate valley of gravel. No wonder that the old Arab conquerors loved to give the high-sounding name of this oratory to distant points in their extensive empire!

Here, as we halted for the noon prayer, the Damascus caravan appeared in all its glory. The mahmal, or litter, sent by the Sultan to represent his presence, no longer a framework as on the line of march, now



flashed in the sun all gold and green, and the huge white camel seemed to carry it with pride. Around the moving host of peaceful pilgrims hovered a crowd of mounted Bedouins armed to the teeth. These people often visit Arafat for blood revenge; nothing can be more sacrilegious than murder at such a season; but they find the enemy unprepared. As their draperies floated in the wind and their faces were swathed and veiled with their head-kerchiefs, it was not always easy to distinguish the sex of the wild beings who hurried past at speed. The women were unscrupulous, and many were seen emulating the men in reckless riding, and in striking with their sticks at every animal in their way.

Presently, after safely threading the gorge called the pass of the Two Rugged Hills, and celebrated for accidents, we passed between the two "signs"—whitewashed pillars, or, rather, tall towers, their walls surmounted with pinnacles. They mark the limits of the Arafat Plain—the Standing-Ground, as it is called. Here is sight of the Holy Hill of Arafat, standing boldly out from the fair blue sky, and backed by the azure peaks of Taif. All the pilgrim host raised loud shouts of "Labbayk!" The noise was that of a storm.

We then sought our quarters in the town of tents scattered over two or three miles of plain at the southern foot of the Holy Hill, and there we passed a turbulent night of prayer.

I estimated the total number of devotees to be fifty thousand; usually it may amount to eighty thousand.

The Arabs, however, believe that the total of those "standing on Arafat" cannot be counted, and that if less than six hundred thousand human beings are gathered, the angels descend and make up the sum. Even in A.D. 1853 my Moslem friends declared that a hundred and fifty thousand immortal beings were present in mortal shape.

The Mount of Mercy, which is also called Tebel Ilâl, or Mount of Wrestling in Prayer, is physically considered a mass of coarse granite, split into large blocks and thinly covered with a coat of withered thorns. It rises abruptly to a height of a hundred and eighty to two hundred feet from the gravelly flat, and it is separated by a sandy vale from the last spur of the Taif hills. The dwarf wall encircling it gives the barren eminence a somewhat artificial look, which is not diminished by the broad flight of steps winding up the southern face, and by the large stuccoed platform near the summit, where the preacher delivers the "Sermon of the Standing."

Arafat means "recognition," and owes its name and honours to a well-known legend. When our first parents were expelled from Paradise, which, according to Moslems, is in the lowest of the seven heavens, Adam descended at Ceylon, Eve upon Arafat. The former, seeking his wife, began a journey to which the earth owes its present mottled appearance. Wherever he placed his foot a town arose in the fulness of time; between the strides all has remained country. Wandering for many years he came to the

Holy Hill of Arafat, the Mountain of Mercy, where our common mother was continually calling upon his name, and their recognition of each other there gave the place its name. Upon the hill-top, Adam, instructed by the Archangel Gabriel, erected a prayer-station, and in its neighbourhood the pair abode until death.

It is interesting to know that Adam's grave is shown at Muna, the village through which we had passed that day. The mosque covering his remains is called El Kharf; his head is at one end of the long wall, his feet are at the other, and the dome covers his middle. Our first father's forehead, we are told, originally brushed the skies, but this stature being found inconvenient, it was dwarfed to a hundred and fifty feet. Eve, again, is buried near the port of Meccah—Jeddah, which means the "grandmother." She is supposed to lie, like a Moslemah, fronting the Kaabah, with her head southwards, her feet to the north, and her right cheek resting on her right hand. Whitewashed and conspicuous to the voyager from afar is the dome opening to the west, and covering a square stone fancifully carved to represent her middle. Two low parallel walls about eighteen feet apart define the mortal remains of our mother, who, as she measured a hundred and twenty paces from head to waist and eighty from waist to heel, must have presented in life a very peculiar appearance. The archæologist will remember that the great idol of Jeddah in the age of the Arab litholatry was a "long stone."



The next day, the 9th of the month Zu'l Hijjah, is known as Yaum Arafat (the Day of Arafat). After ablution and prayer, we visited sundry interesting places on the Mount of Mercy, and we breakfasted late and copiously, as we could not eat again before nightfall. Even at dawn the rocky hill was crowded with pilgrims, principally Bedouins and wild men, who had secured favourable places for hearing the discourse. From noon onwards the hum and murmur of the multitude waxed louder, people swarmed here and there, guns fired, and horsemen and camelmen rushed about in all directions. A discharge of cannon about 2 p.m. announced that the ceremony of wukuf, or standing on the Holy Hill, was about to commence.

The procession was headed by the retinue of the Sherif, or Prince, of Meccah, the Pope of El Islam. A way for him was cleared through the dense mob of spectators by a cloud of macebearers and by horsemen of the desert carrying long bamboo spears tufted with black ostrich feathers. These were followed by led horses, the proudest blood of Arabia, and by a stalwart band of negro matchlock men. Five red and green flags immediately preceded the Prince, who, habited in plain pilgrim garb, rode a fine mule. The only sign of his rank was a fine green silk and gold umbrella, held over his head by one of his slaves. He was followed by his family and courtiers, and the rear was brought up by a troop of Bedouins on horses and dromedaries. The picturesque background of the scene was the granite hill, covered, wherever foot

could be planted, with half-naked devotees, crying "Labbayk !" at the top of their voices, and violently waving the skirts of their gleaming garments. It was necessary to stand literally upon Arafat, but we did not go too near, and a little way off sighted the preacher sitting, after the manner of Mohammed, on his camel and delivering the sermon. Slowly the *cortège* wound its way towards the Mount of Mercy. Exactly at afternoon prayer-time, the two mahmal, or ornamental litters, of Damascus and Cairo, took their station side by side on a platform in the lower part of the hill. A little above them stood the Prince of Meccah, within hearing of the priest. The pilgrims crowded around them. The loud cries were stilled, and the waving of white robes ceased.

Then the preacher began the "Sermon of the Mount," which teaches the devotees the duties of the season. At first it was spoken without interruption ; then, loud "Amin" and volleys of "Labbayk" exploded at certain intervals. At last the breeze became laden with a purgatorial chorus of sobs, cries, and shrieks. Even the Meccans, who, like the sons of other Holy Cities, are hardened to holy days, thought it proper to appear affected, and those unable to squeeze out a tear buried their faces in the corners of their pilgrim cloths. I buried mine—at intervals.

The sermon lasted about three hours, and when sunset was near, the preacher gave the *israf*, or permission to depart. Then began that risky part of the ceremony known as the "hurrying from



Arafat." The pilgrims all rushed down the Mount of Mercy with cries like trumpet blasts, and took the road to Muna. Every man urged his beast to the uttermost over the plain, which bristled with pegs, and was strewn with struck tents. Pedestrians were trampled, litters were crushed, and camels were thrown; here a woman, there a child, was lost, whilst night coming on without twilight added to the chaotic confusion of the scene. The pass of the Two Rugged Hills, where all the currents converged, was the crisis, after which progress was easier. We spent, however, at least three hours in reaching Mugdalifah, and there we resolved to sleep. The minaret was brilliantly illuminated, but my companions apparently thought more of rest and supper than of prayer. The night was by no means peaceful nor silent. Lines of laden beasts passed us every ten minutes, devotees guarding their boxes from plunderers gave loud tokens of being wide awake, and the shouting of travellers continued till near dawn.

The 10th of Zu'l Hijjah, the day following the sermon, is called Yaum Vahr (the Day of Camel Killing), or EEd El Kurban (the Festival of the Sacrifice), the Kurban Bairam of the Turks. It is the most solemn of the year, and it holds amongst Moslems the rank which Easter Day claims from Christendom.

We awoke at daybreak, and exchanged with all around us the compliments of the season—"EEd Kum mubarak"—"May your festival be auspicious." Then each man gathered for himself seven jamrah



(bits of granite the size of a small bean), washed them in "seven waters," and then proceeded to the western end of the long street which forms the village of Muna. Here is the place called the Great Devil, to distinguish it from two others, the Middle Devil and the First Devil, or the easternmost. The outward and visible signs are nothing but short buttresses of whitewashed masonry placed against a rough wall in the main thoroughfare. Some derive the rite from the days of Adam, who put to flight the Evil One by pelting him, as Martin Luther did with the inkstand. Others opine that the ceremony is performed in imitation of Abraham, who, meeting Sathanas at Muna, and being tempted to disobedience in the matter of sacrificing his son, was commanded by Allah to drive him away with stones. Pilgrims approach if possible within five paces of the pillar, and throw at it successfully seven pebbles, holding each one between the thumb and forefinger of the right hand, either extended, or shooting it as a boy does a marble. At every cast they exclaim: "In the name of Allah, and Allah is almighty! In hatred to the Fiend and to his shame I do this!" It is one of the local miracles that all the pebbles thus flung return by spiritual agency whence they came.

As Satan was malicious enough to appear in a rugged lane hardly forty feet broad, the place was rendered dangerous by the crowd. On one side stood the devil's buttress and wall, bristling with wild men and boys. Opposite it was a row of

temporary booths tenanted by barbers, and the space between swarmed with pilgrims, all trying to get at the enemy of mankind. A monkey might have run over the heads of the mob. Amongst them were horsemen flogging their steeds, Bedouins urging frightened camels, and running footmen opening paths for the grandees, their masters, by assault and battery. We congratulated each other, the boy Mohammed and I, when we escaped with trifling hurts. Some Moslem travellers assert, by way of miracle, that no man was ever killed during the ceremony of rajm, or lapidation. Several Meccans, however, assured me that fatal accidents are by no means rare.

After throwing the seven pebbles, we doffed our pilgrim garb, and returned to ihlal, or normal attire.

The barber placed us upon an earthen bench in the open shop, shaved our heads, trimmed our beards, and pared our nails, causing us to repeat after him: "I purpose throwing off my ceremonial attire, according to the practice of the Prophet—whom may Allah bless and preserve! O Allah, grant to me for every hair a light, a purity, and a generous reward! In the name of Allah, and Allah is almighty!" The barber then addressed me: "Naiman"—"Pleasure to thee!"—and I responded: "Allah, give *thee* pleasure!" Now we could at once use cloths to cover our heads, and slippers to defend our feet from fiery sun and hot soil, and we might safely twirl our mustachios and stroke our beards—placid enjoyments

of which we had been deprived by the ceremonial law.

The day ended with the sacrifice of an animal to commemorate the substitution of a ram for Ishmael, the father of the Arabs. The place of the original offering is in the Muna Valley, and it is still visited by pilgrims. None but the Kruma, the Pacha, and high dignitaries slaughter camels. These beasts are killed by thrusting a knife into the interval between the throat and the breast, the muscles of the wind-pipe being too hard and thick to cut; their flesh is lawful to the Arabs, but not to the Hebrews. Oxen, sheep, and goats are made to face the Kaabah, and their throats are cut, the sacrificer ejaculating: "In the name of Allah! Allah is almighty!" It is meritorious to give away the victim without eating any part of it, and thus crowds of poor pilgrims were enabled to regale themselves.

There is a terrible want of cleanliness in this sacrifice. Thousands of animals are cut up and left unburied in this "Devil's Punchbowl." I leave the rest to the imagination. Pilgrims usually pass in the Muna Valley the Days of Flesh Drying—namely, the 11th, the 12th, and the 13th of the month Zu'l Hijjah—and on the two former the Great, the Middle, and the Little Satan are again pelted. The standing miracles of the place are that beasts and birds cannot prey there, nor can flies settle upon provisions exposed in the markets. But animals are frightened away by the bustling crowds, and flies are



found in myriads. The revolting scene, aided by a steady temperature of  $120^{\circ}$  Fahr., has more than once caused a desolating pestilence at Meccah : the cholera of 1865 has been traced back to it ; in fine, the safety of Europe demands the reformation of this filthy slaughter-house, which is still the same.

The pilgrimage rites over, we returned to Meccah for a short sojourn. Visitors are advised, and wisely, not to linger long in the Holy City after the conclusion of the ceremonies. Use soon spoils the marvels, and, after the greater excitements, all becomes flat, stale, and unprofitable. The rite called umrah, or the "little pilgrimage," and the running between Mounts Safa and Marwah, in imitation of Hagar seeking her child, remain to be performed. And there are many spots of minor sanctity to be visited, such as the Jannal El Maala, or Cemetery of the Saints, the mosque where the genii paid fealty to the Prophet, the house where Mohammed was born, that in which he lived with his first wife, Khadijah, and in which his daughter Fatimah and his grandsons Hasan and Hussayn saw the light, the place where the stone gave the founder of El Islam God-speed, and about a dozen others. Men, however, either neglect them or visit them cursorily, and think of little now beyond returning home.

I must briefly sketch the Holy City before we bid it adieu.

Meccah, also called Beccah, the words being synonymous, signifies according to some a "place

of great concourse," is built between  $21^{\circ}$  and  $22^{\circ}$  of N. Lat. and in  $39^{\circ}$  E. Long. (Greenwich).<sup>1</sup> It is therefore more decidedly tropical than El Medinah, and the parallel corresponds with that of Cuba. The origin of the Bayt Ullah is lost in the glooms of time, but Meccah as it now stands is a comparatively modern place, built in A.D. 450 by Kusayr the Kuraysh. It is a city colligated together like Jerusalem and Rome. The site is a winding valley in the midst of many little hills; the effect is that it offers no general *coup d'œil*. Thus the views of Meccah known to Europe are not more like Meccah than like Cairo or Bombay.

The utmost length of the Holy City is two miles and a half from the Mab'dah, or northern suburb, to the southern mound called Jiyad. The extreme breadth may be three-quarters between the Abu Kubays hill on the east and the Kaykaan, or Kuwaykaan, eminence on the west. The mass of

<sup>1</sup> Both latitude and longitude are disputed points, as the following table shows. The Arabs, it must be remembered, placed the first meridian at the Fortunate Islands :

The Atwal makes the latitude $21^{\circ} 40'$ , longitude $67^{\circ} 13'$					
Kanun	„	„	$21^{\circ} 20'$	„	$67^{\circ} 0'$
Ibu Said	„	„	$21^{\circ} 31'$	„	$67^{\circ} 31'$
Rasm	„	„	$21^{\circ} 0'$	„	$67^{\circ} 0'$
Khúshyar	„	„	$21^{\circ} 40'$	„	$67^{\circ} 10'$
Masr el Din	„	„	$21^{\circ} 40'$	„	$77^{\circ} 10'$
D'Anville	„	„	$22^{\circ} 0'$	„	$77^{\circ} 10'$
Niebuhr	„	„	$21^{\circ} 30'$	„	$77^{\circ} 10'$

Humboldt, therefore, is hardly right to say : " L'erreur est que le Mecque paraissait déjà aux Arabes de  $19^{\circ}$  trop à l'est " (" Correspondence," p. 459).



houses clusters at the western base of Abu Kubays. The mounts called Safa and Marwah extend from Abu Kubays to Kayhaan, and are about seven hundred and eighty cubits apart. The great temple is near the centre of the city, as the Kaabah is near the middle of the temple. Upon Jebel Jiyad the Greater there is a fort held by Turkish soldiery ; it seems to have no great strength. In olden time Meccah had walls and gates ; now there are none.

The ground in and about the Holy City is sandy and barren, the hills are rocky and desert. Meat, fruits, and vegetables must be imported *viâ* Jeddah, the port, distant about forty-five miles. The climate is exceedingly hot and rarely tempered by the sea breeze. I never suffered so much from temperature as during my fortnight at Meccah.

The capital of the Hejaz, which is about double the size of El Medinah, has all the conveniences of a city. The streets are narrow, deep, and well watered. The houses are durable and well built of brick mixed with granite and sandstone, quarried in the neighbouring hills. Some of them are five stories high, and more like fortresses than dwelling-places. The lime, however, is bad, and after heavy rain, sometimes ten days in the year, those of inferior structure fall in ruins. None but the best have open-work of brick and courses of coloured stone. The roofs are made flat to serve for sleeping-places, the interiors are sombre to keep out the heat ; they have jutting upper stories, as in the old town of Brazil, and huge latticed



hanging balconies—the maswabujah of Cairo, here called the shamiyah—project picturesquely into the streets and the small squares in which the city abounds.

The population is guessed at forty-five thousand souls. The citizens appeared to me more civilised and more vicious than those of El Medinah, and their habit of travel makes them a worldly-wise and God-forgetting and Mammonist sort of folk. “Circumambulate and run between Mounts Safa and Marwah and do the seven deadly sins,” is a satire popularly levelled against them. Their redeeming qualities are courage, *bonhomie*, manners at once manly and suave, a fiery sense of honour, strong family affections, and a near approach to what we call patriotism. The dark half of the picture is pride, bigotry, irreligion, greed of gain, debauchery, and prodigal ostentation.

Unlike his brother of El Medinah, the Meccan is a swarthy man. He is recognised throughout the east by three parallel gashes down each cheek, from the exterior angles of the eyes to the corners of the mouth. These mashali, as they call them, are clean contrary to the commands of El Islam. The people excuse the practice by saying that it preserves their children from being kidnapped, and it is performed the fortieth day after birth.

The last pilgrimage ceremony performed at Meccah is the Tawaf el Widaaf, or circumambulation of farewell, a solemn occasion. The devotee walks round the House of Allah, he drinks the water of

the Zemzem well, he kisses the threshold of the door, and he stands for some time with his face and bosom pressed against the multazem wall, clinging to the curtain, reciting religious formulas, blessing the Prophet, weeping if possible, but at least groaning. He then leaves the temple, backing out of it with many salutations till he reaches the Gate of Farewell, when, with a parting glance at the Kaabah, he turns his face towards home.

I will not dwell upon my return journey—how, accompanied by the boy Mohammed, I reached Jeddah on the Red Sea, how my countrymen refused for a time to believe me, and how I sadly parted with my Moslem friends. My wanderings ended for a time, and, worn out with fatigue and with the fatal fiery heat, I steamed out of Jeddah on September 26th in the little *Dwarka*, and on October 3rd, 1853, after six months' absence from England, I found myself safely anchored in Suez Harbour.





*A RIDE TO HARAR*

1854—1855



## A RIDE TO HARAR

THE pilgrimage to Meccah being a thing of the past, and the spirit of unrest still strong within me, I next turned my thoughts to the hot depths of the Dark Continent. Returning to Bombay early in 1854, I volunteered to explore the Land of the Somali, the eastern horn of Africa, extending from Cape Guardafui (N. Lat.  $12^{\circ}$ ) to near the Equator. For many years naval officers had coasted along it; many of our ships had been lost there, and we had carefully shot their wreckers and plunderers. But no modern traveller had ventured into the wild depths, and we were driven for information to the pages of Father Lobo, of Salt, and de Rienzi.

My project aimed at something higher; and indeed it was this journey which led directly to the discovery of the sources of the Nile, so far as they are yet discovered.

I had read in Ptolemy (I., par. 9) the following words: "Then concerning the navigation between the Aromata Promontory (*i.e.*, Guardafui) and Rhapta (the 'place of seven ships,' generally supposed to be north of Kilwa), Marianus of Tyre declares that a certain Diogenes, one of those sailing to India . . .



when near Aromata and having the Troglodytic region on the right (some of the Somali were still cave-dwellers), reached, after twenty-five days' march, the lakes (plural and not dual) whence the Nile flows and of which Point Raphta is a little south."

This remarkable passage was to me a revelation ; it was the *mot de l'enigme*, the way to make the egg stand upright, the rending of the veil of Isis. The feat for which Julius Cæsar would have relinquished a civil war, the secret which kings from Nero to Mahomet Ali vainly attempted to solve, the discovery of which travellers, from Herodotus to Bruce, have risked their lives, was reduced to comparative facility. For the last three thousand years explorers had been working, literally and metaphorically, against the stream, where disease and savagery had exhausted health and strength, pocket and patience, at the very beginning of the end. I therefore resolved to reverse the operation, and thus I hoped to see the young Nile and to stultify a certain old proverb.

The Court of Directors of the Honourable East India Company unwillingly sanctioned my project : I was too clever by half, and they suspected that it concealed projects of annexation or conquest. All that my political views aimed at was to secure the supremacy of my country in the Red Sea. Despite Lord Palmerston and Robert Stephenson, I foresaw that the Suez Canal would be a success, and I proposed to purchase for the sum of £10,000 all the ports on the East African shore as far south as Berbera.

This was refused; I was sternly reprimanded, and the result will presently appear.

In July of the same year we reached Aden from Bombay. Our little party was composed of Lieutenant Herne and Lieutenant Stroyan, with myself in command. Before setting out I permitted Lieutenant J. H. Speke to join us; he was in search of African sport, and, being a stranger, he was glad to find companions. This officer afterwards accompanied me to Central Africa, and died at Bath on Thursday, September 15th, 1864.

Aden—"eye of Yemen," the "coal-hole of the East" (as we call it), the "dry and squalid city" of Abulfeda—gave me much trouble. It is one of the worst, if not *the* worst, places of residence to which Anglo-Indians can be condemned. The town occupies the crater floor of an extinct volcano whose northern wall, a grim rock of bare black basalt known as Jebel Shamsham, is said to be the sepulchre of Kabil, or Cain, and certainly the First Murderer lies in an appropriate spot. Between May and October the climate is dreadful. The storms of unclean dust necessitate candles at noon, and not a drop of rain falls, whilst high in the red hot air you see the clouds rolling towards the highlands of the interior, where their blessed loads will make Arabia happy. In Yemen—Arabia Felix—there are bubbling springs and fruits and vineyards, sweet waters, fertilising suns, and cool nights. In Aden and its neighbourhood all is the abomination of desolation.

The miseries of our unfortunate troops might have been lightened had we originally occupied the true key of the Red Sea, the port of Berbera on the Somali coast opposite Aden. But the step had been taken ; the authorities would not say "Peccavi" and undo the past. Therefore we died of fever and dysentery ; the smallest wound became a fearful ulcer which destroyed limb or life. Even in health, existence without appetite or sleep was a pest. I had the audacity to publish these facts, and had once more to pay the usual penalty for telling the truth.

The English spirit suffers from confinement behind any but wooden walls, and the Aden garrison displayed a timidity which astonished me. The fierce faces, the screaming voices, and the frequent faction fights of the savage Somali had cowed our countrymen, and they were depressed by a "peace at any price" policy. Even the Brigadier commanding, General (afterwards Sir) James Outram, opposed my explorations, and the leader was represented as a madman leading others to a certain and cruel death.

I at once changed my plans. To prove that the journey presented no real danger, I offered to visit alone what was considered the most perilous part of the country and explore Harar, the capital of the *terra incognita*. But to prevent my being detained meanwhile, I stationed my companions on the African coast with orders to seize and stop the inland caravans—a measure which would have had the effect of releasing me. This is a serious



danger in Abyssinian travel: witness the case of Pedro Cavilham in 1499, and the unfortunate Consul Cameron in our own day. Those "nameless Ethiopians," the older savages, sacrificed strangers to their gods. The modern only keep them in irons, flog them, and starve them.

At the time I went few but professed geographers knew even the name of Harar, or suspected that within three hundred miles of Aden there is a counterpart of ill-famed Timbuctu. Travellers of all nations had attempted it in vain; men of science, missionaries, and geographers had all failed. It was said that some Hamitu prophet had read decline and fall in the first footsteps of the Frank, and that the bigoted barbarians had threatened death to the infidel caught within their walls. Yet it was worth seeing, especially in those days, when few were the unvisited cities of the world. It has a stirring history, a peculiar race and language, it coins its own money, and it exports the finest coffee known. Finally it is the southernmost town in Tropical Africa.

On April 28th, 1854, in an open boat, I left Aden alone, without my companions, re-becoming El Hajj Abdullah, the Arab. My attendants were Mohammed and Guled, two Somali policemen bound to keep my secret for the safety of their own throats. I afterwards engaged one Abdy Abokr, a kind of hedge-priest, whose nickname was the "End of Time," meaning the *ne plus ultra* of villainy. He was a caution—a bad tongue, a mischievous brain, covetous and

wasteful, treacherous as a hyena, revengeful as a camel, timorous as a jackal.

Three days of summer sail on the "blind billows" and the "singing waves" of the romantic Arab geographers landed us at Zayla, *alias* Andal, the classical Sinus Avaliticus, to the south-west of Aden. During the seventh century it was the capital of a kingdom which measured forty-three by forty days' march; now the Bedouin rides up to its walls. The site is the normal Arabo-African scene, a strip of sulphur-yellow sand with a deep blue dome above and a foreground of indigo-coloured sea; behind it lies the country, a reeking desert of loose white sand and brown clay, thinly scattered with thorny shrub and tree. The buildings are a dozen large houses of mud and coralline rubble painfully whitewashed. There are six mosques—green little battlemented things with the Wahhali dwarf tower by way of minaret, and two hundred huts of dingy palm-leaf.

The population of fifteen thousand souls has not a good name—Zayla boasting or vanity and Kurayeh pride is a proverb. They are managed by forty Turkish soldiers under a Somali Governor, the Hajj Shermarkuy, meaning "one who sees no harm." The tall old man was a brave in his youth; he could manage four spears, and his sword-cut was known. He always befriended English travellers.

The only thing in favour of Zayla is its cheapness. A family of six persons can live well on £30 per



annum. Being poor, the people are idle, and the hateful "Inshalla bukra"—"To-morrow if Allah pleases"—and the Arab "tenha paciencia," "amanha," and "espere um pouco" is the rule.

I was delayed twenty-seven days whilst a route was debated upon, mules were sent for, camels were bought, and an abban, or protector-guide, was secured. Hereabouts no stranger could travel without such a patron, who was paid to defend his client's life and property. Practically he took his money and ran away.

On the evening of November 27th, 1864, the caravan was ready. It consisted of five camels laden with provisions, cooking-pots, ammunition, and our money—that is to say, beads, coarse tobacco, American sheeting, Indian cotton, and indigo-dyed stuffs. The escort was formed by the two policemen, the "End of Time," and Yusuf, a one-eyed lad from Zayla, with the guide and his tail of three followers. My men were the pink of Somali fashion. They had stained their hair of a light straw colour by plastering it with ashes; they had teased it till it stood up a full foot, and they had mutually spirted upon their wigs melted tallow, making their heads look like giant cauliflowers that contrasted curiously with the bistre-coloured skins. Their tobies (togas) were dazzlingly white, with borders dazzlingly red. Outside the dress was strapped a horn-hilted two-edged dagger, long and heavy; their shields of rhinoceros hide were brand new, and their two spears poised upon the right



shoulder were freshly scraped and oiled, and blackened and polished. They had added my spare rifle and guns to the camel loads—the things were well enough in Aden, but in Somali we would deride such strange, unmanly weapons. They balanced themselves upon dwarf Abyssinian saddles, extending the leg and raising the heel like the *haute école* of Louis XIV. The stirrup was an iron ring admitting only the big toe, and worse than that of the Sertanejo.

As usual in this country, where the gender masculine will not work, we had two cooks—tall, buxom, muscular dames, chocolate skinned and round faced. They had curiously soft and fluted voices, hardly to be expected from their square and huge-hipped figures, and contrasting agreeably with the harsh organs of the men. Their feet were bare, their veil was confined by a narrow fillet, and the body-cloth was an indigo-dyed cotton, girt at the waist and graceful as a winding sheet. I never saw them eat ; probably, as the people say of cooks, they lived by sucking their fingers.

And here a few words about the Somali, amongst whom we were to travel. These nomads were not pure negroes ; like the old Egyptians, they were a mixed breed of African and Arab. The face from the brow to the nostrils is Asiatic, from the nostrils to the chin showed traces of negro blood. The hair was African ; they decorated it by a sheep-skin wig cut to the head and died fiery orange with henna. The figure was peculiar, the shoulders were high

and narrow, the trunk was small, the limbs were spider-like, and the forearm was often of simian proportions.

The Somali were a free people, lawless as free. The British Government would not sanction their being sold as slaves. Of course they enslaved others, and they had a servile caste called Midyan, who were the only archers. They had little reverence for their own chiefs except in council, and they discussed every question in public, none hesitating to offer the wildest conjectures. At different times they suggested that I was a Turk, an Egyptian, a Marah man, a Banyan, Ahmad the Indian, the Governor of Aden, a merchant, a pilgrim, the chief of Zayla or his son, a boy, a warrior in silver armour, an old woman, a man painted white, and lastly, a calamity sent down from heaven to tire out the lives of the Somali.

The Somali were bad Moslems, but they believed in a deity and they knew the name of their Prophet. Wives being purchased for their value in cows or camels, the wealthy old were polygamous and the young poor were perforce bachelors. They worked milk-pots of tree-fibre like the beer-baskets of Kaffir-land. They were not bad smiths, but they confined their work to knives, spear-heads, and neat bits for their unshod horses. Like the Kaffirs, they called bright iron "rotten," and they never tempered it. Like all Africans, they were very cruel riders.

These nomads had a passion for independence, and yet when placed under a strong arm they were easily

disciplined. In British Aden a merry, laughing, dancing, and fighting race, at home they were a moping, melancholy people; for this their lives of perpetual danger might account. This insecurity made them truly hard-hearted. I have seen them when shifting camp barbarously leave behind for the hyenas their sick and decrepit parents. When the fatal smallpox breaks out, the first cases are often speared and the huts burned over the still warm corpse.

The Somali deemed nothing so noble as murder. The more cowardly the deed is, the better, as showing the more "nous." Even the midnight butchery of a sleeping guest is highly honourable. The hero plants a rish, or white ostrich feather, in his tufty pole and walks about the admired of all admirers, whilst the wives of those who have not received this order of merit taunt their husbands as *noirs fainéants*. Curious to say, the Greek and Roman officers used to present these plumes to the bravest of their officers for wearing on their helmet.

My journey began with the hard alluvial plain, forty-five to fifty-eight miles broad, between the sea and the mountains. It belonged to the Eesa, a tribe of Somali Bedouins, and how these "sun-dwellers" could exist there was a mystery. On the second day we reached a kraal consisting of gurgi, or diminutive hide huts. There was no thorn fence as is required in the lion-haunted lands to the west. The scene was characteristic of that pastoral life



which supplies poetry with Arcadian images and history with its blackest tragedies. Whistling shepherds, tall thin men, spear in hand, bore the younglings of the herd in their bosoms or drove to pasture the long-necked camels preceded by a patriarch with a wooden bell. Patches of Persian sheep with snowy bodies and jetty faces flecked the tawny plain, and flocks of goats were committed to women dressed in skins and boys who were unclad till the days of puberty. Some led the ram, around whose neck a cord of white heather was tied for luck. Others frisked with the dogs, animals by no means contemptible in the eyes of these Bedouin Moslems. All begged for bori—the precious tobacco—their only narcotic. They run away if they see smoke, and they suspect a kettle to be a mortal weapon. So the Bachwanas called our cannon, “pots.” Many of these wild people had never tasted grain and had never heard of coffee or sugar. During the rains they lived on milk ; in the dries they ate meat, avoiding, however, the blood. Like other races to the north and south, they would not touch fish or birds, which they compared to snakes and vultures. “Speak not to me with that mouth that has tasted fish !” is a dire insult.

The Eesa were a typical Somali tribe ; it might have numbered one hundred thousand spears, and it had a bad name. “Treacherous as an Eesa,” is a proverb at Zayla, where it is said these savages would offer you a bowl of milk with the left hand

and would stab you with the right. Their lives were spent in battle and murder.

The next march, a total of fifty-two miles, nearly lost us. Just before reaching the mountains which subtend the coast, we crossed the warm trail of a razzia, or cavalcade: some two hundred of the Habr Awal, our inveterate enemies, had been scouring the country. Robinson Crusoe was less scared by the footprint than were my companions. Our weak party numbered only nine men, of whom all except Mohammed and Guled were useless, and the first charge would have been certain death.

Escaping this danger, we painfully endured the rocks and thorns of the mountains and wilds. The third march placed us at Halimalah, a sacred tree about half-way between this coast and our destination—Harar. It is a huge sycamore suggesting the hiero-sykaminon of Egypt. The Gallas are still tree-worshippers, and the Somali respect this venerable vegetable as do the English their Druidical mistletoe.

We were well received at the kers (the kraals or villages). They were fenced with large and terrible thorns, an effectual defence against barelegged men. The animals had a place apart—semi-circular beehives made of grass mats mounted on sticks. The furniture consisted of weapons, hides, wooden pillows and mats for beds, pots of woven fibre, and horse gear. We carried our own dates and rice, we bought meat and the people supplied us with milk gratis—to sell



it was a disgrace. Fresh milk was drunk only by the civilised ; pastoral people preferred it when artificially curdled and soured.

We soon rose high above sea-level, as the cold nights and the burning suns told us. The eighth march placed us on the Ban Marar, a plain twenty-seven miles broad—at that season a waterless stubble, a yellow nap, dotted with thorny trees and bushes, and at all times infamous for robbery and murder. It was a glorious place for game : in places it was absolutely covered with antelopes, and every random shot must have told in the immense herds.

Here I had the distinction of being stalked by a lion. As night drew in we were urging our jaded mules over the western prairie towards a dusky line of hills. My men proceeded whilst I rode in rear with a double-barrelled gun at full cock across my knees. Suddenly my animal trembled and bolted forward with a sidelong glance of fear. I looked back and saw, within some twenty yards, the king of beasts creeping up silently as a cat. To fire both barrels in the direction of my stalker was the work of a second. I had no intention of hitting, as aim could not be taken in the gloaming, and to wound would have been fatal. The flame and the echoed roar from the hills made my friend slink away. Its intention was, doubtless, to crawl within springing distance and then by a bound on my neck to have finished my journey through Somaliland and through life. My companions shouted in horror “Libah ! libah !”—“The



lion! the lion!"—and saw a multitude of lions that night.

After crossing the desert prairie, we entered the hills of the agricultural Somali, the threshold of the South Abyssinian mountains. The pastoral scene now changed for waving crops of millet, birds in flights, and hedged lanes, where I saw with pleasure the dog-rose. Guided by a wild fellow called Altidon, we passed on to the Sagharah, the village of the Gerad, or chief, Adan. He had not a good name, and I was afterwards told he was my principal danger. But we never went anywhere without our weapons, and the shooting of a few vultures on the wing was considered a great feat where small shot is unknown. "He brings down birds from the sky!" exclaimed the people.

I must speak of the Gerad, however, as I found him—a civil and hospitable man, greedy, of course, suspicious, and of shortsighted policy.

His good and pretty wife Kayrah was very kind, and supplied me with abundance of honey wine, the merissa of Abyssinia. It tasted like champagne to a palate long condemned to total abstinence, without even tea.

We were now within thirty direct miles of Harar, and my escort made a great stand. The chief Adan wanted to monopolise us and our goods. My men, therefore, were threatened with smallpox, the bastinado, lifelong captivity in unlit dungeons, and similar amenities.

On June 2nd, 1855, I sent for our mules. They

were missing. An unpleasantness was the consequence, and the animals appeared about noon. I saddled my own—no one would assist me. When, mounted and gun in hand, I rode up to my followers, who sat sulkily on the ground, and observing that hitherto their acts had not been those of the brave, I suggested that before returning to Aden we should do something of manliness. They arose, begged me not to speak such words, and offered to advance if I would promise to reward them should we live and to pay blood-money to their friends in case of the other contingency. They apparently attached much importance to what is vulgarly termed "cutting up well."

Now, however, we were talking reason, and I settled all difficulties by leaving a letter addressed to the Political Resident at Aden. Mohammed and Guled were chosen to accompany me, the rest remaining with the Gerad Adan. I must say for my companions that once in the saddle they shook off their fears; they were fatalists, and they believed in my star, whilst they had the fullest confidence in their pay or pension.

The country now became romantic and beautiful—a confusion of lofty stony mountains, plantations of the finest coffee, scatters of villages, forests of noble trees, with rivulets of the coolest and clearest water. We here stood some five thousand five hundred feet high, and although only nine degrees removed from the Line, the air was light and pleasant. It made me remember the climate of Aden, and hate it.

We slept *en route*, and on January 3rd we first sighted Harar City. On the crest of a hill distant two miles it appeared, a long sombre line strikingly contrasting with the whitewashed settlements of the more civilised East, and nothing broke the outline except the two grey and rudely shaped minarets of the Jami, or Maritz (cathedral). I almost grudged the exposure of three lives to win so paltry a prize. But of all Europeans who had attempted it before me not one had succeeded in entering that ugly pile of stones.

We then approached the city gate and sat there, as is the custom, till invited to enter. Presently we were ordered to the palace by a chamberlain, a man with loud and angry voice and eyes.

At the entrance of the palace we dismounted by command, and we were told to run across the court, which I refused to do. We were then placed under a tree in one corner of the yard and to the right of the palace. The latter is a huge, windowless barn of rough stone and red clay, without other insignia but a thin coat of whitewash over the doorway.

Presently we were beckoned in and told to doff our slippers. A curtain was raised, and we stood in the presence of the then Amir of Harar, Sultan Ahmed bin Sultan Abibaki.

The sight was savage, if not imposing. The hall of audience was a dark room, eighty to ninety feet long, and its whitewashed walls were hung with rusty fetters and bright matchlocks. At the further end, on



a common East Indian cane sofa, sat a small yellow personage—the great man. He wore a flowing robe of crimson cloth edged with snowy fur, and a narrow white turban twisted round a tall conical cap of red velvet. Ranged in double ranks perpendicular to the presence and nearest to the chief were his favourites and courtiers, with right arms bared after the fashion of Abyssinia. Prolonging these parallel lines towards the door were Galla warriors, wild men with bushy wigs. Shining rings of zinc on their arms, wrists, and ankles formed their principal attire. They stood motionless as statues; not an eye moved, and each right hand held up a spear with an enormous head of metal, the heel being planted in the ground.

I entered with a loud "As 'Salem alaykum"—"Peace be upon ye!"—and the normal answer was returned. A pair of chamberlains then led me forward to bow over the chief's hand. He directed me to sit on a mat opposite to him, and with lowering brow and inquisitive glance he asked what might be my business in Harar. It was the crisis. I introduced myself as an Englishman from Aden coming to report that certain changes had taken place there, in the hope that the "cordial intent" might endure between the kingdoms of Harar and England.

The Amir smiled graciously. I must admit that the smile was a relief to me. It was a joy to my attendants, who sat on the ground behind their master, grey-brown with emotion, and mentally inquiring, "What next?"

The audience over, we were sent to one of the Amir's houses, distant about one hundred paces from the palace. Here cakes of sour maize (fuba), soaked in curdled milk, and lumps of beef plenteously powdered with pepper, awaited us. Then we were directed to call upon Gerad Mohammed, Grand Vizier of Harar. He received us well, and we retired to rest not dissatisfied with the afternoon's work. We had eaten the chief's bread and salt.

During my ten days' stay at Harar I carefully observed the place and its people. The city was walled and pierced with five large gates, flanked by towers, but was ignorant of cannon. The streets—narrow lanes strewn with rocks and rubbish—were formed by houses built of granite and sandstone from the adjacent mountains. The best abodes were double storied, long and flat roofed, with holes for windows placed jealously high up, and the doors were composed of a single plank. The women, I need hardly say, had separate apartments. The city abounded in mosques—plain buildings without minarets—and the graveyards were stuffed with tombs—oblongs formed by slabs placed edgeways in the ground.

The people, numbering about eight thousand souls, had a bad name among their neighbours. The Somali say that Harar is a "paradise inhabited by asses"; and "hard as the heart of Harar" is a byword. The junior members of the royal family were imprisoned till wanted for the throne. Amongst the men I did not see a handsome face or hear one

pleasant voice. The features were harsh and plain, the skin was a sickly brown, the hair and beard were short and untractable, and the hands and feet were large and coarse. They were celebrated for laxity of morals, fondness for strong waters, much praying, coffee-drinking, and chewing tobacco and kat, a well-known theine plant. They had a considerable commerce with the coast, which was reached by a large caravan once a year.

The women were beautiful by the side of their lords. They had small heads, regular profiles, straight noses, large eyes, mouths almost Caucasian, and light brown skins. The hair, parted in the centre and gathered into two large bunches behind the ears, was covered with dark blue muslin or network, whose ends were tied under the chin. Girls collected their locks, which were long, thick, and wavy—not wiry—into a knot *à la Diane*; a curtain of short close plaits escaping from the bunch fell upon the shoulders. The dress was a wide frock of chocolate or indigo-dyed cotton, girt round the middle with a sash; before and behind there was a triangle of scarlet with the point downwards. The ornaments were earrings and necklaces of black buffalo horn, the work of Western India. The bosom was tattooed with stars, the eyebrows were lengthened with dyes, the eyes were fringed with antimony, and the palms and soles were stained red. Those pretty faces had harsh voices, their manners were rude, and I regret to say that an indiscreet affection



for tobacco and honey wine sometimes led to a public bastinado.

At Harar was a university which supplied Somali-land with poor scholars and crazy priests. There were no endowments for students—learning was its own reward—and books (manuscripts) were rare and costly. Only theology was studied. Some of the graduates had made a name in the Holy Land of Arabia, where few ranked higher than my friend Shaykh Jami el Berteri. To be on the safer side he would never touch tobacco or coffee. I liked his conversation, but I eschewed his dinners.

Harar—called Gay or Harar Gay by her sons—is the capital of Hadiyah, a province of the ancient Zala empire, and her fierce Moslems nearly extirpated Christianity from Shoa and Amara. The local Attila Mohammed Gragne, or the “Left-Handed,” slew in 1540 David III., the last Ethiopian monarch who styled himself “King of Kings.”

David’s successor, Claudius, sent imploring messages to Europe, and D. Joao III. ordered the chivalrous Stephen and Christopher da Gama, sons of Vasco da Gama, to the rescue. The Portuguese could oppose only three hundred and fifty muskets and a rabble rout of Abyssinians to ten thousand Moslems. D. Christopher was wounded, taken prisoner, and decapitated. Good Father Lobo declares that “where the martyr’s head fell, a fountain sprung up of wonderful virtue, which cured many hopeless diseases.”

Eventually Gragne was shot by one Pedro Leao,

a Portuguese soldier who was bent upon revenging his leader's fall. The Moslem's wife, Tamwalbara, prevented the dispersion of the army, making a slave personate her dead husband, and drew off his forces in safety. A strong-minded woman!

My days at Harar were dull enough. At first we were visited by all the few strangers of the city, but they soon thought it prudent to shun us. The report of my "English brethren" being on the coast made them look upon me as a mufsid, or dangerous man. The Somali, on the other hand, in compliment to my attendants, were most attentive. It was harvest home, and we had opportunity of seeing the revels of the threshers and reapers—a jovial race, slightly "dipsomaniac."

Harar also was the great half-way house and resting place for slaves between Abyssinia and the coast. In making purchases, the adage was, "If you want a brother in battle, buy a Nubian; if you would be rich, an Abyssinian; if you require an ass, a negro."

I sometimes called upon the learned and religious, but not willingly—these shaykhash, or reverend men, had proposed detaining me until duly converted and favoured with a "call." Harar, like most African cities, was a prison on a large scale. "You enter it by your own will; you leave it by another's," is the pithy saw.

At length, when really anxious to depart, and when my two Somali had consulted their rosaries

for the thousandth time, I called upon the Gerad Mohammed, who had always been civil to us. He was suffering from a chronic bronchitis. Here, then, lay my chance of escaping from my rat-trap. The smoke of some brown paper matches steeped in saltpetre relieved him. We at once made a bargain. The minister was to take me before the Amir and secure for me a ceremonious dismissal. On the other part, I bound myself to send up from the coast a lifelong supply of the precious medicine. We both kept faith. Moreover, after returning to Aden I persuaded the authorities to reward with handsome presents the men who held my life in their hands and yet did not take it.

After a pleasing interview with the Amir, who did his best to smile, we left Harar on January 13th, 1855. At Sagharah, where the villagers had prayed the death-prayer as we set out for the city, we were received with effusion. They now scattered over us handfuls of toasted grain, and they danced with delight, absorbing copious draughts of liquor. The "End of Time" wept crocodile's tears, and the women were grateful that their charms had not been exposed to the terrible smallpox.

After a week's rest we prepared to make the coast. I was desirous of striking Berbera, a port south of Zayla, where my friends awaited me. The escort consented to accompany me by the short direct road, on condition of travelling night and day. They warned me that they had a blood feud with all the



tribes on the path, that we should find very little water and no provisions, and that the heat would be frightful. Truly, a pleasant prospect for a weary man !

But if they could stand it, so could I. The weaker attendants, the women, and the camels were sent back by the old path, and I found myself *en route* on January 26th, accompanied by my two Somali and by a wild guide known as Dubayr—the “Donkey.” My provant for five days consisted of five biscuits, a few limes, and sundry lumps of sugar.

I will not deny that the ride was trying work. The sun was fearful, the nights were raw and damp. For twenty-four hours we did not taste water ; our brains felt baked, our throats burned, the mirage mocked us at every turn, and the effect was a kind of monomania. At length a small bird showed us a well and prevented, I believe, our going mad. The scenery was uniform and uninteresting—horrid hills upon which withered aloes raised their spears ; plains apparently rained upon by showers of fire and stones, and rolling ground rich only in “wait a bit” thorns, made to rend man’s skin and garment. We scrupulously avoided the kraals, and when on one occasion the wild people barred the way we were so intolerably fierce with hunger and thirst that they fled from us as though we were fiends. The immortal Ten Thousand certainly did not sight the cold waters of the Euxine with more delight than we felt when hailing the warm bay of Berbera. I ended that

toilsome ride to and from Harar of two hundred and forty miles at 2 a.m. on January 30th, 1855, after a last spell of forty miles. A glad welcome from my brother expeditionists soon made amends for past privations and fatigues.

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And now to recount the most unpleasant part of my first adventure in East Africa.

Having paid a visit to Aden, I returned to Berbera in April, 1855, prepared to march upon the head waters of the Nile.

But Fate and the British authorities were against me. I had done too much—I had dared to make Berbera a rival port. They were not scrupulous at Aden, even to the taking of life.

My little party consisted of forty-two muskets, including three officers and myself. The men, however, were not to be trusted, but after repeated applications I could not obtain an escort of Somali policemen. Matters looked ugly, and the more so as there was no retreat.

The fair of Berbera, which had opened in early October, was breaking up, and the wild clansmen were retiring from the seaboard to their native hills. The harbour rapidly emptied; happily, however, for us, a single boat remained there.

We slept comfortably on April 18th, agreeing to have a final shot at the gazelles before marching. Between 2 a.m. and 3 a.m. we were roused by a rush of men like a roar of a stormy wind. I learned



THE ATTACK ON THE CAMP AT BERBERA.

[See Page 96.]





afterwards that our enemies numbered between three and four hundred. We armed ourselves with all speed, whilst our party, after firing a single volley, ran away as quickly as possible.

The unfortunate Lieutenant Stroyan was run through with a spear; he slept far from us, and we did not see him fall. Lieutenants Herne and Speke and I defended ourselves in our tent till the savages proceeded to beat it down. I then gave the word to sally, and cleared the way with my sabre. Lieutenant Herne accompanied me and—wonderful to relate—escaped without injury. Lieutenant Speke was seized and tied up; he had eleven spear-thrusts before he could free himself, and he escaped by a miracle. When outside the camp, I vainly tried once more to bring up our men to the fray. Finding me badly hurt they carried me on board the boat. Here I was joined by the survivors, who carried with them the corpse of our ill-fated friend.

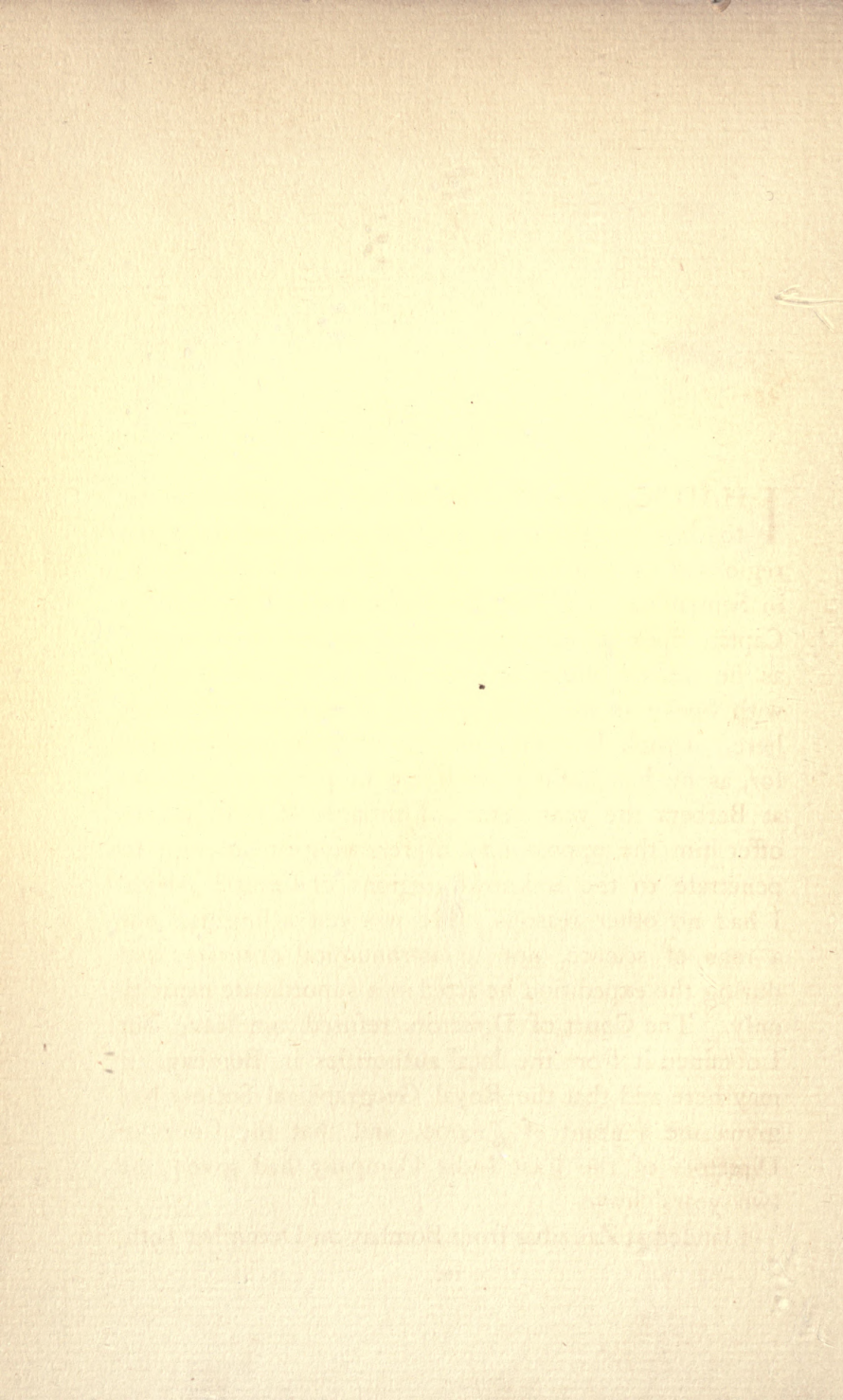
Sad and dispirited, we returned to Aden. We had lost our property as well as our blood, and I knew too well that we should be rewarded with nothing but blame. The authorities held a Court of Inquiry in my absence, and facetiously found that we and not they were in fault. Lord Dalhousie, the admirable statesman then governing in general British India, declared that they were quite right. I have sometimes thought they were.





*TO THE HEART OF AFRICA*

1856-1859



# I

## *THE JOURNEY*

I HAD long wished to “unveil Isis”—in other words, to discover the sources of the Nile and the Lake regions of Central Africa—and to this end I left London in September, 1856, for Bombay. Here I applied for Captain Speke to accompany me as second in command, as he wished much to go. My subsequent dispute with Speke is well known, and I will not refer to it here. I took him with me out of pure good nature, for, as he had suffered with me in purse and person at Berbera the year before, I thought it only just to offer him the opportunity of renewing an attempt to penetrate to the unknown regions of Central Africa. I had no other reasons. He was not a linguist, nor a man of science, nor an astronomical observer, and during the expedition he acted in a subordinate capacity only. The Court of Directors refused him leave, but I obtained it from the local authorities in Bombay. I may here add that the Royal Geographical Society had given me a grant of £1,000, and that the Court of Directors of the East India Company had given me two years' leave.

I landed at Zanzibar from Bombay on December 19th,



1856, and received much kindness from Lieutenant-Colonel Hamerton, Her Majesty's Consul. First of all I made an experimental trip, and this and the study of Zanzibar occupied my time until May 14th, 1857, when I left Zanzibar for the second time, and on the 27th of the same month I landed at Wale Point, on the east coast of Africa, about eighty-four miles from the town of Bagamoyo.

I wanted to engage one hundred and seventy porters, but could only get thirty-six, and thirty animals were found, which were all dead in six months, so I had to leave a part of my things behind, including a greater part of my ammunition and my iron boat. I paid various visits to the hippopotamus haunts, and had my boat uplifted from the water upon the points of two tusks, which made corresponding holes in the bottom. My escort were under the impression that nothing less than one hundred and fifty guns and several cannon would enable them to fight a way through the perils of the interior. I was warned that I must pass through savages who shot with poisoned arrows, that I must avoid trees—which was not easy in a land of forest—that the Wazaramo had forbidden white men to enter their country, that one rhinoceros had killed two hundred men, that armies of elephants would attack my camp by night, and that the hyena was more dangerous than the Bengal tiger—altogether, not a cheerful outlook.

Most of these difficulties were raised by a rascal named Ramji, who had his own ends in view. Being

a Hindoo, he thought I was ignorant of Cutchee ; so one day I overheard the following conversation between him and a native.

“Will he ever reach it ?” asked the native, meaning the Sea of Ujiji ; to which Ramji replied :

“Of course not ; what is he that he should pass through Ugogo ?” (a province about half way).

So I remarked at once that I did intend to pass Ugogo and also reach the Sea of Ujiji, that I did know Cutchee, and that if he was up to any tricks, I should be equal to him.

On June 26th, 1857, I set out in earnest on a journey into the far interior.

On this journey I had several queer experiences. At Nzasa I was visited by three native chiefs, who came to ascertain whether I was bound on a peaceful errand. When I assured them of my unwarlike intentions, they told me I must halt on the morrow and send forth a message to the next chief, but as this plan invariably loses three days, I replied that I could not be bound by their rules, but was ready to pay for their infraction. During the debate upon this fascinating proposal for breaking the law, one of the most turbulent of the Baloch, who were native servants in my train, drew his sword upon an old woman because she refused to give up a basket of grain. She rushed, with the face of a black Medusa, into the assembly, and created a great disturbance. When that was allayed, the principal chief asked me what brought the white man into their country, and

at the same time to predict the loss of their gains and commerce, land and liberty.

"I am old," he quoth pathetically, "and my beard is grey, yet I never beheld such a calamity as this."

"These men," replied my interpreter, "neither buy nor sell; they do not inquire into price, nor do they covet profit."

An extravagant present—for at that time I was ignorant of the price I ought to pay—opened the chiefs' hearts, and they appointed one of their body to accompany me as far as the western half of the Kingani valley. They also caused to be performed a dance of ceremony in my honour. A line of small, plump, chestnut-coloured women, with wild, beady eyes and thatch of clay-plastered hair, dressed in their loin-cloths, with a profusion of bead necklaces and other ornaments, and with their ample bosoms tightly corded down, advanced and retired in a convulsion of wriggle and contortion, whose fit expression was a long discordant howl. I threw them a few strings of green beads, and one of these falling to the ground, I was stooping to pick it up when Said, my interpreter whispered, in my ear, "Bend not; they will say 'He will not bend even to take up beads.'"

In some places I found the attentions of the fair sex somewhat embarrassing, but when I entered the fine green fields that guarded the settlements of Muhoewee, I was met *en masse* by the ladies of the



villages, who came out to stare, laugh, and wonder at the white man.

"What would you think of these whites as husbands?" asked one of the crowd.

"With such things on their legs, not by any means!" was the unanimous reply, accompanied by peals of merriment.

On July 8th I fell into what my Arab called the "Valley of Death and the Home of Hunger," a malarious level plain. Speke, whom I shall henceforth call my companion, was compelled by sickness to ride. The path, descending into a dense thicket of spear grass, bush, and thorny trees based on sand, was rough and uneven, but when I arrived at a ragged camping kraal, I found the water bad, and a smell of decay was emitted by the dark, dank ground. It was a most appalling day, and one I shall not lightly forget. From the black clouds driven before furious blasts pattered raindrops like musket bullets, splashing the already saturated ground. Tall, stiff trees groaned and bent before the gusts; birds screamed as they were driven from their resting-places; the asses stood with heads depressed, ears hung down, and shrinking tails turned to the wind; even the beasts of the wild seemed to have taken refuge in their dens.

Despite our increasing weakness, we marched on the following day, when we were interrupted by a body of about fifty Wazaramo, who called to us to halt. We bought them off with a small present of cloth and beads, and they stood aside to let us pass.

I could not but admire the athletic and statuesque figures of the young warriors, and their martial attitudes, grasping in one hand their full-sized bows, and in the other sheaths of grinded arrows, whose black barbs and necks showed a fresh layer of poison.

Though handicapped by a very inadequate force, in eighteen days we accomplished, despite sickness and every manner of difficulty, a march of one hundred and eighteen miles, and entered K'hutu, the safe rendezvous of foreign merchants, on July 14th. I found consolation in the thought that the expedition had passed without accident through the most dangerous part of the journey.

Resuming our march through the maritime region, on July 15th we penetrated into a thick and tangled jungle, with luxuriant and putrescent vegetation. Presently, however, the dense thicket opened out into a fine park country, peculiarly rich in game, where the giant trees of the seaboard gave way to mimosas, gums, and stunted thorns. Large gnus pranced about, pawing the ground and shaking their formidable manes; hartebeest and other antelopes clustered together on the plain. The homely cry of the partridge resounded from the brake, and the guinea-fowls looked like large bluebells upon the trees. Small land-crabs took refuge in pits and holes, which made the path a cause of frequent accidents, whilst ants of various kinds, crossing the road in close columns, attacked man and beast ferociously,



causing the caravan to break into a halting, trotting hobble. The weather was a succession of raw mists, rain in torrents, and fiery sunbursts; the land appeared rotten, and the jungle smelt of death. At Kiruru I found a cottage and enjoyed for the first time an atmosphere of sweet, warm smoke. My companion would remain in the reeking, miry tent, where he partially laid the foundations of the fever which afterwards threatened his life in the mountains of Usagara.

Despite the dangers of hyenas, leopards, and crocodiles, we were delayed by the torrents of rain in the depths of the mud at Kiruru. We then resumed our march under most unpromising conditions. Thick grass and the humid vegetation rendered the black earth greasy and slippery, and the road became worse as we advanced. In three places we crossed bogs from a hundred yards to a mile in length, and admitting a man up to the knee. The porters plunged through them like laden animals, and I was obliged to be held upon the ass. At last we reached Dut'humi, where we were detained nearly a week, for malaria had brought on attacks of marsh fever, which, in my case, thoroughly prostrated me. I had during the fever fit, and often for hours afterwards, a queer conviction of divided identity, never ceasing to be two persons that generally thwarted and opposed each other. The sleepless nights brought with them horrid visions, animals of grisliest form, and hag-like women and men.



Dut'humi is one of the most fertile districts in K'hutu, and, despite its bad name as regards climate, Arabs sometimes reside here for some months for the purpose of purchasing slaves cheaply, and to repair their broken fortunes for a fresh trip into the interior. This kept up a perpetual feud amongst the chiefs of the country, and scarcely a month passed without fields being laid waste, villages burnt down, and the unhappy cultivators being carried off to be sold.

On July 24th, feeling strong enough to advance, we passed out of the cultivation of Dut'humi. Beyond the cultivation the road plunged into a jungle, where the European traveller realised every preconceived idea of Africa's aspect at once hideous and grotesque. The general appearance is a mingling of bush and forest, most monotonous to the eye. The black, greasy ground, veiled with thick shrubbery, supports in the more open spaces screens of tiger and spear grass twelve and thirteen feet high, with every blade a finger's breadth; and the towering trees are often clothed with huge creepers, forming heavy columns of densest verdure. The earth, ever rain-drenched, emits the odour of sulphuretted hydrogen, and in some parts the traveller might fancy a corpse to be hidden behind every bush. That no feature of miasma might be wanting to complete the picture, filthy heaps of the meanest hovels sheltered their miserable inhabitants, whose frames are lean with constant intoxication, and whose limbs are distorted with ulcerous sores. Such a revolting scene is

East Africa from Central K'hutu to the base of the Usagara Mountains.

After a long, long tramp the next day through rice swamps, we came to the nearest outposts of the Zungomero district. Here were several caravans, with pitched tents, piles of ivory, and crowds of porters. The march had occupied us over four weeks, about double the usual time, and a gang of thirty-six Wanyamwezi native porters whom I had sent on in advance to Zungomero naturally began to suspect accident.

Zungomero was not a pleasant place, and though the sea breeze was here strong, beyond its influence the atmosphere was sultry and oppressive. It was the great centre of traffic in the eastern regions. Lying upon the main trunk road, it must be traversed by the up and down caravans, and during the travelling season, between June and April, large bodies of some thousand men pass through it every week. It was, therefore, a very important station, and the daily expenditure of large caravans being considerable, there was a good deal of buying and selling.

The same attractions which draw caravans to Zungomero render it the great rendezvous of an army of touts, who, whilst watching the arrival of ivory traders, amuse themselves with plundering the country.

Zungomero is the end of the maritime region, and when I had reached it, I considered that the first stage of my journey was accomplished.

I had to remain at Zungomero about a fortnight to await the coming of my porters. In this hot-bed of pestilence we nearly found "wet graves." Our only lodging was under the closed eaves of a hut, built African fashion, one abode within the other; the roof was a sieve, the walls were a system of chinks, and the floor was a sheet of mud. Outside the rain poured pertinaciously, the winds were raw and chilling, and the gigantic vegetation was sopped to decay, and the river added its quotum of miasma. The hardships of the march had upset our Baloch guard, and they became almost mutinous, and would do nothing for themselves. They stole the poultry of the villagers, quarrelled violently with the slaves, and foully abused their temporal superior, Said bin Salim.

When we were ready to start from Zungomero, our whole party amounted to a total of one hundred and thirty-two souls, whom I need not, I think, describe in detail. We had plenty of cloth and beads for traffic with the natives, a good store of provisions, arms, and ammunition, a certain amount of camp furniture, instruments, such as chronometers, compasses, thermometers, etc., a stock of stationery, plenty of useful tools, clothing, bedding, and shoes, books and drawing materials, a portable domestic medicine chest, and a number of miscellaneous articles. As life at Zungomero was the acme of discomfort, I was glad enough to leave it.

On August 7th, 1857, our expedition left Zun-



gomero to cross the East African ghauts in rather a pitiful plight. We were martyred by miasma; my companion and I were so feeble that we could hardly sit our asses, and we could scarcely hear. It was a day of severe toil, and we loaded with great difficulty.

From Central Zungomero to the nearest ascent of the Usagara Mountains is a march of five hours; and, after a painful and troublesome journey, we arrived at the frontier of the first gradient of the Usagara Mountains. Here we found a tattered kraal, erected by the last passing caravan, and, spent with fatigue, we threw ourselves on the short grass to rest. We were now about three hundred feet above the plain level, and there was a wondrous change of climate. Strength and health returned as if by magic; the pure sweet mountain air, alternately soft and balmy, put new life into us. Our gipsy encampment was surrounded by trees, from which depended graceful creepers, and wood-apples large as melons. Monkeys played at hide-and-seek, chattering behind the bolls, as the iguana, with its painted scale-armour, issued forth; white-breasted ravens cawed, doves cooed on well-clothed boughs, and the field cricket chirped in the shady bush. By night the view disclosed a peaceful scene, the moonbeams lying like sheets of snow upon the ruddy highlands, and the stars shone like glow-lamps in the dome above. I never wearied of contemplating the scene, and contrasting it with the Slough of Despond,

unhappy Zungomero. We stayed here two days, and then resumed our upward march.

All along our way we were saddened by the sight of clean-picked skeletons and here and there the swollen corpses of porters who had perished by the wayside. A single large body passed us one day, having lost fifty of their number by smallpox, and the sight of their deceased comrades made a terrible impression. Men staggered on, blinded by disease; mothers carried infants as loathsome as themselves. He who once fell never rose again. No village would admit a corpse into its precincts, and they had to lie there until their agony was ended by the vulture, the raven, and the hyena. Several of my party caught the infection, and must have thrown themselves into the jungle, for when they were missed they could not be found. The farther we went on, the more we found the corpses; it was a regular way of death. Our Moslems passed them with averted faces, and with the low "La haul" of disgust.

When we arrived at Rufutah, I found that nearly all our instruments had been spoilt or broken; and one discomfort followed another until we arrived at Zonhwe, which was the turning-point of our expedition's difficulties.

As we went on, the path fell easily westwards through a long, grassy incline, cut by several water-courses. At noon I lay down fainting in the sandy bed of the Muhama, and, keeping two natives with



me, I begged my companion to go on, and send me back a hammock from the halting-place. My men, who before had become mutinous and deserting, when they saw my extremity came out well; even the deserters reappeared, and they led me to a place where stagnant water was found, and said they were sorry. At two o'clock, as my companion did not send a hammock, I remounted, and passed through several little villages. I found my caravan halted on a hillside, where they had been attacked by a swarm of wild bees.

Our march presented curious contrasts of this strange African nature, which is ever in extremes. At one time a splendid view would charm me; above, a sky of purest azure, flecked with fleecy clouds. The plain was as a park in autumn, burnt tawny by the sun. A party was at work merrily, as if preparing for an English harvest home. Calabashes and clumps of evergreen trees were scattered over the scene, each stretching its lordly arms aloft. The dove, the peewit, and the guinea-fowl fluttered about. The most graceful of animals, the zebra and the antelope, browsed in the distance. Then suddenly the fair scene would vanish as if by enchantment. We suddenly turned into a tangled mass of tall, foetid reeds, rank jungle, and forest. After the fiery sun and dry atmosphere of the plains, the sudden effect of the damp and clammy chill was overpowering. In such places one feels as if poisoned by miasma; a shudder runs through



the frame, and cold perspiration breaks over the brow.

So things went on until September 4th, which still found us on the march. We had reached the basin of Inenge, which lies at the foot of the Windy Pass, the third and westernmost range of the Usagara Mountains. The climate is ever in extremes; during the day a furnace, and at night a refrigerator. Here we halted. The villagers of the settlements overlooking the ravine flocked down to barter their animals and grain.

The halt was celebrated by abundant drumming and droning, which lasted half the night; it served to raise the spirits of the men, who had talked of nothing the whole day but the danger of being attacked by the Wahumba, a savage tribe. The next morning there arrived a caravan of about four hundred porters, marching to the coast under the command of some Arab merchants. We interchanged civilities, and I was allured into buying a few yards of rope and other things, and also some asses. One of my men had also increased his suite, unknown to me at first, by the addition of Zawada—the “Nice Gift.” She was a woman of about thirty, with black skin shining like a patent leather boot, a bulging brow, little red eyes, a wide mouth, which displayed a few long, scattered teeth, and a figure considerably too bulky for her thin legs. She was a patient and hardworking woman, and respectable enough in the acceptation of the term. She was

at once married off to old Musangesi, one of the donkey-men, whose nose and chin made him a caricature of our old friend Punch. After detecting her in a lengthy walk, perhaps not a solitary one, he was guilty of such cruelty to her that I felt compelled to decree a dissolution of the marriage, and she returned safely to Zanzibar. At Inenge another female slave was added to our troop in the person of Sikujui—"Don't Know"—a herculean person with a virago manner. The channel of her upper lip had been pierced to admit a bone, which gave her the appearance of having a duck's bill. "Don't Know's" morals were frightful. She was duly espoused, in the forlorn hope of making her a respectable woman, to Goha, the sturdiest of the Wak'hutu porters; after a week she treated him with sublime contempt. She gave him first one and then a dozen rivals, and she disordered the whole caravan with her irregularities, in addition to breaking every article entrusted to her charge, and at last deserted shamelessly, so that her husband finally disposed of her to a travelling trader in exchange for a few measures of rice. Her ultimate fate I do not know, but the trader came next morning to complain of a broken head.

After Inenge we were in for a bad part of the journey, and great labour. Trembling with ague, with swimming heads, ears deafened by weakness, and limbs that would hardly support us, we contemplated with horrid despair the apparently perpendicular path

up which we and our starving asses were about to toil.

On September 10th we hardened our hearts and began to breast the Pass Terrible. After rounding in two places wall-like sheets of rock and crossing a bushy slope, we faced a long steep of loose white soil and rolling stones, up which we could see the porters swarming more like baboons than human beings, and the asses falling every few yards. As we moved slowly and painfully forward, compelled to lie down by cough, thirst, and fatigue, the sayhah, or war-cry, rang loud from hill to hill, and Indian files of archers and spearmen streamed like lines of black ants in all directions down the paths. The predatory Wahumba, awaiting the caravan's departure, had seized the opportunity of driving the cattle and plundering the village of Inenge.

By resting every few yards, we reached, after about six hours, the summit of the Pass Terrible, and here we sat down amongst aromatic flowers and pretty shrubs to recover strength and breath.

On September 14th, our health much improved by the weather, we left the hilltop and began to descend the counterslope of the Usagara Mountains. For the first time since many days I had strength enough to muster the porters and inspect their loads. The outfit which had been expected to last a year had been half exhausted within three months. I summoned Said bin Salim, and told him my anxiety. Like a veritable Arab, he declared we had enough to last until



we reached Unyamyembe, where we should certainly be joined by reinforcements of porters.

“How do you know?” I inquired.

“Allah is all-knowing,” said Said. “The caravan will come.”

As the fatalism was infectious, I ceased to think upon the subject.

The next day we sighted the plateau of Ugogo and its eastern desert. The spectacle was truly impressive. The first aspect was stern and wild—the rough nurse of rugged men. We went on the descent from day to day until September 18th, when a final march of four hours placed us on the plains of Ugogo. Before noon I sighted from a sharp turn in the bed of a river our tent pitched under a huge sycamore, on a level step. It was a pretty spot in the barren scene, grassy, and grown with green mimosas, and here we halted for a while. The second stage of our journey was accomplished.

After three days' sojourn at Ugogo to recruit the party and lay in rations for four long desert marches, we set forth on our long march through the province of Ugogo. Our first day's journey was over a grassy country, and we accomplished it in comparative comfort. The next day we toiled through the sunshine of the hot waste, crossing plains over paths where the slides of elephants' feet upon the last year's muddy clay showed that the land was not always dry. During this journey we suffered many discomforts and difficulties. The orb of day glowed like a fireball in our

faces ; then our path would take us through dense, thorny jungle, and over plains of black, cracked earth. Our caravan once rested in a thorny copse based upon rich red and yellow clay ; once it was hurriedly dislodged by a swarm of wild bees, and the next morning I learnt that we had sustained a loss—one of our porters had deserted, and to his care had been committed one of the most valuable of our packages, a portmanteau containing “The Nautical Almanac,” surveying books, and most of our papers, pen, and ink.

At last we arrived at Ziwa, a place where caravans generally encamped, because they found water there. At Ziwa we had many troubles. One Marema, the Sultan of a new settlement, visited us on the day of our arrival, and reproved us for sitting in the jungle, pointing the way to his village. On my replying we were going to traverse Ugogo by another road, he demanded his customs, which we refused, as they were a form of blackmail. The Sultan threatened violence, whereupon the asses were brought in from grazing and ostentatiously loaded before his eyes. He then changed his tone from threats to beggary. I gave him two cloths and a few strings of beads, preferring this to the chance of a flight of arrows during the night.

When we resumed our journey, the heat was awful. The sun burnt like the breath of a bonfire, warm siroccos raised clouds of dust, and in front of us the horizon was so distant that, as the Arabs expressed themselves, a man might be seen three marches off.



October 5th saw us in the centre of Kanyenye, a clearing in the jungle of about ten miles in diameter. The surface was of a red clayey soil dotted with small villages, huge calabashes, and stunted mimosas. Here I was delayed four days to settle blackmail with Magomba, the most powerful of the Wagogo chiefs. He was of a most avaricious nature. First of all I acknowledged his compliments with two cottons. On arrival at his headquarters, I was waited on by an oily Cabinet of Elders, who would not depart without their "respects"—four cottons. The next demand was made by his favourite, a hideous old Princess with more wrinkles than hair, with no hair black and no tooth white; she was not put right without a fee of six cottons. At last, accompanied by a mob of courtiers, appeared the chief *in magnifico*. He was the only chief who ever entered my tent in Ugogo—pride and a propensity for strong drink prevented such visits. He was much too great a man to call upon Arab merchants, but in our case curiosity mastered State considerations. Magomba was an old man, black and wrinkled, drivelling and decrepid. He wore a coating of castor-oil and a loin-cloth which grease and use had changed from blue to black. He chewed his quid, and expectorated without mercy; he asked many questions, and was all eyes to the main chance. He demanded, and received, five cloths, one coil of brass wire, and four blue cottons. In return he made me a present of the leanest of calves, and when it was driven into



camp with much parade, his son, to crown all, put in a claim for three cottons. Yet Magomba, before our departure, boasted of his generosity—and indeed he was generous, for everything we had was in his hands, and we were truly in his power. It was, indeed, my firm conviction from first to last in this expedition that in case of attack or surprise by natives I had not a soul except my companion to stand by me, and all those who accompanied us would have either betrayed us or fled. We literally, therefore, carried our lives in our hands.

We toiled on and on, suffering severely from the heat by day and sometimes the cold by night, and troubled much with mutinous porters and fears of desertion, until at last we reached the heart of the great desert, or elephant ground, known as Fiery Field. On October 20th we began the transit of this Fiery Field. The waste here appeared in its most horrid phase; a narrow goat-path serpentine in and out of a growth of poisonous thorny jungle, with thin, hard grass straw growing on a glaring white and rolling ground. The march was a severe trial, and we lost on it three boxes of ammunition. By-and-by we passed over the rolling ground, and plunged into a thorny jungle, which seemed interminable, but which gradually thinned out into a forest of thorns and gums, bush and underwood, which afforded a broad path and pleasanter travelling. Unfortunately, it did not last long, and we again had a very rough bit of ground to go over. Another forest to pass

through, and then we came out on October 27th into a clearing studded with large stockaded villages, fields of maize and millet, gourds and watermelons, and showing numerous flocks and herds. We had arrived at Unyamwezi, and our traverse of Ugogo was over.

The people swarmed from their abodes, young and old hustling one another for a better stare; the man forsook his loom and the girl her hoe, and we were welcomed and escorted into the village by a tail of screaming boys and shouting adults, the males almost nude, the women bare to the waist, and clothed only knee-deep in kilts. Leading the way, our guide, according to the immemorial custom of Unyamwezi, entered uninvited and *sans cérémonie* the nearest village; the long string of porters flocked in with bag and baggage, and we followed their example. We were placed under a wall-less roof, bounded on one side by the bars of the village palisade, and surrounded by a mob of starers, who relieved one another from morning to night, which made me feel like a wild beast in a menagerie.

We rested some days at Unyamwezi—the far-famed “Land of the Moon”—but I was urged to advance on the ground that the natives were a dangerous race, though they appeared to be a timid and ignoble people, dripping with castor and sesamum oil, and scantily attired in shreds of cotton or greasy goat-skins. The dangers of the road between Unyamwezi and Ujiji were declared to be great. I found afterwards

that they were grossly exaggerated, but I set forth with the impression that this last stage of my journey would be the worst of all. The country over which we travelled varied very much from day to day, being sometimes opened and streaked with a thin forest of mimosas, and at other times leading us through jungly patches. Going through a thick forest, one of the porters, having imprudently lagged behind, was clubbed and cruelly bruised by three black robbers, who relieved him of his load. These highwaymen were not unusual in this part, and their raids formed one of the many dangers we had to guard against.

On November 7th, 1857, the one hundred and thirty-fourth day from the date of leaving the coast, we entered Kazeh, the principal village of Unyamwezi, much frequented by Arab merchants. I always got on well with the Arabs, and they gave me a most favourable reception. Striking indeed was the contrast between the open-handed hospitality and hearty goodwill of this truly noble race and the niggardliness of the savage and selfish Africans. Whatever I alluded to—onions, plantains, limes, vegetables, tamarinds, coffee, and other things, only to be found amongst the Arabs—were sent at once, and the very name of payment would have been an insult.

Kazeh is situated in Unyamyebe, the principal province of Unyamwezi, and is a great meeting-place of merchants and point of departure for caravans, which then radiate into the interior of Central Intertropical Africa. Here the Arab merchant from



Zanzibar meets his compatriot returning from the Tanganyika and Uruwua. Many of the Arabs settle here for years, and live comfortably, and even splendidly. Their houses, though single storied, are large, substantial, and capable of defence; their gardens are extensive and well planted. They receive regular supplies of merchandise, comforts, and luxuries from the coast; they are surrounded by troops of concubines and slaves; rich men have riding asses from Zanzibar, and even the poorest keep flocks and herds.

I was detained at Kazeh from November 8th until December 14th, and the delay was one long trial of patience.

It is customary for stranger caravans proceeding towards Ujiji to remain six weeks or two months at Unyamyebe for repose and recovery from the labours which they have endured; moreover, they are expected to enjoy the pleasures of civilised society, and to accept the hospitality offered them by the resident Arabs. In Eastern Africa, I may mention, six weeks was the same as the three days' visit in England.

The morning after our arrival at Kazeh a great number of our porters left us, and the rest of our party apparently considered that Unyamyebe, and not Ujiji, was the end of the exploration. Several of them were mutinous when I told them they would not be rewarded for safe-conduct until we had reached the end of the up march, which was not

here ; and these difficulties took a long time to settle. Kazeh, indeed, proved in effect a second point of departure, easier only because I had now gained some experience. Another cause of delay was the sickness of many of our people, and it took some time for them to shake off the ague which they had contracted. Indeed, the wing of Azrael seemed waving over my own head. Nevertheless, on the morning of December 15th I started off afresh, charmed with the prospect of a fine open country, and delighted to get away from what had been to me a veritable imprisonment.

I will not describe the details of our march, which went on without a break. Christmas Day found us still marching, and so on day after day, if I except an enforced halt of twelve days at Msene. On January 10th, 1858, I left Msene, with considerable difficulty through the mutiny of porters ; and so we pressed on, more or less with difficulty, until at last a formidable obstacle to progress presented itself. I had been suffering for some days ; the miasmatic airs of Sorora had sown the seeds of a fresh illness. On the afternoon of January 18th, 1858, I was seized with an attack of fever, and then paralysis set in from the feet upwards, and I was completely *hors de combat*. There seemed nothing left for me but to lie down and die. One of my chief porters declared that the case was beyond his skill : it was one of partial paralysis, brought on by malaria, and he called in an Arab, who looked at me also. The



Arab was more cheerful, and successfully predicted that I should be able to move in ten days. On the tenth I again mounted my ass, but the paralysis wore off very slowly, and prevented me from walking any distance for nearly a year. The sensation of numbness in my hands and feet disappeared even more slowly than that. I had, however, undertaken the journey in a "nothing like leather" frame of mind, and was determined to press on. So we pressed.

We had now left the "Land of the Moon" behind us, and entered upon a new district. The road before us lay through a howling wilderness, and the march lay along the right bank of a malarial river, and the mosquitoes feasted right royally upon our bodies, even in the daytime. A good deal of the ground was very swampy, and it then stretched over jungly and wooded hill-spires, with steep ascents and descents. Everywhere was thick, fœtid, and putrescent vegetation. The heaviness of this march caused two of our porters to levant and another four to strike work. It was, therefore, necessary for me to again mount ass ten days after an attack of paralysis. So we dragged on for the next week, throughout the early days of February, a weary toil of fighting through tiger and spear grass, over broken and slippery paths, and through thick jungle. But these difficulties were lightly borne, for we felt that we must be nearing the end of our journey.

On February 13th we resumed our travel through



screens of lofty grass, which thinned out into a straggling forest. After about an hour's march, as we entered a small savannah, I saw our Arab leader running forward and changing the direction of the caravan. Presently he breasted a steep and stony hill, sparsely clad with thorny trees. Arrived at the summit with toil, for our fagged beasts now refused to proceed, we halted for a few minutes and gazed.

"What is that streak of light which lies below?" I inquired of Seedy Bombay, one of our porters.

"I am of opinion," quoth Seedy, "that is the water."

I gazed in dismay. The remains of my blindness, the veil of trees, and broad ray of sunshine illuminating but one reach of the lake, had shrunk its fair proportions. Prematurely I began to curse my folly in having risked life and health for so poor a prize, and even thought of proposing an immediate return with a view of exploring the Nyanza, or Northern Lake. Advancing, however, a few yards, the whole scene suddenly burst upon my view, filling me with wonder, admiration, and delight. My longing eyes beheld the Tanganyika Lake as it lay in the lap of the mountain, basking in the gorgeous tropical sunshine. Our journey had not been in vain.

## II

### *THE LAKE REGIONS*

I SHALL never forget my first glimpse of Tanganyika. Below and beyond a short foreground of rugged and precipitous hill-fold, down which the footpath zigzagged painfully, a narrow strip of emerald green shelved towards a ribbon of glistening yellow sand, here bordered by sedgy rushes, there cleanly cut by the breaking wavelets. Further in front stretched the waters, an expanse of soft blue, in breadth varying from thirty to thirty-five miles, and sprinkled by the crisp east wind with tiny crescents of snowy foam. The background in front was a high and broken wall of steel-coloured mountain. To the south, and opposite the long, low point, lay bluff headlands, and, as the eye dilated, it fell upon a cluster of outlying islets, speckling a sea horizon. Villages, cultivated lands, the frequent canoes of the fishermen on the waters, and, as we came nearer, the murmur of the waters breaking upon the shore, gave variety and movement to the landscape. The riant shores of this vast lake appeared doubly beautiful to me after the silent and spectral mangrove creeks on the East African seaboard, and the melancholy, monotonous

experience I had gone through of desert and jungle, tawny rock and sunburnt plain, or rank herbage and flats of black mire. Truly it was a feast of soul and sight. Forgetting toils, dangers, and the doubtfulness of return, I felt willing to endure double what I had endured. I had sighted the fabled lake, and all the party seemed to join with me in joy. Even my purblind companion found nothing to grumble at except the "mist and glare before his eyes."

Arrived at Ukaranga I was disappointed to find there a few miserable grass huts that clustered around a single "tembe," or inn, then occupied by its proprietor, an Arab trader. I found that that part of Ukaranga contained not a single native canoe, and there seemed no possibility of getting one, the inn-keeper being determined that I should spend beads for rations and lodgings among him and his companions, and be heavily mulcted for a boat into the bargain. The latter manœuvre was frustrated by my securing a solid-built Arab craft for the morrow, capable of containing from thirty to thirty-five men. It belonged to an absent merchant, and in point of size it was second on Tanganyika, and, being too large for paddling, the crew rowed, instead of scooping up the water like the natives. I paid an exorbitant price for the hire of this boat.

Early in the morning of the following day, February 14th, we began coasting along the eastern shore of the lake in a north-westerly direction, towards the



Kawele district, in the land of Ujiji. The view was exceedingly beautiful, and the picturesque and varied forms of the mountains, rising above and dipping into the lake, were clad in purplish blue, set off by the rosy tints of the morning. As we approached our destination, I wondered at the absence of houses and people. By the Arabs I had been taught to expect a town, a port, and a bazaar excelling in size that of Zanzibar, instead of which I found a few scattered hovels, and our craft was poled up through a hole in a thick welting of coarse grass to a level landing-place of flat shingle. Such was the disembarkation quay of the great Ujiji.

We stepped ashore. Around the landing-place a few scattered huts represented the port-town. Advancing some hundred yards through a din of shouts and screams, tom-toms and trumpets, which defies description, and mobbed by a swarm of black beings whose eyes seemed about to start from their heads with surprise, I passed a relic of Arab civilisation, the bazaar. It was on a plot of higher ground, and there, between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., weather permitting, a mass of standing and squatting negroes buy and sell, barter and exchange, offer and chaffer, with a hubbub heard for miles. The articles exposed for sale were sometimes goats and sheep and poultry, generally fish, vegetables, and a few fruits, and palm wine was a staple commodity. Occasionally an ivory or a slave was hawked about. Such was the little village of Kawele. The Tanganyika is ever seen to advantage

from its shores, and here I found a lodging in a ruinous tembe inn, built by an Arab merchant, where I was lodged in comparative comfort, though the tembe was tenanted only by ticks and slaves.

As the tembe was to be my home for a space, my first care was to purify the floor by pastilles of asafoetida and fumigations of gunpowder ; the second to prepare the roof for the rainy season. Improvement, however, was slow, for the natives were too lazy to work, and the porters took the earliest opportunity of deserting. I, however, managed to provide a pair of cartels, with substitutes for chairs and tables. Benches of clay were built round the rooms, but they proved useless, being found regularly every morning occupied in force by a swarming, struggling colony of white ants. The roof, long overgrown with tall grass, was fortified with mud ; it never ceased, however, to leak like a colander, and presently the floor was covered with deep puddles, then masses of earth dropped from the soft sides of the walls, and, at last, during the violent showers, half the building fell in.

On the second day of my arrival I was called upon by Kannena, the headman of Kawele. He was introduced, habited in silk turban and a broadcloth coat, which I afterwards heard he had borrowed from the Baloch. His aspect was truly ignoble ; a short, squat, and broad-backed figure, and his apology for a nose much resembled the pug with which the ancients provided Silenus. On this, his first appear-



ance, he behaved with remarkable civility, and proceeded to levy his blackmail, which was finally settled at ten coil-bracelets and two fundi of beads. I had no salt to spare, or much valuable merchandise might have been saved. Their return was six small bundles of grain. Then Kannena opened trade by sending us a nominal gift, a fine ivory, weighing at least seventy pounds, and worth, perhaps, £100. After keeping it a day or two I returned it, saying I had no dealings in ivory and slaves. This, it appears, was a mistake, as I ought, by a trifling outlay, to have supported the character of a trader. The Wajiji did not understand. "These are men who live by doing nothing!" they exclaimed, and they lost no time in requesting me to quit their territory. To this I objected, and endeavoured to bribe them off. My bribes, I suppose, were not sufficient, for we at once began to see the dark side of the native character. Thieves broke into our out-houses, our asses were wounded by spears, and we were accused of having bewitched and killed their cattle. Still, other travellers fared even worse than we did.

At first the cold, damp climate of the lake regions did not agree with us; perhaps, too, the fish diet was over-rich and fat, and the abundance of vegetables led to little excesses. All energy seemed to have abandoned us. I lay for a fortnight upon the earth, too blind to read and write except at long intervals, too weak to ride, and too ill to talk. My com-



panion, Speke, who, when we arrived at the Tanganyika Lake, was almost as groggy upon his legs as I was, suffered from a painful ophthalmia and a curious distortion of face, which made him chew sideways, like a ruminant. The Baloch complained of influenzas and catarrhs, and their tempers were as sore as their lungs and throats.

But work remained undone, and it was necessary to awaken from my lethargy. Being determined to explore the northern extremity of the Tanganyika Lake, whence, according to several informants, issued a large river flowing northwards, I tried to hire from an Arab merchant the only dhow, or sailing boat, then in existence, since the wretched canoes of the people were quite unfit for a long cruise. I entrusted the mission first of all to my Arab, Said bin Salim, but he shirked it, and I therefore directed my companion to do his best. I got the dhow, and set about stocking it with provisions for a month's cruise. I had great difficulty in obtaining sufficient provisions, the prices demanded were so exorbitant. After many delays I at last sent my companion away, supplied with an ample outfit, escorted by two Baloch, and attended by his men, across the Bay of Ukaranga. I was then left alone.

During my twenty-seven days of solitude the time sped quickly; it was chiefly spent in eating and drinking, dozing and smoking. Awaking at 2 a.m. or 3 a.m., I lay anxiously expecting the grey light creeping through the door chinks; the glad tidings of

its approach were announced by the cawing of the crows and the crowing of the village cocks. When the golden rays began to stream over the red earth, my torpid servant was called out, and he brought me a mass of suji, or rice-flour boiled in water, with a little cold milk as a relish. Then entered the "slavey" of the establishment, armed with a leafy branch, to sweep the floor and slay the huge wasps that riddled the walls of the tenement. This done, he lit the fire, as the excessive damp rendered this precaution necessary. Then ensued visits of ceremony from Said bin Salim and another, who sat, stared, and seeing that I was not yet dead, showed disappointment in their faces and walked away. So the morning wore on. My servant was employed with tailoring, gun-cleaning, and similar light work, over which he grumbled perpetually, whilst I settled down to diaries and vocabularies, a process interrupted by sundry pipes. We had two hours' sleep at noon, and I may say that most of the day I lay like a log upon my cot, smoking almost uninterruptedly, dreaming of things past and visioning things present, and sometimes indulging myself in a few lines of reading and writing.

Dinner was an alternation of fish and fowl, butchers' meat being extremely rare at Ujiji. At evening I used to make an attempt to sit under the broad eaves of the tembe and enjoy the delicious spectacle of this virgin nature. I was still very weak.

At 7 p.m., as the last flush faded from the occident,

the lamp, a wick in a pot full of palm oil, was brought in, Said bin Salim would appear, and a brief conversation led to the hour of sleep. A dreary, dismal day, yet it had its enjoyments.

On March 29th the rattling of the matchlocks announced my companion's return. I never saw a man so thoroughly moist and mildewed; he justified even the French phrase, "Wet to the bone." His paraphernalia were in a similar state; his guns were grained with rust, and his fireproof powder magazine had admitted the monsoon rain. I was sorely disappointed; he had done literally nothing. I cannot explain where the mismanagement lay, but the result was that he had come back to me without boat or provisions to report ill-success.

It now became apparent that the rainy season was drawing to a close, and the time for navigation was beginning. After some preliminaries with Said bin Salim, Kannena, who had been preparing for a cruise northward, was summoned before me. He agreed to convey me; but when I asked him the conditions on which he would show me the mtoni, or river, he jumped up, discharged a volley of oaths, and sprang from the house like a baboon. I was resolved, however, at all costs, even if we were reduced to actual want, to visit this mysterious stream. I made other overtures to Kannena, made him many promises, and threw over his shoulders a six-foot length of scarlet broadcloth, which made him tremble with joy. I ultimately secured two large canoes and fifty-five men.



On April 12th my canoe, bearing for the first time the British flag, stood out of Bangwe Bay, and, followed by my companion in another canoe, we made for the cloudy and storm-vexed north. There were great rejoicings at our arrival at Uvira, the northernmost station to which merchants had at that time been admitted. Opposite still, rose in a high, broken line the mountains of the inhospitable Urundi, apparently prolonged beyond the northern extremity of the waters. The breadth of the Tanganyika here is between seven and eight miles. Now my hopes were dashed to the ground; the stalwart sons of the chief Maruta visited me, and told me that they had been to the northern extremity, and that the Rusizi enters into, and does not flow out of, the Tanganyika. I was sick at heart. It appears that my companion had misunderstood, and our guide now told us that he had never been beyond Uvira, and never intended to go; so we stopped here nine days, and I got such a bad ulceration of the tongue that I could not speak. The chiefs came and claimed their blackmail, and also Kannena, so I had to pay up all for nothing, as the gales began to threaten, and our crews insisted on putting to lake on May 6th.

We touched at various stages about the lake, and anchored at Mzimu, but we left again at sunset; the waves began to rise, the wind also, and it rained in torrents. It was a doubt whether the cockleshell craft could live through a short, choppy sea in heavy weather. I sheltered myself in my mackintosh as best

I might. Fortunately the rain beat down the wind and the sea, or nothing could have saved us. The next morning Mabruki rushed into my tent, thrust a sword into my hands, and declared the Warundi were upon us, and that the crews were rushing to the boats and pushing them off. Knowing that they would leave us stranded in case of danger, we hurried in without delay ; but no enemy appeared. It was a false alarm.

On May 11th we paddled about a grassy inlet ; on the 12th we paddled again, and the next day we spent in Bangwe Bay. We were too proud to sneak home in the dark ; we had done the expedition, and we wanted to be looked at by the fair and howled at by the valiant.

The next morning we appeared at the entrance of Kawele, and had a triumphal entrance. The people of the whole country-side assembled to welcome us, and pressed waist-deep into the water. My companion and I were repeatedly called for, but true merit is always modest. We regained our old tembe, were salaamed to by everybody, and it felt like a return home. The upshot of it all was this—we had expended upwards of a month exploring the Tanganyika Lake.

I had explored it thoroughly. My health now began to improve, my strength increased ; my feet were still swollen, but my hands lost their numbness, and I could again read and write. A relieved mind had helped on this recovery—the object of my expedi-



tion was now effected—and I threw off the burden of grinding care with which the prospect of a probable failure had sorely laden me.<sup>1</sup>

The rainy monsoon broke up after our return to Kawele, and the climate became most enjoyable, but it was accompanied by that inexplicable melancholy peculiar to tropical countries. I have never felt this sadness in Egypt and Arabia, but I was never without it in India and Zanzibar. We were expecting stores and provisions, but we got not one single word from the agents who were to forward our things, and want began to stare us in the face. Money was a necessity, or its equivalent. I had to engage porters for the hammocks, feed seventy-five mouths, to fee several chieftains, and to incur the heavy expenses of two hundred and sixty miles' marching back to Unyamwebe, so I had to supplement the sum allowed me by the Royal Geographical Society with my own little patrimony. One thousand pounds does not go very far when it has to be divided amongst two hundred greedy savages in two and a half years.

On May 22nd our ears were gladdened by the sound of musket-shots announcing arrivals, and then, after a long silence of eleven months, there arrived a caravan with boxes, bales, porters, slaves, and a parcel of papers and letters from Europe, India, and Zanzibar. How we pounced upon them! Here we first knew of the Indian Mutiny. The caravan

<sup>1</sup> At the time of which I write (1858) the Tanganyika had never before been visited by any European.



arrived at a crisis when it was really wanted, but as my agent could not find porters for all the packages, he had kept back some of them, and what he sent me were the least useful. They would suffice to take us back to Unyamyebe, but were wholly inadequate for exploring the southern end of Tanganyika, far less for returning to Zanzibar *viâ* the Nyassa Lake and Kilwa, as I had hoped to do.

On May 26th, 1858, we set out on our homeward journey, and left Kawele *en route* for Unyamyebe. I shall never forget my last sunrise look on Tanganyika. The mists, luminously fringed with purple, were cut by filmy rays ; the living fire shot forth broad beams over the light blue waters of the lake, and a soft breeze, the breath of the morning, awoke the waves into life.

I had great difficulties in getting away, but at nine o'clock we departed with a full gang of porters, and advanced until the evening. Many troubles arose : a porter placed his burden upon the ground and levanted, and being cognac and vinegar it was deeply regretted ; then the Unyamwezi guide, because his newly purchased slave girl had become footsore and unable to walk, cut her head off. All these disagreeables I was obliged to smooth down as best I could. Then there was a great dread of savage tribes, and there was also a fear of conflagration, a sort of prairie fire.

A sheet of flame, beginning with the size of a spark, would overspread the hillside, advancing on the wings

of the wind with the roaring, rushing sound of many hosts, where the grass was thick, shooting huge forked tongues high into the air, and tall trees, the patriarchs of the forest, yielded their lives to the blast. Onward the fire would sweep, smouldering and darkening where the rock afforded scanty fuel, then flickering, blazing up, and soaring on again over the brow of the hill, until the sheet became a thin line of fire, gradually vanishing from the view.

On October 4th, after a week of halts and snails' marches, we at last reached Hanga, our former quarters in the western confines of the Unyamyebe district. Here my companion was taken seriously ill, and immediately after our arrival at this foul village, where we were lodged in a sort of cow-house, full of vermin and exposed directly to the fury of the cold gales, he complained, in addition to the deaf ear, an inflamed eye, and a swollen face, of a mysterious pain, which he knew not whether to attribute to the liver or the spleen. Shortly after this his mind began to wander, and then he underwent three fits of an epileptic description, which more closely resembled those of hydrophobia than any I have ever witnessed. He was haunted by a crowd of hideous devils, giants, and lion-headed demons, who were wrenching and stripping the sinews and tendons of his legs. He began to utter a barking noise, with a peculiar chopping motion of the mouth and tongue. When the third spasm was over, he called for pen and paper, and, fearing that increased weakness of mind and body might prevent any further

exertion, he wrote an incoherent letter of farewell to his family. That, however, was the crisis, and he afterwards spent a better night; the pains were mitigated, or, as he expressed it, "the knives were sheathed."

As we were threatened with want of water on the way, I prepared for that difficulty by packing a box with empty bottles, which, when occasion required, might be filled at the springs. The zemzemiyah, or travelling canteen of the East African, was everywhere a long-necked gourd, slung to the shoulder by a string. But it became offensive after some use, and could never be entrusted to a servant for a mile before its contents were exhausted.

We left Hanga, my companion being now better, on October 13th. Seven short marches between that place and Tura occupied fifteen days, a serious waste of time, caused by the craving of the porters for their homes.

The stages now appeared shorter, the sun cooler, the breeze warmer, for, after fourteen months of incessant fevers, we had become tolerably acclimatised; we were now loud in praise, as we had been in censure, of the water and air. Before re-entering the Fiery Field the hire for carrying hammocks became so exorbitant that I dismissed the bearers, drew on my jack-boots, mounted the Zanzibar ass, and appeared once more as the mtongi of a caravan. My companion was also now able to ride.

At Eastern Tura, where we arrived on October 28th,



a halt was occasioned by the necessity of providing and preparing food for the week's march through the Fiery Field. The caravan was then mustered, and it completed altogether a party of one hundred and fifty-two souls.

On November 3rd the caravan, issuing from Tura, plunged manfully into the Fiery Field, and after seven marches in as many days—we halted for breath and forage at the Round Stone—Jiwe la Mkoa. Here we procured a few rations, and resumed our way on November 12th, and in two days exchanged, with a sensible pleasure, the dull expanse of dry brown bush and brushwood for the fertile red plain of Mdaburn. At that point began our re-transit of Ugogo, where I had been taught to expect accidents; they resolved themselves into nothing more than the disappearance of cloth and beads in inordinate quantities. The Wanyamwezi porters seemed even more timid on the down journey than on the up march. They slink about like curs, and the fierce look of a Mgogo boy was enough to strike terror into their hearts. One of them would frequently indulge me in a dialogue like the following, which may serve as a specimen of our conversation in East Africa:—

“The state, Mdula?” (*i.e.*, Abdullah, a word unpronounceable to negroid organs).

“The state is very! (well), and thy state?”

“The state is very! (well), and the state of Spikka?” (my companion).

“The state of Spikka is very! (well).”

“We have escaped the Wagogo, white man O!”

“We have escaped, O my brother!”

“The Wagogo are bad!”

“They are bad!”

“The Wagogo are very bad!”

“They are very bad!”

“The Wagogo are not good!”

“They are not good!”

“The Wagogo are not at all good!”

“They are not at all good!”

“I greatly feared the Wagogo, who killed the Wanyamwezi!”

“Exactly so!”

“But now I don’t fear them. I call them ——s and ——s, and I would fight the whole tribe, white man O!”

“Truly so, O my brother!”

And so on for two mortal hours.

The transit of Ugogo occupied three weeks, from November 14th to December 5th. In Kanyenye we were joined by a large caravan of Wanyamwezi, carrying ivories. On December 6th we arrived at a halting place in the Ugogi Dhun, and were greeted by another caravan, freshly arrived, commanded by Hindus, who, after receiving and returning news with much solemnity, presently drew forth a packet of papers and letters, which as usual promised trouble, and the inevitable—to me—“official wiggling.” I also received the following pleasant letter:—



DEAR BURTON,

Go ahead ! Vogel and Macguire dead—murdered. Write often to

Yours truly,  
N.S.

At Ugogo, which, it will be remembered, is considered the half-way station between Unyamwebe and the coast, we were detained a day through difficulties with porters, who declared there was a famine upon the road we had previously traversed, and also that a great chief, who was also a great extortioner, was likely to insist upon our calling upon him in person, which would involve a change of route. However, there was nothing to be done but to take the road. We loaded on December 7th, and began the passage of the Usagara Mountains, going this time by the Kiringawana route.

Travelling by a roundabout way, we arrived at the village of the chief Kiringawana on December 19th, and the next day proceeded to palaver. After abundant chaffering, the chief accepted from the expedition three expensive coloured cloths and other things, grumbling the while because we had neglected to reserve for him something more worthy his acceptance ; he returned a fat bullock, which was instantly shot and devoured.

We resumed our march on December 22nd, which was almost entirely down-hill. We crossed in a blazing sun the fœtid plain, and after finding with some difficulty the jungly path, we struck into a



pleasant forest. Presently we emerged again upon the extremity of the Makata Plain, a hideous low level of black vegetable earth, peaty in appearance, and bearing long puddles of dark and stagnant rain-water—mere horse-ponds, with the additional qualities of miasma and mosquitoes. The transit of this plain took some days.

The dawn of Christmas Day, 1858, saw us toiling along the Kikoboga River, which we forded four times. The road presently turned up a rough rise, from whose crest began the descent of the Mabruki Pass. The descent was very steep and rough; the path, spanning rough ground at the hill base, led us to the plains of Uziraha in K'hutu.

We had reserved a bullock in honour of Christmas Day, but as he was lost, I ordered the purchase of half a dozen goats to celebrate it, but the porters were too lazy to collect them. My companion and I made good cheer upon a fat capon, which acted as roast beef, with a mess of ground-nuts sweetened with sugar-cane, which did duty as plum-pudding.

We started off again and entered Zungomero on December 29th. An army of black musketeers, in scanty but various and gaudy attire, came out to meet us, and with the usual shots and shouts conducted us to the headman's house. They then stared at us, as usual, for half a dozen consecutive hours, which done, they retired to rest.

We stayed at Zungomero some time and celebrated the New Year there, but January 21st, 1859, enabled

us to bid it adieu and merrily take to the footpath way. We made Konduchi on February 3rd, after twelve marches, which we accomplished in fourteen days. There is little of interest or adventure to record in this return line, for we travelled over much the same ground we had done before.

As the mud near Dut'humi was throat-deep, we crossed it lower down—a weary trudge of several miles through thick, slabby mire, which admitted a man to his knees. In places, after toiling under a sickly sun, we crept under tunnels of thick jungle growth, the dank and foetid cold causing a deadly sensation of faintness, which was only relieved by the glass of æther sherbet, a pipe or two of the strongest tobacco, and half an hour's rest.

On January 30th our natives of Zanzibar screamed with delight at the sight of the monkey-tree, an old, familiar sight to them. On February 2nd we greeted, with doffed caps, and with three times three and one more, as Britons will do on such occasions, the kindly, smiling face of our father Neptune as he lay basking in the sunbeams between earth and air. February 3rd saw us winding through the poles decorated with skulls—a sort of negro Temple Bar—which pointed out the way into the little village of Konduchi.

Our return was attended with much ceremony: the war-men danced, shot, and shouted; a rabble of adults, youths, and boys crowded upon us; the fair sex lulliloo'd with vigour; and a general procession

conducted us to a hut, swept, cleaned, and garnished for us by the principal banyan of the village, and there they laughed and stared at us until they could laugh and stare no more.

We were detained at Konduchi for some days, and on February 9th the battela and the stores required for our trip arrived from Zanzibar, and the next day saw us rolling down the coast towards the Island of Zanzibar, where we landed on March 4th, 1859. I was taken ill there, and my companion went home alone—thereby hangs a tale. But I recovered after a while, and left Zanzibar for Aden to catch the homeward boat. I bade adieu to the “coal-hole of the East” on April 28th, 1859, and in due time arrived once more on the shores of Old England, after an absence of two years and eight months.



*THE CITY OF THE MORMONS*

1860



# I

## THE JOURNEY

I HAD long determined to add the last new name—Great Salt Lake City—to my list of Holy Cities ; to visit the new rival, *soi-disant*, of Memphis, Benares, Jerusalem, Rome, and Meccah ; and to observe the origin and working of a regular go-ahead Western revelation. Mingled with the wish of prospecting the city of the Mormons from a spiritual point of view was the mundane desire of enjoying a little skirmishing with the savages, who had lately been giving the “pale-faces” tough work to do.

The man was ready, the hour hardly appeared propitious for other than belligerent purposes. Throughout the summer of 1860 an Indian war was raging in Nebraska ; the Comanches, Kiowas, and Cheyennes were “out” ; the Federal Government had despatched three columns to the centres of confusion ; intestine feuds amongst the aborigines were talked of ; the Dakota, or Sioux, had threatened to “wipe out” their old foe the Pawnee. Both tribes were possessors of the soil over which the road to Great Salt Lake City ran. Horrible accounts of murdered post-boys and cannibal emigrants, grossly exaggerated



as usual, filled the papers. "Going amongst the Mormons!" said a friend to me at New Orleans. "They are shooting and cutting one another in all directions. How can *you* expect to escape?" But sagely reflecting that "dangers which loom large from afar generally lose size as one draws near," and that even the Mormons might turn out less black than they were painted, I resolved to run the risk of the "red nightcap" from the bloodthirsty Indians and the poisoned bowie-dagger from the jealous Latter-Day Saints. I therefore applied myself to then audacious task of an expedition to the City of the Mormons.

There were three roads to be chosen from—the three main lines, perhaps, for a Pacific railway between the Mississippi and the Western Ocean—the northern, the central, and the southern. The first, or British, was not to be thought of, since it involved semi-starvation, a possible plundering by the Bedouins, and, what was far worse, five or six months of slow travel. The third, or southern, took twenty-four days and nights, and the journey was accompanied by excessive heat in a malarial climate, to say nothing of poisonous food. There remained only the central road, which has two branches; of these I chose the great emigrant road from Missouri to California. The mail coach on this line was not what one would call luxurious, and the hours of halting-places were badly selected. The schedule time from St. Joseph, Missouri, to Great Salt Lake City was twenty-one days; we accomplished

it, it turned out, in nineteen. I therefore travelled to St. Joseph, disrespectfully known as St. Jo, bought my ticket, and prepared to start.

An important part in my preparations was the kit, which in my case was represented as follows :—One India-rubber blanket, pierced in the centre for a poncho, and with buttons and elastic loops, which converted it into a carpet bag. I ought to have added a buffalo robe as a bed, but ignorance prevented. With one's coat as a pillow, a buffalo robe, and a blanket, one might defy the dangerous "bunks" of the stations. For weapons I carried two revolvers. In those days, from the moment of leaving St. Joseph to the time of reaching Placerville or Sacramento, the pistol ought never to be absent from a man's right hand, nor the bowie-knife from his left. Contingencies with Indians and others might happen, when the difference of an instant might save life. In dangerous places the revolver should be discharged and loaded every morning, both for the purpose of keeping the hand in and doing the weapon justice. A revolver is an admirable tool when properly used. Those, however, who are too idle or careless to attend to it had better carry a pair of "Derringers." I took also some opium, which is invaluable on the prairie, and some other drugs against fever. The "holy weed, Nicotian," was not forgotten, for cigars were most useful, as the driver either received or took the lion's share. The prairie traveller was not very particular about his clothes; the easiest dress was a dark flannel shirt, worn over



the normal article, no braces, but a broad leather belt for a six-shooter and a "Kansas tooth-pick," a long clasp-knife. The nether garments were forked with good buckskin, or they would infallibly have given out, and the lower ends were tucked into the boots, after the sensible fashion of our grandfathers. In cold weather—the nights were rarely warm—there was nothing better than an old English shooting-jacket; for riding or driving a large pair of buckskin gloves, or rather gauntlets, were advisable, and we did not forget spurs. The best hat was a brown felt, which, by boring holes around the brim to admit a ribbon, could be converted into a riding-hat or a nightcap, as you pleased. Having got my kit and purchased my ticket, I was ready to start.

Precisely at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, August 7th, 1860, there appeared in front of the Patee House, the Fifth Avenue Hotel of St. Joseph, the vehicle destined to be my home for the next three weeks. I scrutinised it curiously. It was what was known as a "concord coach," a spring waggon, of which the body is shaped something like an English tax-cart considerably magnified. It paid no regard to appearances, but was safe, strong, and light. The wheels were five to six feet apart, affording security against capsizing; the tyres were of unusual thickness, and polished like steel by the hard, dry ground. The waggon bed was supported by iron bands, and the whole bed was covered with stout osnaburg, supported by strong bars of white oak. There was a sunshade, or hood, in front where



the driver sat, a curtain behind, which could be raised or lowered at discretion, and four flaps on each side, either folded up, or fastened down with hooks and eyes. The coach was drawn by a team of four mules, which were much preferred to horses as being more enduring. The rate of travel, on an average, was five miles an hour. This was good; between seven and eight was the maximum, which sank in hilly country to three or four.

We were detained more than an hour before we started. Our "plunder," as they called the luggage, was clapped on with little ceremony, and when all was packed away (and a good deal of the comfort of the journey depended on the packing), we rattled through the dusty roads of St. Jo, got on the steam ferry, which conveyed us from the right to the left bank of the Missouri River, and landed us in "bleeding" Kansas. We then fell at once into the emigrant road, as it was called, to the Far West, a great thoroughfare at this point, open, broad, and well worn as a European turnpike or a Roman military road, and undoubtedly the best and longest natural highway in the world.

At first the scene was one of a luxuriant vegetation; but after an hour of burning sun and sickly damp, the effects of the late storms, we emerged from the waste of vegetation on to the region of the Grand Prairie. Over the rolling surface, which rarely broke into hill or dale, lay a tapestry of thick grass, already turning to a ruddy yellow under the influence of

approaching autumn. Nothing, I may remark, is more monotonous, except the African and Indian jungle, than these prairie tracks. You saw, as it were, the ends of the earth, and looked around in vain for some object upon which the eye might rest ; it wanted the sublimity of repose so suggestive in the sandy deserts, and the perpetual motion so pleasing in the aspect of the sea.

Passing through a few wretched shanties called Troy, in Syracuse, we arrived about three o'clock at Cold Springs, where we were allowed an hour's halt to dine and change mules. The scene was the "rale" Far West. The widow body to whom the shanty of the station belonged lay sick with fever, and the aspect of her family was a "caution to snakes." The ill-conditioned sons dawdled about, listless as Indians, in skin tunics, and the daughters, whose sole attire was apparently a calico morning wrapper, waited on us in a grudging way in the wretched log hut, which appeared ignorant of the duster and the broom. Myriads of flies disputed with us a dinner consisting of dough-nuts, suspicious eggs in a greasy fritter, and rusty bacon, intolerably fat. It was our first sight of squatter life, and, except in two cases, it was our worst.

We drove on all the afternoon and all the night, except for a halt for supper. The last part of our journey was performed under a heavy thunderstorm. Gusts of violent wind whizzed overhead, thunder crashed and rattled, and vivid lightning, flashing out of the murky depths around, made earth and air



one blaze of fire. We arrived about one o'clock a.m. at Locknan's station, a few log huts near a creek. Here we found beds and snatched an hour of sleep. So passed the first day.

It is not my purpose to describe the journey day by day, for it lasted nineteen days, and one day was often much like another. I shall therefore content myself with picking out the chief points of interest on the route.

Before long the prairies wore a burnt-up aspect. As far as the eye could see the tintage was that of the Arabian desert. It was still, however, too early for prairie fires, and I therefore did not witness this magnificent spectacle. In some parts, where the grass is tall and rank, and the roaring flames leap before the fire with the stride of a maddened horse, the danger is imminent, and the spectacle must be one of awful sublimity.

I said at first that the prairie scenery was monotonous, and so on the whole it was, but every now and then we came upon beautiful oases in the desert. Such was the valley of the Little Blue River, fringed with emerald-green oak groves, cotton wood, and long-leaved willow. As we got on to the tableland above this river, between that and the River Platte, the evening approached, and a smile from above lit up into perfect beauty the features of the world below. It was a glorious sunset. Stratum upon stratum of cloud banks, burnished to golden red in the vicinity of the setting sun, and polished to dazzling silvery white



above, lay piled half-way from the horizon to the zenith, with a distinct strike towards a vanishing point to the west and dipping into a gateway, through which the orb of day slowly retired. Overhead floated, in a sea of amber and yellow, pink and green heavy purple clouds, whilst in the east black and blue were so curiously blended that the eye could not distinguish whether it rested upon a darkening air or a lowering thunder-cloud. We enjoyed these beauties, I am glad to say, in silence ; not a soul said "Look there !" or "How pretty !"

When we came to the fork of the great River Platte we saw from time to time a line of Indian removes. This meant that these wild people were shifting their quarters for grass, and when it became a little colder they sought some winter abode on the banks of a stream which supplied fuel and where they could find meat, so that with warmth and food, song and talk, and smoke and sleep, they could while away the dull and dreary winter.

The remove of an Indian village presented an interesting sight. The animated and shifting scene of bucks and braves, squaws and papooses, ponies dwarfed by bad breeding and hard living, dogs and puppies—all straggled over the plains westward. In front, singly or in pairs, rode the men, as if born upon, and bred to become part of, the animal ; some went bare-backed, others rode upon a saddle tree. In some cases the saddle was trimmed with bead hangings. Their long, lank, thick, brownish-black

hair, ruddy from the effects of the weather, was worn parted in the middle. This parting in men, as well as in women, was generally coloured with vermilion, and plates of brass or tin were inserted into the front hair. They wore many ornaments, and the body dress was a tight-sleeved waistcoat over an American cotton shirt, scarlet and blue being the colours preferred. The garb ended with buckskin leggings and moccasins. The braves were armed with small tomahawks, or iron hatchets, which they carried with the powder horn in the belt on the right side. Their nags were lean and ungroomed. They treat them as cruelly as do the Somali, yet nothing—short of whiskey—could persuade an Indian warrior to part with his favourite steed. Behind the warriors and the braves followed the baggage of the village. The rich squaws rode in litters, the poorer followed their pack-horses on foot. Their garb did not a little resemble their lords, and I saw no great beauty among them, young or old, rich or poor. *La belle savage* of the party had large and languishing eyes, dentists' teeth that glittered, and silky, long, black hair like the ears of a Blenheim spaniel. Her ears and neck were laden with tinsel ornaments, and she was very finely dressed. There was with the cavalcade a great company of boys and girls.

On the sixth day we crossed the Platte. We had spent most of the night in the waggon, most uncomfortably. At 3.15 a.m., hungry and thirsty, and by no means in the best of humours, we heard with joy the

savage "Yep, yep, yep," with which the driver was wont to announce our approach to a station. Presently the plank lodging appeared through the darkness. We sprang out of the ambulance ; but all was dark and silent as the grave : the station was asleep. A heavy kick opened the door of the restaurant, when a wheezy, drowsy voice from an inner room asked us in German-English, "And how ze komen in ?" Without waiting to answer we pulled the owner of it out of bed, and ordered supper, refreshment, and repose. But he raised all sorts of difficulties, and it ended with our sitting down and staring at the fire and waiting for the vile food which he provided for our breakfast. I should like here to describe an ordinary prairie breakfast, the one which greeted us nearly all through our journey. First, the coffee, three parts burnt beans, which had been duly ground to a fine powder and exposed to the air lest the aroma should prove too strong for us. It was placed on the stove to simmer, till every noxious principle was duly extracted from it. Then the rusty bacon, cut into thick slices, was thrust into the frying-pan ; here the gridiron was unknown. Thirdly, antelope steak, cut off a carcase suspended for the benefit of flies outside was placed to stew within influence of the bacon's aroma. Lastly came the bread, which, of course, should have been cooked first. The meal was kneaded with water and a pinch of salt ; the raising was done by means of a little sour malt, or more generally by the deleterious yeast powders of the trade. The dough, after having



been sufficiently manipulated, was divided into dough-nuts, or biscuits, and finally it was placed to be half-cooked under the immediate influence of the rusty bacon and rancid antelope. Uncle Sam's stove was a triumph of convenience, cheapness, unwholesomeness, and nastiness. It made everything taste like its neighbour ; by virtue of it mutton borrowed the flavour of fish, and tomatoes resolved themselves into the flavour of greens.

One of the most notable points of our journey was Scott's Bluffs, the last of the great marl formations which break the dull uniformity of the prairies. Before we came to them we passed the far-famed Chimney Rock, which lies two and a half miles from the south bank of the Platte. Viewed from the south-east, it was not unlike a gigantic jack-boot poised on a high pyramidal mound ; I took a sketch of it. Scott's Bluffs are far more striking and attractive objects ; indeed, they excel the Castle Craig of Drachenfels or any of the beauties of the romantic Rhine. From the distance of a day's march they appeared in the shape of a large blue mound. As you approached within four or five miles, a massive mediæval city gradually defined itself, clustering with wonderful fulness of detail round a colossal fortress, and crowned with a royal castle. It was indeed a beautiful castle on the rock, and that nothing may be wanting to the resemblance, the dashing rains and angry winds have cut the old line of road at its base into a regular moat with a semicircular sweep, which the mirage fills with

a mimic river. Quaint figures develop themselves, guards and sentinels in dark armour keep watch and ward upon the slopes, the lion of Bastia crouched unmistakably overlooking the road, and, as the shades of evening closed in, so weird was its aspect that one might almost expect to see some spectral horseman go his rounds about the broken walls. At a nearer aspect the quaint illusion vanished, the lines of masonry became great layers of boulder, curtains and angles changed to the gnashing rents of ages, and the warriors were transformed into dwarf cedars and dense shrubs. Travellers have compared Scott's Bluffs to Gibraltar, to the Capitol at Washington, and to Stirling Castle ; I could think of nothing in its presence but the Arabs' "City of Brass," that mysterious abode of bewitched infidels, which often appears to the wayfarer toiling under the sun, but which for ever eludes his nearer search.

On our last day in the Platte Valley, just before we entered the Sioux territory, we came to Horseshoe station, which was impressed upon my memory by one thing, which I shall presently explain. We were struck by the aspect of the buildings, which were on an extensive scale ; in fact, got up regardless of expense. An immense silence, however, reigned. At last, by hard knocking, we were admitted into a house with a Floridan verandah. By the pretensions of the room we were at once threatened with a "lady." Our mishap was really worse than we expected, for in reality we were exposed to two "ladies," and one of



these was a Bloomer. This, it is fair to state, was the only hermaphrodite of the kind that ever met my eyes in the States ; the great founder of the Bloomer order has long since subsided into her original obscurity, and her acolytes have relapsed into petticoats. The Bloomer was an uncouth being, her hair, cut level with her eyes, depended with the graceful curl of a drake's tail around a fat and flabby countenance, whose only expression was sullen insolence. Her body-dress, glazed brown calico, fitted her somewhat like a soldier's tunic, developing haunches which would be admired only in venison ; and—curious inconsequence of woman's nature !—all this sacrifice of appearance upon the shrine of comfort did not prevent her wearing that kind of crinoline depicted by Mr. *Punch* around "our Mary Hanne." The pantolettes of glazed brown calico, like the vest, tunic, blouse, shirt, or whatever they may call it, were in peg-top style, admirably setting off a pair of thin-soled, Frenchified, patent-leather bottines, with elastic sides, which contained feet as large, broad, and flat as a negro's in Africa. The dear creature had a husband : it was hardly safe to look at her, and as for sketching her, I avoided it. The other "lady," though more decently attired, was like women in this wild part of the world generally—cold and disagreeable, with a touch-me-not air, which reminded me of a certain

Miss Baxter,

Who refused a man before he axed her.

Her husband was the renowned Slade, who had the



reputation of having killed his three men. This pleasant individual "for an evening party" wore a revolver and bowie-knife here, there, and everywhere. It at once became evident that this station was not conducted for the public convenience. One of our party who had ventured into the kitchen was fiercely ejected by the "ladies," and, asking for dormitories, we were informed that lady travellers were admitted into the house, but men could sleep where they could. We found a barn outside; it was hardly fit for a decently brought up pig: the floor was damp and knotty; there was not even a door to keep out the night breeze; and several drunken fellows lay about in different parts of it. Into this disreputable hole we were all thrust for the night. "May gracious Heaven," I prayed, "keep us safe from all 'ladies' in future!" Better a hundred times the squaw, with her uncleanness and her civility!

It was about the tenth day of our journey that the formation of the land began to warn us that we were approaching, as yet far off, the Rocky Mountains. We saw for the first time a train of Mormon waggons, twenty-four in number, slowly wending their way towards the Promised Land. The "captain" was young Brigham Young, a nephew of the Prophet—a fine fellow, with yellow hair and beard, an intelligent countenance, a six-shooter by his right, and a bowie-knife by his left side. It was impossible to mistake, even through the veil of freckles and sunburn with which a two months' journey had invested them, the

nationality of these emigrants—"British-English" was written all over them. One young person concealed her facial attractions under a manner of mask. I thought that perhaps she might be a sultana, reserved for the establishment of some very magnificent Mormon bashaw; but the driver, when appealed to, responded with contempt, "'Guess old Briggys won't stampede many o' that ere lot!" Though homely in appearance, they seemed to be healthy and well fed.

The same day, a little later, we crossed a war party of Arapahos; they looked less like warriors than a band of horse-stealers, and though they had set out with the determination of bringing back some Utah scalps and fingers, they had not succeeded. The war party consisted of some dozen warriors, with a few limber, lithe lads. They had sundry lean, sorry-looking nags, which were presently turned out to graze. Dirty rags formed the dress of the band; their arms were the usual light lances, garnished with leather at the handles, with two cropped tufts and a long loose feather dangling from them. They carried mangy buffalo robes; and scattered upon the ground was a variety of belts, baldricks, and pouches, with split porcupine quills dyed a saffron yellow. I found them sulky and not disposed to be communicative, a fact which, no doubt, was accounted for by the ill-success of their expedition.

I have given some account of the "ladies" we met *en route*; in fairness one must reverse the shield, for, at a station forbiddingly known as the Devil's



Post-Office, we came across an Englishwoman, a "Miss" Moore (Miss is still used for Mrs. by Western men and negroes), who was a pattern of cleanliness, tidiness, civility, and housewifery in general. Her little ranche was neatly swept and garnished, papered and ornamented. The table-cloth was clean, so was the cooking, and so were the children, and I was reminded of Europe by the way in which she insisted upon washing my shirt, an operation which, after leaving the Missouri, had fallen to my own lot. This day also introduced me to the third novel sensation on the western side of the Atlantic. The first was to feel that all men were your equal; that you were no man's superior, and that no man was yours. The second—this is spoken as an African wanderer—was to see one's quondam acquaintance, the Kaffir or Negro, put by his grass kilt and coat of grease, invest himself in broadcloth, part his wool on one side, shave, and call himself, not Sambo, but "Mr. Scott." The third was to meet in the Rocky Mountains with this woman, a refreshing specimen of that far-off Old World. "Miss" Moore's husband, a decent appendage, had transferred his belief from the Church of England to the Church of Utah, and the good wife, as in duty bound, had followed in his wake. But when the Serpent came and whispered in "Miss" Moore's modest, respectable, one-idea'd ear that the Abrahams of Great Salt Lake City were mere "Shamabrams," and not content with Sarahs, but added to them an unlimited supply of Hagars, her



power of endurance broke down. Not an inch would she budge, not a step nearer to the City of the Saints would she take. She fought against the impending misfortune, and she succeeded in reducing her husband to submission and making him earn a good livelihood as station-master on the waggon-line—he who might have been a Solomon in the City of the Saints!

The evening of the next day, when we had reached Pacific Springs, the Wind River Mountains appeared in marvellous majesty. It was one of the sights of the journey. The huge purple hangings of rain-clouds in the northern sky set off their vast proportions, and gave prominence, as in a stereoscope, to their gigantic forms and their upper heights, hoar with the frosts of ages. The setting sun diffused a charming softness over their more rugged features, defining the folds and ravines with a distinctness which deceived every idea of distance. As the light sank beyond the far western horizon it travelled slowly up the mountain side, till, reaching the summit, it mingled its splendours with the snow. Nor was the scene less lovely in the morning hour, as the first effulgence of day fell upon the masses of dew-cloud, lit up the peaks, which gleamed like silver, and poured streams of light and warmth over the broad skirts reposing on the plain.

On August 25th, the nineteenth day of our journey, we set out at 7 a.m. to breast the Wasach, the last and highest chain of the mountain mass before we reached Great Salt Lake Valley, and to arrive at our

destination—the New Jerusalem, the future Zion on the tops of the mountains. The road up the big mountain was a very rough one, lined on either side with great trees—hemlocks, firs, and balsam-pines. The varied hues of the quaking ash were there also ; the beech, dwarf oak, and thickets of elders and wild roses ; whilst over all the warm autumnal tints already mingled with the bright green of summer. The ascent became more and more rugged ; this steep pitch, at the end of a thousand miles of hard work and semi-starvation, caused the death of many a wretched animal. Towards the summit it rises sharpest. Here we descended from the waggon, which the four mules had work enough to draw. The big mountain lies eighteen miles from the city ; the top is a narrow crest. From that eyrie, eight thousand feet above sea-level, the weary pilgrim first sights his shrine, the object of his long wanderings, hardships, and perils—the Happy Valley of the Great Salt Lake.

After a few minutes' delay to stand and gaze, we resumed the footpath way, whilst the mail-waggon, with wheels rough-locked, descended what appeared to be an impracticable slope. Falling into the gorge of Big Canyon Creek, we reached about midday a station, half stifled by the thick dust and the sun. We slaked our thirst with the cool water that trickled down the hill by the house side. Presently the station-master arrived ; he was introduced to us as Mr. Eph Hanks. I had often heard of him as a Mormon desperado, leader of the dreaded Danite band, and



a model ruffian. We found him very pleasant and sociable, though a facetious allusion to the dangers that awaited us under the roof of the Danite was made. We had dinner there, and, after a friendly leave, we entered the mail-waggon again, and prepared ourselves for the last climb over the western-most reach of the Wasach.

The road was now only a narrow shelf, and frequent fordings were rendered necessary by the capricious wanderings of the torrent. At one of the most ticklish turns our driver kindly pointed out a precipice where four of the mail passengers fell and broke their necks. He also entertained us with sundry other horrible tales. In due time, emerging from the gates and portals and deep serrations of the upper course, we descended into a lower level, and the valley presently lay full before our sight. At this place the pilgrim emigrants, like the hajis of Jerusalem and Meccah, were wont to give vent to the emotions pent up in their bosoms by sobs and tears, laughter and congratulations, psalms and hysterics. It is indeed no wonder that children danced, that strong men cheered and shouted, and that nervous women, broken with fatigue and hope deferred, screamed and fainted; that the ignorant fondly believed that the "Spirit of God" pervaded the very atmosphere, and that Zion on the tops of the mountains is nearer Heaven than the other parts of the earth. In good sooth, though uninfluenced by religious fervour—beyond the natural satisfaction of seeing a brand new Holy City—even



I could not, after nineteen days of the mail-waggon, gaze upon the scene without emotion.

The hour was about 6 p.m., the atmosphere was touched with a dreamy haze, and a little bank of rose-coloured clouds, edged with flames of purple and gold, floated in the upper air, whilst the mellow radiance of an American autumn diffused its mild, soft lustre over the face of the earth. The sun was setting in a flood of heavenly light behind the bold, jagged outline of Antelope Island. At its feet, and then bounding the far horizon, lay, like a band of burnished silver, the Great Salt Lake, that innocent Dead Sea. South-westwards, and the Oquirrh Range sharply silhouetted against the depths of an evening sky.

The undulating valley-plain between us and the Oquirrh Range, once a howling wilderness given over to a few miserable savages, was now the site of a populous city. Truly the Mormon prophecy had been fulfilled ; the desert had blossomed like the rose.

As we descended the Wasach Mountains we could look and enjoy the view of the Happy Valley, and the bench-land then attracted our attention. The eastern valley-bench, upon whose western declivity the city lies, may be traced on a clear day along the base of the mountains for a distance of twenty miles. As we advanced over the bench-ground, the city by slow degrees broke upon our sight. It showed, one may readily believe, to special advantage after a succession of Indian lodges, Canadian ranchos, and log-hut mail-stations of the prairies and the

mountains. About two miles north, and overlooking the settlements from a height of four hundred feet, a detached cone called Ensign Mount rose at the end of a chain, and overhung and sheltered the north-eastern corner of the valley. Upon this mount the spirit of the martyred Prophet, Mr. Joseph Smith, is said to have appeared to his successor, Mr. Brigham Young, and pointed out to him the position of the new temple, which, after Zion had "got up into the high mountain," was to console the saints for the loss of Nauvoo the Beautiful.

The city was about two miles broad, running parallel with the right bank of the Jordan, which forms its western limit. As we approached, it lay stretched before us as upon a map; at a little distance the aspect was somewhat Oriental, and in some points it reminded me of modern Athens—without the Acropolis. None of the buildings, except the Prophet's house, were whitewashed. The material, the thick, sun-dried adobe, common to all parts of the Eastern world, was here of a dull leaden blue, deepened by the atmosphere to a grey, like the shingles of the roofs. The number of gardens and compounds, the dark clumps of cottonwood, locust, or acacia, fruit trees—apples, peaches and vines—and, finally, the fields of long-eared maize, strengthened the similarity to an Asiatic rather than to an American settlement. But the difference presently became as marked. Farm houses strongly suggested the old country; moreover, domes and minarets, even churches and steeples, were

wholly wanting. The only building conspicuous from afar was the block occupied by the present Head of the Church. The court-house, with its tinned, Muscovian dome ; the arsenal, a barn-like structure ; and a saw-mill were next in importance.

As we entered the suburbs, the houses were almost all of one pattern, a barn shape, and the diminutive casements showed that window glass was not yet made in the valley. The poorer houses are small, low, and hut-like ; the others, single-storied buildings, somewhat like stables, with many entrances. The best houses resembled East Indian bungalows, with flat roofs and low, shady verandahs, well trellised, and supported by posts or pillars. I looked in vain for the outhouse-harems, in which certain romancers concerning things Mormon had told me that wives were kept, like other stock. I presently found this one of a multitude of delusions. The people came out to their doors to see the mail-coach, as if it were a "Derby dilly" of old, go by. I was struck by the English appearance of the colony, and the prodigious numbers of white-headed children.

Presently we turned into the main thoroughfare, the centre of population and business, where the houses of the principal Mormon dignitaries and the stores of the Gentile merchants combined to form the city's only street, properly so called. We pulled up at the Salt Lake House, the principal if not the only establishment of the kind in New Zion. In the Far West one learns not to expect much of a hostelry, and I had not



seen one so grand for many a day. It was a two-storied building, with a long verandah supported by painted posts. There was a large yard behind for coralling cattle. A rough-looking crowd of drivers and their friends and idlers, almost every man armed with revolver and bowie-knife, gathered round the doorway to prospect the "new lot." The host presently came out to assist us in carrying in our luggage. There was no bar, but upstairs we found a Gentile ball-room, a fair sitting-room, and bedchambers, apparently made out of a single apartment by partitions too thin to be strictly agreeable. The proprietor was a Mormon who had married an Englishwoman. We found him in the highest degree civil and obliging. To sum up, notwithstanding some considerable drawbacks, my first experience of the Holy City of the Far West was decidedly better than I expected.

Our journey had occupied nineteen days, from August 7th to 25th both included, and in that time we had accomplished not less than 1,136 statute miles.

## II

### *THE CITY AND ITS PROPHET*

BEFORE giving any detailed account of the Mormons, I should like to say that I was twenty-four days at headquarters, and every opportunity was given me of surface observation ; but there is in Mormondom, as in all other exclusive faiths, Jewish, Hindu, or other, an inner life, into which I cannot flatter myself to have penetrated. No Gentile, however long he may live in Salt Lake City, or how intimately he may be connected with the Mormons, can expect to see anything but the outside. The different accounts which have been given of life in the City of the Saints by anti-Mormons and apostates are venomous and misleading, whilst the writings of the faithful are necessarily untrustworthy. I therefore take the middle distance of the unprejudiced observer, and can only recount, honestly and truthfully, what I heard, felt, and saw.

The day after my arrival I went to see the Governor, the Hon. Alfred Cumming, who had been appointed by the President of the United States to assume the supreme executive authority at Great Salt Lake City. The conditions were that polygamy should

not be interfered with, nor forcible measures resorted to, except in extremest need. Governor Cumming, accompanied by his wife, with an escort of six hundred dragoons, entered the city in the spring of 1858, shortly after the Mormons were in open rebellion against the Federal authority. By firmness, prudence, and conciliation, he not only prevented any collision between the local militia and the United States army, but succeeded in restoring order and obedience throughout the territory. He was told that his life was in danger, and warned that he might share the fate of Governor Boggs, who was shot through the mouth when standing at the window. His answer was to enlarge the casements of his house, in order to give the shooters a fair chance. The impartiality which he brought to bear in the discharge of his difficult and delicate duties, and his resolution to treat the saints like Gentiles and citizens, not as Digger Indians or felons, had not, when I was at Great Salt Lake City, won him the credit which he deserved from either party. The anti-Mormons abused him, and declared him to be a Mormon in Christian disguise; the Mormons, though more moderate, could never, by their very organisation, be content with a temporal and extraneous power existing side by side with a spiritual power. Governor Cumming did not meet his predecessor, the ex-Governor, Brigham Young, except on public duty. Mrs. Cumming visited Mrs. Young and the houses of the principal dignitaries, this being the only society in the place.



Amongst the Moslems a Lady Mary Wortley Montagu could learn more of domestic life in a week than a man could in a year. So it was among the Mormons, and Mrs. Cumming's knowledge far exceeded all that I might ever hope to gain.

The leading feature of Great Salt Lake City was Main, otherwise Whiskey, Street. This Broadway was 132 feet wide, including twenty sidewalks, and, like the rest of the principal avenues, was planted with locust and other trees. The whole city was divided up into wide streets, and planted with trees. The stores were far superior to the shops of an English country town; the public buildings were few and unimposing. I was disappointed with the Temple block, the only place of public and general worship in the city; when I was there it was unfinished, a mere waste. The Tabernacle, the principal building, required enlarging, and was quite unfitted for the temple of a new faith. It seemed hardly in accordance with the energy and devotedness of this new religion that such a building should represent the House of the Lord, while Mr. Brigham Young, the Prophet, thinking of his own comfort before the glory of God, was lodged, like Solomon of old, in what was comparatively a palace. Near the Tabernacle was the Endowment House, or place of great medicine. Many rites took place here in secret that were carefully concealed from Gentile eyes, and with a result that human sacrifices were said to be performed within its walls. Personally, I did not believe in these orgies; there

were probably ceremonies of the nature of masonic rites. Gentiles declared that the ceremonies consisted of a sort of miracle play, and a respectable judge was popularly known as "The Devil," because he was supposed to play the part of the Father of Sin when tempting Adam and Eve. It was said that baptism by total immersion was performed, and the ceremony occupied eleven or twelve hours, the neophyte, after bathing, being anointed with oil, and dressed in clean white garments, cap and shirt, of which the latter was rarely removed.

On the Monday after my arrival a smoke-like column towards the east announced that the emigrants were crossing the bench-land, and the people hurried from all sides to greet them. Of course, I went, too, as the arrival of these emigrants, or rather pilgrims, was one of the sights of the City of the Saints. Presently the carts came. All the new arrivals were in clean clothes, the men washed and shaved, and the girls were singing hymns, habited in Sunday dress. Except the very young and the very old, the company of pilgrims did not trouble the waggons. They marched through clouds of dust over the sandy road leading to the town, accompanied by crowds, some on foot, others on horseback, and a few in traps. A score of youths of rather rowdy appearance were mounted in all the tawdriness of Western trappings—Rocky Mountain hats, embroidered buckskin garments, red flannel shirts, gigantic spurs, pistols and knives stuck in red sashes with depending ends. By-and-by



the train of pilgrims reached the public square, and here, before the invasion of the Federal army, the first President used to make a point of honouring the arrival of pilgrims by a greeting in person. Not so on this occasion ; indeed, it was whispered that Brigham Young seldom left his house except for the Tabernacle, and, despite his powerful will and high moral courage, did not show the personal intrepidity of Mr. Joseph Smith. He had guards at his gates, and never appeared in public unattended by friends and followers, who were, of course, armed. On this occasion the place of Mr. Brigham Young was taken by President-Bishop Hunter. Preceded by a brass band, and accompanied by the City Marshal, the Bishop stood up in his conveyance, and calling up the captains of companies, shook hands with them, and proceeded forthwith to business. In a short time arrangements were made for the housing and employment of all who required work, whether men or women. Everything was conducted with decorum.

I mingled freely among the crowd, and was introduced to many, whose names I did not remember. Indeed, the nomenclature of the Mormons was apt to be rather confusing, because, in order to distinguish children of different mothers, it was usual to prefix the maternal to the paternal parents' name, suppressing the Christian name altogether. Thus, for instance, my sons, if I had any, by Miss Brown and Miss Jones and Miss Robinson respectively, would call themselves Brother Brown-Burton, Brother Jones-Burton, and



Brother Robinson-Burton. The saints, even the highest dignitaries, waive the reverend and the ridiculous esquire, that "title much in use among vulgar people." The Mormon pontiff and the eminences around him are simply brother or mister. *En revanche*, amongst the crowd there are as many colonels and majors, about ten being the proportion to one captain, as in the days when Mrs. Trollope set the Mississippi on fire. Sister is applied to women of all ages, whether married or single.

Many of the pilgrims were English, who had crossed over the plains, looking towards Mr. Brigham Young and Great Salt Lake City much as Roman Catholics regard the Pope and Rome. The arrangements for their convoy appeared to have been admirable, but many tales were told of mismanagement. An old but favourite illustration of the trials of inexperienced travellers from the Mississippi to California was as follows. A man rode up to a standing waggon, and seeing a wretched-looking lad nursing a starving baby, asked him what the matter might be: "Wal now," responded the youth, "guess I'm kinder streakt—ole dad's drunk, ole marm's in hy-sterics, brother Jim be playing poker with two gamblers, sister Sal's down yonder a-courtin' with an in-tire stranger, this 'ere baby's got the diaree, the team's clean guv out, the waggon's broke down, it's twenty miles to the next water. I don't care a damn if I never see Californy!"

The dress of the fair sex in Great Salt Lake City

was somewhat peculiar. The article called in Cornwall a "gowk," in other parts of England a "cottage bonnet," was universally used, plus a long, thick veil behind, which acts as a cape or shawl. A loose jacket and a petticoat, mostly of calico or some inexpensive stuff, made up all that was visible. The wealthier ladies affected silks, especially black. Love of dress, however, was as great among the sisters as in women in any other part of the world ; in fact, I noticed that this essential is everywhere a pleasing foible, and the semi-nude savage, the crinolined "civilisee," the nun and the quakeress, the sinner and the saint, the *biche* and the *grande dame*, all meet for once in their lives pretty much on a par and on the same ground.

The sisters of Great Salt Lake City—at least, the native ones—were distinctly good-looking, with regular features, lofty brow, clear complexion, long, silky hair, and a bewitching soft smile. It would seem that polygamy had agreed with them. The belle of the city, so far as I could see, was a Miss Sally A——, daughter of a judge. Strict Mormons, however, rather wagged their heads at this pretty person. She was supposed to prefer Gentile and heathenish society, and it was whispered against her that she had actually vowed never to marry a saint.

The City of the Saints was not a dull city. In addition to the spiritual exercises, provision was also made for physical pastimes. The Social Hall was the usual scene of Mormon festivities, and here one could see the beauty and fashion of Great Salt



Lake City *en grande tenue*. Good amateur acting took place here, and dancing seemed to be considered a most edifying exercise. The Prophet danced, the apostles danced, the bishops danced, the young and the old danced. There is high authority for perseverance in this practice: David danced, we are told, with all his might; and Scipio, according to Seneca, was wont thus to exercise his heroic limbs. The balls at the Social Hall were highly select, and conducted on an expensive scale; ten-dollar tickets admitted one lady with one gentleman, and for all extra ladies two dollars each had to be paid. Space was limited, and many a Jacob was shorn of his glory by having to appear with only Rachael in his train, and without a following of Leahs, Zilpahs, and Bilhahs.

An account of one of these balls might be of interest. The hall was tastefully decorated. At four o'clock in the afternoon the Prophet entered, and order was called. He ascended a kind of platform, and, with uplifted hands, blessed those present. He then descended to the boards and led off the first cotillon. At 8 p.m. supper was served; dancing was resumed with spirit; and finally the party ended as it began, with prayer and benediction, about five o'clock in the morning—thirteen successive mortal hours. I may mention that, in order to balance any disparity of the sexes, each gentleman was allowed to lead out two ladies and dance with them, either together or alternately. What an advantage this would be in many a London ball-room!



I will now proceed to describe my visit to the President, or Prophet, Brigham Young. Governor Cumming had first written to ask if he would give me the honour of an interview ; and, having received a gracious reply, I proceeded with him to call upon the Prophet on August 31st, at 11 a.m., as appointed. We arrived at the house, and, after a slight scrutiny, passed the guard, and, walking down the verandah, entered the Prophet's private office. Several people who were sitting there rose at Governor Cumming's entrance. At a few words of introduction, Brigham Young advanced, shook hands with me, and invited me to be seated on a sofa on one side of the room, and presented me to those present.

The "President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints all over the World" was born at Whittingham, Vermont, on June 1st, 1801. He was, consequently, at the time I saw him, in 1860, fifty-nine years old ; he looked about forty-five. I had expected to see a venerable-looking old man ; but scarcely a grey thread appeared in his hair, which was parted on the side, light-coloured, and rather thick. His forehead was somewhat narrow, the eyebrows thin, the eyes between grey and blue, with a calm and somewhat reserved expression. A slight droop in the left lid made me think he had suffered from paralysis ; I afterwards heard it was the result of a neuralgia, which long tormented him. The nose, which was fine and somewhat pointed, was bent a little to the left ; the lips were like the

New Englander's, and the teeth were imperfect. The cheeks were rather fleshy, the chin somewhat peaked, and face clean-shaven, except under the jaws, where the beard was allowed to grow. The hands were well-made, and the figure was somewhat large and broad-shouldered.

The Prophet's dress was neat and plain as a Quaker's, of grey homespun, except the cravat and waistcoat. His coat was of antique cut and, like the pantaloons, baggy, and the buttons were black. A necktie of dark silk, with a large bow, was passed round a starchless collar. He wore a black satin waistcoat, and plain gold chain. Altogether, the Prophet's appearance was that of a gentleman farmer in New England.

His manner was affable and impressive, and distinctly unpretentious. He showed no signs of dogmatism or bigotry, and never once entered, with me at least, on the subject of religion. He impressed me with a certain sense of power. It was commonly said there was only one chief in Great Salt Lake City, and that was "Brigham." His temper was even, and his manner cold; in fact, like his face, somewhat bloodless. He had great powers of observation and judgment of character; if he disliked a stranger at the first interview, he never saw him again. He lived a most temperate and sober life, his favourite food being baked potatoes, with a little buttermilk, and his drink water; he disapproved, like all strict Mormons, of spirituous

liquors, and never touched anything stronger than a glass of lager beer, and never smoked tobacco. His followers deemed him an angel of light, his foes a fiend damned; he was, I presume, neither one nor the other. He has been called a hypocrite, swindler, forger, and murderer; no one looked it less. In fact, he was the St. Paul of the New Dispensation; he gave point, energy, and consistency to the disjointed and turbulent fanaticism of Mr. Joseph Smith; and if he was not able to create, he was at least able to control circumstances.

Such was His Excellency, President Brigham Young, "painter and glazier"—his earliest craft—prophet, revelator, translator, and seer; the man who was revered as no king or kaiser, pope or pontiff, ever was; who, like the Old Man of the Mountain, by holding up his hand could cause the death of any one within his reach; who, governing as well as reigning, long stood up to fight with the sword of the Lord, and with his few hundred guerillas, against the mighty power of the United States; who outwitted all diplomacy opposed to him; and, finally, made a treaty of peace with the President of the great Republic as though he had wielded the combined power of France, Russia, and England.

The Prophet's private office, where he was in the habit of transacting the greater part of his business, correcting his sermons, and conducting his correspondence, was a plain, neat room, with a large writing-table and money-safe. I remarked a pistol



and rifle hung within easy reach on the right-hand wall. There was a look of order which suited the character of the man, and his style of doing business was to issue distinct directions to his employés, after which he disliked referring to the subject. He had the reputation of being a wealthy man, though he began life as a poor one ; and, so far as I could see, he had made his money, not by enriching himself by the tithes and plunder of his followers, but in business and by hard work.

After the first few words of greeting, I interpreted the Prophet's look to mean that he would like to know my object in coming to the City of the Saints. I told him that, having read and heard much about Utah as it was said to be, I was anxious to see Utah as it was. He then touched upon agricultural and other subjects ; but we carefully avoided anything to do with religion or his domestic peculiarities, on which, I was warned, he disliked to be questioned. After talking for about half an hour, the conversation began to flag, so we rose up, shook hands all round, as was the custom there, and took our leave.

The first impression left upon my mind, and subsequently confirmed, was that the Prophet was no common man, and that he had none of the weakness and vanity which characterise the common uncommon man. I also remarked the veneration shown to him by his followers, whose affection for him was equalled only by the confidence with which they entrusted to him their dearest interests in this world and in

the next. After my visit many congratulated me, as would the followers of Tien Wong, or Heavenly King, upon having at last seen the most remarkable man in the world.

The Prophet's block was surrounded by a high wall and strengthened with semi-circular buttresses ; it consisted of many houses. The Lion House was occupied by Mrs. Young and her family in the eastern part of the square. On the west of it lay the private office, in which we were received, and further west again was the public office, where the church and other business was transacted. Beyond this was the Bee House, so named from the sculptured bee-hive in front of it. The Bee House was a large building with long walls facing east and west. It was tenanted by the Prophet's "plurality wives" and their families, who each had a bedroom, sitting-room, and closet, simply and similarly furnished. There was a Moslem air of retirement about the Bee House ; the face of woman was rarely seen at the window, and her voice was never heard without. Anti-Mormons declared the Bee House to be like the State prison of Auburn, a self-supporting establishment, for not even the wives of the Prophet were allowed to live in idleness.

As I have said before, I was unwilling to add to those who had annoyed the Prophet by domestic allusions, and have, therefore, no direct knowledge of the extent to which he carried his polygamy ; some Gentiles allowed him seventeen, others thirty-six, wives out of a household of seventy members, others an



indefinite number of wives scattered through the different settlements. Of these, doubtless, many were but wives by name—such, for instance, as the wives of the late Prophet ; and others were married more for the purpose of building up for themselves spiritual kingdoms than for the normal purpose of matrimony. I judged the Prophet's progeny to be numerous from the following circumstance. On one occasion, when standing with him on the belvedere, my eye fell upon a new erection ; it could be compared externally to nothing but an English gentleman's hunting-stables, and I asked him what it was intended for. "A private school for my children," he replied, "directed by Brother Kelsey."

The following Sunday I attended a Mormon service. I passed the morning in the painful but appropriate exercise of reading the books of Mormon and of Moroni the prophet. Some people had told me that it was the best imitation of the Old Testament existing ; to me it seemed to emulate the sprightliness of Leviticus. Surely there never was a book so dull and heavy ; it was as monotonous as a sage prairie. In Mormonism it holds the same place as the Bible in the more ignorant Roman Catholic countries, where religious reading is chiefly restricted to the Breviary, tales of miracles, of saints, and so forth. It was strictly proper, and did not contain a word about materialism and polygamy.

The early part of the morning passed. At 9.45 a.m. we entered "the Bowery" ; it was



advisable to go early to get seats within hearing. This place was a kind of "hangar," about one hundred feet long by the same breadth, with a roofing of bushes and boughs supported by rough posts, and open for ventilation on the sides; it contained about three thousand souls. The congregation was accommodated upon long rows of benches, opposite the dais, or tribune, which looked like a long lane of boarding open to the north, where it faced the audience, and entered by steps from the east. Between the people and the platform was the orchestra—a violin, a bass, two women, and four men performers—who sang the sweet songs of Zion tolerably well.

We took our seats on the benches, where we could see the congregation flocking in, a proceeding which was not over for half an hour. The people were all in their Sunday best, and many a pretty face peeped out from the sun-bonnet, though the "mushroom" and the "pork-pie" had found their way over the plains, and trim figures were clad in neat dresses, sometimes with a little faded finery. The men were decently attired; but the weather being hot, many of them had left their coats at home, and had come in their shirt sleeves. The custom, however, looked natural, and there was no want of cleanliness, such as sometimes lurks behind the bulwark of buttons. The elders and dignitaries on the platform affected coats of black broadcloth. All wore their hats till the address began, then all uncovered. The number of old people

astonished me ; half a dozen were sitting on the same bench : these broken-down men and decrepit crones had come to lay their bones in the Holy City.

At 10 a.m. the meeting opened with a spiritual song, and then a civilised-looking man, being called upon by the presiding Elder for the day, offered up prayer. The matter was good, but somewhat commonplace. The conclusion was an "Amen," in which all hands joined. It reminded me of the historical practice of "humming" in the seventeenth century.

Next arose Bishop Abraham O. Smoot, second Mayor of Zion, who began with "Brethring," and proceeded in a Methody tone of voice to praise the saints and pitch into the apostates. He made an undue use of the regular Wesleyan organ—the nose ; but he appeared to speak excellent sense in execrable English. As he was in the midst of an allusion to the President, Brigham Young entered, and all turned their faces, even the old lady who was sleeping through the discourse.

The Prophet was dressed as usual in grey homespun and home-woven ; he wore, like most of the elders, a tall, steeple-crowned straw hat, with a broad black ribbon, and he had the gentility of black kid gloves. He entered the tribune covered, and sat down. A man in a fit was carried out pumpwards. Bishop Smoot concluded with informing us that we should live for God. Another hymn was sung. Then a great silence, which told us that something was about to happen : *that* old man held his cough ; *that* old

lady awoke with a start ; *that* child ceased to squall. President Brigham Young removed his hat, advanced to the end of the tribune, expectorated into the spittoon, restored the balance of fluid by a glass of water from a decanter on a stand, and, leaning slightly forwards with both hands propped on the green baize of the tribune, addressed his followers.

The discourse began slowly, word crept titubantly after word, and the opening phrases were scarcely audible ; but as the orator warmed, his voice rose high and sonorous, and a fluency so remarkable succeeded hesitation that the latter seemed to have been a work of art. The gestures were easy and rounded, except one of raising and shaking the forefinger, which struck me as threatening and bullying. The address was long. Mormonism was a great fact. Religion had made him, Brigham Young, the happiest of men. He was ready to dance like a Shaker. At this the Prophet, who was a good mimic and had much of humour, raised his right arm, and gave, to the amusement of the congregation, a droll imitation of the Shakers. A great deal of what followed contained topical allusions. The Saints had a glorious destiny before them, and their morality was remarkable as the beauty of the Promised Land. The soft breeze blowing over the Bowery, and the glorious sunshine outside, made the allusion highly appropriate. After a somewhat lengthy string of sentences concerning the great tribulation coming on earth—it had been coming for the last eighteen



hundred years—he concluded with good wishes to visitors and Gentiles generally, with a solemn blessing upon the President of the United States, the territorial Governor, and all that be in authority over us, and with an “Amen” which was loudly re-echoed by all around, he restored his hat and resumed his seat.

Then arose Mr. Heber C. Kimball, the second President. He was the model of a Methodist, a tall, powerful man, with dark, piercing eyes and clean-shaven, blue face. He affected the Boanerges style, from a certain dislike to the Nonconformist rant and whine, and his manner of speech savoured rather of familiarity than of reverence. Several of his remarks were loudly laughed at by the congregation. His style of oratory was certainly startling; he reminded me of Luther’s description of Tetzels sermon, in which he used to shout the words “Bring! bring! bring!” with such a horrible bellowing that one would have said it was a mad bull rushing on the people and goring them with its horns.

After this worthy’s address, a list of names for whom letters were lying unclaimed was called from the platform. A missionary adjourned the meeting till two o’clock, delivered the prayer of dismissal, during which all stood up, and ended with the Benediction and “Amen.” The Sacrament was not administered on this occasion. It was often given, and reduced to the very elements of a ceremony; even water was used instead of wine, because the latter is of

Gentile manufacture. Two elders walked up and down the rows, one carrying a pitcher, the other a plate of broken bread, and each Saint partook of both.

That same evening when dining out, I had a lesson in Mormon modesty. The mistress of the house, a Gentile but not an anti-Mormon, was requested by a saintly visitor, who was also a widow, to instruct me that on no account I must propose to see her home. "Mormon ladies," said my kind informant, "are very strict"; "Unnecessarily so on this occasion," I could not help adding. Something similar occurred on another occasion: a very old lady, wishing to return home, surreptitiously left the room and sidled out of the garden gate, and my companion, an officer from Camp Floyd, at once recognised the object of the retreat—*viz.* to avoid our possible escort. I afterwards learned at dinner and elsewhere amongst the Mormons to abjure the Gentile practice of giving precedence to the fair sex. The lesson, however, was not new; I had been taught the same, in times past, amongst certain German missionaries, who assumed precedence over their wives upon a principle borrowed from St. Paul.

There was a certain monotony of life in Great Salt Lake City, a sameness from day to day, which does not render the subject favourable for a lively description; moreover, the Moslem gloom, the result of austere morals and manner, of the semi-seclusion of the sexes, and, in my case, the reserve arising towards a stranger who appeared in the train of Federal



officials, hung over society. We rose early, and breakfasted at any hour between 6 and 9 a.m. Then ensued "business," which seemed to consist principally of correcting one's teeth and a walk about the town, with an occasional liquor up. Dinner was at 1 p.m., announced not by the normal gong of Eastern States, but by a most discordant hand-bell. Jostling into the long room of the ordinary, we took our seats, and, seizing our forks, proceeded at once to action. Nothing but water was drunk at dinner, except when a gentleman preferred to wash down roast pork with a tumbler of milk. Wine in this part of the world was dear and bad, and even if the Saints made their own, it could scarcely be cheap, on account of the price of labour. The feeding ended with a glass of liquor, not at the bar, because there was none, but in the privacy of one's own chamber, which takes from drinking half its charms. Most of the well-to-do men found time for a siesta in the afternoon. There was supper at 6 p.m., and the evening was quietly spent with a friend.

To describe Great Salt Lake City in those days without some account of polygamy would be like seeing *Hamlet* with the part of the Prince of Denmark omitted. It is, I suppose, therefore necessary to supply a popular view of the peculiar institution which at once was the bane and the blessing of Mormonism—plurality. I approach the subject with a feeling of despair, so conflicting are opinions concerning it, and so difficult is it to naturalise in Europe



the customs of Asia, Africa, and America, and reconcile the habits of the nineteenth century A.D. with those of 1900 B.C. A return to the patriarchal ages must necessarily have its disadvantages.

I found that the marriage ceremony was performed in the Temple, or, if that was impossible, in Mr. Brigham Young's office, properly speaking, by the Prophet, who, however, could depute any follower to act for him. When mutual consent was given, the parties were pronounced man and wife in the name of Jesus Christ; prayers followed, and there was a patriarchal feast of joy in the evening.

The first wife, as amongst polygamists generally, was *the* wife, and assumed the husband's name and title. Her plurality partners were called sisters, such as Sister Anne, or Sister Maria, and were the "aunts" of her children. The first wife was married for time, the others were sealed for eternity. Girls rarely remained single past sixteen (in England the average marrying age is thirty), and they would have been the pity of the community if they had been doomed to a waste of youth so unnatural.

Divorce was rarely obtained by the man, who was ashamed to own that he could not keep his house in order. Some, such as the President, would grant it only in the case of adultery; and here I may say the two mortal sins in Mormonism are (1) adultery, and (2) shedding innocent blood. Wives, however, were allowed to claim it for cruelty, desertion, or neglect. Mormon women married to Gentiles were cut off from

the society of the Saints, and without uncharitableness men suspected a sound previous reason. The widows of the Prophet were married to his successor, as David took unto himself the wives of Saul; being generally aged, they occupied the position of matron rather than wife, and the same was the case where a man espoused a mother and her daughter.

There were rules and regulations of Mormonism. All sensuality in the married state was strictly forbidden beyond that necessary to procure progeny—the practice, in fact, of Adam and Abraham.

It is not necessary to go into the arguments which are adduced by the Mormons in favour of polygamy, nor to recount the arguments on the other side. I content myself here with stating facts as I saw them. It will be asked, What view did the softer sex take of this state of affairs? A few, mostly from the Old Country, lamented that Mr. Joseph Smith ever asked of the Creator that question which was answered in the affirmative. A very few, like the Curia Electa, Emma, the first wife of Mr Joseph Smith—who said of her, by-the-bye, that she could not be contented in Heaven without rule—apostatized, and became Mrs. Brideman. But most of the women were even more in favour of polygamy than the men. For this attachment of the women of the Saints to the doctrine of plurality I found two reasons. The Mormon prophets expended all their arts upon this end, well knowing that without the hearty co-operation of mothers and wives, sisters and

daughters, their institution could not exist long. They bribed them with promises of Paradise, they subjugated them with threats of annihilation. With them, once a Mormon always a Mormon. The apostate Mormon was looked upon by other people as a scamp and a knave, and as regards a woman, she was looked upon as worse than a prostitute. The Mormon household has been described by its enemies as a hell of hatred, envy, and malice; the same has been said of the Moslem harem; both, I believe, suffer from the assertions of prejudice or ignorance.

Another curious effect may be noticed. When a man had four or five wives, with reasonable families by each, he was fixed for life; his interests, if not his affections, bound him irrevocably to his New Faith. But the bachelor, as well as the monogamic youth, was prone to backsliding and apostacy. This, when I was at Great Salt Lake City, was apparently so common that many of the new Saints formed a mere floating population. But without expressing any further opinions (those I have given so far are merely the opinions of others), I may say that the result of my investigations was to prove that Great Salt Lake City had been wonderfully successful in its colonisation. Physically speaking, there was no comparison between the Saints and the class from which they were mostly taken, and, in point of view of mere morality, the Mormon community was perhaps purer than any other of equal numbers.



About the middle of September the time for my departure drew nigh. I prepared for difficulties by having my hair "shingled off," till my head somewhat resembled a pointer's dorsum, and deeply regretted having left all my wigs behind me. We laid in a good store of provisions, not forgetting an allowance of whiskey and schnapps.

My last evening was spent in the genial company of a few friends. I thanked Governor Cumming for his generous hospitality, and made my acknowledgments to the courtesy of his amiable wife. My adieux were on an extensive scale, and the next day, September 19th, in the morning, I left Great Salt Lake City, *en route* for the South.

The day was fine and wondrous clear, affording a splendid back view of the Happy Valley before it was finally shut out from sight, and the Utah Lake looked a very gem of beauty, a diamond in its setting of steelly blue mountains. It was with a feeling of real regret that I bade adieu to the City of the Saints.



*A MISSION TO DAHOMÉ*

1863





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**I**T is a long stride from Salt Lake City to Dahomé, from the Mormons to the Amazons, but I take my visit to the King of Dahomé as next in date. Before, however, beginning my journey to Dahomé let me touch briefly on that much-vexed and little-understood subject — the negro.

Central Intertropical Africa, lying between north latitude  $10^{\circ}$  and south latitude  $20^{\circ}$ , at that time contained eight considerable negro circles, which may be called kingdoms. Of these there were three on the west coast north of the Equator, namely :

1st. Ashanti, the land which exports the “Minas” negroes. This despotism has been well known to us since the beginning of the present century. The capital is Kumasi, nearly 133 direct miles from the coast. This empire may be said to rest on two pillars, blood and gold. Human sacrifice was excessive, and the “customs” mean the slaughter of fellow-creatures.

2nd. Benin, a kingdom well known to old travellers, and the place where Belzoni of the Pyramids died.

I visited it in August, 1862, and my reception was the crucifixion of a negro. On the night after my arrival a second slave was slain and placed before my doorway. My lodgings commanded a view of the principal square, which was strewn with human bones, *green* and *white*.

3rd. Dahomé. From the plain and unvarnished account of this tyranny, which I am about to relate, may be estimated the amount of hopeless misery which awaited the African in Africa. And as it is unsatisfactory to point out a disease without suggesting a remedy, I will propose my panacea at the end of this essay.

We now cross the Equator and find ourselves among the great South African family. Their common origin is proved by their speech. Briefly to characterise their language, the place of our genders are taken by personal and impersonal forms, and all changes of words are made at the beginning, not, as with us, at the end. The Kaffir (Caffre race in South-east Africa) is evidently a mixed breed, and it has nearly annihilated the Bushmen and the Hottentots—the original lords of the land. There is a curious resemblance between the Coptic, or Old Egyptian, and the Hottentot tongues, which suggests that in the prehistoric ages one language extended from the Nile Valley to the Cape of Good Hope. The true negroes, distinguished by their long, ape-like head and projecting jaws, bowed shins and elongated heels and forearms, are all the tribes of Intertropical Africa



whose blood is unmixed. This is my definition ; but of this point opinions differ.

And here we may stand to view the gleam of light which the future casts across the Dark Continent. Slowly but surely the wave of Moslem conquest rolls down towards the line. Every Moslem is a propagandist, and their traders, unlike ours, carry conversion with them. This fact European missionaries deny, because they do not like it : they would rather preach to heathens than to Moslems, whom Locke describes as unorthodox Christians. They even deny the superiority of El Islam, which forbids the pagan abominations of child-murder, human sacrifice, witch-burning, ordeal-poisons, and horrors innumerable. But we, who look forward to the advent of a higher law, of a nobler humanity, hail with infinite pleasure every sign of progress.

Philanthropists, whose heads are sometimes softer than their hearts, have summed up their opinion of slavery as the "sum of all villainies." I look upon it as an evil, to the slaveholder even more than to the slave, but a necessary evil, or, rather, a condition of things essentially connected, like polygamy, with the progress of human society, especially in the tropics. The savage hunting tribes slave for themselves ; they are at the bottom of the ladder. Advancing to agricultural and settled life, man must have assistants, hands, slaves. As population increases, commerce develops itself and free labour fills the markets ; the slave and the serf are emancipated : they have done

their task ; they disappear from the community, never more to return. Hence every nation, Hindu and Hebrew, English and French, have had slaves ; all rose to their present state of civilisation by the "sum of all villainies." And here, when owning slavery to be an evil, I must guard against being misunderstood. It is an evil to the white man : it is often an incalculable boon to the black. In the case of the negro it is life, it is comfort, it is civilisation ; in the case of the white it has done evil by retarding progress, by demoralising society, and by giving rise to a mixed race.

And there is yet another point to be settled when speaking of the negro. In the United States every black man is a negro, or, to speak politely, a "cullard pussun." Thus the noble races of Northern Africa and the half-Arab Moors, the Nubians and Abyssinians, and the fine Kaffir (Caffre) type of South-eastern Africa are confounded with the anthropoid of Sierra Leone, of the Guinea and of the Congo regions. The families first mentioned differ more from the true negro than they do from the white man.

My first visit to Gelele, then King of Dahomé, was in May and June, 1863. Already in 1861 I had proposed to restore those amicable relations which we had with his father Gezo ; but my application was not accepted by the Government. On my return to the West African coast after a six weeks' visit to England, the journey was made on my own responsibility, and it was not pleasant. I was alone—



in such matters negroes do not count as men—and four mortal days upon the Slave Coast lagoons, salt, miry rivers, rich only in mud, miasma, and mosquitoes, with drenching rains and burning suns playing upon a cramping canoe without awning, are unsatisfactory even to remember. Having reached Whydah, the seaport and slave-market of Dahomé, I procured a hammock, and in three days I arrived at Kana, a summer residency for the Court, distant 7,500 miles from Agbomé, the capital.

The human sacrifices called the “nago customs” had lately ended. Twelve men had lost their lives, and, dressed in various attire like reapers, dancers, and musicians, had been exposed on tall scaffolds of strong scantling. “*C’est se moquer de l’humanité,*” remarked to me the Principal of the French Mission at Whydah. But the corpses had been removed, and during my flying visit of five days nothing offensive was witnessed.

At Kana I met M. Jules Gerard, first “*le chasseur,*” then “*le tueur des lions*”: we had sailed together from Europe to Madeira, and he had been sea-sick during the whole voyage. Men who have spent their youth in the excitement of dangerous sport often lose their nerve in middle age. This was the case with the unfortunate lion-hunter; the sight of the “customs” threw him into a fever. Disappointment also weighed upon his spirits. He came to West Africa in the hope that his fame as a killer of lions had preceded him; but the only lion that can exist



in that mouldy climate is the British lion, and even he is not a terrible beast to bring amongst the ladies. He expected to find Dahomé a kind of Algiers, and he exchanged a good for a very bad country. He had set his mind upon crossing the northern frontier ; but the king at once put an end to that plan, and afterwards played me the same trick. He had also based his hopes upon his good shooting and upon an explosive bullet calculated to do great execution ; but many of the king's women guards could use their guns better than he did, and when the said shell was produced, Gelele sent to his stores and brought out a box-full.

M. Gerard proposed to himself a journey which would have severely tried the health of the strongest man in Europe. He resolved to make his way from the Gulf of Guinea through dangerous Timbaktu (Timbuctos) and the terrible Sahara to Algiers. I advised him to retire to Teneriffe or Madeira and recruit his energies. But he was game to the last. He made another departure through the malarious Sherbro country, south of pestilential Sierra Leone. The next thing we heard of him was when crossing the Jong River he had been drowned by the upsetting of a canoe. Somewhat later came the report that he had been foully murdered. I was rejoiced to hear that a subscription had been raised for his aged and bereaved mother.

Having reported that Dahomé was, under normal circumstances, as safe as most parts of Africa, I received

in August, 1863, orders to visit it as Commissioner. My "mission" was to make certain presents to the king, and to preach up cotton and palm oil versus war and human sacrifices. I may begin by saying I lectured hard and talked to the wind.

H.M.'s cruiser *Antelope* landed me at Whydah in December, the dry season, and the surf was not particularly dangerous. The beach is open ; between it and Brazil rolls the broad Atlantic ; and near the shore are an outer and inner sandbar with an interval forming a fine breeding-ground for sharks. A girl is occasionally thrown in as an offering to "Hu," the sea-dog, and this does not diminish the evil.

We entered Whydah in state, paraded and surrounded by chiefs and soldiery in war dress, kilts and silver horns like the giraffe's : their arms were long guns and short swords for decapitating the wounded. Each troop had its flag, its umbrella, its band of drums and tom-toms, its horns and cymbals. I especially remarked a gourd bottle full of, and covered with, cowries, or pebbles—in fact the celebrated "maraca" of Brazil, which, it has been conjectured, contributed towards the formation of the word America. Every five minutes the warriors halted to drink and dance. The drink is easily described—tafia or bad caxaca. But the dance ! I defy mortal man to paint it in words. Let me briefly say that the arms are held up as though the owner were running, the elbows being jerked so as nearly to meet behind the back ; the hands paddle like the

paws of a swimming dog ; the feet shuffle and stamp as though treading water ; the body-trunk joins in the play, and the hips move backwards and forwards to the beating time. The jig and the hornpipe are repose compared with this performance. There is also a decapitation dance over an ideal dead enemy, whose head is duly sawn off with the edge of the hand.

At Whydah I lodged at the English fort, a large double-storied building of "taipa," tenanted by Wesleyan missionaries. It was once a strong place, as the ruined towers and burst guns show.

There were three other forts in the town. The Brazilian, which was nearest the sea, was held by Chico de Souza, the son of the late Francisco Fellis de Souza. This was a remarkable man. Born at Cachoeira, near Bahia, he emigrated to Africa, where by courage and conduct he became the Chacha, or Governor, of the Guild of Merchants, a kind of Board of Trade. He made an enormous fortune, and by his many wives he left about a hundred olive branches. Though a slave-dealer, he was a man of honour and honesty. The English had done him many an injury, yet he was invariably courteous and hospitable to every English traveller. He strongly opposed human sacrifice, and he saved many lives by curious contrivances. Of the same stamp was M. Domingos Martins of Bahia, once celebrated for enormous wealth. He died in the interval between my first and second visits. I regretted his death, for he had been most kind and attentive to me.



The Portuguese fort had also been repaired, and was inhabited by six members of the Lyons Mission, "*Le Vicariate Apostolique de Dahomé.*" They kept a school, and they were apparently convinced that it was hopeless to attempt the conversion of adults. The superior, Father François Borghero, had several times been ill-treated by the barbarians, and his hatred of idolatry had exposed him to not a little danger. It is rare in those lands to find a highly educated and thoroughly gentlemanly man ; and, looking back, I am not surprised that all my time not occupied by study or observation was spent in the Portuguese fort.

Lastly, there was the French fort, in far better condition than the others. It was held in my time by M. Marius Daumas, agent to M. Regis (*ainé*) of Marseilles, and *faute de mieux* he was buying and shipping palm oil.

Whydah was easily seen. The houses were red "taipa" with thick thatch, and each had its large and slovenly courtyard. The market-place was a long street of small booths open to the front, where everything from a needle to a moleque (small slave-boy) could be bought. The thoroughfares were studded with small round roofs of grass, which sheltered a hideous deity called Legba. He was made of muddy clay, with holes for eyes and cowries for teeth, and he squatted before a pot in which the faithful placed provisions, which were devoured by the urubu (vulture). The chief temple was dedicated to the *danh*, or snake, which here was the principal

“fetish.” It was a circular hut with two doorless entrances, and the venerated boas curled themselves comfortably on the thickness of the walls. The largest was about six feet long, and it was dangerous only to rats, of which it was very fond. Several foreigners had been killed for injuring these reptiles, and Whydah, once an independent kingdom, lost her liberty through the snakes. When attacked by Dahomé in 1729, her chief defence was to place a serpent on the invaders’ path. The Dahomans killed the guardian genius and slaughtered the Whydahs till the streets ran blood. But, when the conquerors had reduced their neighbour, they gave her leave to adore the snake, and Whydah felt consoled, even happy. It sounds like a traveller’s tale. I am writing history.

At Whydah we complied with the custom of sending up a messenger to report our arrival. After three days came three officials from the palace, who presented their sticks and delivered to me a verbal invitation from their master. The sticks were white sticks, two feet long, adorned with plates of silver, cut into the shapes of lions, sharks, crocodiles, and other savage beasts. These batons served as visiting cards, and were signs of dignity. When the king made me honorary commandant of a corps of life-guardswomen, he sent me two sticks by way of commission or diploma.

We set out *en route* for the capital on December 13th, 1863. My little party consisted of Mr. George



Cruikshank, a naval assistant-surgeon detached to accompany me ; the Rev. Mr. Bernasco, Wesleyan missionary and private friend of the king ; two negro interpreters, thirty hammock men, and a troop of baggage porters. This made up a total of ninety-nine mouths, which were never idle except when asleep.

Between the seaboard and Kana, the "villegiatura," or country capital, of the king, there were fifty-two to fifty-three direct miles. The country was here a campo, or rolling grassy prairie : there was a dense and magnificent forest. At every few miles there were settlements, now villages, once capitals which felt the weight of the Dahomé arm. The first was Savé, ancient metropolis of the Whydah kingdom, when the present Whydah, which was properly Gle-hwe, or the Garden House, was only a squalid port. The territory was only thirty miles by seven, but it mustered 200,000 fighting men. This, however, was easily explained. In Africa every male between the ages of seventeen and fifty carried arms : this would be about one-fifth of the population ; consequently there was one million inhabitants in an area of two hundred square miles (4,762 souls to each mile).

After Savé came Tevé, also an ex-capital. It was a pretty little village commanded by a Dahoman "caboceer." This frequently used word is a corruption of a Portuguese corruption, "caboceer," or, rather, "caboceira," and means a pillow, a headman, or a chief officer. The etiquette on arriving at such places is as follows. You alight from your hammock



before the tree under which the grandee and his party are drawn up to receive you with vociferous shouts, with singing, drumming, and dancing. After the first greetings you pledge him in fresh water, which he has tasted before you. Then you drink spirits and receive an offering of provisions. You make a return of rum and gin, the people drum, dance, sing, and shout their thanks, and you are at liberty to proceed.

On the fourth day we crossed the "Agrime Swamp," which is hardly practicable in the wet season. The road then entered upon a true continent: we emerged from the false coast, which at one time was under water, and which is raised by secular upheaval. At the little town of Agrime we were delayed till the king, who was in his country capital, sent an escort and permission to advance.

On Friday, December 18th, we entered Kana, a large and scattered town, shaded by magnificent trees. It is about two hundred and seventy feet above sea-level, and the climate is a relief after Whydah. The morrow was fixed for our reception. It was Ember Day, and the date could hardly have been better chosen.

It is hardly possible to form an idea of the *peine forte et dure* attending the presentation in Africa. It is every negro's object to keep the white man waiting as long as possible, and the visitor must be very firm and angry if he would not lose all his time.

We were duly warned to be ready at 10 a.m.; but local knowledge kept me in the house till 1 p.m. Then we sat under a tree upon the chairs which we had brought from Whydah, to witness the procession of "caboceers." Each grandee, preceded by his flag or flags, his band of drums and rattles, and his armed retainers dancing and singing, passed before us, shaded by an enormous umbrella of many colours. Having marched round, he came up to us and snapped fingers (the local style of shaking hands); then he drank with us three toasts, beginning with his master's health. After the "caboceers" trooped various companies—musicians, eunuchs, and jesters. The last are buffoons, reminding one of our feudal days. Their entertainment consists in "making faces" (*cara feia*), as children say—wrinkling the forehead, protruding the tongue, and clapping the jaws as apes do. They can tumble a little and "throw the cart wheel" neatly; they dance in a caricatured style, draw in the stomach to show that they are hungry, pretend to be deaf and dumb, smoke a bone by way of a pipe, and imitate my writing by scratching a sweet potato with a stick.

The review over, we made for the palace in a long procession; my men, wearing bright red caps and waist-cloths, carried the flag of St. George. The royal abodes are all on the same pattern: enclosures of "taipa" wall, four courses high, and pierced with eight or ten gates. The irregular square or oblong



may be half a mile in circumference. At the principal entrances are thatched sheds like verandahs, one hundred feet long by fourteen to fifteen feet deep. The roof ledge rises sixty to seventy feet high, enough for two stories, whilst the eaves of thick and solidly packed straw rested upon posts barely four feet tall. The inner buildings, as far as they could be seen, corresponded with the external, and the king held his levées in one of these barn-like sheds. The royal sleeping-places, which were often changed, were described to me as neat rooms, divided from the courtyard by a wall with a *chevaux de frise* of human jawbones. The floors were paved with the skulls of conquered chiefs, forming a *descente de lit* upon which Gelele had the daily pleasure of trampling.

The complicated reception was typical of the Dahoman military empire. We found, ranged in a line outside the gate, twenty-four umbrellas or brigades belonging to the highest male dignitaries. The army, or, what was here synonymous, the Court, was divided into two portions, male and female, or, rather, female and male, as the women troops took precedence. They occupied the inside of the palace, and they were the king's body-guard in peace or war. Each line had a right and a left wing, so called from their position relative to the throne. The former, which is the senior, was commanded by the "min-gau" who cumulated the offices of premier and head executioner. His lieutenant was the adanejan. Dahoman officials, for





BURTON VISITS THE KING OF DAHOMÉ.

[See Page 213.]



better espionage, were always in pairs. The general of the left wing was the "meu," who collected revenue and tribute, declared war, and had charge of all strangers. His *alter ego* was styled the ben-wan-ton. Under these great men were smaller great men, and all were *de facto* as well as *de jure* slaves to the king.

Presently we were summoned to enter the palace. We closed our umbrellas by order, walked hurriedly across a large yard, and halted at a circle of white sand spread upon the clayey ground. Here we bowed to a figure sitting under the shady thatch; and he returned, we were told, the compliment. The chief ministers who accompanied us fell flat upon the sand, kissed it, rolled in it, and threw it by handfuls over their heads and robes of satin and velvet. The ceremony is repeated at every possible opportunity; and when the king drinks, all the subjects turn their backs upon him and shout.

Then we advanced to the clay bench upon which King Gelele sat. After the usual quadruple bows and hand-wavings, he stood up, tucked in his toga, descended to the ground, and, aided by nimble feminine fingers, donned his sandals. He then greeted me with sundry vigorous wrings *à la John Bull*, and inquired after Queen Victoria, the Ministry, and the people of England, which country is supposed to be like Dahomé, but a little larger and richer.

Our chairs were then placed before the seat, to which he returned, and we drank the normal three



toasts to his health. On these occasions it is not necessary to empty the glass, which may be handed to an attendant. Salutes having been fired, we retired a hundred feet from the presence and sat under giant umbrellas.

Gelele was then about forty-five years old, upwards of six feet high, olive complexioned, athletic and well made, with clear signs of African blood. His dress was simple to excess: a loose shirt of plain white stuff edged with green silk, a small smoking-cap, a few iron rings on his arms, and a human tooth strung round his neck. The only splendour was in his gold and scarlet sandals, here distinctive of royalty. They were studded with crosses, also royal emblems. He called himself a Christian, and he was a Moslem as well: like all barbarians, he would rather believe too much than too little, and he would give himself every chance in both worlds.

Under the thatch behind the king were his wives, known by their handsome dresses, silver hair studs, and the absence of weapons. They atoned for want of beauty by excessive devotion to their lord, who apparently did everything by proxy except smoke his long-stemmed clay pipe.

The inner court of the palace reflected the outer, and the women sat in the sun along the external wall of the royal shed with their musket-barrels bristling upwards. The right wing was commanded by a "premieress," who executed all women; the left was also under the she "meu." A semicircle of

bamboos lying on the ground separated the sexes at levées. The instrument of communication was a woman-messenger, who, walking up to the bamboos, delivered her message on all fours to the "meu." The latter proclaimed it to the many.

I must here say a few words about the Amazons, or fighting women. The corps was a favourite with the late king, who thus checked the turbulence and treachery of his male subjects. The number was estimated at 10,000 to 12,000; I do not believe it exceeded 2,500. They were divided into blunderbuss-women, elephant-hunters, beheaders, who carry razors four feet long, and the line armed with muskets and short swords.

All the Amazons were *ex-officio* royal wives, and the first person who made the king a father was one of his soldieresses. It was high treason to touch them even accidentally; they lodged in the palace, and when they went abroad all men, even strangers, had to clear off the road. Gelele often made his visitors honorary commandants of his guard of Amazons (I was made one); but this did not entitle them to inspect companies.

Such a *régime* makes the Amazons, as might be expected, intolerably fierce. Their sole object in life is blood-spilling and head-snatching. They pride themselves upon not being men, and with reason. The soldiers blink and shrink when they fire their guns; the soldieresses do not. The men run away; the women fight to the bitter end. In the last

attack on the city of Abokuta (March 15th, 1864) several of the Amazons of my own regiment scaled the walls; their brethren-in-arms hardly attempted the feat.

Dahomé thus presented the anomaly of an African kingdom in which women took precedence of men. Hence every employé of Government had to choose a "mother"—that is to say, some elderly Amazon officer who would look after his interests at headquarters. Often he had two, an "old mother," dating from the days of the late king, and a "young mother," belonging to the actual reign. He had to pay them well, or his affairs were inevitably bad. Thus there was also a Brazilian, an English, and a French "mother"; and visitors of those nations were expected to propitiate their fond and unpleasant parents with presents of cloth, jewelry, perfumes, and so forth.

The levée ended with a kind of parade. A few simple manœuvres and many furious decapitation dances were performed by a select company of the young Amazons. They were decently dressed in long sleeveless waistcoats, petticoats of various coloured cottons, secured at the waist by a sash and extending to the ankles, whilst narrow fillets of ribbon secured their hair and denoted their corps. Their arms were muskets and short swords, and all had belts, bullet bags, and cartridge boxes.

When the sun set a bottle of rum was sent to us. At this hint we rose and prepared to retire. Gelele again descended from his seat and accompanied



us to the gate, preceded by a buzzing swarm of courtiers, who smoothed every inch of ground for the royal foot. He finally shook hands with us, and promised to meet us in a few days at Agbomé, the capital.

We lost no time in setting out for Agbomé, and were surprised to find an excellent carriage road, broad and smooth, between the two cities. Agbomé had no hotels, but we managed lodgings at the house of the bukono, a high officer who was doctor and wizard to the Court and curator of strangers, whom he fleeced pitilessly.

I will now touch briefly on the ill-famed "customs" of Dahomé. The word is taken from the Portuguese *costume*, and here means the royal sacrifices. Many travellers have witnessed them, but no one has attempted to inquire into their origin. I attribute these murderous customs not to love of bloodshed, but simply to filial piety.

The Dahoman, like the ancient Egyptian, holds this world to be his temporary lodging. His own home is Ku-to-men, or Deadman's Land. It is not a place of rewards and punishments, but a Hades for ghosts, a region of shades, where the king will rule for ever and where the slave will always serve. The idea is ever present to the popular mind. When, for instance, sunshine accompanies rain the Dahoman says the spirits are marketing. In Brazil the fox is marrying; in England the devil is beating his wife.

A deceased king cannot, therefore, be sent to Ku-to-

men as a common negro. At his interment a small court must be slain—leopard-wives (that is to say, young and handsome wives), old wives, ministers, friends, soldiers, musicians, men and women. These are the grand customs, which may average one thousand to two thousand deaths. The annual customs, which we were now to witness, reinforce the ghostly court, and number from eighty to one hundred head.

But destruction of life does not end here. All novelties, such as the arrival of an officer in uniform, must be reported to the dead by the living king. A captive or a criminal is summoned, and the message is given to him. He is made to swallow a bottle of rum, whose object is to keep him in a good humour, and his head is then and there struck off. Only on one occasion did the patient object to the journey, saying that he did not know the road to Ku-to-men. "You shall soon find it out!" cried the king, who at once decapitated the wretch without rum. If any portion of the message be forgotten, another victim must be despatched with it. A hard-hearted traveller calls this the postscript.

A Dahoman king neglecting these funeral rites would have been looked upon as the most impious of men, and a powerful priesthood would soon have sent him to Ku-to-men on his own account. It may now be understood how hopeless was my mission. It may be compared, without disrespect, to memorialising the Vatican against masses for the dead. The king's sole and necessary answer was *non possumus*.



The "customs" began on December 28th, 1863, and ended on January 25th, 1864. They were of two kinds. The first was performed by Gelele, king of the city; the second are in the name of Addo-Kpon, ruler of the "bush," or country—also Gelele. The ruler of Dahomé was thus double, two persons in one, and each had his separate palace and property, mothers and ministers, Amazons, officers, and soldiers. I have conjectured that the reason of this strange organisation is that the "bush-king" may buy and sell, which the "city-king" holds to be below his dignity.

The description of a single "custom" will suffice. About midday of December 28th, when summoned to the palace, we passed through the market-place, and we found the victim-shed finished and furnished. This building was a long, wall-less barn one hundred feet long, the roof was a thatch covered with a striped cloth on a blood-red ground and supported by tree trunks. On the west was a two-storied tower, sixty feet high, with four posts in front of each floor. There were on this occasion twenty victims sitting on stools, each before his post, with his arms around it and his wrists lashed together outside it. The confinement was not cruel; each had a slave to flap away the flies, all were fed four times a day, and they were released at night. The dress was a long white nightcap and a calico shirt with blue and crimson patches and bindings. A white man would have tried to escape; these negroes are led like



black sheep to the slaughter. They marked time as the bands played, and they chatted together, apparently quizzing us. I may here remark that at my request the king released half of these men, and that not one of them took the trouble to thank me or to beg alms from me.

Hardly were we seated when Gelele, protected by a gorgeous canopy umbrella, came forth from the palace with Amazons and courtiers in a dense, dark stream. Having visited his fetish gods, he greeted us and retired to his seat under the normal shed. As at Kana, his wives crowded together behind and the soldieresses ranged themselves in front. The ceremonies consisted of dancing, drumming, and distributing decorations—necklaces of red and yellow beads. There was fearful boasting about feats of past valour and bravery to come. About sunset the king suddenly approached us, and I thanked him for the spectacle. He then withdrew, and we lost no time in following his example.

Nothing could be poorer than this display: any petty Indian rajah can command more wealth and splendour. All was barren barbarism, and the only "sensation" was produced by a score of human beings condemned to death and enjoying the death show.

On the morrow I sent a message to the palace, officially objecting to be present at any human sacrifice, and declaring that if any murder took place before me I should retire to the coast. The reply was that few were to be executed, that the victims would only be

malignant war captives and the worst of criminals, and that all should be killed at night. With this crumb of comfort I was compelled to rest satisfied. Hitherto gangs of victims cruelly gagged had been paraded before visitors, in whose hearing and often before whose sight the murders were committed. Something is gained by diminishing the demoralising prominence of these death scenes. It is not so long ago since it was determined that the "customs" of England should be performed within the prisons, and not further debase the mob of spectators.

The catastrophe took place on what is called the "zan nya nyana," or the evil night. At intervals we heard the boom of the death-drum announcing some horrible slaughter. It was reported that the king had with his own hand assisted the premier-executioner.

On the next morning we were summoned to the palace, whose approach was a horror. Four corpses, habited in the criminal shirts and nightcaps, sat as though in life upon the usual dwarf stools. The seats were supported upon a two-storied scaffold made of four rough beams, two upright and two horizontal, and about forty feet high. On a similar but smaller erection hard by were two victims, one above the other. Between these substantial erections was a tall gallows of thin posts, from which a single victim dangled by his heels. Lastly, another framework of the same kind was planted close to our path, and attached to the cross-bar, with fine cords round the ankles and above the knees, hung two corpses side by side and head

downwards. The bodies, though stiff, showed no signs of violence : the wretches had probably been stifled.

At the south-eastern gate of the palace we found freshly severed heads in two batches of six each, surrounded by a raised rim of ashes. The clean-cut necks were turned upwards, and the features were not visible. Within the entrance were two more heads ; all the bodies had been removed, so as not to offend the king.

Thus on Gelele's "evil night" twenty-three human beings had lost their lives. And this is but one act in the fatal drama called the "customs." It is said that an equal number of women were slaughtered within the walls of the royal abode, and I had every reason to believe the report.

I was kept waiting more than a month in this den of abominations before the king could enter upon public affairs. He was discontented with the presents sent from England, and he was preparing to attack a huge Nago city—Abeokuta—where, by-the-bye, he was signally defeated.

When my last visit to him took place he stubbornly ignored, even in the least important matters, the wishes of H.M.'s Government. Filled with an exaggerated idea of his own importance, and flattered almost to madness by his courtiers, he proceeded to dictate his own terms. His next thought was an ignoble greed for presents. He bade me a friendly adieu, and asked me to visit him next year with an English carriage and horses, a large silk pavilion, and other such little gifts.



I refused to promise, and I resolved not to put my head for the third time into the hyæna's mouth. For although Gelele has never shed the blood of a white man, he might, at the bidding of his fetishers, send a new kind of messenger to Ku-to-men by means of a cup of coffee or a dish of meat. I was glad when I found myself safely back in the pestilential climate of Fernando Po.



*A TRIP UP THE CONGO*

1863





## *A TRIP UP THE CONGO*<sup>1</sup>

1863

**B**EFORE starting on an exploration into any part of Africa (especially the West Coast), it is essential that the traveller should be properly equipped with the necessary kit both for the inward and outward man. Clothing, blankets, and waterproofs of every description; tea, coffee, and sugar if they be desirable; a few bottles of real genuine cognac if come-at-able, or some ten years' old Jamaica rum if attainable.

On the occasion of our starting from Fernando Po in August 1863, for the purpose of ascending the river Congo, our kit consisted of one bullock-trunk, one small portable canteen, one dressing-bag, two uniform-cases, one hat-box, one gun-case, one tin box, one deal case of bread, one package of tins of milk, one canteen of cooking utensils, one tin of green tea, one ditto coffee, one small box of medical comforts, etc., two striped bags, a white canvas bag containing newspapers, three guns, two walking

<sup>1</sup> This MS. consisted mainly of notes roughly jotted down by Burton in a memorandum book. I have thought it best to publish them as they stood, with no alterations except those necessary to make the essay coherent and legible.—W. H. W.

sticks, one camp bed and mats, two revolvers, one simpiesometer, a pocket azimuth, an instrument case, one powder horn, one shot-bag and hunting ditto. At St. Paul de Loanda we added two cases of gin, and at Point Banana twelve pieces of siamois, or fancy cloths, twenty pieces riscados, or blue and white stripe, and ten pieces satin stripe, besides six thousand five hundred beads, china, and imitation corals. To all this we afterwards received at Embomma fifteen kegs of gunpowder and ten demijohns of rum.

H.M.S. *Torch* took us down to Loango Bay, and there Captain Smith transferred us on board the sloop-of-war *Zebra*, Captain Hoskins, who in his turn took us to St. Paul's and put us in the hands of Captain Perry, of H.M.S. *Griffon*, and this latter vessel took us into the Congo; and forthwith we commenced a start up the river on August 31st, 1863.

The usual mode of ascending the river up as far as Embomma is by means of small fore and aft schooners, generally from twenty to forty tons measurement, which are heavily sparred and well supplied with canvas. Our gear was taken by the *Griffon's* boats and put on board the French schooner *Esperance*. We had a fine breeze that afternoon, and the *Esperance* sailed up the river most gallantly. The party on board consisted of myself, Captain Perry, Mr. Bigley, and Monsieur Pisseaux, a Frenchman; besides William Dean, boatswain, my servant, four French native soldiers, and the schooner's crew.



*Wednesday, September 2nd.*—We breakfasted at a Portuguese factory, and soon after breakfast we weighed anchor and sailed up the river, arriving betimes at Porto da Lentra. In the afternoon we left Porto da Lentra, and proceeded. Passed several villages on the port hand. Boat got ashore several times after dark. About nine o'clock the Missolongis hailed and asked who we were. When I answered, they said they would pay us a visit during the night. We prepared to give them a warm reception. During the night we rounded Point Devil, a most dangerous place for navigation. Anchored at 10.30 p.m.

*Thursday, September 3rd.*—Arrived at Embomma at 1.30 p.m. Embomma contained a French factory and several Portuguese establishments. At 9.30 we got under weigh again, and in about an hour afterwards entered a part of the river where it assumes the appearance of an inland lake, some parts nearly two miles wide. The scenery here is varied, but principally hilly, the highest of the hills being about 1,500 feet above the level of the river. Here we met a native chief in his canoe. He came to levy contributions from us. His people, who were armed with guns and hatchets, made various warlike gestures and ordered us to stop. Monsieur Pisseaux being our guide and adviser, we were compelled to pay one bottle of rum and a piece of cloth twelve fathoms in length.

Captain Perry shot a fish-eagle, which was considered a fine achievement, as very few of that species can be shot on account of their inclination to fly high

in the air and to perch on the highest trees. About three o'clock we landed to rest, the scenery still bearing the same character, only perhaps the hills were a little higher than those we had passed. The grass was dry all over the hills (indeed, everywhere except close to the water's edge); and little animal life being visible, the country had a very barren and desolate appearance. The trees were not of much consequence, and most of those we saw were stunted and leafless. The chief were the baobab, or monkey bread-fruit tree, the fan palm, or palmijra, a few palm-nut trees, and a species of large spreading tree well scattered over the water side. Its leaves were of a dark green colour, about the size of the lime leaf; its fruit, a long reddish plum, was said to be eaten by monkeys, and also to be fit for human food.

Here was the farthest extent of Monsieur Pisseaux's knowledge of the river, and, to our future sorrow, we landed in the banza, or district, of Nokki. We cooked some food on shore, and messengers were despatched with a bottle of gin to the king of Kayé.

*Tuesday, September 8th.*—We now left the river for the interior, and found the road excessively irksome and trying to our wind and legs; nothing but hills and dales, the descents and ascents very difficult, and stony withal, the soles of our feet receiving a most disagreeable grating on small quartz and schistus. Passing one or two fields of native beans, we arrived at the village of Kindemba.

After resting here for a short time we again



started, and ascended a hill some six or seven hundred feet in height, and came to another village, where we saw something like a large baracoon for slaves, but it turned out to be a fetish house for circumcised boys.

Not many minutes' walk from this was the village of Kayé. On entering it we were marched off to see the king. We found him seated in state, dressed in a motley garb of European manufacture : a white shirt with collar turned down, a crimson velvet loin-cloth, fringed with gold and tied round the waist by means of a belt, and a beautifully mounted sheath-knife stuck in the belt. The handle of the knife was made of nickel silver, and very showily ornamented with imitation emeralds and ruby garnets. Over all he wore a red beadle's cloak, and on his head a helmet somewhat resembling those worn by English Life Guardsmen, but it was evidently of French manufacture. The king was very young, apparently not more than twenty years of age, very smooth-faced, and looked quite shy when he came *vis-à-vis* with his illustrious visitors. When we were all seated, I on a chair, and the others on a covered table, the courtiers sat down on the ground at a respectful distance. The king's old father was seated on the ground before his son.

The king's name was Sudikil, and that of his father Gidi Mavonga, both of them very bright specimens of their race. After some compliments, Sudikil received his presents—one piece of fine fancy cloth and a



bottle of gin. The carriers received five bunches of beads. But it appeared that the king was not satisfied with his presents, and he would give us nothing to eat. Therefore my companions, Captain Perry, Dean, and Monsieur Pisseaux, at once started for the river to return to Embomma. I, however, remained, and engaged Nchama, a native who spoke African idiomatic Portuguese, to act as interpreter and go-between. I may here mention that our party when it first started from the river consisted of fifty-six persons, but it continued to augment until our arrival at Kayé, when it mounted up to one hundred and fifty. We were domiciled for the night in the house of Siko Chico Mpambo, a man who put himself up as a French interpreter, without even knowing one personal pronoun of that language. In the evening the rabble that pretended to have escorted our party down to the canoe returned and requested some gin, and I gave them a bottle. The prince likewise sent for a bottle, which he received.

*Wednesday, September 9th.*—Early in the morning we received a visit from Gidi Mavonga and his son King Sudikil. They examined all our travelling-gear, whilst my servant kept sentry at the door to prevent their escort from going into the house. This consisted of ten men, four of whom carried matchlocks. After about half an hour's palaver, everything was handed over to Gidi, who promised to start for the Congo in three days, and, in consideration of receiving the said goods, bound himself to take us there, bring

us back, and feed us by the way. This arrangement was a good one, as it secured the friendship of the old chief and prevented him and his people from robbing and poisoning us.

We later received a visit from Tetu Mayella, king of an adjacent village called Neprat. He was accompanied by about twenty followers, all of whom came to us for the express purpose of getting some rum. Tetu Mayella wrangled for two hours with Gidi and another half-hour with Sudikil about a bottle of grog, and ultimately despatched Nchama to plead with me for him. I referred him back to Gidi Mavonga, and, after a further consultation, Tetu received one bottle of gin, in return for which he came personally and presented us with two fowls. This was a godsend, as the day before we had nothing to eat but a few pieces of dry bread, and water to wash it down. A pig was then slaughtered with great ceremony. The carcass was cut up and divided according to custom, the king getting the lion's share, and the other personages an allowance in accordance with their rank. We made ready to retire to rest after eating a good bush dinner and drinking plenty of palm wine. Gidi Mavonga paid us a visit late in the evening, and final arrangements were made with him to proceed first to Yellalla, or the Congo Cataracts, and afterwards to St. Salvador, or Great Gongo City.

*Thursday, September 10th.*—The direction of the Yellalla Cataracts from the village of Kayé was

east-north-east, and that of St. Salvador, or Congo, east-south-east. This morning we had dandelion coffee for the fourth time. It was a most excellent decoction, acting, when used judiciously, on the liver and kidneys. We found that the natives breakfasted on beans, ground nuts, fish, and beef when it can be had, and the second course is a good jorum of palm wine. At noon we began packing up, in order to start for Gidi Mavonga's village. The natives of the Congo are divided into two classes only, the mfumo, or freeman, and the muleque, or slave. The mfumo marries amongst his own slaves, or, properly speaking, retainers, and the children born by him are in their turn mfumos, or freemen. The word slave is here quite improperly used, for the slave in reality is a freer man than the king himself. Everything the king possesses, except his wives, is literally at the disposal of the slave. Unquestionably the slave is the bodyguard of the mfumo, and, as regards work, he does what he likes, sleeps when he chooses, attends to his private affairs when he pleases, and if his master finds fault with his conduct, the chances are, if his own country be not too far away from the place of his thralldom, he will leave his master and make a bold effort to reach his native land.

*Friday, September 11th.*—Very early this morning we were astonished by hearing a yelling noise from a lot of women. To use a Scotch phrase, it was a regular "skirl." It so happened that a woman



was bearing a child, and these noises were made either to drown the pains of labour or to welcome the little stranger into his trouble. In any case, we pitied the poor sufferer in travail, for the screeching must have given her an awful headache.

Gidi Mavonga came to take us to his village of Chingufu this morning. It was not a long journey, we found. Gidi's house was a facsimile of the one we had left at Kayé: an oval building upheld by two upright posts, and the roof supported by a long stout beam laid on the top of, and tied to, the uprights. The hut boasted of three doors, one at each end and one at the side. Doubtless, fox-like, the suspicious native makes all these doors to serve as mediums of escape in case of war or a slave-hunt. There was a partition in the centre dividing the hut into two rooms, the first being a general room, and the second the *sanctum sanctorum*, accessible only to the husband and wife. The furniture was very simple, consisting of a native bed in each room. The walls and roof were composed of bamboos and grass very neatly tied together. There was no flooring but the clay bottom, and the whole looked very clean and simple.

Gidi appeared to be a great worshipper of the native fetish Ibamba, or Nzamba, a variation of the devil. The natives called him Masjinga, and he is a house-god, usually keeping guard at the bedsides. The idol in Gidi's hut was a peculiarly droll-looking object. He was an image about three

feet in height, with his mouth wide open, his under lip hanging down, and the upper drawn up as if by some strong convulsions, his nose flat as Africa, and the nostrils very much inflated. His eyes were composed of pieces of looking-glass, and in his belly was inserted a penny mirror, but for what purpose we could not discover. On his head was an English billycock hat, and about his shoulders were hung different kinds of medicines, a calabash, and a knife. The face of this wonderful figure was part black, part red, and part white. On the walls of the house, and particularly about the bed, were hung medicines, spells, and potions of every description, supposed to be antidotes against every evil to which the human frame is subject; medicines to prevent gun-shots from taking effect, spells against ill-luck, potions to have wives and plenty of children, and, in fine, charms to protect against the wrath and subtlety of Nzamba.

About midday we had a visit from some neighbouring chiefs, all gaily attired. They wore red nightcaps on their heads, and this was the only head-dress I ever saw adopted by the men on great occasions, Sudikil's military helmet excepted. The women always went bareheaded. I had often wondered where in the wide universe old clothes went to after they are purchased by the Jews in London. The mystery was here solved, for I found kings wearing second-hand livery suits, with the coronet and crest of a marquis on the button, and

princes disporting themselves in marines' jackets of the last century, besides a variety of heterogeneous habiliments, such as old superfine black coats which had been worn threadbare, and pantaloons whose seats had become quite glazed from long service. All these had been cleaned and turned inside out by the Jews; and, although some would scarcely bear the tug of needle and thread, they were sent out to the west coast of Africa as bran-new garments, love of dress entirely blinding the natives to their defects. Our visitors were regaled with palm wine and a bottle of gin, and after laughing and talking for a long time they went away.

About sunset we witnessed a native game, which certainly was one of the liveliest sights since our start up the river. A number of Gidi's slaves assembled in a large open space between the houses, and, dividing themselves into two parties, began throwing a ball from one to another. Upwards of twenty were engaged in this game, and the fun consisted in the one side dodging about in all directions, and preventing its opponents from catching the ball by playing the game into each others' hands. The ball was made of palm fibre tied round with a central fibre of the plantain leaf. After sunset there was a wild country-dance, which was kept up to a late hour.

*Saturday, September 12th.*—The chief Furano, who was expected from Embomma, arrived the next morning, and we started at once for the cataracts. After marching for a short time and passing two or



three small villages, we commenced a descent in a north-easterly direction, and, journeying at a rapid pace for about three miles, we entered the village of Chinsawu, the residence of Prince Nelongo. Arrived at Nelongo's, we were detained for about half an hour, waiting in the verandah of an empty house, after which we were honoured by the presence of the prince, who intimated his pleasure to us by asserting that unless the same presents as those given to Sudikil were given to him, it would be impossible for us to pass his place. This was preposterous, for we only stopped to breakfast here, whereas we were four or five days in the territory of Sudikil. It was remarkable that nearly all the people in this region, from the prince down to the smallest child, were diseased with the itch. We observed them lying on the ground from morning till night, with their skins so covered with dust that a hippopotamus was a clean beast when compared with these beings, who ranked in animate nature as lords of creation.

We were comfortably housed at Nelongo's village, but Gidi and Nelongo were palavering all day, hammer and tongs. I noticed at Nelongo's village, as I did in other places on the banks and neighbourhood of the Congo, that all the children were afraid of the white man, for when any person attempted to bring them in proximity with me, the little brats howled as if Satan from the infernal regions had got hold of them. Most of the women were of the same texture as their progeny.

*Sunday, September 13th.*—After coffee this morning all the great folks assembled in front of our house and recommenced the half-finished palaver of last evening. Council present: myself, Gida Mavonga, Nelongo, Furano, Siko Npamba, and Interpreter Nchama. All ended in talk, and Nchama threatened to resign. The native idea of the riches possessed by a white man is fabulous. Nelongo refused to believe that we had not sufficient cloth with us to answer his most exorbitant demands. We had a respectable present for him; but that did not satisfy his avarice, and he wanted more than we had taken with us for the whole road. As there was another prince to consult in the matter, it was agreed, at my suggestion, that the whole of our gear should be submitted to examination. The expected prince arrived, carried on a hammock, and, after a heavy palaver and a great deal of yelling from the women, he went away; and then we had another visit from Nelongo, who made some very noisy demonstrations, but as the noise was conducted in the language of the country, we were not able to understand a single syllable. Suffice it to say that the whole affair ended by his receiving an additional supply of cotton, not from us, but from Gidi Mavonga. This Nelongo handed to one of his armed slaves, and then went away; but he returned again in about five minutes and intimated that the palaver was all right, which caused Gidi and his men to make demonstrations of approval by jumping up and running some paces from the house and attacking

a supposed enemy. Then they returned to the house, Furano holding the supposed wounded head of Gidi Mavonga. But the truth must be told : the whole batch of the debaters had got drunk on a mixture of palm wine and Hollands. Hence the noise, which, however, I did not allow to affect me, for I assumed during the greater part of the row the most stoical silence, and pretended to go to sleep. These tactics were successful, and we were shortly afterwards informed that we could depart in peace.

We were ready to start by twelve o'clock noon. The sun was very hot, and the thermometer stood at 90° in the shade ; but we were glad to get out of a place which reminded us of Bedlam, and therefore set out in all haste, making a slight descent into a valley, and then ascending a peculiarly formed hill, the perpendicular height of which might be a hundred and fifty feet, and from whose summit we obtained a glorious view of the river, which was seen some eight hundred feet below us, flowing down rapidly and majestically to the sea. But the utter barrenness of the country in the vicinity of its banks carried away every association of fertility. This view of the country, however, is given at the end of the dry season, when almost every tree loses its leaves, and the green grass becomes withered and dried up.

From this point we began a decline down hill which beggars description. We had not walked above a quarter of a mile before we arrived at a part of our road where, without the least exaggeration, the path,



if such it could be called, was only two degrees from the perpendicular, and as slippery as ice, owing to the loose stones and dry grass that created a stumbling-block for the feet, and we had frequently to descend sitting instead of walking down. Alpine and Vesuvian mountaineers, do try the banks of the Congo.

The distance from Nelongo's village to the banks of the river was about five miles, and on reaching the water-side we found ourselves exactly at the junction of the Nomposo with the Congo River. The Nomposo, we were informed, extended all the way to St. Salvador, but was not navigable, even for canoes. There were some fishermen who followed their vocation at the mouth of this small river, whose services were soon brought into requisition to take us across the Nomposo and land us a little above its mouth, but on the bank of the great river. This landing was the place where the fishermen dried their fish, and was called Munyengi Asiko. Being heartily tired, we very gladly sat down, and ultimately got ourselves ready to pass the night in the open air, not for the first time. Just about sunset this evening we were visited by one of those nasty drizzling showers, commonly called a Scotch mist. In about an hour it increased to a smart shower; but, luckily, we were well provided with good waterproof sheets and coats, so that no harm happened to the gear or to ourselves.

*Monday, September 14th.*—Great excitement this morning, having on the previous night lost my tablets of daily memoranda. An offer of four fathoms of

cloth was made to any person who would recover the same and return them to their owner. The whole batch of carriers and fishermen were instantly hard at work trying to find the missing tablets. After twenty minutes' search they were found in Captain Tuckey's book on the Congo.

Another row amongst the natives. It appears that some two days previously a man had supplied another with two jars of palm wine upon condition of his receiving some fish in return. The unlucky fisherman, after drinking the wine, did not succeed in catching fish for two days, and consequently was unable to pay his debt. Hence the high words and brandishing of hatchets on the part of the wine merchant and his people. But that was all ; no blows were struck, for the dog that barks very loud seldom bites.

It is always advisable in travelling through Africa to keep guides and interpreters ignorant of your possessions, for they are sure to make some excuse or other to fleece you. This morning we had evidence of this. We had paid our guide everything that was necessary for the road, yet he sent the interpreter to ask us for a piece of fancy cloth which he knew I had. I had to grant his request, otherwise I might have had to give up the journey, for ten chances to one he would have left me in a huff.

At eight o'clock we crossed the river, the time occupied being a quarter of an hour. We reached the village of Vivi after half an hour's march ; distance, one and a half miles. Nesalla was the name of the king



at Vivi; he spoke Portuguese and dressed plainly. One of his attendants, however, wore a hussar's jacket. Nesalla sent three bunches of plantains and seven fowls for the expedition. At twelve o'clock I washed, more or less in public, and, in the meantime, the women and children performed a grigri for goodness to be bestowed on their town and prince. One of the children beat on a long native drum, another performed on a native whistle attached to an image of Diabolus, and the women used their tongues very freely. It was a horrid din.

About two o'clock Nesalla came with upwards of one hundred men and commenced a long palaver about our going on to Yellalla. Five or six persons spoke, and the conference lasted one hour. The conclusion showed that the cloth we had with us was not enough, and that the princes at Yellalla must get a different piece from that which was before the conference, and no division into two pieces must be made of it under any consideration whatever. As the whole affair was conducted in a most good-humoured manner, I agreed to the terms.

In the evening the inhabitants of the village had a dance. Those who have witnessed the Spanish cachucha need scarcely be told what this dance was. The cachucha is a very good dance in its way; but the Congo dance beats it hollow, because it has more pith in it than the cachucha. The fun was kept up till a late hour, every one, both great and small, young and old, joining in it, so that in the end, what



with palm wine and excitement, the people became quite unruly, and when they left off the babel of tongues was unbearable. They came to our quarters, aroused us out of our sleep by opening the door and very unceremoniously pulling our clothes from us. They wanted some sort of covering, and thinking we might be kind enough to let them have something, took the liberty of taking without asking. We could not, however, submit to this. We permitted old Gidi Mavonga to sleep in the house, and turned the rest out of doors.

*Tuesday, September 15th.*—Early this morning we started for the Banza Nculu. The scenery along the road was varied and picturesque. The first view we had of the river was from an eminence about a mile from Vivi on the road to the Banza Nculu. Here we had a view of the Congo as it was flowing onwards, and round about in all directions were hills and dales adding a panoramic beauty to the scene. We had to descend from the summit of the first hill and ascend a second one much higher than the first, and from here we again obtained views of the Congo. One, the lower view, appeared like a lake, apparently shut in on all sides by hills, whose lofty summits stretched far and wide on every side, and some of them peered to the height of above a thousand feet into the heavens. Proceeding onwards, we ascended a third eminence, but by this time we had lost sight of the river, and our path became more level for a short distance.

We now commenced a gradual descent, but before

doing so we obtained an open and extensive view of the valley that lay between us and the Banza Nculu. On descending into the valley, we found the soil a dark clay mould with fewer stones on it than on that of the country through which we had hitherto passed. It was certainly a fine sight to behold, and the best addition to the scene was the caravan which formed the expedition now disappearing down a valley, now rising to the top of one of the many hillocks with which the valley abounded. The fertility of the soil may be observed here from the fact of the grass growing to the height of ten or twelve feet, and here also the native beans grow to a greater height than did those we saw in other parts of the country. In the valley we crossed three streams of running water, all feeders of the big river; and considering that it was the latter end of the dry season, these streams all had a fair supply of water.

We now arrived at the summit of the hill of the Banza Nculu, and as the three kings and three interpreters could not be seen at once, in consequence of their having first to settle some palaver about fish, we were compelled to bivouac under a large tree in the environs of Nculu until their highnesses might condescend to give us an audience. We breakfasted under the large tree, and were amused before and after breakfast by a number of urchins (say eight or ten) who had undergone the ceremony of circumcision, and who delighted in making a churring noise—a ch-u-r-r decidedly intended to frighten us into hysterics. But

our nerves were stronger than they at first imagined, and I went up to them and complimented them on their performance. The dress of these youths was a crinoline made of palm leaves, extending from their armpits down to their knees, or a little below that. Their arms, neck, and face were chalked white, and one of them had on a mask representing a white man with whiskers. The performance of this mask was admirably wild and laughable.

About two o'clock one of the three interpreters came to see us. He was dressed in a trade shirt and red nightcap, and was accompanied by a few men only, and had merely come to show us to a house.

At half-past three we heard the beating of a drum and cone, and, on looking out at the door, saw a procession making its way to the house in which we were lodged. I was already seated at the door, and, the whole cavalcade coming up, they seated themselves around the front of the house in a semi-circle. Altogether there might have been about two hundred and fifty persons, including all sexes and sizes. Three ministers belonging to the three kings were the principal personages, and had come as ambassadors for their masters. One of them had already given his opinion in a refusal to permit me to pass on to Sundi, and it now remained for the whole council to arrive at the ultimate decision of Yes or No. The first conference assembled and broke up in a very short time. The beginning appeared favourable, for the ministers retired amidst



the noise of drum and cone. The latter is an iron musical instrument peculiar to the country, and when played sounds exactly like the triangle of the Ethiopian serenaders. When they had reached the palaver tree we heard a great yelling among the populace, which showed that they were satisfied. In a very short time they returned again to the house and waited till I had finished dinner, and then demanded the presents for themselves and their royal masters. As usual they were not satisfied; but we had no more to give them, and Furano, our interpreter, took one of the ministers into the house and showed him all our gear. A grunt from the minister announced to us that he saw it was impossible to get "blood out of a stone."

They went away, and the third conference took place at four o'clock. This was the Grand Council, and there were plenty who spoke, the upshot of the whole affair being that they ultimately demanded the moderate sum of £300 in cloth, beads, and liquor, giving us permission (on our agreeing to the foregoing terms) to go on to Sundi above the cataracts, a journey occupying only three days. "Impudence is better than modesty," but we thought this was carrying impudence to a pitch. This sum was out of the question, and had we been possessed of enough to answer the demands of those bushmen, rather than acquiesce, we should certainly have preferred throwing the amount into the "Slough of Despond."

*Wednesday, September 16th.*—This morning we went

to view the rapids. We found that the Yellalla Rapids ran east-north-east and west-south-west, and might be said to be about a mile in length. They were assuredly very grand, although the natives led us to expect something grander still. Some fishermen were busy catching fish up and down the quieter part of the rapids, whilst the eagles and cranes were satisfying their hunger in the vicinity of the island of Sanga-chya-Malemba in the middle of the stream, some hundred yards from either side of the river's banks.

All day Gidi Mavonga was very stubborn and irritable, and wished to start at once for Vivi and return home ; but as I had to put up some botanical specimens, to finish two sketches of this part of the country, and besides, having sore feet from walking, I would not hear of starting. Gidi therefore started, after repeated palavers, and called his muleks to follow him : some followed ; others begged off, but to no purpose. Off he went, and after proceeding a short distance, returned, and in very strong words expressed himself an injured man. This was taking high ground ; I therefore told the interpreter to tell Gidi that he might go away, and, at the same time, to inform him that he must send certain properties belonging to me which had been left at his banza, and that in future no further communication would be held with his place by any Englishman.

Gidi said that the property belonged to him. I told him to take all, but, he might rely upon it,

the kings who live close to the riverside would have to answer for the things. Whereupon Gidi at once gave way, and most submissively begged pardon, and matters were set right for a short time.

*Saturday, September 19th.*—We found ourselves back again at Gidi Mavonga's village, paying off all the extra hands who accompanied us to the rapids. The pay was made in cloth, beads, and liquors.

The heavy demands made by the bigwigs of Banza Nculu—*viz.* £300 for mere permission to pass to Sundi, beside the enormous expense of feeding ourselves and thirty-five followers—had compelled us to give up the project we had in view, especially as we had seen the principal rapids on the river—the rest of the falls, until reaching Sundi, being mere elevations, in themselves quite insignificant. My object had been to reach Sundi, and thence try to ascertain the course of the river, and to find out whether its source could be nearly reached by canoes, or entirely reached by carriers. But finding the demands of the chiefs beyond my power of compliance, I resolved to return. Our chief guide, Gidi Mavonga, was anxious to make a retrograde movement as quickly as possible, and urged upon us the necessity of packing up and starting after three o'clock on the afternoon of our return from visiting the rapids. But I declined to stir until the next morning, and after much trouble I gave him and his slaves one blanket cloth and a pair of razors, which quieted him a little. But it was soon evident that even this



munificent gift merely banked up the fires of discord in the breasts of the savages, for the same dissatisfaction was observable even after we returned to their village. The day of settlement brought Gidi and his slaves to our temporary residence, and what followed beggared powers of description. What uproar! What threats! What runnings to and fro! All the devils in the infernal regions appeared to have infused a double portion of their diabolical influence into the bodies and souls of their willing disciples on that day of settlement, and when everybody's fury had reached the climax of rage and insolence, old Gidi rushed into the house occupied by us, commenced turning all our gear upside down, and at last laid forcible hands upon a bale of merchandise.

I therefore quietly informed the wild old man that he was carrying matters too far, asked the meaning of it, and took out a six-barrelled Colt's revolver, and placed it at my feet ready for use in case of need. This had the desired effect, for Gidi, after taking a long, covetous look at the bale of merchandise, turned round and stared at the leveller of six men at my feet, and having balanced the difference, he slunk out in perfect silence, followed by his two myrmidons, who had accompanied their master into the house to carry away anything that their lord might select. Outside the slaves still clamoured, and at last induced their master to beard me again when I was writing.

Thus for two days affairs progressed as hot as fire and as irritating as a wife's bad temper, till at length,

by some special interposition of Providence, we managed to make arrangements for some people to carry our gear down to the riverside, and for a canoe to take us to Embomma, one of the principal stations on the river.

The preliminaries of this arrangement occupied two days, and on the morning of the third day we were ready to start by half-past five o'clock, but no carriers had as yet made their appearance, and after they did come, it was with the same infernal noise that we managed to start them with the loads. But the moment they were *en route* they almost ran with the things, and shortly disappeared from our view. We followed as quickly as we could after them, and arriving at Kayé, a sentinel with a gun stopped us, and informed us that his Highness Prince Sudikil desired our presence. On reaching the house of our old landlord, we discovered the whole of our gear before his door, and the prince with his mother and some of his slaves standing in a circle round the things, whilst one disgusting-looking brute was about to open a box of beads. I at once walked up to the rascal and gave him a castigation with a stick. The fellow looked daggers; but on showing him a fine breech-loading Cooper's rifle, he held down his head and slunk a little way back from the box and sat down.

And now commenced a palaver between the prince and myself, the substance of which was that the prince wished to exact more presents from me, but this time by force. The armed slaves began to come

up one by one, until they added a considerable number to the crowd. I told the prince that it was customary to give on the arrival but not on the departure of a stranger. But as his highness persisted in his inflexible determination to have something, I referred him to Mambuka Prata, a powerful chief at Embomma, and requested Sudikil to take and keep my signet ring until the case was settled by arbitration at head-quarters.

At this suggestion the prince, his mother, some of the slaves, and even Nchama, our interpreter, commenced such a babel of tongues that we wished the whole bunch of them keeping company with Pharaoh at the bottom of the Red Sea. It was quite evident that they had perceived the absurdity and obstinacy of their covetous desires. The prince therefore walked away in a great rage, taking with him all his slaves, and nearly one-half of those who had brought our kit from his father's house. Here, again, was another fix. We were standing pondering over the peculiar position in which we were placed, when luckily the few who remained at once resolved to carry each a double load, and this brought us to the waterside, and examining all our baggage, and seeing everything correct, I made a present of beads to the carriers and had breakfast.

By 9.45 a.m. we set off for Embomma with thankfulness, where we arrived at 5 p.m. on the same day, having run down with the current, slightly assisted by paddles, a distance of forty-five miles in seven hours and a quarter.



*Wednesday, September 23rd.*—John Clarke, being engaged to go with us to St. Salvador, started this afternoon with Nchama to bring carriers from Mambuka Prata. Chief Mambuka Prata had a few trading huts close to the French factory, where he flew a black and white flag on trading occasions. The district of Embomma may extend about eight or ten miles in length, and throughout the whole of it villages of from ten to twenty houses may be seen standing in all directions, and sometimes several miles apart from one another. The king's residence may consist of sixty houses, and it is generally at the royal villages that the traveller finds a home during his sojourn.

*Thursday, September 24th.*—At Embomma. This day's proceedings have been more annoying than any that have preceded it. The two messengers, John Clarke and Nchama, who had been sent on a mission to Mambuka Prata, returned without having accomplished a single order in connection with the mission entrusted to them. Nchama returned about six o'clock in the morning, perfectly drunk, and incapable of giving a single word of explanation as to his whereabouts and doings. John Clarke returned in the afternoon, and gave rather a tame version of his proceedings. He said that Mambuka Prata, being annoyed at not receiving a coat promised him by Monsieur Pisseaux, would not send any carriers to take us on to St. Salvador. What a Frenchman's conduct had to do with an Englishman's affairs I

could not conceive. He (Mambuka Prata) said the carriers would not be forthcoming until he received a book from the white man, or saw him himself. This last sounded like a falsehood, as there was not a soul in all Vinda who could read a single scrap, and, besides, our interpreters took with them a very good book in the shape of a demijohn of rum and a tenth of powder, but whether these had been delivered into the hands of the proper persons was a question. Nchama, having been severely reprimanded, repaired to his village, and did not make his appearance again until the day we left Embomma.

*Friday, September 25th.*—We left Embomma, and arrived in Porto da Lentra at 1.15 on the morning of Saturday, September 26th. On the way down the canoemen made several attempts to land at various villages, but were forced to proceed for fear of Colt's revolvers. They did very well, and received six bottles of rum.

We left Porto da Lentra for Point Banana at 4.15 on the morning of September 27th. We had exchanged our smaller but fine canoe for a large one, and started with six hands and captain, but had scarcely lost sight of Porto da Lentra when our canoemen went up a creek—they said to get extra clothing. We were detained more than half an hour waiting for them, until probably they had eaten their breakfast and drunk their palm wine. We got them to start with great difficulty; but at the very next creek they stopped again, and would have repeated the dose at



other places had we not had recourse to our friends in need, the revolvers.

At the creek one man jumped on shore and we pushed off again ; but a few yards down we were hailed by a Missolongi canoe, the river-pirates of this part of the Congo. This third time our canoe-men stopped ; and we were obliged to face them with cocked revolvers and compel them to go on. Down we glided, assisted more by the current than by our men. Another creek, and the canoemen requested to stop again to eat, which request was positively refused.

The river had been hitherto very calm, but at two o'clock the sea-breeze began to blow hard ; the tide was also slightly against us, and this caused a swell in the river which wetted nearly all our things. I was surveying at the time, and, fearing that the instruments might get a soaking with salt water, I ordered the canoemen to put back and return to Point Banana by means of a creek on the right of the river. This appeared to the canoemen to be awfully hard work, although they had only to pull back for about a quarter of a mile. The Congoes are remarkable for their uselessness : they excel in eating, drinking, sleeping, and talking, in a word, in satisfying their sensual comforts, and what little sense they have is used for the purpose of annoying those with whom they come in contact. More than five times they were asked to make sail, and then gave a few strokes with their paddles, and stopped and chatted again, put



the canoe broadside on to the billows, let her drift back, and again gave a few more strokes.

In this way nearly an hour passed away, and we never reached the end of the quarter-mile. They began to complain that the way by the creek was too far, whilst just a short time before that they told us the creek was the nearest. They now declared that they could proceed no farther, and pulled the canoe in shore. Seeing that the whole bevy of them, from the captain to the small boy, were all drunk from drinking some rum they had brought with them, we could do nothing but submit to this state of things, anything being preferable to trusting the canoe with a lot of drunken hands, and getting ourselves and gear saturated with salt water.

The crew were permitted to land. They lighted a fire, cooked, ate, drank, quarrelled, and went to sleep. The padron, or captain, took possession of the rum, and drank himself to sleep also ; and when the wind abated a little and the water became calmer, we awakened the captain with difficulty, and he with greater difficulty his crew ; but the tide had gone down, and the canoe was high and dry on the bank. All efforts to launch her into the water proved unavailing, especially as the rum was still hard at work, and what little sense the Congoes had was perfectly misapplied. In consequence we had to wait until the tide again served, which did not take place till two o'clock the following morning, when we tried again to start our hands, and with great

delay and noise managed to reach Point Banana at 4.15 a.m.

At six o'clock all our things were landed and comfortably housed within Monsieur Parrat's factory. Thank God! we were now at a considerable distance from Yellalla and the triumvirate and avaricious triple ministers of the Banza Nculu, far away from the Banza Vivi and its king, far away from the quarrelsome, covetous, gin-drinking, noisy, and licentious old Gidi Mavonga, far away from that senseless nincompoop the Prince Sudikil, and—praise be to Allah!—within hail of Her Majesty's ship *Griffon*.





*THE INTERIOR OF BRAZIL*

1867



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I HAD been in Brazil nearly two years, vegetating between Santos and São Paulo, varied by an occasional expedition afield or a trip to Rio de Janeiro, when I determined to put into action my long-cherished plan of prospecting the great and wealthy province of Minas Gerães in the interior, and then to go down the São Francisco, which is the Brazilian Mississippi, from Sabará to the sea, and to visit *en route* the Paulo Affonso rapids, the Niagara of Brazil. As my wife was very anxious to go, I took her with me.

We left Rio on June 12th, 1867, and sailed across the incomparable Bay, and then ascended to Petropolis. From Petropolis we made our real start in a large char-à-banc, which held eight, in two and two, and which was drawn by four mules. The mules started off in fine style; being fresh and frisky they simply galloped along the mountain side. It is not necessary for me to describe the first part of the journey, which, for a few days, travelled along a well-known road, through a splendid district of wooded mountains, broad rivers, and boulders of rock; the vegetation was especially fine, even tropical. At Juiz de Fora



we abandoned our char-à-banc for the coach, whereby we travelled to Barbacena, and here again we left the coach for the saddle, and followed the bridle-road, if indeed it could be called a road.

I should weary if I were to describe the places we passed through until we came to Logão Duroda, where the railway was in process of making, and where they were just laying the first chain for the exploration of the mountains and for the prolongation of the Dom Pedro Secunda Railway. There was an inauguration ceremony, and my wife had the honour of giving the first blow to the stock and breaking a bottle of wine over it. After that we had a convivial gathering, and wound up with a dinner in the good old English fashion. Next day we started off again, and still riding through beautiful scenery, up and down mountains, through shallow rivers and bits of virgin forests, from day to day, we eventually arrived at Morro Velho, where we were most hospitably received by the superintendent of the São Goa d'el Rey Mining Company and Mrs. Gordon, and we spent some days in their most comfortable home. Morro Velho is the queen of the Minas Gerães mines, and a most interesting place, but, as we were going back to it, we determined to press on to Ouro Preto, which is the capital of the province, a most hilly town, for walking up and down the streets was as difficult as climbing up ladders. We stayed here two days, and then returned to Morro Velho. We had a long, muddy, rainy journey on the way back, slipping backward two steps for every one

forward, but at last we arrived at the Gordons' house again, and were warmly welcomed as before. Here we tarried for a fortnight, and thoroughly explored everything.

Among other things we explored the mine, which had the reputation of being the largest, deepest, and richest gold-mine in Brazil. My wife determined to go with me, and Mrs. Gordon, who had never before ventured under grass, kindly consented to accompany her. Mr. Gordon and I went down first in a bucket, or kibble, which was suspended over the abyss. We found in it a rough wooden seat, comfortable enough. We were advised by the pitman not to look downwards, as the glimmer of the sparks and lights below was apt to cause giddiness and seasickness. I did look down and felt none the worse. We touched and tilted half over once against a cableway drum, but that was our only contretemps. I could not but wonder at the mighty timbering which met my eyes as it dilated in the darkness;—timber everywhere, all of the best and hardest wood. The mighty mass, it might hardly be said, was not without flaws, very palpable at second look. We made an easy descent down the shaft, and a bunch of lighted tow, tied to the bucket chain, showed us all its features. There was no "rattle his bones over the stones," and the drop lasted fifteen minutes. At the bottom the kibble, or bucket, stood still, began to reel like a boat, and descended perpendicularly until we stepped out. Presently Mrs. Gordon and



my wife, habited in brown holland trousers, belted blouses, and miners' caps, came down, 'delighted with the kibble travelling. The men did everything to banish the ladies' alarm, and spoke and cheered us as we passed. The mine was utterly new to me, and most unlike the dirty labyrinth of little clefts and filthy galleries down which I have often crawled like a low reptile; the height suggested a cavern or a huge stone-quarry.

Candle burning, the usual test, detected nothing abnormal in the atmosphere; the ventilation was excellent. Of course, our feet were wiped, and, physically speaking, they wanted wiping; the floor was wet, the mud was slippery, and locomotion somewhat like an ascent of the Pyramids, although the ground was pretty level.

It was a huge palace of darkness; the walls were either black as the grave, or reflected in the slender rays of light a watery surface, or were broken into monstrous projections, half revealing and half concealing cavernous recesses. Despite the lamps, the night pressed upon us, as it were, with a weight, and the only measure of distance was a spark here and there, glimmering like a single star. Distinctly nerve-testing was the gulf between the huge mountain sides, apparently threatening every moment to fall. Through this Inferno gnomes glided about in a ghostly fashion, half-naked figures enveloped by the mist. Here dark bodies hung by chains in what seemed frightful positions; there they swung like



leopards from place to place ; there they swarmed up loose ropes like troglodytes ; there they moved over scaffolding, which even to look up at would make a nervous temperament dizzy.

Our visit to the mine amply repaid us ; it was a place

Where thoughts were many, and words were few.

But the fact will remain on our mental retina as long as our brains will do their duty.

After a fortnight at Morro Velho I prepared to go to Sabará, there to embark *en route* to the coast. With a peculiar cat-like feeling I bade adieu to the Gordons, with whom we had found an English home in the Highlands of Brazil. My excellent compatriots, however, accompanied me to break the shock of departure ; my wife also, though, as she had sprained her ankle badly, she was to return to Rio.

It was a long ride from Morro Velho and a tiring one, and we were glad to enter the picturesque city of Sabará, where we found tolerable lodgings. Here I completed my preparations for descending the Rio das Velhas, and had to seek the aid of a store-keeper, who turned out to be an extortioner. That, perhaps, was only to be expected ; but I may justly complain when, in addition to his extortionate charges, he sent me down the river, a river like the Mississippi, in a raft whose starboard canoe had a leak scarcely stopped up with Sabará clay.

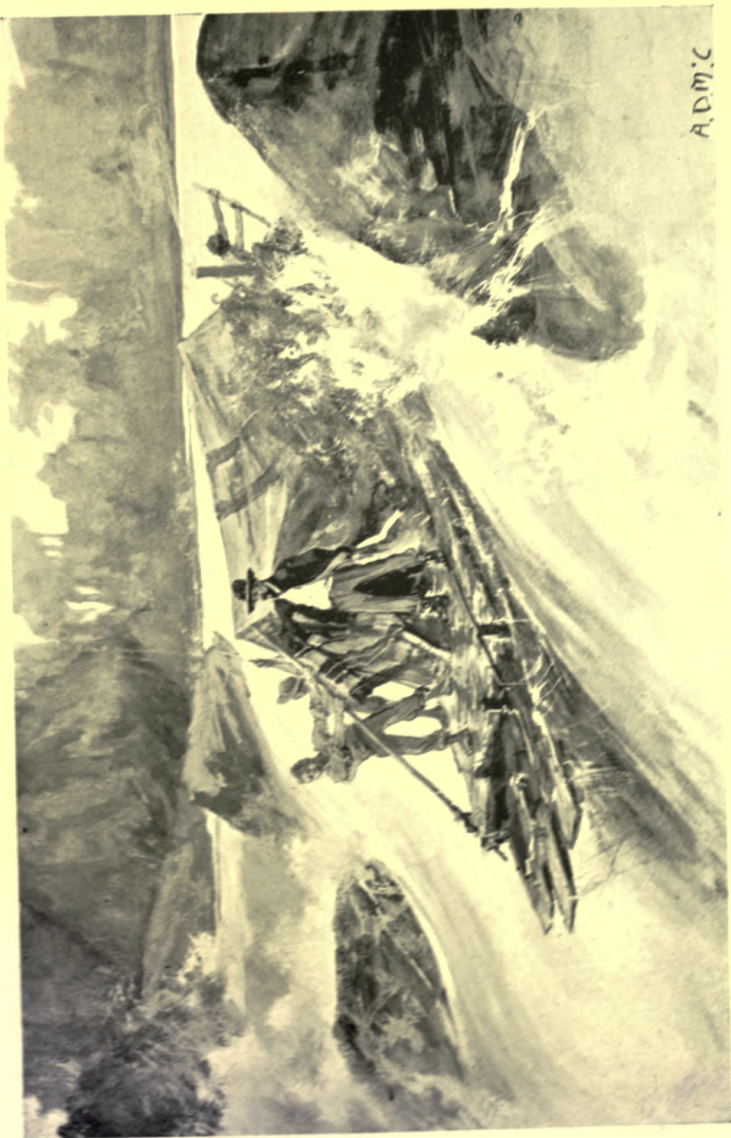
The next day we all walked down to the upper landing-place, where the ajojo, or raft, lay. I never

saw such an old Noah's ark, with its standing awning, a floating gipsy "pal," some seven feet high and twenty-two long, and pitched like a tent upon two hollowed logs. The river, I thought, must indeed be safe if this article can get down without an accident.

All the notables of the place witnessed the process of embarkation. A young English lady broke a bottle of wine with all possible grace upon the bows, and duly christened the craft the *Eliza* and two pairs of slippers were thrown at my head. Many *vivas* were given and returned, and all my party embarked for a trial trip of a couple of miles. When the fifteen souls came on board, they sank the raft some three palms, and deluged the upper platform, making the headman, or pilot, very nervous; already he began to predict swamping, "going down in a jiffey," and being dashed to pieces by the rapids. We shot past a dangerous rock in mid-stream, and in a short time arrived at the little village of Santo Antonio da Roça Grande, where animals were waiting to carry home the non-voyagers, my wife included. They landed here, but stood as the setting sun sank behind the mountains and waved their farewells as they watched the raft turn the last corner and float off into the far mysterious unknown. I confess to having felt an unusual sense of loneliness as the kindly faces faded away in the distance, and, by way of distraction, I applied myself to a careful examination of my raft.

The ajojo, or, as it is called in other places, the





A.D.M.C

[See Page 266.]

SHOOTING THE RAFTS ON THE RIO DAS VELHAS.





“balsa,” here represents the flat boat of the Mississippi. On the Rio das Velhas, however, it had not yet become an institution, and at that time I was the only traveller who had yet passed down by it from Sabará to the rapids of Paulo Affonso. I need not describe it in detail ; I will only say that, though not of the safest description, it behaved itself, under all the circumstances, well.

My crew numbered three—old Vieira and his sons. Two stood in the bows with poles, which they preferred as being easier to use than paddles. The paddles used in deep waters vary in shape every few hundred miles. The men were mere landlubbers ; they felt, or affected to feel, nervous at every obstacle. They had been rowing all their lives, and yet they knew not how to back water ; curious to say, this was everywhere the case down stream. They pulled with all their might for a few minutes when the river was rapid, so as to incur possible risks, and when the water was almost dead, they lay upon their oars and lazily allowed themselves to be floated down. Thus, during the working day, between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m., very little way was made. They had no system, nor would they learn any. The only thing energetic about them was the way they performed upon the cow-horn, and with this they announced arrival, saluted those on the banks, and generally enjoyed the noise.

My first stage was between Sabará and Santa Lusia. The stream was deeply encased ; the reaches were short,

and we seemed to run at the bluffs, where high ribs came down to the bed and cut the bottom into very small bends. The most troublesome feature was the shallow places where the bed broadened ; we grounded with unpleasant regularity. This part also abounded in snags. The tortuous bed, never showing a mile ahead, prevented anything like waves, though the wind was in our teeth. At this time of year we saw the Old Squaw's River at its worst ; there was a minimum of water and a maximum of contrary wind. On the other hand, it was the "moon of flowers" ; the poor second growth teemed with bunches of purple beauty, and the hill-tops were feathered by palms.

At Jaguára the people cried, "You'll never reach Trahiras," deriding the *Eliza*. Indeed, we seemed likely to waste much time. However, we crept on surely, if slowly. As evening approached the weather waxed cool and clear, and the excessive evaporation gave the idea of great dryness ; my books curled up, it was hardly possible to write, and it reminded me of the Persian Gulf, where water-colours cannot be used because the moisture is absorbed from the brush.

The first view of Santa Lusía was very pleasing ; a tall ridge about a mile from the stream was capped with two double-towered churches, divided by fine, large, whitewashed houses and rich vegetation, with palms straggling down to the water. Here I landed and made my way to the hotel, which was a most tumble-down hole, and after supper inspected Santa



Lusia. It was formerly a centre of the gold diggings, but at this time possessed nothing of interest.

The next morning was delicious, and the face of Nature was as calm as if it could show no other expression. The sword-like rays of the sun, radiating from the unseen centre before it arose in its splendour, soon dispersed the thin mists that slept tranquilly upon the cool river-bed. We shot the Ponte Grande de Santa Lusia to Cruvello and the backwoods. The bridge was the usual long, crooked affair, with twelve trusses, or trestles, in the water and many outside, showing that the floods are here extensive. The girders are rarely raised high enough, and an exceptional inundation sweeps them away, leaving bare poles bristling in the bed and dangerous piles under water.

About two miles below Santa Lusia the water became deeper and the country changed. The right, or eastern, side was rough and hilly, with heights hugging the bed. Near the other bank the land was more level, and the soil showed a better complexion, by which both sugar-cane and timber profited. In another hour we sighted the first cotton plantation, and right well it looked. There was indeed a mine of neglected wealth in cotton and fish along, and in, this river, and the more I saw of it the richer I found it. The hills were clothed with thin brown-grey grass, looking in places as if they were frosty with hoar, and always profusely tasselled.

Presently another bend showed certain white lines between the river-fringe of trees, and this was the

abode of the friaresses. We made fast to a gap in the clay bank and landed. At first I was refused even coffee, and there was no inn. I therefore sent my card and letter to the reverend vicar, and he at once called upon me, ordered dinner, and took me off to see the lions, of which the most interesting was the sisterhood, or infirmary, of the friaresses before named. The reverend mother, rather a pretty person, received us at the door, kissed the padre's hand, and led the way to the little college chapel, white and gold with frescoed ceiling. We visited the dormitories; the galleries were long, the room was large and airy. The infirmary contained one sister and four invalid girls. The thirty-six reverend women were dressed in white veils and petticoats, with black scapulars in front, and over all a blue cloak. I spent the night at this place on the raft; the moon and stars were unusually bright, and the night was delightfully clear and cool.

We set out next morning at seven o'clock, and proceeded without much adventure all that day and night, finally arriving at Jaguára, at which hospitable place I spent pleasant days, whilst another crew was engaged and arrangements for my reaching Diamantina were being completed.

After a week at Jaguára I embarked again. There was very little to record day by day of the voyage from Jaguára to Diamantina. The river was ever changing: sometimes we passed picturesque cliffs; sometimes we went through gorgeous forests; with

masses of vegetation rolling and bulging down the bank ; sometimes the currents changed into rapids, and the bed of the river was studded with islets of calcareous stone, dangerous during half-flood.

The most dangerous experience was when we shot the rapids at Cachoeira Grande. People crowded down to the yellow bank to stare and to frighten us about them, and the dialogue was somewhat in this style :—

“Do you know the rapids ?” we inquired.

“We know them !”

“Will you pilot us ?”

“We will not pilot you !”

“For money ?”

“Not for money !”

“And why ?”

“Because we are afraid of them !”

This was spoken as the juniors ran along the bank like ostriches or the natives of Ugogo.

Luckily for us, for the Cachoeira Grande was no joke, we found, just before we came to the rapids, on the right bank a small crowd keeping holiday. The men carried guns in their hands, and wore pistols and daggers under their open jackets ; the women were in full dress, brilliant as rainbows, with blood-red flowers in their glossy, crows'-wing hair. Of the dozen, not one was fairly white. Here we picked up a pilot or two who came on board. They were men of few words ; they saluted us civilly and pushed off.



The beginning of the end was the little rapid of the Saco Grande, or "Big Bend," where the river bed, turning sharply from south-east to north-west, made parallel reaches. To avoid the rock-pier on the left we floated stern foremost down along the right bank, and managed the rapid with some difficulty. Presently we turned to the east-south-west, and faced the dreaded Cachoeira Grande, which is formed by another sharp bend in the bed, winding to the north-east. The obstacles were six very flat projections of dark stone on the right bank and four on the left, and cunning is required to spiral down between them. We began by passing the port of No. 1, then we made straight for No. 2 to the left; here, by pushing furiously up stream, the *Eliza* was forced over to the right, was swung round by main force of arm, and was allowed to descend, well in hand, to within a few feet of No. 4, which rises right in the front. Finally, leaving this wrecker to starboard, we hit the usual triangle-head, with plenty of water breaking off both arms. The descent occupied sixteen minutes.

After many congratulations our friends the pilots made a show of taking leave to do some important business, which proved on inquiry to mean "doing compliments." As the dangers were not yet over, I produced a keg of restilo; it was tasted, and pronounced very hot in the mouth, and the Major—that is, myself—became so irresistible that they all swore they would accompany me to the Rio de São Francisco, or anywhere. The poles were twirled again

and wielded with a will. We left to port broken water and an ugly stone, a hogsback ; then we crossed to scrape acquaintance with a sunken mass in front.

The end was the Cachoeira das Gallinhas, to which we presently came. We gave a wide berth to a rock well on the right bank and stuck to the left side. Here was a narrow gate, formed by two rock-piers projecting from the shores, and in such places "cordelling" was advisable. The men sprang into the water with loud cries, and pulled at the hawser till the current had put us in proper position. They then pushed off and sprang on board before we could make much way. The "Rapid of the Hens" occupied us nine minutes.

A second dram of the "wild stuff" was then given and our friends the pilots blessed us fervently ; they prayed for us, and unintelligibly invoked for us the protection of the Virgin and all the saints. They landed with abundant tripping and stumbling, carrying with them many dollars and a bottle of the much-prized restilo. I had every reason to be grateful to them, for they saved me an immense amount of trouble ; but, shortly afterwards, reports of certain "little deaths," in which they had been actively concerned, showed me that they were not exactly lambs.

After this we proceeded easily down the river to Bom Successo, from which point I intended to visit Diamantina City. I had to land here and make my way to Diamantina on mule-back, not an easy journey, involving, as it did, a day and a night. Diamantina,

or the Diamond City, was peculiarly situated, almost precipitous to the east and south-west, while the northern part was a continuation of the broken prairie-land. I stayed here as the guest of Sr. João Ribeiro, a diamond merchant, and wealthy and hospitable. I spent at this place three days and thoroughly inspected it. The impression left upon me was most agreeable ; the men were the frankest, and the women the prettiest and most amiable, of any it had been my fortune to meet in Brazil ; nothing could exceed their hospitality. I will not describe my visit to the diamond diggings, as I have done so fully elsewhere, and this brief sketch must be mainly devoted to my voyage down the river. I will only say that I found it most interesting, and, so far from the diamonds being exhausted, it seemed to me that they were only at the beginning of a supply which might be described as inexhaustible.

On the eleventh day I returned to Bom Sucesso with great regret, and at 9.30 a.m. on September 7th I dismissed my trooper and his mules, and pushed out of the creek down the river towards Coroa do Gallo. I met with several small troubles, such as low sandbanks, snags, and stones, but managed to push through to the Coroa do Gallo, where I spent the night. The previous day had been burning hot, but when we set forth the weather had become temperate, and, indeed, on all this journey there was nothing much to complain of on account of the climate. We drifted on day after day through a soft and balmy atmosphere, disturbed ever and anon by



gusts of wind and vapours ; sometimes distant sheet lightning flashed from the mists massing around the horizon, the smoke of the prairie fires rose in columns, and they might have been mistaken for the fumes of a steamer by night. Those that were near glowed like live coals, whilst the more distant gleamed blue.

I landed and stayed a day or two at Guaicuhy, but there was nothing very important to record. I was strongly advised to visit the rapids of the Pirapora, which are said to be, after the Casca d'Anta at the beginning and the Paulo Affonso at the end, the important feature upon the Rio de São Francisco. The word means a "fish leap," and is applied to places on more than one Brazilian river. With a flush of joy I found myself upon this glorious stream of the future, whose dimensions here measure seven hundred feet. I had seen nothing to compare with it since my visit to the African Congo.

Two new men were hired to guide us in the "tender" canoe, as we wished to shoot the rapids. We eyed curiously the contrasts of the new stream with that which we had lately left. Here the water was of a transparent green ; the river seemed to break even from the stiff clay, which was in places caving in. After nine hours of hard work we doubled a wooded projection from the left bank, and sighted the Cachoeira of the Pirapora. The Pirapora differed from anything I had yet viewed ; it was, in fact, partly a true fall, divided into two sections, and we trembled to think what the Paulo Affonso might be. Glad

to stretch our cramped limbs, we landed on the right bank, and proceeded to inspect the rapids from above. The upper rapid, six feet high, seemed more formidable than the lower of about seven feet. Near the right bank these form true falls ; they are also garnished by little ladders, miniature cascades rushing furiously down small, narrow, tortuous, channels, between the teeth of jagged stone-saws, and tumbling over dwarf buttresses. Thus the total height between the upper and the lower "smooths" is thirteen feet. Above the break the stream narrows to 1,800 feet, whilst below it broadens to 3,500 feet. During the dry weather the fair-way, if it may be so called, is a thin sheet of water near the western bank : no raft, however, can pass ; canoes must be unladen and towed up. Without a good pilot there is imminent risk.

A storm was gathering, and as we began the descent lightning flashed from the east and south, and from all the horizon, followed by low rumblings of thunder. Presently our cranky canoe was struck by the gale, one of the especial dangers of the São Francisco. The east wind was heard roaring from afar, and as it came down upon the stream, white waves rose after a few minutes, subsiding as easily when the gale had blown itself out. My men preferred the leeward bank, upon which the blast broke, leaving the water below comparatively dead, and thus they escaped the risk of falling trees. The surface of the central channel being now blocked by the furious

wind, a backwater during our ascent bore us swiftly down. It was very dark at 7.30, when we landed and climbed the steep and slippery bank. The thunder growled angrily and heavy rain fell, fortunately upon a tight roof. This was the first wet weather that I had experienced since July 21st.

The Pirapora had been on the São Francisco my terminus *ad quem*, and now it was *a quo*, the rest of the voyage being down stream. When we started in the morning the weather was still surly from the effects of last night's scolding, but the air was transparent and clear; the books no longer curled with drought, and a dose from the quinine bottle was judged advisable. We were evidently at the break of the rainy season. It was noon before the *Eliza* was poled off from the bank of the Guaicuhy, and turned head downwards into the great stream. We drifted on from day to day until we arrived at São Romao, a God-forgotten place, which I explored; but it was not particularly hospitable, so I returned at evening and spent the night on the *Eliza*, lighted the fire, drew down the awning, and kept out as much of the drifting rain and cold, shifting wind as possible. It was not easy to sleep for the babel of sounds, for the Romanenses were decidedly ill-behaved and uncivilised, and made night hideous with their orgies.

We set out again next day, furling the awning, through the drenching rain. We had a day of wind and water, and then another of very hot sun,



and so we went on to Januaria, where I met with frank and ready hospitality. After staying here a night, we took the water again, and proceeded through a small hurricane to Carunhanha, where also I was well received, but had to sleep on board the raft—another night of devilry. Cold wind from the north rushed through the hot air, precipitating a deluge in embryo; then the gale chopped round to the south, and produced another, and fiercer, down-pour. A treacherous lull, and all began again, the wind howling and screaming from the east. The thunder roared and the lightning flashed in all directions; the stream rose in wavelets, which washed over the *Eliza*, and shook her by the bumping of the “tender” canoe. We did not get much sleep that night.

I will not further describe my voyage day after day in the *Eliza*. Suffice it to say, at Varzêa Redonda, a wretched village just before we came to the Paulo Affonso, I dismantled the *Eliza* and paid off the crew. I was asked to stay on land, but, as I wished to see everything settled, I slept on board, and regretted my resolution. The night was furious, and the wind raised waves that nearly beat the old raft to pieces. My men, having reached the end of their work, had the usual boatman’s spree—hard drinking, extensive boasting, trials of strength, and quarrelling, intermixed with singing, shouting, extemporising verses, and ending in the snores and snorts of Bacchic sleep. I found them very trouble-

some ; but the next morning they shed tears of contrition. I saw them disappear without regret ; the only face, indeed, that I was sorry to part from was that of the good old pilot.

The next step was to procure animals and men to take me to the Great Rapids. I had great difficulty in getting these, and when the party was made up it consisted of the worst men, the worst mules, and the worst equipments I had ever seen in Brazil. In two days and two nights I arrived at Paulo Affonso, the King of the Rapids.

I shall never forget my first approach to it. In the distance we heard a deep, hollow sound, soft withal, like the rumbling of a distant storm, but it seemed to come from below the earth, as if we trod upon it. After another mile the ground appeared to tremble at the eternal thunder. A little later we came upon the rapids. Paulo Affonso has well been called the Niagara of Brazil.

The quebrada, or gorge, is here two hundred and sixty feet deep ; in the narrowest part it is choked to a minimum breadth of fifty-one feet. It is filled with what seems not water but froth and milk, a dashing and dazzling, a whirling and churning surfaceless mass, which gives a wondrous study of fluid in motion. Here the luminous whiteness of the chaotic foam-crests, hurled in billows and breakers against the blackness of the rock, is burst into flakes and spray that leap half-way up the immuring trough. Then the steam boils over and canopies the tremendous

scene. In the stilly air of dull, warm grey, the mists surge up, deepening still more the dizzy fall that yawns under our feet.

The general effect of the picture, and the same may be said of all great cataracts, is the realised idea of power—of power tremendous, inexorable, irresistible. The eye is spell-bound by the contrast of this impetuous motion, this wrathful, maddened haste to escape, with the frail steadfastness of the bits of rainbow, hovering above, with the "Table Rock," so solid to the tread, and with the placid, settled stillness of the plain and hillocks, whose eternal homes seem to be here. Magic, I may observe, is in the atmosphere of Paulo Affonso ; it is the natural expression of the glory and the majesty, the splendour and the glamour of the scene, which Greece would have peopled with shapes of beauty, and which in Germany would be haunted by choirs of flying sylphs and dancing Undines.

I sat over the cataract until convinced it was not possible to become one with the waters ; what at first seemed grand and sublime had at last a feeling of awe, too intense to be in any way enjoyable. The rest of the day I spent in camp, where the minor troubles of life soon asserted their power. The sand raised by the strong and steady trade-wind was troublesome, and the surface seething in the sun produced a constant drought. We were now at the head of the funnel, the vast ventilator which guides the gale to the Rio de São Francisco. At night the sky showed a fast-drifting scud, and an angry blast dispersed the gathering



clouds of blood-thirsty mosquitos. Our lullaby was the music of Paulo Affonso.

The next day I visited the falls again and explored them thoroughly, going down from the heights above to the base beneath, from which the finest view of the falls was to be obtained. It was a grand climax to my voyage down the São Francisco.

My task was done ; I won its reward, and my strength passed from me. Two days of tedious mountain riding led to the Porto das Piranhas, and from here I descended the lower Rio de São Francisco more leisurely, and, when that was done, I finally returned *viâ* Rio de Janeiro to Santos (São Paulo), *alias* the Wapping of the Far West, and took up my consular duties once again.



*THROUGH SYRIA TO PALMYRA*

1870





## THROUGH SYRIA TO PALMYRA

1870

I AM "*partant pour la Syrie*," and though it is comparatively near, we find the journey long. We take steamer to Alexandria, and there await the first vessel going northwards. We embark in a foreign steamer, much preferring the Russian, and after passing, perhaps without sighting, the base of the Nile Delta and the northern terminus of the Suez Canal, we run rapidly up the coast of the Holy Land. We are near enough to see certain of its features, and to feel a throbbing of the heart. Here is Ascalon, the "Bride of Syria," still redolent of the days of the lion-hearted king and of the right royal Saláh-el-Din. There is Jaffa, the Joppa ever full of the memories of St. Peter. We touch there, but we may not land unless the sea is of the calmest. Now we steam along the site of Cæsarea, the busy city of Herod Agrippa, converted into the most silent waste of ruins that it has ever been our fate to look upon. There we cast anchor for a few days, at the second station, Hazfa, opposite St. Jean d'Acre, that "Key of Palestine" from the days of the Crusaders to the times of Bonaparte, Sir Sydney Smith, and Sir Charles Napier. From this point we swerve

rapidly past the brown headland of Carmel, type of excellent beauty to the Hebrew poet, past the white Scala Tyrivrum, whose *promontorium album* might be a fragment of the white cliffs of Albion, past the bright little town of Tyre, a phoenix rising a third time from its ashes, and past Sidon and Lebanon, memorial names engraved upon our childish hearts too deeply for time or change ever to erase them from the memory of the man. So memorial, indeed, are all these regions that the traveller must keep watch and ward upon himself, under penalty of suffering from what I may call "Holy Land on the brain." The essence of it consists in seeing all things, not as they are, but as they ought to be ; for instance, "hanging gardens" at Damascus, "Roman bridges" in Saracenic arches, and "beautiful blush marble" in limestone stained with oxide. It wrings the hearts of its friends when sighting the Plain of Esdraelon, and in gazing upon a certain mound it exclaims :

What hill is like to Tabor's hill in beauty and in grace ?

This clairvoyance, or idealism, which makes men babble of green fields where only dust meets the eye of sense is by no means an obscure disorder of the brain ; on the contrary, it is rather aggressive and violent, whilst writers of guides and handbooks appear abnormally exposed to it. Hence those who prepare for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land must temper information and description with many a grain of salt, or they will undergo no little disappointment. Ideal pleasures ever excel those of reality ;



but in this case there is an extra and inordinate supply of ideality.

We disembark at the hopeless, wind-lashed roadstead of Beirut, within the limits of the Land of Promise, but never yet included in the Land of Possession. The trim little harbour-town, seated upon its sloping amphitheatre, converted into "*Colossia Julia Augusta Felix Berytus*," must have been a local Pompeii in the fourth and fifth centuries, and its feminine bust was found associated with the medallions of Alexandria and Halicarnassus. During those ages the Roman and Egyptian galleys jostled one another in the inner port, which now looks like a dock; their palaces and villas covered the slopes with pillars and colonnades; paradises and gardens contrasted with proud fanes rising upon well-wooded and well-watered peaks around—fanes dedicated to gods and goddesses now remembered only by the classical dictionaries. In those days, students of philosophy and theology, of law and language, flocked to Berytus from the most distant lands. But the terrible earthquake of A.D. 551, which laid waste a pleasant site, seems to have been the turning-point of its destinies; the roadstead apparently became shallow, and, despite a noted miracle in the eighth century, Beirut saw her glory depart for many a generation. At last, in the beginning of the nineteenth century, it had sunk to its lowest, and the petty port, placed under the unimportant Pashalate of Sidon, numbered barely five hundred souls.

Sir Charles Napier, the sailor, changed all that. In the autumn of 1840 he made Beyrut his headquarters, whence he and his gallant crews ranged the hill country around and blockaded the ports, till the career of Ibrahim Pasha was unfortunately cut short. Thereupon the hat began at once to take precedence of the turban, even of the green turban. The headquarters of the Pashalate were transferred from Sidon to Beyrut ; European merchants established country houses ; missionaries opened schools for both sexes ; the different consular corps contended for the construction of roads and the abatement of nuisances ; whilst the port was regularly visited by four lines of steamers. Briefly, Beyrut became the only Europeanised place in Syria, and she will probably remain so for many years.

The old part of the city still retains some marks of Orientalism ; the old part, with its alleys, wynds, and closes, its wretched lanes, its narrow and slippery thoroughfares, resembling unroofed sewers, is peculiarly sombre and Syrian, full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Nothing can be meaner than the Customs House, where millions of piastres annually change hands. Of the stately buildings which once adorned it no traces remain but three granite monolithic columns, still towering above modern misery. But the new town which surrounds the ancient archery is Levantine—that is to say, almost Italian ; the points of difference being a scatter of minarets and a sprinkling of tropical vegetation, which



tells you that you are somewhat nearer the sun. There are houses and hospitals large enough each to lodge its battalions ; piano and bugle sounds catch the ear ; the carriage is taking the place of the horse and the mule—here, as in South America, a sure sign of civilisation ; and Orientalism is essentially at a discount. You must not think of Beyrut as an Eastern city.

Life is easy and death is easier in these sub-tropical regions. Men do little during six days, and carefully rest on the seventh. For eight months they saunter through the tepid air of the Mediterranean seaboard ; the other four are spent upon “the mountain” (*i.e.* Lebanon), whose pure, light air is a tonic. The little world of Beyrut rises rather late, and its business hours are but before the noontide breakfast, for here, as amongst the classics, the meals are two per diem. They would be called by our grandfathers dinner and supper ; we say breakfast and dinner. Then a little more work precedes a drive or a ride : the stroll is not unknown, the constitutional is. The evenings are spent either in a *café* or in visits, where whist at times puts in an appearance, and a profound stillness, like that of Lime Street, City, begins to reign about 10 p.m. The theatre has not been imported, although an enterprising Syrian Christian—Moslems cannot originate such things—has, after a visit to Italy, written several comedies in the classical style, unfortunately adopting the French rhymed couplet. The tea party, the little



music, and the *soirée dansante*, flourish in what the Beyrutines are pleased to call the "Paris of Syria." The *jeunesse dorée*, in patent leather boots, "boiled shirts," fold collars, white ties, and lemon-coloured gloves, loves to don the sables which the English gentleman affects. When he goes forth to make merry, he enters gloves in hand; he prefers round dances to square, and he imitates Europe very literally. But as the Romans kept up the time-honoured and homely eggs as the end of their richest banquets, so the "golden youth" of Beyrut prefers the ugly and unpleasant fez or tarbush. For the rest, young Syria's ambition is to marry a European wife, and he does not always get the best of *that* bargain.

In these lands Society still preserves the fragmentary nature which belonged to the ancient world. Beyrut, the port, at the time whereof I write, is distant a single day's ride from Damascus, the capital of Syria, yet there is no trace of sympathy between the two, and the inland say of the seaboard city :

Its sun cracks [wood or teak],  
And its water is salt,  
And its falls are cloud de Paris [dirty of lead].

Again Damascus jeers :

Perish Beyrut, for the reason that her heat resembles Sakar [the eighth hell].  
No flowing of milk is found in her, though her sons are [stupid as] cows.

Whereto Beyrut retorts :

At Aleppo man is a dandy and vain,  
At Shan [Damascus] he is niggard and mean,  
And the Nizri [Egyptian] is simply a rascal.

Whilst "the lying of Damascus" is an illustration in the mouth of every Beyrutine. We have a rhyme of the kind touching one—

Sir Vicary Gibbs,  
The inventor of fibs.

But Damascus says of herself, when describing a man who has become civilised: "He hath been Damascus'd." These sharp sayings, indeed, are not confined to the capital and the port. As of old upon the Sorrentine Plains, to speak of no other place, every town had a nickname, a rhyme, or a tale attached to it, which "kinder ryled up" the inhabitants, so it is the case throughout modern Syria. Thus of Jerusalem men say, as of Meccah:

Her soil is sacred, her sons are soiled.

Of Tiberias, a town built of basalt:

Her stones are black, and her people are Jews.

Of the Naw'arinah, or people of the Auranitis (the great Hauran Valley), we are told that:

They thrice bewildered the Apostle of Allah [Mohammed].

The modern inhabitants of ancient Heliopolis, where Burckhardt found the handsomest woman in Syria, is dubbed:

A Ba'albak bear.

The Halbem village near Damascus is a standing

joke with the witty citizens on account of the huge woollen turbans, the loud voice, and the peculiar dispositions of the people. They make "kass," or lamp-wicks, for Damascus, and it is said that on one occasion, when their shaykh was imprisoned, they threatened, by withholding the supply, to keep the city in total darkness. Also, as a bride was being led home, mounted on an ass, when the doorway was found too low, the popular voice said that her head should be cut off, till some local wise man of Gotham suggested that she might dismount.

Beyrut in my day was connected with Damascus by the only carriageable road in the Holy Land, which was supposed to boast of two others, the Jaffa-Jerusalem and the Alexandretto-Aleppo. These two, however, are utterly unfit for wheels, the reason being that they were laid out by native engineers and administered by the Turks, a nation that has succeeded in nothing but destruction. The distance is forty-seven and a half geographical miles, prolonged to sixty by the old road and to seventy-two by the new one.<sup>1</sup>

We could travel to Damascus by night coach or

<sup>1</sup> Burton writes of Syria in 1870. The journey from Beyrut to Damascus has now been made easy by the opening of the railway. The line rises some four thousand feet, crosses two ranges of mountains on the Lebanon, and passes through some beautiful scenery. After traversing the Plain of Bakaa through the Anti-Lebanon, the railway enters the Yahfâfeh, continuing to Sûk Wady Barada, the ancient Abila, where is seen the rock-cut aqueducts made by Zenobia to convey the water of the Abana to Palmyra; then, passing the beautiful fountain of Fijeh and the remains of an old temple, the train follows the River Abana until it arrives at Damascus.—W. H. W.



by day diligence, preferring the latter, which enables us to see the land. At 4 a.m. we leave the harbour-town, and we shall reach our destination at 6 p.m. The section between the Mediterranean and Damascus, the sea and the Euphrates Desert, is an epitome of Syria, which has been described to be an epitome of the whole world ; a volume might be easily written upon what is seen during that day's journey. After a couple of miles through suburbs, cemeteries, and scattered villas, orchards of mulberry and olive, lanes hedged with prickly pear and dense clumps of young stone-pines, the road begins to ascend the the westward, or maritime, slope of the Lebanon. It works gradually towards the left bank of the great gorge called Wady Hammánah, in one of whose hamlets Lamartine lived and wrote. After some twelve miles from the Beyrut Plain, we reach the watershed of the Jurd, or Highlands of the Lebanon. Here we are about 5,500 feet above sea-level, and feel immensely relieved, in fine weather at least, from the damp heat of the malarious seaboard, which robs the stranger of appetite and rest. The view, too, is charming : a glimpse of sparkling sea, a well-wooded sandstone region, and a long perspective of blue and purple chain and peak, cut and torn by valley, gorge, and ravine, scarring both flanks of the prism. Looking eastward, we sight for the first time that peculiar basaltic bed which gives rise to the Jordan, the Orontes, and the Litani (a river of Tyre). It appears to be a volcanic depression

sunk in the once single range of secondary limestone, and splitting it into two parallel chains, the Libanus and the Anti-Libanus. Viewed from above it is a Spanish viga, a plain of wondrous wealth and fertility, whilst the surface appears smooth as a lake. It is, however, in places dangerously swampy, and though raised some 2,500 to 3,000 feet above sea-level, it is an unwholesome and aguish site, alternately very hot and very cold, curiously damp and distressingly dry. And the same may be said of Damascus, which has to the east the scorching desert, and to the west mountains, mostly snowy: it is no wonder that the old author called it the "windy." But the climate of Damascus is complicated by perhaps the worst and hardest water in Syria, by the exceeding uncleanness of the place, and by the habits of the population. To say that man can exist there at all speaks volumes in his favour.

Rapidly we run down the eastern, or landward, counterslope of the Lebanon, remembering the anti-Jacobin couplet:

And down thy slopes romantic Ashdown glides  
The Derby dilly carrying six insides.

Before its lowest folds we find the fifth station, Shtóra; here, as it is now 10 a.m., we breakfast. We at once realise what will be the bill of fare in the interior. Bread? perhaps. Potatoes? possibly. Beef or veal? impossible. Pig? ridiculous. Little, in fact, but lean kid and lamb, mutton, and fowls whose breast-bones pierce their skins. Wine? yes—dear and bad.



Beer or porter, seltzer or soda? decidedly no. In the winter game is to be had, woodcock and wild duck, hares and gazelles; but the diet is held to be heating and bilious. Vegetables, however, are plentiful, and, during the season, fruit is abundant, with the usual drawback in half-civilised lands: wall fruit is all but unknown, and, with the exception of the excellent grapes and the unwholesome apricots, each kind lasts only a few days.

After breakfast we spin by a straight road—such as old Normandy knew and modern Canada still knows—the breadth of the valley. It is laid out in little fields, copiously irrigated. The little villages which stud the plain are, like those of Egypt, not of Syria, built on mounds, and black with clay plastered over the wicker-work. Every mile or so has some classical ruin: on our right a Báal temple; to our left Chalcis ad Belum; whilst six hours of slow riding northwards, or up the valley, place you at immortal Báalbak, which the Greeks still call Heliopolis.

A rising plane and a bend to the right land us at the first of the Anti-Libanus. Instead of ascending and descending this range, as we did with the Lebanon prism, we thread a ravine called by the Druzes the Valley of Silk, from their favourite article of plunder. An easy up-slope leads to Sahlat Judaydah, the dwarf plateau about 3,600 feet high, where the watershed changes from west to east; farther on to the wild gorge Wady el Karn (“of the Thorn”), so called from its rich ribbings and the wreathing and winding of the



bed. We find a stiff climb or a long zigzag at the Akabat el Tin (the Steep of Lime).

The descent of the steep ends with the Daurat el Billau (Zigzag of the Camel Thorn), and thence we fall into the Sahrat el Dimas, so called from a village which may have borrowed a name from the penitent thief. This Sahara has been described with prodigious exaggeration in order to set off by contrast the charms of the so-termed "sublime Gorge of Abana," to which it leads. Measuring some ten kilometres, it is undoubtedly a rough bit of ground, dry as dust in the summer, and in winter swept by raving winds and piled with sleet and snow. At its eastern end the Sahara at once dips into a deep, lateral gorge, which feeds, after rains, the Barada Valley, and here we remark that curious contrast of intense fertility with utter, hopeless barrenness which characterises inner Spain. Life is in that thick line of the darkest and densest evergreen, which, smiling under the fierce and fiery sun-glare, threads the side of the valley, in the wholesome perfume of the wild plants, and in the gush and murmur of waters making endless music. Death is represented by the dull grey formation standing up in tombstones, by the sterile yellow lime-rock, and by the chalk, blinding white; and the proportion of good to bad is as one to twenty. This verdure is, the Arabs say, a cooling to the eye of the beholder; it is like the aspect of the celadon-coloured sea that beats upon the torrid West African shores. With the author of that charming book "Eothen," "you float

along (for the delight is as the delight of bathing) through green, wavy fields and down into the cool verdure of groves and gardens, and you quench hot eyes in shade as though in deep, rushing waters."

The beginning of the end is at the tenth and last station, El Hamah, meaning the Head of the Valley, and we halt here for a cup of coffee. The next place of note is Dummar ; here we cross the Barada torrent. This place is, despite its low site and hot and cold air, a favourite for villas ; and certain wealthy Damascus usurers have here built large piles, as remarkable for the barbarity of their outer frescoes as for the tawdry decoration of the interior. The witty Damasceines call them "traps," because they are periodically let to high officials for other considerations than hire. And now, with its slate-coloured stream, garnished with weirs on our right, the valley becomes broader and more important ; the upper cliffs are tunnelled into cut caves, Troglodyte dwellings and sepulchres of the ancients ; seven veins at high levels and at low levels branch off from the main artery ; and, after passing a natural gateway formed by two shield-like masses of rock, we suspect that Damascus is before us.

The first sight of Damascus was once famous in travel. But then men rode on horseback, and turned, a little beyond Damascus, sharply to the left of the present line. They took what was evidently the old Roman road, and which is still, on account of its being a short cut, affected by muleteers. Now it is nothing but an ugly climb up sheet-rock and

rolling stones, with bars and holes dug by the armed hoof of many a generation. They then passed through El Zaarub (the Spout); this is the old way, sunk some ten feet deep in the rock till it resembles an uncovered tunnel, and polished like glass by the traffic and transit of ages. At its mouth you suddenly turn a corner and see Damascus lying in panorama, a few hundred feet below you. "A flint set in emeralds" is the Damascus citizen's description of what El Islam calls, and miscalls, the "smile of the Prophet" (Mohammed). Like Stambul, it is beautiful from afar, as it is foul and sore within, morally and physically. The eye at once distinguishes a long head, the northern suburb "El Salituzzah"; a central nucleus, crescent-shaped and fronting the bed of the Barada; and a long tail, or southern suburb, "El Maydan." These three centres of white-washed dwellings and skyline, fretted with dome and minaret, are surrounded and backed by a mass of evergreen orchard, whose outlines are sharply defined by irrigation, whilst beyond the scatter of outlying villages, glare the sunburnt yellow and the parched rich brown of the desert, whose light blue hillocks define the eastern horizon.

The prosaic approach by the French road shows little beyond ruins and graveyards: Damascus outside is a mass of graveyards, the "Great" and "Little Camps" of Constantinople, only without their cypresses; whilst within it is all graveyards and ruins, mixed with crowded and steaming bazaars.



This world of graves reminds one of Job's forlorn man dwelling "in desolate cities, and in houses which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps." The Barada in olden times had its stone embankment ; the walls are now in ruins. On our right is a ruined bridge once leading to a large coffee-house, both also in ruins. As we advance we pass other ruins. But though it was prophesied that Damascus should be a "ruinous heap," her position forbids annihilation. The second of Biblical cities, she has been destroyed again and again ; her houses have been levelled with the ground, and the Tartar has played hockey with the hearts of her sons. Still she sits upon the eastern folds of the Anti-Libanus and on her gold-rolling river, boldly overlooking the desert at her base. Damascus, not Rome, deserves, if any [does, to be entitled the Eternal City.

I passed twenty-three months (October 1st, 1869, to August 20th, 1871), on and off, at this most picturesque and unpleasant of residences. It was then in the transitional state, neither of Asia nor of Europe. To one who had long lived in the outer East, a return to such an ambiguous state of things was utterly disenchanting. Hassan, digging or delving in long beard and long clothes, looks more like an overgrown baby than the romantic being which your fancies paint him. Fatima, with a coloured kerchief (not a nose-bag) over her face, possibly spotted for greater hideousness, with Marseilles gloves and French bottines of yellow satin, trimmed with fringe and

bugles, protruding from the white calico which might be her winding-sheet, is an absurdity : she reminded me of sundry "kings" on the West African shore, whose toilet consists of a bright bandanna and a chimney-pot hat, of the largest dimensions, coloured the liveliest sky-blue.

The first steps to be taken at Damascus were to pay and receive visits, to find a house, to hire servants, to buy horses, and, in fact, to settle ourselves. It proved no easy matter. Certain persons had amused themselves with spreading a report that my pilgrimage to Meccah had aroused Moslem fanaticism, and perhaps might cost me my life. They, as well as I, knew far better, so I was not surprised at the kind and even friendly reception given to me by Emir Abdel Kadir, of Algerine fame, and by the Dean of the great Cathedral el Amahi, the late Shaykh Abdahah el Halati. And I remember with satisfaction that, to the hour of my quitting Damascus, the Moslems never showed for me any but the most cordial feeling.

Other British consuls had been of a stay-at-home disposition, seeing nothing beyond the length of their noses. I was of a roving one, and determined to see all I could, and penetrate to the inner heart of Syria. To be shut up in Damascus was to be in prison ; the breath of the desert was liberty. I soon wandered afield. One of my earliest excursions was to Palmyra. Until the spring of 1870 a traveller visiting Syria for the express purpose, perhaps, of



seeing Palmyra, "Tadmor in the Wilderness," after being kept waiting for months at Damascus, had to return disappointed. Only the rich could afford the large Bedouin escort, for which even six thousand francs and more have been demanded. Add to this the difficulties, hardships, and dangers of the journey, the heat of the arid desert, want of water, chances of attack, the long forced marches by night and hiding by day, ending with a shabby halt of forty-eight hours at a place for which so many sacrifices had been made, and where a fortnight is the minimum required.

Since the beginning of the last century the Porte has had in view a military occupation of the caravan route between Damascus and the Euphrates. "The Turk will catch up your best hare on the back of a lame donkey," say the Arabs, little thinking what high praise they award to the conquering race. The *cordon militaire* was to extend from Damascus, *via* Jayrud, Karyatayn, Palmyra, and Sukhnah, to Daye on the great rim. The wells were to be commanded by block houses, the roads to be cleared by movable columns, and thus the plundering Bedouin, who refuse all allegiance to the Sultan, would be kept, perforce, in the dan, or desert, between the easternmost offsets of the Anti-Libanus and the pitch uplands of Nijd. This project was apparently rescued from the fate of good intentions by Osman Bey, a Hungarian officer who had served the Porte since 1848. He moved from Hamah with a body of some 1,600 men—enough to cut his way through



half the vermin in Araby the Unblest. Presently, after occupying Palmyra, building barracks, and restoring the old Druze Castle, he proceeded eastward to Sukhnah, whence he could communicate with the force expected to march westward from Baghdad. The welcome intelligence was hailed with joy : Palmyra, so long excluded from the Oriental tour, lay open to the European traveller ; half a step had been taken towards a Euphrates Valley Railway ; at Damascus men congratulated themselves upon the new line of frontier, which was naturally expected to strengthen and to extend the limits of Syria ; and the merchant rejoiced to learn that his caravan would be no longer liable to wholesale plunder.

A fair vision, doomed soon to fade ! After six months or so of occupation, Osman Bey, whose men were half starving, became tired of Palmyra, and was recalled to Damascus. The garrison was reduced to two hundred men under a captain, whose only friend was the raki bottle, and the last I saw of the garrison was his orderly riding into Hauran, with the huge, empty demijohns dangling at his saddle-bow. The Bedouin waxed brave, and, in the spring of 1871, I was obliged to send travellers to Palmyra by a long circuit, *viâ* the north and the north-west.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The journey from Damascus to Palmyra can now be made in five days *viâ* Mareau Said and Niah—the pleasantest route, passing by much water, and averaging six to seven hours riding a day. But Palmyra is still under the care of rapacious shayks, and great care has to be observed in arranging for a tour to that city of grand ruins. Things are a little better than they were in Burton's day, but there is still danger.—W. H. W.

A certain official business compelled me to visit Karyatayn, which is within jurisdiction of Damascus, and my wife resolved to accompany me. In this little enterprise I was warmly seconded by the Vicomte de Perrochel, a French traveller and author, who had twice visited Damascus in the hope of reaching Tadmor, and by M. Ionine, my Russian colleague. The Governor-General, the Field Marshal commanding the army of Syria, and other high officials, lent us their best aid. We engaged a pair of dragomen, six servants, a cook, and eight muleteers; twelve mules and eight baggage-asses to carry tents and canteen, baggage and provisions; and we rode our own horses, being wrongly persuaded not to take donkeys—on long marches they would have been a pleasant change. We were peculiarly unfortunate in the choice of head dragoman, a certain Anton Wardi, who had Italianised his name to Riza. Originally a donkey-boy at Beyrut, he made, by “skinning” sundry travellers, some 80,000 francs in ten years. He was utterly spoiled by his French friends, M. de Sauley and M. de Perrochel; he had also dragomaned the then Princess Amadeo, who, in return for his mean conduct, had promised him, and afterwards sent him, greatly to the disgust of every Italian gentleman, the Order of the Rose. This “native gentleman,” the type of the ignoble *petit bourgeois* of Syria, had been trusted without any contract having been made. He charged us a hundred francs per diem, and the others each fifty

francs and forty francs. When the bill was produced for settlement, it proved to be a long list of *des extras* : everything was *un extra* ; two bottles of cognac, reported broken, appeared as *des extras* ; even the water-camels were *des extras*. The fact was, he had allowed, when galloping about the country, some francs to fall from his pocket, and he resolved that *les extras* should replace them.

We altogether regretted the assistance of Mohammed, Shaykh of the Mezrab tribe, who had systematically fleeced travellers for a score of years. He demanded two napoleons a head for his wretched camels, sending a score when only one was wanted ; like all other chiefs, he would not guarantee his protégés, either in purse or person, against enemies, but only against his own friends ; he allowed them but two days at Palmyra ; he made them march twenty, instead of fifteen, hours between Karyatayn and their destination ; he concealed the fact that there are wells the whole way, in order to make them hire camels and buy water-skins ; and, besides harassing them with night marches, he organised sham attacks, in order to make them duly appreciate his protection. I rejoice to say that Mohammed's occupation has since gone ; his miserable tribe was three times plundered within eighteen months, and, instead of fighting, he fell back upon the desert. May thus end all who oppose their petty interests to the general good—all that would shut roads instead of opening them ! With a view of keeping up his title to escort travellers,



he sent with us a clansman upon a well-bred mare and armed with the honourable spear. But M. de Perrochel hired the mare; the crestfallen man was put upon a baggage-mare, and the poor spear was carried by a lame donkey.

Armed to the teeth, we set out in a chorus of groans and with general prognostications of evil. Ours was the first party since M. Dubois d'Angus was dangerously wounded, stripped, and turned out to die of hunger, thirst, and cold, because he could not salary the inevitable Bedouin. It would, doubtless, have been the interest of many and the delight of more to see us return in the scantiest of costumes; consequently a false report generally flew abroad that we had been pursued and plundered by the Bedouin.

The first night was passed under canvas near a ruined khan in the fifth valley plain east of the Syrian metropolis. The weather became unusually cold the next morning when we left the foggy lowland and turned to the north-east in order to cross the ridgy line of hills, which, offsetting from the Anti-Libanus, runs from Damascus toward the desert, and afterwards sweeps round to Palmyra. The line of travel was a break in the ridge. Then, gently descending, we fell into a northern depression, a section of that extensive valley in the Anti-Libanus, which, under a variety of names, runs nearly straight north-east (more exactly,  $60^{\circ}$ ), to Palmyra. Nothing can be simpler than the geography of the country. The traveller cannot lose his way in the Palmyra Valley

without crossing the high and rugged mountains which hem it in on both sides, and, if he is attacked by raiders, he can easily take refuge, and laugh at the Arab goatees. During the time of our journey the miserable little robber clans Shitai and Ghiyas had completely closed the country five hours' riding to the east of Damascus, whilst the Sorbai and the Anergah bandits were making the Merj a battlefield and were threatening to burn down the peaceful villages. Even as we crossed the pass we were saddened by the report that a troop of Bedouin had the day before murdered a wretched peasant within easy sight of Damascus. This state of things was a national scandal to the Porte, which, of course, was never allowed to know the truth.

We resolved to advance slowly, to examine every object, and to follow the most indirect paths. Hence our march to Palmyra occupied eight days; we returned, however, in four with horses that called loudly for a week's rest. The regular stations are as follows:—

	Hours.
1. Damascus to Jayrud . . . . .	9
2. Jayrud to Karyatayn . . . . .	10-11
3. Karyatayn to Agu el Waah . . . . .	8
4. Agu el Waah to Palmyra . . . . .	9

On the second day we dismissed our escort, one officer and two privates of irregular cavalry, who were worse than useless, and we slept at the house of Daas Agha, hereditary Chief of Jayrud. A noted sabre, and able to bring one hundred and fifty lances into the field,

he was systematically neglected by the authorities, because supposed to be friendly with foreigners. Shortly after my departure he barbarously tortured two wretched Arabs, throwing them into a pit full of fire, and practising upon them with his revolver. Thereupon he was at once taken into prime favour, and received a command.

Daas Agha escorted us from Jayrud with ten of his kinsmen mounted upon their best mares. In the upland valley we suffered severely from cold, and the sleety sou'wester which cut our faces on the return was a caution.

At Karyatayn, which we reached on the fifth day, Osman Bey, who was waiting for rations, money, transport, in fact, everything, offered us the most friendly welcome, and I gave official protection to Shaykh Faris, in connection with the English post at Baghdad. The former detached with us eighty bayonets of regulars and twenty-five sabres of Irregulars, commanded by two officers. This body presently put to flight anything in the way of Bedouin; a war party of two thousand men would not have attacked us; and I really believe that a band of thirty Englishmen armed with carbines and revolvers could sweep clean the Desert of the Euphrates from end to end.

At Karyatayn we hired seventeen camels to carry water. This would have been a complete waste of money had we gone, like other travellers, by the Darb el Sultain, or High Way. Some three hours' ride to the right, or south, of the road amongst the hills



bounding the Palmyra Valley is a fine cistern (Ibex Fountain), where water is never wanting. There is, however, a still more direct road *viâ* the remains of an aqueduct and a river in the desert. This short cut from Karyatayn to Palmyra may be covered in twenty-four hours of camel walking, fifteen of horse walking, and twelve by dromedary or hard gallop. Travellers would start at 6.30 or 7 a.m., and encamp after being out from twelve to thirteen hours; but this includes breakfast and sundry halts, sometimes to inspect figures, real or imaginary, in the distance, at other times to indulge in a "spurt" after a gazelle or a wild boar.

We chose, however, the little-known Baghdad, or eastern, road. The next day we rested at a large deserted khan, and on the eighth we made our entrance into Palmyra, where we were hospitably received by Shaykh Faris. Our muleteers, for the convenience of their cattle, pitched their tents close to, and east of, the so-called Grand Colonnade, a malarious and unwholesome site. They should have encamped amongst the trees at a threshing-floor near three palms. Travellers may be strongly advised not to lodge in the native village, whose mud huts, like wasps' nests, are all huddled within the ancient Temple of the Sun, or they may suffer from fever or ophthalmia. The water of Tadmor is sulphurous, like Harrogate, the climate is unhealthy, and the people are ragged and sickly. May there, as in most parts of the northern hemisphere, is the best travelling-season, and in any but a

phenomenal year the traveller need not fear to encounter, as we did, ice and snow, siroccos and furious sou'westers.

If asked whether Palmyra is worth all this trouble, I should reply "No" and "Yes." No, if you merely go there, stay two days, and return, especially after sighting noble Bālbak. Certainly not for the Grand Colonnade of weather-beaten limestone, by a stretch of courtesy called marble, which, rain-washed and earthquake-shaken, looks like a system of galleries. Not for the Temple of the Sun, the building of a Roman emperor, a second-rate affair, an architectural evidence of Rome's declining days. Yes, if you would study the site and the environs, which are interesting and only partially explored, make excavations, and collect coins and relics, which may be bought for a song.

The site of Palmyra is very interesting; she stands between the mountains and the sea; like Damascus, she sits upon the eastern slope of the Anti-Libanus, facing the wilderness, but unhappily she has a dry torrent bed, the Wady el Sayl, instead of a rushing Barada. She is built upon the shore cape, where the sandy sea breaks upon its nearest headlands. This sea is the mysterious Wilderness of the Euphrates, whose ships are camels, whose yachts are high-bred mares, and whose cock-boats are mules and asses. She is on the very threshold of the mountains, which the wild cavalry cannot scour, as they do the level plain. And her position is such that we have not heard the last of the Tadmor, or, as the Arabs call

her, Tudmur. Nor will it be difficult to revive her. A large tract can be placed under cultivation, where there shall be protection for life and property ; old wells exist in the ruins ; foresting the highlands to the north and west will cause rain ; and the aqueducts in the old days may easily be repaired.

I am unwilling to indulge in a description of the modern ruin of the great old depôt, which has employed so many pens. But very little has been said concerning the old tomb-towers, which have taken at Palmyra the place of Egyptian pyramids. Here, as elsewhere in ancient Syria, sepulture was extramural, and every settlement was approached by one or more *Viâ Appia*, much resembling that of ancient Rome. At Palmyra there are, or, rather, were, notably two : one (south-west) upon the high road to Damascus ; the other, north-west of the official or monumental city, formed, doubtless, the main approach from Hauran and Hamah. The two are lined on both sides with those interesting monuments, whose squat, solid forms of gloomy and unsquared sandstone contrast remarkably with the bastard classical and Roman architecture, meretricious in all its details, and glittering from afar in white limestone. Inscriptions in the Palmyrian character prove that they date from about A.D. 2 and 102 ; but they have evidently been restored, and this perhaps fixes the latest restoration. It is highly probable that the heathen method of burial declined under the Roman rule, especially after A.D. 130, when the Great Half-way House



again changed its name to Adrianopolis. Still, vestiges of the old custom are found in the Hauran and in the Druze Mountain west of the great valley, extending deep into the second century, when, it is believed, Gassanides of Damascus had abandoned their heathen faith for Christianity. I found in the tombs, or cells, fragments of mummies, and these, it is suspected, were the first ever brought to England. Almost all the skulls contained date-stones, more or less, and a peach stone and an apricot stone were found under similar circumstances. At Shathah we picked up in the mummy-towers almond shells with the sharp ends cut off and forming baby cups.

There are three tomb-towers at Palmyra still standing, and perhaps likely to yield good results. The people call them Kasr el Zaynah (Pretty Palace), Kasr el Azin (Palace of the Maiden), and \*Kasr el Arus (Palace of the Bride). They number four and five stories, but the staircases, which run up the thickness of the walls, are broken, and so are the monolithic slabs which form the lower floors. Explorers, therefore, must take with them ropes and hooks, ladders which will reach to eighty feet, planks to act as bridges, and a short crowbar. We had none of these requirements, nor could the wretched village provide them. I have little doubt that the upper stories would be found to contain bones, coins, and pottery, perhaps entire mummies.

The shortness of our visit allowed me only a day and a half to try the fortune of excavation at Palmyra.

It was easy to hire a considerable number of labourers at two and a half piastres a head per diem—say 6*d.*—when in other places the wages would be at least double. Operations began (April 15th) at the group of tomb-towers bearing west-south-west from the great Temple of the Sun: I chose this group because it appeared the oldest of the series. The fellahs, or peasants, know it as Kusin Ahi Sayl (Palaces of the Father of a Torrent) ; and they stare when told that these massive buildings are not royal residences but tombs. Here the tombs in the several stages were easily cleared out by my forty-five coolies, who had nothing but diminutive picks and bars, grain-lugs and body-cloths, which they converted into buckets for removing sand and rubbish. But these cells and those of the adjoining ruins had before been ransacked, and they supplied nothing beyond skulls, bones, and shreds of mummy cloth, whose dyes were remarkably brilliant.

The hands were then applied to an adjoining mound : it offered a tempting resemblance to the undulations of ground which cover the complicated chambered catacombs already laid open, and into one of which, some years ago, a camel fell, the roof having given way. After reaching a stratum of snow-white gypsum, which appeared to be artificial, though all hands agreed that it was not, we gave up the task, as time pressed so hard. The third attempt laid open the foundation of a house, and showed us the well, or rain-cistern, shaped, as such reservoirs are still in the Holy Land,

like a soda-water bottle. The fourth trial was more successful ; during our absence the workmen came upon two oval slabs of soft limestone, each with its kit-cat in high relief. One was a man with straight features, short, curly beard, and hair disposed, as appears to have been the fashion for both sexes, in three circular rolls. The other was a feminine bust, with features of a type so exaggerated as to resemble the negro. A third and similar work of art was brought up, but the head had been removed. It would be hard to explain the excitement caused by these wonderful discoveries ; report flew abroad that gold images of life-size had been dug up, and the least disposed to exaggeration declared that chests full of gold coins and ingots had fallen to our lot.

On the next morning we left Palmyra, and, after a hard gallop which lasted for the best part of four days, we found ourselves, not much the worse for wear, once more at Damascus.















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