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LAND OF THE GOLD MOHUR

THE AUTHOR

FROM THE DRAWING BY SARGENT

Frontispiece

LAND OF THE GOLD MOHUR

BY

LADY LOWTHER

ILLUSTRATED

PHILIP ALLAN
MCMXXXII

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TO THOSE WHO HAVE HELPED ME TO FIND
—TO GATHER AND TO SAVE—THESE SCAT-
TERED SHELLS FROM CORAL STRANDS

LAND OF THE GOLD MOHUR

BOMBAY

15th October. Am I going to India—or am I not?

1st November. I am going to India. I am on my way to India—on board P. & O. s.s. *Kashmir* at the entrance to the Red Sea! A wine-dark sea with rose mountain-peaks rising jagged in the North-East, grey-blue peaks against an orange sky in the South-West.

I started from Windsor on the 31st October. A swift journey through France—where I greeted the cypresses, white rocks and yellow plane-trees of the South—and we lumbered through Marseilles, to stop at the P. & O. docks.

A fine harbour; guarded by the tower-crowned islands, the heights above the town whence the Madonna on her dizzy pedestal gazes out to sea and, crouching behind, the lesser Alps; their white bones tearing the mantle of pine and olive, cystus and heather.

At sunrise on the second morning we pass through the Straits of Messina. Will we see anything more lovely than the parting of the Apennines and Sicily? Where, baffled by the waves, the craggy monster gazes across at the blue outline of the island as she sinks into the arms of Neptune. Like Ulysses, I saw a light on Crete last night.

6th November. Port Said, illumined by a theatrical little crescent-moon on the wane and a dim dawn. We

tie up alongside the quay where a host of filthy, jabbering natives, waiting on coal-lighters, swarm into our hold over planks slippery with sweat, gritty with coal-dust, toiling to fill our depleted bunkers. I got up rapidly and went ashore, as did most of my fellow-passengers. Lady Lytton who, with a group of lovely girls, was going out to join her husband, then Governor of Bengal, was even more energetic than I; for she and the rest of her party had early breakfast at the Casino! Everyone bought tobacco; so did I, though I never smoke. I also went to visit the English Hospital there—admirably run.

Then the wonder of the Suez Canal—an achievement indeed; all honour to De Lesseps and to modern enthusiasm. It will be a monument to our times more everlasting than any pyramid—and yet—if we are to fall into a European decadence, Bolshevism calling a halt to the hectic activities of civilization—will it silt up and close and the Israelites cross again into the desert dry-shod?

I had fancied the Canal wider and dug between yellow sands. It is surprisingly narrow and runs, a mathematically straight line, through a greenish marshland. It has no locks but passes through two lakes on the way to Suez.

I am tired and sleep so late that I miss Suez; no great loss. I suppose I shall look at it shivering in anticipation of English chills next January.

How shall I tear myself away from this all enfolding delight of tepid breezes? This felicity! To be really warm though dressed in muslin, not wrapped up in heavy clothing which stifles without warmth.

Lady Lytton's party and I sit at the Captain's table: nine females and one male—Her Excellency, Lady Phyllis Windsor Clive, the Ladies Hermione and Davina Lytton, Lady Patsy Ward, Miss Ursula Lutyens, Miss Lafone, Miss de Verria and myself. In comparison with Transatlantic liners of 58,000 tons the ship is small, only 8000 tons, but is very comfortable and with a complement of about seventy-five passengers.

We are still in the Red Sea. It is almost as I imagined it: the granite heights on either hand, the water-way between. The Arabian coast, however, is very high—I had fancied it nearly flat.

Aden is astonishing—another Gibraltar! The lock on the further door to the Middle Sea! It rises like the Spanish rock, bristling sentinel-wise from the blue waves, just such another fortress, on just such an angular peninsula; the same flat hinterland with faintly violet mountains in the far distance.

The same and yet not the same. For as I looked out of my port-hole when we dropped anchor I saw a misty azure sea, a canoe with languidly paddling boys and a lighter moored to our ship. Then my eyes rested on a single figure and the immutable East flashed before me. A naked bronze youth with a dirty white turban and a dingy loin-cloth was seated on the lighter's edge wrapped in contemplation of the far horizon where no ship was. His brethren were busy moving to and fro, the monstrous fire-ship from the West was beside him, but the wonder lay not there, he paid no heed and crouched in the blazing sun, his limbs shining like polished metal, dreaming the same

dream his like have dreamed age upon age. Are we to call it emptiness?

It was very hot, but I went ashore with the intention of going to church and was padding my way through the black dust along the front of 'Steamer Point,' when Sir Arthur Froome with Mrs d'Adley, the wife of the P. & O. Agent at Aden, picked me up in a motor and whisked me off to the 'Gardens,' an oasis of palms, mimosa and various strange shrubs. The road out of the town was through dazzling desert skirting the base of the rock. I thought I saw water lagoons. It was mere mirage. We looked at the 'tanks,' which are curious large reservoirs carved out of the mountain-side to capture the scanty rain, but they were empty. It seems they are little used nowadays, since sea-water condensers have been installed. We returned across a burnt-out crater, and from thence through a dark tunnel to the port. The Arabs looked very African, and the multitude of camels, some tied one to another by the neck, *dodelinant à la file* towards the glare of Arabia, vividly recalled the darker continent. Each camel had a black rider perched up on its hump, turbaned and draped for a ride of perhaps eight days or more through pitiless desert and parching wind. The fiery climate makes them fiery in temper, difficult to deal with I am told.

The rock of Aden is absolutely arid, a monstrous peak of chocolate-coloured stone without a trace of vegetation. Water is collected from the clouds in cisterns or condensed from the sea, and only human ingenuity has caused a few plants to grow there in small gardens, attracting shy birds. I heard with

surprise the delicious notes of these wanderers whistling through the cool halls of the houses.

We left in the evening, the gaunt shape gradually sinking into the dark-blue waters, as Canopus, Achernar and Fomalhant slowly rose in the south-eastern sky. Canopus is a glorious star, rivalling Sirius, more beautiful than Arcturus and, with the exception of Vega sheltering under the glittering wings of the Swan, the most brilliant star I have ever seen.

Ten days of smoothly dancing seas, innumerable tiny clouds like feathers blowing across the sky. Games and races, swimming in a canvas tank rigged up for us by the kind Captain. The inevitable fancy-dress ball, where two of our lovely party achieve the success of the evening by appearing rolled up with golf-sticks and umbrellas in two many-labelled brown hold-alls, which were carried down the companion-way by a muscular mariner. It was the P. & O. of old-fashioned novels and early romance! Only that the men did not twist long drooping moustaches, nor did the women wear Lily Langtry buns and bustles.

16*th November*. Bombay. Is it possible? We moved through a hazy, faint turquoise sea, the air hot and damp. Groups crowded forward trying to descry the shores of Malabar in a bank of cloud to windward. At last within the cloud a pearl-white shape arose, then another and yet another: the towers of the 'Gateway to India.' Slowly we neared them, the ghats of the eastern coast rising higher and higher, the lighthouse passed and the immensity of Bombay loomed before us as we drew close to the quay.

A group of men in uniform, scarlet tunics, some in

sashes and turbans, were waiting on the docks (which, by the way, are very fine buildings belonging to the P. & O. offices). Foremost amongst them was Lord Lytton, who had come from Calcutta to meet his family. His daughters greeted him gaily, rapturously, his lovely consort more discreetly on the bridge. He later introduced an A.D.C. to me, who in turn introduced another, and I was led down the gangway, along the quay and further steps to the main entrance, saluted by the flaring pathiwallas, the armed native escort, and driven away in a waiting motor. We passed through a vast, humming, garish and modern city, along a palm-fringed avenue (cocoa-palms such as I had seen long ago in the West Indies), beside a medley of villas and gardens recalling in the most absurd way the foolish little houses outside Monte Carlo, until we reached the Back-Bay on our left beyond the trees.

Suddenly we plunged down a sanded avenue, a tunnel of warm shadows, scented like a hot-house. Banyans, pipals and palms arched over us, smothered in strange creepers bearing enormous heart-shaped leaves. The banks on either side were thick with Kentias, ferns and many-coloured foliage. This beautiful alley-way between the faintly blue waters and the deep green leaves is the creation of a former Governor's wife, Lady Northcote. An inspiration indeed, enabling one to avoid a journey through almost two miles of rather close and ramshackle suburb, which was, in the old days, the only approach to Government House at Malabar Point.

Government House is not a house at all! It is a

village of gay bungalows—all verandahs, white and yellow walls, deep windows with awnings of matting —set in an English park! In spite of its magnified cottage plan, the old State Bungalow is delightful in its luxurious spaciousness, height and dignity. It is here that every in- and outgoing Viceroy takes up and lays down his sceptre, and the ancient pillars within, dating from the reign of George IV, the girlish portrait of Queen Victoria, as well as the immense, glittering glass chandeliers, recall the old days when England's sons first arrived intent on their greatest adventure. My breath is taken away and my heart leaps at the magnitude of their adventure!

I cannot, perhaps, uphold the logic of England's conquest of India. I cannot approve of many actions taken by those men of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to establish and consolidate our power here. But who does not stand amazed at what the moderation, fairness and courage of England has done for India since those early struggles, who does not feel that only the firmest hands, the coolest brains and the greatest hearts could have wrought as England has? Every Briton should come to India—including doctrinaire Socialists—to see millions of men governed, directed, and saved from their ignorance and poverty by a mere handful of Englishmen. To see successfully applied on a vast scale the opposite policy of that fatal experiment, the dictatorship of the majority! The degradation of Petrograd and Moscow under the absolute control of the proletariat leaves some men unmoved—and yet Bombay and Calcutta under the rule of the King-Emperor rouses them to fury. Ah!

Reason! Ah! Logic! Was La Rochefoucauld right in saying that language—nay, I add even thought—is but a cloak to hide our instincts and our passions—and is not the cant of Communism no more than this?

And here my own small adventure begins—inspired by Lady Lloyd's proposal that I should visit her in India—and the lucky coincidence that several of my friends were here and had asked me to stay with them.

My hostess was playing tennis when I arrived. Captain Carmichael brought me to her—and her welcome alone repaid any tedium or discouragement the journey might have brought me. I myself was to stay several days in Bombay, but Lord and Lady Lytton and their lovely group left after dinner for their capital on the other side of India. It was delightful to have had them with us. The younger members of the party were full of fun, their happiness was contagious. They were interesting children as well, the Lyttons, remarkably so—and small wonder when blessed with such parents. Lady Lytton with her grace and charm, her loveliness and her intelligent appreciation of all that is beautiful, and Lord Lytton, an exceptionally distinguished man; intellectual, well-read, with an acute and delicately balanced judgment; his heart perhaps too greatly predominant. His idealism found in India a theatre for active achievement. He aimed at inculcating in the native a higher conception of life—may it be added, *our* conception of life—not theirs! He told me that they were to be rescued by love—forbearance coupled with justice—that India should be governed by Indians, advised and guided by the

best England could give. His refined and modulated voice, the light in his blue eyes seemingly kindled by a vision far beyond our common knowledge, almost persuaded me—but I was strongly of opinion that the three and a half hundred million Indians, speaking nearly three hundred languages, could not be saved from themselves, for themselves, by themselves alone, so I held my peace.

My host, Lord Lloyd, alert, vivid and full of instant decision and strong convictions, holds, I fancy, the view that England's paramount influence and direction must endure if this continent of incalculable differences is to flourish—and that for the sake of peace and plenty and the steady development of India, no flinching in the task we have set ourselves must be tolerated —that we have set our hand to the plough and must not turn back. His active movements, his eager dignity, the decision flashing from his brown eyes, even his agreeably harsh, abrupt voice, proclaim the man.

Most scrupulous were the forms and etiquette maintained in his Government House. We assembled in the State Bungalow before dinner. Their Excellencies were announced by the aides-de-camp, they shook hands with us, and he walked in before the company with the most honoured guest on his arm, while the native servants, bearded and stern, in their turbans and red tunics, stood about the table in the lofty room with their hands folded—as is the Indian custom—as though in supplication before their master. The band played gaily, the food was delicious, and we rose to drink the health of the Sovereign at the end of our pleasant repast.

It was here I first tasted the paw-paw, an orange-coloured, most luscious and refreshing fruit, as well as several delicious Indian dishes and Anglo-Indian drinks.

My host and hostess wanted me to go to Deolali with them for a farewell ceremony, as they were leaving India in a few weeks, but as it entailed rising at 6.30 the next morning I reluctantly declined and awaited their return, passing the day reading and resting. I had tea with the agreeable Irene Adam, the wife of H.E.'s private secretary. She was most kind, and it was interesting to see her modern house, somewhat American in style, with deep verandahs and a scarcity of furniture appropriate to a hot climate.

18*th November*. We went in the Government launch to Elephanta, the holy island in Bombay harhour. There lie hidden the famous caves where ancient Hindus worshipped. It is a hilly and thickly-wooded country, where very tall fan-leaved palms (like *Pritchardia*) rise superbly on their bare swaying stems far above the thickets beneath. We climbed many solidly built stone stairs, under overarching verdure, and followed meandering pathways until at last we came upon some tumble-down tea-houses surrounded by wooden railings under a wonderful banyan. The air-roots of this strange tree float from the upper branches earthwards, where they cling, sink and strike root. The feathery fibres harden into trunks and these in time develop leaves and blossoms. A symbol? We must turn to Earth, the Mother, before we can flower anew.

Beyond this, suddenly, we came upon towering crags and a cliff worked smooth by the chisel. Beneath

it yawned an immense cavern, the inner gloom of which was relieved by a faintly glimmering daylight. The old artificers seemed to have understood the magic of light and shadow, for, if the great carvings, hewn from the living rock at regular and carefully measured distances within the cave, were seen in the glare of day, they would lose infinitely in impressiveness and appear theatrical and almost tawdry. Even as it is, in spite of the cleverly managed lighting—two inner caves on either side are open to the sky, and communicate with the main temple through vast apertures—and notwithstanding the mystic silence, only broken by the voice of cooing doves and the echo of footsteps on the stony floor, these carvings in high relief and larger than life-size, convey to the Western mind an impression of purely sensual activity. The overcrowding of the great panels, the lack of proportion in the various and multiple figures introduced, the frank delight in voluptuous form, all tend to frivolity and to distraction from the central idea, nobly symbolized in the magnificent sculptured group of the Trimurti (or three-in-one), a manifestation of the Hindu Godhead.

This is a colossal bust, 16 feet high I believe, a group of three immense faces carved out of the rock within a lofty recess in the wall opposite the entrance. Brahma, unfathomable, ironic and serene in full face; Siva the propagator and destroyer on the right—Vishnu the preserver on the left. Siva sinister and sensual, Vishnu smiling; the two profiles singularly arresting, their dramatic human quality apprehended beside the mystery of Brahma, the creator of all.

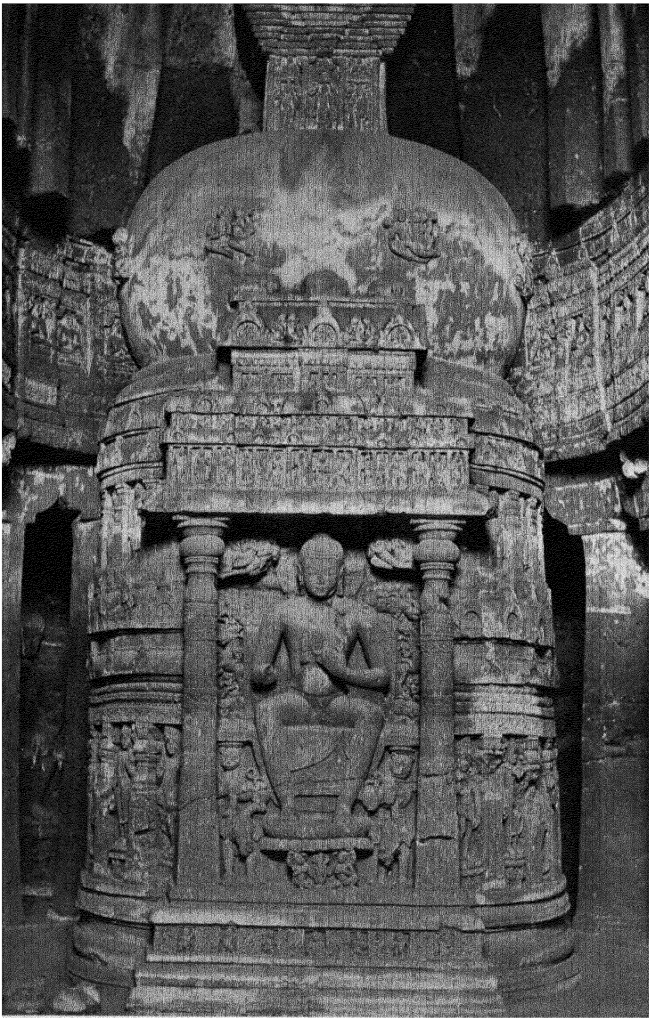
It seemed to me to be a cruel Trinity: ruthless, cynical, curiously devoid of any spiritual significance; proclaiming doom and the supreme impotence of man. This, however, might have been a temple of love compared with others which I saw later. Only one panel depicts cruelty: an irate, grimacing god hacking human victims to pieces; the others present scenes of happiness, feasting, marriage and the more joyous aspects of life.

The characteristic columns, their bases square, abruptly changing into fluted shafts half-way up, are somewhat squat and appear to support the cavern roof which is cut away quite flat and horizontally. The carvings are well restored and everything is kept in order, although the Hindus apparently no longer worship there excepting on special feast days. The symbol of Siva, the stone cylinder or lingam, is distributed upon altars in several shrine-like recesses, and on either side, where the cave opens out upon the courts—with steps on the East and a tank of water on the West—you are led to similar shrines. One wonders how the priests performed their rites and what aid or solace those ironic gods could have bestowed on their prostrate worshippers.

This form of superstition had its source in the ancient Books of Wisdom, the Vedas. These taught deeper truths as humanity gradually recognized the verities underlying all symbols—and their interpreters, the Brahmins, originally evolved this huge Pantheon of gods, one to suit almost every man, woman or child. The later, more tender and spiritual religion called Buddhism, taught by the generous-hearted

THE TRIMURTI, ELEPHANTA CAVES, BOMBAY HARBOUR

Face p. 12



BUDDHIST SHRINE, AJANTA (SEE P. 194)

Gautama from beneath his Bo-Tree about 530 B.C., reached its greatest power in India for only some nine or ten centuries, from the time of Asoka (272 to 231 B.C.) to about that of the influx of Mohammedanism, 800 A.D., and could not withstand the old beliefs, becoming gradually absorbed into the much more universal Brahmanism, or to be more correct, Hinduism. So for millions of souls in India, the gods of Irony, of Cruelty and of Sensuality have still their compelling power and the laws of their priests, the Brahmins, still hold good.

I learned to my surprise that there are scarcely any Buddhists left in India proper, only an insignificant two or three hundred thousand out of over three hundred million inhabitants, and those are in Bengal, Kashmir and Sikkim; the rest, ten millions only, are in Burma. Of course a great part of China and Japan is still Buddhistic. However, the Hindus (apart from their rock-temples) builded so flimsily that little exists of their early Brahmin work, and the oldest architectural remains to be found in India, much influenced by Greek work and ideals, are Buddhist.

The Jain prophet Mahavira was born actually before Buddha (563 B.C. to 483 B.C.), but the existing Jain monuments were built much later. I could not attempt to make the history of the art of India clear without long pages of dissertation. Suffice it to say that *Buddhist*, *Hindu* (this category divided into Indo-Aryan in the North and Dravidian in the South) and *Moslem* architecture, are the main divisions and follow different expressions of art. (Elephanta is Indo-Aryan, dating from about the middle of the eighth century.)

Their Excellencies returned in the evening: dinner and bridge. The staff was very pleasant: Captain Rawstorne, Military Secretary; Major Nethersole, Commander of the Bodyguard; Mr Forbes Adam, Private Secretary; Colonel Grafton Young, Medical Secretary; and the aides-de-camp, Captains Carmichael, John Aird and Lynch.

20th November. I go with T.T.E.E. to the Farewell Meeting at St. Xavier's Jesuit College. An interesting afternoon. 1200 pupils—mostly Indians, of whom about 200 are Catholics—advanced students with a high average of scholarship, judging by the good speech made by an Indian gentleman. Great cheers for H.E.

21st November. Swim at 8.30 a.m. A sea of pale amethyst, Bombay a city of pearl on the horizon. A curious flat-prowed, double-boat manned by a gaunt brown figure in a huge turban and nondescript draperies floated near by in case of danger, and the sun blazed from behind a gauze of morning mist. I swam out into an all enfolding warmth, panted on the steps of a quaint craft, decorated with a dragon's head on the bow, and slowly paddled back. It was less refreshing than I had expected, the water was tepid, the air heavy, but an amusing experience.

We dined with M. Calvocoressi and Mr Ponsonby. Very well done. Absolutely European excepting the servants, who seemed to have stepped out of an Eastern tale: turbaned, silent and in spotless white.

It is odd how startled one is at first suddenly to perceive a black-faced figure at one's elbow, or outside the windows and doors along the verandah! Indian

servants are soundless. Only the eye, never the ear, notes their presence, and their voices are low and muttering. It is somewhat uncanny also to sleep with windows opening wide on to the ground and doors ajar! Regardless of cobra, leopard or robber, in the sublime faith that no one will suddenly think of murdering, or robbing, or even merely frightening you.

22nd November. Miss Rosamund Grosvenor, a fellow-guest, Captain Lynch and I drove off in the motor to see the Towers of Silence. We had to obtain special cards for the privilege, and passed through part of the city and along some beautifully tended grass-bordered avenues until we reached a park enclosed by lofty stone walls high above the town. At the top of a long flight of steps we were met by a wrinkled old Parsee, who guided us up to a still higher terrace where we heard voices chanting, much as in a Catholic church. They seemed to come from a low, stuccoed building on a terrace beyond, the roof of which was supported by large, low arches, and over the arcades were hung loosely falling blinds of bamboo or reed, brightly coloured. The place suggested an Italian Garden-House, with its loggia-like effect, and from the terrace we discovered a beautiful view over the gorgeous sweep of Bombay.

But it is not a Garden-House, in spite of pots of flowers standing about and plants blooming around it; it is the Parsee Tabernacle. Within, so the guide tells us, are two rooms for worship: one, the outer, where all Parsees may go; another, the inner shrine, where only the priests are allowed to enter, with

apron and cowl and a veil before their mouths, to tend the sacred, ever-burning flame which glows within.

It is strange that such a glorious symbol as an everlasting fire should be housed with its acolytes in such an inappropriate building. In fact the grim Towers of Silence are set in the most frivolous surroundings. On arrival the visitor is deceived by the gay loggia and the lovely gardens, where palms, ferns, pipal and banyan trees blend their silvery greens. For suddenly, down an apparently romantic lovers'-walk, you come upon the Altars of Death. You see a low, round stone tower with an entrance cut about a third of the way up, which is approached by steps. The top of the tower is encircled, apparently, by a parapet, and—strangely unpleasant sight—upon this parapet, gorged with their ghoulish repast, are perched enormous vultures with large sleek bodies, tiny heads and thin necks.

In the midst of this scented garden rise five of these Towers, almost buried in verdure. A model is shown of their interior, the originals of which only a special hierarchy, the 'Corpse Bearers,' are ever allowed to enter.

The bodies of dead Parsees are laid, quite bare, upon stone degrees, which slope towards the middle of the Tower, where a pit receives the bones of the deceased as soon as they are stripped of all flesh by the waiting vultures—that process taking from about half-an-hour to over two hours I was told. The bones gradually crumble, disintegrate and are washed away, and thus is fulfilled the Parsee (or ancient Persian or Zoroastrian) desire—that the holy elements of Fire,

Water and Earth should not be polluted by human decay.

It was one of the most curious scenes I have ever witnessed, the cheerful old guide explaining the process in very good English, himself a future repast for the sinister scavengers seated silent and motionless in horrid rows above each charnel-house.

We went on to a garden party given by the Willingdon Club to T.T.E.E. to bid them good-bye, and I sat beside Sir Jamjitsu Jeejeebhoy—a handsome Parsee, a most agreeable and loyal subject of the King's. (I did not tell him where I had been.) I was surprised to see all the Parsee ladies in *saris*, the graceful Indian dress, which is evidently derived from the Greek *himation*, and always becoming.

H.H. the Jam Sahib and the Thakore Sahib of Politana had luncheon at Government House. The first-named, really a Maharajah, was a perfect man of the world—what great gentlemen the Indian Princes are—and he is as cultivated as any clever European. He wore a white muslin turban with tiny mauve flowers printed thereon and a sort of Stambouline or long black tunic, looser than the 'Turkish Curate's.' He spoke English to perfection, almost dropping into slang. The Thakore, whom I first fancied to be his friend and disciple, is a King with his own Kingdom. He looked thirty-five and is only twenty-two; he played tennis extremely well in the afternoon and in the evening attended the Levée in a dazzling gauze and silver turban and a Louis XV redingote of silver-grey satin damask. I did not recognize him after his first appearance turbanless and in flannels.

The Levée was a fine sight and excellently conducted. The dining-room in the State Bungalow, where Lord and Lady Lloyd usually dined, was turned into a Throne Room. T.T.E.E. stood upon a dais while their staff were occupied in marshalling the guests past them. A scarlet-covered rope held by the hugely tall and slender native bodyguard was stretched across the room in front of the dais to keep the crowd from pressing too far forward. About a thousand guests passed through and, after assembling in the great drawing-room and the vast verandahs beyond, dispersed to the tents on the lawns or into the immense supper-pavilion on the edge of the lazily breaking seas.

The dinner that evening was served in the small dining-room in the Governor's living bungalow. The Governor of Goa, the Portuguese possession in India, and Madame Moraes were the guests of honour. Lady Lloyd, with her charming tact, put the rather shy Portuguese lady at her ease, and she told us about the curious and beautiful old churches still standing in Goa, filled with sacred treasures. Amongst others the bones of the Saint of Travellers (or who should be so), St. Francis Xavier, the Spanish monk, who converted thousands of natives to Christianity both in India and in Japan, and died at or near Goa in 1552.

A very picturesque variety of guests were at the Levée. The Indian gentlemen in brilliant turbans and long coats, the Europeans gay with orders and ribbons, the Parsee gentlemen in their strangely original head-covering, made like a high cap in patent-leather, and supposed to represent the hoof of a cow!

The old story recounts that when the Persians (or Parsees), still clinging to their ancient religion, fled to India to escape the proselytizing Mohammedans, the Hindus consented to their settling in their land on the condition that they should bow their head to Lakshmi (whose symbol is a cow), the wife of Vishnu the Preserver.

24th November. I wandered through an old quarter of Bombay, down long steps, where ancient houses on either side stood irregularly grouped with carven corbels supporting overhanging balconies, brightly painted, and shadowed by unexpected foliage. Of a sudden I came upon a Hindu temple with its strange truncated spire, its outline fretted and broken by design and figure, rising grey and silver against a pale sky. Beneath its shadow lay a sheet of shimmering water held within a great, wide tank, graceful steps led down to its blue surface far below; and, guarding the approaches, tall *lats* (looking to me like something between a dovecote and a Chinese bell-tower) stood at each distant corner. Clustered all about and sheltering curious sculptured figures of cow or elephant were numberless small shrines and temples, the angular roofs of which made a pleasant contrast to the broad eaves of the houses beyond, half embowered in trees.

Soft-eyed bullocks encumbered the narrow alleys where children ran in and about, calling lustily, where the pigeons murmured their soothing reiteration and, high above, the wheeling swallows lanced and screamed in the warm air, while bare bronze figures stepped majestically downward to the waters of the holy cistern.

27th November. We went to church. The lesson—'Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken,' was read. The beauty of it is almost startling and holds the pang of unforgotten sorrows.

Lord Lloyd drove me back to Government House. His character is inspired by hope, courage and tireless energy and, oddly rare in combination with such virtues, he responds to artistic appeal and is also singularly sensitive and full of fun. His wife is his complement. Her grace, serenity, and gentleness create a perfect balance. His greatest danger, perhaps, may be too much impulse in action and an inclination to impatience of other people's limitations. He speaks well, with that odd, partly rasping, partly nasal, wholly arresting voice, which, rough as it sometimes is, can be strangely musical and sonorous. Not often have two such delightful persons represented their Majesties in their distant dominions.

BHOPAL AND SANCHI

27th November. I left for Bhopal. An Indian State of nearly 7000 square miles, ruled by an intelligent and enlightened princess: the Begum Sultan Jehan, the third woman ruler of Bhopal in this century. She visited Turkey in the summer of 1911, where I first met her, and I was much looking forward to seeing her again. I had engaged a 'Bearer,' or Hindu courier, as I felt sure I should lose Odam (my maid) first—and perhaps myself next—if I travelled alone. He seemed to sleep in the clouds and feed on air, but was always at hand and ready to help and pack and make tea and follow the luggage. Captain Rawstorne had made out my itinerary. Captain Lynch took me to the station and I was delighted with the railway-carriage: a long saloon, with a broad leather-covered seat running down it on both sides under the windows. The carriages are also provided with slatted shutters which keep out the glare while allowing the wind to sift through. Space is no luxury in India.

I slept, strange to say! We had our own bedding, packed in huge canvas bags, lent by Government House, and though I knew I was to be awakened at 4 a.m. I never opened my eyes.

It was only really hot at the start (about 88° to 90° in the dining-car, I fancy), but with our six windows open and electric fans twirling the heat was quite bearable.

After leaving Bombay the hills rose suddenly about us—strange, curiously-shaped mountains with fabulous outlines: pyramidal, tower-shaped, domed; one of them pointed a single, fiery finger towards the burning sky. These heights rose and sank, encircled us and then melted away with their green valleys and rushing streams until they dropped slowly below a golden horizon, faintly blue against the quivering distance.

Everywhere fine isolated trees dot the plains, indeed so park-like is the effect that, unless closely scrutinized, they can be mistaken for oak, acacia, or even ash trees, and yet they are every one exotic. The scene is one of almost unmarred beauty. The absence of mechanical artifice came to me as an immense relief. I wonder why? Why is it that a thatched hut, surrounded by a hedge of glowing banana-leaves and mud walls, appears more harmonious to the eye than a granite twin-cottage with square windows, a gravel path, a smoking chimney, and 'Lansdowne Lodge' neatly painted on its iron gate?

The impression has nothing to do with ethics of any kind. The former dwelling denotes ignorance, discomfort, lack of sanitation and idolatry; the latter so-called modern civilization! There you have the concentration of horror in three words. And yet without that civilization, would it be possible for us to appreciate the beauty of those conditions which belong to the distant past?

In this lovely land, as well as in our own, there is, of course, a development from the thatched cabin. There are the fairy palaces in rose-red stone, the

arcaded galleries, and watchful turrets. But they are the outcome of another civilization and are unutterably lovelier than the buildings that Western art has evolved in all her latest inventive pride.

Perhaps beauty is sensuous after all. Pillared coolness in a hot land, protective eaves in a cold one—open courts of hospitable ease within safe boundaries, towers of strong defence on warring borders; the brave arm and delicate hand of man himself impressing his living personality upon wood or stone—the bower built for beauty, the column raised for fame—the arch springing to worship—these bear material witness to the shaping spirit of man and to his creative passion. No such fires melt our steel-ribbed cloud-catchers, no such tremor moulds our concrete spanning—our cement spires.

27*th November*. Bhopal. I arrived at 5 a.m. and descended from my dusty express into the dry-soft air of Bhopal, all silver moonlight and golden starlight —wisps of cloud veiling the radiance here and there.

A stout, dark gentleman in a military coat and a turban came forward to welcome me and then gave orders in a low tone to six or seven sombre figures in native lack of costume who seized our boxes and bags and rushed about like ants, eventually carrying them across a fine stone and iron bridge over the railway-track, to where an open motor awaited us, but nothing else. I slipped on my fur coat as the hour before dawn was fresh and stepped in, inquiring about the luggage. "Oh! yes," answered my kind welcomer in excellent English—"the 'transport' will take it all!" So the 'bearer,' dark Samji, in his

polo-cap (all, or nearly all, town Hindus wear polo-caps, whereas all, or nearly all, Indian polo-players wear turbans !) remained alone in command of the ants and the boxes.

After starting swiftly down a beautiful avenue we passed an apparently derelict waggon by the roadside, to which were yoked two alarmed bullocks—the gentle cattle of the land, greyish-white with pointed humps upon their withers. I must here remark that they are really zebus ! (The final picture in my illustrated alphabet. I never heard them called by their proper name, and the bullocks were often cows !) The cart seemed to have been abandoned in a corner of the road and the animals, with their lowered heads, shone silver in the moonlight. We stopped—a passing wayfarer was questioned—he appeared to express complete detachment, upon which we wheeled about, returned to the ants and the ' bearer ' when a few quiet words from my guide acted like a wisp of straw thrown on to an ant-hill ! Agitated brown limbs sped toward the stranded cart and its shy, lonely team. *That* was the ' transport ' !

The guest-house was a charming, though very western-looking building, one storey in height and entirely built of stone. It had very high ceilings, which I revel in, a deep-arched verandah against which crowded great fan-leaved palms—poinsettias flamed beyond and white butterflies hovered near their fire—outside, mysterious trees clapped myriad leaves making a sound like running water. White chrysanthemums gleamed in hundreds of pots and below the red gravel of the terrace a fountain reflected the pale

sky. Within, everything (excepting the extreme height of the rooms) was English, even to the bunches of crowded flowers in vases, the ash-trays, chintz-covers and thick pile carpet.

I fell into a mosquito-net-covered iron bed (placed, as usual, in the middle of the room for more air) and slept well into the day! After a quiet luncheon Her Highness the Begum's Military Secretary came to take me to visit the town of Bhopal.

On the gently sloping hills, on the border of a satin sheet of blue, Bhopal unfolds itself like a group of gay flowers beside the lake; rose and white and saffron, the faded blossoms, the tumbling buildings, left to fall, left to die, as is the Oriental custom, where once they bloomed and shone in glory.

All the houses are low, with the exception of occasional slender, domed turrets or elegant colonnades which rise upon arches and are built about wide courts. Some are glittering white, others rose-red. We drove through mighty gates (as in Fez), we passed through open, clean streets where the sun shone and the fresh air blew (*not* as in Fez). I heard the muezzin chanted from a dozen minarets and I noted the same strange gaze in the eyes of the people; half wondering, half disdainful, as in the eyes of the Moors.

Bhopal is a Mohammedan State, wisely and efficiently ruled by the Princess Sultan Jehan; she has accomplished wonderful things to enlighten and inform her subjects. For instance, she has built and filled a Library, where there were collected some fine Persian books and marvellous Korans; some written

in such infinitesimal script that they can scarcely be deciphered even with the aid of a magnifying glass. It contained mostly English books, all good as far as I could see—but I wonder how much they are used? A pretty building, cared for by a christianized native. I returned to my lonely meal in a lofty room opposite the drawing-room. No native dishes, everything *à l'anglaise* and very good; even savouries and porridge for breakfast (which latter, by the way, I detest).

It is the custom in India for the Princes to lodge their guests in specially built guest-houses where every care and comfort are lavished upon them and where their privacy and wishes are perfectly respected.

28*th November*. I visited several native schools and had an audience of Her Highness the Begum.

The schools proved most pathetically interesting. The first, 'The Asafia Technical School,' the name of which terrified me, I found to be composed of groups of native women seated on the ground under loggias within a court (extremely like Fez), sewing the simplest garments. Several native ladies, quite nondescript in coiffure and costume, were there to receive me. Their welcome was so kind, their work, exposed for sale, so quaint and the perfumed flower-garlands they hung about my silken summer gown so strangely delightful, that I longed for such technicalities elsewhere.

Then the 'Sultaniah School,' housed in a former Begum's Audience-Palace. It was charming architecturally, again like Fez (though without the fine tiles),

and at the end of the inner court, inside hugely heavy doors, I discovered a large room filled with tiny brown girls draped in vivid green tarlatan and holding small Union Jacks in their hands. I was conducted to a chair by a plump and pretty young Indian lady in European dress, and all at once the hundred and more little brown girls, all eyeing me brightly and ready to burst into smiles, started singing 'Welcome,' a song in such eccentric English that I could barely catch a few words. Poor dears! Did they know the meaning of the strange sounds? They then played some games, recited some poetry and finished with God Save the King. I was delighted and left them with regret. Indian children are enchanting, so gentle, dignified and pretty.

Another smaller school I also visited—the 'Victoria'—where an agreeable Indian teacher, in her graceful *sari*, put her pupils through various paces to the summons of a striking bell; so, after more compliments and a brief visit to the Ladies' Club housed in an immense room which was ornamented by photographs of many female Sultans and Viceregal ladies and placed at the disposal of the Moslem ladies for classes in first-aid as well as meetings, I went to pay respects to Her Highness the Begum.

I was received in her private dwelling, a few miles outside her lovely rose and magnolia city. It was a quaint, rambling, rather ramshackle house with smallish rooms opening one out of the other in a confusing manner. One of her daughters-in-law, whom I had known when she was a little girl in Turkey, received me in a moderate-sized sitting-room

after I had been met and conducted through the halls by an English lady-in-waiting. No eunuchs appeared. Her Highness greeted me most kindly. We spoke together of old days, the young Princess addressing me in fluent English, and then a most mysterious and lovely figure appeared and held me spellbound. She was draped in an exquisite *sari* (veil) of deep orange gauze shot with gold, her full skirts and her shoes, pointed and curled up at the toes, were embroidered in gold. Her hands were covered with a net of jewelled gold fastened to her glittering rings which shone on every finger; and from her pretty brown nose hung a large pearl mounted in gold and diamonds. Her lustrous black hair was parted demurely in the middle of her brow, her large eyes discreetly veiled by their dark lids. She sank into a chair and sat silent and motionless, her hands spread on each knee, hieratic and speechless. She was an enchantment. Thus the beauties of the Thousand Nights and One appeared before their Lords, thus they still appear to the Maharajahs of our time. This lady's husband is a ruling Prince.

Then the Begum made her entrance. Her Highness is a short stoutish lady and was of course unveiled, although in public a shawl of heavy damask or satin covers her from head to foot and only two slits, like stretched button-holes, show where her bright, brown eyes are glittering beneath. She has, as have all Oriental princes of high family, great dignity, a noble bearing and gracious ease. A remarkably acute judgment, an unusual gift of common sense, a cultivated mind and high ambition raise her to the peculiarly

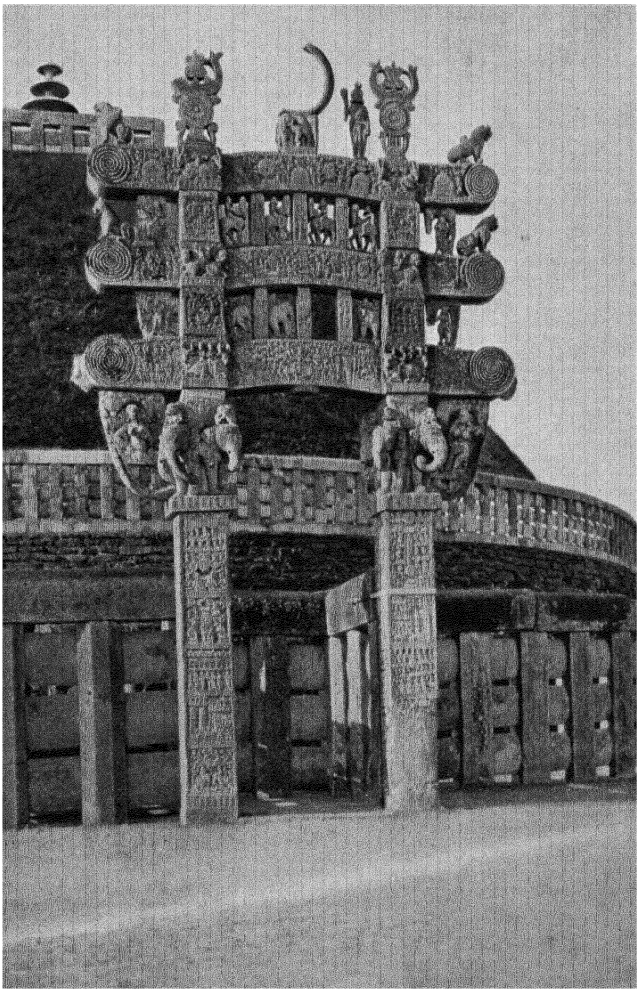
exalted position which she upholds, both in England and in India, with wisdom and prudence. She is venerated by her subjects, most loyal to the Paramount Power, and a great influence for good in India, and wherever Moslems are found. She gave me some books she had written in English—I read them with deep interest.

29th November. Her Highness, learning of my desire to explore Sanchi, the ancient Buddhist holy hill, sent me there by train under the escort of the Librarian, M. Ghosal of Calcutta. On arrival I found a bungalow of three rooms to shelter my maid and myself for the night, while our cicerone was in another guest-house close by, but we had our meals together. Soon after our short journey, we climbed the height where are situated the famous Shrines (topes or dagobas).

A long flight of steps, interspaced by easy gradients, and the summit of the sacred mount is reached. The early builders chose the site of their monuments well, for, upon this quiet hill-top commanding a gently undulating plain bathed, when we first saw it, in the glow of the declining sunlight, the group of strange, cylindrically shaped mounds sheathed in stone, crowned by hemispherical domes and guarded by barriers and gateways of carved rock, stand out in imposing grandeur. The sublime peace of the contemplative spirit broods there and I regretted that the teachings of the great Saint had almost disappeared from the Indias. These *topes* are of various sizes, but all once held venerated relics of the Buddha, or ashes of Buddhist saints hidden within a central chamber;

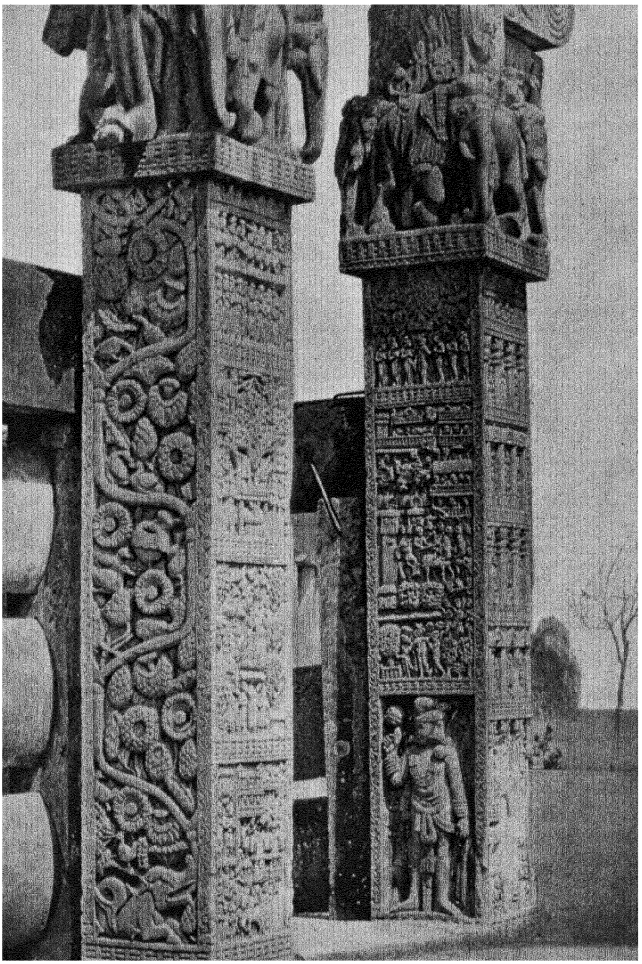
all are partially covered by stone casings and are surrounded by immensely high barriers of stone, carved to resemble wood. At the four points of the compass stand four lofty *toranas* (or gateways) with heavy lintels overhanging the posts, also of carved stone. The *torii* of Japan I presume are an evolution of these structures, at any rate they are strikingly similar, and these *toranas* at Sanchi precede the *torii* of the East.

The domes of the *topes* are very simple, the balustrades equally so, forming a bold interlacing design; the *toranas* alone rear their height in decorative richness, bearing proudly the story, in figure and in flower, of great Gautama the Buddha. Four statues of the celestial Buddha sit close to the plinth of the greater mound and are of very good style. These *stupas*, as they may strictly be termed, date from about 100 B.C., they have been since much repaired; the *toranas* and balustrades date from that period to about the end of the first century B.C. Some of the sculpture in low relief on the gateposts and lintels is intensely interesting, not only on account of the beauty and decorative quality shown, but also because of the amazing medley of styles. Imagine a Japanese or Chinese gate, decorated with friezes in the Hellenistic manner, with touches of the Byzantine and Assyrian besides! One panel is purely renaissance: flower, medallion and figure: simply bewildering! Those carvings which are precursors of Byzantine art are of the later period, so also are the carved lions with the same strongly-marked claws reminiscent of Romanesque sculpture. The Assyrian winged bull, strayed so far from his



NORTH GATE OF GREAT STUPA, SANCHI

Face p. 30



TORANA (GATE) GREAT STUPA, SANCHI

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Persian lair, confronts you with teazing unexpectedness, and the snake with the curling tail just as he is portrayed in far-off Norway! It is as though all styles of art and all symbols of worship had met upon the grey surface of these stones which have remained inviolate for over 2000 years! Some students allege that the wonderful preservation of the carvings is due to their having once been covered by a coating of gold or silver leaf. At all events it is amazing.

Besides the Great Stupa and several smaller ones, a few chapels, or *chaityas*, are dotted about upon the sacred hill and, seeing them against the background of purple hills and fading distances, one is struck by their curiously Greek proportions.

One or two of these later chapels still enshrine a dignified figure of the Buddha who throughout the centuries has sat there unmoved in smiling contemplation. A small museum contains some remarkable sculpture; some of the early Buddhist or 'Gandhara' style show strong Greek influence, particularly in the disposition of the draperies.

I asked my courteous and extremely well-informed guide whether Oriental visitors were impressed, as I had been, by the all pervading religious atmosphere of this ancient and holy spot. He replied that the Chinese viewed it with apparent indifference, the Japanese with reverence; he added that the Siamese Princes had been much impressed and truly moved.

Sir John Marshall, the Curator in Chief, restorer of Sanchi and of many other Indian monuments, is to be congratulated on the wonderful work he has accomplished here, aided by the sympathy and help of the

Begum and of the Government of India. And here I must add that wherever I went I found all monuments of beauty and historic interest preserved, with enlightened taste and reverent care. To those who value every link in the mighty chain of history and of artistic evolution, the work accomplished and maintained by the British and Indian Governments, inspired in great measure by Lord Curzon and faithfully continued by his successors, is beyond praise. Only those who know the Oriental indifference to time and time's depredations will appreciate the inestimable value of what the English have achieved in their effort to save the artistic and historic treasures of India.

30th November. I drove along the lake to have tea with the Begum's daughter-in-law, one of the most beautiful women I had ever seen: her profile is of Greek purity, the oval of her face impeccable, and, set in the magnolia petal of her skin, smoulder the unfathomable eyes of the Indian woman, her lips curved in an inscrutable smile. She seems to hold a secret, too sad to tell, and smiles trying to hush the sorrow of it. Poor lady, her husband was ill, I did not see him—he was dying of a mysterious malady. Some whispered that he had deadly enemies who were slowly poisoning him, but his sons, two fine young men, made their cheerful entrance, and took me over the gay and spacious abode where they proudly showed me some admirable tigers in glass cases which they had shot in the neighbouring jungle.

Here I may say that an Indian 'jungle' is much like a Scotch 'forest'! Where in the latter are the trees?

In the former where the tangle of fern and palm, of bamboo and orchid ?

Although the servants were native, dinner at the Begum's summer residence was served quite in European style. The food was cooked *à l'anglaise*, with the exception of a delicious pilaw and an amusing sweet wrapped in real silver-leaf ! It must be eaten silver-leaf and all ! I did so and survived. A handsome young Moslem, a cousin of Her Highness's, was present ; he looked very elegant in his beautiful turban and talked perfect English ; there was also the wife of Her Highness's third son, a most agreeable young woman in a graceful *sari* (incidentally the image of Madame Thierry, *née* de Rothschild). After dinner she played on the piano (as I used and had to do when I was fifteen), and so did her little girl. We listened to them, all huddled together in an extremely ugly little room—stuffy and dark and full of English ' seaside ' furniture. And yet there are numerous lovely palaces in Bhopal waiting to be repaired and inhabited.

It was a delightful evening, and I shall never forget Her Highness's perfect hospitality and gracious welcome. She made me promise to return. She even proposed to give me a house to live in and offered me the position of Head-Mistress in a Girls' School. There I could read, and expound, and teach little children to paint in water-colours pictures of their own land which is itself a perfect aquarelle. It seemed a fairy tale, all told too soon.

UDAIPUR

1st December. I leave for the heart of Rajputana: Udaipur.

Two days in a rattling railway carriage and one night sleeping on a cane-lounge in the waiting-room at Ratlan! We were late, and on nearing the junction I looked out into the warm night only to see the glitter and shadow of the train to Udaipur moving slowly away, and no other connection until next morning! There were no keys to the doors of the great 'Salle d'Attente,' where I spent the night, no locks even, and crowds of Indian travellers outside moving languidly to and fro from dusk to dawn; but no one disturbed me, and I rested fairly well.

After numberless changes I eventually reached Udaipur the next night quite tired out, but was cheered on arrival by the welcome of a kind Hindu gentleman in an exquisite puggaree and a neat khaki uniform —also by a motor, a lovely starlit drive and another luxurious guest-house.

Luckily, I still had with me my nice Hindu courier, Samji, who took as excellent care of my maid as I did myself, so all was well. All she did was to pack and unpack and look very superior, though I hope she enjoyed the variety and the comfort we found everywhere.

3rd December. My polite escort is the A.D.C. to

the Heir-Apparent—the Maharaj Kumar—and also Superintendent of the Ruler's guest-house just outside the town.

I started with him the next morning to visit the Palaces on the hill overhanging the lake—a faint blue lake imprisoned in the fold of faint blue hills and over all the vaults of Heaven faintly blue.

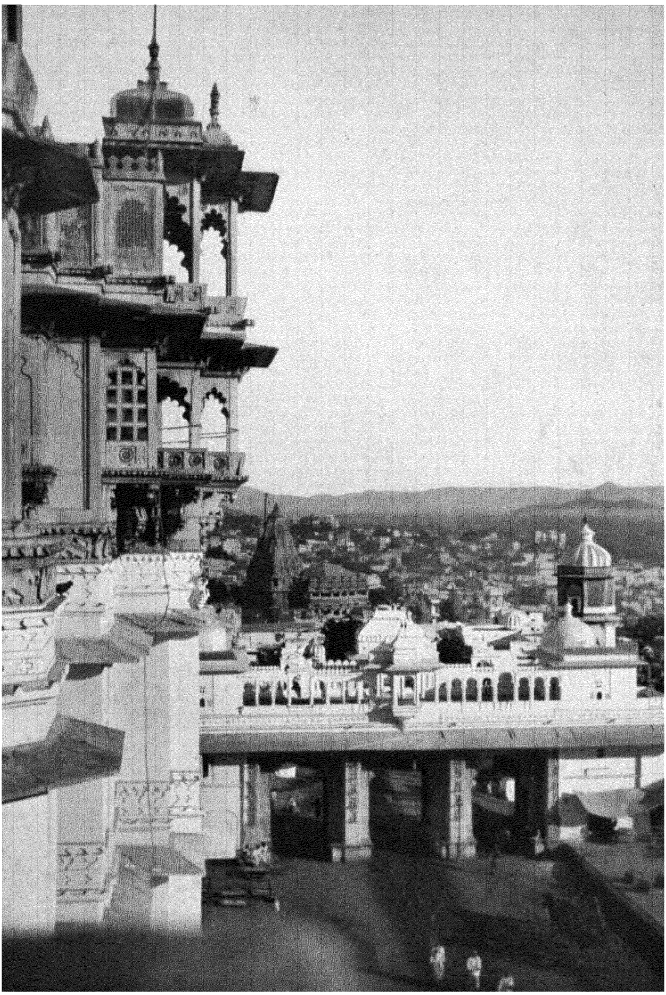
We entered the enchanted city by high and imposing gates. They pierce the rose-coloured crenellated walls with which Udaipur is surrounded and lead to the main street through which we drove from one Arabian Nights' court to another.

We passed the Juggernath temple to Vishnu rising above its long, high flight of steps, where carven elephants in stone trumpet on either side; thence through a magnificent three-arched gateway into the Palace courtyard itself. I was then led up broad, high steps (the steps are all very high in these ancient buildings of India, as in Morocco), through heavy doors, past strange idols: elephant-headed images carved and painted in their niches on the walls: and finally reached a large open court high in air, where nondescript unsoldierlike soldiers in khaki and turbans lounged about at ease. They rose, however, as we appeared, looking at us in a dreamily amused but amiably superior manner.

My guide left a nice pair of patent-leather pumps at the bottom of some steps and pattered up the warm granite stairs in his socks along the corridors leading the way to what was apparently the roof of the sky! Up, up we climbed and then—of a sudden—we stood upon a marble terrace—and the vision flashed before

TEMPLE OF JAGGERNATH, **UDAIPUR**

Face p. 30



TRIPULIA GATE AND PALACE, UDAIPUR

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me which enchants one to-day as it enchanted the Oriental Princes of long ago.

Below us, about us, above us, rose groups of airy pavilions and small domes upheld by slender pillars; behind the open-work marble balustrades which surrounded hanging gardens green boughs drooped and water tinkled.

After long days of unbroken heat and blinding glare, what could be dreamed of more perfect than to rest in marble courts and pillared halls suspended between earth and sky, the walls of which are pierced with delicate tracery open to the faintest breath of evening? Water rises in fountains and runs along shining channels, orange and mango trees and, that most beautiful of all trees, the gold mohur, gleam with emerald and black reflections against the white and polished stone, while the overwhelming wave of golden mist melts into night.

I espied some iron rings fixed in the roof above a wide marble basin in one of these 'palaces of the winds.' I inquired their purpose and my guide told me that the Prince sometimes had his couch suspended over the shining stones, which were then deep in murmuring water, and he slept there through the summer nights.

It suddenly dawned upon me that this wonderland was alive! It was not a museum or a monument, and on being shown into the Peacock Court where the high walls are inlaid with coloured glass, slightly convex and beautifully fitted to form a mosaic design depicting peacocks amid groups of flowers, and when I perceived a delicately shaped shallow bow-window

where, I was told, the Maharajah actually sat on state occasions, and looked down on his courtiers assembled below to do him homage—I felt the East and its Romance still lived.

Imagine my delight when two days later I was received in audience by the Heir-Apparent, the Maharaj Kumar, in a little pillared room lighted by a similar bow-window the open trellis-work of which nearly reached the floor, and to which we gained access from this very Peacock Court.

Our way lay first through a room all painted and gilt, then to another through doors sculptured in high relief with female figures in Indian draperies ; we were then ushered through a black and gold lacquered door, up some square granite steps, and over a high marble threshold into the princely presence.

The reigning Princes of Udaipur are very proud of their ancient lineage, and claim descent from the Sun itself.

His Highness sat in a modern chair of twisted black wood, a Viennese anomaly in this exquisite chamber ; I was invited to sit opposite him and we had a slow, quiet interchange of compliments, an audience much like many another in the East.

After my visit to this Old Palace, the greater part of which was built in the seventeenth century, I lingered in the spacious courtyard, where some lovely Indian children were playing (but never begging) and where a huge grey elephant was chained by the foot beside wandering buffaloes and silver-grey cows. High in air, myriads of pigeons wheeled and fluttered, and through a screen of rose-coloured arches I

looked down upon the green and gold of the land far below.

I was also taken over the European Palace. An immense pile of buildings with huge, high-ceilinged rooms, their walls covered with very mediocre oil-paintings, portraits of various Princes, and the floors piled with thick modern carpets; the furniture consisted of immensely heavy chairs and sofas and more glass than I have seen before, or had imagined possible! There were mirrors and tables and chairs of glass, punkah-poles and frames, and ornaments of the same glittering stuff, and actually an immense glass bed. Thousands of pounds worth of cut and plate glass on every side, in every room! No taste, as we understand it, or as they themselves once understood it—which is: beauty selected and restrained. It was simply luxury run wild, a debauch of upholstery and varnish from the Crystal Palace.

I hurried through this disappointing array of deadliness and we eventually found our way into a lovely garden of orange trees, bougainvillea and cypress, where little chipmunks chattered their surprise at our invasion. (I tried not to notice some cast-iron figures, debased classical, in the style of the Second Empire, holding lamps among the flowers.) At the farther end of this garden stood another palace where I was rewarded by the unusual effect of an immense semi-circular courtyard, dazzlingly white, surrounded by glittering walls, in the midst of which two mango trees spread dark green leaves where peacocks and guinea-fowl picked their disdainful way across the marble pavement.

The graceful outline of the Indian pavilions surrounding us cut sharply against the sky and within them the various rooms were hardly more than loggias framing views of the lake, and almost hanging over the lapis blue waters far below. The doors of these apartments were inlaid with flowers of ivory, and upon the wall-panels hung Indian miniatures of former Maharajah-Maharanas in court-dress: full-pleated skirt, high boots with pointed shoes, short jacket, jaunty toque-like turban and formidable sword.

The spell of all this Oriental pomp and strange beauty remained upon me as we drove home through a shadowy park full of wonderful trees—I had glimpses of tigers in cages, of a huge elephant padding along in the dust, of green parrots fluttering among high branches, and then for a horrid moment I was brought back to earth! We passed a tennis-court where a European and some native gentlemen in flannels were just finishing a game. But only for a moment—for I was once more within the city and the magic held me again.

I believe that there is not a single ugly building in Udaipur. The unerring decorative taste of the Oriental, which demands a contrast between plain surface and decorated surface, between white smoothness and black shadow, is everywhere apparent.

Every smallest house—and with the exception of the royal palaces, no buildings in Udaipur are more than two stories high—has a projecting and covered balcony, or windows with tiny openings within which one sees framed a dark bronze face with a rose or amber-coloured turban.

In the town the style of architecture is entirely Hindu; only the palaces show Moghul influence. These are purely Persian, indeed almost Western in style and proportion; some of the rooms are almost identical with retreats in the old Sarai at Stamboul.

Udaipur is guarded by rose-tinted walls, surmounted at the top by broad leaf-shaped crenellations, within which are slits for rifle-firing. The city gates are very imposing; they are all double gates built at right angles as in Fez, designed to withstand the inrush of an attack, and in narrow alcoves cut into the masonry of their huge piers the guards have their mattress or bedding, their brass water-bottle and gay coverings.

After luncheon at the guest-house my mentor, Shab Karan, drove me down to the edge of the lake, where, from a pretty pavilion, we walked down some steps and, embarking in a little boat, were rowed noiselessly away. Time was apparently no object, and far beyond us, against the shadows of blue hills, upon the golden glitter of the ripples, floated the Water-Palaces of Udaipur, girt with living green, o'ertopped by little bubble-domes and single towering palm trees immobile in the shimmering glare.

We passed below the city walls, which here dip their foundations into the lake, and glided under a high bridge with pointed arches lifting almost to a peak in the middle, curiously decorative. The Moon Gate (Chand Pol) opened on to this bridge, which leads to a suburb dark with trees shading white temples, embowered among the leaves. The usual temples of the enchanting Hindu-Aryan style with curvilinear steeple, truncated, not spired; vertical

bands of masonry, horizontal bands of carving; steps leading to the water and the sacred pipal or banyan tree spreading its benediction above them. The pipal tree murmurs continuously like running water and its leaves look wet in the rays of the hottest sun.

Beyond the Moon Gate was a lovely tri-portal gate leading to the water's edge. Here graceful Hindu women stood swathed in their dark-red garments, gazing across the lake, and farther away on the terraced embankment, between the city wall on the one hand and the steep water-steps on the other, some, half-stripped, knelt and washed their clothes in the lake, beating them with wooden bats, or wringing them out and spreading their brilliant crimson along the stones.

Further, upon the shore rose lofty edifices: the guest-house for Hindu princes, all white lattices and balconies; the Juggernath temple behind, lifting eccentric carved spires; finally the towering heights of the Maharana's palaces dazzlingly white against the opal sky. They are without window or balcony save the smallest openings towards the lake, and the princesses' quarters, the Zenana, were fortress-like in their blank, soaring grandeur. Here and there, silhouetted against the blinding cliff of palaces, stood emerald-green pipal trees or palms, and the shores were lined with kiosk and temple, terrace and step, dipping into the shining waters.

It was an incredibly rare and sumptuous vision. But we turned from it and rowed across the lake towards the jagged hills to the south-west and the fabled turrets of the Water-Palaces which, gleaming above

the molten surface, seemed as unreal and unsubstantial as a mirage in a dream.

But no! We neared them, we approached, and breathless with delight I stepped out and found myself standing before a graceful marble loggia, where in the silence I heard the ripples breaking at its base. A thicket of golden marble colonnettes, all in the curious 'wood-turner shapes' so prevalent in India, supported the graceful roof with its broad eaves; and between them hung iron rings hinting where heavy stuffs were stretched to hide those sheltering in the shade from the vulgar gaze. Beyond this grove of pillars was a lofty wall pierced by a gate, and within, courtyard after courtyard followed one beyond the other, each with a marble kiosk or balcony overhanging the water and looking towards the white-domed turrets of the palaces of Udaipur; most of them embracing a formal garden pleasaunce behind the latticed margins of the lake.

These gardens are built with curious plaster compartments dug into the ground—huge tanks filled with earth or water. The former are planted with low trees, laden with orange, citron and almond, or with palms and gaudy flowers, the others, once filled to the brim with water, are now almost dry.

One of these water-gardens was entirely enclosed by a high stone wall, upon which the most unusual mosaic designs had been applied in tiny convex mirror-glass. Although this glass was very old, dating from 1700 at latest, its radiance flashed undimmed upon the white surface it adorned. The design continued all around the enclosing wall in glittering sequence, and

there you saw flowers in baskets curving gaily across the plaster panels; graceful Persian cypresses, each crest bending before a secret breeze; and figures in stiff, full dresses, their hair smoothly parted, each holding a fan or a tulip in their hand, stood watching one another in the silver silence. I have rarely seen decoration so pure, so chaste, so enchanting.

Below the mosaics a wide tank was being filled with water where the Zenana princesses could bathe and be refreshed in seclusion.

Immense trees overshadowed these mysterious gardens, trailing their branches over the marble trellises into the lake below.

On the south side of the island stood the Water-Palace itself—tall and white in the hot sun. One wing seemed the reflection of a classic temple, pure in line and unadorned, another was square and plain, an unpretentious building shining in the sunlight.

I was about to embark and proceed to the farther island when my conductor, who had vanished for a moment, came to inform me that H.H. the Maharaj-Kumar, the Heir to the *Gaddi* (or throne), was at that moment on the island and wished to see me. Alas! I was not dressed for such an occasion. I was wearing an old white knitted coat and skirt, and an unbecoming hat, but I could not make that an excuse and followed the much impressed A.D.C. through various courts, up narrow stone stairs and along very straight corridors until at last we came to a room in the Palace itself.

Although the shutters of this apartment were closed to attenuate the glare reflected from the lake, it was nevertheless full of light. Upon the walls hung large

mirrors in glass frames, painted flowers in bright colours were flung across the panels; and from the high ceiling were suspended glass chandeliers carrying sapphire-blue globes; the effect was one of gay brilliance. Several tall bearded attendants in native dress and wearing small turbans were grouped around a slight but dignified young man who seemed unable to stand without their support. A frail figure with a thin careworn face, and large wistful eyes in immense orbits, he had a prominent chin and a quick, intelligent glance. He was dressed in a Norfolk jacket and tight linen trousers; a very small turban like a woman's toque was draped about his head.

This was the Heir to the Maharana of Udaipur, the great hunter, descendant of the Sun, who was at this very moment away on a shooting expedition in spite of his seventy-three years, leaving his delicate son in the capital to look after his State and people.

The Prince was very courteous and would not sit until I was seated in a Viennese armchair of twisted-wood placed beside his—no other furniture but two consoles adorned the room. He was slightly embarrassed, and I had to do my best to keep up the conversation, but when he spoke his remarks were clear and sensible, and delivered in excellent English.

I told him of my admiration of his country and capital, and how greatly I admired his father's palaces. I said that I had never ridden an elephant, whereupon he suggested my riding one of his, to which I demurred in alarm! I said that I thought it unwise to grant self-government to uneducated masses led by agitators, lawyers and students, but that the Princes of India

might with success form a Council and govern this vast continent themselves. He looked at me gravely and said: "If the English go—we all go!" I had not expected such a shrewd reply. I also tentatively urged upon him the importance of repairing and preserving his architectural and artistic treasures, which were irreplaceable; but alas, he seemed to respond but faintly to my assertion that electric light and telephones could wait—whereas his marble kiosks and mirror mosaics would crumble and be lost for ever!

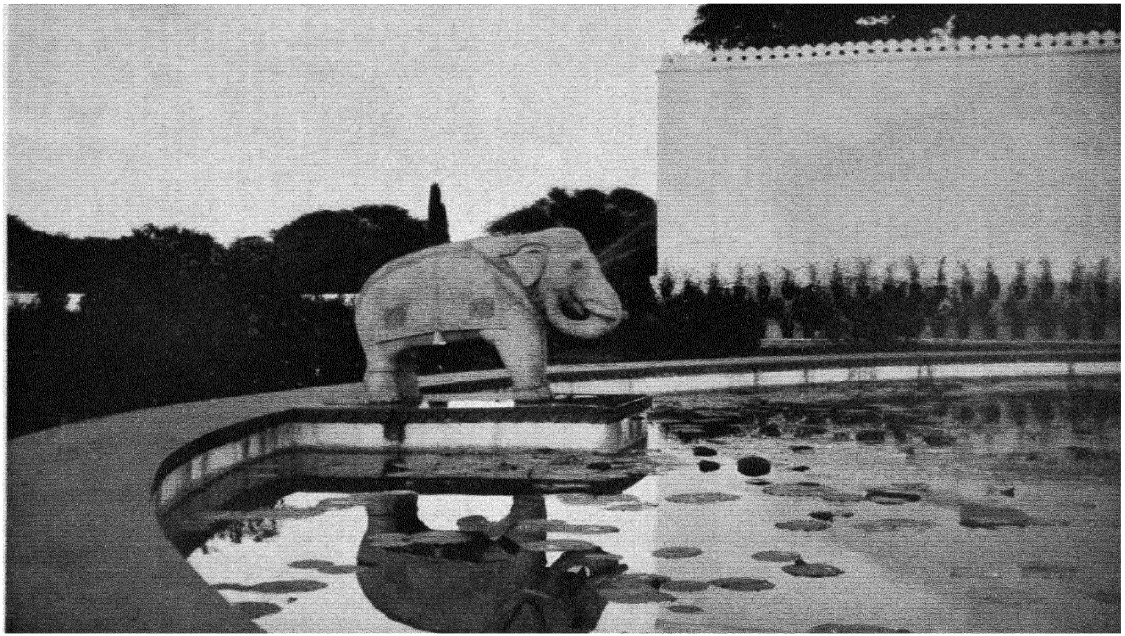
I could see that he was scrutinizing my toilette with some interest, and longed to have been wearing something pretty; a plain coat and skirt, even though white and soft (and coming from Molyneux), must look strangely awkward to an Oriental Prince!

After about twenty minutes or more of my chatter and smiles, punctuated by his serious and shy responses, he signified that he would retire, and called for his towering attendants who hurried in and supported him while I shook hands and, as politely as I could without curtseying, backed my way out of the room.

Full of sympathy for this courageous and courteous gentleman I returned to my waiting boat. I found another alongside, from which I was saluted by two jolly-looking brown boys in polo-caps. These two children, who were accompanied by their tutors, were cousins of the Prince, who, at present, has no sons. We moved swiftly away, passing below the marble lacework from behind which lovely soft-eyed ladies should have been gazing curiously at the stray European, but where only the birds and flowers peeped and nodded from the shade.

GATE AT UDAIPUR

Face p. 46



PALACE GARDEN, UDAIPUR

The farther island was like an island in a dream; it seemed completely deserted.

A row of solemn elephants, carved and rigid, stood in the blue waves trumpeting with their stone trunks. Upon their backs rested the marble quays, behind them rose the columns of an airy loggia, and beyond that again was a wide square court, bordered with a hedge of crimson flowers. Tall, many-fingered palms floated high above a mighty wall, and at the farther end a golden-coloured kiosk with marble domes and balconies reminded one that Shah-Jehan of the Taj-Mahal was once a fugitive hidden behind those walls, protected by a Prince of Udaipur of those days; an uncle or cousin perhaps, as his father Jehangir had married a princess of this proud line.

Flowers in profusion with blossoming shrubs and trees were crowded on this more distant island, and many wild birds flitted from branch to branch; but the marble quays and walls encircling the fabulous bouquet are beginning to fall into ruin and, as we rowed away and it faded from us in the golden dust of the evening sunlight, I felt such beauty must be unreal, and such a conception merely the evanescent vision of a land of dreams.

The shock of the awakening came when we landed at twilight at the farther end of the fabulous lake and climbed a hill to stand upon the terrace of a graceful summer-house and gaze upon what appeared to be a wild scene of carnage! Scores of savage boars, all tusks and bristles and snorts, scrambled and clattered on their high hoofs, fighting for handfuls of yellow maize flung down at them from above! I am told

that these boars are fed to become the bait for the tigers and jaguars with which the jungle hereabout abounds. It was a horrid sight of which I soon tired, so through dusky brushwood, followed by the gay shrieks of gold-green parrots on the wing, we motored back to the guest-house through the park, past the tennis-courts and the statue of Queen Victoria (with the inevitable bird perched upon her crown), whilst I still wondered in my heart whether it were all true or only the echo of an Arabian Nights' tale.

4th December. Last night I was awakened by the most agonizing screams. Low and querulous at first, they would rise to an almost unbearable shriek and then cease. I concluded that a woman was being murdered—or a helpless girl tortured, and I turned quite cold. But no! It was merely the night-call of the wild hyena or the jackal which wander right up to the walls of Udaipur in search of carrion.

My kind and indefatigable guide takes me to see the Juggernath temple in the town.

It is of the general type of Hindu temple and dedicated, I think, to Vishnu, the Protecting God of Udaipur. A steep, very steep approach of stone stairs and at the top of this flight a terrace, flanked by stone elephants and crowned by an elaborate gateway, heavily decorated with carved personages and animals set in horizontal lines. Fortunately, structural breaks are here vertically set, and relieve the monotony of the design, unlike the Southern or Dravidian style of architecture, where all the lines as well as decoration accentuate the horizontal and give a heavy, confused effect.

I may here add that I found the Jain temples, where worship the followers of Mahavira, more pleasing than the Hindu. The decoration was more subdued, there were no sculptured figures of man or beast on those I saw, and the curious spires, always crowning the square body of the building, slightly curvilinear in outline and truncated at the apex, were more graceful and in better proportion than those of the Hindu temples; besides which the accompanying portico carried on pillars before the entrance added a certain dignity to the whole.

At Udaipur the temple stood in the middle of a fair-sized court, in each corner of which was a separate shrine enclosing a Hindu idol. I can call them nothing else. I am not often shocked; but to see what looked like a Catholic shrine: the columns, the altar, the lights and the flowers, and then, in place of a dignified and saintly figure to find an obese and naked monstrosity, squatting in the midst, with the gross head and trunk of an elephant, gave me a distinct feeling of revulsion; a feeling which grew instead of diminishing as time went on. I tried at first to persuade myself that the manifestation of the Trimurti (Brahma, Siva and Vishnu), more especially of Siva, in the person of his son Ganesh (always represented as a figure half-man, half-elephant), was merely symbolical, the power and beneficence of the elephant standing for wisdom and strength in the popular mind; but, as I saw more of these figures and observed them smeared with red paint and covered with flowers, it appeared to me that the figure itself was the object of worship and appeal, and the higher interpretation of the Hindu cult seemed to fade.

Opposite the door of the temple proper (a square-cut door—no arches are ever used in these temples) rose a covered platform, also reached by further steep steps. Upon this stood a singularly shaped beast in slightly Byzantine style made all of glittering brass: a 'Garuda,' half-eagle, half-human—gazing into the mystery of the temple before him. This monster is one of the 'vehicles' of Vishnu. As we entered the court an old woman, wizened and smiling under her ragged draperies, offered us wreaths of marigold. My courteous guide accepted one and hung it upon the steps in front of the 'Garuda'; I had bought some blossoms, and on suddenly realizing their uses, put them into my escort's hands, begging him to place them before the shrines. He flung them at the various images, ignoring Kali, the dread spouse of Siva, whose altar stood in one corner, the grille closed in front of her grimacing, almost Chinese mask of a face—they evidently did not even attempt to propitiate her here.

Here? What would my Puritan and Quaker ancestors think of a descendant of theirs offering flowers to heathen idols?

The temple itself remained to me inviolate—no foot of an unbeliever may cross its threshold.

In contrast with this fortress of superstition and ignorance was the garden to which we afterwards drove. Following the lake we passed beyond the park of the British Residency (where I left my card, the Resident was unfortunately away, a regret to me, for I had heard that he was charming). At last, behind immensely high walls, tall trees lifted green summits, leaning over as though to beckon one within. Through

a low, narrow door we followed their summons and found ourselves in a thick grove shadowing some white buildings and further high walls.

On passing through another entrance, a charming open court appeared before my enchanted vision, almost entirely filled by a huge basin of glittering water starred by four beautiful little *chhatries* in black wood most delicately carved rising above the ripples. (*Chhatries* are airy domes supported on slender pillars, the word signifying parasol.) Upon these domes, silver birds stretched metal wings and pointed shining beaks. All about were carefully tended flowering plants in pots, and opposite us a gay pavilion of white marble and *chunam* (white plaster polished to look like marble) arched its openings to cool depths.

Suddenly, all about the margin of the marble tank almost on a level with the marble pavement upon which we stood, a fine rain of tiny jets rose into the hot air and fell plashing softly into the water, which quivered into smiles at the delicious surprise! Then all awoke as from a magic spell. The waters whispered, the silver birds twirled around, spouting silver streams from their silver beaks, the flowers nodded in the shower of silvery drops and the mango trees rustled with the shiver of cool streams.

With what magic those Princes of old contrived to while away the long summer hours of their languid Sultanas! For these gardens are called the Zenana Gardens and were planned for the delectation of the wives of a now departed Maharana.

Surrounding the Pavilion are more gardens with more fountains; in one of them is an immense tank

filled to the brim with rose-red lotus-flowers lifting proud petals above their bold, round leaves, over which stand ivory-coloured elephants on guard. But the effect was sadly marred by a grim cast-iron fountain towering in the midst, an erection of a series of basins, like immense platters, each one smaller than the one below and supported on the backs of a cluster of painted storks, each spurting water from an iron beak!

Is not perfect beauty, beauty inviolate? No object of perfect harmony in one age can be improved by the touch of any following age. In fact that touch is death to it—at its contact beauty withers and dies.

And yet, you may cite as evidence to the contrary the charm of a Renaissance porch ushering you into Gothic aisles, the grace of an airy cupola crowning a Giralda above a Moorish base.

Yes. It may be beautiful, it surely has charm. But can it compare with the purity of the Acropolis, the perfection of the Taj-Mahal, the majesty of Saint-Sophia unravished by the years?

A glimpse of the Museum interested me, principally on account of the hundreds of turbans therein exposed, each and every one folded and twisted differently, according to the rank, caste or tribe of the person for whom they were destined. Apparently the ceremonial turban in this capital is a very small, rather rakish toque, wrapped in the most chic French manner. You may wear as many as forty yards of delicately hand-made, hand-dyed muslin, which, tenuous even as it is, swells into quite a large and imposing head-covering with a soft streamer left loose behind; this is for travel, or sport, or to don outside the precincts of the

princely palaces. But, within the mighty Tripolia Gates, behind the high walls, you must wear, if your rank permits it, the tiny gay toque with a gold band athwart its folds and suffer the curious half-ferocious, half-feminine air it bestows.

Half-feminine! And yet! What traditions ring through Hindu annals. This very family of the Princes of Udaipur, descendants of the Sun, fleeing after years of savage attack by the Moghul emperors from their fortress of Chitor into the fastness of their hills and lakes at Udaipur, they were not feminine! Their very women were as men.

I must here relate a tale I both heard and read; that of Padmani.

Padmani was the wife of Bhim-Singh, uncle of Ajai-Singh, Maharana of Mewar. Now Padmani was so beautiful that the fame of her perfection spread over all India. She was as white as the jasmine-flower, her hair was as glittering as a raven's wing, her eyes were darker than the velvet night and her voice was like the murmur of the wild pigeon. Her shining body was without speck or blemish, she was as fleet as the doe and as slender as the cypress.

The fame of her beauty reached even to the court of the Pathan emperor, Allah-uddin Kilji, even to the ears of the great Emperor himself. He who had consolidated the rule of the northern conquerors, who, followed by thousands of powerful princes, had subdued countless provinces, the rulers of which crowded to his courts at Delhi—the old Delhi, far southward from the walls of Shah-Jehan who came long afterwards.

He wrote to the Maharana of Mewar with many courteous words begging to see this wonderful princess. He was answered in as many courteous words that such a boon could not be granted.

Again an envoy—again a refusal. At last a prayer: Might the great Emperor look upon the reflection of Padmani in a mirror? And with the prayer, a threat, so that the Rajput prince, proud as he was, thought it prudent to comply with the request.

Allah-uddin came. He was met on the plains below the tremendous bastion of Chitor, the overwhelming hill rising sheer on all sides from the tablelands beneath, guarded by gate upon gate, protected by massive walls, heralded by soaring towers from which one could gaze so far that the blue horizons melted into the unknown.

So it stands to-day as it stood eight hundred years ago in the days when Padmani's eyes filled with tears and her white hands shook as she drew aside the silver tissue of her veil and gazed into the mirror wherein the Sultan also looked and then hungered with a burning hunger. He saw the gold and silver veils, the rubies and emeralds, the raven hair, the jasmine wreaths, but most wonderful of all—the white throat and arms, the night-dark eyes and the rose-red lips of Padmani. He looked and he desired and swore by all he held sacred that Padmani should be his.

He galloped back to Delhi, he issued a challenge: Padmani, the wife of Bhim-Singh, uncle of the Ruler of Mewar, must be his, or he would ravage the fertile lands of Mewar and would claim her at the scimitar's point.

A ringing answer was returned.

So the armies assembled with horse and foot, camel and elephant, and the fertile lands of Mewar lay ravaged at the foot of the high fortress of Chitor.

But the Rajputs would not yield. Padmani herself urged them to ever sterner resistance, and, even when the smoke of burning harvests drifted through her marble lattices, she stirred her defenders with fresh words of courage. And the Invader, repulsed, turned and departed from Chitor.

But not for long. The vision of Padmani haunted him: the emeralds and the rubies, the cunningly woven silver and golden stuffs, the jasmine on the raven hair and the eyes and breast and mouth of Padmani. And, distracted, he raised another army and again marched into stricken Mewar.

Again the descendants of the Sun-God, the Princes of Rajput, withstood him bravely, fighting in their steel helmets and coats of mail with their swords in hand, the spears and arrows on high; but the might of Allah-uddin, 'Faith in God', was greater than that of Ajai and Bhim-Singh, and the defenders, stricken with despair, consulted behind the towers of Chitor.

A parley is proposed—an envoy from Allah-uddin! He is accepted, welcomed and treated with courtesy. He says his lord is tired of battle, respects his enemy and wishes to come to terms; will not the Maharana send an ambassador to him? He asks for the uncle of Ajai, that is Bhim-Singh! Safe-conduct is promised.

Reluctantly the besieged accept the proposal and, in spite of Padmani's warnings, her husband goes

forth and with noise of drums and blare of trumpets is received into the huge tent of the Sultan himself.

They watch from the walls of Chitor; they peer from the towers and gates; eyes strain from the airy lattices high above the misty plains.

As yet no one comes out from the Imperial tent, no procession returns with words of peace and terms of compact, the sun burns low and all the air and the upper fields of the sky are powdered with gold, the neem-trees, drooping, glow like emeralds, the starlings chatter and fly towards the tamarinds where the monkeys swing curiously over the temple gate.

Still no one comes.

A murmur: treachery!

A shout: revenge!

And they realize that the perfidious Sultan of Delhi has kept Bhim-Singh a prisoner, and in his passion for Padmani has broken his pledged word.

The Rajput prince advises cunningly: we must free our uncle by stratagem as we cannot do so by force. And once more they parley, and promises are made and broken. At last a final proposal is submitted to the enemy: on certain conditions would the Princess Padmani be allowed to go to visit her husband?

"At last!" exults the Sultan, and Padmani is called to join Bhim-Singh in the Sultan's camp.

He looks at the long procession winding down the mountain side: the small group of unarmed soldiers, the palanquins of Padmani and her ladies, and the retinue of servants bearing her goods and her treasure. She comes in state, the most beautiful woman in India,

she brings her jewels, her robes, her stuffs, perhaps her mirror!

The group approaches, is brought into the camp, when on a clap, the palanquin curtains are tossed aside, the slaves throw off their draperies, and over a hundred tall Rajputs, sabre in hand, led by the intrepid Padmani herself, rush in, rescue Bhim-Singh and bear him off in triumph to Chitor.

If only my story could end here! Alas, maddened by his frustrated desires, after a few months Allah-uddin once more comes down from the north, this time enveloped in such a cloud of horsemen, of elephants and of archers that the plain about Chitor rages like an angry sea.

In their desperation the Rajputs dethrone Ajai-Singh and place another princeling in the seat of power; he is again defeated and another of the Sun's descendants takes his place until eleven royal princes are sacrificed —but all in vain.

Allah-uddin is clamouring at the gates of Chitorgargh. The portals are giving way. The Pathans are pouring in. Padmani alone is calm, and with her head held high, her divine features unveiled that all may gaze and mourn—she causes the nethermost vaults of her palace to be filled with dry grasses, camel-thorn, and great beams of wood. Then, followed by all her women, she enters therein, sets fire to the crackling brush, and locked with a hundred heavy bolts and bars perishes nobly, undaunted to the last, faithful to the end, winning her victory over the Sultan of Hindustan, the servant of God, Allah-uddin of Delhi.

Later, as I passed the great mountain of Chitor, still bound by its astounding walls, six miles and more in circumference, as I saw its towers and gates and crumbling palaces, I thrilled at the memory of Padmani and her story, while the whole sky was red with the clouds of an Indian sunset as the plains long ago were red with the pennants of the savage Sultan and his victorious hordes, defeated in the end by a woman's heart.

5th December. His Highness the Maharaj Kumar has sent for me. He received me in the Old Palace at ten o'clock in the morning.

(I wonder what he thought of my costume in the pale mauve crêpe-de-chine with floating folds from the shoulders and hips, a drooping straw hat also mauve, weighted down at the back and lined beneath the brim with orchid-pink velvet? Lovely as it really was, he took far less interest in it than in my horrid little knitted coat and skirt!)

He received me in a quaint little room vividly recalling the Padishah's rooms in the Old Serail at Stamboul. It was decorated with tiny arches and colonnettes all painted in yellow, no furniture, only narrow painted walls bright with formal designs, and low windows looking out on to the Peacock Court. Alas, two ugly pieces of European utility offered us their bony seats and arms, and as I sat upon them I reflected how perfect it would have been had he waved me instead to a low divan in the recess near the window from whence one's glance, like the flight of a swallow, swept and soared above wood, hill and lake.

But he was charming and much less shy. He told

me he had all the work of State to do and that the files of business papers neglected before him piled up mountain high.

He wore an incredible tweed jacket, black trousers, and a jaunty royal turban in crimson and gold. Luckily, as it was cool in that lofty eyrie, he sent for something to keep him warm, and, much to my joy, the bearded attendant brought him a bright pink cashmere shawl with a brilliant border and fringes with which he wrapped himself.

He filled me with sympathy; ill and lonely as he is, yet, in spite of his father's suspicions and estrangement, carrying on courageously and endeavouring to salvage his State from the disorder into which the gay carelessness of his magnificent parent has let it drift.

"If your affairs are not straightened out," had uttered the 'Power-that-Is,' "we shall take your authority from you."

"Sooner abdicate," declared the old Maharana, "than have my affairs looked into and examined by strangers!"

And so the son, wiser than his father, had undertaken the tremendous task.

"I must now go to my work," said the young man, looking at me calmly and kindly.

I felt like exclaiming: "Oh, no! Pray do not. Rest. Distract your weary mind! Come away into your gardens beside the laughing fountains and forget the cares and worries of your State!"

But he rose, helped by his tall attendants; so, bowing with all the politeness and sympathy one can put into a stiff inclination of the head, I went away

down the steep stairs, through the Peacock Court where the glass mosaics glittered in the sunlight, down more stairs, then by the shoeless guards and the shrines of hideous gods, into the great entrance-court far below.

It seems that the Maharaj Kumar has a private passage and entrance from the Palace to a lovely kiosk near the water's edge. I rowed past it on the evening preceding my departure, and the sinking sun gleamed upon the open verandahs and decorated loggias, painting the mosaics anew and transforming it into a fairy palace. Near by is the Prince's private temple where the hereditary priests employed by the royal family say the accustomed prayers and offer the usual sacrifices.

In some temples a goat is still immolated every morning to Durga the terrible. I even saw the blood on the pavement and wondered if living blood were still offered up at the shrines of the Maharaj's temple at Udaipur.

Would this be strange? After fabulous hours in this land of fable, where Western colour, sound and movement are almost unknown, one is tempted to measure life by other standards and yet find it full of beauty and significance.

Must I tear myself away from this enchanted spot? Once more my guide lifts a veil and, on my way to the train which is to take me to Jaipur, we stop for a moment to see the burial-place of the Princes of Udaipur.

A high wall without the city gates, with crowded domes and trees rising above it and beyond. A narrow

door and then a truly impressive scene. For, one close to the other, shrined and shaded by deepest green, rise the splendid monuments erected to the memory of the departed Maharanas and their kin. They are only cenotaphs, no more than a handful of human dust sometimes is left within a small receptacle beneath the airy cupolas; the bones and ashes of all high-caste Hindu princes are taken to the Ganges and tossed into its holy waves.

The monuments are all of much the same style and design: lofty, square terraces, reached by high steps, and upon them, lifted into the air by arch or colonnade in stone or marble, the most lovely domes I saw in India, finely proportioned, capped by the drooping lotus petal and, seemingly, as light as the air on which they appear to float.

The carving on several of these *chhatries* is exquisite. One especially held me; more airy, more delicate than all the others, it was dedicated to the memory of a beloved daughter, and the decoration is touchingly appropriate: it consisted of flowers and birds and graceful interlacings, the marble shone like ivory in the declining sunlight, and beyond, more domes and pillars lifted against the sky.

An ancient Hindu stone-cutter crouching not far away, chipped at a marble shaft, and a great peace reigned.

Why is it that both Hindu and Moslem burial-grounds are so touched with quiet and peace and even with a sort of subdued gaiety? Where are the gruesome horrors of a Catholic cemetery, where are the skulls and the flames and the anguished figures

hanging in desolation upon an instrument of torture? Do these beliefs teach one a truer attitude towards Death? The return to the Almighty and Everlasting? Almighty to pardon His own poor creations, everlasting in His Peace.

In India the railway carriages are of three classes: the first and the second class which usually only white travellers use, and the third, where the natives are accommodated in their thousands—nowhere have I seen such continuous travel; hundreds of Hindus pour in and out of every train—whole families move from one place to another, visiting, I believe, friends or relations. They carry with them their bedding and eating utensils—they wash and drink in the ample water-supply provided at every station—I saw an elderly Hindu standing on one leg like a stork, deliberately washing the other leg and never losing his balance. They camp in small families on the platforms, assembling for hours before the trains start. The station officials are often Eurasians, sometimes with an English station-master—the porters are Indian and astonishingly lacking in muscular power, no doubt because of their universal vegetarian diet.

The better carriages are reserved for white women travelling alone, and no Indian would think of intruding, excepting in very special circumstances. Such an exception occurred on my leaving Udaipur, where the small train only had one better-class carriage, and, when an Indian student politely inquired whether I objected to his joining my maid and myself, I invited him to enter. He was a nice-looking young man of

about twenty-one or two—neatly dressed in a curate-like long coat and a white turban—he had the long, flexible fingers of the Indian, the tips of which seem almost to turn upwards; they give—they do not grasp.

He soon wearied of keeping his feet on the floor and curled his toes under him in what was, to him, an attitude of greater comfort.

He was very eager to talk and spoke English quite well, having been educated, as far as I could judge, in an American mission-school. (Why do we permit such schools in India with their disingenuous attitude? Owing life and protection to the British, they teach a very prejudiced history of England.) He told me he was very fond of *English* literature and knew many writers, among whom he mentioned Ella Wheeler Wilcox! I inquired about his home; he replied that he came from Karachi. "Is it a fine town?" I asked. He replied, "A very fine town." I then questioned him as to its size—he replied that Karachi had a population of 150,000,000. I answered that that was very odd, as the whole of the Indias had but a population of three hundred and odd million—he politely agreed!!

Is it not striking how little sense of proportion, let alone accuracy, his years of Western training had brought him? I know that mathematical conceptions are the highest exercise of the human mind and that women are incomparably inferior to men in their mastery of them; but it was an instance of the type of brain to be found among Orientals.

JAIPUR

6th December. At ten a.m. I arrive at Jaipur, the capital of another Rajput State, where the Resident, Colonel Patterson, and Mrs. Patterson welcomed me with gruff kindness. I was shown into a delightful suite of rooms, lofty and airy, amply ventilated by square windows placed high in the wall just under the ceiling, as well as by those below (an eighteenth-century architectural device, difficult to be improved upon); an immense brass bedstead was placed, as usual, in the middle of the room; a sitting-room and a bathroom were also at my disposal—and I was served with the best cup of coffee and crisp, light toast imaginable. (I found the pretty Miss Rosamund Grosvenor there, whom I had met at Bombay.)

Refreshed and inquisitive, led by the lure of a low open window, of a verandah and of steps leading into a garden, I went out into the soft air and wandered among beds of canna and hibiscus, groves of tamarind and neem. The flash of the blue jays' wings seemed to light blue flames across the lawns, and at some distance from the house I found myself suddenly bewitched by the most beautiful tree I have ever seen.

Its silver-grey trunk lifted pale limbs against the sky, and quivering aloft like feathers on slender stems were a myriad small pointed leaves as delicate as a

fringe of powdered emeralds. Here and there rose the fuse of a golden aigrette, the flower of this tree, and, as it waved tremulously in the morning light, its very shadow upon the ground was beauty; my eyes dimmed with tears at the grace of its perfection; I could scarcely see.

Then a gong boomed with a sound as though struck from gold. The spell broke—I turned away and walked to the Residency, hardly daring to look back. I asked what tree it was that I had seen. It was the sacred tree—the gold mohur—which is worshipped in India. I learned later that there is indeed no smoke without fire; for this tree wrapped in winter with a mist of silver green holds a burning secret; its passion for the sun. As the star of day draws nearer, this tree breaks into a flaming fire of flowers orange and crimson in which the grey leaves and limbs are utterly consumed. It is therefore also called the Flamboyant or Flame Tree.

I also asked about the gong, which sounded again. "Oh yes," I was told, "that is our clock. An Indian coolie strikes the gong every half-hour that all may know the time. He has no watch but never makes a mistake and has done it for years."—Perhaps even now he is striking that golden-throated gong, while the blue jays flash across the lawn and the divine gold-mohur tree lifts its branches to heaven.

After luncheon Mrs. Patterson's sister, Miss Bruce, took me to Galta where, for the first time—excepting for a ride in the Zoo in childhood—I was to mount an elephant!

We motored through the town of Jaipur, entirely

built to order in 1728 by the famous Maharajah Savai Jai Singh II. Its broad straight streets running in parallel lines give it a very artificial appearance; the uniformly low, flimsily built houses, covered in stucco and painted in brilliant colours, remind one of a scene on the stage, but produce a general effect unusually bright and gay.

We eventually reached the foot of a high cliff where I observed with astonishment a huge elephant awaiting us. On his back was a small gallery covered by a mattress-like cushion with small planks depending on either side, presumably on which to place one's feet, in fact, a sort of Irish car. The mahout (or native driver) sat astride the mighty neck, his legs hidden behind the animal's enormous ears; in his hands curious iron instruments with spiked ends and a hook curving over near the spike. The forehead and trunk of this Leviathan were painted in a beautiful flowing design in brilliant colours, slightly faded; he was altogether magnificent. A ladder appeared, ready for us to climb. "Can three ride him at once?" I ignorantly ventured. My conductress laughed and replied, "He usually carries seven!"

Without more ado the benign monster quietly knelt down, first with his forelegs and then with his hind ones. Even so the ladder had to be placed against his mighty side and we climbed four or five rungs to perch ourselves upon the saddle (or is it howdah? I did not dare ask!). I was then adjured to hold on, and with extreme deliberation the elephant arose (tipping us up and forward, and then up and level) and, giddy and bewildered, I tried to feel detached and at ease. This

was rather difficult, as we started rapidly up a steep paved way straight into a dark ravine where at times my legs overhung the horrid abyss and where I found myself impelled to look firmly at the more reassuring land-side of our great ship, rather than towards the giddy air-side.

Without mishap, however, we reached the head of the gorge and descended from our perilous grandeur to find a lovely path winding downwards over step and stone, the rocky walls above us almost closing in on either side. Water from a wide tank within the wall near a temple-shrine trickled along beside us, spouting now and then through the mouths of quaint animals carved in stone. Monkeys regarded us with detached interest from elevated perches among the rocks, and we passed groups of natives clad in the particularly bright clothing affected by the inhabitants of Jaipur, who scrutinized us with curiosity and amusement. We were rarer in Rajputana than any Maharajah in London.

At the bottom of the cleft, the valley widened sufficiently to reveal a group of what appeared to be pleasure-houses. Buildings with gay balconies and balustrades, open *chhatries* and verandahs frivolously painted with holiday scenes of prince and princess, man and maiden. I supposed them to be the summer retreat, in this dark and water-cool valley, of the Princes of Jaipur. I was mistaken. They were all temples; some mysterious cult was still practised behind their tawdry walls and Brahmin priests officiated amongst their colonnades. We halted at the lower temples where a crowd of gentle Indian cows,

humped and soft-eyed, moved about, followed by the rather sinister-looking black buffaloes.

Suddenly one of the Indians gave a loud weird cry; it echoed among the lonely crags above us; again he shouted and to my amazement the whole place became alive with monkeys!

They came singly, in groups, in scores! Some were yellowish-brown and very ugly with no fur to sit on—only a patch of scarlet skin. Others had beautiful silver-grey fur, long and straight and so glossy that they surely must comb one another every day and many times a day with silver and ivory combs! Their black faces peeped out from stiff silver ruffs of fur which surrounded their chins and ears. With their bright eyes and graceful, furred tails they were almost captivating. It was amusing to observe a tiny silvery baby-monkey clinging to its mother upside-down as she ran along on all fours; it grasped her fur and passed (like Ulysses beneath the ram's belly) safe from harm. Monkeys, yes, and peacocks, pigeons and goats, they all swarmed about us, fed out of our hands with the corn and stuff we were provided with for the purpose, and nearly knocked us over when the cows clambered up the temple-steps where we stood and tried to join in the feast. It was a most curious and unexpected sight.

7th December. Another expedition into the land of fable: to Amber, the ancient capital, founded in the eleventh century, built high on the side of a valley beyond the line of hills north-east of Jaipur.

As was usual with the old Moghul and Indian princes, water, more precious than jewels in this

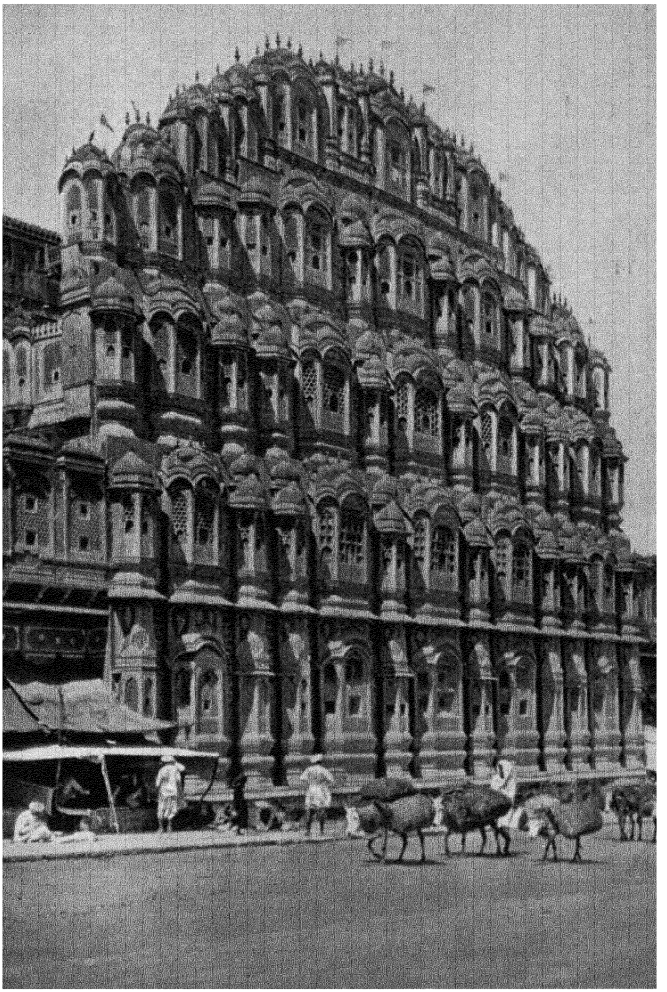
thirsty land, had been captured in the valley and dammed to form a lake. Alas! now it is almost, if not entirely, dry; and the domes and turrets of Amber no longer shine reflected upon the polished flood.

Mrs. Patterson took me in her motor on this expedition; we drove through Jaipur and past what I imagine used once to be the summer haunts of the capital long ago. White walls, capped at the corners with graceful *chhatries*, huge banana-leaves waving above them, and, in the distance, the gay though crumbling balconies and verandahs of white pavilions spoke of long-forgotten laughter and delight.

Along the road, through a mountain-pass, the *Kos Minars* ('mile-towers') of the great Akbar ('the Greatest') are still to be seen, marking the distances on the Sultan's highway which ran all the way from Agra to Amber. Curious milestones, like huge cartridges twenty feet high, standing beside the new macadam (of British production), which stretches its length under the never-ending avenues of neem or tamarind trees.

At last on our left appeared the towering crags crowned with fortress-walls and turrets belonging to ancient Amber.

Below these rose the Palace; marble pavilions aloft upon red bastions, like glittering flower-petals from the darkest clay—sheer beneath, at giddy depths, lay the shallow flats where once the waters had repeated the beauty above; and in the midst of the dry lake-bed, an island where water-gardens had bloomed and shone. Arabs, Persians and Hindus all love water and its



PALACE OF THE WINDS, JAIPUR

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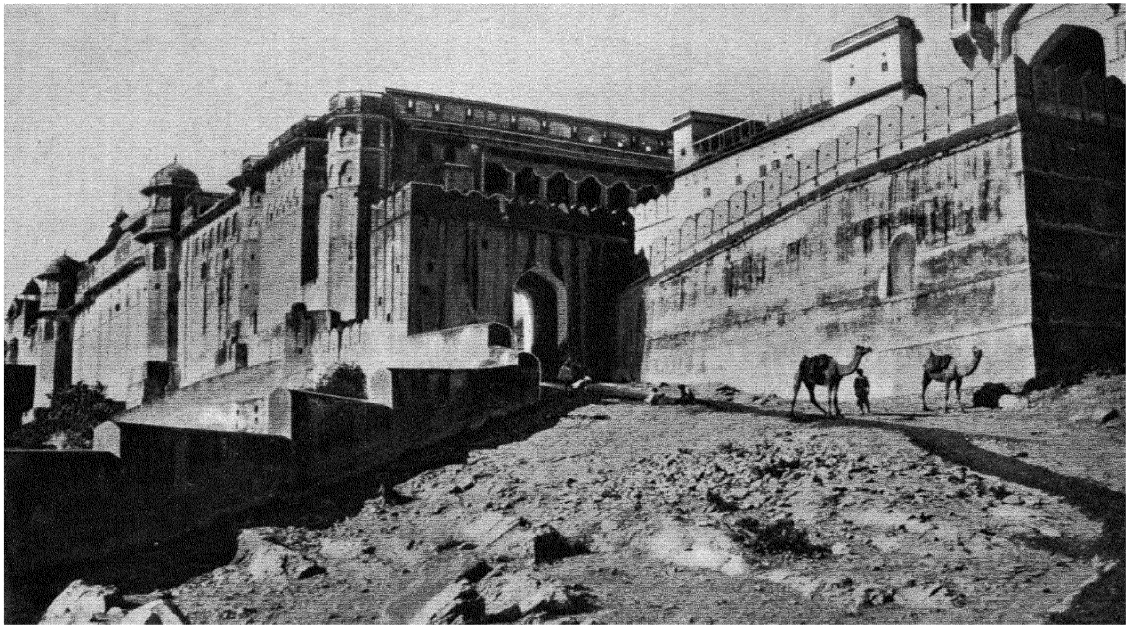


GREAT GATE OF PALACE, AMBER

sound and light runs through their palaces and gleams under their trees.

Again monster elephants stood waiting for us and up we climbed. I was not so alarmed on this occasion, for the steep, paved road which we slowly ascended was protected on the valley side by a high stone parapet, and we wound our way upwards and under the lofty arches of the gates with safe dignity.

At the top we dismounted in a vast courtyard. Ascending a broad flight of steps, we found another court in which a remarkable Divan-i-Am (General Reception loggia) lifted quaint carved pillars to support high rounded arches cusped, if I remember rightly, in the Arab style.

It is said that the magnificence of this Divan so struck the fancy of the Great Moghul Jehangir that the Mirza Raja (the nephew of Man Singh who commenced the building of the castle in 1600), in alarm lest the lovely work be destroyed out of jealousy, caused the marble columns and arches to be covered with modest stucco. (Now removed.)

The palace is an interesting specimen of Rajput art, where one notes the marriage of Hindu originality and geometric fancy blended with the more delicate and semi-Persian style of the Moghuls. Indeed the Rajah's private apartments which rise above the actual castle closely resemble the Kiosks and Divans of Delhi and Agra.

My breath was almost taken away by the beauty of these palace eyries.

The singular custom, prevalent in this torrid land, of building audience-halls, reception-rooms and even

private apartments without walls (these consisting simply of marble terraces shaded by roofs supported on forests of pillars), appeared to me very lovely. In the sleeping apartments one or two sides alone were shaded with lace-like marble lattices whereon curtains of silk could be hung to keep out an excess of sunlight.

The simplicity of the furniture must also have been restful to the eye and soothing to the senses. Low couches covered with cushions on the chill of marble floors, such as one sees in Morocco even to this day, low tables with feet of carved ivory, low pallet-beds spread with embroidered mattresses which serve as settees as well; immense coloured awnings stretched across the lofty terraces (I perceived in countless buildings the stone sconces into which were fixed the poles to support the velarium). Niches in the delicately decorated walls held the perfume bottles, the sherbet glasses, flower vases and water-jars. Even the Princess's jewels were hidden within the marble of the walls, the recess only accessible through tiny holes into which the little hand of a woman could slip, but which would baffle the fist of any male thief.

And now we ascended still higher; up stone stairs, along stone corridors, through narrow and sometimes inclined ways, until, high above the lake and the great court, we stood at last—it seemed amid the clouds.

We stood on the topmost terraces of the topmost towers of Amber; yet scarcely realized our giddy eminence; for the cloud-capped court in which we found ourselves was entirely surrounded by marble pavilions rising between the steeps of the abyss and encircling a lovely garden. This filled the middle

of the court, hemmed by a low, carved marble balustrade decorated in delicate geometrical tracery. Here were mango and orange and quaint-leaved mandarine trees; these were watered by tiny rills of clear water issuing, strange to say, from beneath the lattice-like walls of the harem, the halls of which on the garden side were enclosed by high perforated marble screens, so that the beauties of the shaded courts were imprisoned like rare birds in a lace-like cage. We entered the once secret and jealously guarded chambers through doors of sandal-wood inlaid with ivory, and saw the carved bed of various water-rills meandering across the marble floors. Here in the twilight freshness of long ago, the waters wandered through the lofty halls, twinkled at the feet of indolent Sultanas who, gazing at the glittering ripples, dropped white jasmine petals upon the escaping stream, which fled murmuring to the green gardens without, high in air, flowering amid the towers of Amber.

The Jai Mandir must have been a marvel in olden days. Even now there is an enchanting contrast between the carved flowers on the panels of wall and square pillar, and the elaborate painting and 'recessing' above. (Recessing is not a happy word, but the best I can think of to express a favourite device of Moghul decoration when an arched, square or elongated surface is sunk in stone or plaster, but in so shallow a fashion that it resembles a sunk panel.)

Perhaps the brilliant design on high, forming a deep frieze of painted vases, bowls and flowers, is too elaborate for perfect taste, but the effect is entirely gay and joyous.

The Zenana rooms are a delight with their formal yet flowing decoration of fruit and flowers in small glass mosaics (called *Shishadar*, probably Venetian in origin), their shining marble of arch and colonnette, vault and pavement. The Oriental princes of old who built these palaces seem to have been masters in the art of refining the purely sensuous.

They apparently needed no appeal of the spirit; but the delicacy of their perception of the pleasures of the senses reached a point never touched before or since, and very nearly attained spiritual beauty. These doves' nests in the eagles' eyrie, these roses and lilies flowering upon the crags and peaks, these pearls beyond price which are water-drops, caught and held to cool a bower—Amber itself, their creation, an outpost of empire on the mountain-side of a dry and sterile land.

But all this ingenuity and delicacy was of no avail to assure either peace or contentment, and on his airy terrace, upon his low marble throne—the swallows and the wide-winged kite screaming and wheeling above him—the Hindu prince of the days of Queen Elizabeth, or James, or Charles sat brooding and trembling, his gaze fixed beyond the broken mountains on the plains afar, there where all the fortresses of Amber would fail to stop the invaders from the north.

We wended our long way down in the gathering twilight, I, for one, silent and thoughtful. While waiting for our conveyances we had refreshment in a garden on the margin of what was once the lake of Amber, and where once shone reflected the lights twinkling from palace and tower. Peacocks picked

their dainty way among us, looking for a stray crumb or sweet; huge banana-leaves hung their silken banners against the fading sky, and the evening-star rose above an abandoned watch-tower.

Beyond were more abandoned towers and temples and, in a cleft rising amid the vivid green, the white dome and twin white minarets of a mosque seemed to float above the trees, the fabric of a dream.

But now we also, like the princes of old, had to abandon the stately town, and I turned to bid farewell to our mighty convoy, the elephants. I hoped to see them lift their trunks in salutation, as my mount had done in proud submission in the valley of Galta—but no, the mahouts forgot to give the signal and we turned and left in the fast descending dusk where a sickle moon hung idly in the dry air.

It is very pleasant to recall the kindness of my host and hostess to a perfect stranger such as I.

DELHI

8th December. I left for Delhi in the morning and arrived that evening (luckily without a change of trains) at Flag-Staff House, where Lord and Lady Rawlinson gave me a warm welcome. I instantly fell under the charm of my host, as does everyone. Tall, graceful, with a fine figure and a swinging stride, his happy ease of manner, his smiling sympathy, his directness and vitality place him apart from all others. He was a friend of the Lowther family, and he and Lady Rawlinson made me feel as much at home as though I had always known them.

Delhi! Could it be true that I was really in Delhi? In spite of the English comforts, the bright wood fire (for the nights are cool in this season) and the English talk of home, I knew myself translated to another world.

Delhi! The seat of so many empires, the scene of so much bloodshed! The pearl in England's crown. Genghis Khan had fought here, and Timur. The Moghul Sultans, the Persians and the Mahrattas, and close to me, nearly at my feet, the ground had been stained red with English blood. Here Englishmen had fought, agonized and died. Bravely, almost hopelessly, battling against native arms and treachery, against torrid heat and foul disease. No 'leave' for them, no rest 'behind the lines,' no pang of relief at

the thought of safety for wife or child; wife and child shared their danger.

Has any Englishman been to Delhi and still believes in abandoning the Indias? For that Continent is not 'India' but many Indias. To leave them to the experiments of their students, their half-trained politicians, their rival Princes, each one jealous of the other?

Did Anson and Nicholson die, did Lawrence fight for this? Surely no!

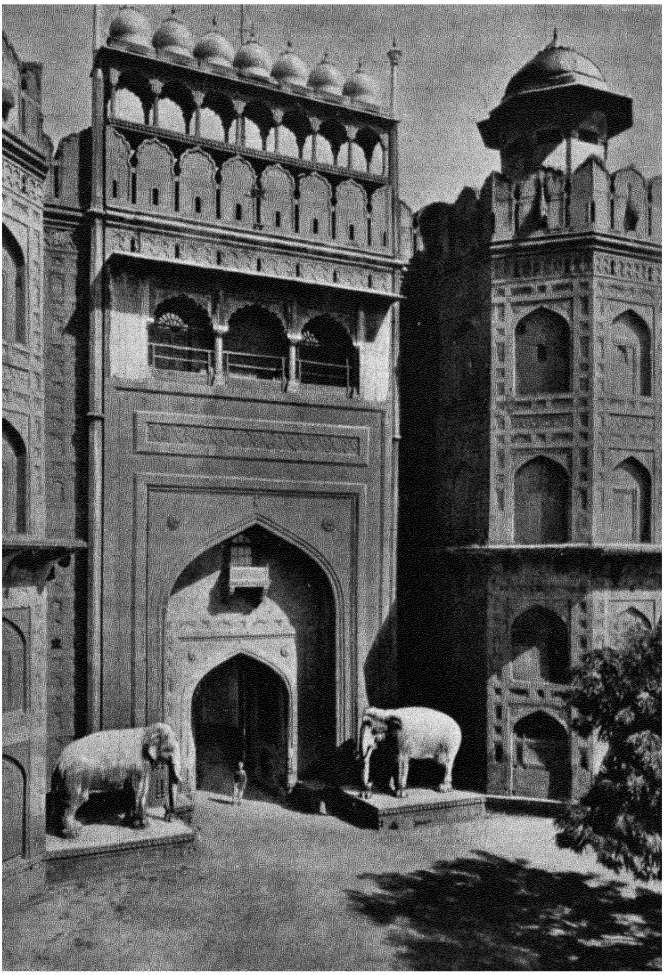
9th December. Miss Wade and Miss Kennard are at Flag-Staff House, also Major McCartney, Major Gibbs and Captain Dugdale.

We go to church. The Viceregal pew in front of ours is empty. Lord and Lady Reading are away in Hyderabad and Madras on tour.

We lunch at General and Mrs. Cooke's at New Delhi, or Raisina as the English call it. The natives call it 'The New Fortress'! This is not a surprising name, as the plains surrounding Delhi are strewn with the forts and palaces of wrecked empires, and the British edifices, rising blood-red from a rolling eminence, must appear like fortresses to the native mind.

Lady Rawlinson took me over the site of the new Capital, the conception of which we owe to Lord Hardinge of Penshurst; it was already marked out with splendid avenues, radiating from various centres; the secretariat was nearly completed—the Viceregal Lodge, already half-built, presented a scene of striking activity; over 10,000 workmen were employed there, they told us.

The avenues were partly bordered by small white



GATE OF THE FORT, DELHI

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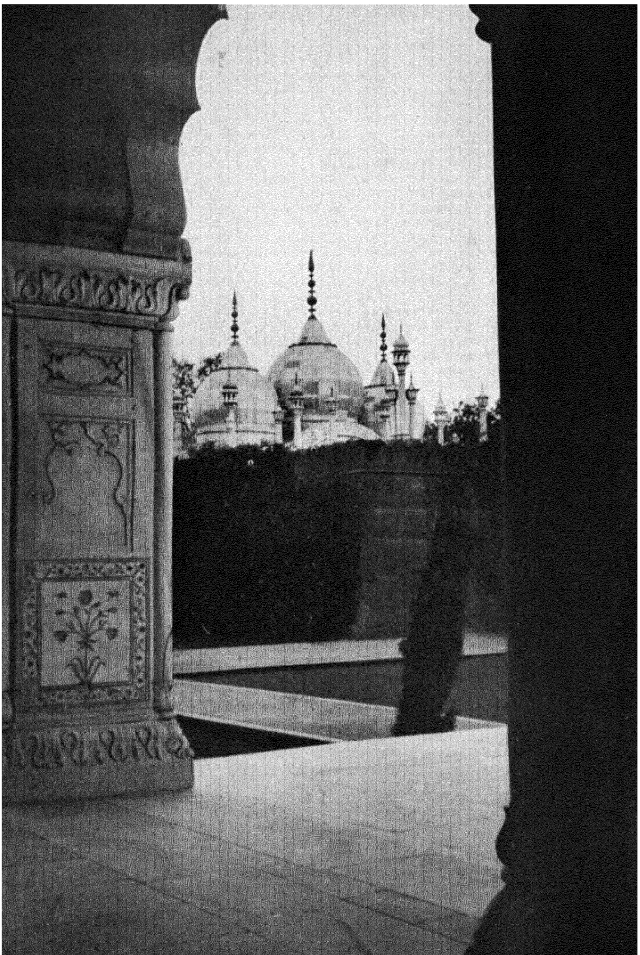

PEARL MOSQUE, DELHI

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bungalows which, it is said, are not as well built as the eighteenth-century houses; the walls are too thin, the ceilings too low (designed to carry a second storey), no verandahs or porticoes, and they were certainly lacking in picturesqueness.

On our way back to Delhi, which is the Delhi of Shah-Jehan and of his son Aurungzebe, we drove westward towards the misty minarets of the Jama Masjid and the crimson walls and towers of Old Delhi Fort. "You must see it now in the evening light," said Lady Rawlinson, so we turned and drove up through the great Lahore Gate, engulfed by the huge portals, under the towers of the Emperor Aurungzebe. As in all mediaeval and Oriental fortresses, the gates of this stronghold are double and at right-angles; but here a striking and unusual feature impressed me, for after passing through the gates we plunged into the shadows of a lofty, long and vaulted arcade leading to the so-called Musician's Gate and Gallery, an imposing structure forming the entrance to the Palace courts.

We descended from the motor-car (which to my eyes was a glaring anomaly. In *my* 'East'—Morocco and Turkey—I had always been conveyed in a Victoria and pair, or a Sedan-chair, or upon a crimson-caparisoned mule!). But I was none the less grateful for my modern car, for how otherwise should I have been able to see so much in so short a time?

I turned and had to exclaim my wonder! The scene before us seemed laid for some joyous festival. Lovely gardens stretched below us, palaces and turrets gleamed among the trees, and beyond the mighty

terraces upon which they rose, the land dropped like a cliff to the bed of the Jumna, where the quiver of green leaves replaces what was once the ripple of water.

In the foreground the majestic colonnades of the Divan-i-Am, or Audience Hall, glowed red as coral. None of the former adornment of brilliant plaster or multi-coloured painting remained on the rough stone of the pillars or upon the cusped arches, the stern severity of which, rising from the vast platform, added great dignity to the building. It is an immense loggia, enclosed on one side only where, suddenly unfolding its colour like a single flower, the Imperial balcony opens its marble and jewelled petals. Here, above the assembled multitude of officers of State and petitioners, the Sultan of Sultans would sit in state, while below him, in the great Hall, his Grand Vizier would take up his position on a marble stand, and hand up the written appeals to His Imperial Majesty. Brilliant stuffs, hung from rings, kept out the glare of excessive light, and the crowd of courtiers and humble folk could gaze fearfully upon the features of him who moulded or broke them as the potter his clay. I noted the inlaid panels in vari-coloured marbles within the balcony, behind the broad, low throne on which the Sovereign sat with his legs crossed under him; these panels are very small and upon them little birds with flowers and fruit shine forth in cornelian, lapis-lazuli and precious stones; the exquisite work of a European named Austin of Bordeaux, executed hundreds of years ago and restored by order of the greatest of our artistic Viceroys.

To Lord Curzon the world owes a debt never to be repaid. He has rescued these unique buildings of India from ruin and neglect, he has framed them in verdure, he has cleared the thirsty fountains of choking dust and given them to drink, he has raised the fallen pillar and illumined the darkened hall. Countless minds have thus been filled with delight, countless hearts with solace; all pilgrims of beauty should bless him.

We wandered farther towards our left, where, upon the very edge of the fortress-wall, overhanging what was once the slow-moving flood of the river, stands the other Audience Hall—that of the Private Audiences: the Divan-i-Khas—surely one of the most perfect buildings in the world. Built in 1640 by Shah-Jehan, fifth of the famous Moghul Emperors, it follows the recurrent plan of a vast marble platform, above which a beautiful roof (formerly inlaid with gold and silver, but torn away by the Mahratta Hindus during their revolt in the eighteenth century) is supported by a forest of marble pillars and arches decorated by elaborate and delicate carved panels picked out with gold.

The lower panels are mostly of polished marble resembling mother-of-pearl, so soft is the surface upon which iris and rose, tulip and jasmine bloom in pale grace, their petals blown by an unfelt wind. Even the tapering summits of the chiselled cypresses bend before the inaudible breeze.

The decoration of the upper panels is more elaborate and in places reminiscent of Chinese art, especially in the golden groups of flowers, peonies rather than

roses, far removed from the prevalent Persian motifs. At the back of the Divan, all along the river-front are marble walls pierced by marble lattices, the three remaining sides stand open to the light, and through the shafts of the pillars glisten the farther pavilions and the green of trees enshrouding them.

In the middle of the wall are three open arches of perfect grace, guarded below by the diminutive parapet of carved marble so often seen on Moghul buildings. Before them, with their vista of silvery water and pale sky, once stood that wonder of wonders, the Peacock Throne. Broad and low, supported upon four massive golden feet, it stood upon a marble platform, and two immense golden peacocks kept watch behind it—their outspread tails glittering with green and blue flames as the emeralds and sapphires encrusted thereon flashed with light. Above gleamed a golden canopy fringed with pearls, held high above the Sultan's head by twelve golden poles inlaid with precious stones. Swinging aloft, its eyes two rubies, shone an incredible parrot carved out of a single, cloudy emerald and, blazing in the midst of all, the fire, air and water of the Koh-i-nur!

Alas! All these treasures have disappeared, carried off by Nadir Shah, the Persian invader, in 1739. Only the Koh-i-nur was saved after many vicissitudes, and the following is what I was told of it.

It is supposed to have been given to the Moghul conqueror Humayun, the son of Baber, by the widows of the last of the Hindu Tomar Chiefs of Gwalior. The latter, Vikramaditya by name, was killed with the last of the Lodi Emperors of Delhi at Panipat in

1526. These captive princesses offered their most precious treasure in gratitude for the clemency of the Moghul prince who spared their lives after the conquest of Northern India by his victorious hordes.

The Moghuls cherished this marvel of marvels, the largest and most beautiful diamond in the world, and eventually it was enshrined in a chiselled marble pillar standing at the foot of the cenotaph of the Emperor Akbar in the midst of the aerial chamber which crowns that Sultan's mausoleum near Agra. Akbar was the son of Humayun and died in 1605, a few years after our great Queen Elizabeth.

Hindu legend recounts that the Koh-i-nur was first owned by Karna, King of Anga. Persian legend that it first belonged to a potentate named Afrasiab. The truth is lost in mystery.

In the eighteenth century it apparently passed from the conquering Persian Nadir-Shah, into the possession of the Maharajah Ranjit Singh, the great Sikh ruler in the Punjab, who in 1839 bequeathed it to the God Juggernath at his temple in Puri (on the east coast of India). His successor, however, did not give effect to his bequest, and the greatly prized gem was handed over to the British after their conquest of the Sikhs later in the nineteenth century.

How many glances of delight, envy, and despair must have been reflected upon its shining facets, what final peace in the serene gaze of our gracious Queen.

But the marble arcades and the warm caress of Indian airs surround it no more; the Divan-i-Khas is bereft of its greatest splendour.

We turned from the Divan and passed quickly through the group of palace kiosks which stretch along the banks of the languid river, here enclosed by high red walls. They are strung like a necklace of pearls, joined one to another by the glittering water-channel which runs from end to end, from fountain to fountain through these fabulous abodes. This water-channel is of marble, broad and shallow, and small ridges, like scales, are carved in its depth causing the water to ripple. The little waves must have whispered and gurgled as they slipped along it from the halls of the Hammam at the north to the painted kiosks at the south. Over sunlit terrace, under grille and lattice, into the shadow of the gilded arches, where heavy draperies shut out the harem from all curious eyes, and little ivory-coloured feet or hands dipped in the stream and the water-drops leaped like silver sparks in the twilight.

Then in the farthest retreat, in rooms cooled by breezes blowing through shadowed arch and darkened colonnade, stretched on his divan, or squatting on his cushions, perhaps a jewelled chess-board set before him on jewelled feet, gay with quaint ivory men—the all-powerful Conqueror would play and plan, meditate and pray.

The rooms of the Hammam were curiously delightful. Walls and pavements of marble, the former decorated with flowers picked out in a mosaic of coloured stones, dim light stealing through lace-like trellises to fall upon low stone beds with strangely carved feet —dark pools and deep tanks filled with perfumed waters—where all the joys of the bath, so exquisitely

welcome in a hot climate, were indulged in by these artists of the sensuous.

Beyond these palaces the Painted Hall displayed its grand arcades, recalling, in faded pictures, the brilliant glory of ancient days. Its walls are now covered with whitewash, the winter of time having buried the painted flowers beneath its snow. I must here anticipate my later experiences and declare that I think this group of buildings the most lovely I saw in India. Those at Agra Fort are perhaps more grand and of a purer style, but the joyous dignity, the graceful pomp of these palace-halls are unsurpassed.

As we turned away from this haunt of ancient delights the sun was already declining and the daylight had become a rain of gold, a mist of silver; the sandstone glowed blood-red and three white floating domes arose from a screen of leaves beside us.

"You must now see the Pearl Mosque," said my charming guide, and led me towards a most beautiful carved and chased bronze door. It was opened for us and we entered a small court where the peculiar charm of the Indian mosque held me in all its unfamiliarity. It is merely a loggia, with sustaining arch and pillar raised upon a broad terrace, part of which is open to the sky; a court with a fountain lies in the foreground.

The style of this unique example of Moghul craft is perhaps not great; the architectural design is simple; but, as an embodiment of delicate grace, repose, and quiet joy this building stands alone.

Before me rose a platform upon which four-sided pillars upheld slender arches against a pearl-grey

background of shadow formed by the mihrab wall and the low minber. Marble steps led up to these recesses for prayer, at my feet a shallow fountain spread its invitation to the faithful, high carved walls surrounded the sanctuary and sheltered it from the winds of distraction; the trailing branches of tall trees, secluding this Pearl Mosque from the world without, alone intruded upon its secret, drooping over the marble coping. Bubble-domes gleamed white against the clouds and a strange glow pervaded the atmosphere as every curve and line, every surface and depth, glistened with a misty iridescence; I was lost in the heart of a pearl.

A house of happy prayer. Where is the anguish, the striving of our northern places of worship? Not here. The Moslem does not wrestle with his Maker. He accepts his decrees and in serene meditation feels at one with his will.

Great beauty is here. But perfect beauty is elsewhere.

10th December. No rest for travellers—up early—to bed late—visiting places of interest all day—dining or dancing at night. Lady Lytton telegraphs from Calcutta asking me to go to them on the 14th. The Viceroy is to be there. It is kind of her to have me to stay; I accept with joy.

Miss Wade, Miss Kennard and Captain Dugdale take me off with them in the open motor and we pass again into Delhi through the famous Kashmir Gate. It is still broken and dented by the shot from the guns of the English in the days of the mutiny.

The European quarter north of Delhi proper is

entirely outside the town walls, and is nothing but a quantity of pleasant low houses with deep verandahs and big windows surrounded by green and fragrant gardens flaming with poinsettia, hibiscus and canna. These form the suburbs between the city and the ridge where the English waited and watched and from whence they eventually advanced to the capture of Delhi in 1857. Here is the Viceroy's house and that of the Commander-in-Chief, 'Flag-Staff House,' and you drive straight from the ridge to the gate of the city and through the embowered streets to the great *maidan* (or meadow). There, on the left, to the east, rise the red bastions and gates, *chhatri*-crowned, of Delhi Fort; on the right, screening the dirty, ramshackle town behind, the terrace and domes of the mighty Jama Masjid stand out against the sky. Before you is the southern exit from the town, through which you emerge upon the great plain of Southern Delhi where the ruins of the eight former capitals of Empire crumble into historic dust; and there, too, in the shining distance is the red pile of Raisina, British New Delhi.

We turned to the right and stopped before the great mosque of Shah-Jehan, the splendid builder. It was founded in 1644 and the conception, although one of great dignity and grace, is so far removed from our north-European architectural plans with their irregular planes and twisting corners, their secret passages and varying levels, that I sometimes wonder how its lofty simplicity and accurately balanced features can possibly please an Englishman. Yet the Indian architect attained equilibrium without rigidity, balance without

monotony, combined with a sense of proportion and a beauty of material seldom equalled. Their buildings show the same formal planning of the Latin and classical period almost pushed to an extreme and, oddly enough, coinciding in date with European monuments conceived in a similar spirit, though intercourse between France, Italy and the Moghul Empire was rare. I found the usual arrangement as adopted in all Moghul mosques. The high terrace reached by steps, the immense square court, surrounded in this case not by a wall but by a beautiful open colonnade, the Music Gallery over the great Gate of Ingress exactly opposite the open Hall of Prayer which forms a broad, lofty portico under three immense hollow domes. These are hollow, but roofed by other flatter domes within the Hall.

This Hall is raised upon a platform to which steps give access: two tall minarets curiously striped in black marble upon white, to match the marble covering of the domes, soar upwards on either hand and shine reflected in the low, square sheet of water gleaming in the midst of the forecourt. Here the Moslem performs his ablutions before prayer.

I happen to find delight in the rhythm and balance of very formal building, and to my mind there is no monotony where sun and shadow, angle and reflection cast their ever-varying magic upon such a group as the Jama Masjid. The shade of the huge middle arch, the dusk inside the mosque itself, in contrast with the red stone and glitter of marble outside, made music and movement in the noonday light.

We were shown some relics of the Great Prophet.

In the north-east corner of the cloister, high above the rattle and clang of the crowded street below, stood a tiny chamber holding a sort of altar and shrine from the unlocked door of which, as it opened, issued an odour of rose and jasmine. The odour of sanctity? Yes, for every day the devotion of the faithful covers the floor, and strews the caskets in which lie the holy treasures, with fresh rose and jasmine petals.

We saw the Koran which Mohammed himself had read! It was in ancient Arabic: the lettering stiff, thick and squarely written, Cufic they called it, but it looked more like early Arabic to me; the bare foot-print he had left upon a polished stone; a hair even from his beard, in a tin box under a lid of glass. A long, very thick, very red hair. Henna-stained? Or plucked from the chin of some infidel?

These treasures were shown to us most confidingly. I admired and wondered, recalling Morocco and Turkey where no 'dogs', such as we, could even approach such holy ground.

After due peace-offerings to our guide, we wriggled out of the ungainly outer shoes they had wrapped about our feet and descended the five flights of steps to the busy earth below.

We made our way to a shop called the Ivory Palace. Most lovely objects in ivory are still carved at Delhi: baskets like lace and caskets more delicately wrought than those from the hands of a goldsmith.

I then begged to be taken to the Kalan Masjid, one of the oldest mosques in Delhi built by Firoz Shah in 1386—nearly three hundred years before the gracefully flaunting pile of the Jama Masjid. Raised upon

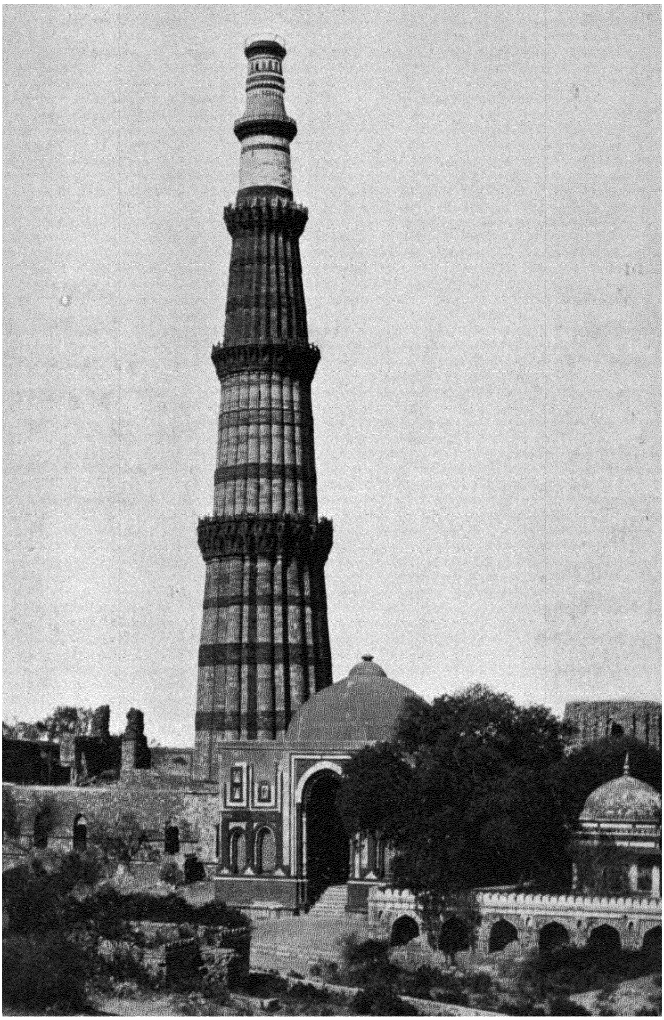
sloping walls it looked almost Egyptian and was purely Arabic within: a small court surrounded by arcades simply whitewashed and roofed with many small domes as in our 'Near-East,' a style obviously imported from their 'Far-West.'

On our way back to luncheon we stopped at Schweiger's beautiful shop. He showed us some crystal Buddhas which almost brought tears (of envy) to my eyes. His shop was a treasure-room from the Arabian Nights, full of crystal and jade and tassels of emeralds and pearls, aigrettes fastened with rubies and diamonds; turban-lengths of departed Emperors embroidered centuries ago with minute flower-buds upon hand-woven muslin.

The best jade is Chinese, both the milky and emerald; Indian jade is dark green and very handsome, but has not the jewel-like depth of the former.

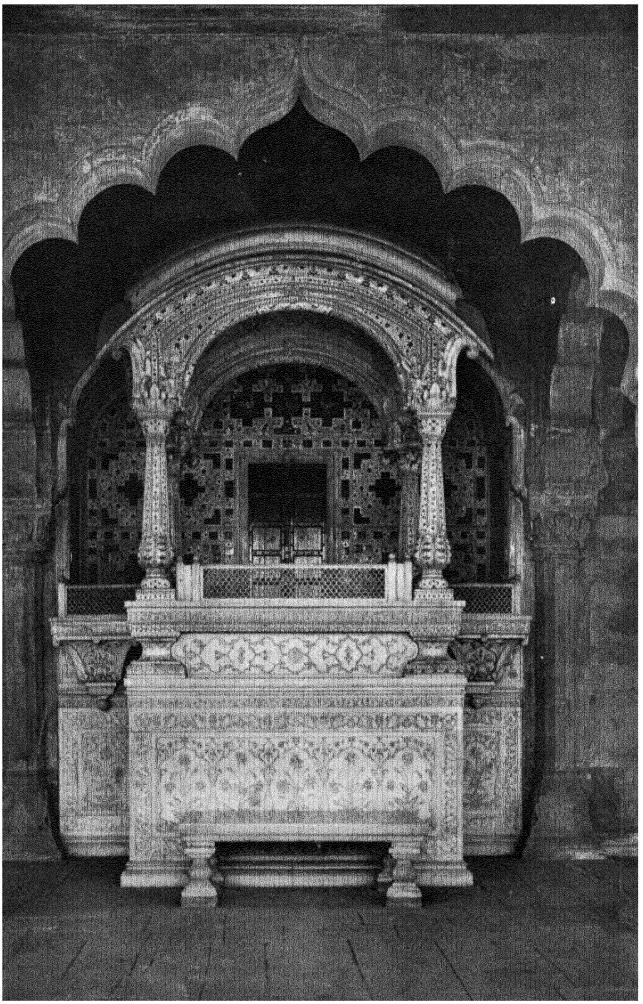
In the afternoon I was taken several miles to the South and was shown the Kutb Minar, the mosque of the Lame Conqueror, the tomb of Altamish and the Alai Derwaza, or Gate, which leads into the mosque courtyard.

I was bewildered by the haphazard disposition of the plan. Nothing resembling the ordered majesty of the Moghul edifices. We stood within a square bounded on three sides by a cloister built in a most irregular way. It was composed of colonnades of curiously shaped columns supporting a roof of heavy stone slabs and small clumsy domes, the latter erected 'bracket-wise,' one stone overlapping the other and closed at their apex by a broad flag of sandstone. I suddenly realized that these materials had been carved



KUTB MINAR, NEAR DELHI

Face p. 90



THRONE OF MOGHUL EMPEROR, PUBLIC AUDIENCE HALL, DELHI (DIVAN I AM) (SEE P. 80)

and cut long before the actual building before us had arisen; that pillar and bracket had been taken from a Hindu Jain temple formerly standing on the spot, representations of the human form erased by the Moslem overseers and most of the work merely put up by simple Hindu artisans.

Beyond this medley I saw another agglomeration of low open colonnades and then, as sudden as a crash of sound, across the pavement of a wide court was flung the mighty shadow of an immense wall pierced by arches. The entrance without doubt to the ancient mosque. It must have been a beautiful structure, light and yet strong with seven lofty arches, now, alas, crumbling save the central one which is still intact and reveals the pearl-like skies beyond. It was built after the capture of Delhi in 1193 A.D. by Kutb-ud-din Aibak, viceroy of the Moslem Conqueror Shebal-ud-din Ghori.

The elegant flowered tracery upon the rosy stones is still as sharp as ever, and the style and vigour of the design is magnificent. The central arch, however, is not a true arch; it is slightly pointed and built in a most interesting manner: horizontal stones rise in two tiers and overlap one another toward a common centre until, when nearly touching, two heavy slabs are fitted between them almost wedgewise, thus forming a species of keystone. The overlapping edges of these stones are then smoothed within the opening, upwards into the graceful point which our Gothic designers reached by entirely different methods.

The daring lines of this screen and the glorious tower of the neighbouring Kutb Minar bear witness

to the singular freedom and confidence of these thirteenth-century designers and builders. They did not, however, achieve the unity of plan of later architects, and the awkward adjustment of the elaborately carved pillars and heavy domes, the odd grouping of rooms behind the screen and the uneven placing of the various buildings, made an unhappy contrast which left me dissatisfied.

The mausoleum of Altamish, the oldest known tomb near Delhi (that of the Turki Emperor who died in 1235), is close behind the court of the mosque and already shows a change of style. It is heavier and less graceful in design than the arcade, the ornamental lettering is not so fine, and the builders, apparently, abandoned their work in despair; there is no dome, and the mausoleum is left open to the sky.

It has been suggested that this was done deliberately, as the earlier Moslems wished the rain of Heaven to fall direct upon their last resting-place. (I recall a tomb in Broussa where the Sultan had caused an opening to be made in the roof of the sort of saloon in which the rulers of Turkey were wont to be buried, as he believed that earth, air and water alone should rest over him.) But, as has been pointed out, the overlapping stones of the Hindu construction of a dome still lie in place upon the southern wall of this edifice. The cenotaph itself is very plain, the Kibla (or *mihrab*), on the other hand, is clumsy and ornate and the interior facing of the walls too closely covered with carved arabesques in flat relief; the effect is most confusing to the eye.

Close to us the tower of Kutb soared into the sky,

a curious structure strangely like a lighthouse in shape but very different in detail. The body of the tower is fluted, semicircular flutings alternating with angular ones; it is broad at the base but tapers, rising into the air to a height of nearly 240 ft., its five stories marked by corbelled balconies encircling it, beneath which are inscriptions in magnificent Arabic script; the three lower stories are built in red sandstone (as are the mosque, cloister and tomb), the upper stories of white marble. Some critics consider it the most beautiful tower in the world.

It appears to have been begun by Kutb at the end of the twelfth century and finished by Tughlak Shah about the middle of the fourteenth. The period of our Gothic exuberance, but how dissimilar.

Again Lord Curzon deserves our gratitude for having planted the surrounding spaces with trees and lawn, bringing an atmosphere of peace and seclusion to these monuments of ancient piety and glory.

We next visited the tomb of another Moslem invader who reigned in a different Delhi, some miles from the Kutb Minar towards the east. Fresh from the vision of fiery grace brought to my eyes by the ruins about the sanctuary of Altamish, what was my surprise to note the complete change of style which expressed the attitude of the later Moslem invaders scarcely a century afterwards. This difference is clearly apparent in the monument of Tughlak Shah. His tomb is no more than a sombre fortress standing in the midst of what was once a lake, reached by a stone causeway and parapet leading through the stagnant waters.

All about the mausoleum are strong walls with

parapets for defence; the tomb chamber is formed by sloping masonry of immense thickness, within which a majestic cenotaph stands unadorned upon a lofty plinth. The only attempt at decoration are some brilliant tiles of which a few remain upon the fine dome above. I was greatly impressed by Tughlak's tomb; nothing I had yet seen approached it in force and dignity. Solitary in its massive grandeur, it stood beside the fallen walls of his half-forgotten capital; the wind rustled amid the trees which had grown up long since in the bed of the vanished lake, jade-green parrots screamed and spread their fan-shaped tails as they swung and clung to the white dome high in air: a solemn peace reigned in the solitude.

Were Tughlak's sons already living in fear of rivals from the South? The avenging Hindus? Were they trembling at the threat of thunder from the North? Not so very long after the building of this tomb, Timur Lenk (our Tamburlane) swept down with his hordes and, in 1398, but a few miles away, defeated the tall Pathans and their Sultan Mohammed Shah Tughlak, the son of the buried Emperor, and overthrew his Empire.

Three of the four walls of the mausoleum are pierced with lofty archways filled with stone lattices; white marble lattices also shed the light of heaven from above. Did Tughlak, even in death, lie waiting for the conquerors of the Conqueror?

We drove on farther still, accompanied all the way by the welcome escort of great trees which seems to follow you all over India. (A shelter for all travellers bestowed by the English.)

I have omitted to mention an evidence of a yet more ancient civilization than that even of Tughlak or Kutb. The Iron Pillar. Very graceful, upright and of remarkably pure metal (in fact its composition is far superior to iron melted centuries later), this pillar stands in the midst of the ruins of the mosque of Kutb, shining and unstained by rust throughout the centuries. It is over 23 feet high, decorated at the top with the conventionalized lotus-petals in reverse and, in olden days, probably bore the figure of Vishnu's vehicle : the Garuda or eagle.

From its Gupta inscription it is ascribed to the early fifth century A.D., the age of Hindu classicism, a surmise which is borne out by its slender proportions and purity of outline. It may have come from Bihar, the nucleus of the Gupta Kingdom, or from Gwalior, as the name of the founder of the 'Tomar dynasty' (reigning Princes of Gwalior) is also found inscribed upon it.

We were passing Humayun's tomb and turned to visit it. Humayun was the much beloved son of Baber and the father of Akbar 'The Greatest,' his mausoleum is fine but cold, too regular in design and, in my opinion, unpleasing in decoration. The dome, however, is good and with its four satellite domes at the corners of the square pile forms a striking landmark gleaming across the plains.

The sun was low as we climbed to the upper terrace and gazed at the historic panorama. The faint shadow of the fort of Shah-Jehan and the soaring outline of his mosque were very lovely through the violet smoke which comes with the evening in Northern

India. (Numberless fires are lighted and fill the sunset air.)

We left Purana-Kila and its lofty walls and gateways behind us, I meditating wistfully that I should never see it again, as I was to leave early next morning for Agra.

A pleasant dinner with clever fellow-guests. I find the people I meet most interesting; they are generally very dubious about the wisdom of the 'Reforms.' Those who disapprove assert emphatically that they cannot possibly be extended, those in favour of applying them to their farthest limit shrug their shoulders and explain: "What can we do? We have promised, we cannot break our word." Those who take the matter carelessly say: "Give them plenty of rope and let them hang themselves." One very young man (I am sorry to say young) growled: "What is the good of India anyway! We had better get out!" But most smile calmly and remark: "We won't leave yet!"

AGRA AND FATEHPUR SIKRI

11th December. I leave for Agra early in the morning. As usual a handsome A.D.C. takes me to the station and sees me safely into the roomy, comfortable railway carriage. Railway compartments in India are very long and all made of windows fitted with wire netting. They are furnished with wide leather couches and sometimes arm-chairs, and electric lights are conveniently placed to read by.

My path through India was decorated with handsome aides-de-camp and Indian military secretaries. They welcomed me on arrival, they saw me off on departure, they relieved me of all doubts as to how I should find out my trains and get from place to place. I found that I was watched over and protected as I had not been for years. It was delightful.

This was my first journey of normal length, only four hours! Usually they had lasted from twenty to twenty-four. Traversing the golden plains dotted everywhere with magnificent trees green with foliage above the thirsty ground, I almost had the illusion of being in an endless English park, when suddenly groups of palms or a clump of bamboo would remind me that I was '*Auf die Fluren des Ganges.*'

The trees of India entranced me and it was some time before I found anyone who could give me their names. I remembered the beautiful garden of the

Jaipur Residency where I fell under the enchantment of that strange tree, and like a lover went distressed until I knew its name.

Agra was also a garden. The white suburbs, the cantonment and the narrower streets were crossed and re-crossed by great avenues of neem trees and mango ; flowers and lawns invaded the very precincts of the mighty fort. Even against the white walls of the excellent Hotel Cecil, cerulean ipomæa clung to its galleries and opened blue trumpets blowing happy airs.

After luncheon I went out to see for myself whether Agra had, as so many have affirmed, risen from the stroke of an enchanter's wand, or was merely the traveller's thrice-told tale which Sir Denison Ross and others had asked me to believe. But I fear I am banal. I fear I am influenced by sun and air and by the joyous welcome which all India seemed to offer ; I was as a spellbound wanderer in a magic land.

. Agra strikes a grander, sterner note of which Delhi is the softer echo. Here the Jumna actually rolls its flood under the fortress walls ; here the castle soars far above the plains below, tower on tower joined by machicolated curtain-walls and massive gates. A stern pile of blood-red masonry. The theme is the same, but the group of palaces on the river-side hangs higher above the moat and ditch and the surrounding outer walls.

Here, centuries ago, between the outworks and the moat, elephants trumpeted and fought while the Sultan and his guests looked down from his balcony in shadow under the domed *chhatries*, and the women of the harem peeped at the fray through their marble

lattices, and chattered and shuddered and laughed, no doubt.

The road approaches through the outer gates (noble gates, built in a severe style, presumably by Akbar about 1600), over the drawbridge and through the 'Delhi Gate.' Then up an inclined plane between high walls to the Elephant Gate, where two stone elephants taken from famous Chitorgarh stood guard on either hand. We passed beneath the echoing vaults and found ourselves amid barracks and modern erections. Leaving the Great Pearl Mosque on our right we eventually reached a large court surrounded by red-stone colonnades and planted with trees. Here stands the Divan-i-Am, which is a more severe and imposing edition of the Audience Hall at Delhi. It is very open; even the back is only partially enclosed, as immense stone grilles open in the midst to allow those beyond the hall to look within. The same white marble balcony and alcove provide a seat for the Sultan when holding audiences, and the graceful *pietra-dura* embellishment finds its later counterpart at Delhi.

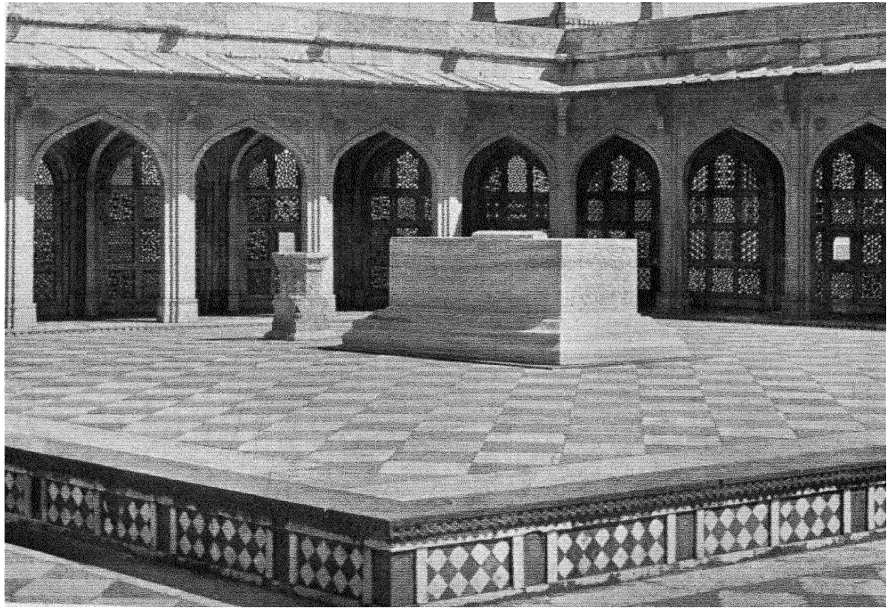
Shah-Jehan built most of the Agra palaces as well as those of Delhi, and was apparently dominated by a passion for building. He reigned at Agra from 1632 to 1637, and then from 1638 to 1650 started the construction of his new capital Delhi, apparently intending to move there. In 1658, however, he was deposed by his son Aurungzebe and lived a prisoner in Agra for seven years longer, the usurper quietly appropriating his father's new palaces at Delhi, where he established the seat of Empire.

I was first taken to the southernmost palace, that of Akbar; under red arches and through wide courtyards, until we reached a platform almost overhanging the river, from the parapets of which I saw what I was told were the domes and towers of the Taj-Mahal. It seemed incredible.

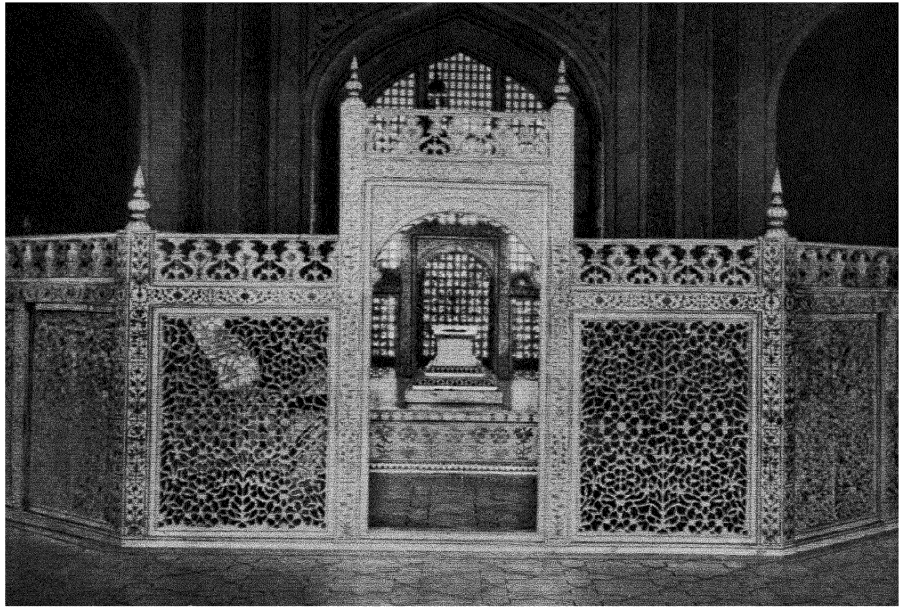
In the misty Indian air its marble walls, rising from the deep verdure of the surrounding courts, seemed to float above the molten silver of the Jumna. I gazed and gazed again upon the barely swelling curve of the great bubble gleaming with the iridescence of a fabulous pearl.

Then my attention was held by the grace of the smaller domes accompanying it, and the majesty of the square court surrounding them, broken by the arching shadows of the mighty gate. Four minarets, shimmering in the flooding light, stood about the magic structure, like torches of light and shade.

I had supposed that the Taj stood alone in a garden. But the plan of the surroundings almost rivals the beauty of the tomb itself. The centre jewel is set in an immense square begirt by high walls of ember-red stone, balanced by a small mosque on the one side and a garden pavilion of similar size upon the other. The entrance gate, far from the tomb itself, stands guard before these treasures where leaf and water, flower and marble, weave a net of beauty from wall to wall. The vivid contrast of golden plain without, the coral walls encircling it, and the cool depth of green embowering the pearl of the mausoleum within, was appreciated in masterly fashion by these Moslem architects.



TOMB OF AKBAR, NEAR AGRA



TOMB OF MUMTAZ-I-MAHAL (DIED 1629), TAJ MAHAL, AGRA (SEE P. 108)

The architectural design of the Taj has given rise to a certain amount of discussion. Some writers aver that an Italian goldsmith, who had come to India with Portuguese merchants from Goa, was the successful candidate among the hundreds who had submitted plans to Shah-Jehan. Now Mumtaz-i-Mahal hated Christians. Was it probable that her mourning lover should have chosen one of the abhorred Faith to build her monument? Or that such an extraordinary fact should have escaped the attention of both Bernier and Tavernier in their careful accounts of the Taj?

The unanimous statement by contemporary Indian writers is that the design ultimately chosen was that of Ustad Isa, some add from Shiraz in Persia, others add from Rum (Rum being the Eastern name for Turkey in Europe).

The style, however, recalling the plan of the mausoleum of Humayun, built about the middle of the preceding century, seems to show it to have been purely Moghul.

It is possible that French or Italian artists executed some of the *pietra-dura* ornamentation: delicate scroll-work with flowers and whorls picked out with precious stones inlaid.

It is strange that no authentic accounts seem to exist, or that those in existence should have led to confusion. Some go so far as to say that the Emperor designed the tomb himself, and meant to build his own mausoleum, in black marble, to stand on the opposite shore of the mighty Jumna. But no trace of it remains.

I turned back to Akbar's colonnades where the

square lintels and fantastic brackets of the Hindu architects still held their own. What a revolution of style had taken place in a few years! And so to the palace of Jehangir, the father of Shah-Jehan, a domed hall once beautifully decorated and still showing strong Hindu influence; stone slabs on the roof, far overhanging eaves also of stone, and elaborate brackets, delicately carved, show how long the Hindu craftsman retained his skill.

Through graceful arches from a portico on the east side of this hall there is a distant view across the river to an horizon empty and remote.

We now moved into another and later group of building; the Grape Garden, my guide explained sadly. He himself, so he averred, could remember a time when the vast empty court was still filled with trees, flowers and grape-vines. In the centre, high above the river bank, stands a lovely marble pavilion recalling the Divan-i-Khas at Delhi and in my opinion no less beautiful. Close to it are three apartments called the Golden Pavilions, a name due to the gold leaf which entirely covers the curious 'elephant back' shaped domes above them. Within these the small, elegant rooms, all delicately adorned with carved panels, were reserved for the women and their slaves, and here again, as at Amber, were to be seen cunning 'jewel caches' in the thickness of the walls. A corner of this fairy palace of precious marble holds Shah-Jehan's private rooms. The decoration here is quite unimaginably beautiful. Tulip and iris, cypress and jasmine of varied tones are painted upon the marble panels, at times with a strikingly Chinese effect.

Flower petals of lapis-lazuli with drops of blood-red cornelian shine upon the door-jambs.

And suddenly I stepped out on to an airy, circular balcony, jutting over the giddy depths and shaded by a dome supported on delicate columns. Here, so tradition relates, Shah-Jehan lay dying in solitary despair, his last glances resting on the grave of his beloved Mumtaz-i-Mahal shining faint and yet fainter across the holy stream.

Awed by the beauty and romance of these halls and alcoves, I made my way down a stairway and was shown the dark 'mirror-rooms,' small and vaulted, the surface of the walls and ceilings entirely encrusted with the tiny convex glass so much admired by the Moghul sovereigns. A light flared and the tiny glittering points, like stars in a dark sky, gleamed in pathetic gaiety. No more do the lovely princesses laugh to see the sparks fly in their mimic night. Only dusty tourists wonder at this will-o'-the-wisp ; I was tired and too affected by the evanescence of the glory of past times even to smile.

Indeed my heart was almost heavy when I next was taken to the rooms of the Sultan's favourite wife. Every detail was dainty, every line lovingly imagined. How often she must have sat and waited behind her sighing lattices, how many times she must have played with the water in her fountains and lifted the hangings of her canopy upon the terraces, looking, longing for him who had laid his devotion, his love, his very empire at her feet. Her golden feet, slipping free from her embroidered shoes, gliding across the warm marble towards the dizzy prospect. There she could

look down and see the black marble throne beyond the Divan-i-Khas where, cross-legged, the Emperor of Ind listened gravely to the endless discourse of his turbaned viziers.

But I now did what she could not do—I passed on and visited the Divan-i-Khas itself which rises like a fable of beauty in the eyes of memory. Its arches and pillars are silhouetted against the fading sky. Indeed the gold and glitter, the colour and glow of the Agra palaces have almost dimmed in my thoughts before the perfect dark outline of that lifted pillared court, swung high upon the soaring fortress walls ; gracious and serene against a light of moon-stone.

The huge so-called Fish-court, surrounded by a two-storied arcade and dominated by the Divan-i-Khas with its carved marbles and the terrace where stands the Black Marble Throne, was once an immense tank where fish darted merrily and where in the cool of evening some planet hung reflected like a mosque lamp from the velvet depths of heaven.

But time was flying and I wanted to see the Taj-Mahal in the evening light.

We merely looked into the Great Pearl Mosque. It stands on a high platform of red stone, encircled by high walls and, like the King's daughter of the Psalms, is all glorious within, yet, although an example of purity of line, truth and symmetry of construction, it seemed to me somewhat cold, somehow empty of either love or prayer, and I wondered why the spirits of those who had meditated and offered up thanks-giving there did not still people it with their friendly shades.

I was beginning to feel really exhausted and clambered down the steep steps and into the motor with relief.

And now I have to make a confession. I cannot say that I have in reality seen the Taj-Mahal. Although I had made so long a journey partly with the object of looking at this achievement of Oriental art, I was only able to give it a glance, to bring away a shadowy vision, a gleaming thought. Can I recapture the shadow, the gleam, before they fail?

I misjudged my hour and the rapid coming of night in India, and, lost in wonder before the apparition of dome and minaret shining in the waning light, arrested on the threshold of the mighty gate which guards the sacred enclosure, I could go no farther until it was too late. I lulled my disappointment by repeating to myself: I will return to-morrow. Though no to-morrow was there for me.

Nothing, however, can take from me the moment of almost dramatic intensity when I looked upon the famous, nay, too oft-described tomb.

A rare inspiration moved these architects of old so to align these melodies, to choose these instruments, as to create such a perfect harmony. The spacious courts, the stupendous gate—terraced and lofty, of which the curving arch (smouldering crimson, burning ember-red) framed the distant vision of those cloudy marbles—indescribable in the grace of their unfolding, the peace of their majestic serenity—breathe a unity of conception almost sublime. So flawless is the beauty of the structure, so true the balance of its proportions, so vivid the play of glittering white on velvet

shadow that I felt I had been illumined by a flame of joy in the darkness of a despondency. I scarcely dared to move for fear the dream would dissolve utterly.

But the shaded avenues and sky-deep water-ways lured me on, the cypresses, like sombre sentinels before the tomb, beckoned me to advance. So I went past the fountains and down the coral gravel-paths although the sun had almost set and my eyes were half blinded by the veils of twilight.

I was impressed by the grandeur of the mausoleum which soared ever higher as I drew nearer, and in spite of its solemnity a certain joyousness seemed to haunt it. Spraying flowers sculptured in a chaste profusion gleamed in the shadow; Koranic letters, splendid in their tall procession, decorated the marble walls above the arches; while spires upon minaret and dome shot the dusk with gold. Majesty of purpose had here attained the joy of fulfilment; did a passion tender beyond death inspire its creation where remembered joys disdained the falling tears?

But I must hasten, I must climb the steep stairs leading up the outer face of the lofty platform on which stands the building itself.

The Moslem guardians, in turban and flowing garment, who were grouped about the archways, rose and came forward, one of them lighting a small Cairene lamp through the open metal-work of which glittered a yellow light. (I have heard that this trust is hereditary, for centuries the same families tend this tomb.)

I must hasten in, I whispered to myself, and see the tombs by lantern light; to-morrow I will return and see them by daylight.

So I went in, swallowed by the shadows of the arches under the heavy masonry forming the support of the dome, which swung above me, dark as the night.

The guards hurriedly lit another lantern and by the flickering glimmer I saw the beautiful lace-work of the marble screen placed about the cenotaphs by Aurungzebe, the false son, and looked at the tombs themselves, or rather the emblems of the actual tombs which lie buried in the earth far below.

That of Shah-Jehan was merely a narrow, long and low casket-shape of marble on an exquisitely moulded base engraved with flower-like arabesques—an even smaller, more delicately chiselled tomb close beside, was that of his much loved Arjimand Banu, Mumtaz-i-Mahal. The ninety-nine names of Allah were carved on her slender sarcophagus, and the brown finger of one of the guides ran along the beautiful lettering of her own names in Persian script.

The lanterns wavered, the walls and dome remained in utter darkness. I must go, but will return to-morrow and impress what I have seen once more upon my memory.

I left reluctantly and slowly walked away through the rapidly falling shadows; only a shimmer of the pale sky was reflected from the sheet of water stretching to the gate and courts beyond. I turned and gazed and turned again, saying to myself, "To-morrow I shall return."

But I did not return, and my memory of the Taj-Mahal is a vision of exquisite regret.

12th December. Up and out early to motor across

the Jumna towards the north-east of the town and visit the tomb of I'timad-ed-Dowleh, grandfather of the greatly mourned Queen. It was finished in 1628 before that of his granddaughter and Empress. She died a year later at the birth of her fourteenth child, having been married thirteen years.

I'timad-ed-Dowleh was a Persian and the father of Nur-Jehan (Light of the World), who married Jehangir, Shah Jehan's father. Mumtaz-i-Mahal was his niece. His last resting-place is a most lovely example of Moghul art. It lies in the midst of a formal garden with pendent kiosks, water-ways and gravel-paths; overhanging the river at the far end is a little, gay pavilion where painted sherbet bottles and cups, flowers and fruit joyously adorn the walls.

The mausoleum itself stands four-square and is built entirely in ivory-coloured marble, marvellously carved, low and delicate. Four *chhatries* rise at the corners, an open-work balustrade surrounds the upper terraces, and all the walls, everywhere possible, are pierced like lace, so that a milky light reigns within. The low tombstone on its beautiful moulded base is of amber-stained marble and some of the Faithful had scattered marigolds over it. There is nothing forbidding or tragic about this festive kiosk. Parrots screamed and streamed from tree to tree and the pale morning sun warmed the stones until they shone with a translucent and almost unearthly light.

The Tchinika Rauza tomb, not far away, is half hidden by trees and flowering shrubs, and lies at the shadowy end of a watered garden where we found some bare-backed, dark-skinned gardeners stretched

lazily in the shade. Severe and cube-like, with a heavy dome, it once blazed with large dazzling tiles: turquoise, green and indigo. Only a hint now remains of what it once was when built by Afzal-Jehan, a follower of Jehangir and Shah-Jehan, before his death in 1639.

I came away thinking of Tchinika—Chinese. Had the tiles originally come from China? Even in my time at Constantinople one of the Sultan's tile-bedecked summer-houses was still called the Tchinili Kiosk.

I hurried across the Jumna again, to visit the mausoleum of Akbar ('The most Great'), father of Jehangir and grandfather of Shah-Jehan.

We drove and drove through endless avenues of noble trees, past the red statue of Akbar's favourite horse, past broken gravestone and falling *chhatri*, when suddenly we met a company of fresh-faced English soldiers camping at a cross-road. Such a cheerful sight under the Indian sun. And a few yards farther there was the great arch, the colossal gateway which these monarchs always set as a guard before the garden-courts of their last resting-place.

There again were the formal pathways, the soaring trees and, beyond and above, rising high in air, the imposing mausoleum itself.

It is of red sandstone inlaid with white marble in varied geometrical patterns and built in four stories, an unusual plan. The cloisters surrounding the lowest storey are broken by the entrance arches and the corners are so constructed as to conceal stairs, thus enabling one to ascend to the various platforms, which are decorated with *chhatries* and cupolas. On the very top of this lofty pile is a square court entirely screened

by beautifully pierced marble lattices; it is paved with dazzling marble, at each corner stands a glittering stone cupola, and in the midst lies the great Akbar's marble cenotaph carved on its every face as with a jeweller's tool.

It passes my comprehension how the marble could have withstood for centuries such exposure as must obtain on that giddy height, open to wind and rain, sun and cold. Was it once covered with precious metal like the Torana gates at Sanchi? It is said that the surface of the low, marble pillar erect at the foot of the Sultan's cenotaph was once all covered with beaten leaves of gold and that it held on its summit the fire and ice of the Koh-i-Nur!

The sun shone, the kites wheeled and whistled, and the hot breeze drifted through the marble lattices. Alas, it was already time to descend and whirr back to Agra, eight miles to the east, and so, following the tall shadows cast by the garden trees, I returned to my car and to the white walls of my excellent inn, where the sky-blue volubilis blows and where I found the most delicious curry and chicken for luncheon.

Fortified and refreshed, my maid and I sallied forth to visit another creation of Akbar's, his fabulous capltal, Fatehpur Sikri, twenty-three miles away.

He built this city, so legend relates, because of the holy presence on that hill-top of the Chisti Saint, Sheik Selim. Twenty years afterwards he abandoned his soaring palace and towering gates because of a quarrel with the same saint—so the story adds; the guide-book, however, suggests lack of water.

The shaded road to this ancient citadel stretched

even and straight as Akbar had built it, measured by his *Kos Minars* and well kept by the Conquerors of the Conquerors. Quite suddenly the fortifications and red palaces came into sight, rising from the hill upon which they crowd, dominating the vast plains beyond and below.

On the north an artificial lake once spread its shallow waters, on the south the ground drops almost precipitously, so that as one looks through the stupendous gateway of the mosque on high it appears to lead into heaven itself.

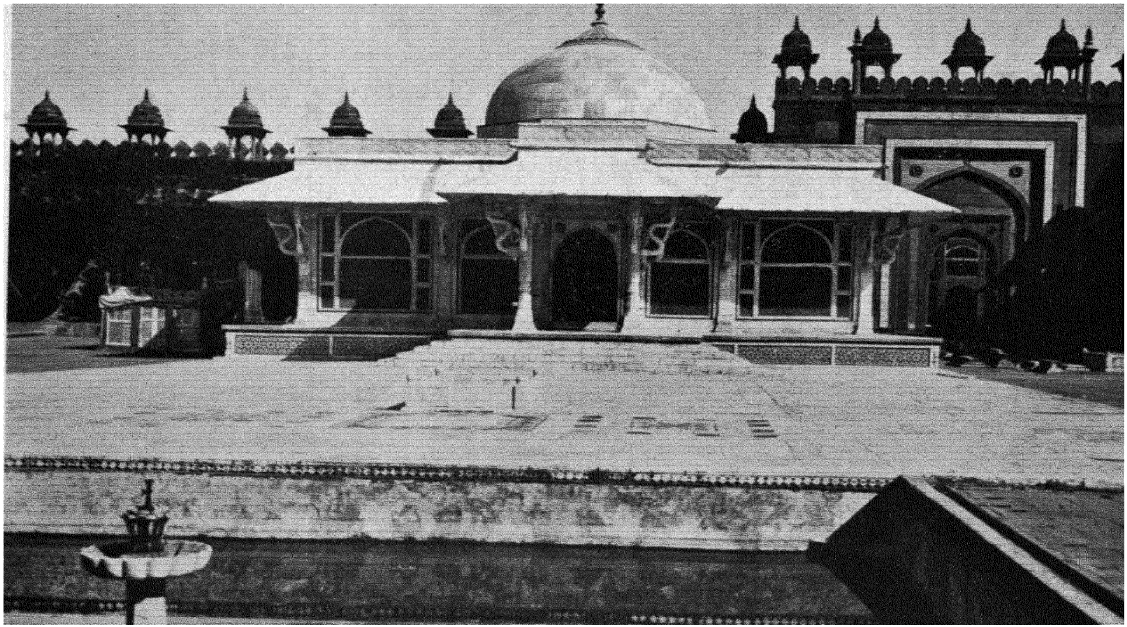
We motored up to and under the Palace gate where the musicians used to make strange noise as the Sultan entered his citadel and—almost at the summit of the height, reached by a winding road lined with crumbling ruins—we found an immense courtyard surrounded by a red stone colonnade. Now vast and staring, empty of the gay crowds and gaudily decked horses and elephants which once had thronged it. On one side this colonnade deepens into an Audience Hall and behind it are various apartments and pavilions where Akbar and his court resided.

How bare and deserted it appeared, the wide empty terrace where the Emperor played chess with living slaves on the black and white squares! One gazes over a parapet at the fields once drowned by sheets of water and perceives, far below, a curious high round tower covered with stone spikes shaped like elephant-tusks. This was the coign of vantage from whence the elephant-fights were watched, safe in the midst of danger. It is said that the Sultan's favourite elephant was buried beneath.

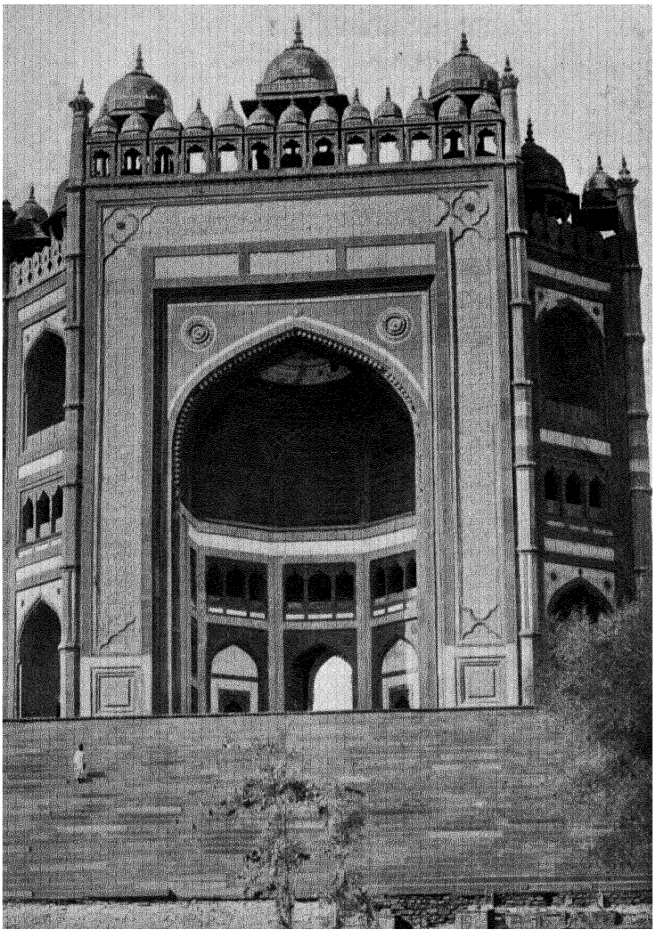
Much Hindu influence was apparent—and the lofty Divan-i-Khas (Private Audience Hall) was most peculiar. One discovered, on entering, an immense central pillar crowned by a circular and corbelled capital from which four causeways in stone radiated to the corners of the building about half-way between the vaulting above and the pavement beneath. Upon the capital is a small platform protected by a low balustrade upon which Akbar is supposed to have sat and conferred with his ministers seated in the corners while his guests and advisors remained below; a very original but not a very happy scheme. The pillars and the bridges are elaborately carved and the effect most fanciful.

The house of the 'Turkish Queen' (did a moon-faced maiden from the Bosphorus travel all that weary way to find a tiny prison on this hill-top?) has but a few rooms, one of them very small, fussily painted and carved, the details so crowded that they weary the eye. Quaint pictures are painted on the lower portion of the walls on a level with the gaze of a person seated on the floor; the clouds and flowers of these paintings show distinct Chinese influence. Above these, latticed stones, chiselled into niche and shallow alcove, served as shelves. The curious Palace of the Winds, five storeys high, one airy colonnaded hall above the other, ever higher, ever smaller, is a building which is unique. The ladies of the harem are said to have fluttered their gay draperies and veils upon these varying levels while the winds floated unimpeded through the groups of pillars.

The Hindu peculiarity, that of treating stone in



SHRINE OF SHEIK SELIM CHISHTI, FATEHPUR SIKRI



GATE OF VICTORY, FATEHPUR SIKRI

Face p. 118

every possible alien way, copying wooden structure, simulating metal and even terra-cotta tiles, is very evident at Fatehpur Sikri.

When these picturesque courts were filled with brilliantly attired people, when flowers were strewn on the marbles and the fountains threw their quivering feathers into the warm air, it must have been a gaily impressive scene. But from the evaporating lake and marshes below, poisonous emanations floated up and the Sultan searched in vain for water on his lofty summit. Every means was employed to carry up the needful supply, even Persian water-wheels were requisitioned, but apparently they were of little avail. The buildings where they turned still stand, but no water drips where the wheels cried and creaked.

My recollection of the other palaces is somewhat vague; they did not impress me as did those at Delhi and Agra. The great Dargah Mosque, however, is unforgettable. Its huge court, stretching on a magnificent level upon the highest point of the rocky acropolis, is surrounded on all sides by palace, gate and portico.

The mosque proper is opposite the royal entrance gate, across an immense open space paved with marble. The marble kiosk, beneath which the saint Sheik Selim lies buried, shines like a handful of pearls thrown on red velvet. It is low and square, surrounded by marvellous lattices, and stands upon a low platform sheltered by long drooping marble eaves; these in turn are supported by extraordinary corbels, shaped like dragons or snakes, also in glittering marble. The doors are of ebony ornamented with brass and the quaint grave within looks like a low bed.

Above it is a canopy of tortoiseshell inlaid with mother-of-pearl and a heavily embroidered coverlet is spread over it. This tomb is very holy and prayers are still said before the shrine of this saintly man and flowers brought in scattered petals to perfume the sacred marbles.

Beyond, on the left, the level of the court rises a step, and again beyond are the lofty and graceful arches of the Liwan (or mosque). Three great chambers, admirably proportioned and most beautifully carved, form the recesses in which the Moslem faithful assemble for prayer; the details are strikingly Hindu, but the construction is Moghul.

On the south side of this court of the clouds is the Gate of Victory or 'Lofty Portal,' which opens upon heaven itself. Within the archway is an inscription which may surprise some people. It runs as follows: "Aissa, on whom be peace, said: 'The world is a bridge, pass over it, but build no house on it. The world endures but an hour, spend it in devotion.'" Aissa is the Arabic for Jesus.

It is sad to reflect that all this glory shone but for a day and that Akbar had to desert it for Agra in the plains beside the mighty Jumna.

According to one legend, Fatehpur Sikri was not the original name; Fatehpur was added to the name of the old town of Sikri which stood in the plain below in 1527, when Baber, the grandfather of Akbar, here defeated Singhram Singh of Chitorgarh, scarred with a hundred scars, the bravest warrior of his time. He was so broken by his defeat that Chitor saw him no more. Did he foresee his grandson's defeat by

Humayun and Chitor abandoned for ever for the more distant fastness of Udaipur?

The sun was dropping and Agra already wrapped in the mists of evening. I reluctantly turned from the dizzy platform of the Gate of Victory and the unending stone steps leading down into the shadows below and drove back to Agra. There I proceeded to the Caravanserai where I persuaded myself to buy yards of glorious cloth of silver. It fell like a sheet of water in moonlight, and I thought I might wear it some day in the grime of London with the hope that a glitter from the moonbeams woven into it might there shine and light the Cimmerian shadows.

CALCUTTA

13th December. Off to Calcutta—too early in the morning to give me a moment to return to the Taj-Mahal—and last night it was too late. Is a regret a more faithful memory than a joy?

All day in the train—*Auf die Fluren des Ganges*—though they looked more than ever like a never-ending park. At Patna the river floated slowly by, broad and yellow, stretching away to low sandy shores. I slept restlessly on the leather seat.

14th December. At 7 p.m. arrived very dirty and dusty, but full of anticipation. I am met by a good-looking A.D.C. and conducted through the streets of an apparently modern town to Government House, Calcutta, formerly Viceregal Lodge, and a most imposing place.

There seem to be some favoured mortals who exist, as the birds in the air, or the rainbows in the clouds, framed by rarely beautiful and appropriate surroundings, and who appear to unite in themselves all that this earth can give or the gods can bestow. They have beauty, gifts of brain and heart, youth and health, and when they have their being in an atmosphere of fable and a setting of colonnades, porticoes and white terraces, there is a perfection of attainment which is distinctly pleasing. Dignity and grace smile with unconscious fitness from chairs of state upborne by silver

lions under crimson canopies. Rows of dark-skinned servitors in scarlet and gold press palm and hand against bowed forehead as Their Excellencies pass by, paying due homage to those whose wisdom and courage serve to control the destinies of millions.

I become didactic, but this confession of faith is wrung from me not only from what I saw in Calcutta but as vividly elsewhere. Take hope, ye gloomy and jaundiced habitants of grinding modernity, this earth still responds to ideals and these ideals are still expressed in self-sacrificing service and patient endeavour and, strange to relate, sometimes within an appropriate setting.

Why should not Responsibility flutter the trappings of its heavy burden? Why should not the flags and kettledrums be bright and gay? Have we in the West become so poisoned by envy, malice and all uncharitableness that the capability and will to serve one's fellow-men must be stealthily disguised as something shameful?

Civilization has bestowed many things; principally the power to fulfil life more abundantly. It has brought more beings on to this limited planet, more opportunities for self and others. Pity has come forward with open hands as she never did in bygone ages. Mercy and Toleration are her gifts. But what of the treasure civilization has stolen—Faith, faith in Heaven and in Man? Can Suspicion mate with Inspiration, Doubt marry with Love?

But enough.

I was not so tired that I must dine alone in the immense lofty rooms assigned to me. I dived into the

first cool evening-dress my maid dragged out of its tissue paper and tore down endless stairs, across deserts of parquet-floor under dancing, glittering, eighteenth-century glass-chandeliers, to the wide red room in which the household had assembled. All the young members of the party were already collected, and to my delight welcomed me by whirling me round and round until I was dizzy. They were all there: the Tanagra-like Hermione, the flower-like Lady Phyllis, palely beaming, the sparkling Ursula, statuesque Patricia and dark-eyed Miss Lafone. Only the youngest of the family, the fairy sprite, was away—I supposed immured in the schoolroom (but I was told afterwards that she had been in hiding behind the white columns to witness the meeting).

The A.D.C.'s were rather taken aback until we had explained our P. & O. manners, and soon we stood in our usual circle waiting until Their Excellencies appeared—preceded by Captain Bruce-Johnston—and led the way into dinner, passing through the long colonnade of the ballroom while we followed after them. As at Bombay, the Kitmagars stood, a scarlet ring, about the table, all turbaned and barefooted, all bowing and pressing submissive foreheads to bronze palms as we entered the lofty dining-room.

The Governor of Bengal has a beautiful head; Byron might have longed to resemble him; the extraordinarily refined features, aristocratic nose, sensitive well-cut lips, arched brows shading remarkable eyes, both dreaming and penetrating, exceedingly blue and darkly fringed. A certain droop to the mouth and a chiselled severity about the chin give character, at

times almost sharpness, to his face. A contrast to the Governor of Bombay with his rapid almost jerky movements, his electric response, dark piercing eye and boyish smile. Both are of a slender graceful build —the former more deliberate, the latter more abrupt of movement.

Lady Lytton, with her eyes like perilous seas, her cloudy hair and fleeting wistfulness, looked like an exile from fairyland. What joy to be with them all once more!

I was told that the Viceroy and Lady Reading were arriving the next day for a short visit on their way from Madras to Burma and, to my dismay (I who hate rising early, especially after thirty-six hours in the train), we were further informed that we were all to be up and suitably arrayed to receive them and eat a formal breakfast at 8.30 a.m. Marvellous to relate I was punctual, and we stood, a smiling group, on the top of the great flight of steps leading from the court-entrance up to the dining-hall (naturally covered with a broad crimson carpet and hedged with the gorgeous Indian bodyguard in scarlet and gold with turban and spear).

We received the Viceregal party, who had been met at the station by Their Excellencies, Hermione, and a cloud of aides-de-camp. Poor mortals! The east coast railway had been wrecked for miles by a cyclone. They had consequently been compelled to travel from Madras via Hyderabad, and had been in the train for four nights and three days!

Lady Reading is very delicate, but quite undaunted she walked along the red carpets lined with palms and flowers, with a smile for all, soon, however, retiring to

her room while we all sat down at various tables to our early breakfast. T.T.E.E. at a table for four in the middle of the room, Hermione taking Lady Reading's chair.

As the prayers of the righteous serve to save the souls of the unrighteous, so—let us hope—did Lady Reading's rest serve to refresh the rest of her party, for they seemed to be made of iron! No sooner was breakfast over than they all immediately departed on official duties or shopping errands. Even the charming Miss Fitzroy (the inspiration of Shepperson, I must believe) floated off to buy hats at 8.30 a.m. after that exhausting journey. No wonder the British have conquered the earth.

Apparently we are all too busy to have any time to ourselves—little sight-seeing for me.

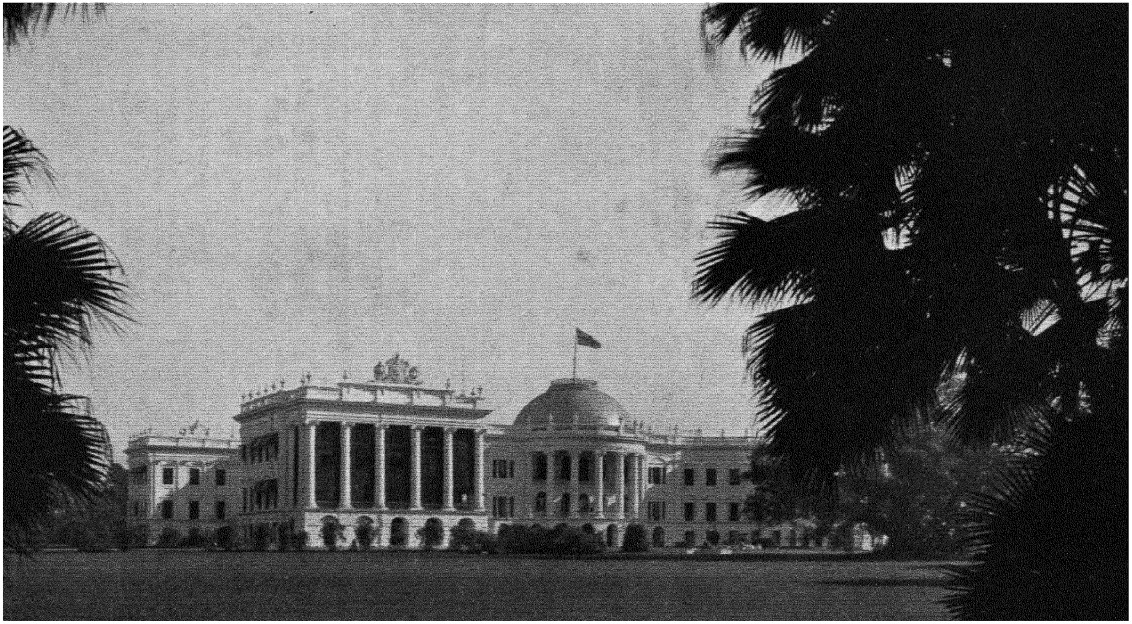
After a gay luncheon, although minus the Viceroy and Lady Reading, we all went to the races, which were held in a most lovely spot. One drives there straight from Government House, which looms white with wide wings and colonnades on the Maidan, partly hidden by its palms and lotus-covered lakes. From beneath the trees of this noble expanse of grass and bush, you see on the left the tall row of shops and houses stretching far away (Chowringhi the street is called); on the right, behind more buildings, you presume lie the quays and docks of the mighty Hooghli (one of the lower branches of the Ganges), for there you see the masts and funnels of great ships rising black and stark, outlined upon the blue, misty sky.

The racecourse is provided with beautiful stands

and a most gorgeous box for the Viceroy or the Governor. A fine double stairway in stone (or stucco) curves upwards to a wide terrace where arm-chairs, red carpets and palms give the usual official touch. The stands having been built facing north-east are in complete and welcome shade, as are also the lawn and wide enclosure below. There I saw the Maharajah of Kapurthala walking about, but he did not join us in the box or in the Governor's tent for tea that day. Across the racecourse on the edge of the Maidan rises a fine white marble dome, propped by arches crowned with lesser domes, the whole creating a well-graduated pyramidal effect. A tall, winged Victory stands poised upon the summit, her golden wings flaming as the sun sinks and the marble blushes in the evening light. The Victoria Memorial they tell us. (Something for me to go and see ?)

Nice Ralph Burton is on the Viceroy's staff. I was glad to see him and to talk over our yachting days at Cowes and in the North Sea. Sad to say, I learnt of Belle Herbert's death. A great loss to me. I dined quietly and did not join the young people who went off that evening to a sort of Fair.

16th December. Am I never to have a real night's rest ? At 8 a.m. this morning we leave for Barrackpore, the Governor's country house up the Hooghli. A cup of tea and a nibble of toast as I am awakened and an excellent breakfast on board the big launch upon which the Viceroy, Lord Lytton, all the girls and several A.D.C.'s are assembled. Lady Reading is still resting, Lady Lytton is to motor up for luncheon. Steam and petrol have revolutionized the trip up the



GOVERNMENT HOUSE, CALCUTTA
(FORMERLY VICE-REGAL LODGE)

LADY LOWTHER. THE GUEST HOUSE, VICE REGAL LODGE, DELHI

Face p. 123

river. The Viceroys of old days used to embark on an immense barge and were rowed to Barrackpore followed by a fleet of smaller boats all elaborately decorated—it took them half the day or more—we were there long before midday.

At breakfast my two neighbours, Lord Reading and Sir Malcolm Hailey, vied with Lord Lytton in regaling us with witty anecdotes and reminiscences. I wonder if I have remembered aright one story related with dry humour by Sir Malcolm; I had been questioning the Viceroy about the great Khedda or rounding-up of wild by tame elephants into a huge blockade for the future training of the captives. From this the talk had turned to hunting stories and Lord Reading told us how some of the native Princes had solemnly assured him, to his delight, that they had killed two—four—nay *seven* stags all at *one* shot! And their narrow escapes from lions were blood-curdling.

"I heard a very good lion story the other day," said Sir Malcolm Hailey. "Several men were relating their hunting experiences and were capping one another's stories until one's hair stood on end. Their escapes and miraculous shots surpassed the wildest imagination until one hunter, and a very good one, turned to the last hero and said he had had the following wonderful experience with a man-eating lion. 'We had gone out to trap or kill the monster,' he said, 'as it was devastating the surrounding villages, and had camped outside one of the most stricken of the thatched hamlets. I had just breakfasted, and had wandered but a few yards into the jungle when I looked up and saw, right in front of me, an enormous lion!

He was bristling with rage and padding straight down upon me, his green eyes like points of light. I stopped and then in a flash realized that I was unarmed. I had neither knife, pistol nor gun. . . .' A breathless silence ensued. Then, 'Well—what did you do?' we almost gasped. 'The only thing possible,' he replied dreamily: 'I died like a gentleman.'"

This put a stop to all further lion stories.

The Viceroy, I am told, shot at Gwalior the second longest tiger on record. It measured eleven feet nine inches, if I remember rightly; a very long, thin tiger with a poor coat, so he told me. Lord Hardinge holds the record.

Nearly the whole way up the muddy, swirling Hooghli the shores are lined with a succession of native pleasure-houses, temples, and factories, mostly the latter. All their chimneys were smoking and I learned that business was good. The trade of Calcutta will not decline, I feel fairly sure of that. Calcutta is visibly a capital of commerce, if not of Empire, with its splendid streets and quays, its churches and business houses. It reminded me of an English city in spite of its palms and white colonnaded houses, green-shuttered from the glare. It even more closely resembled a North-American state-capital of colonial days. After all, the U.S.A. were founded and fostered by the same men as those who made Bengal; sturdy Georgians with their wide waistcoats, their wigs and their Madeira wine.

There is a general air of gaiety about the town. So light, so wide are the avenues, so spacious, so well set the houses. In India there is still plenty of room. The

Sahib does not yet have to hang on to straps in Undergrounds.

Barrackpore, with its lofty, immensely lofty, rooms, colonnaded porticoes and marble stairways, seemed to me an ideal country place for a hot climate. It shone white under poinsettias and convolvulus at the end of a long arched tunnel of green bamboo, so thick that the hottest sun never disperses the twilight beneath the bending branches, which lead all the way from the river to the house. Fortunately the day was cool, so we repaired to the bright tents pitched in the shade of the banyan-grove below the terrace; a grove consisting, I discovered, of one solitary tree but which, with countless offshoots from root and branch, formed a veritable little wood.

I had confided to Lord Lytton my curiosity about the trees of India and he sent for the head gardener of Barrackpore, an elderly Hindu who, with languid interest, took Captain Fyldes and myself across the shining, carefully watered lawns and pointed out the various species of Indian tree which had puzzled me since I reached the land of Ind. They were mostly trees I had heard of, but had rarely seen growing. The teak for instance I saw, with a very large, velvety leaf and ample branches, the fading remnants of its flower-clusters still upright; the mahogany of noble height with a leaf somewhat resembling that of the ash. There are many trees with this sort of leaf formation, such as the neem, the leaf of which is smaller, the stem slightly curved and the branches deliciously drooping. Also, most noble and sturdy, the mango, with bunches of grouped leaves long and

pointed, hiding its fruit amidst the dark green. The tamarind is immensely tall with small leaflets clinging to one central stem, its graceful limbs drooping and veiling the reddish trunk and mighty branches. The mast-tree (or devidari) is an ornamental tree having a long spear-shaped leaf ruffled along its edge and glittering like a brilliant emerald.

The pipal (or peepul) I had already distinguished. Although like a poplar in its colour, its leaf and restless wavering, it is of the *ficus* (or fig) tribe, to which also belongs the banyan. It has an oddly wet look; even in a burning midday when the sun shines upon them the leaves appear to have been drenched in a silver shower.

It is curious how at a distance the outline of the woods and avenues look like that of oak or elm, ash or poplar, only on closer observation did I discover that not a single one of these Indian trees were known to me or to the ordinary English landscape. Never an oak, or elm, ash or willow, did I see, neither hazel nor chestnut, maple nor poplar. And not a fir nor a pine tree of any kind from Bombay to Calcutta, from Delhi to Bhopal. Nor, strangely enough, no real fig, magnolia, plane or southern variety of tree, except the cypress and the mandarine, and these were in gardens only. The gold mohur I have mentioned elsewhere; there is also the cassiorina, resembling the tamarind, the pomelo, with its immense pale-orange fruit, and that absurdly artificial-looking creeper with enormous leaves, broad and thick and seemingly cut out of india-rubber, the pothas, which winds up the highest trees, sometimes entirely green, sometimes streaked and

spotted with dingy white. It is the only ' jungle '-like plant I saw excepting those gorgeous palms which the gardener at Barrackpore called ' Livingstonia.'

In spite of the shadow and the water there were few birds on the shores of the Hooghli. Only a blue-black myna or two with their orange patch near the eye and the white flutter of their underwing as they fly away. (Indian starling they are sometimes called.) I looked in vain for the turquoise gleam of the blue jay's feather to contrast with the shades of the tamarind trees.

Birds in northern India are not as strange as the trees, for crows are almost everywhere to be seen as well as kites, sparrows and, particularly in Bombay where they wheel over Bungalow-point, swallows by the score, flashing and circling, practising perhaps for their long flight northwards later in the year.

But time pressed, we were called back from our wandering, and our visit of inspection finished all too soon. We returned to Government House, Calcutta, to a pleasant dinner, and that night I really did get a long, long sleep, waking in my vast room to see a high sun baffled by the green slats of the tall shutters.

17*th December*. Polo ! Galloping ponies, light and swift (not the thundering chargers ridden by American players), soldiers and their Indian friends, beautiful riders, the latter with their heads tied up in soft-tinted puggarees with a wisp fluttering behind.

That evening there was a State dinner and ball. Over fifty guests assembled in the drawing-rooms in the farther south-east wing. Lady Reading with a long silver train, Lady Lytton all in white. I danced and chattered and met the Chief Justice, and at supper

in the long south saloon, where we all went in as to a dinner and were formally seated, I found myself next to the charming Lord Rawlinson who had just arrived from Delhi.

My escort was an Indian gentleman on the Viceroy's Council, Sir Mohammed Shafi. He told me he had been much in England; he spoke admirable English and had met many well-known English people. He leaned close to me to emphasize his words, in fact his face was very near my own as he assured me he had met only the very most exclusive people and, to add to my conviction, flourished his head so near my cheek that I was tempted to interpose my parrot-wing fan between the tip of my nose and his gestures. I did so. And the fan just withstood the attack! He was most agreeable, and full of talk; my friends tell me he is excellent in Council.

18*th December*. Lord Rawlinson came to have luncheon the next day, with Captain Dugdale in attendance. It was nice seeing them again. We all agreed that the ball had been a great success. I was much struck by the good looks and pretty dresses of the women; the men, of course, looked admirable in their uniforms and orders. Why don't they wear them more at home? (We were all photographed this morning; I looked very sleepy and dissipated!)

Captain Fyldes took me to see the Persian and Indian miniatures at the Museum, and downstairs we glanced at the very good collection of Buddha figures and temple carvings from Bihar and Bharhut. The paintings are in rooms apart and are extremely beautiful. The old Indian or Hindu examples, the

Moghul school (mostly portraits), and the Hindu school—the theme of the latter being chiefly from the Ramayana, a popular Sanscrit epic. I fancy that many of these delicate paintings are taken out of the magnificent books, often written in Persian and usually dedicated to some Maharajah, which illustrate the old Hindu legends.

The Ramayana deals with the story of Rama, one of the incarnations of Vishnu; he is in fact believed to be the sixth avatar of Vishnu, Krishna being the eighth and Buddha the ninth. Thus did the ancient Hindu cult absorb and transfuse the newer religions: Brahmanism admitting into its vast pantheon the saints and teachers of later-day Buddhism.

Rama is the very human manifestation of the Deity. Brave, bold and tender, he and his wife Sita and his brother Lakshman, with his great friend and ally Hanuman (or the Monkey, a representation of wisdom and cunning), are often painted in a group together. Rama is painted as having a blue skin. (I was told that this was the conventional manner in Hindu painting for depicting dark-skinned people.) Sita is usually seated lovingly beside him, his brother behind, the monkey generally at his feet. The Hindus believe that Ravana, the King of Ceylon (or Lanka), came and carried away the lovely Sita, whereupon Rama called Hanuman to his aid to effect her deliverance. On the way to Ceylon to save the Princess, Hanuman hurled the mountain of Dronagiri at his enemies in the bay of Bombay, and there, to this day, it rears its mighty bulwark.

This epic is ascribed to the hermit Valmiki and is

supposed to have been composed about the fifth century B.C., compiled from a mass of legend collected about the figure of a real personage: the son of an ancient King of Oudh. There were several of these Ramayana illustrations in the Museum Gallery and also some very lovely pictures forming a sort of suite purporting to represent both music and poetry: the subject representing pictorial symbols corresponding to notes of music and special words. I cannot recall the name of this style of picture but they illustrate the Raga or musical modes. They were all exquisitely painted; the delicacy of the faces, the detail of dress and coiffure, the subordination of all irrelevant subjects make this Indian self-expression a very notable contribution to Art.

The very sensitive decorative sense possessed by Indians is particularly evident in the balanced pose of all figures. I was especially enchanted with two dancing Nautch girls as well as the illumined borders of three paintings. The conventionalized motifs never become stereotyped or grotesque like the Chinese or the Gothic; as in the Italian Renaissance, the lines are always alive, the blossoms grow, the lettering flows as evenly as living water.

I there first became acquainted with *T'ankus*: banners embroidered or painted for Buddhist shrines in Thibet and Central Asia. Some of them are revelations; painted presumably between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries A.D., they show a mastery of execution, of grouping and of design such as few artists in Europe could equal at any period; drawing their inspiration from models of a far earlier time. In

one of these banners the purity, serenity and ineffably gracious dignity of the slender young face and figure of Gautama the Buddha defy description. Alas, we had to hurry away, and I reluctantly left the fine museum and its treasures.

Lady Lytton suggests my staying on until the Christmas guests arrive. I acquiesce with pleasure.

More polo.

The Viceroy's team were practising to win the "All India" cup which is fought for every winter; many teams coming to fashionable Calcutta from all over the great peninsula to compete. The most picturesque team is that of the Native Princes headed by the Maharajah of Jodhpur (the Rajput State I longed to visit but for which I had no time). The Maharajah of Rutlam is also a member of that team with two other Indians. They play extremely well, sitting their ponies admirably, neatly habited in khaki with riding boots, their puggaree ends streaming in the wind, their faces dark and set, their eyes gleaming. One of the best players in the Viceroy's team is H.H. Nawabzadeh ('brother of the Nawab,' the latter being a high Indian title) Hamidullah, the son of my friend and hostess the Begum of Bhopal.

The days slipped by all too quickly. Tennis on the grass courts in the Government Gardens, tea under the gay tents; the girls full of fun, the A.D.C.'s full of fire! There was even a fancy-dress ball at the Club. We all appeared in curious garbs: Hermione as a charming Chinese mandarin, Ursula and Patsy as the 'Little girls in red,' checks, socks and pigtails complete. Phyllis in a most becoming semi-Oriental

costume, myself as a very incorrect Sultana in silver, black and green with an immense aigrette in my silver turban. We danced and supped and were suddenly spirited away to the Hooghli where Captain Horne handed us into a native craft like a large gondola. 'The Dolly Sisters,' Lady Honor and I crept under the matting roof, Hermione sat out under the stars and sang and we drank a glass of beer and nibbled sandwiches. Why we were not all tipped into the glimmering ink which was all one could apprehend of the holy river I do not know. The native oarsmen paddled and swung and dipped and pulled, the shores whirled about until poor Lady H. grew alarmed and was dropped ashore, where the gallant Captain B. J. took her off to a more sophisticated supper and we floated away again upon our cheerful Styx.

21st. Lady Lytton takes me to see the Victoria Memorial where all the British memorials, archives of interest, old prints, pictures, etc., having to do with India are preserved. An imposing building, both detail and execution quite successful, but, in spite of its grandeur, somewhat uninspiring.

A State dinner in the evening and I am asked to stay on for Christmas! I almost give way to the temptation. What fun it would be! A Sunday at Barrackpore—Lord and Lady Rawlinson arriving and all the gaiety Christmas brings to a happy company; but, pressed by the limit of my time in India and having received a telegram from the Maharajah of Benares to say he would place the accommodation of his guest-house at my disposal on the 23rd, I decided to tear myself away, wistfully reading among the items

in the printed 'List of Engagements' officially circulated every day: "Sat. 22nd etc. at 7.30 p.m. Lady Lowther leaves for Benares!"

The Viceregal party had left on the night of the 19th for Burma. T.T.E.E., Hermione and I went to see them off on the fine ship Lord Inchcape had placed at their disposal. Burma! How I longed to hide in the hold and be carried off there as a stowaway! Sir Harcourt Butler could have put me in a tent at Government House! Only a few of their staff accompanied them, among them Yvonne Fitzroy and Miss Megan (pronounced Meggan) Lloyd George; but Benares, Ellora and Ajanta called insistently! Now was my opportunity to put away the cap and bells and put on the cap and gown.

Her Excellency took me to Mr. Percy Brown's house to see some vivid water-colour sketches by Miss Hughes. They were brilliant and modern. But alas for contemporary appeal, a collection of rare *T'ankus* on Mr Brown's walls riveted my attention and gave me a delight nothing else could equal.

What interested me also, however, was a collection of water-colours by young Indian artists, which we went afterwards to see. Our painters at home have much to learn from them. Their subtle suggestion, delicate line and subdued colour; a certain Japanese elegance of composition, a great sobriety of material and a singular concentration upon the subject represented (as for example the exact and loving reproduction of leaves and trees), combined with a subordination of detail to the whole, are qualities our Western artists are unable, or decline, to

achieve. All these Indians have studied in Tagore's school.

This family is well known and most talented. Rabindranath's poems are famous and his brother encourages young art in India. He was there to receive us and I hope realized our admiration.

I was particularly struck by a 'Cradle-scene' by Devavarman and also Chakravarti's fantasy representing a child in a swing amid deep woods. An imaginary portrait of Omar Khayyám by N. N. Tagore was distinctly clever. Sastry's bold outlines, almost *pointe-sèche* lightly-toned, of a mother and child and also that of a girl abandoned by her lover, were striking as well as beautiful. B. M. Chandra Day had a very thoughtful woman's head in moonlight, partly shaded by a *sari*, which was full of grace. Sen also is a very clever painter. All these pictures were small, graceful and slight in theme, more suggestions than pictures, and most of their authors clung to the Indian means of expression through line; only Tagore himself had attempted something more in the modern note, some rebus-like canvases, kaleidoscopic in colour, with the lure of an angular puzzle.

Both Lord and Lady Lytton appreciate beauty; I hope they will do much to encourage these young artists. The former is a mixture of dreaminess and positivism. He told me that the only true driving force in the world was love—that we should base all policy on that. But in the same breath he spoke of having officially offered the leadership of the opposition to C. R. Das, the violent Swarajist. Did he guess that Das would decline and thus furnish Swaraj with

seeds of weakness and dissension? He appears to be wrapped in speculative meditation, but nothing escapes him, and although to all appearances abstracted and detached, I should be surprised if his governorship were not a great success.

Alas! The last day dawned and, after the Races and an adieu to my host and hostess and the others, I was taken to the train at Howrah across the bridge of boats on the Hooghli.

I can never look back on those days at Calcutta without a pang of joy and a stab of regret. Joy at the perfection of my experience, regret at its having so quickly become but a precious memory.

A gay send-off, a comfortable night on the train (in spite of a certain hardness in the settees) and a safe arrival at Benares, the heart of ancient India.

BENARES

23rd December. Arrive at holy Benares at 10.50 a.m., where I am met by an active, bright-eyed young gentleman, a Hindu officer from the Maharajah's guest-house, and driven off in a motor to my quarters there. One of the most comfortable and hideously ugly houses I have ever been in.

The exterior is pleasing, with deep verandahs arched in stone, there are palms and flowers about the entrance, and efficient, hurrying native servants; but oh! the horrors within. Thick carpets, heavy drab hangings, stuffed and stuffy furniture, oil-paintings in photographic poses of our unfortunate Sovereigns facing a similar perpetuation in oils of the late Maharajah. A nigger, life-size (in wood), seated astride a chair, grins at you as you enter, the electric lights are dissembled behind bunches of glass grapes with leaves in metal trained about big mirrors, while stands for hats and umbrellas impede you at every turn. However, these examples of European taste were almost redeemed by the airy, comfortable rooms with bathroom and excellent beds, and from the vast sitting-rooms a lofty colonnaded porch opened on to the gardens below, which are formally laid out with fountains and cypresses.

I found the house full. Lady Emily Lutyens with some Theosophist friends (I was told as a secret)

occupied the lower floor and Sir Basil Blackett, the Minister for Finance in the Viceroy's Cabinet, and his wife were occupying the other rooms on the upper floor near mine. The Indian gentleman appeared slightly nervous as he informed me of all this and inquired as to my taste in food—was I a vegetarian? Or to my taste in company—did I want to have my meals alone? I reassured him; so we of the upper floor all lunched together, the Indian gentleman presenting us to one another, and I found I was most fortunate in meeting two delightful fellow-travellers. He is remarkably clever and well-informed, she a countrywoman of mine. Full of enthusiasm, we agreed to visit the beauties of Benares together under the able and courteous guidance of our young Hindu officer, Girinji Singh.

We elected to go that afternoon to Sarnath, about four miles to the north of Benares, the 'Deer Park' where Buddha preached his first sermon on Fire. We motored out in one of the Maharajah's cars and I eagerly explored the ruins; needless to say there was no park and no deer either; we also visited the Sarnath Museum, a particularly pretty building. I saw there one of the magnificent capitals of an Asoka pillar —the *lats* set up by King Asoka, who in the third century B.C. revived the cult of Buddha all over India. It is shaped most curiously: four lions, very Assyrian in style, are grouped sitting on their haunches back to back, and are boldly carved in red stone admirably polished; this pillar is finer than the same, or similar one, at Sanchi. But I confess that after Sanchi I found Sarnath somewhat disappointing. The principal

tumulus (or Dharmekh stupa) is still very high, although nothing approaching the 300 feet it is supposed to have reached; it was probably partially destroyed by Kutb-ud-din, the very conqueror who built so well at Delhi. It is still partly encased by broad sandstone slabs carved in vigorous and decorative floral design, a fine example of the Gupta style of work. It belongs to the renaissance of pure Indian art which arose after the fading of the Mauryan (or primitive) and Gandhara (or Punjab-hellenistic) schools, and is very striking. The shaft of the Asoka *lat*, or pillar, lies broken upon the ground. Did jealous fury tempt Kutb-ud-din to overthrow this monument of Buddhist appeal, or is its downfall merely due to the sullen rage of time?

I was also interested by a singularly graceful Jain temple—a structure of pure and elegant proportions not far from the mounds and ditches of this ancient monastery.

We were not sorry, however, to leave the somewhat disappointing ruins and to drive back to tea on our lofty verandah. The weather had been perfect; we breathed a veritable elixir of life and light, and my gay companions added to the enjoyment of the expedition.

The Day before Christmas! We had planned to float down the Ganges on this morning, and to my dismay Sir Basil firmly decreed that we should be roused at 7 a.m. so as to be in time to see the holy ones at their bath. No rest for the weary! So, although I had spent the night before in the train, up I got, and at the dismal, chilly hour of 8 a.m. we sallied forth in fur coats into a damp mist and drove through the dusty

avenues and verandah-lined streets until we halted among some dilapidated buildings above the river. Then down a stony path, ankle-deep in dust, we stumbled towards the water, where we found the boat in which we were to embark.

It was certainly a weird pilgrimage! To realize that I was actually at Benares, on the Ganges, seemed almost impossible. That the flat sandy bank on my right was unholy ground (no one dying on that bank goes to heaven); that for thousands of years the high banks we had just left had been held sacred by countless millions of the faithful; that the waters, muddy and dark, on which we floated were also believed to be holy—seemed almost too extraordinary to be true.

The mists still clung and no warming sun shone upon us to turn the drab surroundings into colour. The only touches of light were the bright *saris* of some of the women on the terraced bank and the wreaths and garlands of fiery marigolds flung upon the eddying surface of the sacred flood.

As the row-boat (shaded by a useless awning) slowly paddled downstream, the left bank, crowned with towering palaces, temples and mosques, rose high and impressive. The red cliffs were carved into terraces, graded with mighty stairs down which thronged the faithful Hindus moving towards the odd little floats and piers upon which small platforms, shaded by immense plaited-straw parasols, jutted into the water almost on a level with the flood. These palaces, these steps without baluster or rail, these temples and bathing piers appeared to be endless!

Different portions of the banks were reserved for

various temples. At some temple-steps not a soul seemed to linger, at others the shore was crowded with white-robed men, and women swathed in crimson and smoke-red draperies.

Although the day was cold, hundreds were standing in their clothes, knee-deep or up to their waists in the dark stream, splashing the water over themselves, bowing and praying to Mother Gunga; hundreds more sat huddled in their saturated cotton garments apparently untouched by the clammy chill.

Tier upon tier the steps climbed upwards, crowned by temples where the glorious pipal tree shadowed the marble courts, or further on—their foundations laved by the sacred river—the fortress-palaces of Sind and Singh, of Alwar and Gwalior reared dizzy towers capped by white marble, the dainty cupolas of which seemed to float in the sky.

Curious small shrines were hollowed out of the rocky cliffs. In some a Brahmin would be seated cross-legged, shaven-pated, stern-browed, lost in meditation; in others slim brown youths, naked excepting for a loin-cloth, were rapidly performing violent gymnastic exercises. They appeared, in the wan light, to be figures of a wild phantasmagoria.

I was somewhat disappointed by the size of the temples. None was striking in height or extent, and although the spires of the Golden Temple on the top of the hill rose above the houses surrounding them, yet the soaring dome and minarets of Aurungzebe's mosque far outstripped them all. These last were, to me, the inspiring note of the river-front. With almost reckless daring they lift and taper far above the

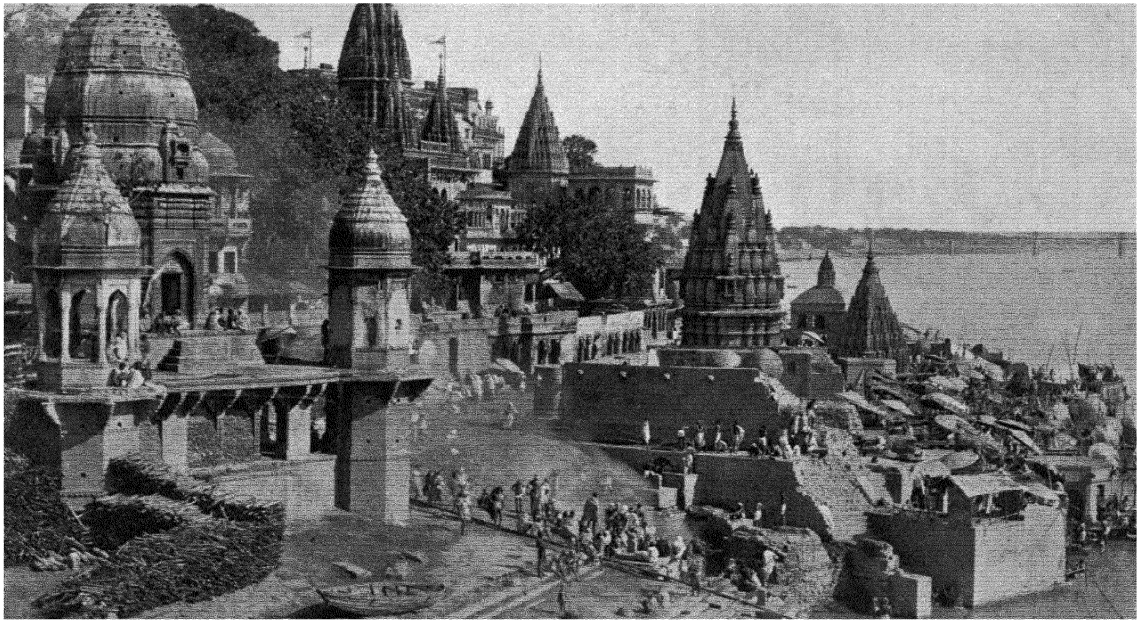
eddying Ganges and against the misty sky make a mute appeal to a God more spiritual and purer than that represented by the sad idols below; they set a plume upon the brow of Benares without which her beauty would indeed be diminished.

The Burning Ghat was very ghastly. It is where the pious Hindu is cremated. The stiff figures of the dead wrapped in coloured draperies lay with their feet in the river waiting for the wood to be piled up for the final ritual. The low pyres ready to burn, the heavy smoke and rushing flame leaping above those already alight, the half-naked men in turbans and rags who thrust long poles into the heart of the fire, appeared as figments of a horrid dream. The corpses are set within the pyres, huge logs are piled above as well as below them, and their ashes, when the flesh is consumed, are flung into the river.

Is it from this daily sacrifice that Gunga shows a grey, ashen face? The very foam whipped by the oars clung dark and heavy.

Our rowers wanted to linger near the gruesome landing-stage, but we ordered them to hasten past and I tried to forget the sordid realities of holy cremation by refreshing my eyes with the cool green of the overhanging trees beyond, where low branches drooped over the high terraces and rounded domes resting on light pillars seemed to wait for lover and mistress, jasmine and the sound of lutes.

Suddenly I was aware of the huge bridge of the G.I.P. Rly., a violent reminder of modern life, almost shattering in its contrast; but turning we rowed back to a jetty in the centre of the town and, climbing out



BURNING GHAT, BENARES

DOME AND SPIRES, GOLDEN TEMPLE, BENARES

Face p. 143.

of our craft, plodded up, deep in the holy dust, until we reached the height above and continued our way towards the Golden Temple.

There the idols still hold their own ; there, through crowded alley-ways between high buildings, the Hindu populace swarm and sway ; had it not been for our guide and the apparently instinctive respect they pay to white people we should have been jostled and shaken. As it was, we walked slowly, moving along the worn walls, grazing the delicate tracery of temple enclosures overhung with balcony and drooping tree.

Suddenly we stood before a high doorway ; two broad steps led up to its welcoming portals through which the crowds were pressing. The guide stood aside and bowed, apparently inviting us to enter ; I started to place a foot on the lower step, but a sudden silence and a low murmur arrested my attention, and I turned, realizing in a flash that I had made a mistake. And so it was—no non-Hindu is allowed to pass that threshold. We moved on a few steps and almost opposite the temple gate we were led through a door, up a narrow stairway and eventually into a room where four or five men squatting on the floor were counting piles of coins, copper and silver. One man was entering in a huge book the totals called out to him. These coins were the offerings of the pilgrims to the shrines of the Golden Temple.

Thousands of the pilgrims come every month to Benares, and it is part of their religious duty to visit the Holy Temple, to say prayers at the numerous shrines, to offer oblations of water, gifts of flowers and of silver, and to ring a bell hung in the central

court to draw the attention of the Recording Deity to the fact that they have actually accomplished the prescribed rites.

We were shown to a balcony and from there looked down into part of the temple. Before us rose the three famous golden towers and the terraces where doves brooded and some Brahmins sat in silent meditation.

The spires are remarkable, although not very high; they display the same truncated tops and slightly swelling sides to be observed everywhere in India, the accustomed vertical lines accentuating the construction broken by horizontal lines of decoration. But these spires are more delicate in form and restrained in ornament than is usual, the copper covered with gold-leaf which covers the central spire is beautifully *repoussé* and modelled with branches of flowers and graceful tracery.

Of the three towers two are gilt with gold-leaf, the third is painted red. The latter was built by Ahalya Bai, the reigning Princess of Indore, who was a model of piety and wisdom. She reigned for thirty years, and died in 1795. History tells that she had the courage to stand and look on at her daughter burning to death on her husband's pyre, after having vainly tried to dissuade the wretched widow from accomplishing this pathetic sacrifice, or *Suttee* as it is called. Widows cannot marry in Hind.

Curiously enough, none of the buildings of Benares (or Kasi Ji as the Hindus call it) is older than the seventeenth or eighteenth century, although the city itself dates from the darkness of antiquity; Buddha

chose it as the first town in which to preach and teach his revelation, and it must have been, even at that time, a town of considerable importance. It was razed to the ground by the Moslem conquerors, both the earlier Ghaznivides and the later Moghuls, but arose from its ashes to appear much as it is now.

The rites and customs at Benares are of interest as showing how the age-old worship of the Brahmans has always been attuned to the Hindu consciousness. For what appear to us to be purer religions have arisen only to be swept away or transfigured, as was Buddhism, or defeated and ignored, as is Mohammedanism, by the bulk of the peoples in the great Hindu continent. Out of a population of over three hundred and twenty millions scarcely any Buddhists remain in India, they are concentrated almost entirely in Burma; of Moslems there are only sixty-three millions and of Christians only about three or four millions including Europeans. (The 'minority' of the Moslems gives pause for reflection—it is larger than the whole *white* population of the British Empire.)

In spite of the dignity and spiritual appeal of Sanchi and of the Buddhist temple-worship of Ellora; in spite of the purity and virility of the teaching of the Jama Masjid and the Taj-Mahal, the Indian in his millions bows his stained brow before the paunch and trunk of Ganesh and drenches the altars of grimacing Durga with the blood of goats.

The intellectual philosophy of the higher Hindu cult is of course infinitely refined, and, apart from these primitive observances, it has evolved a religious and mystical meaning from these age-old beliefs,

symbolic and elevated, far beyond the understanding of the masses and, from certain angles, surpassing Western thought.

At the Golden Temple the ancient observances still obtain, though without doubt variously interpreted by different intelligences. The bell goes on tolling and the crowds press through, their arms laden with jasmine and marigold, in their hands a polished brass bowl or jar, full of water to pour upon the symbol of Siva the reproducer, or to throw at the feet of Ganesh the God of Wisdom. Through the marble portals of the Golden Temple they push their way, gently however, for it is a courteous throng; past the silver doors polished by a million touches bestowed upon them, there where pilgrim slightly jostles pilgrim and the flower-petals drop and the water is spilled, where the shining floors are slippery and soiled from the bare brown feet which crush the blossoms and slip in the wet.

By hanging over the balcony you can perceive on your left another smaller temple; this one is of grey stone also shadowed by sacred trees.

I could hardly drag myself away, so enthralled was I by the unimaginable scene below, but the kind Girinji Singh recalled the passage of time, and we followed him downstairs and outside through unexpected alleys, past whining beggars and laughing children, dusty pilgrims and high-turbaned Hindus making way for us; not a white person did I see or hear, only the whirl of strange, dreaming faces, the patter of bare feet and the whisper of low voices.

Finally we were led up more stairs in semi-darkness

and then, to my amazement, we came out upon a high platform apparently within the temple itself. This terrace formed a large court surrounded by a sort of cloister; in the midst of the court another terrace formed an open loggia covered by a high roof supported on many pillars. Near this loggia was hanging a group of bells, and every instant some pilgrim or faithful worshipper of Siva would stop and pull an iron chain which, attached to the clapper, dragged it with sudden clangour against the lip of bronze. The marble pavement was again strewn with flowers, bright-robed Hindus poured by, and, in two open carved stone stalls, gazing down at the passing throng with calm serenity, stood two beautiful silver-coloured cows. Nandi the bull being the vehicle (or symbol) of Siva, these fine animals are apparently kept here in his honour—or are they live offerings such as we had noticed near the terraced temples of the Sacred River? There, a Brahmin keeps a cow all ready for sale, in case a pious pilgrim wishes to buy her and offer her life to the Hindu god. On inquiry, however, the poor pilgrim often discovers that he cannot afford to pay the market price. But no matter! "Buy it from me at the price you can pay," says the obliging priest—"I myself will accept the offering in place of the Deity and in the spirit it is given." So for a few rupees the animal is bought and then solemnly returned to the priest, who pockets the amount in the god's name. I wonder what would happen if the pilgrim were to walk off with the offering after having bought it!

In front of us, in the temple, a good-looking young man in the dress of a Hindu gentleman was seated on

the marble floor, and as the people passed him he rapidly marked their foreheads with a brilliant crimson sign; some had odd white smears under the sign, all showed the mark freshly gleaming to prove to god and man that they had faithfully performed their devotions.

The young priest—for such he doubtless was—suddenly arose and came towards us, a man beside him carrying jasmine or neem blossoms strung on threads into garlands. He then offered them to us; to myself who stood near him and to Lady Blackett and to Sir Basil, who had a most restless twinkle in his eye all the time—a sparkle of surprise most embarrassing to encounter.

What a blot on the scene I felt we were! Sir Basil's good looks shadowed by the odious topee and the awkward European coat and trousers; Lady Blackett in a black satin hat with drooping feathers and an ample alpaca dust-coat; I in a white pleated skirt and loose white blouse, a mauve sombrero and a mauve and white knitted jumper (from Chanel) on my arm. The young Brahmin must have hated the sight of us. He was in perfect harmony with his surroundings; his dark, smiling face, his elaborately wound puggaree and a beautiful green cashmere shawl wrapped around his shoulders. "I know him," said Girinji Singh, our guide and counsellor, "he is a friend of mine; as he is a priest he cannot marry unless he is willing to incur terrible disgrace like his predecessor who ran away with a girl and was severely punished." I think he even said 'killed.'

My head was spinning, and holding my sweet-

smelling garland in my hand I hurried down the blood-red stairs and was glad to find myself in the little piazza without—but even there I was confronted by a huge stone bull all bedaubed with scarlet, rolling a painted eye beside the 'Well of Wisdom.' At last to my relief I reached the quiet precincts of Aurungzebe's mosque, silent and aloof, although so close to the medley and confusion of the temple that one half apprehended its restless murmur. There was little to see within the cold precincts although I removed my shoes and tripped to the great doorway in stockinged feet. It was closed by a strong iron grille, and a glance within revealed nothing but an empty, grey interior, the inner dome very flat and dull covered by the onion-shaped dome above.

There is something baffling and unsatisfying about the 'façade only' effect of most Indian mosques, where the climate seems to have modified the original Arabian form. The *liwan*, or usually covered-in part of the building, is often merely a verandah upon a platform with a wall at the back; sometimes the wall is not protected by a roof; the open court preceding it is seemingly all-sufficient for purposes of worship; and although the *mihrab* and *minber* (pulpit and 'sacred-direction') are always on the platform of the *liwan*, it offers a bare and uninspiring shrine.

In Arabia, in Morocco and in the earlier Indian mosques, as in the Kalan Masjid at Delhi, the court is open, fully arcaded, and the *liwan* very deep. At the big mosque at Broussa in Asia Minor the covered porticoes are so important that the central fountain only is open to the sky; most of the Egyptian and

Moorish mosques are of this type. In Turkey proper and in Spain the mosques are *entirely* covered in, the courts being merely accessories. The artistic influence of the Christian churches, especially Saint-Sophia, may have had something to do with this change of style, for the great mosque at Damascus as well as that of Cordova and that of Omar in Jerusalem are also covered in.

The Indian type when exemplified by a small mosque, such as the Pearl Mosque at Delhi where the walls of the court are high, is very pure and pleasing; but in a great space with no lofty enclosure, the shallow *liwan* gives a sense of naked publicity and chilly emptiness.

I had draped my garland about the horns of a sacred cow before entering the court of the mosque, Sir Basil had flung his on to another astonished animal; on our return we passed them busily devouring these tokens of welcome! I quite regretted having exposed mine to such a fate; but to be absorbed by a daughter of Nandi is perhaps a holier end than to dry in the portfolio of a Christian female!

Although by this time almost faint with fatigue, we could not resist a visit to one of the famous Benares shops where the most ravishing gold and silver tissues tempt the staidest with the whisper: "For presents, if not for self!" I fell; not so Lady Blackett. Her husband offered her the most alluring sea-green and silver *sari*, but she remained firm—a model consort.

At last we tore ourselves away and at twelve o'clock, noon, had a second breakfast—not having eaten anything since 7 a.m. My meals at Benares were more

Oriental than the Orientals' (who rarely eat at fixed hours).

Were we killing our young guide? Undeterred by our busy morning we packed into the motor again at about three o'clock and drove through Benares to the Monkey Temple, the temple of Durga the Terrible, the spouse of Siva the Destroyer.

The streets through which we drove were fairly wide and the macadam very good. The shop-fronts were all open, small and crowded with wares, the different kinds of ware concentrated each in their own street, so that one saw rows and rows of leather work, or basket work, or fruit—then toys, then materials, then cutlery, etc. We could not resist a look at these narrow lanes, which were like those in an Arabian Nights' tale. The shop appeared to be one large show arranged on a slope with scarcely any room for the solitary merchant, who, seated huddled in a corner working at some piece of jewellery or leather work, would emerge shyly on our approach and try to tempt us with lovely bits of filigree in gold or silver and slender glass bracelets or gay tinsel tassels and fringes.

We had to hasten, however, through these quaint alley-ways, and after driving along a smooth avenue lined with high walls and trees, or queer grey hovels, we stopped before the holy place of Durga—or the Monkey Temple.

I again experienced surprise at the smallness of the Hindu temple. It was built in a square, barely 45 feet each way, set on the usual terrace and surrounded by the usual paved court. Picturesque but not imposing.

We were permitted to climb up into the loggia over

the gateway and to walk about a terrace which formed a kind of cloister round the court. Some glorious tamarind trees soared and drooped beside the temple spire, their rough trunks almost as blood-red as Durga's temple itself, and, hanging from the trees in groups and chains, a crowd of monkeys came tumbling down, galloping over the terraces towards us, well knowing we would feed them with some sweet stuff which is there provided for the purpose. They are as tame as dogs, but alas! not so beautiful; the little rainbow-hued cushions with which Nature has provided them to sit on are unworthy of her. We were shown the place where they told us that a goat is daily sacrificed to the fearful Goddess; whether this is true or no I cannot say.

We left without regret, and our guide proposed a visit to another small building among some trees we could just espy from Durga's temple.

"Let us go," we assented, and behold! that proved to be the loveliest Hindu temple I saw in India. It had not the beautiful bell supported by curious bronze dragons which hangs in the quadrangle of Durga's shrine, nor had it the graceful open porch upon the square plinth forming the entrance to that shrine (usually a Jain feature), but its situation and its proportions were of rare loveliness. Before it lay an immense square of silken faintly-blue water, framed by lofty banks of ruddy stone; broad steps led down to the murmuring ripples on every side and, clinging to one of the high containing walls, a little marble pavilion with tiny cupolas above, invited one to rest and contemplation.

Beyond this shining solitude, at the top of a flight

of steps which rose from the water, framed by a grove of trees, stood the delicate little temple where, alone of all the Hindu shrines I saw, it seemed that prayer might find an answer.

It is placed upon a lofty, square terrace paved with alternate slabs of white marble and of red sandstone; the usual square temple with square doors, tapering spire and mounting steps. But in the grace of every proportion, in the delicate decoration of carved flower and tendril, in the restraint and order of the entire building, Hindu art seems to have surpassed itself and to have here discarded the brutal and sensual exaggeration it so often displays. The grey stones, carved and chiselled with a masterly hand, their beauty undimmed by the touch of time, are an enchantment. The marble was warm under my feet as I passed over its sunlit surface, the myna-birds chuckled and whistled in the green depths of the grove, and orange-red pomegranate flowers bloomed in the court below.

25th December. Christmas. A very unusual Christmas, warm and sunny. I put on a white cashmere dress with a fringed cape, a white straw hat with a twisted quill, and went to church. I found myself surrounded by worshippers of all colours excepting black.

I was struck that morning by the pathetic fate of the Eurasians. Nothing can explain why Nature ordains that different races shall intermingle only at their peril. The result may be brilliant in one case—in another you cannot escape the impression that the child itself of a mixed marriage feels unequal to the intellectual effort of either race.

The apologetic air of the darker members of such

a family, the jaunty air of the whiter ones. The latter are often perfectly white and may even have fair hair; but there is a slight thickness about the lip, a prominence about the cheek-bone, shadows, not carmine but smoky-red, about the ears and hands, an oddly shaped kink at the tip of the ear; these things always seem to tell the tale they would fain forget. Curiously enough, the distinctive traits of the Eurasian are not Indian in character, they miss the beauty of outline and almost classical purity of shape one often notices in the Indian, a beauty unsurpassed by the western Aryan. Is it possible that a very distant mixture with an African or Chinese type lies dormant in the Indian Aryan and only comes to light when mixed with purely Aryan blood?

If these people were simple and not conscious of their foreign descent, perhaps they would not make one feel a vague uneasiness; but neither the white nor the dark will treat them as dark or white, and the result is saddening.

The Eurasians and Asians sat on the right side of the church, the Europeans on the left, whether by arrangement or not I do not know.

We were told that the Maharajah was coming to pay us a visit before luncheon, so we waited and waited. No Maharajah! At last, at two o'clock, faint from want of food, we proceeded to have our mid-day meal, and, wonder of wonders: plum-pudding! Plum-pudding burning bright. We were really touched. I noted, by the way, no dearth of wine or spirits in the Hindu establishments. It was otherwise in the Moslem guest-houses, where I had to sip a few drops

of brandy from my tiny travelling-flask to assist my digestion, which suffered from the lack of no other apéritif but cold water.

After our Christmas cheer the Indian Ruler was announced—an elderly gentleman who spoke some English in a measured, tentative manner and every now and then startled us by giving vent to shrill little chuckles for no apparent reason. Perhaps we appeared so extremely funny to him that he could not control himself. He wore a tiny toque, jauntily set on one side of his head, and a tight damask morning-coat, buttoned up to the neck. A fine and dignified costume, or so I found it, often worn by Indian gentlemen.

He very kindly gave each of us a beautiful book of photographs of Benares which he had wished to place at our doors in the morning and over which we should have inevitably tripped on emerging from our rooms; but our kind young officer had rightly told him that we should appreciate our gift more from his own hand.

Sir Basil, being Minister of Finance in the Indian Government, could of course accept no richer present, as it is contrary to all regulations for British officials to receive any gift. I truly appreciated the Maharajah's kind thought and I only hope he guessed from my words the sincerity of my gratitude for his hospitality and his thoughtfulness. He proposed our going to visit his palace that afternoon at Ramnagar, and after some very desultory but complimentary conversation the Maharaj Sahib left.

The rank of Maharajah appears to be varied and

rather arbitrary. The most important of the native Princes of India ruling over their own territories under British protection is His Exalted Highness The Nizam of Hyderabad. There is but one Nizam. I believe that the Maharana of Udaipur comes next in rank and has a salute of guns and the title of Highness. Many others have a right to that title and some are of as ancient descent as the Prince of Rajputana ; others such as Kapurthala and Gwalior are of less exalted lineage. Then there are Their Highnesses the Nawabs (the old English term nabob was no doubt derived from these), such as His Highness the Nawab of Bhopal, the ruler of a goodly sized independent state. All these rulers have precedence over those Maharajahs who own no territory and have no authority to entitle themselves Highness nor, grief to the Oriental heart ! the right to a salute of guns fired at their approach at the great Durbars. There is also the delicious title of Jam : His Highness the Jam Sahib.

The only title with which I was familiar before my visit, and the bearers of which I expected to meet at every turn, was that of Rajah. The Indian Rajah ! I never saw one !

In the afternoon we motored along a deeply shaded avenue to Ramnagar and were there shown over a roomy and cheerful modern palace, court after court, saloon after saloon, like a large rambling country house, admirably situated on the lofty right bank of the Ganges. This site has its advantage, as every truly pious Hindu must bathe in cold Ganges water every morning or go without his breakfast (or so I was told).

Apropos of 'no breakfast' the following unusual anecdote was told us as absolute truth by our guide, Captain Singh.

A friend of his in Benares was engaged to be married. The usual ceremonies were held, and at last on the final morning, when the concluding and definite services were due to take place, the bridegroom suddenly declared that he would eat no breakfast!

Eat no breakfast?

Consternation—Despair!

What was the cause of this terrible decision?

Plunged in gloom, after many entreaties, the bridegroom at last informed his distracted father that it was because the wedding presents did not include a motor-car.

No motor-car? cries the parent, immensely relieved. Is that all? But as motors are extremely rare in the Holy City, every shop, every house, every hotel is then ransacked. But in vain.

Not a motor is to be found anywhere.

This is reported in shaking tones to the son. He shrugs his shoulders and again utters the awful threat: 'no breakfast'! Beside himself, the unhappy father again hunts high and low; at last, at one of the hotels, the manager declares that he is prepared to sacrifice his second-hand car for the sum of 4000 rupees! (nearly £300). Done! cries the lucky forbear of the thrice-lucky bridegroom, who, smiling and triumphant at last, consents to eat his breakfast.

Capt. Singh laughed at the tale as much as ourselves, but he laughed even more at an incident which had happened to himself.

He had once had an unpunctual and disobedient soldier under his orders, whom he had been compelled to punish. Thereupon the man deserted. He completely disappeared. A year or two afterwards he turned up again and presented himself smiling to his old Captain, who, very irate, exclaimed: "I'll clap you into prison!"

"Wait a bit," answered the fellow, "let me tell you my story! I fled from here without a penny and wandered for many days saying my prayers at many shrines, until at one shrine I found a pious fakir who was ill. I took pity on the holy man and resolved to devote myself to his service. He gathered in many offerings and placed his wealth in great security. But his wealth did not save him departing from 'this act of eternal pilgrimage' and he died" . . .

"Well," burst out Girinji Singh, "what has that to do with your fate as a deserter?"

"Oh! my lord," he said with a broad grin, "now I have thousands of rupees, fields with grain and fine cattle, and I am the owner of five elephants! Surely you would not punish me now!"

The elephants got him off. Capt. Singh did not have him shot at dawn, and whether the man had strangled the fakir in his sleep or not no one ever told. There are ups and downs in Wall Street and in London City, but no vicissitudes of fortune as picturesque as this.

Captain Singh showed us the armoury where the most beautiful daggers with jade hilts inlaid with rubies and gold and silver damascened blades were ranged in glass cases carefully ticketed. Other poniards slept in ivory sheaths more lovely than lilies, and I

admired a long glittering scimitar, apparently in silver, powdered with turquoises, which looked as though it had been stolen from a prince in an Eastern fairy tale. Perhaps it was indeed one of those from the Book of Fairy Tales which we were afterwards shown.

We glanced over two out of eight volumes, every one hand-written in exquisite Persian script. They were the translation of the Hindu epic, the far-famed Ramayana, from Sanscrit into the literary Persian of the time (originally made by Abou Fazl in the reign of Akbar, but these appeared to me to be later, perhaps in the seventeenth or more probably the eighteenth century). These parchment books were all illustrated with the most delicate miniature painting. I wanted to look at every picture, to examine every volume, for here, almost as in a film, could be followed every incident of Rama's life ; the painter having delineated each gesture, every adventure of the hero in such minute detail that the same incident in several tableaux filled entire pages. But we had to tear ourselves away as tea awaited us in a boat on the Ganges and the sun was already low in the sky.

" I am rather hurried to-night," exclaimed our guide ; " a friend of mine has left his wife and boy in my care and the boy is ill, ill with diphtheria, so I promised to bring him some anti-toxin."

" But you have it with you ? " we exclaimed. " Leave us now and take it to the child at once."

" Oh no," he replied casually ; " there is no hurry."

" But you must," we insisted.

" No, I left it at the guest-house," he said.

"Was there much illness about?" we inquired.

"Oh yes, a lot of diphtheria at Ramnagar, and my family is not strong. I myself was so delicate as a child that I had to be sold."

"Sold?" we ejaculated in amazement.

"Yes. A Brahmin told my parents that the only way to save me was to sell me as a slave. So I was sold," and he turned to us laughing, "sold to an old farmer for two pi! And he brought me up whilst I brought up a dog. A dog for luck; for whatever happened I had to feed and care for the dog myself—and here I am!" he laughed again. "But not so very strong," and he coughed. He really did not seem to care about his own health any more than about that of the sick child. We could not even persuade him to leave us when we had eventually found our boat after crossing (contrary to regulations, I could not find out why) the bridge of boats over the Ganges below the town.

We settled comfortably in our craft, it was by now quite dark, and tea by lantern-light proved most welcome. We were soon moving upstream in the starlight, and in the sky shone the radiant Star of Bethlehem, swinging above the minarets of the mosque of Aurungzebe and the idol-temples of Siva and of his son Ganesh.

Pagan, Christian, Moslem, Idolaters, yet all with one purpose; all pathetically united in their quest for Truth. Truth apprehended under many forms. Hope invoked in different tongues. But despair weeping the same salt tears.

The night grew darker, the deserted waters blacker.

Only here and there a wavering light or two flickered upon the ripples, tiny wicks in oil set to sail in a fragile earthen cup down the Ganges. For a custom prevails at Benares and is still followed by young girls whose hearts have been touched by love. They light a small wick placed in oil within a tiny cup. This frail ship of hope is launched upon the ripples of the holy river, and if the light burns bright and long as it floats away, their affections will be requited. If the flames are rapidly extinguished, then, alas! their love must be unhappy.

Then of a sudden the lurid flame of some temple-watch and, most horrible! sparks showering and leaping from where bare arms with long stakes turned the logs and embers of funeral pyres. Gustave Doré: the black heights above, the temple-spires, the palace-towers looming against the faint sky and the rain of impure fire streaming to the stars.

We nearly touched the sinking ruins of a huge temple, a mass of broken fragments, which for years has lain on its side half in and half out of the water. There the splashing oars rested, while we listened to the temple-music made with pipe and string, in a rhythm abrupt and fitful.

Suddenly Rimsky Korsakoff's 'Chant Hindou' came to my mind, and now, whenever I hear that air, I am haunted by the vision of the Ganges at night; banal as that song has become, it harmonized strangely with that theatrical setting and seemed vaguely appropriate to that weird scene.

We hurried home, late for dinner. We had been promised some dancing by Nautch girls afterwards,

and our delightful Captain Singh was to have returned and seen them with us. But he never reappeared. And we are still wondering whether he was overcome by our indefatigable powers of sight-seeing! Snuffed out!

However, he was replaced by a brother-officer much older and stouter than himself—who had made no attempts to adopt European evening-dress or modern manners. On the contrary he was very courteous, and with elaborate ceremony he introduced, after dinner, a couple of musicians in very nondescript attire. It cannot be denied that there is something distinctly surprising in a musician dressed with a turban, in a European woollen jacket, with draped linen trousers and no shoes and stockings. Yet it is the favourite garb of millions and millions of Indians; the Bengalis omitting the turban.

The draped trousers are particularly characteristic of the man in the street. They appear to be composed of a long strip of cotton, once white, which hangs loosely about the bare legs and is drawn up between the thighs with flowing ends in front. Some wear them almost as wide and flapping as a petticoat, others drape them tightly and neatly. Worn with a wadded cotton jacket or a long linen coat shaped gracefully to the slim Hindu waist, these trouser-draperies look very well and appropriate; they are less effective, however, when worn with a baggy Norfolk jacket.

Our musicians, however, were not thinking about their appearance, but about their performance. One of them carried a strange sort of drum on which he

thumped and twiddled his fingers and which alone kept alive a mysterious sense of rhythm; the other played a kind of violin, somewhat resembling a Moorish *rebab*, in an erratic manner. Indeed the airs they produced quite recalled the Moorish music which I had heard in Morocco nearly twenty years ago. The same quarter-tones were employed, the same suddenly varying rhythms and unexpected suspensions. Their favourite theme was a short refrain repeated over and over again, the *rebab* sharply fiddled it out, while the time and measure were supplied by the tambourine-drum which gave all the variations of *forte* and *piano*, the send-off and the abrupt and surprising halt!

After a short prelude by these gentlemen, a young woman entered the room, and gazing at us sleepily moved aimlessly to and fro chewing some root or betel-nut all the time. The chewing of betel-nut is a very prevalent habit in India. The juice thus produced is blood-red, the teeth and lips are stained, and the curiously unpleasant result makes it repellent to Europeans. It is supposed to possess slightly narcotic properties. She was enveloped in a Nottingham lace curtain and vari-coloured draperies, and though far from slender had a pretty face with softly classic features, smiling dark eyes and lovely hands. Her feet were bare, but she wore heavy silver anklets adorned with little silver bells which chimed and tinkled in measure with the drum. She swayed slightly and then, having cast a glance at the busily thumping and scraping musicians, who immediately redoubled their efforts, she burst into song: curiously sharp and nasal

in tone, the refrain reiterated at frequent intervals, the time punctuated by a clash of her silver anklets, her hands and arms slowly waving in graceful gestures. The song—quite incomprehensible to us—went on and on; she was evidently telling a story in rhyme, a very long story; each sentence concluded with an emphatic catch of the breath, and suddenly—for no apparent reason—she stopped dead and the musicians, unevenly trailing their notes and thrums, also fell silent.

We expressed our delight to the polite officer who had taken the place of our gay young Captain, and he translated a few words of the song to Sir Basil, who appeared somewhat embarrassed and did not attempt to explain them to us!

Other people, dark and vague, drifted in to see the show, and (although quite invisible) all the untouchables in the compound seemed to be breathing and creaking behind the numberless doors which surrounded the room.

The officer informed Sir Basil that the Nautch girl, instead of being seventeen or eighteen as I had supposed, must be over thirty. She had a very smooth skin like magnolia petals. Asked whether she had any children, he remarked: "No, she has not yet issued any birth." Sir Basil did not find courage to repeat this to us until later.

After an hour or two of this damsel, another Nautch girl appeared. She wore a very elaborate dress; her black hair was confined by a most lovely jewelled ornament, quite flat and very chic, which clung to her head with two jewelled plaques over her

ears. Both girls wore the *sari* draped about them and drawn over their heads, the Greek *himation*, the most graceful of any woman's garments. But alas! Neither of them was slender, supple nor long of limb, so the secret beauty of all drapery was scarcely revealed.

The second woman was evidently the better dancer. She revolved in perfect time, clapping her pretty hands and clashing her silver anklets; she also shook her head together with her neck from side to side, a favourite trick of Nijinski's in the Russian ballet, and she even gave us a mild version of the *danse du ventre*, as did also her companion, both looking rather shy, having been warned not to give us too many shocks. This girl also sang a song or two in funny English about a 'leetle burrrd', and, much to his confusion, tunefully demanded of Sir Basil whether it was not better to remain single and let the money jingle?

Every window was wide open, and I was chilled to the bone in my thin evening dress. But no one else minded, indeed the poor dancers wiped the beads of exertion from their brows while dancing bravely on. I suddenly discovered, however, that it was one o'clock a.m., and as I had to start on my travels at 5 a.m. I reluctantly broke up this most unusual and delightful party.

26th December. 5 a.m. Pitch dark—I am dazed with sleep but must motor to Moghul-Serai and pick up the express for Manmad, where we arrive to-morrow morning on our way to Ellora. There, thanks to the Viceroy, I am to spend two or three days at the Nizam's guest-house at Rauza near Ellora and

visit the famous temples and caves in that famous valley.

The train as usual was very comfortable, a huge carriage for my maid and myself, my bearer Samji finding a place in the part of the coaches reserved for Indians, whence he would emerge and appear, silently and suddenly, to wait on us, clad in his flapping draped trousers and a woolly jacket with a jaunty little polo-cap perched above his grave, dark face and haunted eyes. He would squat on the floor and proceed to boil the water on my travelling-lamp, and prepare or pack the bedding.

I always brought my provisions with me—bovril, boiled eggs, cold chicken and tea, although it was hardly necessary, as the Company arranges excellent meals at proper intervals when there is no restaurant-car. Have I noted the extraordinarily small size of chickens in India, and their tiny eggs? They were most surprising but very good.

The formation of the land through which we journeyed was very peculiar, the earth and rocks having the exact shape and colouring of those one wonders at on Chinese screens. Top-heavy mounds, the bases of which are eaten away in the most irregular manner, cover the landscape as far as one can see. No trees, no water, only tufts of grass clinging to the upper surface of these curious eruptions.

A terrible country to travel through on foot or on horseback, as every path winds and twists around these hillocks and one is surrounded on all sides by apparently impassable earthy bulwarks. What a relief it was to be rushing over it on rails, where the

hollows between the mounds must have been laboriously filled in, for we were flying over the heights in rapid security.

I noted with pleasure, perched on the fences by the railway, the lovely king-crow, not in the least like our humble crow, excepting that it is jet black, for it is scarcely as large as a blackbird and flaunts two proudly flung tail-feathers, also jet black, which are twice as long as itself.

ELLORA AND DAULATABAD

MANMAD at 8 a.m. Change into the narrow-gauge railway for Daulatabad. Samji was slow and evidently trusted to custom in India where white women have precedence in first-class railway-coaches. Here there happened to be only one first-class carriage on the train, so I was much annoyed on my arrival to find two Japanese men installing themselves in it. As they and their luggage filled the entire compartment, my maid and myself had to travel second-class. I thought them very rude, and made several cutting remarks about the way women were treated by some foreigners, which luckily the grinning little Japs and the helpless Eurasian station-master seemed to understand. Normally I would not have minded in the least, but an outburst did seem to be warranted against those smilingly expressionless little Japanese who pretend to think themselves the future rulers of India—that is what they repeat out here—and their behaviour was all the more objectionable in a country where white women are treated with the most perfect politeness. In fact, I think I am getting a little spoilt.

We arrived at Daulatabad at 11.30 and were met by Mr. Squire, the Resident's right-hand man, who drove me along a model road through a lovely country. On arrival at Rauza guest-house I immediately plunged into a bath (one of the immense tin tubs placed in a

hollow in the cement floor, such as you nearly always find in India) and then felt prepared to greet my fellow-beings once more. After a night in the train I need more than half measures. No splashing in tepid water, no gritty soap slopping about a tin basin as the carriage reels and rocks, is sufficient to restore my self-respect. And yet I have heard of brave and dauntless people who are quite sure of themselves after the ministration of a handkerchief and eau-de-Cologne!

I found Mr. (since Sir) Lennox Russell and his pretty wife already in possession of the guest-house, also his sister Miss Russell and some friends of theirs from Hyderabad where he is the Resident. They had arranged to visit the ruins of the town and fortress of Daulatabad that afternoon, and as they promised that I should be carried up part of the way in a chair I summoned my courage to join them.

It was steeper than I had anticipated!

As we drove up in our motors the pavilion with arched windows and the crowning towers loomed far above the lofty minaret which lifted its graceful balconies at the foot of the fortress-hill of Daulatabad. I was much surprised to find the remains of a Moghul capital in this central part of India. The great rock itself, over 500 feet high, was originally fortified in the thirteenth century, evidently prior to the siege in 1295 by Allah-ed-Din Khilji, the future conqueror of Chitor and lover of Padmani. He captured the town, then named Deogiri, but failed before the courage of the defenders of the citadel, and raised the siege on receiving the fabulous ransom of 1500 lbs.

of gold, 2500 lbs. of silver, 50 lbs. of diamonds and 175 lbs. pf pearls. Fantastic!

Poor Deogiri, not an ounce of gold, pearl or even of silver, could it provide now. But it suffers no more assaults; the only strangers who attack its giddy ramparts are the guests of the Nizam, armed with kodaks, topees and parasols.

Another conqueror, Mohammed Shah Tughlak (the Bloody King), who is buried in the sternly beautiful mausoleum south of Delhi, attempted, in 1338, to settle some of the inhabitants of that northern town at Deogiri, and changed its name to the one it now bears. But success did not attend his drastic methods and his plan ended in failure. However, later Moghuls appear to have favoured Daulatabad, as the Emperor Shah-Jehan often visited it and must have prayed in the mosque outside the triple ramparts and gates of the fortress, while the muezzin sounded from the beautiful Chand Minar (tower of the moon).

I noticed the singular grace and proportions of this tower, one of the most lovely minarets I had ever seen, and I have seen many! The guide-book calls it of 'Turkish form.' It was built in 1435. Was it designed by an architect who had been to Broussa? For Constantinople was then Byzantium and ruled by a Byzantine emperor, as at that time Mohammed II had not yet conquered Constantine Paleologus and raised the crescent upon the dome of Saint-Sophia.

Following the steps of these Moslem invaders we started up the stairs under immense gateways, and proceeded undaunted along steep paths bounded by rock and precipice. For part of the way I sat in a

wooden arm-chair tied to poles under which six men simply staggered. Query: Are Hindus physically less strong than Europeans? Does a diet consisting almost exclusively of vegetables weaken their powers of endurance? I weigh only about 135 lbs., the chair and poles could not have weighed much more than another 50 lbs., yet after fifty steps or so, six good-sized men, young and apparently sound, stumbled and panted and showed every sign of fatigue. And at Agra I noticed that my chauffeur brought a youth with him, and to start the car both of them wrestled together with the crank, apparently too weak to turn it separately. Poor fellows! I soon got out of my chair, feeling very unsafe and quite sorry for my bearers, and finished the ascent on foot.

The view became more and more lovely, the steep fall of the rocky walls was really fine. The path was cleverly hewn out of the rock itself and we mounted through tunnels and up stairs, by false openings and over deep artificial ditches where water must have flowed long ago. At one spot they pointed out ledges on which a huge iron shutter, 20 feet long, used to fit; this was heated until it was red hot, so that the only ingress to the fort was defended by fire as well as by water.

At length the summit was reached and the vast horizon swung its immeasurable circle at our feet. Below us in the jungle, where Daulatabad once flourished, only broken walls remained with crumbling mosques and tombs to mark its extent. And beyond lay the plains, the far plains of India.

Nowhere else does the land seem so to yearn to-

wards illimitable distances, nowhere do the restless outlines of the earth seem so to sink to a pale edge on a remote horizon that one imagines it a far-off sea where, like a lighthouse tower, the white minaret of Aurangabad, nearly twenty miles away, shines at the foot of a blue cliff. The sky was a pale infinity where a wisp of cloud floated derelict, white and rose, to burn crimson and at last turn ashen grey.

We had climbed to the highest tower of towers; upon a parapet close beneath us crouched an immense cannon looking out towards the south-east. It is said that after everyone had failed to raise the monster to such a height, a European artilleryman was called in to perform the engineering feat of placing this gun (called the Creator of Tempests) in its present position.

Before undertaking the task the foreigner demanded that as the reward of his success the Great Moghul should grant his oft-refused petition to be allowed to return to his own country. The gun is still there, but history does not tell us whether the unhappy gunner ever saw his home again.

We were decorated with the most beautiful jasmine and tinselled garlands and had tea, cake and sweets under the arched recesses of an airy pavilion which hung over the precipice just below the summit of the fortress. This pavilion was purely Arabic in style, almost the replica of a Moorish building: three long, shallow rooms about three sides of a court: which shows it to be pre-Moghul. Probably, I imagine, of the Tughlak period.

Leaving the last glow of warm sunset on the height, we stumbled down as best we could in the fast gather-

ing darkness, our footsteps illumined by lanterns in the valley.

I was quite tired the next morning, having been awakened early by some incredibly noisy sparrows, which had found a comfortable night-perch inside my room and had started an angry argument almost before dawn. All rooms in India are very high and, besides the customary windows, are usually ventilated by square apertures in the walls near the ceiling, sometimes opening into other rooms. These apertures are hardly ever curtained and the sunlight and the birds used to enter too early for my comfort. I occasionally slept with my hand over my eyes like peasants in the summer fields.

However, determined to see everything possible, when Mrs. Russell proposed taking me to the caves of Ellora, I gladly consented and we plunged into a furnace of heat at 10.30—rattling through the quivering air in an Overland (or a Ford—I noticed nothing but *American* motors in India). We descended the hill upon which the Nizam's guest-house is situated and turned into the valley under the cliff-like banks below which lie the caves and temples of Ellora.

Through the usual park-like scene we drove as far as the farthest cave. Although their style is purely Hindu, the Jain rock-temples, which these are called, reminded me, of all surprising art, of French Second Empire! Particularly in decoration and in the pseudo-renaissance elaboration of which Napoleon the Third was so fond. They were large artificial caverns, hollowed out into great square chambers; a method facilitated by the horizontal strata in the

formation of the rocks which presumably made the levelling of floor and flattening of ceiling comparatively easy. Moreover, the quality of the reddish sandstone found along these cliffs lent itself temptingly to the fanciful chisel of the artists of the eighth to the thirteenth centuries A.D.

You usually find an immense square-cut opening as broad and high as the cave itself, the lintel or upper lip of which is apparently supported on pillars left in the shape of square uprights and carved in the living rock. (Query: Why 'living', any more when in the rock-bed than when detached? A curious but descriptive term.)

On entering you see the walls smoothed straight; the ceilings are level and niches are hewn in the end and sides of the subterranean hall. Colonnades help to support the immense weight of rock and earth above, and oddly raised ridges are sometimes left to run along the floor from column to column.

Again, carved from the living rock, Buddhistic figures emerge which are perhaps more restrained in style and less influenced by the Hindu exuberance than the true Buddhist type, but evidently the Jain forms of art follow those of the later doctrine very closely. The representations of the Holy Jain Prophet or Mahavira are at times difficult to differentiate from those of Gautama the Buddha.

Taught by the followers of Mahavira—who was born several years before Buddha—the Jain religion originated as a spiritual revolt, similar to Buddhism, from the crudely materialistic forms to which Brahmanism had declined. The founder of this sect,

whose private name was Vardhamana, was also called Nattaputta by the rival Buddhist order. It is a bewildering and almost universal habit among Indians to call their already multitudinous gods by several different names, as also their vehicles (or symbols), their manifestations and avatars (or rebirths). Mahavira was born about 599 B.C., and after teaching and establishing an ascetic system, died in 527 B.C. Jainism is a compromise between Brahmanism and Buddhism, but never took hold of the native mind and heart, whereas the Brahmins were finally compelled to incorporate Buddhism in their own system, and accept Buddha as the Ninth Avatar of Vishnu or Brahma. Thus did the High Priests direct the currents of popular belief to their own ends.

In their architectural expression the Jains are far more reserved and elegant than the Hindus, and the beautiful and graceful spires which rise above the porches preceding their temples are easily distinguishable from the coarser and more exuberant Hindu work. In these rock-temples, however, the Jains appear to have fallen into the errors of the Hindu style, and the over-elaboration of detail weakens the lines of apparent construction and is rather displeasing. Nor could one approve the curious use of a basket of flowers with overhanging creepers as a species of capital (hardly ever placed at the top of the column, be it noted), nor regard as successful the device of carving necklaces of beads around the pillars as an adornment. But the delicacy of the work, the ingenuity of the forms, the lively treatment of leaf and volute are undoubtedly remarkable, and the effect

of the interior of one of these chiselled caverns, with dim remains of painting on ceiling and side-aisle, gives one a strange impression of secret luxury and festival, an intimate welcome almost of polite worldliness, in strong contrast with the voluptuous terror suggested by the Hindu cave-temple No. 29 which we next saw.

This temple is really magnificent. The modern dramatist and his scenic artist should come here and receive inspiration (as did Pavlova, I believe). They should use the design of this Hindu cavern as the setting for a mighty conflict of soul with flesh!

The vast size of this rock-temple is really imposing; its splendid proportions are emphasized by four rows of soaring columns and two side-aisles; the porch and entrance-steps guarded by conventionalized lions are also very striking. It dates from the latter half of the seventh century (soon after the birth of Mohammedanism in Asia and Europe) and recalls the cave of Elephanta which, however, it pre-dated. It is more beautiful than the one in the harbour of Bombay, in the first place because it is deeper and more lofty, and in the second place the lighting is beyond words beautiful and seems to have a mystery all its own. The principal rays fall from the immense opening and wide shadowed terrace by which one enters, but on either hand, within the vast cavern, great shafts of light appear; those on the right-hand glow with gold and the fire of sunlight, those on the left shine like silver which even at mid-day seems to suggest the chill rays of the moon. The one is the northern, the other the southern daylight. It is strangely dramatic.

Beyond the moonlight opening is a low terrace

overhung by the towering rocks which it must have taken years to break through; it is reached by steps hewn in the stone itself, flanked by crouching lions, and in the midst is a large tank filled with water. Perhaps it served as a bathing place for the sacred crocodiles or preserved the precious water when all else was dry.

The opposite opening leads to a flight of steps and a rocky chasm lighted from above and pierced by a portal commanding further steps. We were told that the priests in procession entered the temple from this sunlit gorge, behind and beyond them the precipice and the blue of the far-away plains. ('Sitaka Nahain' the guide-book calls this cave—cave No. 29 was its name at Ellora.) The gigantic carved panels are as decorative as those at Elephanta, very crowded in high relief, and very gay; they represent Siva in a merry mood, his wedding celebrations being the theme of several of the reliefs. But they lack dignity and restraint, in fact the sensual note is too insistent and one misses the magnificent solemnity of the great carved Trimurti at Elephanta. As a place of prayer and supplication it is inferior—as a setting to a religious festival it is perfect.

I must try to recall my impression of the far-famed Kailasa temple, although I do not know exactly how to describe it. It is neither architecture, nor carpentry, nor sculpture, but an extraordinary mixture of all three done in living stone. For as the patient Chinaman twists and turns his knife in the soft ivory, so did the Indian workman in the eighth century of our era twist and turn his chisel in the hillside. Only instead

of an elephant's tusk he chose a mountain. Instead of a toy ball or a basket he carved an immense temple. This *tour de force* is not a structure; it is anything but structural; not a building, it was not built; not an erection, for it was not placed in the great ravine, which is also the handiwork of man, not of nature. The bluff itself was hacked out into great channels a hundred feet deep, leaving two main blocks in their midst, and these in turn were hewn out and carved into the Kailasa temple and a chapel for the god's vehicle, or Nandi (the Bull), to stand before it. Two immense stone elephants guard the entrance to the courts, two stone fire-towers rise in the stagnant air, galleries surround the strange group whilst stairs and arcades are carved into the sides of the cliffs. It is all elaborate in the extreme.

The actual temple is three stories high with a hall and shrines in each, and upon the roof are numberless smaller shrines with traces of crude, thick paint still to be seen on the rough stone surfaces, daubed there about a century ago and now peeling away. (So the English are not the only people who thought of covering sculptural details in paint.) The roof itself is almost as lavishly decorated as the base, and purposely so, for one usually approaches the temple from the hilltop and gazes down upon it embedded in the hollowed rock beneath: a valley indeed and made by hands.

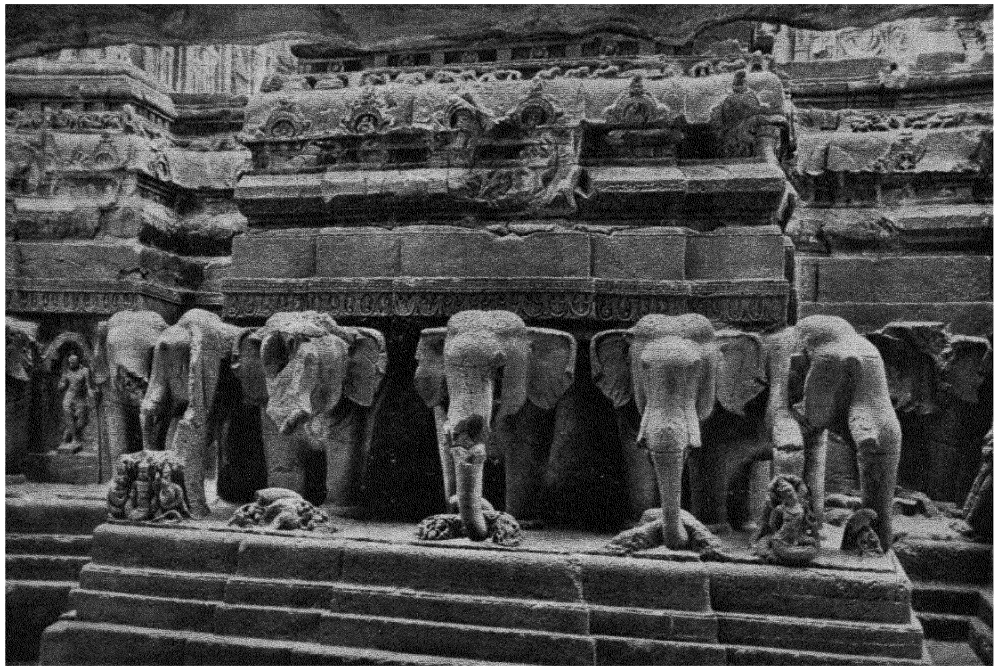
The finest feature about the Kailasa is the great frieze round its base. A frieze of sculptured elephants and monsters, their heads turned outwards, their trunks and tusks at a flourish, they stand side by side

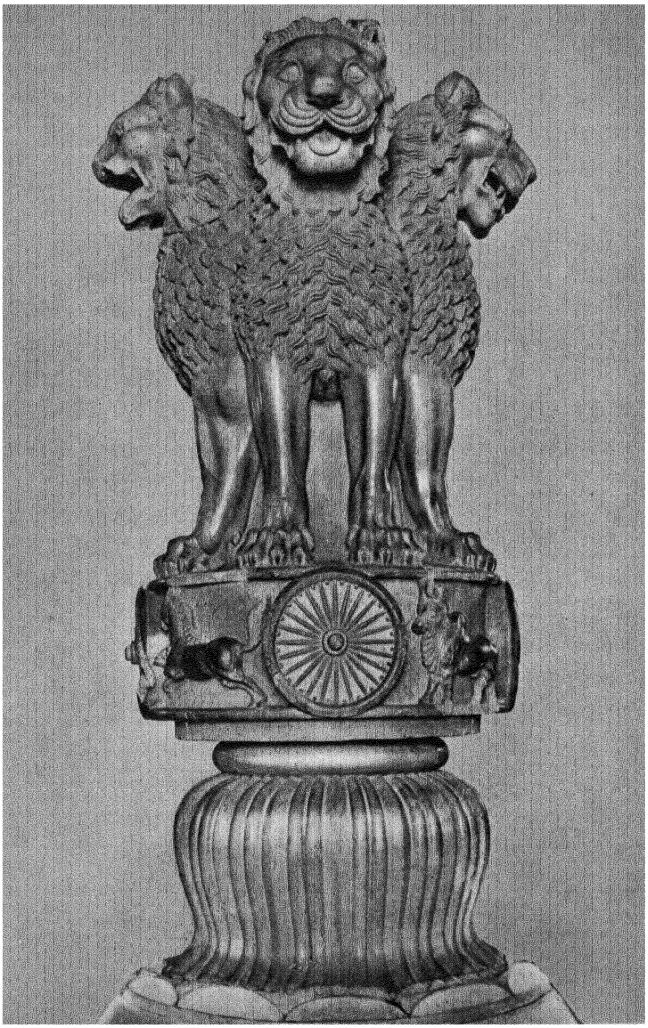
in serried ranks carrying upon their mighty backs the whole weight of storey, chapel and pinnacle.

I was once again struck by the oddly modern, almost Second Empire, atmosphere of the upper chambers of this Indian fantasy; I could not shake off the haunting shadow of Napoleon the Third. And the surprising 'upper-floor' sensation! Was not the art of building upper-floors almost unknown at that period? Even in Greece and Rome the principal apartments were nearly all on the ground-floor surrounding court and atrium. Many of the designs also reproduced a ludicrously modern effect. One of the shrines in the great court, on my right as I went out, was decorated by female guardians leaning with nonchalance on one hip, whose tiny waists and elaborate high coiffures were absolutely astonishing. In other places I was amazed at curves and flourishes in the carving pure rococo in style. Is there nothing new under the sun? How did French art produce the same type of ornamentation a thousand years afterwards in the time of Louis XV? It could have been no plagiarism, as no envoy of the French monarch saw these caves, hidden and lost as they were for centuries.

By the time that these temples were built the ascetic and spiritual reform of Gautama the Buddha had nearly spent itself, his religion was becoming absorbed into the vast Hindu cult of Brahma and the ignorant millions had sunk into the pathetic idolatry which the priesthood still encourages to-day.

All the Buddhist shrines I visited were bare of devotees: Sanchi, Sarnath, Ellora and Ajanta. Nor





CAPITAL OF ASOKA LAT (OR PILLAR), SARNATH

Face p. 181

did I hear of his image being worshipped in any place. Although admitted to the Hindu Pantheon as the Ninth Avatar (or rebirth) of Vishnu, Buddha receives no worship as do Brahma, Siva or Vishnu in countless temples in India. It is to be noted, however, that these, the great gods of the Hindu religion, are usually adored under other names or through their symbols or vehicles. It was often under the semblance of Kali (or Durga) or even Ganesh that Siva was prayed to, or through the sacred Bull or holy Lingam that he was venerated. The modern, unlike the ancient, Hindu seems to shrink from the representation of his god in person.

Melted and drooping with the heat, which by this time seemed to rise from the ground like an invisible flame, we were glad to reach the cool halls of Rauza guest-house and rest after luncheon.

In the afternoon, quite undaunted, the Resident and most of his friends went off on long walks ; some of the party, however, took me to see the Buddhist caves in the nearer part of the cliff. It is interesting to note that the Jain and Hindu caves are all close to one another, then come the Brahmanistic temples of Kailasa and others, and lastly the Buddhistic caverns.

Here the dignity and sobriety of treatment were in singular contrast to the sensuous exuberance shown in the temples which I had seen with Mrs. Russell in the morning ; especially in the so-called Carpenter's cave (a *chaitya* or chapel-cave). But for the large figure of the Buddha at the far end of the chapel with the ' nine umbrellas ' above his head, I might have thought myself in a Christian place of worship. Long and

narrow, a row of pillars runs on either side towards the apse, forming aisles and a central nave. The apse is semi-circular and most remarkable; the ceiling is carved to represent curved beams neatly cut and purporting to support a round, arched roof or barrel vault. All hollowed out of the rock itself! It is lighted by an immense horse-shoe opening above the entrance door and is approached by a court and a verandah. The frieze of carved panels which decorates the colonnade is very curious, the whole effect singularly reverent and solemn.

The other caves are less interesting; they are square in shape and filled with innumerable small figures of the Buddha in monotonous repetition, besides which another statue of the Buddha seated and often of gigantic size is usually to be found at the end opposite the opening in the façade. This opening is supported by square pillars which are roughly decorated with carvings and possess curious square capitals, sometimes very uneven in size and frequently different in shape, although always regularly distributed. Litanies of the god appear as a favourite device, *i.e.* rows of tiny figures of the seated Buddha by the hundred in low relief. This is also a frequent Jain decoration.

I noticed that the Gupta Buddhas are all more beautiful than those of a later date; in the figures of this earlier period the Buddha is often represented standing and wrapped in a floating transparent garment with the flat, sharp folds characteristic of the classic style. When the Hellenistic impulse wanes he is shown in a sitting posture with crossed legs and

becomes more gross and clumsy as the Hindu influence grows stronger, although the modern representations of the god present a more spiritual aspect on the whole.

At Sarnath I saw a very fine standing figure, and at Sanchi the most beautiful, slender, seated figure of Buddha that I have ever seen. The latter is opposite one of the wonderful *torana* (or gates) and contemplates you benignly as you enter.

28*th December*. This evening, after watching the blue of the sky turn to violet and the rose to gold, the Resident and his party (who had been most forbearing to the strange female thrust into their company) left for Hyderabad, where Mrs. Russell very hospitably asked me to visit them at the Residency; but alas, much to my regret I had to decline—my time in India was too short. So I remained alone in the care of Sir Mohammed Raza, His Exalted Highness the Nizam's Tulukdar of Aurangabad.

I made myself the present of a perfectly quiet morning—only in the afternoon did I rouse myself at the thought of seeing the temple-cave of Siva once more. It was wonderful in the evening light, more mysterious and more remote; I also looked for the last time at the strange monster of the Kailasa coiled in its rocky bed, and turned away realizing that I had lived days of magic.

AJANTA

30th December. I start for Ajanta. An undertaking indeed, but made possible by the kindness of the Viceroy, H.E.H. The Nizam, the Resident, Mr. Russell, and of Sir Mohammed Raza (without whose care and foresight I could never have reached the goal of my desire). At 1 p.m. we are off to the Junction of Manmad, and from thence to Jalgaon, where at about 9.30 that night my maid and I find a motor-car waiting for us, but as this conveyance can only hold four persons (the guide, the chauffeur and ourselves), poor Samji must perforce be left behind. He received the news with smiles and bows, and what he lived in or on during those three days, abandoned by his employer, a stranger in a strange land, I do not know. But as he never charged me a penny—I suppose air!

And what air! Warm, dry and exhilarating. So full of mystery that it touched me like a caress as we rushed through the night. The stars hung immense above us—those of Orion a challenge, Sirius flashing fire, and lower in the fathomless depths swung Canopus glittering in his golden armour. Every now and then as we tore southwards the wind would suddenly chill, and we would pass through a damp belt near a stream, to emerge again into the warm night. Several times wild animals darted across the shaft of light we projected in front of us, and once a

gazelle stood within it, staring amazed, then in terror turned and fled along the ribbon of brilliance unrolling before it. It leapt faster and faster, afraid to leave the danger of the known radiance to plunge into the terror of the unknown darkness, until I told them to stop the car and put out the light or we should have crushed the lovely creature. It immediately darted aside and vanished into the night.

At length, at about midnight we arrived, and so delicious was the breath of the Indian night that even at that late hour and after the long day's journey I scarcely felt tired.

Fardapur, our village, was thirty-six miles from Jalgaon (Jalgaon with its mysterious streets, shadowy avenues, and leaping fires, like those of a bivouac by the roadside, will always remain in my memory as a city of night). Close to it stood the guest-house of the Nizam; a low building, arched and white, it gleamed in the dazzle of our head-lights as I tumbled out and waited until the oil-lamps should be lit and the rooms unlocked.

I noted an odd custom in India; only empty rooms are locked. No one thinks of locking himself in, night or day. It seemed that throughout my entire journey my principal defence from surprise, robbery, or death by tiger's fang, was a mosquito-net. That is about all the protection I found at Ajanta.

No blankets, no sheets, no towels, but luckily a net! No matter. There were iron bedsteads with flat mattresses and pillows, and we had towels with us; so I rolled myself in my blue satin quilt and slept profoundly, lulled by the breeze whispering across the

uplands dry with the long sunny days, golden in the drought.

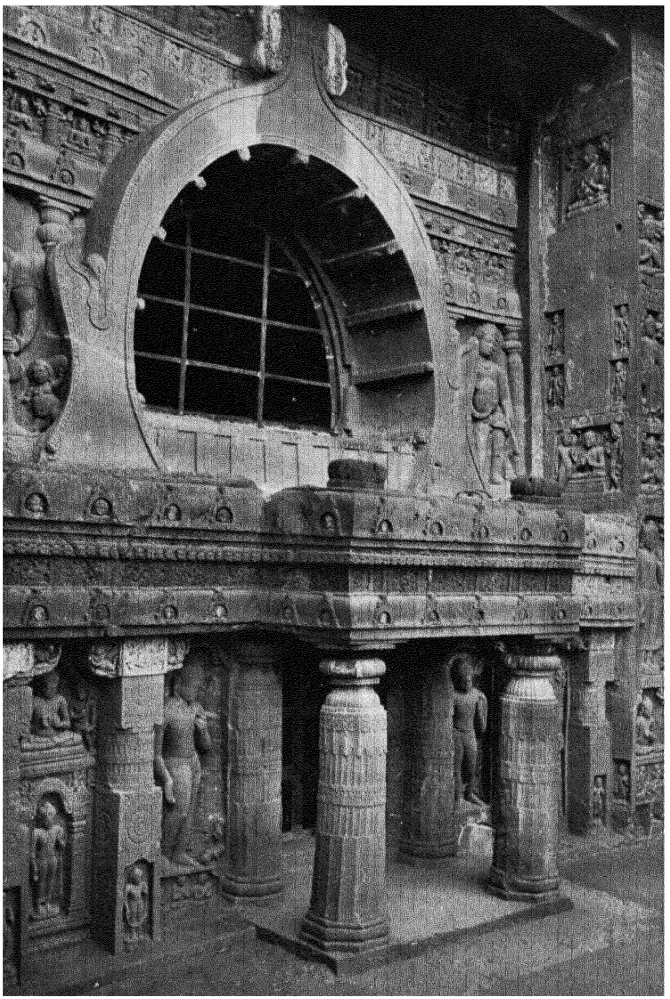
The next morning (31st December) I met Seyyid Achmed, the young Hindu by race and Moslem by faith who is the Curator of the caves. He showed me some drawings and books about Ajanta, and when the heat had abated and the sun's rays were horizontal, so that they would better illuminate the caves, we started off again in the motor over a rough, twisting road, through rolling grass-lands towards a blue line of hills which rose in the south-east. We passed cultivated fields and a few huts, but no houses ; there is wild jungle in this part of Hyderabad, and tigers and panthers are seen and shot. After driving about three or four miles and fording a stream, shallow in the dry season, the motor could go no farther, and a quaint ox-cart, with creaking wheels and shaded by a canopy, took me up a deep ravine under the strange foliage of the season. Most trees were still fresh and green, others were quite bare, whilst the under-brush, yellow and dry with a reddish glare on it, was spread like a tiger's skin on the hillside opposite the cliffs we were nearing.

We stopped, and I skipped down from my odd conveyance (in which I had had to sit cross-legged) and started climbing up a steep incline along a narrow path—sign-posts stood here and there to guide me—higher and higher, with the rocky bed of the Warora far below. The scene was one of real beauty. The waters had worn the rock away until it had become a deep gorge, tall trees grew near the stream, but the cliffs soared above them and, in a curve so deep that

it formed a horse-shoe, I suddenly saw, hollowed out of the face of the cliff, curious square openings, chiselled and excavated by the Buddhist monks centuries ago: the famous rock-temples of Ajanta.

The most ancient of these excavations, which are named *viharas* (monastic dwellings and worshipping-halls), date from about the second century before Christ, not long after the reign of the great King Asoka (272-231 B.C.), who spread the cult of Buddha throughout Northern India about a hundred years after the invasion of the Great Alexander. The later caves date from about 600 A.D., and it is in these that one finds, alas, in a very dilapidated state, the remarkable wall-paintings to which Ajanta owes its fame.

For centuries these caves were forgotten, lost, unknown. For hundreds of years the tiger and the pestilential bat made their lair within these sacred temples, and damp and animal filth poisoned the atmosphere. Even now precautions have to be taken: wooden frames for doors and windows covered with wire-netting prevent the incursion of bat, beast or bee; the paintings are carefully preserved, and the vanishing lines of beauty copied with minute and exhausting labour by the clever artists to whom this work has been entrusted. The principal worker, the Curator (who spoke very good English), was my guide, and never had I realized how illuminating a really intelligent cicerone could be. One usually has the hopeless feeling of knowing more than the man himself when he rolls out the glaringly obvious: "Portrait of Charles the First by Van Dyck, Wood-carving by Grinling Gibbons," etc. But here the



EXTERIOR OF BUDDHIST CAVE TEMPLE, AJANTA

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NO. 29 ELLORA, HINDU CAVE TEMPLE (SEE P. 178)

wall-paintings are so old, the lines so faint, and the legends they depict so unfamiliar to those who are not students of Buddhism and know the Jataka stories by heart, that from shadowy depths strange marvels were evoked by Seyyid Achmed's incantations, and wavering against the fabulous background of strange verdure, abrupt rocks, or gay, flimsy architecture emerged the flowing, vivacious tale of the Buddha, as prince and human being. A Rajah, not a god. And yet a Rajah with divine attributes and unexpected metamorphoses, as when, in the figure of a magnificent white six-tusked elephant he dies to appease another's jealousy; or, as a large and nimble ape saves the lives of countless brother-apes by swinging his body across an abyss over which the monkeys, menaced by danger, flee for refuge, breaking his devoted back in the process. You also see him as a king, seated in his house upon wide cushions under a canopy upheld by slender colonnettes, holding serious converse with his queen and her attendant ladies. Yet again he is depicted as receiving the tonsure on becoming a monk, so I was told by my guide, thinking sadly of his sorrowing wife perhaps, whose figure is near by on the dim wall—his young wife dying for love of him, her slender brown body curved in languid misery, her head drooping like that of a faint flower. About her the waiting maids cluster, showing restrained and courteous anxiety.

One is struck by the important and honourable rôle assigned to woman in these remarkable paintings. She is evidently the companion, the adviser, the consoler and delight, always in an honoured position.

Even in the street-scenes she is shown as unveiled, and though the Indian women of those days appear to have been clad in the minimum of garments, and the curves of hip and especially of breast are much accentuated, an almost classical purity emanates from the decorous grace of these brilliant creatures, allied though it is to a most un-Grecian luxury of adornment. For, where a girl will have little but a gauzy strip drawn close about the hips and tied together in loose folds in front, she will be weighted down with jewels, and her hair most exquisitely and elaborately dressed, twined with pearls, twisted with turban strands.

The Buddha, too (or is it a delineation of a future Buddha, a Bodhisattva ?), is positively clothed in gems, the setting of which must have been a marvel ! Tiaras, encrusted with gems and glittering with gold, the intricate design of which would confuse a Cartier, bind the brow of the god ; strand upon strand of pearls are wound about his neck, and over his shoulders and about his waist fall rivers of precious stones.

Although bracelets clasp the arms, the hands seem free of rings. Long thin hands, slender and pliable, marvellous fingers, with tips almost curling back in extreme sensitiveness, gracefully expressive as they hold a lotus flower or a sacred symbol with delicate precision.

It is indeed startling to reflect that these wall-pictures were painted at a period when elsewhere in the world such art had apparently disappeared. Decadent Rome in the fifth and sixth centuries had some decorative frescoes ; Byzantium her archaic, stern mosaics ;

Central Asia her strange Buddhistic wall-paintings; inspired, no doubt, by the same cult and perhaps imported by the same artists or their forbears of Ajanta. But where else were such grace, naturalness, and variety to be found? Where such action, such life? And such artistic skill?

The medium, too, is strangely restricted, only five different colours are used, and yet what varied harmonies of glow and tone! At every moment one stops in delighted surprise over some fragment: the *profil-perdu* of a head, the turn of a long throat, the glow on a brown cheek.

It is curious to note all lack of false pride in depicting brown people, for those of lighter skin were admittedly more admired by their darker brethren and the artists themselves were probably dark-skinned. The Buddha is usually a pale copper-colour, in some groups one or two of the attendants are very dark, but very few negroid types are seen. The Aryan contour of face predominates, although the nostrils are slightly wider, the nose more aquiline and the lips distinctly fuller than in the Caucasian face. The Brahmans are clearly differentiated and were apparently much whiter in colouring, which leads one to suppose that they were the descendants of a northern, probably a north-western, race, perhaps more intelligent and virile, therefore able to exercise priestly power over the darker, more primitive, indigenous inhabitants. Climate is at the foundation of most racial movements; the Indians, weakened by their hot, damp seasons, seem always to fall under the influence of hardier races from colder lands, who in time soften unless

strengthened by new recruits, and succumb in their turn. Reflect upon the plains of Delhi.

These artists, monks though they are called, could not have been ascetics, for no man who has not loved woman could draw and define the feminine at Ajanta with such reverent care.

They seem to rely on line as a foundation for their work. The figures, the animals, and the scenery are carefully drawn, every limb and especially the leaves of their oft-repeated forest scenes are delicately detailed. There are none of the modern mass effects which ignore line or curve, and within the outline everything is skilfully shaded to produce a certain modelling.

Against all the tenets of our contemporary art? And yet what eloquence—what effect? After fifteen hundred years the eye brightens and the heart thrills with the inspiration which guided those lines so long ago.

It is true that the work is unequal: the drawing is sometimes very childlike, the perspective reminiscent of the Chinese scenes one observes on a Coromandel screen. The principal figure appears over and over again, acting the story as in a broken film. The drawing of the feet does not compare with that of the hands; some of the figures are life-size, others vague, hurrying little shadows, carrying banners, riding wretched little horses, unnatural-looking camels, or again very fine and well-drawn elephants in majestic motion.

At times the modelling of the figures is astonishingly beautiful; at others the work is very thin and flat.

CAVE PAINTING, AJANTA
(GAUTAMA THE BUDDHA AS PRINCE)

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BODHISATTVA (OR PREDESTINED BUDDHA)
(SEE P. 190)

The Chinese influence, if I may venture to call it so, is very striking. Especially in some of the odd little square spaces on the *vihara* ceilings, supposed no doubt to be between rafters—stone coffers in fact, an example of the straining after wooden construction apparently felt by all early workers in stone. In these squares are painted little groups of dwarfs or children playing, arrangements of flowers and birds, ducks, lotus, deer, strange creatures half-bird, half-human, such as an artist from the Celestial Empire might have painted on rice-paper only yesterday. The brilliant China blue. The living green. The marvellous vitality and humour of the tumbling dwarfs must be seen to be realized. These monks must have spent hours musing upon a lotus-bud, the curve of a duck's wing or a gamin's grin!

These warm colours and gay frescoes line the walls of large halls, monastic meeting-places or dwellings all hollowed out of the stony hillside. The largest of these caves, measuring eighty-nine feet square, is supported by twenty-eight pillars. They are sometimes surrounded by small window-less cells, a few of which have a couch hollowed out of the rocky wall. They are preceded by a verandah usually supported on pillars, and their interior, lighted on one side only through the windows and doors, is brilliantly illuminated when the sun casts his level rays from the western sky, but at other times is in half darkness; recourse must have been had to some kind of artificial lighting—I wondered what; and noticed no such device depicted in any of the paintings.

The columns, pillars, doors, and windows are all

elaborately carved, delicately chiselled with ingenious designs : the twisting acanthus leaf—or a leaf recalling it—and jewelled necklace hanging over stony fern and flower. The pillars in particular are very unusual; some of them are round and fluted, but not through their entire height ; here and there a round, pillow-like capital reposes on a circular shaft merging into a square base—and an elaborately decorated capital often has a roughly hewn support. I noticed one unfortunate peculiarity, namely, that the over-elaborate basket or fluted-vase and leaf decoration, which would have made an effective capital, was usually carved at two-thirds of the height of the pillar, the line of support being thus too broken for the satisfaction of the eye. The balance also is not always true (there are not the same penalties to pay in stone-*carving* as there are in stone-*building*), and the doorways, cut as they all are out of the rock *in situ*, are slightly thick and awkward, the panels have very heavy mouldings and the lintels and thresholds are not perfect in line. Both here and at Ellora stairs and steps are painfully steep and high ; the rippling shallows of the Renaissance stairways seem to have been an inspiration of late Italian art. Even in the comparatively modern Moghul monuments, which post-date the sixteenth-century palazzi, the steps need young and agile limbs to climb them without effort.

The exterior ornamentation of these caves is not as elaborate as on those at Ellora, where the spaces tempted the artists to form courts peopled with carved guardian-beasts. At the Ajanta caves you almost overhang the valley far below, and a narrow parapet,

sometimes a mere stretch of wire, keeps one from a false step into the depths. A few, however, of the *chaityas* (chapels proper) have interesting façades, and above the entrance-doors huge open arches give light to the lofty interior and illumine the inscrutable smile of the cross-legged god within.

Chaitya Cave No. 9 has an especially fine front and the architect evidently attempted to produce a classical work; straight columns, square lintels, and panels in high and low relief conduce to this effect. In fact, in all this early Buddhist art there seems to be a very obvious straining after a dimly apprehended ideal. The artist conceived but could not achieve. He appears to have been torn in conflicting directions and, unfortunately, missed the perfection of true art, which is to produce beauty appropriate only to the medium in which it is worked. A cavern hewn out of living rock, arched and ribbed to simulate wooden beams and rafters, is not true art, neither is the device of chiselling a stone cliff into a semblance of masonry.

Did not the Brahmanical Hindu grasp the true beauty of the rock-temple where the Buddhist failed? The former does not as often pretend to carpentry, masonry, or tapestry, but boldly hews out the sides of the great hills and with vigorous stroke brings to life in the naked rock rough and almost elemental figures. He breaks open lofty entrances for light and air, and spaces the mighty supporting pillars with true vision: *i.e.* far too distant one from another for any practical *architectural* building. The whole conception is sincere and satisfying.

An interesting query occurs to me. Are there any

fine Brahmin cave-temples to be found anterior to the earliest Buddhist ones at Ajanta? I believe not, as nothing as early as 250 B.C. has, as far as I know, yet been discovered. In fact, it looks as though the Buddhists had inaugurated these cave-dwellings and places of worship, the models of which were perhaps the Egyptian caves seen by Buddhist pilgrims who wandered far, teaching and learning. Before their period of influence, and the invasion of the civilizing Greeks, we are told that only wooden or matting-and-earth structures were known in India, and these Buddhist temples all point to an echo of structural knowledge, especially the *chaityas* of the sixth and seventh centuries.

As we still revet our steel arches with granite to look like solid stone, so these Indians carved their mountain-sides to imitate first wood and then actual masonry. It would otherwise have been pleasing to fancy that these caves were the last examples of an ancient and almost prehistoric tradition and belonged to a period when the most advanced of mankind lived in caverns; that these splendid temples cut out of the very heart of the earth were the echoes of the crowning achievement of a remote age before the dawn of history.

But to return to the fast darkening valley and my now tired self. We descended a steep stairway in the side of the hill, leaving the terraces, narrow and of unequal height, above us in the failing light and, following the stony bed of the almost dry stream along a neatly gravelled path, reached our conveyances under the green of the winter trees and so back to the guest-house.

New Year's Day. Another beautiful day! When I first reached India I used to exclaim at the glory of the days. Noticing a look of surprise on the faces of my friends I realized that my remark was quite superfluous. None the less, I revel in the high, blue heavens, the rush of warm, dry wind, the tiny scudding clouds like the lost feathers of a Devi's wings and the curiously wet flutter of the pipal tree, of which the green and silver foliage rustles like the falling of a rivulet.

It appears that I missed meeting a tiger yesterday evening. The Curator informed me of the fact, reported to him by his men.

"A tiger!" I exclaimed, "and we missed him? What a pity!"

Seyyid Achmed looked shocked at my levity. "But a tiger," he murmured, "is not a pleasant creature to meet."

"If he had appeared," I replied, "and not fled at the sight of us, I should have opened and shut my parasol at him suddenly. That would have frightened him away!"

But it was not to be, in spite of my lingering and looking about the spot where the king of the jungle was said to have shown his gold and striped sides. (It was probably only a panther after all!)

For we returned the next afternoon, and again I lingered in the spacious caverns, again I listened to tales of the Jataka, again I was struck by the refinement of the paintings, so free from all the grossness and sensuality of later Hindu art. A faint, very faint echo from Greece breathes from the painted shadows of the half-forgotten god.

No doubt many modernists would decry them as too delicate, too tender, too detailed. To wit, the meticulous outlining of palm leaves, lotus, and mango. And yet there is originality in their treatment, a certain stylization which points to mastery. The very fine conventional design which one sees in sixteenth-century Italian damasks is, I feel certain, derived from an Indian source. It suggests a monstrous flower in the uniform decoration upon many a crimson silk and had always puzzled me. Great was my surprise upon seeing the very same pattern in several paintings at Ajanta. I inquired, and was told it was the leaf and fruit of the mango.

The influence of Indian art on Western design in the early and pre-Renaissance days was enormous, following the caravan trade-routes from East to West across Asia. The Oriental has a sense of decoration and of balance in design which the Western artist has never surpassed.

Two figures at Ajanta remain undimmed in my memory. At the back of one of the larger caves near the shrine: the figures, I was told, of the Holy Rajah and his wife. The majesty, grace, and serenity of the Buddha is difficult to imagine. (I know of no representation of the Christ, curiously enough, which can compare with the serenity of the finest Buddhas.) Beside him droops the slender body of a woman with a beautiful and thoughtful face; they are regally sumptuous in jewels and head-dress, from both of them emanates an indescribably tender grace, almost religious in its subtle quality, a very halo of beauty.

Alas for beauty! Time, the enemy, has grievously

damaged these paintings. The rocks have wept, the paint has flaked off, the smoke of peasants' fires and the dust of centuries have blackened some of the walls irremediably.

What can still be done to preserve the remaining treasures is now being done. The Nizam keeps these shrines of art in order. They are guarded and kept clean, and in the Curator, Seyyid Achmed, the cause of beauty has a strong defender. Bit by bit he is at this moment copying every inch of design available. He takes transparent paper, applies it to the frescoes and retraces those lines which are not entirely effaced; those which cannot actually be traced he restores afresh with minute precision and something more. Precision is not enough. Race must assert itself; I believe that only an Indian artist can follow the curve and sweep of this particular expression of artistic impulse, and that his copies alone can have the vitality and grace of the original which no European could render.

Lady Herringham has published a very fine series of copies, the work of herself and her coadjutor, of the paintings in the Ajanta caves, but it is a very costly book. Seyyid Achmed is now preparing a series of plates to be published at a more moderate price, as he feels that these frescoes should be known by a wider circle of people than they are at present. Only the most undaunted or the fortunately privileged are able to see these marvels and to draw never-ceasing inspiration from the fast-fading glow of their ancient light.

And so the ages sweep past and we are as powder between the millstones of time. But through the

mist of blood and tears there crystallize some eternal truths, or so it seems ; the unalterable beauty endures, and we still worship faith and tenderness, fidelity and dignity as they were worshipped in these and other temples long ages ago. Do we not ? Or are these faiths outworn and have we turned from them to burn incense at very different shrines, infinitely more pagan than those at Holy Ajanta ?

2nd January. Leave at 5 p.m. and motor to Jalgaon where we arrive again at night. The city of darkness and of red glare.

How curious are the contrasts in India ! Palaces lit by dusky fires about which camp ragged men, crowding to warm themselves at the glow ; splendid metalled roads along which bound wild animals ; solemn statues of British Sovereigns with screeching parrots clinging to their marble crowns ; homeless fakirs tottering along glorious avenues ; and draped women huddling in tumble-down bullock-carts sheltered by tattered cotton canopies while Rolls-Royces tear by, hooting hoarsely, driven by swarthy chauffeurs in turbans.

Spent the night in the train after receiving at Jalgaon a welcoming telegram from the Viceroy's Military Secretary.

DELHI

3rd January. At 7.30 p.m. arrived again at Delhi and was met by Captain Gregory-Smith, good-looking and very resplendent in readiness for the Viceregal dinner.

On reaching the Viceregal Lodge I was shown into a charming sitting-room opening into a vast bedroom with a palatial dress-closet and bathroom beyond. Here I add that without the poor ' bheastie ' (or lowest caste Hindu servant and drudge) these ubiquitous bathrooms would be useless. Nearly everywhere the hot water for bath and basin is carried to the bathroom by this humblest of the humble, but as he is content, so you are content—and this arrangement works without a hitch or a plumber. He is always hovering in the background, silent and invisible, and much less disturbing than pipes !

As it was late and I had no time to change my dress and join Their Excellencies at dinner, a charming little table was laid for me in the sitting-room with silver and carnations (just as in a fairy tale), and a brown-skinned, beturbaned and scarlet-coated servitor soon brought me an excellent dinner. (More and more like a fairy tale.)

The enchanting Yvonne Fitzroy, as well as my old friend Ralph Burton, and Sir Geoffrey de Mont-

morency (the Military Secretary) came in and greeted me. Very pleasant.

I really should have sailed on the 5th of January! But the temptation to accept Lord and Lady Reading's kind invitation to stay with them, and to revisit Delhi and its beauties, had proved too much for me, and I postponed my departure until the 12th to sail in the *Kaisar-i-Hind.*

The charming and good-looking 'Household' had something to do with my succumbing so weakly. I could not have had a more delightful welcome. I was particularly appreciative of the hospitality of Lord and Lady Reading, and although the latter was far from well, they entertained an unending series of guests in the most agreeable way. Lady Reading rose from her sofa to receive officials and princes—to undertake long journeys and to undergo fatigues which would have exhausted far stronger women. Her seconding of Lord Reading was in every way entirely unselfish and very valuable to him.

The Viceroy has a very interesting personality. His fine head has a lack of height unusual in one of such great mental capacity; but his shrewd glance, his sensitive mouth, his eagle-like features and intellectual refinement of mien arrest one immediately. While conversing he gives you an impression of deep knowledge and of keen judgment, ever balancing the two aspects of a question, the conclusion apparently drawn from an inner conviction, not wantonly exhibited, but nearly always right. Fortunately for India he was not a visionary, nor did he plant a riddled banner in the last ditch; on the contrary, his open

mind welcomed expressions of opinion, and he always weighed and considered the advice of those worth listening to.

In a difficult period, in a difficult situation, he contrived to uphold the prestige of his great trust to a remarkable degree. Both he and Lady Reading followed the usual traditions of Viceregal etiquette, in which they showed their wisdom. Manners and customs are a script that those who run may read—and, nowadays, we are nearly all running!

Almost royal honours are conceded to the Viceroy and his wife—in fact, except for the omission of address in the third person, which in England is barely customary, even with a sovereign, all other observances are followed.

At luncheon the day after my arrival we were all duly assembled in the large drawing-room awaiting Lord Reading's entrance. The circle was formed, the aides-de-camp restlessly opening and shutting the doors into Lady Reading's sitting-room beyond, but some delay was apparent. After a group of men I was the woman nearest to the entrance door when at last our host came in and shook hands with my neighbours. Whereupon I, beaming with appreciation of his kindness and of his having asked me to stay with them in Delhi, moved forward with outstretched hand, expressing my pleasure and gratitude. He took it, but did not smile; he hesitated, and I noted with surprise a faint veil of astonishment fall upon his features. I turned and looked to my left. There was Miss Fitzroy, who stood next to me, sinking into the very crypts beneath in a plunging curtesy! Followed by Miss

Lloyd George, then the other ladies! Dismay and disgust! I had quite forgotten to make my obeisance! It is odd the tricks that memory plays. We had been for days together at Calcutta, where even in private the observances were strictly adhered to. Why I suddenly forgot it all, in the enthusiasm of my arrival, I cannot think. But I was mercilessly teased, and informed by the rejoicing aides-de-camp and lady-in-waiting that guests had been turned out of Viceregal Lodge for less!

I had my lesson, however, and much practice, for after dinner, as the ladies left the dining-room, the first one to go out had to stop near the door, turn, and make a sweeping curtesy to His Excellency. This makes one feel self-conscious. As I was the only older guest for several days, I thus received my punishment and my host smiled upon me once more.

4th January. Delightful Delhi, where I again lead my frivolous hours. The gay presence of Miss Megan Lloyd George and Lady Honor Bridgeman adds to the fun. Lord Rawlinson stays to luncheon (after a Council of State), and to my joy wears the Christmas remembrance I had left for him at Calcutta. A gaudy silk handkerchief! He pretends he did not know I was at Viceregal Lodge!

Ralph Burton shows me the Lodge; it is the former 'Circuit House' where the Viceroys used to stay while on tour. It is now the temporary Viceregal Lodge until the New Delhi palace is built. In four years? Or in five? We all wonder. Lord Reading is glad the change will not come in his time, as the temporary Lodge is so comfortable.

It is a long, low, white building, perfectly adapted to the climate: shadowed by deep-arched verandahs. It has very high ceilings and is cooled by the usual square openings in the walls of the apartments above the verandah roofs. Palms and blazing poinsettias adorn the steps and porches, white columns stand sentinel at the entrances, and scarlet figures flash in and out, the barefooted native servants of whom there seems to be an unending number.

Within you find a large drawing-room next to the small ante-room through which you pass; a private sitting-room for Her Excellency and her bedroom lie beyond. The Council Room, with some good pictures, is at the further end of the drawing-room, and through the vast dining-room you move to reach a vaster ball-room, at present much needed for State functions.

For a wonder it is raining, so we cannot go into the gardens, and we pack instead into a motor that I may make the acquaintance of the Chandni Chauk, which I had no time to drive along before. It is the business street of Delhi. The shops there are not as tempting as at Agra, but the so-called 'Ivory Palace' near the Great Mosque, and the Austrian Schweiger's wonderful shop opposite Maiden's Hotel, are very alluring (with that of Ganesh Lal at Agra the most alluring that I saw in India). Jades, jewels and embroideries, all quite exquisite. Indeed this cloudy day is all illumined by the emeralds and pearls, pale rubies and diamond tassels, some of them fountain-like, from the treasure of a dead Rajah.

5th January. Luncheon with my agreeable friends of Benares, the Blacketts, after which Lady Blackett

takes me to visit the eighteenth-century tomb of Saffar Jang. It shows the same splendid arrangement of gateway, mausoleum, pavilions and water-ways which has so struck my imagination in India. It is one of the last of the great tombs built in the eighteenth century. Green parrots darted and clung to the eaves of the little *chhatries*, the sun sank in gold and silver, and it was dark when we reached the poinsettia-burning porch of the Finance Minister to welcome him home to tea.

On Sunday Purana-Kila was the object of our pilgrimage. The clouds were drifting and breaking, and golden threads with blue shone in the tapestry of the sky, so that the immense enclosure within the walls and towered gates of the fortress, empty as a shell on a wind-dried beach, was magically stained with colour. Built by Sher-Shah and Humayun to the south of the ancient Hindu capital of Indrapat, it is one of the most picturesque of all the ruins outside Shah-Jahanabad, one of the seven Delhis, Shah-Jahanabad being the sixth, and Raisina, our new British Delhi, the seventh.

The mosque of Sher-Shah which stands within the vast enclosure (the latter a wide stretch of grass surrounded by a sort of cloister under the fortress walls, originally shops, no doubt) is very fine. The red sandstone of which it is built is beautifully carved and the influence of Hindu thought in the decoration and even the construction is very noticeable: in the brackets supporting the balconies for instance, as well as in the shape of the numberless small domes. This group of buildings dates from the earlier half of the

sixteenth century, when Francis I and Charles V were strutting about Europe in polished rivalry.

We went from Purana-Kila to the Dargah (or Mohammedan shrine) of Nizam-uddin-Aulia, who lived in the thirteenth century and attained the ripe age of ninety-two. He appears to have been a very powerful Saint, holding his own even in conflicts with Tughlak Shah. The first feature which strikes one after entering through the low whitewashed gateway (shuffling along in dilapidated sandals tied over one's shoes) is the very deep tank or reservoir which, so it is said, became a grave cause of dispute between Saint and Emperor.

The latter suddenly requisitioned the workmen who were, at the Saint's bidding, digging down into the depths of the earth to make the water rise and irrigate the dry land. The Saint, therefore, caused his work to be carried on at night. Oil was used to light their labour (perhaps rags soaked in oil tied to iron rods? Such as Bernier describes centuries later). Infuriated, the Emperor forbade the sale of oil to the Saint; whereupon lo! the water in the tank itself flamed alight in the darkness. The labourers, inspired by the miracle, toiled on in the holy glare and the tank was completed. The Sultan then cursed the miraculous waters; the Saint in turn cursed Tughlakabad. "May it be inhabited by none but the homeless and the outcast!" (*Gujar*, a tribe of nomads of low caste).

The Saint's curse has not lost its effect, as, within the ruined walls of the haughty Sultan's city, the beggar tribes still pitch their temporary abode; the tank on the other hand still sparkles, reflecting sky and arch

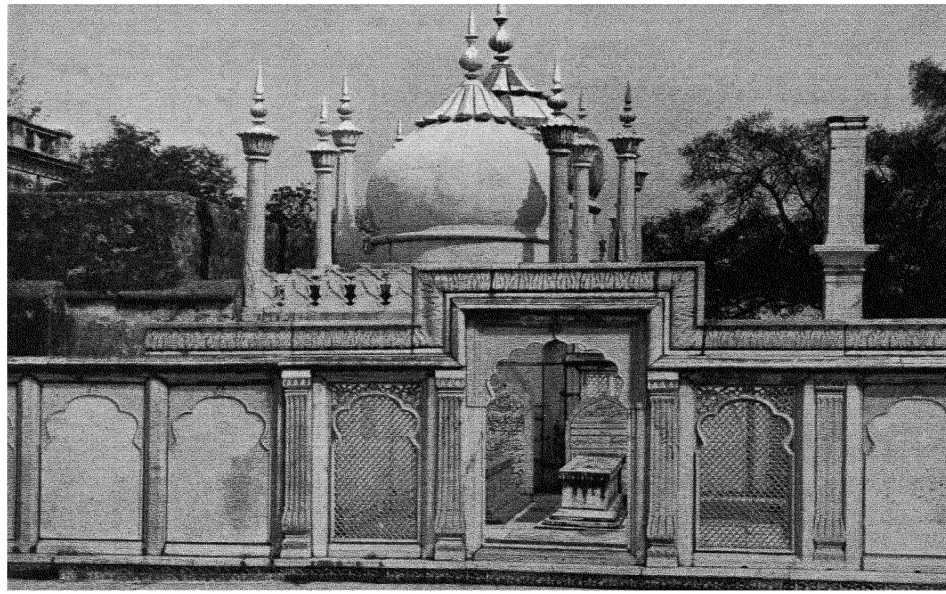
in its depths and, at night, the holy waters still gleam and glitter as with fire.

Beyond the tank are courts, and in the midst of one of these stands the tent-like mausoleum of the Saint himself with its low, painted eaves, its marble lattice sides and, within, the lowly tomb, strewn with jasmine and rose-leaves. As we approached, the nasal drone of the Imam was sighing about the walls and we waited until the prayer had ceased so that we, the unfaithful, could look at the holy man's last resting-place.

Near by is the tomb of Jehanara Begum, the sister of Aurungzebe, whose progress upon mighty elephants during the imperial visit to Kashmir (in 1660 or thereabouts) is so delightfully described by Tavernier: how no man half a mile away is allowed on pain of death even to look at the elephants, scores of which carried the Princess and her ladies; how the huge animals were covered with embroideries and carried golden seats with curtained canopies hung with bells of silver and followed by eunuchs and slaves on foot or on horse.

Alas for past triumphs! Beautiful Jehanara! The elephant-bells ring no more in the warm twilight, no more is the curtain drawn aside for a moment's breath of cooler air whilst the rash foreigner hides near the road to gaze on young and secret beauty. Here you lie, in half-forgotten solitude, the narrow marble stone marking the spot where the answer to your riddle is left untold.

Mohammed Shah is also buried near at hand and his tomb, encircled by a marvellously delicate enclosure



TOMBS OF MOHAMMED SHAH AND PRINCE JEHANGIR (SON OF AKBAR SHAH)
NIZAM UDDIN AULIA'S DARGAH, NEAR DELHI

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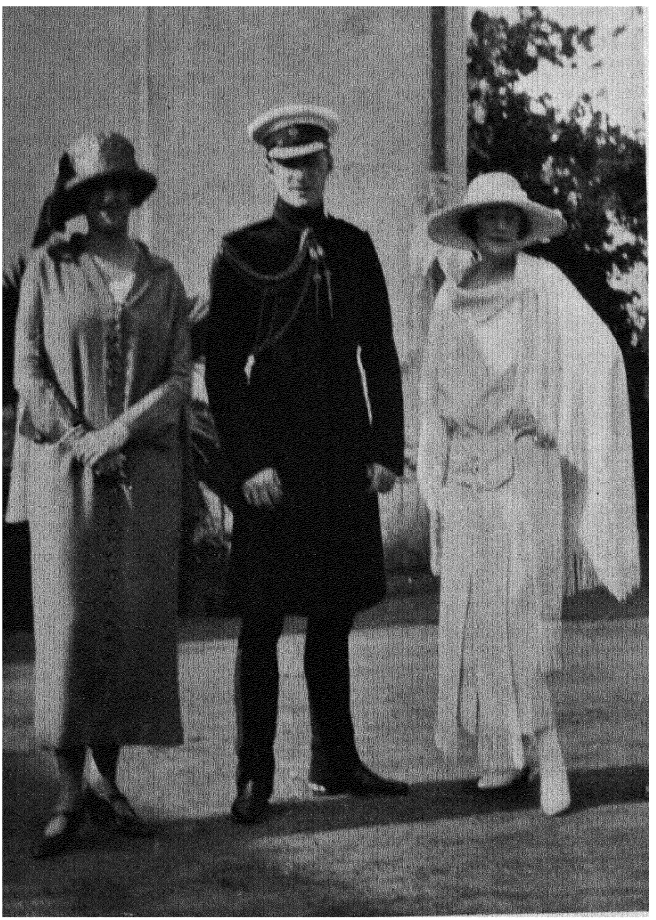

LADY HONOR WARD, CAPTAIN BOWES DALY AND LADY LOWTHER

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of perforated marble, shows the design and execution of an eighteenth-century jeweller.

An atmosphere of calm and peace pervaded these courts, where from the marble pavements tall trees had thrust tender shoots, to become with the years great canopies of green. I left them with regret.

The grave of Ayam Khan, who also is buried in this neighbourhood, carried one back to the Memoirs of Baber, where the saving of his son's (Humayun) life by this chieftain is so vividly described. A spirit of chivalry and courage hovers about the memory of these early Moghul conquerors, far removed from the atmosphere of self-indulgent luxury of the later Sultans.

We also visited the open marble hall called that of the Sixty-four Pillars, glittering white and gay. In fact, all Indian architecture strikes a note of gaiety. The grace and welcome of the tombs of great men, those elegant kiosks, afterwards used as their last abode, where pleasure-parties were held both before and after the death of the builder. The joyous invitation of clusters of open *chhatries* on the palace walls; tiny domes supported by light columns or pillars, the shelter of which you reach from level terraces where you can linger in the twilight of a yellow moon; the drooping balconies, the open halls from whence you gaze up on flower and flowering-tree reflected on the mirror of calm waters. There is a complete lack of any thought of dreariness, despair or grimness in the Hindu or Moslem conception of death.

This ancient gaiety breathed even from the walls of Ajanta. Kiosks, flowers, feasts, lovely women

gazing down from on high upon gorgeous pageants below! And yet now, how rarely one sees an Indian in cheerful mood; laughing, or dancing, or playing pranks! Those serious, questioning eyes, those slow, almost weary movements, do they belong to a gay people? Are they like tired children, wistful and quiet in their gardens of beauty, sad, they know not why? Or is it the despair of wisdom and disillusion which they try to drown in the light of their sun, the music of their fountains, the perfume of their garlands?

6th January. I dine with the Commander-in-Chief and Lady Rawlinson, a concession on the part of the Viceroy. One does not dine out when staying at Viceregal Lodge, so I was told.

A very pleasant evening. As usual I found the men I met full of common-sense and an earnest desire to do their work well. They all seemed pleased to hear of my delight in India and my admiration of their achievement, and that of their predecessors.

Lady Helen Seymour was there with her husband; visitors to India as well as myself.

7th January. Miss Megan Lloyd George (who is also a guest at Viceregal Lodge) and several others of our party went over the Delhi Fort again; it was evening the first time I had seen it, now it was morning, glowing and radiant. The gold of the sun's rays actually shone through the marble of the wonderful halls, the pierced marble screens seemed alive with light. With a pang in my heart I left the magic held within those crimson fortress walls.

In the afternoon General Cory and Colonel White-

head took us over the Ridge, and most graphically brought to our mind's eye those terrible, yet splendid, days of the Mutiny through which a comparative handful of British gentlemen lived—or perished—for the glory of the name of England. Remembering what those men endured, it is unbelievable to me how anyone can breathe, even in secret: Let us abandon India! Must the fruit of such heroism be thrown aside and left to rot in the chaos India would become without England's just and firm guidance? What a whirl of thought such scenes awoke! And now the thunder of the guns, the anguish or triumph of the heart is stilled, and along the earth once stained by English blood runs the gay, white ribbon of the highways, and the bird crowned by King Solomon himself trips along the grassy slopes, the dainty hoopoe. Did the hoopoe come all this way from the deserts of Arabia?

King Solomon, beloved of all, both beast and man, once set out on a journey which took him across the burning sands where the sun's rays beat down without mercy for the most merciful. The hoopoe, a light-winged creature, in its devotion fluttered along beside him hour after hour. The horses stumbled and drooped, the escort lagged and fainted. In prayer and meditation the King tried to forget the flames of the sun, but without avail. Noting his growing distress, the little bird suddenly bethought itself of a means of succour. It flew away.

"Alas!" thought the King, "even my tiny companion has deserted me; I am indeed abandoned in my suffering."

But a cool whirr of wings, a deep, grateful shade all in a moment encompassed him! The hoopoe had called together all his feathery tribe and, flying in their thousands above King Solomon, they utterly shielded him from his flaming foe.

The Wisest of the Wise then blessed the hoopoe, and decreed that he and his should for ever after wear a crown. And so they do to this day.

I asked to be allowed to see the frescoes which Sir Aurel Stein discovered in Central Asia, in or near Thibet. So the next day we motored out to New Delhi and, in one of the many white bungalows embowered in trees, we found a museum and workshop combined under a single roof, presided over by Mr F. H. Andrews, whose experience and knowledge made smooth the path of the uninitiated. I was filled with admiration and surprise. These immense frescoes, in the most wonderful freshness of colour and preservation, had been carried for hundreds of miles on mule-back or pony. They had been cut from the walls of ancient huts, which were built of a sort of cement mixed with chopped straw. These slices were then packed, brought to Delhi and placed on the walls before us so cleverly that you could not detect a single joint. They covered great spaces, and the vivacity of the figures, the variety of types depicted, the elaboration of gorgeous dress and headgear were striking in the extreme.

It seems that actual chunks of the huts themselves had been cut out, covered and packed. On arrival at Delhi the painted sides of the walls were placed on glass and the backs then slowly scraped away until the

actual substance upon which the paint had been laid was reached. This proved to be straw! A new metal back was then cemented on (if I recollect aright), the pattern sorted out and fitted into great frames, and the whole fresco set up intact for the admiration and delight of those who care for exotic art and the history of art, indeed for art at all—especially of those who enjoy line, light and remarkable sureness of touch in draughtsmanship. The subjects appeared to be religious. Most of them depicted scenes from the life of Buddha as imported into Eastern lands. For in that part of the world inspiration flowed from the West.

These paintings are very Chinese in feeling and expression, but with the 'grotesque' (which we associate so much with Chinese art) entirely absent. The classical and, at times, almost Byzantine draperies worn by the stylized figure of the Buddha are in striking contrast to the rich and elaborate Chinese garments which clothe his devotees. A Western god among his Eastern worshippers! The panels are very crowded, the grouping much less spaced and balanced than in the Ajanta paintings, although the dates of these Central Asian frescoes are, no doubt, two or three centuries later than the later paintings in Hyderabad. On the other hand the mastery of line and the careful delineation of types and variety of dress are more advanced than in those at Ajanta.

The predominating colours are an orange-coloured pigment and fine reds and blues. The effect is in some cases almost as vivid as stained glass.

These ancient Buddhist monks are somewhat of a

mystery. Where did they learn their craft? Why did the art they mastered suffer total eclipse and apparently lead to no further development (except perhaps in the *T'ankus*, the Buddhist painted banners, of later times), until Italian art struggled painfully to emancipate itself from the mosaics of Roman days—the stiff fingers of Cimabue giving place to the master hand of Giotto, who, unillumined by the glow of Eastern achievement, lit alone the torch of Art in Europe?

9th January. Much to my edification, Sir John Marshall lunched to-day at Viceregal Lodge. He is the Head of the Preservation of Monuments Department in India, a most capable, nay brilliant, man. All speak of him very highly and of his efficiency and knowledge. Thanks to him, the subsidy for the care of India's treasures of art was not vetoed in Assembly, and Lord Curzon's traditions are carried on.

The Mewa of Chitral was also at luncheon, but could only speak the tongue of his native country. How dull for him to join our company. His dragoman seemed somewhat bored by the everlasting necessity of translating everything, but I was struck by the quiet and pleasant manners of both these Indian gentlemen.

The hours crowd, pressing together—soon I must leave this Garden of Eden, these canna, these tamarind trees, the hibiscus blowing in the shadow and the wavering pipal leaves. . . . And my tale is but half told.

I went to sit in the marble court of the Prince of Wales's pavilion, to look into the watery mirror gleaming in its midst—to see the pale Indian winter

sky shining within it like a treasure, a secret jewel—so will the memory of India shine within my heart.

9th January. My last day at Delhi! Almost my last in India. I was sent out in one of the Viceregal carriages to say my good-byes. A cee-spring landau, with native, scarlet-coated footmen standing on their precarious perch behind, and a gorgeous scarlet coachman, turban and all, enthroned aloft, driving with skill a pair of splendid horses. Delight unbounded! I still enjoy the calm progression of a carriage and drove to and fro in regal solitude, rejoicing in a style which the next generation will regard as more absurd and obsolete than the sedan-chair.

Alas! To-night I *must* leave. My ship sails from Bombay on the 12th. I have only just time.

I depart after dinner—full of heartfelt gratitude to Their Excellencies, who had waved their wands of power and beneficence and given me enchanted hours. Several of the party come to see me off. We almost fall on one another's necks in tears.

I am indeed miserable at awaking from my dream of dreams, and I know my next few days will be merely a feverish hurry as I have stretched my stay to its uttermost.

Friday, 11th January. After a journey of thirty-six hours I arrive at the Western gate of India. The dreariness of the scenery matched my mood. For the land we passed was of an uncanny formation, like the background of a crazy Chinese screen, the shapes of which I had always attributed to primitive drawing. Not at all! The sudden hollows, the pointed grassy peaks, the twisted paths and bumpy hillocks rose and

fell for weary miles, earth and tussocks of monstrous size stretched for monotonous distances, a veritable desert of rugged desolation.

Captain Lynch meets me on my arrival; I congratulate him on his engagement to the charming Miss Grosvenor.

Sir Leslie and Lady Wilson, the new Governor and his wife, extend a very kind welcome, and I am lodged in a different, but most comfortable, pavilion looking on the silvery seas. They are most hospitable to the passing and very fleeting guest who sets sail the next morning.

The 12th. On the splendid ship *Kaisar-i-Hind*, I bid a wistful good-bye to my courteous escort, to the scarlet-coated kitmagars and my faithful bearer Samji, who, silent, grave and omnipresent, never left me through all my Odyssey.

A beautiful ship! Decks such as no poor crowded, hustled Atlantic traveller ever dreamed of; huge, flat expanses of velvet-white wood and nothing to interrupt your walking a score abreast from one end of the boat to the other.

A delicious voyage across the seas to Aden and through the Red Sea, but alas! a storm in the Mediterranean, and the temperature drops from 80° to 40° in a day.

A veil is best drawn over the next few months of my existence: I reached Paris to sink into bed with bronchitis and pleurisy and never got home until April!

Perhaps a heavy price to pay for my experience? But I was almost glad to pay it, and even when in

fevered nights I closed my weary eyes I refreshed my tired spirit with the memory of cool marble terraces under dew-wet moonlight—I heard the rippling shiver of the pipal tree and saw Canopus hung like a golden shield in the fathomless sky of Ind.

I suffered—but is not suffering the seal of the perfect treasure? This time a treasure more rare than coffers filled with glittering Gold Mohurs in fee for the Peacock Throne of Delhi.

THE END

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ALICE LOWTHER.

GLOSSARY

LAND OF THE GOLD MOHUR

ALWAR. Indian State with capital of same name south of Delhi in Rajputana. Ruled by the Maharaoraja Pratab Singhi of Alwar. (Area over 3000 sq. miles. Population of capital over 44,000.)

ASOKA. Mauryan King. (272-231 B.C.) He decreed a revival of Buddhism, spreading the cult and erecting monuments throughout Northern India.

BEARER. Native servant, acting as courier.

BEGUM. (From the Turkish.) Lady of rank, a Queen or Princess.

BHARUT. Place where a Tope (or Memorial relic mound) was discovered of very fine style.

BHEASTIE. Native servant of lowest caste. An untouchable (*i.e.* his touch contaminates the true Hindu believer). He performs all the humblest duties.

BIHAR. Province of Central India (British), south-west of the Ganges river.

BODHISATTVA. Predestined Buddhas. "Teachers of the Truth." Much multiplied by the Mahayana sect of Buddhists.

BRAHMAN or BRAHMIN. Priest of the ancient Hindu cult derived from the Holy Books of the Vedas.

BUDDHA. The founder of a religion once widespread in India. Gautama The Buddha, an Indian Prince, left his Kingdom and family to become an ascetic, preaching and inculcating a more spiritual doctrine to the masses sunk in the idolatry of Brahmanism. Transmigration of Souls, ethical and moral purity were parcel of his belief. 558-483 B.C.

BUDDHIST. Follower of Buddha.

CHAITYA. Buddhist Chapel or Church. Also a place of sacrifice or religious worship.

CHHATRI. From 'Chhattar': umbrella: insignia of rank. Small dome upheld by columns, or pavilion.

CHUNAM. From 'Chuna': lime. A plaster sometimes made of shells and of remarkable whiteness and brilliance.

DAGOBA (Sinhalese word) = 'relic-receptacle,' strictly applicable to the dome of the stupa. (See below.)

DARGAH. Burial-place of a Mohammedan Saint.

DIWAN-I-AM. Hall of Public Audience.

DIWAN-I-KHAS. Hall of Private Audience.

DURGA. Wife of Siva, the Destroyer and Reproducer, in her terrible aspect—also called Kali.

EURASIAN. 'European-Asiatic': the child of a white father and Indian mother, or vice-versa.

GARUDA. A fabulous creature half man, half eagle. The vehicle or symbol of Vishnu, the Preserver.

GHANDARA. Early Buddhist Art, hellenistic in style, flourishing in the first centures before and after Christ.

GOLD MOHUR 1. Gold coin of various values minted by the Moghul Emperors: 1518-1707. Mohur-sovereign. Some with signs of the Zodiac on the face and Arabic lettering on the reverse, often the Declaration of Faith: "There are no Gods but God etc." The coin on the wrapper of this book represents the Emperor Jehangir, the son of Akbar and the father of Shah Jehan who built the Taj Mahal. He reigned from 1605-1627. An enlightened Prince. He tolerated both Christians and wine.

GOLD MOHUR 2. A tree. *Poinciana regia* Bojer. Also called 'Gulmohr,' Flame-Tree, Flamboyant. Native of Madagascar. Feathery Mimosa-like foliage, flowers profuse and brilliant red. (Modern nomenclature 'Delonix.')

GUPTA. Indian Art of the period of the Gupta Emperors from the fourth century A.D. to the seventh century A.D. It spread widely and influenced the architecture of Western and Northern India strongly; from it evolved the Indo-Aryan style.

GUNGA. Hindu name for a female spirit representing the Ganges river.

GWALIOR. An Indian state with capital of the same name south of Agra; ruled by the Maharajah Scindia of Gwalior (Area over 26,000 miles; over 3,000,000 inhabitants).

HAMMAM. Persian word. Baths used by Orientals. Hot air, water and friction.

HOOPOE. *Upupa epops*. Small bird, crested, light brown and white with showy plumage. Stripes across the back.

HOWDAH. Large saddle or seat for one or more persons, often covered by an awning and placed on an elephant's back.

JAI-MANDIR. 'Hall of Victory,' a fine one is at Amber near Jaipur, Rajputana.

JAIN. A sect founded by 'Vardhamana' (or 'Nattaputta' as he is called by the rival order of Buddhists). Generally known as Mahavira (Great Hero) 599 B.C. to 527 B.C. His ascetic teaching was a reaction against Brahmanism and is a more spiritual and ethical system. The Jains are kind to animals. The style of architecture adopted by the Jains, Indo-Aryan in spirit, is also called Jain.

JATAKA. The story of Gautama the Buddha, treating of his frequent manifestations as a Prince, as an animal, as a miracle-worker, is found among this collection of legends dating to very early times and containing the oldest versions of those nursery-tales and fables which are the common property of the world.

KAPURTHALA. Native Indian state south of Amritsar, Punjab. Ruled over by the Rajah of Kapurthala.

KARACHI. Capital of Sind. Province in British India. North-west coast. Population 152,000. Seaport of importance.

KHITMATGAR. Native table-servant or servitor.

KOS MINAR. Milestone erected on the roads in some parts of India.

LAT. Tall monolithic pillar usually surmounted by a symbol. The most famous are those erected by King Asoka as a memorial of his enthusiastic support of Buddhism (270 B.C.). Also called 'stambha.'

LIWAN. Broad, sometimes shallow, terrace covered by an arcade, closed by a wall at the back and two sides, used as a mosque by the Indian Moslems; preceded by a large open court and fountain.

MAHAVIRA. See Jain, *supra.*

MAHOUT. Native driver of elephants, seated astride the animal's neck, behind the ears.

MAIDAN. Meadow, plain, battlefield.

MANGA. Large tree *Mangifera indica*—broad velvety leaves with clustered yellow-orange fruit, good to eat. Native of tropical Asia now widely cultivated in hot countries.

MAURYAN. Early Hindu style of art. Contemporary of pre-Asoka period. More archaic than the later Gupta work.

MIHRAB. An Arch. The recess in the wall of a mosque on the side nearest Mecca to which Moslems turn in prayer. Usually called Kibla by the Indians.

MINBER or MIMBAR. Pulpit in a Mosque. The Preacher stands on the middle step while delivering his sermon (or Khutba).

MUEZZIN. Call to prayer by the Imam (a sort of priest) of a Mosque several times a day.

MOGHUL or MUGHAL. A branch of the Turki family, descendants of Timur Lenk, coming from the North of India, and of which the Conqueror Baber is the first of a line of Moslem Emperors who ruled Northern India for over two centuries. The greatest were the first six. Baber 1526-1530. Humayan from 1530-1556. Akbar from 1556 to 1605. Jehangir from 1605 to 1627. Shah Jehan from 1627 to 1658. Aurungzebe from 1658 to 1707. After that they weakened and reigned with less and less power until the British conquest swept them away.

NANDHI. 'The Joyous.' The representation, usually in sculpture, of a Bull. The vehicle or symbol of Siva.

NAWAB. Originally meaning 'Deputy.' Now the title of a Ruler or high official.

NAWABZADEH. Brother of a Nawab.

NEEM. Technically known as *Melia Azedarachta.* A tall, graceful tree, with perfumed flowers.

OUDH. A province of British India in the north near Lucknow.

PARSI or PARSEE. 'A Persian.' The modern followers of the Zoroastrian religion. Numerous in Bombay and Surat. The sacred fire, brought from Heaven by Zoroaster, still burns in their shrines and is worshipped as a symbol of God. They expose their dead in towers open to the sky—they do not bury them.

PI. Small Indian Copper coin. 64 to a rupee.

PIETRA-DURA. 'Hard Stone.' A form of decoration of flowers and arabesques carved, coloured or inlaid in stone panels.

PUGGAREE. A Turban. Indian men's head-dress made of yards of muslin wound about the head in graceful folds.

RAGA. Musical modes—elaborate and obscure, evolved by Indians, expressed by pictures.

REBAB. A Moorish musical instrument something like a banjo but the strings are stroked with a bow.

SARI. Long and wide veil which Indian women drape around

the body and over head and shoulder; closely resembling the Greek *himation*.

SHERBET. Cold, sweet drink, flavoured with fruit, non-alcoholic.

SIND. A district of British India on the north-western coast.

SINGH. 'A lion.' The name of the ruling families of several native states—such as Udaipur, Jaipur and Alwar. Descendants of the Sun (Surya).

STAMBOULINE. Long, black, tight-fitting coat in cloth, buttoned up to the neck; once worn by Turkish gentlemen at the Sultan's Court in Stamboul.

STUPA. (Or Tope) 'Relic-shrine.' Monument containing relics; or a commemorative tower.

SUTTEE. Self-immolation by burning. Once practised by Hindu widows. Rarely performed nowadays.

TAMARIND. A large tree. 'Indian date,' *Tamarindus indica*, tall, graceful with drooping branches and a reddish bark, brilliant flowers. The pulp, seeds and timber are much used.

TAMERLANE. Popular form for Timur Lenk (Timur the lame). A Turki Conqueror descended from Jenghis Khan who at the age of sixty invaded India with his hordes from the north and defeated the Moslem Ruler Mohammed Shah Tughlak, near Delhi in 1398. He became master of Delhi and continued his victorious career as far as the shores of the Mediterranean, annexing Bagdad, Aleppo and Damascus. He crushed the Turks and took their Sultan Bajezid prisoner, shutting him in a cage. On his way to conquer China he died. 1336-1405.

T'ANKU or TANKA. Painted banners carried in Buddhist religious processions depicting the Buddha in his Heaven, surrounded by the holy ones. Usually dating from the fifteenth century, but carrying on the tradition of an earlier style.

TOPE. See Stupa, *supra*.

TORANA. Immense sculptured stone gateways placed before a Tope or Stupa; the entrance to the enclosure surrounding the Topes which is guarded by high stone fences of grand design.

TORI. High gateways usually in wood, placed near a temple in Japan, similar to the Torana; note the characteristic cross-pieces over the lofty gate-posts with the protruding beam-ends.

TRIMURTI. 'Trinity.' The group of the three great God-Heads of the Hindu Brahmanical cult. Brahma, the Creator; Vishnu, the Preserver; and Siva, the Destroyer and Reproducer.

VIHARA. A buddhist Monastery or apartment in a monastery. (In Ceylon a Buddhist temple.)

ZENANA or ZANANA. (Persian word.) Women's quarters in a Hindu household.

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